

# 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)

## Kalligrafi

Fra gresk “kallos”: “skjønnhet” og “graphein”: “skrive”. En mellomting av skrift og tegning/maleri. Skriften vises fram som estetisk objekt (Coulmas 1981 s. 127).

“A calligrapher [...] paints with words.” (Jackson 1981 s. 161) “Not only the fingers, but the hand, the arm, the whole body, indeed the whole personality of the scribe are involved in the process of writing.” (Gaur 1987 s. 176)

“The art of elegantly beautiful handwriting. A highly skilled penman is a calligrapher. The term also refers to handwritten characters, words, pages, and entire documents that meet the aesthetic requirements of highly skilled penmanship. In Far Eastern cultures, calligraphy is done with a pointed brush held in a vertical position. In Western and Islamic cultures, it is done with a reed, quill, or nib pen held at an angle to the writing surface. During the Middle Ages, certain scribes were known for the beauty of their script. Some became writing masters and wrote model books like this one created by Georg BocsKay, Croatian-born court secretary to the Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand I (Getty Museum, MS 20). In the Islamic world, the proscription on religious imagery facilitated the development of Arabic calligraphy into a sophisticated art form.” (Joan M. Reitz i [http://lu.com/odlis/odlis\\_c.cfm](http://lu.com/odlis/odlis_c.cfm); lesedato 30.08.05)

Kalligrafi forener kvaliteter ved poesi, skrift og maleri i seg (Coulmas 1981 s. 127). Kalligrafi viser både skriverens kulturelle tilhørighet og skriverens følsomhet/sensibilitet. Skriftbildet er ekspressivt. Det er “uttrykksavhengig innhold og innholdsstyrt uttrykk” (Coulmas 1981 s. 145).

“Kalligrafi er et av våre vakreste kunst- og håndverksfag. Det er et dobbelt privilegium i den forstand at man både får arbeide med ordet og budskapet som ligger i det, og man får arbeide med streken, linjen og rytmen som skriveverktøyet danner på underlaget. Kalligrafi er både en kunst og et håndverk. Grensen er vag. Det finnes ikke noe klart skille for når det kalligrafiske slutter å være et håndverk og når det begynner å bli en kunstform. Det kalligrafiske uttrykket kan være leselig og informativt, formelt og godt innøvd. Men det kan også være fritt, helt uleselig, på grensen til å være abstrakte tegninger og ikke lenger ha noen tilknytning til ord, språk eller formidling av et gitt innhold. [...] Når man arbeider med kalligrafi,

åpner det seg en ny dimensjon i opplevelsen av håndskrift, og en ny dimensjon i forhold til streken og merket man etterlater seg.” (Helene Jenssen i <https://steinerbladet.no/article/kalligrafi/>; lesedato 02.10.23)

“Calligraphy, from the Greek words *kallos* (beauty) and *graphos* (writing), refers to the harmonious proportion of both letters within a word and words on a page. While some of the best examples of calligraphic writing make this art form appear effortless, each letter and diacritical mark is the result of painstaking measurements and multiple strokes. Calligraphy appears on both religious and secular objects in virtually every medium – architecture, paper, ceramics, carpets, glass, jewelry, woodcarving, and metalwork. In addition to its decorative qualities, it often provides valuable information about the object it decorates, such as function, maker, patron, and date and place of production. A number of factors, such as the prospective audience, content of the text, and the shape and function of an object, informs the type of script employed.” (<https://www.metmuseum.org/learn/educators/curriculum-resources/art-of-the-islamic-world/>; lesedato 22.04.23)

“Ideas on beauty have changed throughout history. Behind much Western art and writing lie notions that come from Ancient Greece. When the fifth century Greek sculptor Polykleitos wrote his Canon on beauty, he declared that beauty lies in the proportion of one part to another and of all the parts to the whole. Similar ideas led the Greeks to think in a modular way about their alphabet, and this kind of thinking lies behind the design of many scripts. We have also come to think of the roman alphabet we use today not as a random collection of 26 letters but as a system of interlocking proportions based on squares, rectangles and circles. [...] Proportional thinking has also run through Arabic calligraphy ever since the time of Ali Ibn Muqla (885/6-890), vizier to three Abbasid caliphs in Baghdad. When political rivals had his right hand cut off, legend has it that he continued to write with a pen fastened to his arm. Ibn Muqla composed an overarching system of proportions for Arabic script, perhaps Pythagorean in inspiration. He took as its basic element the rhomboid dot, one of the simplest shapes a square-nibbed pen can make. His concepts allowed Arabic calligraphy to develop and extend formal structural thinking even to cursive (joined-up) shapes. While Arabic calligraphy puts an emphasis on proportion, brush calligraphy (practiced in China and Japan) seeks out balance. Many characters have complex structures, while others are simple in form. This means that:

