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Where Are We in Europe? Two Literary Maps of the Continent in Renaissance Epic Poetry (Luís Vaz de Camões and Maciej Strykowski)*

In my paper I am going to examine two epic texts written in the 1560s and 1570s, one in the Kingdom of Portugal, the other in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. There are several striking resemblances between these texts but I would like to focus on only one of them: the literary mapping of Europe. I will attempt to answer the question as to how maps permeated Renaissance epic poetry and I will examine the problem of the early modern cartographical production of national space (Hampton 2001: 130-149, Padrón 2004: 185, Conley 2007: 407). However, my main aim is not to prove that Strykowski and Camões saw or consulted specific maps. Many historical and literary studies published in the last three decades show that cartography influenced early modern literature and there is no need to prove it again (Conley 1987, Olson 1994: 195-232, Nuti 1999, Cosgrove 2001, Hampton 2001: 109-149, Klein 2001: 133-187, Padrón 2004, Jacob 2006, Conley 2007, Conley 2011, Veneri 2012: 29-48, Engberg-Pedersen 2017, Piechocki 2019). My intention is rather to show how Portuguese and Polish poets used some rhetorical tools (figures of speech) to construct literary maps.

My most important hypothesis is that early modern texts apply strategies for imitating maps in a way similar to the imitation of ancient texts. Thus we can try to interpret these Renaissance mapping texts using terms borrowed from the early modern theory of imitation. This problem has not yet been discussed in literary studies.

We have to bear in mind that early modern authors did not imitate the process of mapping which was used in the *Odyssey* or the *Aeneid*. Spatial representations in early modern epic poetry differed from those in Homer and Virgil because they were based on new types of maps and an early modern cartographical impulse (Alpers 1987: 51-96, Conley 1987: 2, Pickles 2004: 104). Greek, Hellenistic and Roman mappings were completely dif-

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ferent from Renaissance ones (Thrower 1996: 13-26). Furthermore, the ancient poets had limited access to maps. We are not even sure of the extent to which the Romans used them at the time of Octavian Augustus.

Before the mid fifteenth century hardly anybody used maps (Buisseret 1992: 1-2, Woodward 2007: 3-24). However, sixteenth-century humanist writers knew them very well and demonstrated relatively well developed cartoliteracy. This cartoliteracy shaped their spatial imagination and permeated all the spatial representations they produced (pictures, prose, poetry etc.). They refer to them directly and indirectly. Thus cartography is an indispensable component of early modern epic poetry and organizes narrative space differently from the Ancient eposes (Wolf 2017: 163). This was an important innovation in Renaissance literature, which can be observed in the poems I am going to interpret.

The first is *The Lusíads* (*Os Lusíadas*) by Luís Vaz de Camões, published in 1572, which is considered to be one of the masterpieces of European Renaissance poetry. The other is *On the Beginnings, Genesis, Bravery, Knightly and Domestic Deeds of the Famous Nation of Lithuanians, Samogitians and Ruthenians* (*O początkach, wywodach, dzielnościach, sprawach rycerskich i domowych sławnego narodu litewskiego, żemojdzkiego i ruskiego*) completed by the Polish writer Maciej Strykowski in 1577¹. This work is known only to a central and eastern European readership.

Both authors had a similar background in the humanities, but even though their biographies differ from each other, they also have some points in common. Camões (ca. 1524 or 1525-1580), who was more than 20 years older than Strykowski, was a man of humble origins who studied at the University of Coimbra. He became a courtier and then a soldier in Northern Africa. As an exile he joined an expedition to India. After returning he lived in poverty. Strykowski (1547-sometime between 1586 and 1593) was a Pole born into a noble family (Biedrzycka, Wojtkowiak 2006-2007: 536-541). We know little about his education. He moved to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and became a courtier and later a soldier in the Lithuanian-Muscovy borderlands. He was responsible for Lithuanian intelligence. He took part in a diplomatic mission to the Ottoman Empire (1574-1575) and after his return became a Catholic canon of the Samogitian chapter. From his autobiographical notes we learn he was also a cartographer². Both poets spent some periods of their lives in the capitals of their countries (Lisbon and Vilnius), but in both cases we have a limited number of sources. In fact, contemporary researchers know much more about the literary output of Camões and Strykowski than about their lives.

