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Zacharias Lund (1608-67) and the early Baroque

The poet Zacharias Lund has earned himself a certain name as one of the early Baroque poets in Germany. In 1636 he published a volume of lyrics in German, *Allerhand artige deutsche Gedichte*, and in the Royal Library of Copenhagen two dramas are preserved in manuscript, one a translation of a French pastoral, *Reu und Leid über die Liebe der Schäßferin Dieromene*, and the other a tragedy, *Zedechias oder Trawer-Spiel von der Zerstörung Jerusalems in Teutschen Versen*; both belong to the same period of his life as the printed volume.¹ His first published work, however, was a volume of Latin poetry, *Poemata Juvenilia*, 1634, and most of the poems that have survived from his hand are in Latin.

Lund lived in a period when Neo-Latin poetry had been cultivated in Northern Germany and Denmark for roughly a century. The term is used for Latin poetry which in language, orthography, metre and literary form distanced itself from the Latin poetry written during the Middle Ages and imitated ancient poetry as closely as possible. The more or less clumsy first attempts were a thing of the past, as was the sense of introducing something new and revolutionizing. By Lund's time, the art of composing Neo-Latin poetry was firmly established, and the best of the poets – among whom Lund belongs – moved freely and elegantly in many different metres and genres.

Born in Nybøl in Southern Jutland, he usually called himself Cimber, which may mean that he considered himself an inhabitant of Denmark or Jutland or Schleswig-Holstein – the last choice probably comes closest to the truth. His career was entirely Danish: he was attached as a tutor to the Scanian noble family Vind, later be-

¹ Dieter Lohmeier in *Neue deutsche Biographie* 15. Berlin 1987, pp. 520-521. Lund is also discussed in the following works: Julius Paludan: *Renaissancebevægelsen i Danmarks Literatur, især i det 17. Aarhundrede*. Copenhagen 1887, pp. 175-176, 323, 331-332; Herbert Cysarz: *Deutsche Barockdichtung*. Leipzig 1924, pp. 134-139; Ulrich Moerke: *Die Anfänge der weltlichen Barocklyrik in Schleswig-Holstein: Hudeman – Rist – Lund*. Kieler Studien zur deutschen Literaturgeschichte 8. Neumünster 1972; Anthony Harper: Leipzig poetry after Paul Fleming – A Re-Assessment. *Daphnis* 5 (1976), pp. 145-170; Marianne Pade: Horace's *Ars Poetica* in Denmark in the sixteenth and seventeenth century. The commentaries of Andreas Krag and Zacharias Lund. *Atti del convegno di Licenza 19-23 aprile 1993. Bimillenario della morte di Q. Orazio Flacco*. Venosa 1994, S. 217-246; Sebastian Olden-Jørgensen: *Poesi og politik. Lejlighedsdigtningen ved enevældens indførelse 1660*. Mit deutscher Zusammenfassung. *Renæssancestudier* 8. Copenhagen 1996; id.: Zacharias Lunds sidste år 1657-67 eller Dichtung und Wahrheit i lyset af et regnskabsbilag. *Fund og Forskning* 35 (1996), pp. 249-255.

came headmaster of the Danish boarding school Herlufsholm, spent a period as the librarian of a great private book collection in Ringsted, and ended up as a secretary in *Danske Kancelli*, the royal administration.

When Danish literature from c. 1500 to c. 1700 is studied from the Latin angle, it can be subdivided into two relatively clear-cut periods. The 16th century was dominated by Latin, and the bulk of poetry written in Denmark was in this language. This does not of course exclude the possibility that Denmark may have had a rich oral poetry in the vernacular, and as a matter of fact, it was during the second half of this century that the first ballads were recorded in writing. The kings had won great wealth as a result of the Lutheran Reform, and above all Frederik II (in power 1559-88) spent part of this on patronage. Gifted young men were given access to higher education abroad by means of generous royal funding, and it was in Latin that the mental energy of this new intelligentsia was invested. From the middle of the century we see internationally trained young poets struggling to implant the fashionable Neo-Latin forms into their native culture and to treat modern and often strictly local topics in ancient classical form, all in the effort to convince themselves and their neighbours that Denmark was no barbarian country, but the scene of a modern, sophisticated culture with roots far back in time. Their achievement may conveniently be called the Renaissance of poetry in Denmark.

