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The “Polski Przegląd Kartograficzny” on the centenary of its first issue – an analysis of content (1923–2022)

Abstract. In 2023, one hundred years had passed since the publication of the first issue of *Polski Przegląd Kartograficzny* (PPK) – the only Polish scientific journal devoted exclusively to cartography. This anniversary provided an opportunity to conduct an analytical and historical review of the journal's achievements. The article aims to present a quantitative and qualitative analysis of PPK's content over a century. The study examines changes in the number of publications of various types (articles, reviews, reports, etc.) as well as the evolution of the thematic scope of the articles.

The methodology involves a content analysis of the journal divided into seven publishing periods, using statistical data on the number of publications, the structure of sections, and subject matter. Editorial, structural, and functional changes are also considered, including the transition to an open-access model, the introduction of an English-language edition, and the launch of new publication series.

The results indicate a gradual adaptation of PPK to the changing academic and technological environment. In the interwar period, the journal focused mainly on reviews and bibliographies of Polish cartographic publications, whereas after 1969 scientific articles presenting the national cartographic output began to predominate. Since 2015, PPK has been published as the *Polish Cartographical Review* in English, accompanied by a supplement in Polish and a thematic library.

The collected data make it possible to capture the fundamental changes in the nature and role of the journal, as well as its significance as a forum for the exchange of scientific ideas and for documenting the development of cartography in Poland. The article presents PPK as an example of the transformation of a local periodical into a journal that has secured its place in the international academic circulation.

Keywords: *Polski Przegląd Kartograficzny*, *Polish Cartographical Review*, cartographic journals, history of cartography, geoinformation

1. Introduction

Polski Przegląd Kartograficzny (PPK) is the first Polish scientific journal devoted to cartography, founded in Lviv in 1923¹ on the initiative of Professor Eugeniusz Romer. The first series of the journal was issued quarterly until 1934 and served as the organ of the Cartographical Institute operating within the “Książnica-

-Atlas” publishing house. After a break of more than thirty years, caused inter alia by the Second World War and systemic changes, the periodical was revived in 1969 at the initiative of the Cartographic Section of the Polish Geographical Society, in cooperation with the PPWK – State Cartographic Publishing House (in Polish: Państwowe Przedsiębiorstwo Wydawnictw Kartograficznych, PPWK). Professor Franciszek Uhorczak was then appointed editor-in-chief, continuing the pre-war editorial concept and content structure of the journal.

¹ The article is published on the tenth anniversary of the English edition of the journal (2015–2025).

From the time of its reactivation, PPK was published continuously over the following decades, undergoing gradual modernisation in response to changing institutional and communicative conditions. Particularly significant transformations took place in the 21st century, when the internationalisation of science and new publication models prompted similar changes in the sphere of cartographic periodicals. Following several years of discussion about the future of the journal, from 2015 it began to operate in electronic form under the revised title *Polish Cartographical Review* (PCR), published in English on the De Gruyter platform in an open-access model. In parallel, since 2016, the printed biannual *Polish Cartographical Review, Supplement in Polish* (PCR Supl.) has also been issued. The Supplement retains the journal's traditional profile, with most articles translated from the English-language PCR and a dedicated section for chronicles, reports, and documentary materials.

The centenary of the journal provided the impetus for a comprehensive analysis of its content, taking into account structural, thematic, and functional changes. As the only specialist scientific periodical in the field of cartography in Poland, *Polski Przegląd Kartograficzny* constitutes a key source of knowledge on the evolution of the discipline and a record of the institutional and intellectual development of Polish cartography. It should be noted that analyses of the magazine's content in different periods have already been published. The pre-war years were analysed by Winid (1971), while the first ten and forty years of the post-war PPK have been studied by Ostrowski (1979, 2009). In the meantime, on the occasion of the journal's thirtieth anniversary, a synthetic quantitative analysis of its post-war content was published, which forms an important context for the present study (Zielonka & Sirko, 1999). A complete compilation of cartographic literature, both Polish and foreign, was later published in two volumes of the *Bibliotheca of Polish Cartographical Review* (*Biblioteka Polskiego Przeglądu Kartograficznego*), devoted respectively to national (Kozieł, 2021b) and international (Kozieł & Kozieł, 2023) works from 1968–2020 and 1968–2018. These studies were based on bibliographic listings prepared by Ostrowski (1988, 1998, 2004b, 2008). They were further enriched with reflections on the

role of bibliographies as a source of knowledge about the cartographic community (Konopska, 2021) and with an editorial perspective that provided interpretative framing for the entire compilation (Kozieł, 2021a). For a historical overview of Poland's four decades of activity within the International Cartographic Association that contextualises PPK's reporting, see Ostrowski (2004a).

