

Bibliotekarstudentens nettleksikon om litteratur og medier

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Ekspansjonslyrikk

(_sjanger) Lange dikt som ikke primært er fortellende (episke), men beskrivende. Et ekspansjonsdikt er et “long, plotless, open-ended poem” (Fender 1977 s. 8). Det beskrivende kan gli over i lyriske “kataloger”, en slags opplistinger (“oppramsingslyrikk”). Det er maksimalistiske dikt som ofte omfatter opplysninger om geografi, historie, dyreliv, planteliv, dikterens personlige minner m.m. Diktene har en “uvanlig fleksibilitet [...] gjennom den rapsodiske oppbygningen som kjennetegner dem” (Hamburger 1985 s. 78). Poeten kan gjennom slike dikt bli “en eventyrer gjennom alle tider og rom” (Friedrich 1988 s. 201). Konsentrasjonslyrikk er preget av minimalisme (reduksjon), ekspansjonslyrikk derimot av maksimalisme, svulmende utvidelse, opphopning, at et stort mangfold er inkludert.

I *Engle i sneen: Lyrik og prosa i 90erne* (2000) skriver den danske litteraturforskeren Erik Skyum-Nielsen om to motpoler: en minimalistisk og “anorektisk” litteratur og en encyklopedisk og “bulemisk” litteratur.

Ekspansjonslyrikk er et lyrisk uttrykk som tenderer mot å være “altoppslukende og ekspanderende” (Kittang og Aarseth 1991 s. 232). Slik lyrikk kan være preget av gjentakelser og kataloglignende partier, generelt av en additiv og løs struktur. Dikteren har vanligvis en “eruptiv dikterfantasi” (Kittang og Aarseth 1991 s. 235), og diktene har vanligvis noe totalomfattende og -oppslukende ved seg. Det omfattende ved diktningen, særlig hvis det inkluderer mye fra folks hverdagsliv, kan oppfattes som en demokratisk tendens (Friedrich 1988 s. 295).

“In the face of multiple chronologies, many poets turn to synchronicity (the simultaneous existence of all places & times) as a basic organizing principle. As a method, a process of making the poem, this becomes “collage.” ” (Jerome Rothenberg sitert fra Perloff 1990 s. 138) “The correct pictorial analogy to these poems would be a work of art made up of fragments – not a mosaic, but a collage or cubist painting, in which the constituent parts, by virtue of their shape or the material from which they are cut, retain an interest as separate objects. [...] Length is also a useful way of conveying the sense of the accidental because it arouses expectations of formal structure which can then be denied the reader.” (Fender 1977 s. 8-9) Leseren skal oppleve et “universe of fluid force” (Kenner 1975 s. 544).

Den tyske dikteren Günter Herburger forsvarte lange dikt som er fulle av fakta og sanne beskrivelser, dikt som ligner “fullstappede skuffer” (sitert fra Willberg 1989 s. 60).

I ekspansjonsdikt er det nesten uunngåelig at det subtile og det trivielle støter sammen, og at litterære og hverdagslige uttrykk “leker med hverandre – som hund og katt” (Walter Höllerer sitert fra Willberg 1989 s. 61). “Det lange dikt tillater banaliteter [...] Uttrykk som er subtile og banale, litterære og hverdagslige finnes med nødvendighet i det lange dikt” (Völker 1986 s. 91-92).

Den amerikanske poeten Robert Lowell “thought a mass of unperfected writing might generate a greater cumulative power than a smaller, more unified volume of finer work. Like every creator of a poetic heap since Pound, he hoped that recurrent themes might transform the heap into a whole.” (Perkins 1987 s. 415)

“Den som skriver et langt dikt, gir seg selv perspektiver til å se verden mer frimodig, til å opponere mot den rådende fastlåsthet og kortpustethet.” (Walter Höllerer i Völker 1986 s. 90)

Eksempler:

Walt Whitman: *Leaves of Grass* (1855)

Hart Crane: *The Bridge* (1930)

Pablo Neruda: *Den store sangen* (1950)

Ezra Pound: *The Cantos* (skrevet fra ca. 1915 og publisert i ulike deler med forskjellige titler fram til 1969)

Ifølge Stephen Gill var amerikaneren Walt Whitman (i likhet med den engelske romantiske poeten William Wordsworth) en dikter som “remoulded his greatest work to make it commensurate with the grandeur of his own self-projection.” (Gill 1991 s. 106) Whitmans lange dikt “Song of Myself” (1855; i *Leaves of Grass*) har blitt kalt en jublende bønn (“a jubilant prayer”) og en feiring av det nye amerikanske mennesket i en “expansive, free-flowing style” (Ro 1997 s. 46 og 62). Whitmans innstilling synes “demokratisk” på livets vegne: Alle (alt) skal med. Whitman skapte en slags “simultanisme” som framstiller fenomener som samtidige, også når de ikke har noe med hverandre å gjøre (Diederichs 2004 s. 252).

