

Abstract

The book discusses the knowledge and popularity of geographical issues among the intellectual elites in the 15-th century Poland. The ground for the author's reflection is analysis of representation of the incunabula editions of the texts indirectly or directly referring to the knowledge on the Earth, preserved in the Polish book collections.

This issue is interesting and worth attention both from the point of view of historical bibliology, history of geography, as well as history of science. Although the source base which we have is not complete and clear, we can provide answers to many questions, or at least – which is also important for the development of science – make attempts to seek them. It is a real phenomenon that nearly in every catalogue of contemporary incunabula collections and in the inventories of unpreserved historical collections there are works containing more or less extensive information on the Earth, the ecumene, particular regions, countries and nations inhabiting them, as well as chorographic descriptions etc. We may assume, with some dose of caution, that this fact proves, first of all, the significance of the geographical issues for our predecessors; second, that the interest in this discipline of science was wide as it could be noticed in every intellectual circle: both among secular people and clergy. Definitely, it was not exclusively the domain of university professors. Therefore, the decision was made to undertake research on this topic and to describe, as far as possible, the issue mentioned before. As the author examines it mainly from the historical bibliology perspective, he mainly focuses on registration of geographical incunabula, discusses their contents in a synthetic way and refers the reader interested in this issue to the literature on the subject and the source publications.

Key words: incunabula, history of geography, historical bibliology, late Middle Ages