

# Bibliotekarstudentens nettleksikon om litteratur og medier

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Om leksikonet: [https://www.litteraturogmedieleksikon.no/gallery/om\\_leksikonet.pdf](https://www.litteraturogmedieleksikon.no/gallery/om_leksikonet.pdf)

## Elveroman

Fransk: “roman fleuve”, engelsk: “river-novel”.

Uttrykket “roman fleuve” ble første gang brukt av den franske forfatteren Romain Rolland om hans egen romanserie *Jean Christophe* (Demougin 1985 s. 1401). Uttrykket er nesten synonymt med “roman-syklus”, altså en rekke sammenhengende romaner om en person og dennes sosiale tilhørighet, om en familie eller et samfunn. Elveromaner har et stort persongalleri. Romanene utgjør til sammen en stor sosial “freske” og har nyansert psykologisk analyse (Ligny og Rousselot 2016 s. 120). En elveroman representerer et samfunn (Leblond 2010 s. 59).

Likheten mellom en elv og en elveroman er lengden, følelsen av at livet strømmer på, at tiden renner av sted, og etterligning av verden (for elvebreddene blir reflektert i vannet) (Leblond 2010 s. 457). Akkurat som en elv er noe stort og uåndsgripelig, overskrider romanen individet og handler om en “kollektiv energi” i familien og samfunnet (Leblond 2010 s. 458). Historien i en elveroman veksler mellom å fortelles langsomt og raskt – som vannet i en elv har ulikt tempo (Demougin 1985 s. 1401).

Romanene er kvantitativt omfattende (mer enn tre bind), de har et tematisk og narrativt enhetspreg, handlingen “flyter”, men kan gjøre mange avstikkere, og leseren får inntrykk av en uendelig tekst om et menneskes utvikling, en tidsperiode og/eller et samfunn med dets sosiale miljøer og klasser (Lynette Felber gjengitt fra Leblond 2010 s. 14). Tekstens store lengde samsvarer med forfatterens vilje til å uttrykke en verden som utvider seg i en akselererende rytme (Leblond 2010 s. 26).

Romanenes struktur har blitt sammenlignet med musikk der mange syngende stemmer lyder polyfonisk, samtidig og parallelt med hverandre. Slik konfronteres ulike temaer og blander seg med hverandre, i gjensidig påvirkning (Vladimir Jankélévitch gjengitt fra Leblond 2010 s. 240).

Det er alltid realistiske romaner, altså med virkelighetsnære skildringer av noe som kunne ha skjedd. Romanenes/romanseriens lengde og realisme fungerer som “de uatskillelige redskapene for en rekonstruksjon av verden” (Leblond 2010 s. 58). Den franske litteraturforskeren Aude Leblond hevder at “den maksimale

integreringen av delene” er et av de viktigste kjennetegnene ved elveromaner (2010 s. 104).

“Some novelists are happiest when they can organize what they have to say about man and his problems not into single separate books, each with a new hero, background and plot, but into a whole sequence which contains many volumes but goes on telling the one story. The French use the term *roman fleuve* for a novel which flows on and on in this manner, perhaps the author’s lifework, perhaps a work that only death finishes – the reader’s or the writer’s. The river-novel often, it must be said, appeals more to the writer than to the reader. Knowing the beginning of a novel, we do not like to wait too long for the end; indeed, there are people who like to read the end first. A *roman fleuve* looks like an *oeuvre* (or body of various work), but it is not: it is only a single big novel whose various sections must never, as they come out, be judged as separate books; thus the author, delaying the end, has it in his power also to delay the critic’s verdict. Capture an audience for your first volume, and you are sure of keeping much of it for your last. You are spared the burden of perpetual fresh invention and some of the problems of form; what would be long patches of boredom in the short novel are called ‘expansiveness’ in the novel-sequence. Plan a really long one of these, and you have planned your writing life. When, however, we consider the pleasure and enlightenment that Anthony Powell and C. P. Snow (Lord Snow) are giving us, we are not inclined to take these strictures too seriously. Both Snow and Powell seem to have set themselves a very lofty aim – that of rivalling Marcel Proust in producing imaginative chronicles of an era and, to some extent, a class. The very title of Powell’s novel-sequence – *The Music of Time* – recalls the *A la Recherche du Temps Perdu* of the French master, and the technique of invoking past time through a seemingly trivial object or incident (with Proust it was a cake dipped in tea) appears at the very beginning of *A Question of Upbringing* – the first novel in the Powell sequence.” (Burgess 1971 s. 82-83)

“Elveroman” kan oppfattes som relativt synonymt med “saga novel”: “a form of the novel in which the members or generations of a family or social group are chronicled in a long and leisurely narrative.” (<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/saga>; lesedato 12.01.16)

“Some of the features of the roman-fleuve are those of the novel intensified [...] a quantitative difference produces a qualitative difference. The abundance of characters, often numbering in the hundreds and requiring a “Who’s Who” to refresh readers’ memories, and the prolonged temporal gaps between the publication of the novels create a reading experience significantly different from that of the serial or long novel. The exaggerated characteristics of the subgenre illuminate, by magnifying, features of the novel itself.” (Felber sitert fra Leblond 2010 s. 430)