- allowance needs to be made for variety of scale or weight between forms within a piece of writing
- characters need more space around them
- in less formal writing, the calligrapher has to balance the tone and density of ink across the piece as they write.

What matters is the overall appearance of the composition rather than a focus on replicating individual units. There is also a deep appreciation of the performative aspect of brush calligraphy; it can be viewed almost like a dance. Each character is written as a flowing sequence from beginning to end. Even if the ink runs out, the calligrapher will coax the last remnants from the brush, rather than break that flow midway through writing a character. The traces left by the brush on the page leave a record of movement that the reader can follow and enjoy.” (Ewan Clayton i <https://www.bl.uk/history-of-writing/articles/a-short-history-of-calligraphy-and-typography>; lesedato 22.04.23)

“In the West printing has generally been considered a move toward the end of calligraphy. But the twentieth century has seen a remarkable renewal of interest, both in Europe and, perhaps even more so, in America: exhibitions, the foundation of professional societies, teaching at art schools and colleges, and a growing circle of gifted amateurs and fine professional scribes. The roots go back to the Arts and Crafts movement of the 1880s and the work of William Morris (1834-1896) and, most of all, Edward Johnston (1872-1944).” (<https://www.encyclopedia.com/environment/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/calligraphy-overview>; lesedato 04.05.23)

“Den vestlige kalligrafien ble gjenoppdaget av Edward Johnston [...] Han var inspirert av Arts & Crafts-bevegelsens forsøk på å høyne kvaliteten på håndverksprodukter. Johnston forsket egenhendig på manuskripter i The British Museum og fant fram til grunnleggende prinsipper for bruk av bredpennen [...] Johnston utgav boken *Writing, Illuminating and Lettering* i 1906, der han fremla sine oppdagelser i form av en praktisk håndbok. I kjølvannet av Johnston ble The Society of Scribes and Illuminators (SSI) dannet, og den vestlige kalligrafien utviklet seg som en selvstendig kunst- og håndverksform. [...] Grunnskriften (Foundational Hand) ble utviklet av Edward Johnston på bakgrunn av et manuskript fra 900-tallet (Harley Manuscript 2904). Den har en klar og logisk grunnstruktur, gir et godt utgangspunkt for å skape variasjon, og for å avdekke sammenhengen mellom kalligrafien og typografien.” (Erichsen m.fl. 2007 s. 228-229)

“Noen av våre største [bokstav-]typedesignere har kalligrafisk trening: Herman Zapf, Jan Tschichold, Robert Slimbach, Adrian Frutiger med flere. Det ser ut til at vi med fordel kan betrakte våre bokstaver som en samling strøk, snarere enn vilkårlige konturformer eller strenge geometriske konstruksjoner. [...] Noen ganger er det bare i bokstavenes proporsjoner at vi får øye på skriftens historiske opphav (som i såkalte humanistiske grotesker), andre ganger er opprinnelsen mer åpenbar, som i skriveskrifter eller renessanseantikvaer.” (Erichsen m.fl. 2007 s. 228-229)

“Kalligrafiens utøvere bedriver alt fra ren amatørvirksomhet, der kalligrafi brukes til teksting av bordkort og diplomer, julekort og hustavler, til profesjonell formgivning av logotyper. Det lages alt fra unik kalligrafi som kunst til kalligrafi for

reproduksjon og typedesign. Mange kalligrafer driver også med undervisning og utadventt pedagogikk. I mange land har kalligrafien hatt en positiv innflytelse på håndskriftmodeller og håndskriftundervisning. Disse håndskriftmodellene er basert på renessansekursiv (cancelleresca), men er tilpasset vår tid. [...] Moderne vestlig kalligrafi har mange muligheter. Fagets status er endret i og med datarevolusjonen” (Erichsen m.fl. 2007 s. 229).

