

**UNIQUE MAP OF THE NORTH-WESTERN BLACK SEA REGION BY
GIOVANNI ANTONIO BARTOLOMEO RIZZI ZANNONI**

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***Abstract.** The article is devoted to a unique map from the atlas of Poland, published in 1772, by D.A.B. Rizzi Zannoni. The map contains detailed information on the historical geography of the Northern and North-Western Black Sea regions, including Moldavia, and is an invaluable scientific source. Rizzi-Zannoni map, compiled in the middle of the 18th century and based on earlier cartographic materials, is currently the oldest discovered topographic map of the region, reflecting the geographical picture of the 16th–17th centuries.*

Key words: map, Rizzi Zannoni, cartography, historical geography, Black Sea region

Introduction

Ancient geographic maps are invaluable sources on history, geography, and toponymy that require particular attention and complex study of information [7; 8; 4, p. 97]. Extreme interest in the Black Sea region and its mapping was connected with numerous Austrian-Polish-Russian-Turkish wars in the 16th–18th centuries, when the main theatre of military operations was the territory of the North-Western Black Sea region. According to rough estimates of the authors, from the 15th to mid-19th centuries about a thousand maps of the region were published [4]. Cartographic activity became very popular in European countries in the 15th–16th centuries due to the invention of the printing press and the intensive development of printing. A large number of maps were used to illustrate newly published travelers' stories and country descriptions. Therefore, most of the maps published during this period were mainly overview maps. A new epoch in the study of the Black Sea region and European cartography as a whole began in the 17th century, following the intensive development of the fortification science [5]. In the second half of the 18th century there is a transition to the next stage of cartography development – classical topographic studies.

In the mid-18th century in Central, Western and Southern Europe, extensive mapping activities were carried out by the outstanding Italian scientist Giovanni Antonio Bartolomeo Rizzi Zannoni (1736–1814), known for his impressive maps and atlases. In 1749–1751, he was the most prominent Italian scholar in the field of maps and atlases. Rizzi Zannoni was a student of Professor of Astronomy Giovanni Poleni at the University of Padua. After his trip to Italy, Rizzi Zannoni visited Turkey and Russia. In 1753 he was invited by the Polish King August III, at whose court Rizzi Zannoni began his career as a cartographer. In 1756 he moved to Sweden and Denmark, where in the same year he was commissioned to carry out geodesic measurements of Danish possessions – Oldenburg and Delmenhorst counties (now Germany). In 1757, he went to Germany, then to Prussia. During the Battle of Rochbach (5 December 1757) he was captured by the French and sent to Paris, where he lived and worked for more than twenty years. It was there that Rizzi Zannoni met Ferdinando Galiani, secretary of the Embassy of the Kingdom of Naples. As a result, he created a map of the Kingdom of Naples based on the best sources of the time and was then employed as a hydrographer engineer in Paris, where he worked from 1772–1774. Rizzi Zannoni then returned to Italy – Venice, Padua. Here he continued his active work, the

main result of which was the publication of the famous incredibly detailed "Geographic Atlas of the Kingdom of Naples" on 32 large sheets (completed in 1812).

During Rizzi Zannoni's lifetime, several of his books, atlases and maps were published, among them: "Kurze Vorstellung der gegenwärtigen Kriegs-Begebenheiten in Deutschland" (1758); "Atlas historique de la France ancienne et moderne contenant tous les lieux illustrés par les événemens les plus mémorables de notre histoire..." (1766); "Carte de la partie septentrionale de l'Empire Otoman" (1774); "Atlas géographique contenant la mappemonde et les quatre parties: avec les différents Etats d'Europe" (1782, here Moldavia is indicated between the Dniester and the Bug), and others. In European scientific circles, Rizzi Zannoni's contribution is already appreciated by his contemporaries: A.F. Bushing mentions some of his maps in his book [2]. The first detailed information about his life and activities belonged to Aldo Blesisch in his publication in the late 19th century [1, 3].