2. Materials and methods

The analysis encompassed all annual volumes of *Polski Przegląd Kartograficzny* (PPK) from 1923 to 2022, amounting in total to 66 volumes and 228 issues of the journal. Data on the contents of individual issues were drawn primarily from retrospective bibliographies published in PPK, compiled by Ostrowski (1988; 1998; 2004b; 2008; 2022): volume 36 (1923–1934), volume 20 (1969–1988), volume 30 (1989–1998), volume 40 (1999–2008) and the special issue of volume 7 (2009–2020). The contents of the most recent volumes of the *Polish Cartographical Review. Supplement* (2021–2022) was compiled analogously, following the arrangement adopted in the earlier bibliographies, which included the structure of thematic sections as well as the order and method of classifying particular publication types (Ostrowski, 1988, 1998, 2004b, 2008, 2022).

Given the distinct stages in the journal's history, the entire hundred-year period was divided into seven time intervals: five decades (1923–1934, 1969–1978, 1979–1988, 1989–1998, 1999–2008) and two seven-year periods (2009–2015, 2016–2022), the latter division reflecting the change in the publishing formula introduced in 2015.

The study is analytical and historical and is based on the method of content analysis combined with elements of bibliometric analysis. For each of the distinguished periods, an editorial and organisational analysis was conducted (including publication frequency, changes in section structure, language of publication, and publisher), along with quantitative analysis (number of publications of a given type) and qualitative analysis (themes of the leading publications).

The results are presented in descriptive form, supported by numerical data compiled in tables and charts. Additional information on

issue structure was also included – for example, instances of issues covering several numbers within a single volume. Between 1923 and 1934, a total of 34 issues were published, many of which comprised two numbers (1924: nos. 7–8; 1926: nos. 13–14, 15–16; 1928: nos. 23–24; 1930: nos. 29–30; 1931: nos. 33–34; 1932: nos. 38–39), three numbers (1929: nos. 26–28), or even four (1925: nos. 9–12). In the post-war period, the quarterly was issued with much greater regularity. Until 2015, when PPK retained its quarterly format, only seven of the 47 volumes contained double issues (1981, 1989, 2015: nos. 3–4; 1987, 1990, 1991, 1992: nos. 1–2). Since 2016, *PCR Supplement* has been issued biannually; in two volumes, double issues were published (2019 and 2021). In addition, a special issue was published in 2022.

To highlight trends in the journal's content, simple comparative indicators were employed, such as the average number of publications per annual volume, the percentage share of selected thematic categories, and the number of articles within individual thematic sections.

3. Content of PPK – evolution of publication types and thematic scope

An analysis of the number of publications in *Polski Przegląd Kartograficzny* (PPK) reveals significant quantitative and structural changes within the journal's sections over the past century. Due to the heterogeneous nature of the content, the data are presented separately, avoiding direct comparisons between sections.

In the early decades (both in the interwar period and the first thirty years after the 1969 relaunch), the number of publications remained relatively stable at an average of 80–90 items per year. The exception was the period from 1999 to 2008, which saw a record average of 122 publications per year. This increase may be linked to systemic transformation, intensified international collaboration, and the development of national cartographic research. In subsequent years, the total number of publications gradually declined, particularly after 2016, when PPK was transformed into a biannual.

Of all sections, *Reports* were the most numerous, accounting for 33% of the total publications, and as much as 52% in the years 2016–2022. This section served as a chronicle of

the cartographic community, documenting national and international events. A marked increase in activity was also recorded in 1999–2008, followed by a decrease in line with the general downward trend in publication numbers.

Reviews ranked second (25% of all publications). However, more than half of them originated in the pre-war period, indicating a shift in editorial functions and priorities in the post-war and contemporary periods.

A particularly important, though numerically less represented, section is *Articles and Notes*. Their number increased from the 1980s onwards, reaching a stable level of 5–6 texts per issue, compared to around 3 in earlier periods. The increase reflects the growing role of original, research-based content in the structure of the journal.

Sections such as retrospective bibliographies, announcements, and commemorative publications display high numerical variability, depending on external circumstances and professional events.