“The art of calligraphy begins with the tools and materials, and these should be selected with great care. Often, a struggle to achieve a good result is an indication that the chosen surface or writing tool is unsuitable. [...] In addition to the reed pen and quill there is a huge range of writing implements from which the calligrapher can choose. Fibre-tipped pens are ideal for trying out ideas, while, for flexibility and economy, detachable nibs are an excellent option. The use of a fountain pen guarantees a constant supply of ink, although a spring-loaded dip pen is more convenient for changing ink colours easily. A broad-edged brush is essential for constructing Imperial Capitals” (David Harris i <https://daretobebetternow.files.wordpress.com/2016/01/the-art-of-calligraphy-by-david-harris.pdf>; lesedato 22.04.23).

I kalligrafi er “ductus” “the number of pen strokes required to write a character and the direction and sequence in which they are executed by the scribe. In medieval manuscripts, the ductus of each script was in its time considered by experienced scribes to be the most effortless way of writing it. However, as Marc Drogin notes in *Medieval Calligraphy: Its History and Technique* (Allanheld & Schram, 1980), two scribes might write a letter differently, or ductus might depend on the letter preceding or following it. On an exemplar, ductus is shown by surrounding the completed letter with numbered arrows indicating the sequence and direction of strokes or by displaying the letter in the process of creation (first stroke, then first and second, and so on, until the final stroke is added). Plural: ducti.” (Joan M. Reitz i [http://lu.com/odlis/odlis\\_c.cfm](http://lu.com/odlis/odlis_c.cfm); lesedato 30.08.05)

En “cadell” er en “large, highly creative capital letter composed of sweeping pen strokes embellished with patterned calligraphic flourishes, giving the letterform the appearance of a versal. Cadells were an exaggerated form of gothic littera bastarda, used in medieval manuscripts from the 13th to the 15th century. [...] Also spelled cadelle.” (Joan M. Reitz i [http://lu.com/odlis/odlis\\_c.cfm](http://lu.com/odlis/odlis_c.cfm); lesedato 30.08.05)

På faraoenes tid var det i Egypt knapt noen forskjell på å tegne og å skrive. I Kina ble tegnet for kalligrafi (“chou”) og tegnet for maling (“houa”) ofte satt sammen til ett ord (“chou-houa”) (Étiemble 1973 s. 90-91). En kinesisk kalligraf var Su Shi (også kalt Su Dongpo) på 1000-tallet e.Kr.

Ciceros sekretær og slave (senere satt fri) Marcus Tullius Tiro var en pioner for kalligrafien (Ernst 2006 s. 225). To franske middelalder-kalligrafer var Raoulet

d'Orléans og Henri de Trévou (Barbier 2007 s. 23). En tredje mester-kalligraf fra middelalderen var Nicolas de Clamanges (Barbier 2007 s. 46).

De første ordene i Koranen har blitt utformet som vakre skriftfigurer, f.eks. som en stork – en fugl som ble oppfattet som from fordi den foretar en slags “pilegrimsreise” og ofte bygger reir på moskeer (Ernst 1991 s. 766). Sufi-mystikerne ga ofte sin kalligrafi en speilsymmetrisk form. Skriverne ville gi Profetens ord struktur og skjønnhet (Ernst 1991 s. 768).

“Islam greatly respected the scribe [...] especially the scribe who was also a skilled calligrapher and who devoted himself to the writing of the Koran. [...] the scribe, especially the calligrapher, was never a mere servant or artisan, but a man in harmony with the will and purpose of God. The names of famous calligraphers have been carefully preserved for posterity; often they were persons of high social standing – princes, scholars, statesmen, even Caliphs.” (Gaur 1987 s. 154-155)