Lengden er en nødvendig konsekvens av forfatterens prosjekt (Leblond 2010 s. 54). Et helt samfunn blir framstilt gjennom det som ofte er en vrimmel av individuelle skjebner (Raimond 2002 s. 65). Den franske forfatteren François Mauriac beskrev sjangeren som “denne menneskelige symfoni som vi alle deltar i” (Leblond 2010 s. 695). Han skrev om forfatteres utfordring: “Hvis romanforfatteren vil nå målet for sin kunst, som er å avbilde livet, må han anstrenge seg for å framstille den menneskelige symfonien som alle deltar i, der alle skjebner fortsetter i andres og trenger inn i hverandre.” (sitert fra Leblond 2010 s. 26-27)

“Elveromanen stiller seg selv moralske spørsmål og inkluderer leseren i sine refleksjoner.” (Leblond 2010 s. 578)

Den omfattende, anonyme middelalderteksten som kalles *Lancelot-Graal* eller *Lancelot på prosa*, fra begynnelsen av 1200-tallet, har blitt kalt en elveroman (Gentil 1968 s. 94).

Litteraturforskeren Alastair Fowler kaller den engelske forfatteren Anthony Trollopes romanserie fra 1800-tallet om Barchester for “a roman fleuve” (Fowler 1982 s. 93). Den første boka i serien er *The Warden* (1855), som i likhet med de andre romanene er sentrert om domkirkebyen Barchester, der små og store hendelser involverer et stort persongalleri. “Under the shadow of the great cathedral of Barchester – modelled on Winchester perhaps or Salisbury – the dignified, self-satisfied clergymen spin out their days with social rituals and minor political intrigue, their wives and daughters pursue influence and marriage, while their parishioners are little more than troublesome incidents in their measured lives. Religious faith and theology are nowhere in this picture, instead it is money and power that really count, and in each of these six novels the placid surface of life is disturbed not by religious zeal or doctrinal controversy, but by threats to the stability of incomes, to the privilege and dignity of the leading protagonists, and to their finely nuanced relationships. [...] becomes a mirror of the real world because it is developed not through one novel but a series, a roman-fleuve, in which the leading characters in one novel re-appear as subsidiary figures in the others, so that reality appears in many facets as it does in real life: two of the six novels have nothing to do with the church, but are purely secular plots of love, marriage and family secrets. Each character has his or her own story: like figures on a slow-motion carousel, they are brought into view, become central, then they recede into the background.” (<https://naxosaudiobooks.com/warden-the-unabridged/>; lesedato 16.11.20)

I første halvdel av 1900-tallet ble elveromaner oppfattet som et slags epos for samtidens sivilisasjon (Leblond 2010 s. 15). Verkene innen sjangeren som ble skapt i mellomkrigstiden, forsøker å motarbeide den følelsen av at verden går under som fulgte med 1. verdenskrig og å “fornye båndet mellom fortiden, nåtiden og framtiden” (Leblond 2010 s. 55). I Frankrike var elveromanene som ble skrevet

etter 1. verdenskrig, forsøk på prekær rekonstruksjon av verden etter katastrofen (Leblond 2010 s. 317).

Den franske forfatteren Roger Martin du Gard oppfattet seg selv som en forfatter av elveromaner, “auteur de “romans fleuves” ” som han skrev i et brev (Leblond 2010 s. 19). Blant franske elveromaner regnes *Thibault-slekten* (1922-39) av Roger Martin du Gard, *Den fortryllede sjelen* (1922-34) av Romain Rolland, *Den gode viljes menn* (1932-46) av Jules Romains, *Pasquier-kroniken* (1933-45) av Georges Duhamel og *Historien om et samfunn* (1904-59) av René Béhaine (Leblond 2010 s. 21 og 24).

Franskmannen Jacques de Lacretelles *De høye broene* (*Les haut ponts*) ble utgitt i fire bind i 1932-35, “the story of the cult of land ownership that destroys a family over three generations” i området Vendée på 1800-tallet (<https://wallector.com/it/letters-of-invitation-113211.html>; lesedato 05.12.24).

I *Den gode viljes menn* av Jules Romains, publisert i 27 bind, møter leseren stadig nye personer og sosiale miljøer, blant andre arbeidere, intellektuelle, forretningsmenn og kirkens menn (Raimond 2002 s. 66). Romains ville ikke skrive en romansyklus (slik Balzac og Zola hadde gjort tidligere), men én roman med en enorm lengde. Martin du Gard skrev om sitt eget verk: “Det bindet jeg har publisert er faktisk ikke den første romanen i en serie eller en syklus. Den er begynnelsen på en roman med en uvanlig lengde.” (sitert fra Leblond 2010 s. 109)

Den franske litteraturkritikeren Albert Thibaudet sammenlignet en elveroman med sykkeløpet Tour de France, som på begynnelsen av 1900-tallet var på til sammen 2428 kilometer (Leblond 2010 s. 101), og han kalte *Thibault-slekten* for “a stream of flesh” (sitert fra Leblond 2010 s. 61). Men forfatteren Martin du Gard ønsket ikke at bøkene hans skulle ha et éntydig mål, slik et sykkeløp har, men snarere etterligne hele universet: “Universet? Et enormt kaos av krefter som fletter seg sammen og kolliderer på tilfeldige måter, og skaper alle mulige fenomener. Ingen plan.” (sitert fra Leblond 2010 s. 460)

