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LATIN LAPIDARY STYLE IN FINLAND

RAIJA SARASTI-WILENIUS

In the second half of 17th century a novel literary style came into fashion in Finland. It occurred most frequently in occasional literature, i.e. texts written for funerals, weddings, inaugurations, academic degree ceremonies, etc. A part or some parts of these publications were written in lapidary style and had an unusual visual form. In the following I shall try to throw some light on how this style manifested itself in Finland and how it was connected to European literature.

Lapidary style is neither verse nor ordinary prose. Lines of varying length are divided by the substance of the message, not by the requirements of metre. The visual form of the text is particularly important; it catches the reader's eye and produces a special effect by its lineation and often also by its varying size and type of print.¹ Sometimes each line contains an epigram or an individual idea.² The style has still to be distinguished from the figure lay-out, which does not contribute to the meaning of the text, but merely illustrates it.³

¹ J. Sparrow, *Visible Words: A Study of Inscriptions in and as Works of Art* (1969) 136.

² Cf. E.R. Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* (2nd edition, 1967) 292–293. See p. 125.

³ Cf. Apollinaire's poetry and Lewis Carroll's *Mouse's Tale* in *Alice in Wonderland*. There are some examples of figure lay-out in the occasional literature of 17th century Finland, e.g. in Mel. 989 and 1281 the text is printed in the form of a bowl to indicate celebration.

There has been some variation in the appropriate nomenclature for this individual style. Owing to the fact that it was much in vogue, especially during the Baroque Age in Finland, Kajanto prefers to call it the baroque epitaph.⁴ Ridderstad⁵ uses the Swedish word "stenstil" (lapidary style), whereas Mel(ander)⁶ in her bibliography uses the term "centrerad sats" (centred sentence). Little attention, however, has been paid to this style in the literary history. Sparrow's⁷ research has investigated the history and development of this style in Southern and Central Europe. Ridderstad's detailed study, on the other hand, deals particularly with the lapidary style in Sweden, with some observations about Finland as well. His reason for the lack of attention this style has received in literary history is that the style was closely connected to occasional literature, a genre which did not arouse any great interest. Moreover, Latin writings in Sweden and Finland were for a long time considered "unnationalistic" and of secondary importance.⁸

The style developed from the type of ancient inscriptions in which lines of varying length were arranged on both sides of an abstract vertical line. However, Sparrow emphasizes that ancient Greek and Roman, post-classical and mediaeval inscriptions cannot be considered aesthetic (or literary) works; their lineation does not contribute to the sense in the same way as the lapidary style does.⁹ It was in the 16th century when epigraphists first began to exploit the possibilities of lineated lapidary inscription.¹⁰ In the Italian Renaissance more and more attention was given to the typographical design and literary form of texts in different kinds of inscriptions. Finally, in the course of the 16th century, lineated inscription acquired a literary and artistic importance of its own and became a

⁴ I. Kajanto, *Humanism in a Christian Society I* (1989) 30–31.

⁵ P. Ridderstad, *Konsten att sätta punkt: Anteckningar om stenstilens historia 1400–1765* (1975).

⁶ T. Melander, *Personskrifter hänförande sig till Finland 1542–1713* (1951). The material I have used is mainly based on this bibliography.

⁷ See n. 1.

⁸ Ridderstad 237.

⁹ Sparrow 9–11.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* 137.

recognised literary form. The epigraphists of the 17th century transferred it from stone to paper.¹¹ The Jesuits in particular, who were interested in rhetoric and its possibilities, diligently cultivated the style. Lineated inscription is, in fact, closely connected to the rhetorical style known as mannerism.¹² Also, around the middle of the 17th century many works on literary theory drew parallels between the concept of *argutia*, a fashion of witty writing, and mannerism.¹³ Most important of the treatises was Emanuele Tesauro's *Il Cannocchiale Aristotelico*¹⁴ (1654) in which he shows that the lapidary form is the best accompaniment for witty writing. *Il Cannocchiale* became the basic work on lapidary writing.¹⁵ From Italy the style soon spread over the Alps throughout Europe. In Germany Christian Weise declared that the art of inscription had become *poesis hodiernorum politicorum*.¹⁶ Both Tesauro and Weise define *ars lapidaria* as lying mid-way between *ars oratoria* and *ars poetica*.¹⁷

The art of inscription came to Sweden in the 17th century. However, the development here did not go from incised text to lineated lapidary style printed on paper. Both forms appeared in Sweden at the same time.¹⁸ The famous poet Georg Stiernhielm was one of the first authors to use lineated inscription.¹⁹

¹¹ Ibid. 25.