¹ Strykowski's work is known from manuscript copies. Aleksandra Oszczyda found a fragment of its printed copy from the sixteenth century (Oszczyda 2017).

² In his *Chronicle* (1582) Strykowski recalls his cartographical experiences when he visited Istanbul in 1575: "I myself drew [the plan of the city] *iuxta regulas geometricas et cosmographicas*, so the reader can see everything in my work as if he could be there". Strykowski 1582: fol. A iij^v (Olszewicz 1957: 32; Łopatecki 2017).

1. *The Truth of the Poem and the Necessity of the Map*

At first glance *The Lusíads* and *On the Beginnings of the Lithuanians* are completely different books. First of all, they were written at opposite ends of sixteenth-century Europe in completely different geographical and cultural settings. However, both poems imitate and simultaneously argue with the *Aeneid*. And what is most interesting, both of them deal principally with history and the process of forming two early modern national identities. The Portuguese epic poem is an imitation of the *Aeneid* and its main focus is a heroic journey of Vasco da Gama to India (Garson 1976: 471-477, Carvahlo 2001: 315-328, *Gil et al.* 2009: 17, Hampton 2015: 181), while the Polish work does not fulfill the criteria for classical epic poetry. It is a couple of hundred pages long and comprises a history of the Lithuanian nation. It was written partially in prose, partially in verse and in at least two styles. In this respect it is close to Martianus Capella's *De nuptiis Mercurii et Philologiae* and some Mediaeval chronicles written in prosimetrum³. However, both Camões and Strykowski refer to the *Aeneid*.

Camões began his first canto in the Virgilian mode, imitating the first lines the *Aeneid* ("*Arma virumque cano*" etc.):

Arms are my theme, and those matchless heroes
Who from Portugal's far western shores
By oceans, where none had ventured
Voyaged to Taprobana and beyond.

(Camões 2008: 3 [1 1, 1-4])

However, in the third and eleventh stanzas he declared that his intention is not to write about the fictional conquests and deeds of ancient and Mediaeval heroes, like Aeneas, Alexander the Great and Orlando, but about true history:

Boast no more about the subtle Greek
On the long odyssey of Trojan Aeneas;
Enough of the oriental conquests
Of great Alexander and of Trajan;
[...]
Historic deeds such as theirs
Transcended fables, and would eclipse
Boiardo's Orlando, and Ariosto's too,
Even if all they wrote of him were true.

(Camões 2008: 3 [1 3, 1-4] and 5 [1 11, 5-8])

³ In Polish Mediaeval historiography there are two examples of chronicles combining verse and prose, namely *The Gesta* by Gallus Anonymus (ca. 1113-1116) and *Chronica Polonorum* (1190-1208) by Magister Vincentius (Wincenty Kadłubek).

A similar tension between imitation of the Virgilian model and disdain for ancient fables appears in Strykowski's claims. Strykowski and Camões declare the truthfulness of their works in similar ways. The Polish poet, just like the Portuguese one, starts by paraphrasing *Arma virumque cano* topos:

I revive the wars and the men who from the Ausonian shore
With God's providence navigated in their sailing ships through yours,
Danish Sund, straights to the port in Samogitia, where they pitched their tents.
(Strykowski 1978: 41)

After the invocation Strykowski includes a long passage about his view on his task as an epic poet. Strykowski confesses that his ancient predecessors Homer, Virgil, Ovid and others wrote about fictional events, but his mission is to write "a simple truth, / Because history despises false narrations, / History which is called by Cicero the teacher of life" (Strykowski 1978: 43).

Even though Strykowski's book looks like yet another 'true' chronicle about wars and political events, its main purpose is to show how the multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-lingual nation of free citizens of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania emerged (Strykowski 1978: 41). This his poem has in common with *The Lusiads*. He meant to write a historical work but eventually he wrote an historically-based epic poem or an epically-influenced history. In both texts history and the process of forming two early modern national identities are the main focus (Gil *et al.* 2009: 42-43, Niedźwiedź 2014: 35-36).

