

Bibliotekarstudentens nettleksikon om litteratur og medier

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Konsentrasjonslyrikk

(_sjanger) Denne typen kort og fortettet lyrikk har blitt definert som “et maksimum av strukturelasjoner mellom et minimum av elementer” (Kittang og Aarseth 1991 s. 234). Dikteren av slik lyrikk foretrekker det lille og finpussete formatet, og bruker en “knapphets-estetikk” eller “poetisk askese”. Fenomenet er en type lyrisk minimalisme. Noen sjangrer krever korthet, f.eks. haiku og epigram.

“For hvad der driver dem [lyrikerne] til at skrive, er bl.a. netop spørgsmålet: hvor meget de kan få sagt med så få ord som muligt, altså gennem antydning og fortætning.” (Skyum-Nielsen 1986 s. 32) “Minimalism, an abstract and by some measure even a geometric art form, at best aims to do more and more with less and less.” (Brater 1987 s. ix) Et minimum av språklige tegn skal gi et maksimum av meddelelse (Willberg 1989 s. 5). Korte dikt representerer en nærhet til “potensielt rik taushet” (Friedrich 1988 s. 158). Det korte, sammentrukne forener ord og stillhet (Tadié 1987 s. 74).

Dikterne foretar en “ubarmhjertig nedbygging av det som kan unnværes” (Karl Schwedhelm sitert fra Willberg 1989 s. 22). Diktene kan i noen tilfeller representere “den modernistiske minimalismens paradoksale drøm om det helt tomme kunstverk som uttrykk for den dypeste innsikt.” (Jørgen Magnus Sejersted i *Morgenbladet* 19.–25. august 2011 s. 36)

Det er diktning som har gjennomgått “en avmagringskur fra ideologisk flesk” (Karl Markus Michel sitert fra Brackert og Lämmert 1977 s. 275). Det skrives med “dråpeteller”, der målet er å uttrykke et maksimum med et minimum av ord (Hillen 2007 s. 27).

Den amerikanske forfatteren Edgar Allan Poe hevdet i essayet “The Poetic Principle” (1850) at et langt dikt er en selvmotsigelse.

“Language hides reality; to describe something is to kill it. Moreover, since reality exists only in this instant, we cannot know it.” (den amerikanske dikteren Edward Dorn gjengitt fra Perkins 1987 s. 513)

Ved analyse av et kort dikt kan hele diktet være fullstendig til stede i bevisstheten samtidig.

“In fissional poetry spaces are used to “disconceal” words within words as in LeRoy Gorman’s, “t rain s top spar row,” [...] In fusional poems words are combined as in Jonathan Brannen’s, “splace,” to create implicit metaphors, in this case the splash/splice of a space’s becoming a place [...] Sometimes categories are combined, as in the following fissional/fusional (or compound infra-verbal) poem by Karl Kempton:

ANTIQUÉ QUESTION

anti quest ion

a we

awe

It is vital to read this poem both as words and letters, and to watch as well as read it. In such a reading, and watching, the poem should make almost tangible the idea of a question’s congealing into a serenity beyond irritable answer-seeking. And the subsequent parallel drawing together of “a we” (or group of individuals associating to the degree of we-ness but not any transcendently further) into “awe,” or some higher Oneness, should have an even more electrically almost-tangible impact. [...] “Mutational” is my term for infra-verbal poems that deviate only mildly from normal spelling. [...] When a poem’s words are so “poorly” spelled as to be close to 100% “wrong”, I term the result “microherent.” [...] As for alphaconceptual minimalist poems, they might use any of the tricks so far mentioned but go beyond other infra-verbal poems into letter-related conceptual concerns as in Ed Conti’s “galaxyz.” From one point of view, this is just a mutational poem – but its whimsical but deep use of the concept of alphabetical order with “xyz” to imply Final Terminality, makes it more than that.” (Bob Grumman sitert fra <http://www.thing.net/~grist/l&d/grumman/egrumn.htm>; lesedato 18.02.19)

Den amerikanske 1800-tallslyrikeren Emily Dickinsons skrev en stor mengde dikt som ikke ble publisert før etter hennes død. De fleste diktene er korte. Hun reviderte ofte sine egne dikt, “always in revision shortened, not lengthened.” (Sewall 1963 s. 101) “Dickinson often writes aphoristically, meaning that she compresses a great deal of meaning into a very small number of words. This can make her poems hard to understand on a first reading, but when their meaning does unveil itself, it often explodes in the mind all at once, and lines that seemed baffling can become intensely and unforgettably clear.” (<http://www.sparknotes.com/poetry/dickinson/analysis.html>; lesedato 13.12.17)

Den amerikanske dikteren Ezra Pounds dikt “In a Station of the Metro” (1913) består av to verselinjer:

“The apparition of these faces in the crowd:

Petals on a wet, black bough.”