¹² Mannerism is a style popular in the 17th century which made much use of rhetorical devices. See Curtius 273ff.

¹³ Ingenuity was thought of as the highest value of literature. See Curtius 293–301, Ridderstad 122.

¹⁴ I have had access to *Idea Argutae et Ingeniosae Dictionis, Ex Principis Aristotelicis* (Francofurti & Lipsiae 1698), which is the Latin translation of *Il Cannocchiale*.

¹⁵ Sparrow 109–122; Ridderstad 108–123.

¹⁶ See Chr. Weise, *De Poesi Hodiernorum Politicorum Sive De Argutis Inscriptionibus*, (Weissenfels 1678). According to Weise, Justus Lipsius, whose works were well known at Turku, was the father of witty inscription and the Jesuits increased its popularity. Cf. W. Barner, *Barockrhetorik* (1970) 358, Sparrow 106–109.

¹⁷ Tesauro 593. Cf. Sparrow 108, Ridderstad 114.

¹⁸ Ridderstad 227.

¹⁹ Funeral inscription to Johan Skytte's daughter, Vendela, who died in 1629. See Ridderstad 228–229, 232.

Approximately twenty years later the publication to the memory of student Gustaf Silferstierna in 1651 proved to be epoch-making. It consists of three funeral orations by three foreign scholars Johan Loccenius, Johan Henrik Boecler and Johannes Scheffer, who had been invited to Sweden by Queen Christina. At the end of each oration there is a kind of fictive epitaph; Boecler's and Scheffer's epitaphs are composed in lapidary style. Soon after this, the new style also became popular among students.²⁰ The popularity of lapidary style in Sweden is largely attributed to Scheffer's much-used handbook, *Gymnasium styli*,²¹ which presents the theory and practice of lapidary style.

According to Melander, the first example of lapidary style in Finland is by Peter Wanaeus in 1652. Wanaeus uses both types of traditional inscription: he begins with the lineated style but changes after the heading *Epitaphium* to a style in which the left margin is even and the text, which is punctuated, runs like normal prose. Wanaeus had evidently been influenced by Swedish examples, where it was typical of the early days of lapidary style that texts were not systematically lineated.²² In Turku he probably had no models. Furthermore, the instruction of eloquence was neglected when Johan Terserus the Younger (1640–49) and Samuel Hartman (1650–53) were holding the chair. They were not likely to have introduced students to the new style.²³

About the same time (1654–55) in Tartu, Olof Wexionius²⁴ published wholly lineated prose epitaphs.²⁵ The addressees of these writings were not Finnish by nationality and it is possible that the writings were not known in

²⁰ Ridderstad 239–240.

²¹ *Gymnasium styli* was originally published in 1657. I have used the edition which was printed in Jena in 1678 together with his *De stylo*.

²² Jean Hugueton's *Elogium Sveciae* (1629), for instance, is composed by varying these styles. See Ridderstad 229. The above mentioned (n. 19) Stiernhielm's text for Vendela Skytte's memory is not lineated all through either; ordinary prose intervenes between sections in lapidary style.

²³ I. Heikel, *Filologins studium vid Åbo universitet* (1894) 47–51. Their successor Enevald Svenonius (1654–60) did not use lapidary style either.

²⁴ Wexionius had studied at Turku and held the Chair of Political Sciences and History at Tartu 1652–56. W. Lagus, *Åbo akademis studentmatrikel I* (1891) 27.

²⁵ Mel. 328, 332, 344.

Finland – not at least before Wexionius's return to Turku in 1656. In Stockholm in 1656 a lapidary piece appeared written by Anders Julinus, who had studied at Turku since 1652. Ridderstad poses the question whether Julinus learned to use the new style at Turku.²⁶ I find it very unlikely. Wanaeus's text was at that time still the only printed example of the style in Finland. I am more inclined to think that Stiernhielm and the foreign scholars (Scheffer, Boecler) in Sweden served as models for Julinus, who himself was a Swede by birth.