Whitman “mixed Beowulf, Broadway, and the Bible to make his own literary concoctions. Gradually Whitman perfected a new style and rhythm; he became “a man standing in the open air.” With a directness and honesty that is too daring to be merely conceited, he announced he was his own chief subject. [...] Whitman

himself drew from various European forms and canons – dream visions, sagas, German mystical thought, for example – but he was a great and original craftsman. He developed an elaborate and complicated system of special devices (repetition, hovering accents, and caesuras) and lied when he claimed “I have never given any study to mere expression.” [...] His style was so new, so unorthodox, that no one wanted to print his collected poems called *Leaves of Grass*. So Whitman set up, printed, and distributed the book himself. Ameristyle dates from that book, that year (1855). The opening inscriptions made it clear what was to be encompassed – physiology from top to toe; a simple separate person; the passion, pulse, and power of Modern Man. “I know perfectly well my own egotism,” Whitman admitted with disarming frankness, “Know my omnivorous lines and must not write any less.” He described dirt farmers, prostitutes, Negroes, the body electric, city of orgies, ganders that say *Ya-honk* in the cool night. There had never been a book like this, full of barbaric yawps that itched the ears.” (Fishwick 1974 s. 118-119)

“The first edition of *Leaves of Grass*, the collection of poems which was to form his life work and which he was to quadruple in size by the time he died, appeared in 1855. [...] *Drum Taps*, his collection of civil war poems, was published in 1865, and incorporated into the fourth edition of *Leaves of Grass*, 1867. [...] Though it includes beautiful, short love lyrics and meditations of a relatively private nature, its predominant form is the long, prophetic address to the public ‘I’ to the facts of the ordinary, contemporary world. In his poetry, as he wrote in ‘A Backward Glance O’er Travel’d Roads’, Whitman wanted ‘none of the stock ornamentation, or choice plots of love or war, or high, exceptional personages of Old-World song ... no legend, or myth, or romance, nor euphemism, nor rhyme. But the broadest average of humanity and its identities ... in each of the countless examples and practical occupations in the United States to-day.’ ” (Fender 1977 s. 13)

Whitman uttalte at “the poet must now turn ‘to facts, to science, and to common lives’ [...] Whitman’s poetic voice not only records the ordinary world; it announces the cosmic plan linking its past, present and future.” (Fender 1977 s. 14) Dikterens innsikter gjør at diktene får en både “public” og “prophetic style” (s. 14), de er både nasjonale og kosmiske.

Whitman formidler i sin diktning en følelse som ligner den hos panteisten Baruch Spinoza, at helheten er guddommelig. Og Whitman opplever seg som ett med verden i all dens mangfoldighet, og vil vise sin solidaritet med alt som lever. Han vil gripe eller omfavne mest mulig av verden og virkeligheten gjennom sine tekster, fra detaljer til totaliteten. Han har et begjær rettet mot verden som har blitt kalt “panseksualitet” (Peter Craven: “Although Whitman’s impulses were homoerotic, he was *pansexual* in the sense that he could find the driving force of something such as sex in almost everything ...”). Han “tries to prove that he both encompasses and is indistinguishable from the universe. [...] the longing for communion with every living being and a connection that makes use of both the body and the soul [...] “I do not ask the wounded person how he feels, I myself become the wounded

person” ” (<https://www.sparknotes.com/poetry/whitman/section2/>; lesedato 02.10.18).

“Walt Whitman’s “Song of Myself” is the great American epic poem and has often been read as the poem that best captures the tensions and conflicting qualities that define what we might call the “American democratic self.” [...] He sets out to expand the boundaries of the self to include, first, all fellow Americans, then the entire world, and ultimately the cosmos. When we come to see just how vast the self can be, what can we do but celebrate it by returning to it again and again? Throughout the poem, Whitman probes the question of how large the new democratic self can become before it dissipates into contradiction and fragmentation, and each time he seems to reach the limit, he dilates even more. In the first three lines, he abandons the two main things that separate people, that create animosity, jealousy, and war – beliefs and possessions: “what I assume you shall assume, / For every atom belonging to you as good belongs to me.” At every level of our being, we are incessantly transferring and exchanging materials, ideas, emotions, affections. The atoms that yesterday composed a living cow or a growing plant today are part of us, as the eternal atoms of the universe continue their nonstop interaction and rearrangement.” (<http://iwp.uiowa.edu/whitmanweb/en/section-1#>; lesedato 10.08.15)

Whitman bruker i sine dikt noen indianske navn på kjente steder i USA, f.eks. Paumanok i stedet for Long Island og Mannahatta for Manhattan (Fender 1977 s. 15). Diktet “Starting from Paumanok” inneholder verselinjene “Okonee, Koosa, Ottawa, Monongahela, Sauk, Natchez, Chattahoochee, Kaqueta, Oronoco, / Wabash, Miami, Saginaw, Chippewa, Oshkosh, Walla-Walla”. Dette er navnene på nordamerikanske indianerstammer, og ordene lever videre som geografiske betegnelser.

