

Political and administrative divisions of Ukrainian lands on the 16th century maps

Abstract. The author discusses the first maps of Ukrainian lands within the borders of various countries, reflecting their political and administrative division, which were published in the 16th century.

State and administration borders in Ukrainian territories were presented on the map of Southern Sarmatia (1526) by the Polish cartographer B. Wapowski and on the wall map of Europe (1554) by the Dutch cartographer G. Mercator. Maps by S. Münster and G. Gastaldi, including names of individual administrative units without reflecting state and administrative borders, were taken into account. A thorough analysis was carried out of the territorial division of Ukrainian territories on maps in the atlases by A. Ortelius (maps of Poland by W. Grodecki and A. Pograbka), on the maps of Lithuania and *Taurica Chersonesus* in the atlases by G. Mercator, including their subsequent adaptations. A number of inaccuracies regarding the location of state and administrative borders as well as names of administrative units have been revealed. Particular attention has been paid to the manner of presenting administrative borders.

It was established that in those times no special attention was paid to the presentation of political and administrative divisions on maps. During subsequent editions of maps, no national and administrative borders were updated. Maps could be published without changes for decades. Map publishers often borrowed unverified information, which led to duplication of errors.

Keywords: old maps, sixteenth century, Ukrainian lands, political and administrative division

The first known maps did not contain any political and administrative borders. Initially, the deployment of nations was shown on them by placing their names on the appropriate territory. The location of Proto-Slavic nations and Slavic nations, which inhabited the Ukrainian lands, is reflected in numerous maps of the early Middle Ages¹. Gradually the name “Rus” appears on the maps in various transcriptions (“Russia”, “Rusia”, „Rucia regio”). On the world map by Fra Mauro from 1459, the local geographical name of the “Rossia Rossa” (Red Ruthenia) region on the territory of Galicia was placed for the first time.

The map by Bernard Wapowski (1470–1535) and Marco Beneventano (approx. 1465–1524) for Roman editions of C. Ptolemy’s “Geography” from 1507 and 1508 *Tabula Moderna Polonie Ungarie Boemie Germanie Russie Lithuaniae* at a scale of approx. 1:3,700,000 is the first printed map with the names “Poland” and “Lithuania” in the title². On the territory of Ukraine there are two names: “Ruthenia” (“Rvssia” – the authors had the Ruthenia Voivodship in mind) in the Kingdom of Poland and the name of the historical and geographical area of Podolia used for the first time, there is also a toponym “Tartaria Precopiensis”.

The most important cartographic works of the Polish cartographer B. Wapowski were three

¹ L.S. Chekin, *Kartografiya khristianskogo srednevekov’ya VIII–XIII vv.: teksty, per., komment*, Moskva 1999, 366 pp. (Drevneyshie istochniki po istorii Vost. Yevropy); V.H. Kryukov, *Al.-Khuvarizmi pro «Sarmatiyu – zemlyu burdzhani» ta susidni z neyu «krayiny»: monografiya*, Luhans’k 2009, 540 pp., 2 il.

² K. Kozica, J. Pezda, *Imago Poloniae. Dawna Rzeczpospolita na mapach, dokumentach i starodrukach w zbiorach Tomasza Niewodniczańskiego*, Warszawa 2002, t. 2, pp. 18–19.