The lapidary style really came to Latin occasional literature written in Finland in the second half of the 1660's. Ridderstad, grounding his statement on Melander's bibliography, says that the first Finnish lapidary style is a text for Georg Alanus's funeral composed by the Professor of Eloquence, Martin Miltopaeus, in 1664.²⁷ However, this text, defined as "centrerad sats" by Melander, turns out to be a poem in distichs.²⁸ The poem, it is true, is printed with capital letters and its form differs from normal printed poetry in that the last words of many verses have been printed on their own lines owing to the lack of space. But it is poetry, not lapidary style. The first Finnish lapidary style which I have been able to discover is from 1665.²⁹ It is Johannes Flachsenius's lineated prose epitaph appended to the funeral oration on Professor Anders Thuronius. It is printed in two columns, like a couple of Flachsenius's later pieces in lapidary style.³⁰

The lapidary style became much more popular in the 1670's. The

²⁶ Ridderstad 240.

²⁷ Mel. 476; Ridderstad 248. It seems that Wanaeus's text has escaped Ridderstad's notice.

²⁸ The incipit: "*Sic vivit: tumulo decuit super addere carmen: / De patria hoc meritus doctor Alanus erat*". Melander also incorrectly defines number 636, a piece by Gabriel Wallenius, as "centrerad sats", although it is again a question of poetry in distichs (the incipit: "*Oxenstierniadum celebri de stirpe propago, / Carole, Nunc laudes ordiar unde tuas?*"). Gabriel Wallenius – it is true – frequently used lapidary composition in other connections (see p. 128).

²⁹ If we ignore Wanaeus's text, which is very short and does not quite represent lapidary style in the proper sense of the word (see p. 126).

³⁰ Normally, lapidary writings were printed in one column irrespective of the format of the publication. There are few exceptions, such as Johannes Flachsenius's writings in quarto (also Mel. 517) and Daniel Achrelius's one piece in folio (Mel. 1089).

celebrated orator and Professor of Eloquence, Daniel Achrelius, began then to cultivate the new style. With good reason he can be considered not only the establisher but the foremost representative of lapidary style in Finnish occasional literature.³¹ The 1680's and the 1690's were the years in which the style truly flourished; from each decade we know of more than 30 lapidary writings. In the beginning of the 18th century the number suddenly decreases and lapidary style seems to go out of fashion. Only 7 examples are extant from the first 13 years of the century.³² The same phenomenon is to be seen in Sweden, where the popularity of Latin lapidary style begins to decline as early as the 1690's, and the real fall comes in the 1710's.³³ It should be pointed out, however, that specimens were still printed throughout the 18th century in both countries, and in 18th century Sweden the lapidary form was frequently used for pieces in the vernacular language.³⁴ But in Finland the Swedish lapidary style never gained similar popularity.

On the whole, from the period 1665–1713 there are a little more than 100 extant printed examples of lapidary style in Finland.³⁵ About 20% of them are composed by Daniel Achrelius. As Professor of Eloquence (1679–92) he might even have given some instruction in composing the new style in the style exercises he supervised. Besides Achrelius, among the most diligent cultivators of the style were Librarian Gabriel Wallenius and Professors Mathias Svederus and Anders Wanochius.

Lapidary composition was used in different contexts. Most frequently it is to be found in texts for funerals (about 53% of the cases), which is natural considering its origin, inscriptions on tombs. About 42% are congratulations for degree ceremonies, weddings, birthdays and inaugurations. Wedding congratulations do not have any direct connection to the tradition of the art of

³¹ Cf. Ridderstad 247–248.

³² Melander's bibliography goes up to 1713, the year of Russian occupation (see n. 6).

³³ Ridderstad 403.

³⁴ Carl Gustaf Tessin (1695–1770) was the most famous lapidary writer in Swedish. It was he who also established the term "stenstil". Ridderstad 322–351.