Det skjer en sammendiktning av elementer som ellers kan oppfattes som spredt og isolert. Den amerikanske essayisten og dikteren Ralph Waldo Emerson roste førsteutgaven av *Leaves of Grass*, men “also wondered whether a less sympathetic reader might mistake it for an ‘an auctioneer’s inventory of a warehouse’ ” (Emerson i et brev fra 1856; her sitert fra Fender 1977 s. 4).

Knut Hamsun skrev om Whitmans dikt: “Forfatteren kalder selv dette Arbejde Sange, (...) Det er da i Virkeligheden heller ikke Sange, ikke mer end Multiplikationstabellen er en Sang; (...) – jeg vil i al Beskedenhet og simpelthen kalde Walt Whitman en Vild, han er en Naturlyd i et udyrket Urland.” (sitert fra *Bokvennen* nr. 2 i 1994 s. 15-16). Hamsun skrev dessuten i *Fra det moderne Amerikas Aandsliv* (1889) om Whitmans “primitivt-tøjlesløse Følelsesliv”. Presten Hans Tambs Lyche hevdet at det i Whitmans dikt kan være “linier, der gjør samme virkning paa en, som en mjauende kats indtræden paa scenen midt i det mest gribende optrin” (sitert fra *Bokvennen* nr. 2 i 1994 s. 16). Litteraturhistorikeren Just Bing hevdet at Whitman blander “tørre Ramser og storslagne Fantasi-Syner”, mens

Vilhelm Troye tvilte på om Whitmans “uartikulerte udbrudd og skrig kan kaldes poesi” (s. 16 og s. 18).

“Når Walt Whitman besynger det nye landet i diktverket *Leaves of Grass* (1855) og erklærer “I contain multitudes”, er det præriens velde som er tatt opp i det amerikanske selvet.” (Olaf Haagensen i *Morgenbladet* 9.–15. desember 2016 s. 38)

“The Boston Intelligencer found neither wit nor method in his [Whitmans] “disjointed babbling.” Whittier could say nothing – he quickly burned his copy of *Leaves of Grass*. A century later we recognize in Walt Whitman one of the authentic voices of his day and the New World. The word that best summarizes him is *fluid*. Words, thoughts, phrases, ideas flow, expressing an inexhaustible interest and faith in the world around him. As his critics point out, there are few good lines in his poems. He didn’t write them to be dissected, line by line, and analyzed. They must be felt, being more visceral than intellectual. He draws the reader into the poem, intriguing him with specific details, but revealing finally a world floating in space.” (Fishwick 1974 s. 119)

Hart Cranes *The Bridge* har tittel etter den lange Brooklyn-broen. “The track of the poem’s meditation moves from a paean of mystical intensity celebrating the links across time and space symbolized by the Brooklyn Bridge, to a kind of prelude drawn from American prehistory, in which the European discoverer, having completed his work, returns eastwards to his home. Then, following a description of an American east-coast harbour in the present day, the scene moves, via an urban subway, then a main-line railroad, and finally a river, both westwards and into the past, where the description of an Indian dance celebrates the closest connection made in the poem between the American inhabitant and his ‘soil’. At ‘Indiana’ the poem turns again towards the east and the present: the widow and son of a gold miner, whose western adventure proved disappointing, return eastward – she to a farm and he to sea. Through the celebration of another frontier of American technology – the sea – the poem moves to the present day, and finally to the metropolis. The rest of *The Bridge* examines the present, sometimes critically and sometimes hopefully, in the light of what the poem has retrieved from the American past.” (Fender 1977 s. 41)

“Hart Crane’s long poem *The Bridge* has steadily grown in stature since it was published in 1930. At first branded a noble failure by a few influential critics – a charge that became conventional wisdom – this panoramic work is now widely regarded as one of the finest achievements of twentieth-century American poetry. It unites mythology and modernity as a means of coming to terms with the promises, both kept and broken, of American experience. *The Bridge* is also very difficult. It is well loved but not well understood. Obscure and indirect allusions abound in it, some of them at surprisingly fine levels of detail. The many references to matters of everyday life in the 1920s may baffle or elude today’s readers. The elaborate compound metaphors that distinguish Crane’s style bring together diverse sources

in ways that make it hard to say what, if anything, is going on in the text. The poem is replete with topical and geographical references that demand explication as well as identification. [...] the poem's labyrinthine complexities and to its dense network of allusions – the thousands of strands that, Crane boasted, had to be sorted out, researched, and interwoven to compose the work.” (Lawrence Kramer i <https://muse.jhu.edu/books/9780823248735>; lesedato 30.09.15)

“Crane conceived his epic *The Bridge* as a reply to [T. S. Eliots] *The Waste Land*. He hoped to carry Eliot's methods into a celebration, altogether in the spirit of [Walt] Whitman, of American experience, and finally into mystical ecstasy.” (Perkins 1987 s. 7) “*The Bridge* carried the legacy of Whitman into the urban, industrial world of the twentieth century.” (Perkins 1987 s. 70)

