

Mgr IRENA GRUCHAŁA
Instytut Informacji Naukowej i Bibliotekoznawstwa

Subject: Helena Dąbczańska's (1863-1956) Lviv collection of books as a manifestation of the bibliophile culture of the period

SUMMARY

The subject of the current dissertation is the book collection gathered by famous Lviv collector Helena Dąbczańska, a major part of which is currently preserved in the Central Library of the Academy of Fine Arts in Cracow. Dąbczańska's library enjoyed excellent reputation among her contemporaries, but no in-depth research into the collection has been carried out to date. Neither do we know the details of the owner's biography despite her outstanding contribution to Polish culture and to Cracow's cultural history. The paper is based on the inventory of books from Dąbczańska's library and her *Diary*. In addition, the author drew upon the memoirs and articles left by people who knew her personally, and on a range of other publications. The gathered material was investigated using methods applied in bibliological research – the bibliographical method and the study provenances, as well as the biographical and quantitative methods. What has emerged from the research is a portrayal of the Lviv bibliophile culture in the second half of the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries. The picture is made up of collectors, venues where books were acquired, the characteristic features of binding, annotations made by owners of private libraries and institutions, and the output of publishing houses based in Lviv. It has also been ascertained that the contents of the collection were influenced by Dąbczańska's interests, focused on literature, history and art, and by her activity as a collector. Besides, the collection to some extent reflects the offer of contemporary publishers as well as the stock of antiquarian bookshops in Lviv. Like most collections during this period, Dąbczańska's library was generally inclined towards humanities, but was also distinguished through its comprehensiveness and universal range of subjects. The current investigation of Dąbczańska's activity is a major addition to our knowledge about women bibliophiles, a subject that deserves more attention from scholars. Besides, the partial descriptions of libraries preserved in Dąbczańska's collection are a significant contribution to research into ancient collections from the Eastern Borderlands that formerly belonged to Poland, and to endeavours aimed at recreating their histories.