³⁵ Title-pages and short dedications are not included in this number.

inscription. Nevertheless, lapidary style was used for this celebration as well,³⁶ though only in the 1670's and the beginning of the 1680's. Also in Sweden it was particularly popular in wedding writings in the 1670's.³⁷ The remaining 5% consist of invitations for different occasions composed by a rector at a given time, the so-called academic programmes.³⁸ Moreover, all the title-pages³⁹ of printed works and sometimes also the dedications⁴⁰ were formed inscriptionally.

The lapidary writings vary in length from some 20 up to around 200 lines.⁴¹ Often lineated prose epitaphs were subjoined to funeral orations (*parentationes*) as fictive epitaphs or they were one or several authors' contribution to a collective publication, which could contain also ordinary prose and poetry. Sometimes a whole publication was composed using the style. Especially towards the end of the century these kinds of publications increased in number. They are also the longest examples of lapidary style, e.g. the funeral epitaphs on Enevald Svenonius⁴² (159 lines), Daniel Gyldenstolpe⁴³ (182 lines), Simon Paulinus⁴⁴ (about 200 lines) and Anna Rudeen (née Brunell)⁴⁵ (190 lines) are completely composed in lapidary style.

³⁶ 25% of all the congratulations in lapidary style are addressed to bridal couples.

³⁷ Ridderstad 238.

³⁸ Cf. Ridderstad 255. In Sweden lapidary style was not greatly used in academic programmes. It seems that in Finland it was somewhat more general; Daniel Achrelius and Martin Miltopaeus in particular quite often applied the style to academic programmes as well, e.g. Mel. 551, 639, 963, 1115, 1177.

³⁹ Title-pages form their own special story. Ridderstad has a separate chapter on the history and development of title-pages 368ff. See also A.F. Johnson, *One Hundred Title-pages 1500–1800* (1928).

⁴⁰ In Sweden lapidary style begins to be general in dedications after the middle of the 17th century, Ridderstad 234. In Finland it is not general before the end of the century and even then prose dedications are in the majority.

⁴¹ E.g. Mel. 685 and 1263. Cf. Kajanto, *Humanism I* 30.

⁴² Mel. 1119 signed by J. F. 1688.

⁴³ Mel. 1263 by Johan Forssteen 1691.

⁴⁴ Mel. 1329 by Anders Heinricius 1692.

⁴⁵ Mel. 1488 by Johannes Helinus 1695.

In the early days of its literary existence lapidary style, like the ancient inscriptions, often contained punctuation marks between every word. This practice continued partly in the later development of the style. The punctuation marks became a clear characteristic for the 18th century's Swedish lapidary style.⁴⁶ On the other hand, in the 17th century the punctuation marks were in no way a dominant distinctive sign in Latin prose epitaphs. Only about 13% of the Finnish material is punctuated. It is in fact largely dependent on the author's preference whether he uses punctuation marks or not. According to Ridderstad⁴⁷, Achrelius's lapidary style is not normally punctuated. To be precise, he never uses punctuation – and neither does Anders Wanochius. Mathias Svederus, Gabriel Wallenius and Nils Lietzen the Younger for their part prefer punctuated style.⁴⁸ The punctuated lapidary pieces are sometimes, but not necessarily always, printed with capital letters.⁴⁹

Roughly speaking, lapidary writings do not differ very much stylistically from contemporary Latin occasional literature.⁵⁰ They are somewhat clearer than Baroque prose in many orations. There are differences between single authors but generally humanistic rhetoric also influenced the lapidary style. Judging from Achrelius, it is evident that rhetorical devices are not so abundant in his lapidary writings as in his prose texts. Largely the same figures which are used in prose occur most frequently in the lapidary writings: tricolon (sometimes of increasing intensity), anaphora, alliteration, synonyms and enumeration.⁵¹ Many of the figures come out clearly and indeed visually in lapidary form. New lines often begin with anaphora and different inflectional forms of polyptoton, e.g.: "*Illam Matrem Omnibus Amicam!*, / *Illud Nomen Terris Salutare!* / *Illam*

⁴⁶ Ridderstad 310–321.

⁴⁷ Ridderstad 248.

⁴⁸ E.g. Mel. 688, 807, 808, 860, 1168, 1313, 1408, 1456.