Around 1590 a new style appeared, a kind of mannerism as the term is used by Ernst Robert Curtius.² Formal games grew increasingly popular – anagrams, chronograms, acrosticha, telesticha, etc. The style was first adopted by the nobility, in the milieu which Tycho Brahe established in his Uraniborg and Henrik Rantzau in Breitenberg. Tycho Brahe, for instance, has a long elegiac letter to a young friend, in which each pentameter ends with the word *amor*.³ The Norwegian poet Halvard Gunnarsson showed himself a proper virtuoso, for example, in a eulogy of the Danish king Christian IV, in which every single word begins with a C. In Denmark the poet Bertil Knudsen Aquilonius was a successful mannerist. The movement kept its vigour throughout the 17th century and gave rise to new literary forms – the epigrammatic genre was radically changed, and a new genre, the lapidary poem, was also developed: a fake inscription centred symmetrically around a vertical axis and characterized by a terse, pointed style.⁴ It was used mainly for funeral poems and for political invective.⁵ It is close to hand to call this mannerism Baroque and underline that the first steps into this style were taken in Latin.

² Ernst Robert Curtius: *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter*. Bern 1948, chapter 15.

³ Edited, translated into Danish and discussed by Peter Zeeberg: *Amor på Hven, Tycho Brahes digt til Erik Lange. Renæssancestudier 2*. København 1988, pp. 161-181.

⁴ John Sparrow: *Visible Words. A Study of Inscriptions in and as Books and Works of Art*. Cambridge 1969.

⁵ Karen Skovgaard-Petersen: *Avant-garde polemics in Latin. A History of Nordic Neo-Latin Literature*. Ed. Minna Skafte Jensen. Odense University Studies in Scandinavian Languages and Literatures 32. Odense 1995, pp. 309-320.

Again, looked at from this angle, the most radically innovative aspect of Baroque poetry was its use of the vernacular. The early Baroque poets who composed in Danish expressed themselves in the very same forms that were most familiar in Latin poetry: the private letter in verse, the occasional poem, the laudation (of a city, a locality, a person, etc.), the pastoral, the travel poem and not least the Biblical paraphrase. These were the preferred forms of Anders Arrebo, Anders Bording, Søren Terkelsen, Elias Naur and Thomas Kingo. In general, the very idea of what Stina Hansson calls ‘repertoire poetry’ came from Latin. Thus the coherence between Latin and the vernacular is evident, and that this is how it was felt at the time appears from titles such as Arrebo’s *Hexaëmeron Rhythmico-Danicum* or Stiernhielm’s *Musae Suetizantes*. There were still poets who composed only in Latin right up to the end of the 17th century, but the dynamic energy gradually shifted from Latin to Danish, and towards the end of the century with the poetry of Kingo the vernacular had definitely become the main vehicle of modern thought.

The vernacular poets fetched literary forms and mannerist expressions from Latin, but not the vehemence of Baroque poetry – the many synonyms heaped on top of each others, the exaggerations, the juxtaposed contrasts, etc. These are rather, as suggested by Erich Trunz, expressions of the turbulence of the times, with the Thirty Years’ War devastating Europe.⁶ Thus when considering Wilhelm Friese’s definition of the term Baroque⁷ I should prefer to keep only parts of it, not because I do not agree with his main point that Baroque art is closely connected with certain facts of the society in which it belongs, but exactly because I am interested in this interaction between poetry and society and need separate terms for each party. And as regards Nordic literature „zwischen Reformation und Aufklärung“, at least for Denmark I should maintain that there is not only a Baroque style, but that it was preceded by a Renaissance.

Lund is of special interest in this connection because he was bilingual, and because he was such an early representative of the vernacular Baroque.

Already from the titles of his two first printed books two quite distinct sets of aesthetic norms appear. His Latin book from 1634 is called *Poemata Juvenilia* (‘Youthful poems’), and that is that. His German volume from 1636 has the title, *Allerhand artige deutsche Gedichte, Poëmata, sampt einer zu End angehengter Probe auszerlesener, scharfsinniger, Kluger, Hoff- und Scherz-Reden, Apophthegmata genant* (‘All kinds of pleasant German poems, Poëmata, with at the end an example added of select, sharp, bright sayings from court and entertainment, called Apophthegmata’). Whereas his Latin title is terse, almost puritanical, the German

⁶ Martin Opitz: *Weltliche Poemata 1644*. Hg. von Erich Trunz. 2. Deutsche Neudrucke. Reihe Barock 3. Tübingen 1975, pp. 15*-76*.

