

### **Description of the project for the general public**

The objective of the project is to answer the question about the role of printers and printed books in the cultural and intellectual life of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the years ca. 1574–1673 on the example of the Piotrkowczyk family of printers. Timeframes of the research cover one hundred years of the family's printing activity in Krakow. The century was a time of important shifts and changes in the Polish culture. On the level of the worldview the dominant of the period is surge, victory and consolidation of the Counter-Reformation; in the area of arts and literature it is the transition from renaissance to baroque and flourishing of the latter. In spite of economical difficulties and multiple wars as well as of tightening censorship the period witnessed a constant rise in the number of books printed in the Commonwealth. It is worth asking how the printed book and its makers took part in the abovementioned processes of change and also the other way round how the printed book in its turn was affected by these developments.

The result of the project will be a monograph of the Piotrkowczyk family activity as printers and their role in the cultural life of the Commonwealth. Activities and achievements of the family will be showed through the prism of books printed in their workshop and discussed in the broader, national and international, comparative perspective. One of the aims will be to show connections between the output of the print shop and the socio-economic situation of Krakow, and more generally the Polish Lithuanian-Commonwealth and Europe, in the discussed period. Questions of the influence of the typography of Piotrkowczyk prints on the development of the form of the Polish book in the 17th century will also be raised. The project will help to fill some gaps in the history of the Polish book in the 17th century by determining the place and role of the printed book in the changing cultural environment of the period.

The nature of the project is interdisciplinary. The research focuses on the history of the book and can be included both in the history of culture and book studies (bibliology). The project fits well in the approach that considers broadly defined book culture as the subject of bibliological explorations. Modern Polish bibliology defines book as a fusion of content, form and social function. Taking this into consideration I have decided to place printers in the centre of my project as responsible for giving to a particular content a form corresponding with its function. By this act printers become mediators between authors and their readers, they transmit meanings conveyed in authors' texts and giving them some new meanings in the course of that transmission.

The monograph that is the objective of this project will help to fill some gaps in the history of the Polish book in the 17th century. First of all, it will help to determine the place and role of the printed book in the changing cultural environment of the period, especially in the context the Polish Catholic piety and culture after the council of Trent. Secondly, the perspective of one hundred years will be an advantage, offering an opportunity to examine the influence of economical, social and historical factors upon the production of the print shop. This dynastic perspective, applied not only to the economic issues and the organisation of work in the print shop but also to the typography of books printed by the Piotrkowczyk family, will be an important novelty in the Polish book history. Thirdly, the chronological continuity and a large sample of over 1000 editions will provide a chance to analyse the form of the printed book and its changes over the time.