Litteraturforskeren Hugh Kenner hevdet at den amerikanske dikteren Ezra Pounds store tema i *The Cantos* var “the coming and going of vortices in time's river” (1975 s. 360). Diktene har en spesiell “inclusiveness” (s. 378): “All manner of modern preoccupations, it was clear, linguistics, anthropology, biology, folklore, economics, so interrogate present phenomena as to open up tunnels in time, down which we see to an archetypal past whose shadows, under our transparent present, lend weight and nerve and import.” (s. 381) “One of Pound's main motives in the *Cantos*, [Michael A.] Bernstein argues, is to challenge the dominance the novel had achieved by the end of the nineteenth century as the genre that could engage political, economic, historical, and social realities.” (Perloff 1990 s. 134) Pound har en “multi-disciplinary poetics, gleaned from “Mauberly” and the *Cantos*: “Beauty is sexual, and sexuality / Is the fertility of the earth and the fertility / Of the earth is economics.” ” (https://www.poetryfoundation.org/uploads/magazine/1_2016.pdf; lesedato 24.01.17)

Pounds lange dikt er en “composition by field” (Charles Olson sitert fra Perloff 1993 s. 199). “[M]ost of the references in the passage cut across to earlier or later *Cantos*. The circle of fragments becomes wider and wider.” (Perloff 1993 s. 195) “The first problem is the poem's range of reference, including the Greek and Latin classics, Chinese and Medieval Italian history, detailed legal and economic theory, and the autobiographical details of a poet who has lived in Mid-West and Eastern America, London, Paris and Italy for long periods. The poem also includes the full range of reading of an extremely well-read man, another fact which as alienated those readers who are reluctant to dig into the poem for its treasures. [...] Pound's epic ranges over most of the world's areas and cultures.” (Merchant 1986 s. 86-87 og 89)

“The old reverence before sacred nature is gone in the modern world. This fact connects, Pound believed, with the artistically unproductive, deeply unnatural character of modern life, and the *Cantos* facilitate comparison by placing their images or evocations of the ideal next to other images of venal art, sterile luxury, inert sloth, ruthless greed and swindles.” (Perkins 1987 s. 238)

I 1925 publiserste Pound *A Draft of XVI. Cantos of Ezra Pound for the Beginning of a Poem of some Length now first made into a Book*. Disse 16 delene er “a compendium of his interests and styles: Seafarer, Imagism, Provençal versions, Chinese poetry, contemporary satires, vision-poems, dramatic monologues, elegies. These styles help us block the sequence into five groups, of which only the third, the Malatesta group, offers a wholly novel rhetoric:

(Ouverture)

I Homer: Odysseus and the dead. Glimpse of Aphrodite. *Greece*

II Metamorphoses: Homeric Hymn to Dionysus, via Ovid. *Rome*

III “I sat ...” Declined fortunes of poet, hero, culture; but contains a vision of gods.
Now

(Phantastikon Group)

IV Actaeon/Vidal, Greece/Provence. Quivering, flickering.

V Catullus/Sappho. The murders.

VI Eleanor, Bernart de Ventadorn, Sordello.

VII A present pervaded by ghosts; the dead more alive.

(Malatesta Group)

VIII He concentrates the life of a time. Wars, artists.

IX The Tempio. The post-bag. (Two emblems of *The Cantos*).

X His enemies gather forces. The burning in effigy.

XI His decline (Cf. *Le Cid*, Canto III). “In the gloom, the gold.”

(Moral exempla)

XII Baldy Bacon; “the Honest Sailor.” Finance and perverted fertility.

XIII Kung. He says things Greek philosophers don’t say.

(Hell Group)

XIV England as Hell, “without dignity, without tragedy.”

XV Exit from Hell, Plotinus aiding.

XVI Visions outside Hell, descent to earthly Paradise, and voices bringing news of the European War.

The apparitions, the blurred identities, the kaleidoscopic glitter of the fourth through seventh cantos may be helpfully referred to Pound’s 1912 remarks on the *phantastikon*, a precarious mental state “circumvolved” about its possessor like a soap bubble “reflecting sundry patches of the macrocosmos.” [...] he imagines gods floating in the azure air, and indulges (Cantos IV-VII) a kaleidoscope of fancies, visions, glimpses, flickering wonders that merge into postwar unreality. [...] The subject? Vortices and their dissipation.” (Kenner 1975 s. 416-419)

Pound “skipped unpredictably from topic to topic: he used an assortment of English and American dialects; he read occasionally from his *Cantos*. Hardly anyone was listening, needless to say, but Italian and American officials were. Hearing such passages as this one from Canto 46 (here as transcribed by official American listeners) – “And if you’ll say that this day teaches a lesson, all that the Reverent

Elliot (Haston) more natural language, you who think you'll get through hell in a hurry, huh, ah ..." – the Italians naturally suspected he was transmitting in code." (Perkins 1987 s. 218)

"Each group of Cantos, it grows clear, has its special plane of attention: the first 16, we may say, perspective, all things in the mind simultaneous; the next group, journeyings; 31-41, letters and documents; 42-51, money and fertility; 52-71, history and biography; the Pisan sequence, memory; 85-95, vegetable growth; and finally, *Thrones*, 96-109, philology. For there is nothing elsewhere in the poem to match the concern of this last full block Pound completed for individual terms, precisions, distinctions, correlations. As Joyce progressed from tidy narrative to verbal phantasmagoria, so the *Cantos*. In *Thrones* the words, as never before, are *exhibited*. [...] Pound takes huge enjoyment in his lexicographic high jinks, teases the presumably impatient reader" (Kenner 1975 s. 532 og 534).