Martin de Gards *Thibault-slekten* gir et bredt bilde av fransk samfunnsliv i årene 1890-1925. Romanen speiler blant annet diskusjoner om den katolske kirkens plass, nye medisinske metoder, venstreradikale bevegelser, og viser 1. verdenskrigs lidelser. Familien Thibault domineres av en konservativ, tyrannisk far. Han framstilles som en skinnhellig katolikk. En av hans sønner er nesten like usympatisk. Denne sønnen blir etter hvert anarkist og dør mens han deler ut pasifistiske pamfletter. En annen sønn er derimot en progressiv lege, og hjelper under krigen til i skyttergravene, der han dør etter et gassangrep. For Martin du Gard var 1. verdenskrig et tidsskille som nesten fullstendig brøt den historiske forbindelsen mellom hendelser før og etter krigen (Alain Pagès i <https://journals.openedition.org/genesis/1265>; lesedato 21.03.22)

Andre eksempler:

Madeleine de Scudéry: *Den store Cyrus* (1649-53) og *Clélie* (1654-60) – begge disse romanseriene var bestselgere på 1600-tallet og “romans fleuves” (ifølge Aragon 2009)

Gautier de Costes de La Calprenède: *Cassandra* (1642-45) og *Kleopatra* (1647-58) – begge er elveromaner (ifølge Aragon 2009).

John Galsworthy: *The Forsyte Saga* (1906-22)

Romain Rolland: *Jean-Christophe* (1904-1912) – består av ti romaner

Marcel Proust: *På sporet av den tapte tid* (1913-27)

“*Roman-fleuve*, (French: “novel stream” or “novel cycle”) [...] deals with one central character, an era of national life, or successive generations of a family. Inspired by successful 19th-century cycles such as Honoré de Balzac’s *Comédie humaine* and Émile Zola’s *Rougon-Macquart*, the roman-fleuve was a popular literary genre in France during the first half of the 20th century. Examples include the 10-volume *Jean-Christophe* (1904-12) by Romain Rolland, the 7-part *À la recherche du temps perdu* (1913-27; *Remembrance of Things Past*) by Marcel Proust, the 8-part *Les Thibault* (1922-40) by Roger Martin du Gard, and *Les Hommes de bonne volonté*, 27 vol. (1932-46; *Men of Good Will*) by Jules Romains. Proust’s work is the masterpiece of the genre.” (<https://www.britannica.com/art/roman-fleuve>; lesedato 14.09.21)

“Romain Rolland wrote *Jean Christophe* (1906-12) in ten volumes. Later he returned to the roman-fleuve scheme with *L’Ame enchantée* (1922-33) in seven volumes. Marcel Proust’s monumental *A la recherche du temps perdu* (1913-27) consists of seven inter-related sections and occupied him for at least twelve years. Georges Duhamel began with the *Vie et Aventures de Salavin* (1920-32) in five novels and followed this with *Chronique des Pasquier* (1933-45) in ten volumes. Jules Romains was even more ambitious with his *Les Hommes de bonne volonté* (1932-47), the generic title of a series of twenty-seven novels covering a wide range of French life from 1908 to 1933. John Galsworthy attempted the same sort of thing with *The Forsyte Saga* (1922). More recently there have been C. P. Snow’s *Strangers and Brothers* sequence (1940-70), which gives a documentary chronicle of English social history from 1925; Henry Williamson’s *A Chronicle of Ancient Sunlight* (1951-69) in fifteen volumes; and Anthony Powell’s *A Dance to the Music of Time* (1951-76) in twelve volumes. A number of other novelists have used the trilogy and the tetralogy to achieve a comparable continuity.” (<https://literaryocean.com/discuss-the-term-roman-fleuve-definition-of-roman-fleuve-and-examples/>; lesedato 14.09.21)

Noen lange føljetongromaner har blitt kalt elveromaner (Olivier-Martin 1980 s. 105). Den franske forfatteren Eugène Sues *Paris' mysterier* (1842-43) er en “roman-fleuve” ifølge forskeren Yves Olivier-Martin (1980 s. 46).

Den polske forfatteren Maria Dabrowska publiserte i årene 1932-34 elveromanen *Nettene og dagene*, et verk med et stort persongalleri og som handler om livet til en godseierfamilie i årene 1863-1914 (Demougin 1985 s. 408).

En families utvikling, vist gjennom kontinuitet og brudd, representerer en mer omfattende utvikling i samfunnet. Litteraturkritikeren Albert Thibaudet sammenlignet den familien (eller det sosiale miljøet) som elveromanen handler om, med en filosof sitt system av tanker og ideer (gjengitt fra Leblond 2010 s. 60).

Om franske elveromaner skriver Aude Leblonde at de ofte fokuserer på én generasjon selv om leserne kan få innsikt i livene til både tre og fire generasjoner (2010 s. 323).

René Béhaines *Historien om et samfunn* (1904-59) har Michel Varambaud som hovedperson og foregår i et borgerlig miljø der det er viktig å markere forskjellen til arbeiderklassen, samtidig som misunnelsen overfor aristokrater er påfallende. Michel er lenge forlovet med Catherine, og gifter seg senere med henne. Forholdet mellom dem gjenspeiler sosiale motsetninger i samfunnet ([https://www.lemonde.fr/archives/article/1966/01/08/un-ecrivain-meconnu-rene-behaine\\_2702410\\_1819218.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/archives/article/1966/01/08/un-ecrivain-meconnu-rene-behaine_2702410_1819218.html); lesedato 27.12.21).