Methods, discussion and results

Among the multi-paged overview topographic maps created by his team, which show a large part of the North-Western Black Sea region, the most interesting is the "Map of Poland Divided into Provinces and Voivodships..." [10]. The scale of the map is about 1:629,000, it was published in Paris on 24 sheets and was specially prepared and presented to Prince J.A. Yablonowski in London on 25 January 1772. Although the main content of the map (essentially a colossal atlas) is an image of Poland in its borders of those times, the adjacent lands are shown in no less detail, including areas of the Black Sea region to the north of the 47° north latitude parallel.

The territory of the Black Sea region is depicted on 6 of the 24 sheets of the Atlas [5]. The greatest interest with respect to the Moldavian part of the North-Western Black Sea region is sheet No. 23 – "Map of the borders of Poland from the end of the *Karpak* in *Transylvania* to the territory of the *Tatars-Bessarabs* containing *Moldavia North*, the *Tatars-Lipcov Desert* and the *Dniester River* flow from *Cochim* to *Bender*" [12] (Fig.1a) and No. 24 – "Map of the Polish Borders from *Balta* to the *Sina Woda River*; containing the territory of *Kozaks of Human* and *Zapor*; the *Tatars Desert of Ochakowa*, *Bessarabia* and *Nogaya* with their *Hordes* as they were located at the end of 1767, by order of the *Khan of Crimea*. We also find the continuation of *Bog* and the *Dniester*, with the flow of *Borisfen* from the *Rifts* to its mouth in the *Black Sea*" [11] (Fig.1b).



Fig. 1 a, b. Map of Poland sheets No 23, 24 [12, 11].

In the preface to the 1772 edition, D.A.B. Rizzi Zannoni expressly acknowledged that the work presented to J.A. Yablonovsky was the result of twenty-year-long of work. Indeed, in 1753–1756, at the court of the Saxon prince-elector and the Polish king Augustus III, he began his career as a cartographer when he had the opportunity to carry out topographic research in the Polish lands on his own and to considerably enrich his own cartographic collection with the materials of his predecessors.

The Rizzi-Zannoni map areas directly on the Black Sea could not have been the result of independent shootings. They were undoubtedly based on cartographic materials from the

Ottoman Empire, apparently obtained during his voyage to Turkey in the early 1750s. Of course, the materials accumulated by the cartographer from the mid-18th century were revised, generalized and supplemented. In a number of places where military operations took place in the 1750s and 1770s and new fortifications were built, updates and additions are accentuated and directly noted by the author.



Fig. 3. Fragment of the "Carte des Frontieres de Pologne..." map [12]

At the same time, the cartographic basis of this work is based on a much older geographical picture, which is understandable since the enormous amount of information on the map itself could not have been collected by an individual researcher on its own, let alone such a short period of time of his trip to Turkey in 1751. And even then, a young Italian cartographer would probably have been able to get not the latest and most accurate and therefore top secret materials, but most likely the old ones not important to the Ottomans any more by the mid-18th century. That is why Rizzi Zannoni's map looks so archaic, much more reminiscent of topographical plans and Beauplan's maps from the first third of the 17th century.

In addition to the explanations given, there is also a number of other direct and indirect evidence that it was compiled from highly outdated sources. Along with Turkish duplication of toponyms (Arabic script), archaic stylistics and cartographic techniques, another proof of its ancientness is the "Map of Moldavia" [14]⁸ by the French royal geographer Rouge, created in 1769–1770 (published in Paris in 1770) based on maps by Cantemir and Rizzi Zannoni; the annotation contains direct references to these sources. Judging by the content of the Rouge Map, this is an earlier publication similar to that of Rizzi Zannoni, but not yet known to researchers.

Conclusions and recommendations

Compiled in the middle of the 18th century on the basis of earlier cartographic materials, it is now *the oldest discovered topographic map of the North-Western Black Sea Region*, mainly reflecting the *geographical picture* of no later than *the first half of the 16th – second half of the 17th centuries* [4; 5; 6]. The D.A.B. Rizzi-Gannoni map contains detailed information on the

⁸ Carte de la Moldavie dressée sur celle du prince Cantimir dans la quelle j'ai puise simplement pour la partie meridionale, la septentr.^{le} est reduitee d'après la frontiere du Royaume de Pologne, de M.^r Zannoni,.. le Rouge geographe du roy, a Paris. Aout 1770.

historical geography of the Northern and North-Western Black Sea region, including Moldavia, and presents an invaluable scientific source.

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