maps issued in Kraków – “Polonia” (1526), “South Sarmatia” (1526, 1528) and “North Sarmatja” (1526, 1528), which for almost two centuries were used for creating maps of the territory of Poland at that time. On the map “South Sarmatia”, as established by the Polish scientist S. Pietkiewicz, the author, using densely drawn trees (one or two rows) depicted borders of states, and sometimes administrative divisions. In case of the border crossing mountain ridges, the border is shown customarily by a marked schematic drawing of mountain peaks³. In general, the Kingdom of Poland (the Crown) on the map of “South Sarmatia” is quite well demarcated from neighbouring states; there were also separate political units: Ruthenia (Red), Wolhynia, Podolia. However, in the south-eastern part of the map a number of inaccuracies can be seen. The border between the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Moscow State passes through Ukrainian territory along the Dnieper. Along the left bank of the river from the north to Zaporozhye there is a dense row of trees, although in reality this border passed far more east of the Dnieper. Also, the territory of the Moscow State was not properly demarcated from the Crimean Khanate – the border passes from the Dnieper towards the north-east at the beginning of the Psiol river, further by the Vorskla river and is shown by two rows of trees with the name “Black Forest” (“NIGRA SILVA”) on the territory of Wild Plains (Zaporozhye). The political and administrative borders shown on the map by B. Wapowski, G. Mercator later used in the development of the map of Europe.

In the context of the increase in the number of names of regions of Ukrainian lands on maps, it is chronologically worth mentioning the map of *Polonia et Ungaria, XV · Nova Tabula* at a scale of approx. 1:4,800,000 by a German humanist and cosmographer Sebastian Münster (1488–1578), which was included for the first time in the Basel edition of C. Ptolemy's “Geography” from 1540. On the map, without explanation of political and administrative bor-

ders in modern Ukraine, the names “Russia”, “Podolia”, “Bessrabia”, “Tartaria minor”, “Tartaria Precopien” are written in capital letters, while “Volhinia”, “Codimia”, “Pokutze” are written in small letters. The name “Ruthenia” was used once in the territory of the Russian Voivodship⁴.

Since the second half of the 16th century, quite schematic borders of states are shown. On the maps of Muscovy by A. Wid, Z. Gerbenstein, K. Jenkinson, the border between Lithuania and Tataria was presented with a symbol schematically.

For the first time, the territorial division in Ukrainian territories was shown on the wall map of Europe by G. Mercator (1512–1594), published in 1554 on 15 sheets at a scale of approximately 1:4,300,000. Information about it is known today thanks to a copy from a Wrocław copy of the map (lost in 1944)⁵, and also thanks to the so-called atlas by G. Mercator (1570), acquired by the British Library in 1997, containing nine sheets originating from the mentioned wall map. In 1572, the second edition of the map of Europe was presented, supplemented and improved mainly in the northern part and in today's Russia⁶.

On pages 63–64⁷ and 93–94⁸ of the mentioned atlas by G. Mercator from 1570, political and administrative units were separated by means of a broken line. On page 64 “Ruffia” and “Volhinia” were shown, which are marked and signed just like “Polonia” and “Majovia”. In the southern part of the territory of Ruthenia, the name “Pokucze” can be found. On pages 93 and 94, the entire territory of modern Ukraine was visible. The borders of Ruthenia and Volhynia as well as Podolia were marked and signed. The Podolia area is located between the tributary of

⁴ K. Kozica, J. Pezda, *Imago Poloniae...*, op. cit., pp. 24–25; M.H. Vavrychyn, Ya.R. Dashkevych, U.R. Kryshchalovych, *Ukrayina na starodavnikh kartakh. Kinets' XV – persha polovyna XVII st.*, Kyjiv 2004, pp. 42–43.

⁵ K. Kozica, *Wrocławski przedwojenny egzemplarz mapy Europy Gerarda Mercatora (1554)*. In: *Dawne mapy jako źródła w badaniach geograficznych i historycznych*, „Z Dziejów Kartografii” t. 18, Warszawa 2014, pp. 111–119.

⁶ According to the data by K. Kozica, *ibidem*, p. 113, to this day, three copies of the second edition of the map of Europe by G. Mercator have been preserved.

⁷ <http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/ftp/mercator/accessible/images/page62full.jpg> (access 03.03.2018)

⁸ <http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/ftp/mercator/accessible/pages93and94.html> (access 03.03.2018).