Karl Ove Knausgårds roman *Ute av verden* (1998) har blitt kalt “en roman fleuve som det så treffende heter på fransk, slik den flyter av sted, stille og rolig, for til stadighet å bukte og hvirvle seg rundt i bakevjer” (Øystein Rottem i *Dagbladet* 19. januar 2009 s. 19). Men *Ute av verden* har “bare” 705 boksider.

Lynette Felber hevder i studien *Gender and Genre in Novels Without End: The British Roman-fleuve* (1995) at Anthony Trollope “developed one of the first identifiable examples of the nineteenth-century British roman-fleuve in his Palliser novels, often mistakenly regarded as merely a serial” (forordet, s. xi) Felber skriver om “those notorious, wandering, British multi-volume novels [...] a distinct generic category: the roman-fleuve, or sequence novel. Distinguishing the roman-fleuve from the serial or long novel, this “first theoretical study of the roman-fleuve as a genre” finds the fullest flowering of the form in Dorothy Richardson’s thirteen-book, transitionperiod narrative, *Pilgrimage* (1915-1967). [...] a Victorian inheritance exemplified by Trollope’s six-book Palliser novels (1864-1880), and in terms of a postmodern legacy exemplified by Anthony Powell’s twelve-book *A Dance to the Music of Time* (1951-1975). Creating new theoretical, historical, and ideological contexts for analysis of novels by Richardson, Trollope, and Powell, Felber proves a valuable guide through these daunting narratives and through the thorny questions about the meanings and functions of gender that feminist criticism

has placed at the center of discussions about them. One of Felber's stated goals is to give these baggiest of "baggy monsters" their critical due. She acknowledges the practical and aesthetic difficulties that the roman-fleuve poses to readers, who must bravely confront novels of massive length with bewildering spatial and temporal gaps between volumes and problematic (or nonexistent) forms of closure." (Kristin Bluemel i <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/367121>; lesedato 14.09.21)

Lynette Felbers bok "is the first substantive study of the roman-fleuve – the multivolume sequence novel – as a distinctive genre. Though Lynette Felber finds these "novels without end" to be "the ultimate pleasurable text," prolonging a moment of Keatsian arrested passion, she claims they have fallen between the cracks of the popular and the canonical novel. [...] Felber argues that the roman-fleuve has an inherent propensity for "an écriture feminine, a writing with narrative features designated feminine." " (<https://www.ibs.it/gender-genre-in-novels-without-libro-inglese-lynette-felber/e/9780813014029>; lesedato 16.11.20)

"[T]he *Bildungsroman* and the *roman-fleuve* have in common a strong autobiographical tendency. [...] The *roman-fleuve* has its origin in nineteenth-century France, and Balzac's *La Comédie Humaine*, mentioned by [Dorothy] Richardson in her Foreword to *Pilgrimage*, is an early example of this genre. [...] Some of the distinguishing traits of the *roman-fleuve* such as the lack of closure, the extreme length and the apparently dispensable plot lines and characters are usually considered defects in a conventional novel. Each volume of the *roman-fleuve* supplies both a new beginning and a provisional ending within the whole series. [...] The *roman fleuve*'s narrative progresses through a nonlinear movement. It develops through reiterations and parallels and it has a synchronic way of moving, rather than a diachronic one. Thus the conventional forward movement of a major plot is underprivileged in favour of an extended development of characters and subplots" (María Francisca Llantada Díaz i <https://revistas.ucm.es>; lesedato 14.09.21).

"It could be said that the *roman-fleuve* has most of the characteristics of what David Mickelsen [i artikkelen "Types of Spatial Structure in Narrative", 1981] calls the spatial-form novel. He differentiates between this type – characterized by lack of development and traits such as replacement of action by characterization, slow pace, lack of resolution and repetition – and the *Bildungsroman*. He considers the *Bildungsroman* and the spatial-form novel polar opposites: whereas the former minimizes the temporal dimension and the main impetus is forward, the latter maximizes the temporal dimension and the impetus is backward or sideways (64-65, 67). However, this rigid differentiation could be interpreted in a more dynamic way that takes into account that the concept of *Bildungsroman* cannot be established once and for all, as the constant evolution of literary genres makes it impossible to have a complete and fixed account of all their features." (María Francisca Llantada Díaz i <https://revistas.ucm.es>; lesedato 14.09.21)

I Rollands bøker er Jean-Christophe et musikalsk vidunderbarn, men hans ungdomstid i Paris byr på mange utfordringer og kriser, før han klarer å realisere sitt potensial. Om *Jean-Christophe* uttalte Rolland at hovedpersonen er “Beethoven i dagens verden” (sitert fra Leblond 2010 s. 355). Musikken fører Jean-Christophe inn i en kosmisk dimensjon og fungerer som en beskyttende guddom (Leblond 2010 s. 684). Rolland har skrevet at hovedpersonen i *Jean-Christophe* “forekommer meg som en elv”, og helt fra begynnelsen av romanen blir Jean-Christophes fødsel knyttet til den enormt lange elva Rhinen (Leblond 2010 s. 456). Rhinen fungerer som en allegori for Jean-Christophe sin sjel, samtidig som elva på andre meningsnivåer er som en roman og romanen som en elv (Leblond 2010 s. 457).