To prove these nations were not invented by Strykowski and Camões, it was necessary to draw attention to their geographical location. If we can provide evidence that they exist in real space, then they must be real (Harley 2001a: 53-60). Thus, the true location of the Portuguese and the Lithuanians should be located geographically. In order to do so, in early modern times (as today) a map had to be used because every nation aspires to have its own state which can, or even must, be represented cartographically (Monmonier 1991: 45). Since a map is considered to be true, a cartographically based narration must be true as well. A map is then one of the main factors that produce a reality effect in these pieces of poetry (Besse 2017: 27-33).

2. *Two Epic Maps of Europe*

The literary maps in *The Lusiads* and in *On the Beginnings of the Lithuanians* were made in a sophisticated way using cartographical and poetic topoi, for example a sea voyage, a description, a dream vision, a quoted narrative and a God's-eye view etc.

In *The Lusiads* stanzas 6 to 20 of canto 3 contain a description of Europe (Camões 1973: 51-54, Camões 2008: 49-52). At the end of canto 2, Vasco da Gama goes to Malindi in eastern Africa. He is asked by the sultan of the kingdom to tell him about Portugal. Before the admiral begins his story about the achievements of his nation, he locates it on a map of Europe. The description of the continent is a prologue to a poetic chronicle. In canto 3,

Camões repeats the structure of many mediaeval and early modern chronicles which begin with or contain a chorography (Rott 1995: 53-59).

Camões's description starts with an overview of the continent and its borders. Next the poet lists its northern and eastern regions, namely Norway, Sweden, Ruthenia, Livonia, Muscovy, Poland, and the countries controlled by the German emperor (Hungary, Saxony and Bohemia). He mentions the Balkan Peninsula under Ottoman occupation (Thracia, Byzantium, Macedonia and Greece) and moves west. Two stanzas are devoted to Italy, one to France and three to Spain. The last stanza about the map of Europe comprises a short description of Portugal (Lusitania), and Camões moves seamlessly on to a narration about the history of his country. This narration can be linked to many sixteenth-century maps designed by Portuguese and other European cartographers (Diogo Ribeiro, Pedro and Jorge Reinel, Bartolomeu Velho, Diogo Homem, Giacomo Gastaldi, Sebastian Münster, Abraham Ortelius, Gerardus Mercator and many others).

Strykowski chooses a similar compositional structure. He leads his reader from a distant land to the country which is the main theme of his story. In the first chapter of his work he explains the beginnings of the Lithuanian nation. He uses many ancient, mediaeval and contemporary sources, but he admits frankly that the ancient Lithuanians preferred steel to quills so they did not leave any notes about their achievements. It is the task of the poet to recall what the earliest history of Lithuania might have been like.

It is not surprising that sixteenth-century Lithuanians must have had noble ancestors, just like the Portuguese had a companion of Bacchus / Lusus (in *The Lusians*), the French had Francus of Troy (in the *Franciad*), the Germans – the ancient German tribes (in Tacitus' *Germania*), and the Poles – the Sarmatians. The ancestors of the Lithuanians were the Gepids (a branch of the Goths) and the Romans. According to Strykowski the Gepids arrived there from the Middle East after the destruction of the Tower of Babel. A long time later 500 Roman refugees under the command of Publius Palemon Libo came to Samogitia, joined the Gepids and formed a new state and a new nation. Strykowski claimed that several Lithuanian noble families traced their origins back to the Romans (Suchocki 1997: 27-65, Niendorf 2011: 76-89).

In chapter one the route of the Roman voyage is described. The story is based mainly on the journey of Aeneas, but it is Palemon and his companions who succeed in circumnavigating Europe. They start in Rome, travel next through the Mediterranean Sea and pass Gades, Spain and Portugal. They stop in England and try to navigate west, but the winds near Scotland blowing in the opposite direction force them to change their plans. In England Palemon has a dream in which a prophecy is revealed to him: he must go to Lithuania which will be his new home country. This country will be located between Prussia, Ruthenia, Poland and Masovia.