³ S. Pietkiewicz, *Mapa Polski – „milionówka” Bernarda Wapowskiego (1526)*, „Studia i Materiały z Dziejów Nauki Polskiej”, Seria C, z. 24, Warszawa 1980, pp. 37–62; H. Rutkowski, *Polska na wybranych mapach z pierwszej połowy XVI wieku*. In: *Dawna mapa źródłem wiedzy o świecie*, „Z Dziejów Kartografii” t. 14, Warszawa 2008, pp. 221–233.

the Dniester – in the west, the Amadoca lake and the upper sections of the Stucz and Teterew rivers in the north, the Siniucha river – in the north-east and east and the Dniester river and the Black Sea coast – in the south. Lithuania is shown north and east of Volhynia and Podolia. In the east, the territory of Lithuania borders with the Duchy of Novgorod-Seversk (“Sewera provincial”), whose territory without the indication of the border meets the Moscow Duchy (“Mojcovia ducatus”). In the south, on the left bank of the Dnieper, “Tartaria” is shown, and the name “Taurica” is also placed on the Crimean Peninsula.

During the creation of the map of Europe by G. Mercator, as is known, Ruthenia (in this case understood as the Ruthenian Voivodship) and Western Podolia were within the borders of the Kingdom of Poland; Volhynia, East Podolia and Kievshchina – until the conclusion of the Union of Lublin in 1569 within the borders of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and the Duchy of Chernigov and Severshchina in 1503 were moved to the State of Moscow. Marked by G. Mercator Ruthenia, Volhynia and Podolia can also be treated as historical and geographical lands, and not only as specific administrative-territorial formations. Let us note,

however, that in the cartography of that time, most authors did not pay attention to the correctness of the spatial distribution of the names of states or their administrative units. This was due to both the lack of stability of state borders and the territorial system, as well as the level of development of the cartographic method of providing information.

Based on the map of Europe, G. Mercator later prepared numerous maps of individual regions with appropriate additions and corrections for the future atlas. The first world atlas of the outstanding cartographer includes two maps with the image of the territory of Ukraine, which will be discussed below in a chronological order.

The image of the territorial division in the Ukrainian territories presented on the map of Poland by Wacław Grodecki (around 1535–1591) was used in the atlases of Abraham Ortelius (1527–1598). The original map of W. Grodecki, published in 1562 at the scale of 1:1,680,000, contained only partial borders of states and other territorial units. To this map in the first edition of *Theatrum ...* from 1570, A. Ortelius, as always, brought a lot of corrections and additions, including the imposition of administrative borders, and published it at a slightly



Fig. 1. Part of the map of Poland by W. Grodecki (1570)

smaller scale around 1:2,500,000⁹ (fig. 1). In the atlases by A. Ortelius K. Kozica distinguished three variants of the map of Poland by W. Grodecki¹⁰.

The map of W. Grodecki as the basic cartographic source was also used by the Polish doctor and cartographer Andrzej Pograbka (around 1540 – around 1602) while creating the map of European Sarmatia (*Partis Sarmatiae*

the next edition of the atlas by A. Ortelius instead of the map by W. Grodecki¹² (fig. 2).

The political and administrative divisions, names of states, administrative units and historical and geographical lands were unchanged on the above-mentioned maps of Poland by W. Grodecki and A. Pograbka, contained in A. Ortelius' work. On the maps the same names of state formations and lands are provided¹³.



Fig. 2. Part of the map of Poland by A. Pograbka (1598)

Europeæ ...) at the scale of about 1:1,900,000, which was issued in 1570 in Venice as an independent publication. Towns and rivers with names were added, but state borders and borders of administrative units on the original map by A. Pograbka were not present¹¹. In 1595, the map of Poland by A. Pograbka, with a changed title and several amendments, was included in

The names "POLONIA MAIOR" and "POLONIA MINOR" are included in Poland. On the territory of present Lithuania and Belarus, the name "MAGNUS DUCATUS LITUANIAE" was placed. In the Ukrainian territories, the names "RUSSIA", "VOLHINIA" and "PODOLIA" were provided, which meant that the names of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania did not refer to the territory of Ukraine.