“[P]oint of view in the novel is clearly represented by the river’s current as the element of consciousness and movement and the fixed landmarks of the shore, as passing external events and exterior characters, to be viewed from the river and to disappear as each successive stage of the hero’s life is passed.” (David Sices i *Music and the Musician in Jean-Christophe: The Harmony of Contrasts*, 1968, her sitert fra Leblond 2010 s. 457-458) “[T]he nature of such music, its architecture, requires that the listener submerge himself in the work’s stream of duration, that he exist in unison with it and experience the composer’s intuition in the same rhythm in which it dictated itself to him. At the same time, part of the listener’s consciousness must remain separate from this submerged intuition, analyzing and organizing the experience which the rest of the mind is undergoing, tracing direction and development, relating and balancing rhythms, and synthesizing the apparently unrelated or dissonant antithetical experiences which occur from moment to moment.” (David Sices sitert fra Leblond 2010 s. 510)

“[T]he *roman-fleuve*’s overarching ambition is to rework the notion of the modern subject in function of an alternative understanding of the individual and the collective. In a tumultuous era marked by war and the crumbling of religious and metaphysical certainties, this reconception of subjectivity inaugurated an innovative literary exploration of Bergsonian intuition and the Nietzschean overturning of ready-made systems of thought. Lying between the sentimentality of the romantics and the materialism of the positivists, the *roman-fleuve* was a landmark, if short-lived, example of French literary creativity blossoming in the arid ground of modernity.” (Ashok Collins i <https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/cambridge-history-of-the-novel-in-french/romanfleuve/>; lesedato 14.09.21)

Den britiske forfatteren John Galsworthy, som fikk Nobelprisen i litteratur i 1932, ga ut *The Forsyte Saga*, en elveroman om en rik, engelsk familie som leseren følger over nesten hundre år. “*The Forsyte Saga* was the greatest success of Galsworthy’s career, and largely responsible for the exceptional honours he received – among them the Nobel prize for literature in 1932 and the Order of Merit in 1929. Much of the social detail has dated, and the passing of time has made some of his characters’ concerns less immediate, but the characters themselves are recognisable and

compelling, and Galsworthy still hits his targets – materialism, selfishness, insensitivity, possessiveness – with force and accuracy.” (Jeffrey Archer i <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2012/mar/14/jeffrey-archer-top-10-romans-fleuves>; lesedato 14.09.21) *The Forsyte Saga* ble “published between 1906 and 1921 and as a collection in 1922. The second series of novels in the Forsyte *roman fleuve* would be *The White Monkey* (1924), *The Silver Spoon* (1926), and *Swan Song* (1928). *Maid in Waiting* (1931), *Flowering Wilderness* (1932), and *Over the River* (1933) comprised the third. *The Man of Property* (1906) would be the first of the *The Forsyte Saga*. Chronicling three generations of the Victorian upper-class Forsyte family, it was followed by *Indian Summer of a Forsyte*, *In Chancery*, and *Awakening* in 1920 and *To Let* in 1921. The Forsyte obsession with wealth, status, and acquisition is apparent. Galsworthy satirically though not unsympathetically criticises the hollow insularity of everything from matters of property and marriage to the ideologies of the very class he was born into.” (C. D. Merriman i <http://www.online-literature.com/john-galsworthy/>; lesedato 02.03.22)

“What Galsworthy and his characters eulogize is, of course, bourgeois individualism apotheosized as a family trait.” (Jon Smidt i <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/24907804.pdf>; lesedato 13.10.21) Galsworthy oppfattet familien som samfunnet i miniatyr.

Den britiske kjemikeren og forfatteren C. P. (Charles Percy) Snow begynte i 1940 å publisere en elveroman. “The 11 novels that make up *Strangers and Brothers* appeared between 1940 and 1970, and trace the career of Lewis Eliot, a barrister, who progresses from provincial origins to positions of influence in national life; this progression to some extent mirrors Snow’s own career. Perhaps the most successful of the novels are *The Masters*, a well-informed account of the election of a new head of a Cambridge college, and *The Affair*, about a scientific scandal. The title of one of the novels introduced a useful phrase into the language: “the corridors of power”. Together, the sequence presents a vivid portrait of British academic, political and public life. Snow was that rare thing, a scientist and novelist.” (Jeffrey Archer i <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2012/mar/14/jeffrey-archer-top-10-romans-fleuves>; lesedato 14.09.21) Snow bruker mange metaforer hentet fra naturvitenskap i bøkene. “In its careful psychology and closed politics, in the spaciousness so symbolized by the elaborate, dry chapter headings, and the way in which major characters in some novels move on the edges in others, the series is reminiscent of Victorian and Edwardian forebears. This does not belie the contemporaneity Snow has always blended with tradition. The first – and titular – novel, “*Strangers and Brothers*” (1940), as it focuses upon a precursor to the hippie cults and communes, here an isolated farm on the edge of the Midlands town in which Lewis Eliot grows to maturity, is as modern as tomorrow. Presided over by the pathetic George Passant, dedicated to an intellectual and social freedom for which society is unready and which may be too morally obtuse for any time, the weekend utopia leads to predictable disaster. Here as in all the novels, Lewis Eliot tells the increasingly convoluted story of his family and friends as well as his own;

and in “Last Things” it is fitting that some of them – like George Passant – have their obsequies tolled.” (Stanley Weintraub i <https://www.nytimes.com/1970/08/23/archives/an-elegiac-ending-to-cp-snows-11-novel-cycle-last-things.html>; lesedato 08.09.21)