“Calligraphers are the most highly regarded artists in Islamic culture. The art of calligraphy was passed down from master to student, often within the same family. In order to become a master calligrapher and acquire a formal license, a student had to train for years by copying models to perfect his or her skills. Training to become a calligrapher was a long and rigorous process. Most calligraphers were highly educated and some came from the upper echelons of society. Many rulers received extensive calligraphic training from the best court masters and became accomplished calligraphers in their own right. While most calligraphers at the time were men, some wealthy women practiced calligraphy too. Today, the art of calligraphy is widely practiced by both men and women. Tools and materials affected the quality of the final product. Every calligrapher learned how to prepare pens, inks, and paper. Pens (*qalam*) were often fashioned from reeds due to their flexibility. First, hollow reeds were harvested and left to dry; the calligrapher then cut a tip in the shape, width, and angle that best matched the particular script he or she planned to use. Inks were made of natural materials such as soot, ox gall, gum Arabic, or plant essences. Manuscripts were written on papyrus and parchment (animal skin) before paper was introduced to the Islamic world from China around the eighth century. Because of the status of calligraphy as an art form, the tools associated with it – shears, knives, inkwells, and pen boxes – were often elaborately decorated and sometimes made of precious materials. [...] The first calligraphic script to gain prominence in Qur’ans and on architecture and portable works of art was *kufic*, which features angular letters, horizontal format, and thick extended strokes. Eventually, variations of *kufic* emerged. Examples range from letters intertwined with floral ornament (floriated *kufic*) to letters that appear to be woven into knots (knotted/plaited *kufic*) [...] A new system of proportional cursive scripts was codified from the tenth to the thirteenth century. In a proportional script, each letter’s shape is determined by a fixed number of rhombic (diamond-shaped) dots [...] A rhombic dot is the shape formed when a calligrapher presses his or her pen to paper in one downward motion, producing the diamond shape. A

word written in one of the proportional scripts can vary in size but the letters will always be in strict proportion to one another. There are six proportional scripts (the Six Pens) – *naskh*, *thuluth*, *muhaqqaq*, *rayhani*, *tawqi* ‘, and *riqa* ‘ [...]” (<https://www.metmuseum.org/learn/educators/curriculum-resources/art-of-the-islamic-world/>; lesedato 22.04.23)

“In Islam perfect calligraphy is a manifestation of spirituality, of an inward perfection which comes from being in harmony with the will and purpose of God. There have always been strong connections between mysticism and calligraphy, and calligraphers and Sufis alike trace back their spiritual lineage to the same person, the Prophet’s cousin Ali ibn Abi Talib.” (Gaur 1987 s. 165)

“One of the most famous calligraphers in Islamic history was Ibn Muqla who lived in Baghdad in the late 9th-early 10th centuries. His gift as an artist was likened to the inspiration of bees as they build the cells in their beehive. Ibn Muqla set out the initial principles of proportionally perfect script by developing them according to how many rhomboids (the design of the pen nib on the paper) fit on the Arabic letter *alif* (English letter “a”). He set up what are called the “Six Pens” of Ibn Muqla which include the 6 scripts of *riqa*, *muhaqqaq*, *raayan*, *naski*, *thuluth*, and *tumar*. This greatest Arabic calligrapher of all time was an architect of script. He not only developed and improved several styles of writing (among them Thuluth and Naskhi), but was also first to propose a theory of the dimensions of written characters, keeping them in harmony and symmetry with each other. His doctrine of proportion holds to this day, and can easily be used to check whether or not the proportions of a work of calligraphy are correct or not. Ibn Muqla was a gifted mathematician, calligraphic scholar and natural scientist, and the author of some remarkably straightforward and candid poems.” (Monirul Islam i <https://ocd.lcwu.edu.pk/cfiles/Arabic/Min/FA-101/IbneMakla.pdf>; lesedato 04.05.23)

“Ibn Muqla’s writing system, known as *al-khatt al-mansub*, enabled the letters of any given script to be in proportion to one another. It required a well cut pen (*qalam*) with a deep slit for holding ink. The nib produced a rhombus-shaped dot that became the basic unit of a geometric letter design system. Writing an *alif* (the long, vertical Arabic A) required a number of dots one on top of the other, resulting in the maximum height of any other letter. The *alif* acted as control: its total height was the diameter of a circle that enclosed all letters of a particular script. Accordingly, letters were in proportion to one another in as much as they were proportional to the circle produced by the *alif*. The proportions held regardless of letter size, which resulted from the actual size of the nib. Ibn Muqla applied this system to six modes of writing, producing the six pens (*al-aqlam al-sitta*) of what is known as Arabic calligraphy or, more accurately, *khatt*.” (Monirul Islam i <https://ocd.lcwu.edu.pk/cfiles/Arabic/Min/FA-101/IbneMakla.pdf>; lesedato 04.05.23)