⁹ M.G. Vavrychyn et al., *Ukrayina na ...*, op. cit., pp. 44–47; K. Kozica, J. Pezda, *Imago Poloniae...*, op. cit., pp. 27; *Senieji Lietuvos žemėlapių iš Vilniaus universiteto bibliotekos rinkinių*, Vilnius 1999, I aplankas / Iš Joachimo Lelewelio ir kitų rinkinių, nr 4.

¹⁰ K. Kozica, J. Pezda, *Imago Poloniae...*, op. cit., p. 27.

¹¹ W. Kordt, *Materiały po historii russkoy kartografii*, Wyp. 1, *Karty vsey Rosii i yuzhnykh ee oblastey do poloviny XVII veka*, Kiev 1899.

¹² M.G. Vavrychyn et al., *Ukrayina na ...*, op. cit., pp. 102–103; K. Kozica, J. Pezda, *Imago Poloniae...*, op. cit., pp. 29; *Polonia. Atlas map z XVI–XVIII wieku*, Warszawa 2005, map no. 3 (Copies and descriptions of maps).

¹³ M.G. Vavrychyn et al., *Ukrayina na ...*, op. cit., pp. 44–47, 102–103; *Senieji Lietuvos ...*, op. cit., nr 6; K. Kozica, J. Pezda, *Imago Poloniae...*, op. cit., pp. 26–29; *Polonia. Atlas map...*, op. cit., nr 3; *Granice Litwy. Tysiącletnia historia*, Vilnius 2010, p. 40.

The maps by W. Grodecki in the atlas by A. Ortelius were published since 1570. As a result of the union of Lublin in 1569, when the Kingdom of Poland (The Crown) and Grand Duchy of Lithuania were joint into the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, a significant part of Ukrainian lands (Volhynia, Kiev and Braclaw Voivodships) were passed from Lithuania to the Kingdom of Poland¹⁴

On the map, the Braclaw Voivodship (without borders) is included in the Podolia Voivodship, and the Kiev Voivodship (also without any

towards the map edge the territory of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was shown. While making the original map, W. Grodecki took into account the extent of the territory of Poland in the period before the Union of Lublin, therefore, to show the area of the Kingdom of Poland after 1569, it was necessary to extend the map's coverage to the east. The schematic nature of the cartographic image of the geographical situation (mainly the deformed stretch of individual areas in the direction "north-south" and "west-east", the image of the Dnieper River in

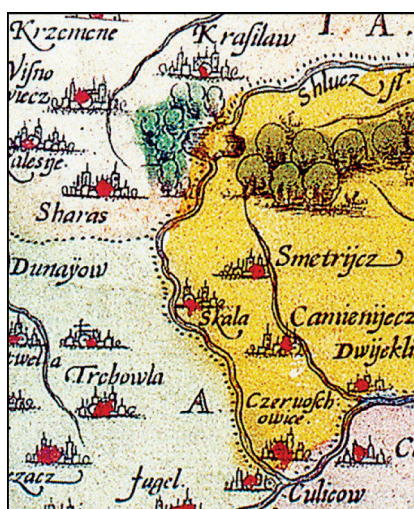


Fig. 3. State and administrative borders on maps of Poland: a – by W. Grodecki and b – A. Pograbka

borders) remained in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. The Belz Voivodship, which had existed for a long time, was not marked at all. So, the author (these were amendments by A. Ortelius) introduced changes on the map regarding the passage of Volhynia and the land of Braclaw to the jurisdiction of Poland, but for unknown reasons, Kievshchina was left in Lithuania. To the east of the Dnieper, with a narrow strip

Ukraine in the shape of an almost straight line from north to south) and very generalized reconstruction of state and administrative borders prevents a detailed analysis of the administrative division shown on the map. Only the image of the Podolia Voivodship between the rivers Dniester ("Niester (Nijester) fl. (flu.)", "Ptol[emaeus] Tyras") and Boh ("Bog fluvius", until the eighteenth century the river had the Ukrainian name "Bog") was inconsistent with reality, because the estates of the Osman Empire commenced south of the Sawran river; in addition, the extent to the north of the Ruthenian and Volhynian Voivodships was too large.