“In Snow’s design each novel was to have its own particular resonance as well as a theme which penetrated to the core of its time-period. The Proustian and personal “The Conscience of the Rich” (1958), for example, develops the thirties themes of social guilt and political conscience in a world moving ominously to the Right. In “The Conscience of the Rich,” too, is evidence of Snow’s long-range planning: the first chapter had appeared in an obscure and short-lived English journal, *The Windmill*, in 1945. Snow has also rejected that planning when necessary, having a remarkable ability to incorporate events which could not have been part of his original pattern, in one case even discarding a novel already written – “The Devoted” – because events made a stronger link in the cycle possible. [...] the most autobiographical of all may be “Time of Hope” (1949), a young man-from-the-provinces book in which Lewis Eliot learns about life and love, and – unlike the young Snow – sacrifices ambition to marriage, making the worst of both. Like Snow, his protagonist (via law rather than physics) makes the passage from boy in Leicester to don at Cambridge [...] The first of the Cambridge group, “The Light and the Dark” (1947), explores, through the talented and tormented Roy Calvert, Snow’s sole tragic hero in the sequence, the search for a way out of despair through religion, through politics, through love, with the doomed romantic figure seen against a background of approaching war. Calvert’s ghost returns to loom over “Last Things.” ” (Stanley Weintraub i <https://www.nytimes.com/1970/08/23/archives/an-elegiac-ending-to-cp-snows-11-novel-cycle-last-things.html>; lesedato 08.09.21)

“ “The Masters,” written second but not published until 1951, examines only one year – 1937 – of the eight covered by “The Light and the Dark,” and restricts itself to the closed world of the venerable college in which both Eliot and Calvert are Fellows, while 13 men savor the power of choosing one of themselves to replace the dying Master. As one critic has written, what Trollope thought useful only for a chapter (“Who Will Be the Next Bishop?”) becomes an entire novel for Snow. The remark is no denigration. “The Masters” not only portrays a power structure in microcosm but is tantalizingly told – perhaps the most engrossing academic novel in English. “The Affair” (1960) examines the College nearly 20 years later. The Cold War has replaced the Spanish Civil War as background, and an arrogantly Communist don has appealed his dismissal for publishing research based upon apparent scientific fraud. Again the closed personal politics of small groups operates, and justice is done, with Eliot, fair to a fault in defending a man he dislikes, reinforcing – as Snow does with each novel – the “Strangers and Brothers” collective title. “The New Men” (1954), covers the earlier war and postwar years, and the atomic bomb project in which Snow himself was indirectly involved as wartime chief of scientific personnel for the Ministry of Labour. “Homecoming”

(1956) takes up Eliot's story at a point not long after it is dropped in "Time of Hope." The scenes now alternate between Whitehall (as Eliot is now a civil servant) and Eliot's private life, primarily the renewal of his conflict between love and ambition. In "Corridors of Power" (1946), a phrase which because of Snow was in circulation long before the book (it had appeared in "Homecoming"), ambition wins out, although not its proponent, an adventurer among ministers. [...] although Snow never prepares formulas for its solution, he does, through the cycle and into "Last Things," trace the decline, but not the demise, of the old ruling class in England, still attractive to outsiders and kept alive by its assimilations from the new managerial élite." (Stanley Weintraub i <https://www.nytimes.com/1970/08/23/archives/an-elegiac-ending-to-cp-snows-11-novel-cycle-last-things.html>; lesedato 08.09.21)

Snows *The Sleep of Reason* (1968) "takes Eliot away from the corridors of power and back to the Midlands town of his origin, where a niece of George Passant is tried for the torture and killing of an 8-year-old boy, Snow's symbolic event for the anarchic violence of the sixties. Like the earlier novels it is set squarely upon a morally crucial event – the Moors Murders. Others are based upon the Suez blunder, the Profumo affair, the decision to drop the Bomb, the atomic spy cases, an obscure scientific fraud in Germany, a 1930's Communist underground publication specializing in London political scandal, and, in the final novel, the campus revolt. For all of them the allusive title of the penultimate book is equally valid. "The sleep of reason," says Goya, "brings forth monsters." The sleep of reason, in our time and his, is what Lord Snow has been seeking in his cycle to understand, his psychological penetration often masked by the deceptively flat, disconcertingly solemn and understated style so appropriate for his stodgy and pragmatic narrator. The difficulty intensifies when other characters speak, and although the failure of differentiation of voices here and there may be ascribed to their being recorded for us and played back by Lewis Eliot, it is a problem nevertheless. [...] The administrative, often scientific, prose, precise, flat and unemotional, with its figures of speech more often from chemistry or anthropology or medicine than from esthetics, seems Snow's personal bridging of the chasm of the "Two Cultures" – a term and a concept he put into the language. [...] It is unlikely that Lord Snow's ambitious roman fleuve will founder on the shoals of style. He is too skillful a storyteller for that, although the satire, subtlety and symbolic luxuriance that make other novelists of his generation ripe for textual exegesis are lacking. [...] none have dealt so successfully not only with the larger issues but with the mysterious and fascinating complexities of the new bureaucratic world." (Stanley Weintraub i <https://www.nytimes.com/1970/08/23/archives/an-elegiac-ending-to-cp-snows-11-novel-cycle-last-things.html>; lesedato 08.09.21)