⁷ Wilhelm Friese: *Nordische Barockdichtung. Eine Darstellung und Deutung skandinavischer Dichtung zwischen Reformation und Aufklärung*. München 1968, pp. 17-19.

one overflows in all directions and takes in Greek terms for its two main elements in order to achieve a distinguished and also slightly exotic flavour. In the preface to the German book the author conducts a rather detailed discussion with his reader, in which he defends himself against a supposedly critical question about why he writes in German when it is so much more prestigious to compose in Latin. His Latin volume had no similar introduction. Nobody at Lund's time would have wondered why a young man published his Latin poems, whereas an explanation was apparently called for when he chose German. Danish is not mentioned as a possibility.

The contents of the two volumes show the same difference as the titles. The Latin collection is firmly structured. It consists of four 'books', of which the two first are elegies, both of them rounded wholes which together tell a story with the young poet as their protagonist; the third book is a so-called *silva* ('wood'), a more sketchy collection of poems in various metres, and book four contains exactly one hundred epigrams. The German volume is loosely constructed and gives the impression of having been put together spontaneously, without too much learned speculation. The Scottish scholar Anthony Harper has stressed this aspect as an argument that Lund was part of the so-called Leipzig circle, centred around Paul Fleming. Here the ideal was to pose as an impressionistic poet, composing in an off-hand way as if writing poetry was a natural talent that demanded no effort of the author.⁸

Another trait which Harper considers to be typical of the Leipzig poets is the cheerful, uncommitted tone of their poems and their predilection for such topics as drinking parties and love stories. In addition, they are characterized by an interest in dialogue: often their poems are conversations between two parties. In these respects both of Lund's youthful volumes would qualify for the Leipzig circle: the elegant erotic tone is common to both collections, and in both of them he has poems impersonating friends or relations. Thus the two last elegies in Lund's Latin collection present a dialogue his friend Vincent Fabricius has with his beloved Merilla.

Whether Lund actually belonged to the Leipzig circle or not is for various reasons a complicated question, which I shall not consider here. It is, however, evident that he was very much influenced by the new wave in literary aesthetics. He studied theology in Wittenberg 1630-32, but the teacher who had a lasting impact on his mind was professor of poetry August Buchner, a personal friend of Martin Opitz. The latter was at the height of his career in those years. Between 1621 and 1625 he had published translations into German of Daniel Heinsius' hymns to Jesus and to Bacchus, a German poetics closely dependent on Heinsius and Aristotle, a translation into German of Seneca's drama *The Trojan Women*, and eight books of German poems. In 1627 the opera *Dafne* followed, in 1628-29 *Deutsche Poemata*, I-II, and in 1630 a pastoral drama. In these works Opitz united the previously separate traditions for Latin and the vernacular. He was the first to translate into German Horace's self-confident poem, „Exegi monumentum [...]“ ('I have erected a monu-

⁸ Harper, Leipzig poetry after Paul Fleming, *Daphnis* 5 (1976).

ment', *Odes* III. 30), in which the Latin poet claims that his achievement will turn out to be more lasting than any memorial cast in bronze. Opitz, like Horace, put his poem at the end of a book (*Wälder*, 1) and clearly let it apply to his own poetical work: just as Horace had transplanted Greek forms into his native Latin language, Opitz now introduced Latin classics into his own German language.⁹

With Opitz the whole complex of Latin culture was put under discussion. Looked at from our century, this seems to be a natural and even necessary development; but to Opitz' contemporaries who had no chance of predicting how things would go, this must have been shocking. A tradition which had been unbroken since antiquity was being questioned. However, this was in no sense a radical break: German and Latin mingle easily in Opitz' works, and one might even describe the many Latin prefaces, dedicatory and laudatory poems and other marginalities as a defensive cloak, placed around all the new and provocative German poems so as not to shock the readers unduly. In this framework Opitz' German poems appear as a natural development from the old Latin tradition – which they were. And in 1631, while Lund was a student in Wittenberg, Opitz even published a collection of Latin epigrams.