It should be noted that one common sign was used to show state and administration borders – a dashed line made up of dots on

¹⁴ After the Union of Lublin in 1569 Ukrainian lands in the composition of the Kingdom of Poland were divided into the following voivodships: Ruthenian, Vilhynian, Betz, Podolian, Braclaw and Kiev. Brest Voivodship remained in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Vilhynian and Braclaw Voivodships were created in 1566 within the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. In 1569 they were included in the Kingdom of Poland together with Kiev Voivodship (created in 1471).

the map by W. Grodecki and a dotted line made up of small triangles on the map by A. Pograbka (fig. 3). On the maps by A. Ortelius, in contrast to the maps by W. Grodecki from 1562, signs of borders were given along rivers, which avoids possible different interpretations of their location. However, in the case of a border crossing along mountain ridges, its customary sign was not placed – as on the map by B. Wapowski.

The surface of political and administrative units, as on most of the maps printed at that time, were painted by hand. In order to increase the readability of borders, a colourful ribbon was applied along the linear mark on its inside (according to the colour of the area being delineated).

Between 1570–1645, the transformed maps of Poland by W. Grodecki went out into the world without any changes of the political and administrative divisions. This showed that this element of the content of the map as a result of various circumstances (frequent political and administrative changes, low level of map making technology, lack of reliable cartographic sources) was not given enough attention.

The individual voivodships in the West Ukrainian territories are shown on the Polish map at the scale of 1:1,800,000 by a Dutch publisher and cartographer Gerard de Jode (1509–1591). The map was printed in his *Speculum Orbis Terrarum* atlases in 1578 and 1593. Earlier, around 1573, Gerard de Jode published a map of Poland with the same title and at the same scale, but the borders of the voivodships were not shown, while on the map in the atlas printed in Antwerp in 1593, state borders and borders of voivodships were marked with a line composed of dots¹⁵. On this map, with a small geographical consistency, the Ruthenian (Russia) and Vilhynian (Volhynia) Voivodships are shown. Attention is drawn to the extent of the Vilhynian Voivodship up to the Dniester River, which did not correspond to reality.

The first edition of the fundamental atlas of the world by G. Mercator *Atlas sive cosmographicae meditationes de fabrica mundi et fabricati figura*, printed by his son Rumold after the author's death in 1595, included two maps

with a partial image of the territory of Ukraine: *Lithuania* at the scale of approx. 1:3,000,000 and *Taurica Chersonesus* at the scale of approx. 1:3,600,000.

On the map of Lithuania, the political and administrative division was reflected in the Ukrainian lands¹⁶. Within the borders of the Kingdom of Poland, the Ruthenian (including Belz), Volhynian and Podolian (including Bracław) Voivodships were presented likewise. The map specifies course of the administrative border between the Podolian and Ruthenian Voivodships, which was moved west from the Zbruch River (Zbruch flu.) to the Stryj River (Stripa fl.). To the north and to the east of these voivodships there is the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, which in the east, in contrast to the map by W. Grodecki, borders with Muscovy (Moscoviae Pars). This border runs from south to north along the Dnieper River and further along the Mereia River. This means that in comparison to the above-mentioned map of Europe by G. Mercator, incorrect changes were made when showing the extent of the Moscov Tsardom up to the Dnieper (fig. 4). The designation of the state border and administrative borders is similar to that on the map by W. Grodecki, i.e. a hand-coloured dotted line.