“The first treatise on calligraphy, written by [kinesiske] Lady Wei Shao about 320 AD states that a character must neither have too much ‘bone’ (structure) nor ‘flesh’ (consistency) nor ‘sinew’ (composition) but that all three must be in the right relationship to one another. [...] In traditional China, to be ‘master of the three arts’ – calligraphy, painting and poetry – was the hallmark of a truly educated, truly cultured, if not to say superior, person.” (Gaur 1987 s. 176-177) “Though mainly practiced by men, none of the three great civilizations actively forbade women to become calligraphers. The first Chinese treatise on calligraphy, published in 320 ce, that established definite criteria, still valid today, was written by the Lady Wei Shao. It is thought that even the great Wang Xizhi (321-379 ce) was one of her students. In China and Japan calligraphy was an accomplishment practiced by the elite for the elite; a good calligraphic hand ensured success in the civil service examinations (enforced during the Tang period, 618 to 907 ce).” (<https://www.encyclopedia.com/environment/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/calligraphy-overview>; lesedato 04.05.23)

“Whilst in the rest of the world the 10th century was generally a rather bleak and precarious period, in Japan the Heian period had just reached its halfway mark, producing a highly advanced and totally original form of culture. Translation of literary works from this period such as Murasaki’s *Tale of Genji* and Sei Shonagon’s *Pillow Book* allow us glimpses of a courtly society where a small number of men and women led lives of almost unbelievable sophistication and artistic refinement. In those circles the art of writing occupied a very special place. Arthur Waley goes so far as to say that the true religion of the Heian people was the cult of calligraphy, and though this is perhaps an exaggeration, it is certainly true that the way a man or woman handled the brush was considered a far better guide to his or her breeding, sensitivity and character than what they actually wrote (or said). A fine calligraphic hand came close to being a moral virtue, and being, in the opinion of the people, a mirror of a person’s soul, it also played an essential part in the complex games of courtship which occupied so much of the leisure hours of people of Heian. Often it was the sight of a lady’s (or gentleman’s) handwriting which first gave rise to romantic speculation and to a desire to meet the writer in person. Calligraphy was a powerful aphrodisiac and during the initial stages of a love affair both partners awaited the first written communication from the other with a good deal of trepidation – since an indifferent handwriting nearly always meant the end of the affair. At one point in the *Tale of Genji* Prince Genji receives a letter from a lady he had known in Akashi. His favourite companion, Murasaki, is consumed with anxiety, not about the contents of the letter, but about the lady’s handwriting. When she finally manages to catch a glimpse of it she at once realizes ‘that there was great depth and feeling in the penmanship. Indeed it had style that might give pause to the most distinguished ladies of the Court’, accepting sadly that it was ‘small wonder that Genji felt about the girl the way he did’.” (Gaur 1987 s. 161)

Kalligrafi brukt etter at trykkekunsten var oppfunnet i Europa har blitt kalt “håndskriftens hevn over trykt skrift”, med mestere som Gerardus Mercator i Nederland, Leopardo Antonozzi i Italia, Pedro Diaz Morante i Spania og George Bickham i England (Quinsat 1990 s. 153).

Pedro Diaz Morante var en barokk pennekunstner som “published his major copybook in four parts in 1616, 1624, 1629 and 1631 [...] In 1776, [Francisco] Palomares published his own copybook in which he included over 70 pages of comments on Diaz Morante’s techniques as well as plates heavily influenced by the master’s works.” (<https://pennavolans.com/17th-century/>; lesedato 02.10.23).