"[T]o think of languages in constant change means to think of people speaking them, singing them, thinking in them: one reason the *Cantos* resonate with so many hundred voices." (Kenner 1975 s. 112) "Rare single words can imply, like seeds, whole energy systems." (Kenner 1975 s. 171) *The Cantos* "are labyrinthine in structure, a zigzag of subject, modifying and illuminating each other by proximity, treating time as if it were a space over which one can move in any direction" (Guy Davenport sitert fra Perloff 1990 s. 144).

Pound inkluderte "Douglasite explanations of cost and purchasing power, instructions of Sigismundo Malatesta to his architect, descriptions of hemorrhoids, and moments of mystical vision. It is humorous, grand, startlingly beautiful in places, relentlessly boring in others, nobly intended, and sometimes morally repulsive. Laying different historical times and places "ply over ply," it tries to show the recurring basis of just societies – the few to be found – and creative civilizations. It asks what sustains the human spirit amid the confusion and fear of existence." (Perkins 1987 s. 221)

"One of Pound's most effective ways of distorting perspective is to juxtapose a snatch of Italian with the "official" Latin document relating to the same thing, and then to tack on an English conclusion, thus incorporating linguistic conventions of various centuries. [...] The love affair of Sigismundo and Isotta degli Atti is thus viewed in the perspective of three centuries as well as three languages." (Perloff 1993 s. 186-187)

"When two things are given together, the mind naturally strives to connect them. We respond to Pound's discontinuities with an initial surprise and shock, and this gives way to heightened mental activity as we explore possible interrelationships among the separate units. The process may end in illumination as we discover implications in the juxtaposition. To speak of this mode of composition as construction oversimplifies, but emphasizes the contrast with the Romantic

convention of spontaneous flow, of the poem conceived as an organically evolving process. Different styles may be juxtaposed. Not merely literary styles from Homer to Henry James to newspapers, but spoken styles, the way diverse people express themselves – a contemporary swindler named Baldy Bacon, or Confucius, or Malatesta. For a style is associated with and implicitly expresses values. It registers a state of mind.” (Perkins 1987 s. 226)

“Pound’s history collage, on the other hand, retains fidelity to the literal events but brings those events into the reader’s circle by transforming the history lesson into a kind of “VORTEX, from which and through which, and into which, ideas are constantly rushing.” History becomes the impetus for the play of language.” (Perloff 1993 s. 188)

“*The Cantos* uses collage or what now might be called “sampling” – the juxtaposition of quotations from a carefully selected range of Eastern and Western cultures, including a fair amount of American history and current events. Quoted material forms only a small part of the overall text, however, since the entire poem is shot through with Pound’s own interventions, interpolations, and compositional extensions. Pound’s quotations were often in Chinese, Italian, French and other languages and he usually left them untranslated. This was because Pound was interested in an opaque texture for the poem; he once commented that if you didn’t understand something you should just push on. In the later *Cantos*, Pound organized the words spatially on the page, decisively breaking with the flush left orientation of much Western poetry up until that time, though following the lead of Stephane Mallarmé’s *Un Coup de Dés*. The result is a poem of immense sweep, often gorgeous lyricism, with a sometimes baffling range of references and many infuriatingly didactic passages. For this poetry of ideas, Pound maximized discontinuity, what some would call fragmentation. At the same time, he tried to maintain strong authorial control over the intended meaning to be derived from the juxtaposition of what he called “luminous details.” ” (Charles Bernstein i <http://wings.buffalo.edu/epc/authors/bernstein/essays/pound.html>; lesedato 20.11.15)

“Pound’s basic strategy in the *Cantos* is to create a flat surface, as in a Cubist or early Dada collage, upon which verbal elements, fragmented images, and truncated bits of narrative, drawn from the most disparate contexts, are brought into collision. Such “collage poetry,” as David Antin points out, “no longer yield(s) an iconic representation, even of a fractured sort, though bristling with significations.” It thus occupies a middle space between the mimetic on the one hand and the non-objective or “abstract” on the other; the referential process is not cut off but it is subordinated to a concern for sequential or spatial arrangement. Indeed, in the case of the Malatesta *Cantos*, the text becomes a surface of linguistic distortions and contradictions that force the reader to participate in the poem’s action. Just as Rimbaud invents cityscapes in which Swiss chalets on magic pulleys dissolve into Vesuvian craters and then into gorges spanned by little footbridges, so Pound dislocates language so as to create new verbal landscapes.” (Perloff 1993 s. 181-