The map of Lithuania by G. Mercator with subsequent additions and changes, was entered in all the editions of the atlas published by the heirs of the great cartographer. Usually, the Kiev Voivodship has always been represented within the borders of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, which can be interpreted as a manifestation of the Lithuanian elite's rejection of the incorporation of some Lithuanian territories into the borders of the Kingdom of Poland after the Union of Lublin in 1569. In the Amsterdam edition of *Atlas minor Gerardi Mercatoris a I. Hondio plurimis aeneis Tabulis...* (1628) on the map of *Lithuania*, it was presented that Lithuanian lands included Podlahian and Volhynian Voivodships, apart from Kiev Voivodship. Attributes of the map include precise marking of the eastern border of the Grand Duchy (in fact – the Kingdom of Poland), on the left bank of the Dnieper, to which the Duchy of Seversk ("Ducatus Severiensis") and Tataria Perekopska

¹⁵ K. Kozica, J. Pezda, *Imago Poloniae...*, op. cit., pp. 161–163; M.G. Vavrychyn et al., *Ukrayina na...*, op. cit., pp. 72–73.

¹⁶ M.G. Vavrychyn et al., *Ukrayina na...*, op. cit., pp. 110–111; *Senieji Lietuvos...*, op. cit., nr 9.



Fig. 4. Part of the map of Lithuania by G. Mercator (1595)

(“Crimea. Tartaria Perecopensis”) adjoins¹⁷. The Chernigov-Severshchina region adjoined to Poland as a result of a truce with the Moscov Tsardom in Deulino in 1618, is not yet shown on the map of the main territory. The administrative-territorial unit “Duchy of Seversk” was established in 1619 after the transfer of this area to the Kingdom of Poland. It should be remembered that the name of the new province in 1635 was not fixed and the name “Duchy of Chernigov” was most often used¹⁸.

Another work by G. Mercator with the image of Ukrainian lands was the map of *Taurica Chersonesus*, whose main content was the image of the Khanate of the Crimea. It is described on the map as “Crimea seu Tartaria Precopensis” and covers the area from the lower Dnieper to the lower Don, including the northern part of the Crimea, which corresponds to historical realities. The distorted image of the territory of Crimea is evident. Bakhchasaraj (“Baccasfaratum”) – the capital of the Khanate of the Crimea is located far to the north of the peninsula,

also far to the north of the peninsula the Alma river (“Alma flu.”) flows. The boundary between the Khanate of the Crimea and the Osman Empire estates runs in the northern part of the peninsula, thus increasing the territory of the Empire, which in fact occupied only a narrow strip along the southern bank of the Crimea (with the area of today’s Sevastopol city) and a section of today’s Kerch (fig. 5). The border depicted in a broken line is not distinguished by colouring neighbouring areas (the border runs from west to east along the Alma River and further along the ridge of the mountains).

In the west, the area of Podolian Voivodship adheres to the Khanate of the Crimea on the map, traditionally incorrectly shown in the south to the mouth of Boh (Southern Boh) and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (“Lithuaniae Pars”), although after 1569 it was already the area of the Kiev Voivodship in the Kingdom of Poland. In the north a part of the territory of the Moscov State (“Russiae pars”) is shown, as well as Tartaria (“Tartariae pars”)¹⁹. These last lands were attached to the Russian Tsardom after the conquest of the Khanate of Kazan (1552) and Khanate of Astrakhan (1556).

¹⁷ *Granice Litwy. ...*, op. cit., p. 42.

¹⁸ Ya.V. Veremnych, *Administratyvno-terytorial'nyy ustroiy Ukrayiny: evolyutsiya, suchasnyy stan, problemy reformuvannya*, u 2 ch., Kyiv 2009, ch. 1, p. 224.

¹⁹ M.G. Vavrychyn et al., *Ukrayina na ...*, op. cit., pp. 124–125.