The Romans continue their journey through Ditimarsia (Dithmarschen, north Germany), Denmark, the Sound and the Baltic Sea, and eventually get to Prussia. They enter the country through the Nemunas River. Strykowski describes the first contact of the Romans with the Gepids: "They were terrified when for the first time they saw / Ships unusual

for them and their vast sails. / They run away as wild people to their caves. / *Restate! Restate!* – the Italians called them in vain”.

3. *Cartographical Imitations*

Camões’s map of Europe must have based on several earlier works. Most of them are the works of such ancient scholars as Herodotus, Strabo, Pliny, Ptolemy and Pomponius Mela (Camões 2000: VIII, Kłobucka 2003: 125). As far as early modern geographical sources are concerned, Camões used *Enneades* by Marcus Antonius Coccius Sabellicus (Venice 1498 and 1504). It was a universal history, immensely popular in the first half of the sixteenth century, containing some geographical information as well. Camões used one of the late Latin editions which were extended significantly by Paolo Giovio, Caspar Hedionis and others and republished in 1535, 1538 and 1560⁴. Information about the regions and countries of Europe could be found in the second volume of *Enneades* (a sequel to Sabellicus’s work).

However, it seems Camões also used sixteenth-century visual sources. For his geographical knowledge and his mapping of Europe and Asia, especially China, cartographical representations are no less important than the discursive texts. In the case of his description of Europe two cartographical sources can be identified.

The first such source might be maps based on Ptolemy’s *Geography*, although some information concerning Sarmatia may have been taken from Pliny’s *Natural history* or other texts, such as Sabellicus. If we assume that Camões used the Ptolemy-based maps, then their influence can be seen in stanzas 7-11.

For da Gama, the Muscovites, Ruthenians and Livonians are “strange people” (“*estranha gente*”). But for the Lithuanians, Poles and Swedes Camões’s description of their part of Europe would have seemed strange as well. He mentions the Hiperborean and Riphean Mountains in which the Don River would have had its sources. He also claimed that Scandinavia is an island (“*Escandinávia Ilha*”). All this information can be found on map 8 in Ptolemy’s *Geography* (Ptolemy 1482: *Octava Europe tabula*). This Ptolemaean view was refuted in 1517 when Matthias of Miechów (Miechowita), a scholar from the University of Cracow, challenged the ancient sources and published in Latin *A Treatise on two Sarmatias*. Matthias of Miechów (ca. 1457-1523) proved the Riphean and Hiperborean Mountains did not exist (Maciej z Miechowa 1517: Ar., Ulewicz 1950: 53-66, Zantuan 1968: 327-337, Mund 2003: 62, 221-227, Piechocki 2015: 83, 88-91; Piechocki 2019). The treatise was widely circulated in Europe. In the sixteenth century there were at least 18 editions in several languages (Mund 2003: 467-510). Was Camões’s knowledge not up to date? He relied mainly on Portuguese and some Italian books (Rodrigues 1979: 222-223). Their view of the opposite end of Europe went no further than how it had been presented by Ptolemy. However, even Ortelius and Polish poets at the time mentioned the Riphean or Hyper-

⁴ *Enneades* were partially translated into Portuguese for Camões’s patron D. Leonor de Noronha, and twice published in Coimbre in 1550 and 1552 (Rodrigues 1979: 211-212).

borean Mountains in their works (Kochanowski 1584: 79, Piechocki 2015: 91-94, Piechocki 2019). To some extent the authority of Ptolemy was still valid in the second half of the sixteenth century, at least in literary works⁵.

But there might be yet another explanation of the use of Ptolemy's map in *The Lusiads*. Since Vasco da Gama did his travelling at the end of the fifteenth century his geographical knowledge should have corresponded to that of his time. Camões tried to make his story historically probable so it may be yet another example of his attempts at verisimilitude. On the other hand both Camões and Strykowski were often not interested in historical details. In Strykowski's account of the Romans' journey to Lithuania the ships had equipment and were of a shape typical of the sixteenth century. An astronomer took part in the voyage who used a compass (Strykowski 1978: 61).