These figures indicate that the dynamics of PPK's publication numbers reflected both institutional changes and broader transformations in the functioning of cartographic scholarship in Poland, adapting the journal's structure to the changing needs of its readership and publishing conditions.

3.1. Papers and notes – dynamics of volume and thematic scope

The *Papers and Notes* section forms the core of each PPK issue, gathering peer-reviewed scientific contributions. Between 1923 and 2022, a total of 1,135 articles and short notes were published.

Over the hundred years of *Polski Przegląd Kartograficzny*, the subject matter of published articles underwent a significant transformation, reflecting broader shifts in the methodology, technology, and functions of cartography. Chronological and thematic analysis make it possible to distinguish several key stages in this evolution.

In the interwar period (1923–1934), articles on foreign cartography predominated (44 texts), followed by those on Polish cartography (11), consistent with the journal's mission as a tool for documenting and evaluating the development of cartography. Historical cartography,

geographical names, and cartometry also occupied a significant place, corresponding to the need to define and consolidate a new scientific discipline. The journal's orientation was strongly normative and evaluative, concerned with cartographic culture and editorial standards for maps.

After the relaunch in 1969 and throughout the post-war period (1969–1988), there was a noticeable intensification of work on cartographic theory (31 articles), cartographic literature (26), and methods of presentation (22). There was growing interest in thematic cartography (24) and atlas cartography (14), indicating the expansion of the cognitive and educational functions of maps. The first articles on remote sensing (15) and geographic information systems (GIS, 9) appeared, heralding the digital era. Articles on school cartography (13) were also significant, reflecting increasing demand for the didactic application of maps.

In 1989–2008, the range of topics became more diversified. The number of publications on the history of cartography grew (a total of 86 in two decades), while thematic and atlas cartography remained important. The number of articles on computer cartography also rose (28). Interest in map perception and use increased (11), suggesting a shift towards research on cartographic communication and user–map interaction. Geographical names (23) also gained prominence as elements of spatial identity.

Since 2009, particularly after the journal's transformation into a biannual in 2016, fewer articles have been published. The subject matter has become more specialised, with a consistently high proportion devoted to the history of cartography (62), and increasing attention to map perception and use, cartographic research methods (21), presentation methods (20), and thematic cartography (17). Modern technologies such as remote sensing and GIS have shown reduced dynamism, not through marginalisation, but due to their institutionalisation and ubiquity in research practice (Table 1).

The early 21st century also saw the emergence of new themes: internet cartography (15), mobile cartography (8), animated maps, and maps used in computer games (6). This trend indicates progressive digitalisation and the transformation of maps from static documents into interactive, dynamic tools integrated with augmented reality.

3.2. Reviews – an overview of the reviewed cartographic output

From its inception, the *Reviews* section has played an important role in documenting new cartographic publications – maps, atlases, and literature in the field of cartography. Between 1923 and 2022, a total of 1,464 reviews were published, making it the most significant section in the history of the journal. Changes in the number of reviews over time were analysed alongside the types of works reviewed, which were grouped into three main categories: atlases, maps, and cartographic literature (books, bibliographies, etc.).

The most striking finding is the sheer number of reviews in the pre-war period – 757 between 1923 and 1934, representing 52% of all reviews published over the century. In the inter-war years, PPK thus served as the main forum for discussing new maps and atlases, in line with the needs of the young state and its community of geographers and cartographers (documenting available cartographic materials). After the journal was relaunched in 1969, the number of reviews stabilised – in the decades 1969–1998, between 130 and 142 reviews were published per decade. In subsequent years, a marked downward trend emerged: in 2009–2022 only 30 reviews were published (around 2% of the total). This decline can be explained by changes in the publishing market and modes of scholarly communication – fewer traditional publications were reviewed in the journal, as reviews of monographs and maps increasingly moved to other channels (e.g. online reviews, specialist portals) or were reduced due to space limitations in the new PCR format.

In terms of the structure of reviewed works, maps formed the largest group, 768 reviews, accounting for 53% of the total. Of these, as many as 555 reviews date from 1923–1934 (72% of all map reviews). Most frequently reviewed were topographic and overview maps (42% of reviewed maps) and thematic maps (36%), reflecting the strong interest in developing topographic cartography in the Second Polish Republic and in producing thematic maps.