"At the end we are in the late summer of 1968, 54 years after the opening of the first novel in the series. Lewis Eliot is 63, and feeling older, as well he might in the decade of the generation gap, the revolution in morals, the risings on college campuses, the rebellion of the young against the moral certainties and the

comfortable liberal values for which their fathers had struggled, all important issues in “Last Things.” “Some of them know what they’re doing,” says Charles. “Some are about as relevant as the Children’s Crusade.” But he cannily respects the power inherent in those dedicated to the irrelevant, “because we may need some of those characters. And if you are going to work with people, you can’t afford to be too different.” The insight is typical of the balance and fairness of Snow’s perspectives. He has always communicated the feel of his times; his characters do not merely play out their lives against a background of events – they make and shape and attempt to comprehend their era. The “inner design” of the cycle, Snow once wrote, “consists of a resonance between what Lewis Eliot sees and what he feels. Some of the more important emotional themes he observes through others’ experience, and then finds them enter into his own.” Such resonances vibrate through “Last Things,” although for the initiated, the explanatory asides meant to mesh experience with earlier novels come as unsubtle intrusions. It is the uninitiated who will be more puzzled when they discover following the final chapter a group of pages of “Announcements 1964-68,” listing, godlike, marriages, births and deaths of characters many of whom either play no significant part in the action or who are recalled for the purpose from previous books. Some indicate how many additional plotlines Lord Snow has resolutely put aside in order to complete the sequence in the promised 11 books. Others fill in matter which the reader should have learned in the novel itself, one death, in fact, coming as a cruel and gratuitous shock.” (Stanley Weintraub i <https://www.nytimes.com/1970/08/23/archives/an-elegiac-ending-to-cp-snows-11-novel-cycle-last-things.html>; lesedato 08.09.21)

Britiske Dorothy Richardsons *Pilgrimage* (1915-38) omfatter “13 chapter-novels, 11 of which were published separately: *Pointed Roofs* (1915), *Backwater* (1916), *Honeycomb* (1917), *The Tunnel* (1919), *Interim* (1919), *Deadlock* (1921), *Revolving Lights* (1923), *The Trap* (1925), *Oberland* (1927), *Dawn’s Left Hand* (1931), and *Clear Horizon* (1935). *Dimple Hill*, the 12th “chapter,” appeared in 1938 in a four-volume omnibus under the collective title *Pilgrimage*. A decade after Richardson’s death in 1957, *Pilgrimage* was again released in four volumes, this time including an as-yet unpublished 13th “chapter,” *March Moonlight*. The autobiographical work is noted for its pioneering use of stream of consciousness. Although it does not proceed chronologically, *Pilgrimage* traces the development of Miriam Henderson over a period of 18 years, during which she works as a teacher and as a governess, becomes a dental assistant, joins a socialist organization, and studies the lives of Quakers. [...] *Pilgrimage* is an extraordinarily sensitive story, seen cinematically through the eyes of Miriam Henderson, an attractive and mystical New Woman. Although the length of the work and the intense demand it makes on the reader have kept it from general popularity, it is a significant novel of the 20th century, not least for its attempt to find new formal means by which to represent feminine consciousness.” (Kathleen Kuiper m.fl. i <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Pilgrimage-novel-by-Richardson>; lesedato 03.01.22)

“It may seem ironic that a novel verbose enough to cover over two thousand pages should have silence as one of its central themes. Yet Dorothy Richardson’s thirteen-volume novel *Pilgrimage* constantly reverberates around different aspects of silence, both in its content and in its form. Not only is silence represented on the page – in the form of ellipses, gaps, and blank spaces – but it is also a constant presence in the protagonist Miriam Henderson’s explorations of her existential condition. In its efforts to portray those sides of human experience that resist verbal representation, the novel repeatedly positions itself perilously close to the limits of language, making the question of how to capture the ineffable and the silent in words an acute dilemma, frequently addressed directly in the text itself.” (Annika J. Lindskog i <https://www.dorothyrichardson.org/journal/issue5/Lindskog12.pdf>; lesedato 02.03.22)

Den engelske forfatteren Anthony Powells *A Dance to the Music of Time* (1951-75) består av 12 romaner, der hovedpersonen Nicholas Jenkins sitt liv følger i nesten femti år, fra 1926 til 1971. “Through the eyes of the narrator, Nicholas Jenkins, we see the English upper-class and bohemian life as it was lived by a generation growing up in the shadow of the great war and then grappling with the horrors of another conflict and the profound social changes of a postwar world: the years covered range from the 1920s to the 1970s.” (Jeffrey Archer i <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2012/mar/14/jeffrey-archer-top-10-romans-fleuves>; lesedato 14.09.21) “It was Proust’s example that inspired the English novelist Anthony Powell [...] to begin his own roman-fleuve, *A Dance To The Music Of Time*, which traces the changing fortunes of its narrator and his circle across several decades, examining shifts in military, political and cultural life as it does so.” (<https://metro.co.uk/2008/07/27/an-essential-taster-of-the-roman-fleuve-312126/>; lesedato 29.11.21)