“Maximilian I of Austria (1459-1519) not only took great interest in fine printing, but was himself an accomplished calligrapher.” (Gaur 1987 s. 157) “*Proba centum scripturarum* by the Augsburg calligrapher Leonhard Wagner [...] This modelbook of 100 scripts was composed between 1507 and 1517 and was dedicated to Maximilian [...] Ninety-nine of the samples are introduced by large gothic initials of the sort Maximilian was to use in his *Prayerbook*.” (Christopher S. Wood i <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/renaissance-quarterly/article/maximilian-i-as-archeologist/>; lesedato 04.05.23)

Kalligrafi kan også omfatte musikalske noter. “At Ars Subtilior-komponistene [fra senmiddelalderen] også yndet nydelig kalligrafi, er en annen side av denne kunsten. Det er for eksempel overlevert et manuskript der en harpes strenger er brukt som notelinjer i en sang om harpeklangens skjønnhet, og et annet der en kjærlighetssang er notert med hjerteformede notelinjer.” (*Morgenbladet* 4.–10. januar 2008 s. 31)

Det publiseres fortsatt bøker der teksten er utført som kalligrafi. Et eksempel er den tospråklige bildeboka *Erlkönig/Alvekongen*, basert på et dikt av tyskeren J. W. Goethe. Boka har dette på ett av tittelbladene: “fri gjendiktning, tegninger, pastellmaleri, kalligrafi og design ved Anne Tone Thorshaug” (Damm ExLibris 2000). Den upaginerte boka ble trykket i 2000 eksemplarer, og 300 av dem ble nummerert og signert av Thorshaug.

Den klassiske kinesiske teksten *Tao te ching*, som inneholder poetiske læresetninger, filosofiske refleksjoner og ordtak, ble i 1995 oversatt til norsk av Åse-Marie Nesse. Denne utgivelsen har den kalligrafiske kinesiske teksten ved siden av den norske.

“[D]et slås et slag for den døende håndskriften. I den nye boka “The Missing Ink” skriver Philip Hensher om hvordan håndskrivning historisk har blitt sett på som en indikator på vår individualitet og på hvordan det står til med samfunnet. Skriften er en del av den vi er, intet mindre enn “nøkkelen til våre sjeler”. Tasting er mer mekanisk og mindre menneskelig, mener Hensher” (*Klassekampens* bokmagasin 13. oktober 2012 s. 2).



Innen grafitti- og hiphop-subkulturen ser noen sprayere på seg selv som videreførere av kalligrafi-tradisjonen (Krekow, Steiner og Taupitz 1999 s. 181).

“[C]alligraphy, the art of Chinese handwriting, is largely ignored by the new generation of Chinese. A traditional art and important vehicle of communication, calligraphy was once extensively required and exceptionally prized at work. But with Microsoft and the Internet, few Chinese office workers recognize the glory that Chinese calligraphy skills once held [...] artists of the “modern calligraphy” movement. The artists include Gu Gan, Qiu Zhenzhong, Zhang Dawo, Wei Ligang, Pu Lieping, Zeng Laide, Zhang Qiang and Shao Yan.” (<http://www.china.org.cn/english/culture/36280.htm>; lesedato 04.05.23)

“For å få til en god skrift er det viktig å finne rytmen. Kalligrafi er som musikk. Finner du ikke rytmen, føles skriften ukomfortabel. Våg å trekke pusten og kjenn at du slapper av og tør å være ett med strekene du etterlater deg. Finn fokus og gå inn i rytmen som skal danne skriften. I stedet for å øve skalaer som en musiker kanskje ville ha gjort, øver kalligrafielever rytmeøvelser med pennen eller penselen. Det går ikke å mase eller stresse. [...] Den tause kunnskapen som etter hvert fester seg i hånden; hvor hardt man skal presse pennen, hvor raskt man skal utføre pennestrøket, hvor man skal legge trykket og hvor man skal slippe opp [...] ha fokus på hva det er som gjør en skrift harmonisk. Rytmen, rekkefølgen på pennestrøkene, koherens mellom bokstavformene. [...] skriften kan være en avslappende og meditativ øvelse.” (Helene Jenssen i <https://steinerbladet.no/article/kalligrafi/>; lesedato 02.10.23)

Litteraturliste (for hele leksikonet): <https://www.litteraturogmedieleksikon.no/gallery/litteraturliste.pdf>

Alle artiklene i leksikonet er tilgjengelig på <https://www.litteraturogmedieleksikon.no>