

**Maciej Strykowski's epic historiography (1547-1593).
Between rhetoric and humanistic philosophy**

Abstract:

The aim of this paper is to present the historical and poetic work of the 16th-century Polish poet and historian, Maciej Strykowski, from the perspective of rhetoric and the philosophy of humanism.

The first chapter presents the research context of the historical period and the current state of studies, thus introducing the subject of the Renaissance works of the author of *Kronika* and *O początkach* – the two great works written in verse and prose on the most remote history of Poland and Lithuania.

The second chapter presents the life and work of the Renaissance historian, during which he developed an advanced philological, historical and rhetorical craft. On its basis, Strykowski constructed various mythological historical analogies between Roman and Lithuanian history, however deliberately avoiding the historical truth. The aim was to integrate the historical Polish-Lithuanian identity into the European (Greco-Roman) cultural and civilisational circle.

One of the most important values of Renaissance culture, apart from virtue (*virtus*), was rhetoric understood as *ars bene dicendi scientia*. From it also arose the similar to the 'art of good speech' – rhetorical-philosophical conception of historiography formulated by Strykowski.

The third chapter is devoted to the phenomenon of reception of ancient rhetoric in M. Strykowski's works, above all to the influence of the theory of rhetorical genera (*genera causarum*) and the question of the duty of a speaker-historian (*officia oratoris*).

The main conclusion of this work is that Strykowski's conception of historiography was built not only on the foundations of ancient rhetoric, history and poetry, but also on the foundations of Stoic philosophy, which set the Renaissance history to fulfil formative (educational), civic (civil) and political goals. The aim of Strykowski's work was not therefore strictly cognitive (epistemological), but predominantly educational and bonding for the national community through reference to the values they shared. The author accomplished this by means of the instruments of the demonstrative and advisory types of rhetoric: *genus demonstrativum* and *genus deliberativum*.

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