The other visual source is a famous map of Europe portrayed as a Queen (*Europa regina*), designed by Johannes Putsch in 1537 and made popular by Sebastian Münster in his *Cosmography* (Schmale 2004: 244-245, Padrón 2004: 14-17, Werner 2009: 241-260) (FIG. 1). The relationship of the poem to the *Europa regina* is visible in stanzas 14, 15, 20 and presumably in stanzas 11 and 12. The western and southern parts of "proud Europe" in *The Lusiads* took their shape from this woodcut. The Italian Peninsula is called "an arm", the Alps are a "shoulder". Mountains separate the Balkans from the rest of the continent. The British Isles, just as in the woodcut, were actually excluded from the main body of Europe, since the English were Protestants and rivals of Portugal. And most importantly, the crown and the head of Europe is Portugal: "quási cume da cabeça / De Europa toda, o Reino Lusitano" (Camões 1973: 54, Madureira 2007: 78).

It is hard to identify Strykowski's cartographical sources, but his description of Europe is also a map-based one. He may have used maps by Agnese, Münster, Ortelius, Mercator and others. Furthermore, we know that in his youth he was a mapmaker (Olszewicz 1957: 32, Łopatecki 2017). Thus, he knew several different types of cartographical representation, so he could choose the one most suitable for his purpose. While Camões's depiction is more a political map, Strykowski's resembles a portolan⁶ (FIG. 2). This is a paradoxical fact since it was Camões who may have had easier access to maritime charts than Strykowski. However, the Polish poet may have come across the idea of rendering literary journeys on portolans. Although he could not have had the opportunity to read Ortelius's maritime maps depicting the voyages of Aeneas or Jason, which were published two decades later (Ortelius 1594, Ortelius 1601, van den Broecke *et al.* 2015: nr. 223, nr. 226), he may have taken his inspiration from another map by Ortelius, which showed the Mediterranean voyages of Saint Paul (1579) (Ortelius 1579, van den Broecke *et al.* 2015: nr. 181).

⁵ Katharina Piechocki (2019) examines the influence of Ptolemy in the late sixteenth century and in Camões's poem. For information about Hyperborea in French poetry in the sixteenth century see Hampton 2001: 162-165.

⁶ In other places, however, *The Lusiads* exhibited a strong connection to sea charts (Klein 2011: 242-247).

In his 'portolan' Strykowski presents the continent more holistically than does Camões. Nevertheless, both poets write as cartographers and consider the continent from a cartographical perspective. This is a God's-eye view, typical of cartographical writing (Pickles 2004: 80). Each of them acts as if he puts his finger on a map and moves it from one place to another. However, a poet does not actually have a map before him and he does not use his finger. He has a partially blank sheet of paper in front of him and a quill in his hand. He drives his pen across the surface but it is not an act of driving the finger on a map but rather drawing a map with a quill. When we move our finger on an actual map, this is rather a reproduction of previously designed space. In the act of writing the poet not only reproduces space but also produces it (Wood 1992: 17-22, Short 2004: 2). I do not mean the production of the same spatial stanzas on paper, I mean rather a production of space which was previously invented by and on the map and now it is produced again in a new literary form.

However, the maps should lie on the poet's desk or be in his memory. In the case of Camões and Strykowski, describing a continent must have been the result of following a real or remembered map. Such a process of following a source was actually a basic form of literary activity. It was called imitation. When Camões and Strykowski mapped their Europes, they certainly made use of imitation. They were trained in the humanities so the concept of imitation was an indispensable element of their poetic practice. They did not leave any treatises explaining their theoretical approach to epic poetry, as Tasso did, but in their texts they speak explicitly about their attitude towards Virgil or Homer. Even though they did not write about their imitational practices, when it comes to translating maps into discursive texts, I assume they worked in a similar way. When Camões imitates Ptolemy he refers tacitly to the idea of the *imitatio antiquorum*.

A poet who draws a literary map creates an imitation of a 'real' or imagined but still spatial map. If we ignore the act of inter-textual translation, the process of imitating a map resembles the process of imitating a literary text. The result is a poem which imitates or emulates a cartographical sample. However, there is yet another aspect to imitation. When a reader is interpreting a poem by Strykowski, he or she is actually imitating the gesture of moving a finger on the surface of a map. This mode of reading a map makes cartographical imitation (*imitatio mappae*) different from literary imitation (*imitatio auctorum*) (Fulińska 2000: 21-22, 67-69, 329-337).