The second largest group comprised atlases – 386 reviews in total (26% of all reviews). The greatest attention was devoted to school atlases (28% of atlas reviews), thematic atlases (22%),

Table 1. Number of articles by main thematic categories in the seven analysed periods

Thematic category		1923– 1934	1969– 1978	1979– 1988	1989– 1998	1999– 2008	2009– 2015	2016– 2022	Total
1	History of cartography	11	16	43	44	42	38	24	218
2	Cartographic collections	3	2	10	7	6	6	–	34
3	Cartographic literature	–	2	24	–	12	3	–	41
4	Theoretical foundations of cartography	–	16	15	8	13	2	2	56
5	Mathematical cartography	5	3	3	1	1	1	2	16
6	Cartographic methods of presentation	4	11	11	13	19	15	5	78
7	Map design, generalisation	–	11	9	2	10	4	2	38
8	Geographical names (on maps)	11	4	5	6	17	9	4	56
9	General cartography	–	3	6	5	4	5	–	23
10	Thematic cartography	7	16	8	12	14	9	8	74
11	Planetary and lunar cartography	–	2	1	–	–	2	–	5
12	Atlas cartography	5	3	11	15	18	8	4	64
13	School cartography, tactile cartography	–	1	12	5	2	6	2	28
14	Tourist cartography	–	1	13	9	–	–	–	23
15	Remote sensing in cartography	–	4	11	3	4	–	–	22
16	Computer cartography, GIS	–	7	2	18	10	7	–	44
17	Cartographic reproduction	1	1	1	–	–	–	–	3
18	Cartometry, morphometry	10	–	–	–	–	–	–	10
19	Map perception and use, cartographic research methods	–	3	5	6	5	13	8	40
20	Mobile cartography	–	–	–	–	4	2	2	8
21	Internet cartography	–	–	–	–	8	6	1	15
22	Animated maps, maps in computer games	–	–	–	–	3	1	2	6
23	Cartography education and the cartographic profession	–	2	4	1	5	5	–	17
24	Cartography in Poland	11	8	9	15	24	–	–	67
25	Cartography abroad	44	7	11	11	4	–	1	78
26	Activities of international organisations	–	1	7	4	6	10	1	29
27	Other issues	1	2	5	12	14	6	2	42
Total		113	126	226	197	245	158	70	1135

and national/regional atlases (20%). Notably, most of the reviewed atlases were foreign publications, which demonstrates the interest of Polish cartographers in the achievements of other countries. The most dynamic period for atlas reviews was 1969–1998, when numerous new atlas works were published in Poland and worldwide; however, in the 2000s, the number of reviews of such works began to decline.

The third category was cartographic literature, including reviews of books, bibliographies, textbooks, and other texts. A total of 310 reviews were published in this category, representing 21% of the section. This category was relatively stable over time – reviews of cartographic books appeared in every period, without the extreme fluctuations seen in the maps or atlases categories. There was a slight predominance (55%) of reviews of Polish publications over foreign ones. Most frequently reviewed were academic textbooks and teaching materials (16% of literature reviews), works on the history of cartography (20%), and bibliographies, guides, and catalogues (25%). Historical publications in this category more often concerned Polish cartographic heritage, reflecting a sustained interest in documenting the national scholarly tradition.

In sum, the changing dynamics and structure of the *Reviews* section in *Polski Przegląd Kartograficzny* reflect broader transformations in publishing culture, the evolving functions of the journal, and the changing modes of information circulation in the geographical sciences.

3.3. Publishing news – information on new maps and books

For many years, the *Publishing News* section was an integral part of *Polski Przegląd Kartograficzny*, documenting current developments in the cartographic publishing market. Over the life of the journal, a total of 987 notices were published announcing new maps, atlases, and books in the field of cartography. Analysing the section's activity makes it possible not only to capture the dynamics of cartographic publishing but also to trace shifts in the channels for disseminating scholarly information.

The highest intensity of activity was recorded in 1999–2008, with 233 entries, accounting for 24% of all notices. This high number re-

flected the dynamic development of cartographic sciences and the richness of publishing in this period – numerous new atlases, textbooks, and thematic maps appeared, both domestic and foreign. Similarly, the previous forty-year post-war period (1969–1998) showed high activity: 568 entries (58% of the total). By contrast, recent years saw a marked decline: only 25 entries were recorded in 2016–2022 (3%), and 65 entries (7%) in the interwar period. The post-2015 decline should be interpreted in the context of technological and media changes – traditional print notices were replaced mainly by information published online, on publishers' websites or professional forums. In the *Polish Cartographical Review. Supplement*, the section was discontinued or reduced to minimal forms.

