Travel Compilations in Sixteenth-Century England: Eden and Ramusio as Hakluyt's Generic Precursors

Author / Creator
Imes, Robert

Scholarship on Richard Hakluyt's compilations of travel writing regularly refers to his main literary predecessors: Richard Eden and Giovanni Battista Ramusio. However, such scholarship very rarely engages in a sustained comparison of Hakluyt's, Eden's, and Ramusio's work. In George Bruner Parks' essential literary history "Richard Hakluyt and the English Voyages," for example, Parks notes that Eden was Hakluyt's "forerunner," and that Hakluyt's books "outdistanced" Eden's, yet Parks does not specify the connections between the two. Similarly, in a section on Hakluyt's Italian influences from his recent study "Richard Hakluyt: A Guide to His Books," Anthony Payne writes that Ramusio was Hakluyt's "most notable" early literary influence, but Payne's further association of their work is cursory and largely ambiguous. In this thesis, I continue the discussion of Parks, Payne, and other scholars about the bonds of influence and continuity shared by Eden, Ramusio, and Hakluyt. I begin by introducing the place of published travel accounts in early sixteenth-century English and European cosmography. I then follow sections on Eden and Ramusio with a study of Hakluyt's earlier and later work that takes care to locate his inherited place in a larger literary tradition. I
conclude with a brief synopsis of Hakluyt’s part in the continued development of travel writing after 1600. My hope is that this study of the connections between Eden’s, Ramusio’s, and Hakluyt’s books will contribute to an enhanced appreciation of the emergence in England of a subgenre of early modern cosmographical writing dedicated to accounts of travel.

Subjects / Keywords
Geography
Early modern
Cosmography
Richard Eden
Hakluyt
English
Eden
England
Sixteenth century
Richard Hakluyt
Giovanni Ramusio
Ramusio
Travel
Renaissance

Graduation date
Spring 2012

Type of Item
Thesis

Degree
Master of Arts

DOI
https://doi.org/10.7939/R38W56

License
This thesis is made available by the University of Alberta Libraries with permission of the copyright owner solely for non-commercial purposes. This thesis, or any portion thereof, may not otherwise be copied or reproduced without the written consent of the copyright owner, except to the extent permitted by Canadian copyright law.