Lund's youthful poems were manifestly open to the modern ideas, and it is natural to connect this fact with the inspiration he received from August Buchner. To translate a pastoral drama from French into German was to take Opitz' advice: in his preface to *Die Schäßferey von der Nimfen Hercinie* (1630) Opitz had declared that his work was meant as a stimulus for other poets to compose in a similar way, so in his *Dieromene* Lund was following Opitz' precepts. Furthermore, in the very activity of translating, Lund was a pupil of Opitz', and he kept this interest all his life, translating from French, Italian, and Greek into German or Latin, and from German into Latin and vice-versa. To compose a tragedy, as Lund did with his *Zedechias*, was to exploit the literary form most central to both Aristotle and Heinsius in their theories of poetry, and to do so in German was again to conform with Opitz' doctrines.

The most important ancient models for Lund's *Poemata Juvenilia* were Ovid's *Amores* and Martial's epigrams. Just as in Ovid, each of Lund's elegies is a rounded whole which can be read in its own right. But together they form a story of the ups and downs of the young poet-lover. Our hero is an eager hunter, and we do not need to read many of his poems before we understand that his game is not only animals, but also women and learning. A charming Charinta appears, and at a certain point the hunter even has to admit that he has himself been caught in her net. Happy feelings shift into melancholy, and at a certain point there is a poem in which the hero takes leave of the world. Later on, however, he has restricted himself to merely saying farewell to love. The main themes of these elegies are poetry, friendship and love, and their elegant, slightly ironical tone has few parallels in Danish Neo-Latin.

⁹ Cf. the list of Opitz' works in *Weltliche Poemata 1644*. Hg. von Erich Trunz. Deutsche Neudrucke. Reihe Barock 2. 1. Tübingen 1967, pp. 11*-22*. The interpretation of the place occupied by the Horace translation follows Trunz in Opitz, *Weltliche Poemata*, 2, 1975, p. 6*.

In his epigrams, too, Lund was a modernist. Lots of epigrams had been composed in Denmark during the 16th century, and they had the character of brief poems, most often in elegiac couplets. But at Lund's time the genre was changing. French classicism made itself felt, with an interest in *le mot propre* and all kinds of elegant, witty surprises. The Welsh poet John Owen became enormously influential with his epigrams, and it is this form of the genre Lund presents in his volume. He published one of them in a German translation two years later:

31. Ad Amicum, de seipso. (*Poemata Juvenilia*, p. 97.)

Eximium dicis me vatem. Certe ego non sum
Forte nisi ex imis Vatibus eximius.

Aus seinem eigenen Lateinischen. (*Allerhand artige deutsche Gedichte*, p. 110.)

Wie lange wilst du mich der Teutschen Naso heissen
Soll ich dich wiederumb vielleicht für Opitz preisen?
Schweig' / ich mags auch nicht thun: des Lobs schäm' ich mich/
Ein jeder weis/ dass du nicht minder leugst als ich.¹⁰

Again, the two versions of the poem demonstrate how Lund keeps the two sets of aesthetic norms clearly apart. In the Latin epigram, there is a wordplay on *imus* ('humblest') and *eximius* ('eminent') making a fake *figura etymologica*: the context of the two words suggests that *eximius* should mean somebody who distinguishes himself from the lowest group. At the same time, the different *i*'s remind the reader that this is not so (*imus* has a long *i*, *eximius* a short one). This is a device that recurs in other of Lund's epigrams. In the German version the friend, who was mentioned only in the title of the Latin epigram, has entered the poem, thus doubling its size. The grammatical-stylistic wordplay has disappeared and been substituted with a play on the idea of lying. It is perhaps dependent on a paradox from antiquity, speculating on what kind of a conclusion can be drawn from the enigmatic syllogism, 'All Cretans are liars; I am a Cretan'. Ancient model or not, in Lund's German poem the two friends are flattering each other, and therefore the poet's modesty in reference to himself hits his friend as well.