182) “It is this *interference* that is important; the text becomes what Steinberg calls “a kind of flat documentary surface to which anything reachable-thinkable can adhere” (p. 88).” (Perloff 1993 s. 189)

For Pound “in all times life has always presented fragments to the mind. This is the natural case. The world is coherent – this was Pound’s faith – but our data are always incomplete. The event is a complex whole, but only aspects, snatches, bits come to our cognizance. As when historians reconstruct the past from surviving documents, or scientists *Sinanthropus* from his bones, or archaeologists the ancient city from their digs, we must intuit the living reality from the snippets we can know of it. Some details are especially telling or “luminous,” and afford “sudden insight into circumjacent conditions, into their causes, their effects, into sequence, and law.” Naturally Pound tried to give such details in his poem. Since life presents fragments, it is not surprising that our minds are inherently disposed to work with them. “All knowledge is built up from a rain of factual atoms ... Real knowledge goes into natural man in titbits. A scrap here, a scrap there; always pertinent, linked to safety, or nutrition or pleasure. Human curiosity survives and is catered for, by the twopenny weeklies, 24 lines on chromosomes, six lines on a three-headed calf.” And as life does not comment on the concrete fragments it provides us, neither do the *Cantos*. If the most important poems may be called a reading of life, the *Cantos* aim also to be a course of education in how to read life’s page. As we go through the poem we are learning by concrete experience – this was Pound’s hope, at any rate – how much and how we can know people, events, civilizations, historical transitions. The rule of procedure is synecdoche. The fragments evoke the whole context from which they come. They may be very brief or extended. Three words, “Adamo me fecit,” carved in the stone of a church bring to mind the ethos of medieval craftsmanship as opposed to modern factory production. At an opposite extreme John Adams is evoked (if Adams is the ultimate object and if “evoked” is the right word) in eighty pages (Cantos 62-71) of selections from his works. Though Pound’s fragments are perfectly definite, their implications are endless and often contradictory. Allusion is an aspect of Pound’s concrete presentation. Instead of generalizing about crucified founders of cultures, he writes Manes, Mussolini, Dionysus. Thus he obtains the depth and complexity of the concrete, for whatever we know about these figures may enrich our response. So also with allusions to places, works of literature (usually brief quotations), history, philosophies, and religions; the allusion brings its context into the poem’s context, setting up a system of interrelations. All this is familiar in Modernist literature.” (Perkins 1987 s. 224-225)

Den chilenske dikteren Pablo Nerudas *Den store sangen* handler om indiansk og annen latinamerikansk historie, revolusjoner og diktaturer, myter og ideologier m.m., ofte med sidestilling av fortid og nåtid. Deler av diktet kan minne om et litani, dvs. en lang, sanglignende bønn.

“Neruda expanded on his political views in the poem *Canto general*, which, according to de Costa, is a “lengthy epic on man’s struggle for justice in the New World.” Although Neruda had begun the poem as early as 1935 – when he had intended it to be limited in scope only to Chile – he completed some of the work while serving in the Chilean senate as a representative of the Communist Party. [...] Although, as Bizzarro noted, “In [the *Canto general*], Neruda was to reflect some of the [Communist] party’s basic ideological tenets,” the work itself transcends propaganda. Looking back into American prehistory, the poet examined the land’s rich natural heritage and described the long defeat of the native Americans by the Europeans. Instead of rehashing Marxist dogma, however, he concentrated on elements of people’s lives common to all people at all times. [...] According to Alazraki, “By bringing together his own odyssey and the drama of the continent, Neruda has simultaneously given to *Canto general* the quality of a lyric and an epic poem. The lives of conquistadors, martyrs, heroes, and just plain people recover a refreshing actuality because they become part of the poet’s fate, and conversely, the life of the poet gains new depth because in his search one recognizes the continent’s struggles. *Canto general* is, thus, the song of a continent as much as it is Neruda’s own song.” ” (Natalia Kennedy m.fl. i <http://www.poetryfoundation.org/bio/pablo-neruda>; lesedato 14.12.15) Under president Salvador Allendes regjeringstid i Chile ble det arrangert masse møter der *Den store sangen* ble deklamert for blant andre indianere i landets fjellområder.

Den franske dikteren Saint-John Perse's store lyriske produksjon kan, til tross for at den er fordelt på bøker og enkelttekster, oppfattes som én eneste lang setning uten stopp og aldri forståelig (Caillois 1972 s. 13). Utformingen av Perse's poesi skal uttrykke og gjenskape bevegelsene i de erfaringene og opplevelsene han skriver om (Favre 1977 s. 106). Hans diktning kan i sitt innhold oppfattes som en poesiens encyklopedi over all naturens rikdom og all historiens mangfold (Caillois 1972 s. 76). Perse blander inn botanikk, zoologi, geologi, gammel historie, reiseberetninger m.m. i sin diktning (Quinsat 1990 s. 256).