In terms of content, the structure of the notices was relatively balanced: 52% concerned new maps and atlases, while 48% concerned books, bibliographies, and other literature. The dominant source of information on new map publications was the PPWK – State Cartographic Publishing House, which accounted for 40% of all entries, understandable given PPWK's co-publishing role in PPK. Other notices concerned domestic publications (38%) and foreign ones (22%), most of the latter dating from 1969–1998. In the cartographic literature category (476 entries), Polish publications dominated (60%), with peak activity in the early 2000s – 117 items (25%).

In 2011, the format of the section changed, and in subsequent years it gradually lost significance. Some notices began to be published electronically or as appendices to other sections. The lack of this type of documentation in recent editions of the *Polish Cartographical Review* and its *Supplement* signifies the end of a chronicling tradition that was typical of journals from earlier decades of the 20th century. This shift demonstrates the transformation in how information is shared, driven by digitalisation and the internationalisation of scholarly communication.

3.4. Reports – chronicle of cartographic events

The *Reports* section, introduced to *Polski Przegląd Kartograficzny* following its relaunch

in 1969, has played a key role in documenting current developments within the cartographic community. Its purpose was to provide information on conferences, congresses, meetings, as well as on the activities of national and international institutions and organisations. In contrast to the interwar series (1923–1934), in which such documentation was absent, from 1969 onwards, this section became one of the cornerstones of the journal. By 2022, a total of 1,937 reports had been published, making it the most extensive section in the history of PPK.

The evolution of report numbers reflects both fluctuations in the activity of the cartographic community and changes in the role of scholarly periodicals in the context of rapidly developing electronic media. In the first decade after the relaunch (1969–1978), 326 reports were published. In the following decades, the figures remained at a similar level (307 in 1979–1988; 320 in 1989–1998). The period 1999–2008 saw a sharp increase to 467 publications (24% of the total), reflecting the intensification of national activity and a rise in participation in international scholarly events. Since 2009, there has been a steady decline: 340 reports in 2009–2015 and only 177 in 2016–2022. This decrease is linked to the changing modes of scholarly communication, with information on events increasingly disseminated via the internet, institutional reports, or social media. Nevertheless, reports remain a significant element of the *Polish Cartographical Review. Supplement*, where they currently account for more than half of each issue's content.

The thematic structure of the section reveals three main groups of publications: (1) national affairs, (2) international cooperation, and (3) foreign affairs. The largest category comprises national reports – 1,296 items (67%). These are dominated by accounts of the activities of Polish cartographic institutions and organisations, including the Cartographic Commission of the Polish Geographical Society (18%) and academic centres, together with the Polish Academy of Sciences (a combined 19%). An important subcategory consists of biographical reports – jubilees and obituaries of distinguished cartographers – making up around 15% of national reports, which reflects the journal's established chronicling tradition and integrative role.

International cooperation is the second most important component, with 545 publications (28%). A substantial proportion of this group covers the activities of the International Cartographic Association (ICA), with regular reports on its congresses and initiatives (over 33% of this category). Reports also frequently concerned UN conferences (including UNGGIM – 14%) and the activities of Polish delegations and experts in the international arena (13%). This category confirms the active participation of the Polish cartographic community in global scholarly life.

The third, smallest category consists of reports on foreign events not directly connected with Poland – 96 publications (less than 5%). These are mainly accounts of events held abroad (59%) and biographical notes on foreign cartographers (41%). The small size of this category confirms the national profile of the periodical and its focus on domestic activities and Polish international initiatives, while leaving the documentation of world cartography to foreign journals.

Thus, the *Reports* section has served not only a documentary role but also an integrative one, building the institutional and personal memory of the Polish cartographic community. Its significance, although affected by the shift towards digital communication, remains important in the context of the history of science and the evolving functions of professional journals.

3.5. Other sections: *Bibliographies, Announcements, Commemorative Publications*

In addition to the dominant article-based and reporting sections, *Polski Przegląd Kartograficzny* also contained smaller documentary and informational sections, serving as supplements to the core content of the journal. The most important of these were bibliographies, announcements, and commemorative publications. In total, 355 items were published across these three sections, representing about 6% of all publications. Despite their relatively small quantitative share, these materials played a significant role in documenting the achievements of cartography and in supporting communication within the scholarly community.