⁴⁹ E.g. Mel. 521, 533, 654, 689, 1408, 1456.

⁵⁰ On the other hand occasional literature differed greatly from contemporary learned Latin. Cf. J. Scheffer, *De stylo* 16–18, Kajanto, *Arctos* 24 (1990) 77.

⁵¹ The coordination of the items enumerated is largely asyndetic and unsystematic.

Virtutem Orbi Necessariam!"⁵². Hyperbaton, too, which was much used in the Neo-Latin literature in the Baroque Age⁵³, can be easily recognized when the first and last word of one line constitute the first and the last word of the phrase: "*Nobis variis publicae sortis casibus expositis, / Nobis ludicris fortunae lusibus subjectis, / Nobis incertis passibus in hac vita errantibus*"⁵⁴. In this way Achrelius uses in lapidary style 3–5 intervening words to separate a phrase, whereas in prose he never uses more than two.

What were the Turku authors' conceptions of this literary style? Lapidary pieces were often called *elogium* or *epitaphium*, sometimes *titulus* or even *monumentum* (which produces the impression of an incised text on a tomb or monument.⁵⁵) Unfortunately, the Professors of Eloquence, Martin Miltopaeus and Daniel Achrelius, have not dealt with the style in their manuals on rhetoric.⁵⁶ Scheffer in his *Gymnasium styli*, which was well known at Turku⁵⁷, defines *epitaphium* as the text recited at a funeral whereas "...*non recitari elogium sed tumulo inscribi*".⁵⁸ *Elogium* was generally connected to lapidary style in Italy in the first half of the 17th century and in Sweden after the issue of Scheffer's book.⁵⁹ In the Finnish material, too, it is used most frequently to give a title to lapidary pieces. In addition, the term *titulus* was generally attributed to

⁵² Mel. 1089.

⁵³ E. Tengström, *A Latin Funeral Oration from Early 18th Century Sweden* (1983) 22.

⁵⁴ Mel. 1199. Besides hyperbaton, there is also an example of anaphora. Often two rhetorical devices occur together.

⁵⁵ These terms often occur at the end of a lapidary piece before the author's name in phrases like *monumentum / elogium / epitaphium erexit / adposuit / dicavit* and so forth, e.g. Mel. 672, 694, 963, 1089, 1302.

⁵⁶ M. Miltopaeus, *Institutiones Oratoriae* (Aboae 1669); D. Achrelius, *Oratoria* (Aboae 1687).

⁵⁷ J.C. Scaliger's work *Poetices libri septem* (1561) still formed the accepted pattern of literary theory at Turku. It was the most important work on poetry in the Nordic countries well into the 18th century. So his ideas about *epitaphium*, *elogium* etc. influenced directly and also through Scheffer and other contemporary teachers. Cf. Scaliger 52, 168, Ridderstad 100ff.

⁵⁸ According to Scheffer *elogium* is *vulgo* and incorrectly named *epitaphium*. Scheffer, *Gymnasium styli* 146.

⁵⁹ Ridderstad 234–235.

lapidary style.⁶⁰

Did the authors in Turku see the style as a link with the ancient tradition of inscription? In many respects the style was new though it did include some elements which derive from ancient or later inscriptions. The most conspicuous classical loan – to mention but one – is an address to a presumed wayfarer (*viator*).⁶¹ The contemporary equivalent, due to the literary nature of these texts, was an address to the reader (*lector*).⁶² The scholars at Turku were likely to be aware of the former tradition. Gruter's famous edition of inscriptions was available at the University Library⁶³ and in Sweden there were a large number of other famous collections of inscriptions.⁶⁴ Travels to European cities and universities could offer the possibility of actually seeing the inscriptions for oneself as well as gaining access to relevant literature. However, most if not all of the composers of the style at Turku must have become acquainted with the inscriptional tradition mainly through the available books.⁶⁵

The lineated epitaphs appended as fictive epitaphs to funeral orations are probably merely literary. Nevertheless, we cannot totally ignore the possibility that some of them could have been real epitaphs incised on tombs.⁶⁶ In the Cathedral of Turku there are some epitaphs from the same period which resemble these fictive ones.⁶⁷

⁶⁰ Ibid. 134–135.