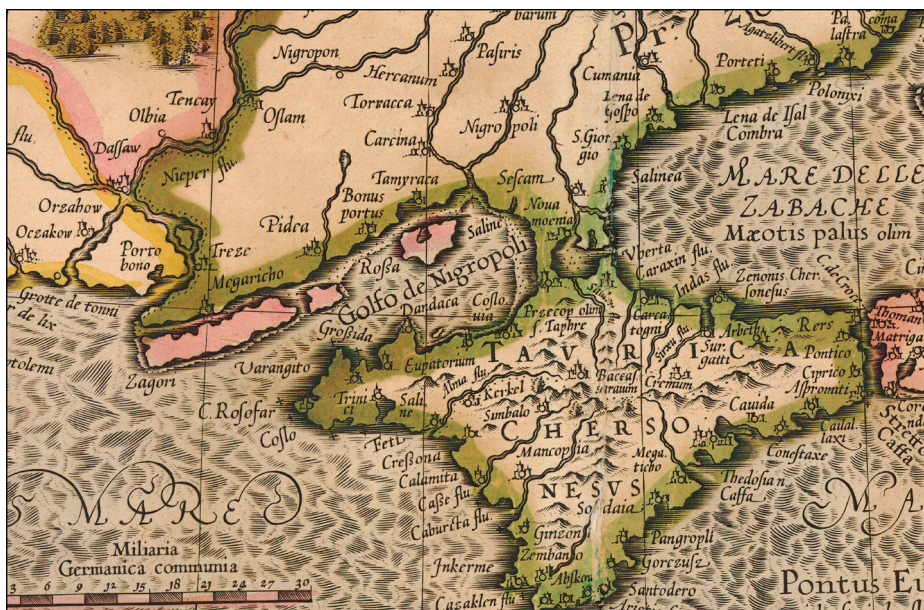


Fig. 5. Part of the map of *Taurica Chersonesus* by G. Mercator (1595)

The map of *Taurica Chersonesus* by G. Mercator was later included in numerous editions of the atlas *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* (or *Novus Atlas*) by a Dutch cartographer Willem Janszoon Blaeu (1571–1638) and his heirs, the first edition of which was published between 1634–1635. A characteristic of the map *Taurica Chersonesus*, *Noftra ætate Przecopsa, et Gazara dicitur* by W.J. Blaeu was the use of two slightly different border marks (fig. 6). The border of the Khanate of the Crimea – the main object of the map – was marked with a dashed line consisting of slightly thicker and longer strokes than other state and administrative borders²⁰.

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On the maps of Poland by W. Grodecki and A. Pograbka in the presentation by A. Ortelis and on the maps of Lithuania and *Taurica Chersonesus* by G. Mercator (with their numerous later changes), published from the second half of the 16th century to the first half of the 17th century, the course of state and administration borders in Ukrainian lands, which at that time belonged to different countries, was presented

for the first time. The analysis of these small-scale maps, on which information about the political and administrative division of territories is provided, demonstrated that this element of map content was not properly considered. It is obvious that due to the lack of necessary information about the states and the administrative structure of their territories at that time, the maps contained numerous inaccuracies both in the course of borders and in the names of political and administrative units. In general, contemporary cartographers were very casual providing such information. With subsequent editions of the maps, no updates of political and administrative divisions were made; they could be published for decades in such a manner. Map authors often borrowed unverified information about such divisions, which led to the duplication of numerous errors.

It should also be noted that the maps discussed were drawn up mainly after the Union of Lublin (1569), when a significant part of Ukrainian lands was passed from the Grand Duchy of Lithuania to the Kingdom of Poland, but these changes were not correctly reflected on the maps. The first maps with the presentation of state and administrative borders show examples of tendentious presentation of the

²⁰ Ibidem, pp. 174–177.



Fig. 6. Part of the map of *Taurica Chersonesus* by W.J. Blaeu (1641)

political and administrative structure of these areas.

Although the maps at that time mainly included individual states or their regions, the real image of state and administrative borders did not constitute a priority in their development. The same symbol was used to mark them. Due to

the small scale of the maps, the lack of appropriate source cartographic materials, the technical level of making and publishing maps at that time, the presented political and administrative divisions were quite schematic. Therefore, such maps cannot be used as full-value source materials when compiling historical maps.

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