“Saint-John Perse’s American poems included elemental evocations of the West and the South, of rains and snows pelting the cities, and of winds howling over the plains. *Pluies* (*Rains*, 1943), *Neiges* (*Snows*, 1944), *Vents* (*Winds*, 1946), and *Anvers* (*Sea-Marks*, 1957) are the titles of his epic of man embracing the universe. [...] Perse is the only French poet since Claudel to have embraced the whole world and to have given a voice to all the elements: “cosmic” and “epic” are the adjectives most often used to describe his verse. At the same time, he has curbed his sonorous rhetoric and he has cherished density; in 1956 he confided to some of his admirers that his poetry was made of “subtractions and omissions.” ” (Burnshaw m.fl. 1964 s. 96-97)

Etter at Perse hadde fått Nobelprisen i litteratur i 1960, “he went on traveling, quite a distance at times since he went as far as Patagonia, but mostly in the Mediterranean, when he went on a yearly cruise, and in the Caribbean. His love of

traveling reveal one essential side of his work, its universality. Geographically, it embraces the totality of the universe. Everything interests him: flora and fauna, climate, geology, economy, lifestyle, folklore, everything which, in one way or another, manifests the creative energy at work throughout the cosmos, be it found in the power of natural forces or in human activity. [...] In point of fact, he attended courses in all kinds of subjects: geology, mineralogy, psychiatry, ethnology, anthropology. He read Spinoza and Hegel, but he also went mountain-climbing and horse-riding. [...] he saw manifestations of a hidden energy, of a cosmic power which revealed itself in the ascension of stars, in the violence of earthquakes and hurricanes. Saint-John Perse was later to admit that Pointe-à-Pitre, at that time, was only a miserable shanty-town, but everything, in this place, was for him a “*splendeur*”, even a fish head lying between the teats of a dead cat, even a skinny little girl with hands white from leprosy, or the harbor waters covered with grease and urine. In his eyes, the splendor of vegetal or animal life and the cosmic force at work in the violence of earthquakes and hurricanes were identical with the divine.” (René Galand i <http://repository.wellesley.edu/cgi/>; lesedato 28.10.15)

Perses lange dikt “registers the manifestation, within the poet’s individual consciousness, of the becoming of Being, which includes not only what is, but also what has been, what will be, and, what is undoubtedly more important still, what might be. It includes the universe of dream and desire as well as the universe of concrete things. The poet’s consciousness, including its unconscious levels, perceives the unfolding of Being as “*une seule et longue phrase* [...]” [= “en eneste og lang setning [...]”] [...] long poems like *Vents* and *Amers*, which are full sized volumes [...] Poetic vision illuminates Being in all of its dimensions: past and future, human and divine, temporal and eternal, real and imaginary. [...] This vision of Being as Becoming is obviously modeled on the order of Nature, on the cycle of seasons, on the rhythm of tides, on the rhythm of menstruation, of the periodical succession of death and birth, for the stars as well as for animals and plants.” (René Galand i <http://repository.wellesley.edu/cgi/>; lesedato 28.10.15)

“Perse’s sentences are often long and sinuous. They teem with parentheses and at times they resound with the eloquence of rather elaborate periods.” (Burnshaw m.fl. 1964 s. 95)

Den amerikanske dikteren William Carlos Williams har skrevet både korte og lange dikt, inklusiv *Paterson*, som omfatter flere bøker. “The idea of writing a long poem centred, as he wrote in his *Autobiography* (1951), on ‘an image large enough to embody the whole knowable world about me’, seems to have occurred to Williams in the early 1940s.” (Fender 1977 s. 179) *Paterson* var hans “most ambitious work [and] was first “finished” in 1951, when Book 4 of *Paterson* appeared. In 1958, though, Book 5 was added, to encompass – in Williams’s words – the “many changes ... in me and the world”, and it appears from this new edition that he was planning a sixth book during the months before his death in 1963 [...] It is not surprising that *Paterson* has turned out to be interminable. Its progress, since the

appearance of Book 1 in 1946, has been more and more in the direction of what Randall Jarrell has called “the organization of irrelevance”; it has grown progressively more arbitrary and self-indulgent in its pursuit of “a particular history”. The effort of Paterson is to unfold an individual sensibility in terms of its environment, local, historical and cultural; to discover a man in his city. “I searched for a city”, Williams wrote, “one that I knew. It couldn’t be New York, not anything as big as a metropolis”, and perhaps the first limitation of the poem is that its locale is selected not because it offers an urban complex which is representative of modern America but rather because Williams felt it to have an “important colonial history”; it invited further excavations in the American grain.” (Ian Hamilton i <http://www.the-tls.co.uk/tls/public/article994622.ece>; lesedato 23.11.15)

