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# Differences in the cartographic presentation of contemporary Polish western and northern territories in European cartography of the 20th and 21st centuries

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**Abstract:**

The political appeal of maps stems from their apparent neutrality and the presentation of complete knowledge, while in reality, they always distort reality and represent it selectively. Therefore, cartographic manipulations are often used as a means of creating narratives, especially in the context of disputed areas. To determine the extent and methods of distortions and manipulations applied to maps in the process of shaping the political narrative about the so-called Recovered Territories incorporated into Poland in 1945, an analysis of maps presenting them published in atlases was conducted.

The presentation will show the results of analyzing over 170 atlases from various countries: East Germany, West Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Czech Republic, Austria-Hungary, USSR, and Russia, from the early 20th century to the present. This analysis allowed for the identification of differences in the presentation of the studied territory on maps from different countries, as well as showing the evolution of these presentations even in the period preceding the border changes in 1945.

Thanks to the analysis of cartographic representations of the Polish Western and Northern Territories, it is possible to better understand how political, cultural, and social narratives and perspectives in the region have changed, and what themes were used for propaganda and shaping public opinion. The presentation will focus on the methods used by different countries in presenting these areas on maps, as well as the changing patterns and trends in this regard.