⁶¹ See e.g. Mel. 518, 551, 657, 676, 690, 770. Cf. Kajanto, *Humanism I* 32. See also Kajanto, *Classical and Christian: Studies in the Latin Epitaphs of Medieval and Renaissance Rome* (1980) 51–56, 81.

⁶² Especially Achrelius often addresses the *lector*, e.g. Mel. 600, 601, 633, 685.

⁶³ G. Wallenius – P. Laurbecchius, *Bibliotheca Regiae Academiae Aboensis* (Aboae 1682).

⁶⁴ E.g. Apianus's and Tesauros *Inscriptiones*. See Ridderstad 192–194.

⁶⁵ Achrelius, who in many orations praises the importance of peregrination, never himself moved from Turku. Wallenius and Wanochius travelled between Finland and Sweden. Svederus was the only one of these four most frequent users of the style who had studied abroad. J.J. Tengström, *Finska universitets fordna procancellorer samt facultaternas medlemmar och adjuncter* (1836) 137–138, 152–154. A. Liljenstrand, *Juridikens studium vid Åbo universitet* (1890) 41–42.

⁶⁶ Cf. Kajanto, *Humanism I* 32 n. 14.

⁶⁷ Professor Johan Thorwöste's tomb from the year 1732 has the only lineated epitaph. See H.

In conclusion, we should ask why the lapidary style was so popular in the last two decades of the 17th century, and then suddenly died away. Its popularity may well be due to the greater freedom it gave a writer who was "thinking in lines" to emphasize his points and to make his message richer in nuances than was possible in conventional prose and verse. It seems that the new style fascinated and satisfied those authors who for a change wanted to write something other than prose and at the same time wanted to avoid metrical rules and restrictions.⁶⁸ This is particularly evident with the foremost representative of the style, Daniel Achrelius.⁶⁹ In Finland lapidary composition was strictly bound up with the Latin language, thus the demise of the style is at least partly due to the declining popularity of Latin occasional literature. Swedish began to be used more and more in the beginning of the 18th century. In Sweden vernacular lapidary style became very popular but in Finland, like in most European countries,⁷⁰ it never gained widespread support.

Laaksonen, *Latinska inskrifter i Åbo* (1984) 20. Laaksonen thinks it possible that Achrelius or Wallenius could have formulated the texts for Marshal Åke Tott's sepulchral monument (1678) and for Queen Karin Månsdotter's epitaph (1678). *Ibid.* 24ff, 80.

⁶⁸ Cf. G. Highet, *The Classical Tradition* (7th edition, 1971) 322.

⁶⁹ His extensive literary production consists of learned and oratorical Latin prose and Swedish poetry. His work contains very few examples of Latin verse. They are somewhat clumsy and also include some incorrect prosody, e.g. in *Mel.* 1177.

⁷⁰ Cf. Sparrow 138–139.

Quisquis es mortalium!
 confiste illic, seposito opinionis morbo,
 dum Justa
 lectissimæ Matronæ
M A R I Æ Gerdt
 persolvas.
 Quæ
 honestis orta Parentibus
 mox
 pijs Christianorum Exercitijs & honestis laboribus
 sic assvefacta fuit
 ut
 nunquam
 pietate in Deum
 charitate adversus proximum
 comitate erga singulos
 Superaretur.
 Igitur
 Sic semper Deo & sibi vixit
 ut
 totam vitam
 accusare nemo possit
 præter INVIDIAM.
 Sed
 tuta jam cum Angelorum choro sanctè tripudiat
 nova arcanorum miracula acutè perscrutatur,
 æterna júbila in Sanctorum collegijs pandit.
 Nunc lector!
 abi & perpende
 quantas nugas hæc tumuli incola effugit
 & placidè
 ad
 Inestimabiles Cælestium regionum concessus
 migravit;
 unde deridet
 profundam hominum stultitiam
 Quæ
 Inaudita indies procudit.
JACOBUS FALANDER, O-Borbn.

Lapidary piece composed by Jakob Falander for Maria Gerdt's memory in 1678. In the last sentence there is an address to the reader (*lector*).