

YOUNG BROCKMANN ON POETICS

One of the challenges in the reconstruction of the poetological program of Reiner Brockmann (1609–1648), the author of the first secular poems in Estonian, is the absence of personalia from his youth. Therefore it is difficult to decide which of his poetic principles had been acquired in Germany and which of them evolved in Estonia. Three Brockmann's autographs from September 1629 to October 1633 are retained in Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz Library in Hannover, among the correspondence of the German scholarly family Meibom of the early modern era. In addition, Brockmann published 1630 a greeting poem on the occasion of the publication of the *Irenaromachia* by Ernst Stapel.

These newly founded sources indicate that in his early twenties Brockmann lived through an intense period of contemplation of theoretical as well as practical issues of poetry. In all his writings of the Hamburg-Rostock period Brockmann discusses the poetical practices of the time, including issues like versification, structure, choice of subjects and motifs, as well as the choice of a proper measure to express certain feelings. Nevertheless, the poetological interests of young Brockmann must have been merely theoretical as his own poems of that period were simple anagram poems consisting of elegiac distichs without any further experiments on form, language or meter. The possibility of vernaculars becoming a medium of poetry had not entered his mind yet, not even if the occasion to be celebrated was the publication of a vernacular book. At that time Brockmann makes no mention of Opitz or any other advocate of vernacular poetry. Consequently the winds of change did not touch Brockmann's poetic oeuvre until his settling down in Tallinn in 1634. The reason why it was Brockmann who went along with the multilingual and multiform poetic tradition practised in Tallinn, and not the rest of the literati of Tallinn Gymnasium, can probably be explained by Brockmann's active theoretical reflections on poetic issues in his pre-Tallinn period.