I suppose that this way of constructing geographical images in these two poems could not have been possible without the cartographical revolution and development of carto-literacy among sixteenth century humanists. If readers weren't 'carto-literate', the hidden agenda of Camões and Strykowski's maps of Europe would not work (Harley 2001b: 83-107).

4. *Why the Map?*

One of the hidden agenda is a longing for the glory of an imperial past. In the second half of the sixteenth century both the Kingdom of Portugal and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania started to lose their political and military positions. They were still important states at opposite

ends of Europe and had imperial aspirations, but their decline was visible. In the colonial race the Portuguese started to lose against their other European rivals, while the Lithuanians started to lose their competition about hegemony in Eastern Europe with Muscovy. This Lithuanian and Portuguese preoccupation with the future of the countries concerned not only political power but also their cultural positions. In the second half of the sixteenth century Portugal and Lithuania were forced to set up political unions with their culturally and politically stronger partners, Spain and Poland (Macedo 1990: 37, Brandenberger 2007: 84-85, Martínez 2010: 72-77, Rotundus 2009: 152-161, Niendorf 2011: 79). The need for the Portuguese and Lithuanians to establish or strengthen their national identity became urgent, although in many respects it was similar to the processes which were taking place in other European countries at the time. The main areas in which this process could be felt were literature, history, law and geography. The epic poetry of Camões and Strykowski covers three of these areas.

National epic poetry is not only about a nation's place in history but also about its place on the map (King 1996: 25). It should locate the nation in an important, central place, both historically and geographically. Thus Lithuania and Portugal had to be placed on the map in a privileged position (Harley 2001a: 66). However, they could not be positioned in the very centre, like Bohemia on sixteenth-century maps, because an accepted cartographical representation of Europe had already been established. But Camões and Strykowski as mapmakers succeeded in redrawing the map in such a way that it corresponded to their aspirations.

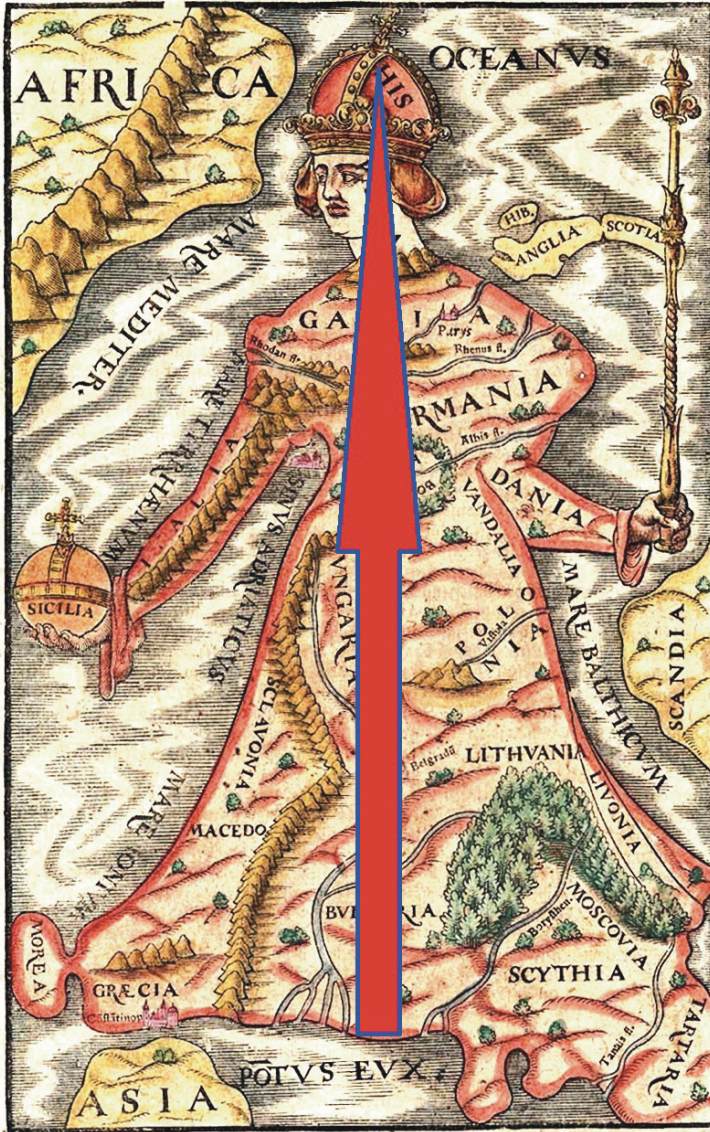
In their texts Portugal and Lithuania are related to other places in Europe – mainly easily recognizable countries. This relationship places the Lithuanians and the Portuguese within the system of the geographical and historical narratives of other European countries. Thus the other countries can give an historical and geographical explanation or justification for the existence and the important role of Portugal and Lithuania. If somebody denies that one of these countries has a significant role, he or she undermines the entire system of European narratives. Strykowski and Camões seem to be saying that there is no Europe and no world without the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Kingdom of Portugal.