The bibliography section (138 items) primarily included retrospective and special listings,

with a clear dominance of personal bibliographies (around 70% of the total). Such publications documented the achievements of individual scholars and institutions, providing an important source of information on the history of cartography in Poland. In 1996, an annual list of master's, doctoral, and habilitation theses in cartography was introduced, serving to integrate the community and to monitor the development of early-career researchers. The section also occasionally included thematic bibliographies, such as compilations of PPK's contents or the output of the PPWK – State Cartographic Publishing House. Although few, these works constituted valuable documentary material.

The announcements section, comprising 154 publications, functioned as a current bulletin for the community. About 70% of notices concerned national events, such as conference announcements, commission meetings, and organisational changes, while 30% related to international matters – for instance, activities of the International Cartographic Association (ICA) or institutions operating under the auspices of the UN. With the expansion of electronic communication, the role of this section gradually diminished, and websites and social media essentially took over its functions.

Commemorative publications (65 items) were the most diverse. They included prefaces, editorial letters, jubilee speeches, announcements of personnel changes, obituaries of cartographers, and, from 1999, texts published in the *Debates and Discussions* column. In earlier decades (particularly in the interwar period), editorials and official letters were common, whereas in the 21st century, the dominant forms were reflective and community-focused pieces. Despite their limited number, this section played an important role in documenting editorial life and preserving the institutional memory of the journal.

4. Development stages of *Polski Przegląd Kartograficzny* (1923–2022) in the light of changes in the journal's structure and content

Based on an analysis of the content of *Polski Przegląd Kartograficzny* (PPK), its editorial structure, and publishing rhythm, it has been possible to distinguish seven characteristic phases in the journal's development. Key pa-

Table 2. Basic bibliometric data for the journal by editorial period

Period	Annual vols.	Issues	Avg. issues per year
1923–1934	12	34	2.8
1969–1978	10	40	4.0
1979–1988	10	38	3.8
1989–1998	10	36	3.6
1999–2008	10	40	4.0
2009–2015	7	27	3.9
2016–2022	7	13	1.9
Total	66	228	3.5

rameters for each period are presented in Table 2. This division reflects significant functional, institutional, and formal changes in editorial activity and corresponds with broader transformations in the Polish and international academic environment. An alternative, historically oriented account of the chronological history of the journal is provided in the centenary article by Konopska and Słomska-Przech (2023), published in *Historical and Geographical Studies in Ukraine*. The present analysis, therefore, emphasises functional and editorial transformations that responded to changing conditions in the cartographic community and scholarly communication.

1923–1934 – the first Lviv series

In 1923–1934, 12 volumes appeared in 34 issues, published irregularly as a quarterly (with frequent combined issues, e.g. double and triple numbers). The journal served as the organ of Romer's Cartographical Institute, presenting works on both Polish and international cartography. In the early phase, the *Reviews* section was dominant – during these years, as many as 757 cartographic works were reviewed, more than half of all reviews published over the century. The overall structure was stable, with distinct sections: *Articles and Notes*, *Reviews*, and *Publishing News*, but the emphasis was on short, critical formats. The first series ended in 1934. Possible reasons for its discontinuation include financial constraints and impending geopolitical changes (Konopska & Słomska-Przech, 2023). This stage defined

the journal's profile as a specialist documentary and critical forum.

1969–1978 – post-war relaunch

After a 35-year break, PPK was revived in 1969 at the initiative of the Polish Geographical Society, in cooperation with the PPWK – State Cartographic Publishing House. In 1969–1978, it was published regularly as a quarterly, 10 annual volumes (40 issues, averaging 4 per year). Professor Franciszek Uhorczak, editor-in-chief, continued the pre-war editorial model. The traditional structure was retained, but a new *Reports* section was added, absent in the interwar series. The structure was balanced – full scientific articles appeared alongside *Reviews*, *Publishing News*, and *Reports*. The publishing house operated within the conditions of the People's Republic of Poland, supported by the state cartographic publisher. This phase was marked by the consolidation of the editorial formula, regularity of publication, and the activity of the first post-war generation of authors and editors, shaping the post-war cartographic environment in Poland.