“Hilary Spurling’s new biography, “Anthony Powell: Dancing to the Music of Time” (Knopf), is a fond portrayal of the man sometimes called “the English Proust.” [...] Called “*A Dance to the Music of Time*,” after a Poussin painting of the same name, it came out in twelve book-length installments between 1951 and 1975. [...] Nick, like Marcel, is closely modelled on his author, but he’s the least Proustian and introspective of narrators, revealing next to nothing about himself. He’s more interested in observing the behavior of others – mostly bad, he discovers, especially when sex or power or money is involved. His book is much less interior than “*In Search of Lost Time*,” but also much funnier [...] Powell was writing about the circle he lived in, where high society and bohemia overlapped, and he caught it at a moment of tremendous upheaval. Almost none of the characters in “*Music of Time*” are well off. A lot of them are genteel but shabby, as Powell himself was for decades.” (Charles McGrath i <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2018/11/12/how-anthony-powell-wrote-his-twelve-volume-masterpiece>; lesedato 03.01.22)

*A Dance to the Music of Time* er “[l]oosely organized into four three-volume “movements,” [...] covers an immense span [...] and includes hundreds and hundreds of characters, largely from the English upper middle class, who come and go just as people do in life. Someone with a walk-on part in one volume may turn out to be a major figure in a later one, or the other way around, and people’s fortunes are always changing. Some of the most captivating figures in the early installments become pathetic and needy later on, while apparent losers – especially a character named Kenneth Widmerpool, one of the greatest creeps in all of literature – keep landing on their feet. Evelyn Waugh said that the effect was like watching an aquarium: “One after another various specimens swim towards us; we see them clearly, then with a barely perceptible flick of fin or a tail they are off into the murk.” Powell’s intention was to record an epoch and a society that was disappearing even as he wrote about it, and, as the volumes began piling up, many readers, like Waugh, considered them a masterwork, capturing the tone and texture of life as they knew it.” (Charles McGrath i <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2018/11/12/how-anthony-powell-wrote-his-twelve-volume-masterpiece>; lesedato 03.01.22)

Den engelske forfatteren Henry Williamsons *A Chronicle of Ancient Sunlight* (1951-69) ble utgitt i 15 bøker. “The series opens in 1863, and goes on to cover the story of Phillip Maddison and that of his family and friends through the first half of the twentieth century, including two world wars and a great deal of the social history of the period. The series, in fact, roughly follows HW’s own life – but with considerable fictional embellishment. Comprising the best part of 3 million words, the work is a tour de force and has to be one of the great achievements of English literature. [...] Phillip Maddison is a divided man, sometimes cruel, cowardly and sinful, sometimes possessed of courage, kindness and insight, moving towards a still unknown salvation, and seen with complete clarity and charity by a man who has become whole (i.e. HW as the writer).” (Richard Williamson m.fl. i <https://www.henrywilliamson.co.uk/bibliography/a-lifes-work/a-chronicle-of-ancient-sunlight>; lesedato 03.02.22)

“*A Chronicle of Ancient Sunlight* is written as one long story with deliberate minimum apparent internal structure between individual volumes. This method is known as a *roman fleuve*: a story which flows like a river from one volume to another. As the *Chronicle* also expresses philosophical ideas, it can also be termed a ‘thesis’ novel. [...] it gives a detailed picture of the life of an ordinary family over the first half of the twentieth century. It is a picture of the social history of that time: one in which, due to the power of its author, we live as intensely as if it were happening to ourselves. One of the main themes is the plight of agriculture, another is suffrage: the politics of the late 1930s are interwoven into the later volumes. Transport looms large – especially Phillip’s obsession with fast cars (echoing HW’s own predilection!). The whole is bound together not just by Phillip’s life story, but by HW’s power of description of the natural world and its many facets – large sweeps of the brush setting scenes as if backcloths of allegorical plays, but filled

also with the myriad minutiae of the tiniest detail of plants and insects and birds and animals. [...] Opening in a London suburb still fairly rural in nature, these scenes are expanded in the first three volumes (known as ‘The London Trilogy’), while the content of the next five is devoted to the First World War (these volumes are considered by many to be among the very best writing on that war). We are taken through Phillip’s difficulties in love and writing: his first idyllic marriage ending in the tragic death of his beloved Barley in childbirth (an entirely fictional event); his struggle to become a writer; a second marriage and family; his first farming venture on the family estate which ends in failure – and then his second attempt in Norfolk during the Second World War and his involvement in the politics of Hereward Birkin (Oswald Mosley); and the amazing climax of the final volume culminating in the catastrophic flood that devastates Lynmouth on the North Devon coast, which finally releasing Phillip from his demons, so that at last he can begin his long-planned great series of novels. Thus HW brings us full circle.” (Richard Williamson m.fl. i <https://www.henrywilliamson.co.uk/bibliography/a-lifes-work/a-chronicle-of-ancient-sunlight>; lesedato 03.02.22)

Engelskmannen Simon Ravens *Alms of Oblivion* ble utgitt i årene 1964-76. “This *roman-fleuve* consists of ten novels [...] The first three novels are set in the nineteen-fifties, and the fourth provides the back story, which takes place in the summer after the War ends. It is essentially a farrago about love, jealousy and mutual back-stabbing. There is a lot of social climbing and people who are determined to get on in life at the expense of others; friends who will ruthlessly sacrifice friends for personal gain. [...] The major character, who emerges by the fourth novel, is Fielding Gray, and he has the misfortune to be done over by his two best friends as well as to have two of the most ghastly parents imaginable.” (Alexander Lucie-Smith i <https://catholicherald.co.uk/simon-raven-an-entertaining-read-but-no-powell/>; lesedato 03.02.22)

Om Prousts *På sporet av den tapte tid*, se <https://www.litteraturogmedieleksikon.no/gallery/roman.pdf>

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