But there is something else. In literary mapping, the extreme positions of Portugal and Lithuania on the map of Europe tended to be an advantage. A reader could be lead throughout the entire continent to reach the most important land. To do so, the two poets employ two different literary devices, namely climax and parallelism (Meihuizen 2002: 26). Camões enumerates the countries of Europe from the bottom to Europe's highest and most important crowning point. Thus, the Portuguese poet begins from deserted and semi-barbarian regions of Scythia and Muscovy and finishes in Lusitania, the vertex of Queen Europe. In this way Camões provides a cartographical climax (FIG. 1). On the other hand, Strykowski enumerates European countries to stress the most important points, namely the beginning and the end of the journey, Rome and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. They lie at opposite ends of the axis south to north and are parallel. This cartographical parallelism (FIG. 2) represents the *translatio imperii* visually (Padrón 2004: 212).

The devices of climax (the crown of Europe) and parallelism (Rome-Lithuania) were successfully employed by Camões and Strykowski in redrawing the map of Europe. Less

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Das ander Buch



zweyen General Tafeln/ vnd in der neuen Tafel die allein Europam begreiff. Doch wann man ansehen will vnd darzu rechnen die grossen Landschaften die gegen Dienacht gehn/ solt wol die breite Europae vbertreffen die länge. Wie aber Ptolemaeus Europam beschreiben hat/ ist sein länge grösser dann die breite. Das ist ein mal gewis/ das Europa ist ein trefflich fruchtbar vnd wol erba-
wert

FIG. I

Camões's climax: Portugal as the top and the crown of Europe.

Europa Regina, in: S. Münster, *Cosmography*, Basel 1570.



FIG. 2

Strykowski's parallelism of Rome and Lithuania and the *translatio imperii*: Europe with Palemon's circumnavigation. A fragment of a map of the world *Typus Orbis Terrarum*, in: A. Ortelius, *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, Antwerp 1570.

successful was Pierre de Ronsard whose *Francus* travelled by land from Greece, through Hungary and Germany to France. In this prophetic journey to the heart of Europe (i.e. France) there is no vision of the entire continent.

Strykowski and Camões succeeded in their attempts. Over the next few centuries *The Lusíads* and the works by Strykowski were the iconic texts of the two nations. So were their maps.

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Abstract

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Where Are We in Europe? Two Literary Maps of the Continent in Renaissance Epic Poetry (Luís Vaz de Camões and Maciej Strykowski)

In my paper I discuss two representations of Europe in epic poems by Maciej Strykowski and Luís Vaz de Camões. Both poets lived at opposite ends of the continent but they both attempted to respond to the cartographic revolution they witnessed. The increasing importance of maps caused several problems. Strykowski and Camões were also witnesses of political troubles in their own countries. One of the most important tasks was placing their own country (and nation) on the map of Europe and the world. This raised questions of symbolic and real hierarchy in cartographic representations, national pride and its cartographical identity. Poets who produced their own 'self-made maps' dealt with this problem in different ways, and this paper focuses on these poetic practices. Two of them are cartographical imitations and use rhetorical figures to translate a chart into a poetic map.

Keywords

Polish Renaissance Literature; Portuguese Renaissance Literature; History of Cartography; Maciej Strykowski; Luís Vaz de Camões.