1979–1988 – thematic expansion and early signs of internationalisation

Maintaining quarterly frequency (10 volumes, 38 issues – with several combined numbers), the editorial team consolidated the journal's format while broadening the range of authors and topics. The 1980s brought further development of the theoretical foundations of cartography and the first indications of the coming technological revolution, with articles on remote sensing and GIS appearing towards the end of the decade. Despite the constraints of late-period socialism, PPK maintained a high substantive standard. International links were also emphasised – the *Reports* section began to feature accounts of international cooperation (e.g. ICA congress reports), signalling the increasing integration of Polish cartography with the global community.

1989–1998 – post-1989 transformation

The political transformation in Poland created new opportunities for the journal. In 1989–1998,

PPK continued as a quarterly (10 volumes, 36 issues), with the annual number of publications rising to an average of around 89, sustaining the high level of editorial activity achieved in the previous decade. The changed political and scholarly context fostered expansion into thematic cartography, atlas cartography, geographic information systems, and standardisation issues. There was greater reference to international literature and more contributions from foreign authors. Editorial modernisation included the introduction of English-language abstracts and the expansion of *Publishing News* to cover both national and international works. Increased editorial activity reflected the growing professionalisation of cartography in Poland and its integration into the European and global research landscape.

1999–2008 – peak intensity and maximum structural expansion

The years 1999–2008 saw the highest publishing activity in PPK's history. Ten volumes (40 issues) were published as a quarterly, and the average number of publications per year rose to 122 – a record for the journal. This period was characterised by intensified scientific activity in cartography, a more substantial presence of PPK in both domestic and international scholarly circulation, and an expanded volume of published material. Both more full-length articles and the expansion of informational sections drove growth. The *Publishing News* section reached peak activity – 233 entries (24% of the century's total) – while *Reports* recorded a record 467 publications. This phase marked the apogee of the journal's development in its classic format before moving into the digital era.

2009–2015 – transition to the digital era (preparing for a new format)

Although the quarterly frequency was formally retained, there was a marked decline in the number of publications, especially in *Reviews* and *Publishing News*. During this time, the editorial team began transforming the journal's model, preparing for migration to a digital platform and a switch to English. The content structure began to shift. In *Reviews*, a sharp downward trend was visible. After 2008, the

number of reviewed works steadily decreased, linked to changes in the publishing market, including a reduced number of traditional book publications and the migration of reviews to online formats. A similar trend was seen in *Publishing News*, which after 2011, essentially lost its previous function. Some information on new publications began to be disseminated online, reducing the number of bibliographic notes published in PPK. This shift was a transitional phase – the journal still operated in a traditional format but was preparing for imminent change. Content structure was simplified, with themes focusing increasingly on the intersection of cartography and geoinformatics.

2016–2022 – digital transformation and new format: *Polish Cartographical Review*

From 2015, the principal form of the journal has been the English-language scientific periodical *Polish Cartographical Review*, published in open access by De Gruyter. This edition constitutes the main, evaluation-eligible version of the journal, in line with international standards of scholarly communication. In parallel, a national edition – the *Supplement in Polish* – has been issued in print twice a year. Both formats coexist in a hybrid model, catering to both global and local audiences.

The change in editorial format significantly affected content structure. Shorter textual forms dominate, including reports on conferences and community initiatives, which in 2016–2022 accounted for 52% of all publications. The average annual number of items published was around 49. In this period, seven volumes of the supplement appeared in 13 issues (two of them combined). The supplement included translations of selected texts from the English-language version and reports and informational content on events and activities within the Polish cartographic community. The *Publishing News* section was discontinued, and the number of reviews declined sharply, reflecting changes in scholarly knowledge dissemination and the migration of certain informational functions to digital environments.

The current formula of the journal meets contemporary requirements for internationalisation and transparency in scholarly communication. However, the editorial team faces a significant challenge – maintaining the con-

tinuity of the *Polski Przegląd Kartograficzny* tradition under the dominance of English-language academic discourse, while preserving its integrative role for the national research community.

5. Discussion

In the context of global transformations in scholarly communication – digitalisation, open access, and metric-based evaluation – *Polski Przegląd Kartograficzny* (PPK) is at a turning point. Its future role will depend on its ability to combine a local cartographic identity with the requirements of global visibility and scientific interoperability. In this sense, it could serve as a “bridge” between the tradition of Central European cartography and new paradigms of spatial representation in the era of big data and artificial intelligence.