Paterson “was intended to be a unified long poem and as such it must be judged a failure, probably an irresponsible one. The second reason Williams had for choosing the town of Paterson was, he said, that it had “a river ... the Passaic ... and the Falls” which he could use as a spine for his long poem. It is revealing to recall how easy he thought it was going to be: “This was my river and I was going to use it. I took the river as it followed its course down to the sea; all I had to do was to follow it and I had a poem.” Williams could hardly have selected a more permissive regime, and it is only in Book 1 that the physical shape of Paterson exerts any central control; elsewhere, and with accelerating abandon, the river spills more or less where it pleases.” (Ian Hamilton i <http://www.the-tls.co.uk/tls/public/article994622.ece>; lesedato 23.11.15)

“*Paterson* and Pound’s *Cantos* (especially the *Pisan Cantos*) [...] had not been planned out before the act of writing, and in the process of writing a similar freedom had been preserved throughout. From any point in these poems the poet could proceed in innumerable different directions. The poems enact and thus dramatize the instant, unpredictable motions – leaps of comparison, turns of feeling, reversals of argument, associations – of the poet’s mind in composing. I am not, needless to say, asserting that *Paterson* or the *Cantos* were actually created in this way. I am describing a formal procedure these poems could suggest.” (Perkins 1987 s. 489)

Lynn Kellers bok *Forms of Expansion: Recent Long Poems by Women* (1997) har et kjønnspektiv. “Expanding the boundaries of both genre and gender, contemporary American women are writing long poems in a variety of styles that repossess history, reconceive female subjectivity, and revitalize poetry itself. In the first book devoted to long poems by women, Lynn Keller explores this rich and evolving body of work, offering revealing discussions of the diverse traditions and feminist concerns addressed by poets ranging from Rita Dove and Sharon Doubiago to Judy Grahn, Marilyn Hacker, and Susan Howe. Arguing that women poets no longer feel intimidated by the traditional associations of long poems with the heroic, public realm or with great artistic ambition, Keller shows how the long poem’s openness to sociological, anthropological, and historical material makes it

an ideal mode for exploring women's roles in history and culture. In addition, the varied forms of long poems – from sprawling free verse epics to regular sonnet sequences to highly disjunctive experimental collages – make this hybrid genre easily adaptable to diverse visions of feminism and of contemporary poetics.” (<http://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/F/bo3645838.html>; lesedato 24.08.15)

Den amerikanske dikteren Sharon Doubiago's "first book, the epic poem *Hard Country* was published in 1982 to the acclaim of a wide number of poets and scholars. *Hard Country* tells the story of the breakup of a marriage, the meeting of a new love, and the subsequent journey the new couple make across the U.S., climaxing on the Tennessee Valley Authority lake where his mother drowned herself when he was ten. Through the whole journey the narrator is mourning her lost husband. *Hard Country* weaves the personal, the public, the political, the personalities, the history, geographies, lore and mythologies of the states they move through, going north, east, south, then returning to the Pacific Coast. [...] "A quick count reveals that *Hard Country*," Robert Peters wrote, "has nearly 10,000 lines, all readable, gripping, and never flagging. What an achievement! A orchestration of modes and themes in the grand Whitmanic Projective verse manner, lavish with explorations of American history (the struggle for the West, the American Civil War, Viet Nam), primitive myths, the poet's personal and family histories, her restless wanderings after archetypal lost lovers, the subterranean connections of male and female, and these counter culture considerations, pop celebrities, literary figures, ecology and hallucinogenics ..."” (http://www.sharondoubiago.com/_i_hard_country__i__87152.htm; lesedato 02.10.15)

Kanadiske Barrie Phillip Nichols *The Martyrology* (1972-93) er "a long poem published in several volumes [...] Books 1 and 2 appeared in 1972, and subsequent volumes were published in 1976, 1982 and 1987, with further, posthumous volumes in 1990 and 1993. After several attempts to "finish" it, Nichol came to see his poem as an open-ended, ongoing work; its very lack of closure challenges traditional ideas of what constitutes a single, unified poem. [...] *The Martyrology* has expanded into a wide-ranging exploration of world mythology and personal experience, and of the forms of language and of human community. The later volumes became increasingly experimental in technique and presentation, featuring re-presentations of earlier passages, and in Book 9, a full-length opera score." (<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/the-martyrology>; lesedato 28.01.21)

Jan Erik Vold har skrevet dikt "i en stadig pendling mellom konsentrasjonslyrikk og ekspansjonslyrikk: en bjelles enslige pling og jazzens utbyggende frase." (<http://www.audiaturno/festival/jan-erik-vold/>; lesedato 21.11.16)

Relativt korte dikt som har tydelig preg av å være opplister, minner ofte om ekspansjonslyrikk, fordi diktene gir inntrykk av å kunne svulme opp til det

mangedobbelte i omfang, å kunne utvides enormt. Dette gjelder f.eks. Henrik Wergelands “Hvor ofte skal Gud takkes?” (1833), Harald Sverdrups “Stemmeseddel” (1985) og Frode Gryttens “Den rasande elva” (2014). Mye av Wergelands diktning kan kalles ekspansjonslyrikk.

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