So in translating, Lund takes pains to ensure that a joke in the source poem is equalled by a joke in the translated one. And where the Latin poem evokes the struggle that every young intellectual had been through in order to master the technicalities of the Latin language, the connotations of the German version are Opitz' discussions of *Poeterey*. It is worth noting that metre and rhyme in the German poem are smoothly and elegantly formed and thus establish a stylistic level just as meticulously as the Latin poem adheres to the formal demands of the epigrammatic

¹⁰ 'To a friend, about himself. You call me an eminent poet. Surely I am not unless perhaps I am eminent among the lowest ones. – A poem translated from his own Latin. How long will you continue calling me Ovid of the Germans? Should I perhaps make repayment, praising you as Opitz? Keep silent! nor do I want to do it; I blush at such praise, since everybody knows that you lie no less than I do.'

style – it was one of Opitz' main points that German poetry should be made with the same degree of formalistic care as was the habit for Latin poetry.

To put Ovid and Opitz side by side means both that Ovid is treated as if he were a contemporary, and that Opitz is claimed to be as great in his field as Ovid was in his. And even though in this poem the two famous forerunners are distributed between the two young friends, both of them are, of course, the two great models for Lund's own endeavours.

One might perhaps have expected that with all his eager appreciation of Opitz' work Lund would have let the Baroque style influence his Latin poetry, that the energy so obviously present in the German poetry of his day and in his own contributions to it would have made itself felt in his Latin works. I have, however, been unable to find such an influence. Lund continued composing Latin poetry all his life, and we can follow his development in this art right up to the last weeks before his death. We do not, however, know whether he also still wrote German poems. Most of his works were never printed, but a considerable pile of manuscripts, most of them autographs, survives in the Royal Library in Copenhagen. Besides the poems, there are Latin works of scholarship and various school texts. Among the learned works are detailed commentaries on the two perhaps most influential works on Latin poetic theory, the medieval *Poetria Nova* by Geoffrey of Vinsauf and Horace's *Ars Poetica*. However, a list of Lund's works which were to be found in the library of the book-collector Frederik Rostgaard at a certain point mentions quite a few titles that are no longer extant, and among these is a volume of *Poemata Germanica*. Its contents may have been the poems already known, since in his Latin manuscripts Lund often repeats poems from earlier days, also such that had already been published in print; but it may also have been German poetry from Lund's later years.

If so, it seems that all his life he kept the two ways of composing carefully apart. He has poems in which he cultivates exuberant forms, adding couplet to couplet in order to express the same idea in still new ways, and this might be considered a Baroque trait. However, his ancient model Ovid did exactly the same, and there is nothing in Lund's later poetry that cannot be considered strictly classical. The many revisions in his late manuscripts of his own poetry from earlier days generally tend to make their language as fluently classical as possible. I think this should be taken as another sign of the strength of the Latin tradition. Even to an innovator like Lund who had been among the first on the barricades of modernism, vernacular Baroque poetry must have been felt as a ripple on the surface of the ocean of Latin tradition.

Towards the end of the 17th century, however, we do find Latin poetry in Denmark which might be called Baroque. The statesman Peder Griffenfeld, who was also an excellent Latin poet, has left two poetical paraphrases of Biblical psalms. They were written in 1683, when he was in prison, and they express his grief and despair at his hard fate in a way close to the mature Baroque style we find in Thomas Kingo's poetry from the same period.

So it seems that the powerful vernacular Baroque did after all leave its mark on the old craft of composing in Latin; only it took much longer time than what I had first expected to find. Latin and the vernacular were closely related, but for many decades the influence was almost exclusively from Latin to the vernacular, even in cases where a poet mastered both idioms.¹¹

¹¹ I have published some recent papers on related topics: Latindigteren Zacharias Lund (1608-1667). *Fund og Forskning i Det kongelige Biblioteks samlinger* 33 (1994), pp. 19-34; Dänische Lateindichtung als Vermittlerin europäischer Kulturströmungen nach Dänemark 1550-1660. *Europa in Scandinavia. Kulturelle und soziale Dialoge in der frühen Neuzeit*. Red. Robert Bohn. *Studia septentrionalia* 2. Frankfurt am Main etc. 1994, pp. 85-90; En ønskedrøm. *Symbolae Septentrionales. Latin Studies Presented to Jan Öberg*. Red. Monika Asztalos, Claes Gejrot. Stockholm 1995, pp. 317-331; Eine humanistische Dichterfreundschaft des siebzehnten Jahrhunderts. *Humanismus im Norden. Frühneuzeitliche Rezeption antiker Kultur und Literatur an Nord- und Ostsee*. Red. Thomas Haye. *Chloe* 32. Amsterdam: Atlanta, 2000, pp. 256-287.