The content analysis of PPK (*Polish Cartographical Review*) against the backdrop of contemporary cartographic directions reveals a tension between the pursuit of technological modernisation and the maintenance of scholarly tradition. While the official profile of the journal declares a broad thematic spectrum – from cartographic theory through GIS and remote sensing techniques to cultural and social aspects of mapping – the detailed analysis indicates that this profile is not always fully reflected in its published content.

Contemporary currents in cartography increasingly adopt epistemological and critical perspectives. Research addresses the map as an active component of the knowledge process, enabling the formulation, testing, and reinterpretation of spatial knowledge; as an actor in socio-technical networks (Kitchin et al., 2012; Latour, 2005); or as a means of cultural persuasion and meaning-making (Casti, 2005; Mattern, 2017). In contrast, PPK tends to prioritise functional and technical approaches, focusing mainly on applied solutions such as map design, remote sensing, or GIS use, with more limited attention to the map as an epistemic or ideological construct. This tendency may be seen as an example of “local translation of knowledge” (Latour, 2005), where the journal strengthens the national cartographic community, but in doing so limits its participation in the global theoretical discourse.

This situation also relates to the changing role of scholarly journals. In the age of digital

communication, open access, and the growth of preprint culture, journals are not only carriers of articles but also platforms for reviews, trend analyses, and reflections on the state of a discipline (Borgman, 2007). PPK only partially fulfils this function – meta-analyses and conceptual papers on the language of cartography, cognitive shifts, or critical methodologies are rare.

Analysis of cartographic paradigms shows that contemporary science is moving away from the map as a static representation towards the map as a performative communication tool, a social code, and an actant in knowledge processes (Azócar Fernandez & Buchroithner, 2014; Kitchin et al., 2012; Mattern, 2017). Such perspectives are still marginal in PPK, which reflects the journal's predominantly practical-applied profile and the tailoring of content to the needs and expectations of its mainly domestic audience. This limited representation of recent theoretical trends does not stem from an editorial policy of exclusion, but rather from the journal's role as a national knowledge-exchange platform, documenting Polish cartographic achievements and integrating the domestic academic community. Given its limited international reach and lower bibliometric indicators compared to leading world journals, its ability to attract authors working in cutting-edge theoretical fields is naturally constrained.

In this context, PPK's primary contribution lies in its documentary and integrative role within Poland, where application-oriented, didactic, and institutional needs dominate. The lack of complete alignment with global trends should therefore not be interpreted as a delay or deficiency, but as a consequence of its function, systemic limitations, and the specific characteristics of its authors, audience, and national publishing market. Furthermore, many scholars engaged in research on map theory, critical cartography, or GeoAI (Cheng et al., 2024; Kang et al., 2024), due to evaluation pressures and research assessment systems, choose to publish in high-impact, internationally indexed journals. Intense competition for space in such journals – often those on the Web of Science Journal Citation Reports "Philadelphia List", which forms the basis for journal scoring in Poland's science evaluation system – significantly limits the flow of such articles to PPK. As a result, the journal operates under structural

conditions that hinder full participation in the global circulation of theoretical ideas, regardless of editorial intent.

6. Conclusion

The centenary of *Polski Przegląd Kartograficzny* is not only an opportunity for a summary, but also for reflection on how deeply rooted journals can actively co-shape the future of cartography as both a science and a social practice.

Over the past hundred years, PPK has evolved from a national periodical into a modern digital journal, operating in open access and with a growing international reach. This transformation has encompassed both organisational structure, including the introduction of the English-language *Polish Cartographical Review*, and adaptation to contemporary publishing models.

The content analysis of PPK highlights a strong focus on practical topics like the history of cartography, GIS, remote sensing, and map design. However, there is also an exciting opportunity for greater exploration of theoretical and critical perspectives, which could enrich our understanding even more. While such contributions appear only occasionally, they represent a potential space for development. In an era in which maps not only represent the world but actively shape it, and the cartographer becomes a designer of algorithms and an architect of spatial knowledge, *Polski Przegląd Kartograficzny* can serve as a "bridge" – retaining its documentary mission while enriching it with conceptual and theoretical perspectives, open to multidimensional approaches to mapping.

The evolution of PPK reflects not only changes within the journal itself, but also broader transformations in scholarly communication, in the identity of the cartographic community, and the understanding of the map's role in science and society. From a periodical supporting the development of cartography in the Second Polish Republic (1918–1939), through a platform consolidating national achievements during the socialist era, to a contemporary journal open to new challenges, the *Polish Cartographical Review* remains a significant participant in the academic life of cartography.

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