“Here is presented a singular instant – one differentiated from a generic multitude; a clarification and intensification of the ordinary; a poetic subtraction which repeats and amplifies Pound’s claim regarding the image. In these lines we may trace those microscopic poetic points upon which the haziness of the reader’s imagination tips into the crystalline hardness of the image. At this point the represented image is indeed an “apparition,” something which leaves the realm of the undifferentiated and enters a space of intense presence, mediating in this *poietic* intuition a deep experience of its concreteness.” (Botha 2011 s. 281)

Den franske surrealisten Louis Aragons dikt “Suicide” (1920) består av alfabetet:

“A b c d e f
g h i j k l
m n o p q r
s t u v w
x y z”

“The central contention of the work is that by its taking-place, the substance of the poem self-reflexively consumes its poetic potential. The mediating activity of the poet, becomes one of perpetual, self-sacrificial exhaustion, indeed suicide. No means of figuring *poiesis* remains except the statement of the quantitative constituents of the poem in their most minimal form: “letters of the alphabet spelled out in sequence.” [...] the atomic elements of writing – elements which are *recalculated* by the alphabetic sequence to indicate the “finite and infinite possibility of the limited set;” the suicide of predetermined entities constitutes a rebirth of *poietic* language.” (Botha 2011 s. 176-177)

Den italienske poeten Giuseppe Ungarettis dikt “Morgen” (1933) består av kun to verselinjer (her i engelsk oversettelse): “(1) I flood myself with light (2) of the immense.” “This famous little poem [...] is the kind that particularly infuriated the anti-hermeticists. [...] Poetry of this kind, recalling the experiments of [Ezra] Pound and like them owing something to Oriental poetry, has been called *poesia-baleno*, flash-of-lightning poetry.” (Burnshaw m.fl. 1964 s. 311)

Den amerikanske dikteren Robert Creeleys dikteriske stil “was usually called “minimal,” meaning that in many things in which poets may be abundant Creeley is sparse or barren. His poems have few or no descriptions, characterizations, or incidents. He builds his subtleties and resonances by juxtapositions of short, simple lines and phrases, by manipulation of syntax and rhythm, and by metaphor. As Creeley says, “You can’t derail a train by standing directly in front of it, or, not quite. But, a tiny piece of steel, properly placed ...” ” (Perkins 1987 s. 507).

“Beguiling Simplicity: The Poetry of Robert Lax [...] Robert Lax wrote spare poems that, in their beguiling simplicity, provoke anxieties about how and why we read. A typical Lax poem forms a narrow vertical column, each line of which is only one or two words long, that descends down the center of the page in repetitions and permutations: “one stone/ one stone/ one stone,” opens *poems* (1962-1997), edited and with a superb introduction by poet John Beer, “i lift/ one stone/ one stone// i lift/ one stone/ and i am/ thinking” (3). Such phrases, repeated and varied, make the reader aware, if not self-conscious, about the reading act. However, unlike other poets whose work causes readers to read themselves reading it, such as Gertrude Stein or e.e. cummings, Lax’s poems present no obvious difficulties or impediments to sense. Instead, stanzas like the above – difficult in their easiness, complex in their simplicity – lull the reader into committing the heresy of paraphrase: Lax lifts one stone and he is thinking. It’s easy, all too easy, to be lax when reading Lax.” (Louis Bury i <https://hyperallergic.com/291086/beguiling-simplicity-the-poetry-of-robert-lax/>; lesedato 30.08.18)

“Her til lands har poeter som Olav H. Hauge og Paal-Helge Haugen eksperimentert med det minimale formatet, mens Håvard Rem for et par år siden laget en hel diktsamling med tekstmeldinger.” (*A-magasinet* 24. oktober 2008 s. 7) Eiliv Eide skriver om Olav H. Hauges “bitte små, haikulignende” dikt (siteret fra *Åmås* 2004 s. 342), f.eks. “Sleggja”, “Ljåen” og “Sagi”.

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)

“[I]dealet i norsk lyrikk [...] handler om reduksjon, om en asketholdning der alt skal skjæres bort for “det rene uttrykkets” skyld. [...] Det minimale, det knappe som tyngende ideal i Norge, vektlegging av antydningen [...] Følges modernismen helt ut, ender den i stillhet.” (Alexander Rubio og Bertrand Besigye i *Aftenposten* 20. oktober 1993 s. 18)

“Minimalist poetry refers to a poetry type or movement that doesn’t have any clear originator and is only loosely defined. Minimalist poetry was influenced by concrete poetry, Japanese haiku, and Black Mountain poetry, among others. Although this movement is not as clearly defined as some poetry movements, it does possess some specific characteristics that make it unique. [...] Minimalist poetry does not rely on story or narrative; it is as concise as possible and seeks to convey meaning while eliminating any unnecessary words. Minimalist poems do not seek to set scenes, introduce characters or provide descriptions of specific actions or events. [...] Minimalist poets provide variation and visual interest in their poems by playing with font, spaces between letters and size of letters. A famous example of this is Richard Kostelanetz’s sequence “Genesis,” in which each word represents one day of creation and is characterized by a different font

type, color and text arrangement.” (Ann Trent i <http://penandthepad.com/minimalist-poems-1889.html>; lesedato 07.03.17)

Konsentrasjonslyrikkens “aim is to get its job done in as few words as possible [...] It is not clear when contemporary minimalist poetry began, or who “invented” it, but it’s probable that one-word, one-phrase, and other very compressed poems were among the oddities thrown together by the dadaists in the twenties. At around the same time, imagism importantly emphasized the value of concision. A third important contribution to minimalist poetry was made by the concrete poetry movement of the 50’s and 60’s before it succumbed to narrowness of scope and various forms of parochialism. The flowering of the haiku in the West was a large influence, as well. To my mind, though, full-scale minimalist poetry didn’t begin in this country [USA] and Canada until the one-word poems of Aram Saroyan and Richard Kostelanetz in the late sixties and early seventies. The movement, if it can be called that, was almost invisible until the mid-eighties when poets like Geof Huth, Jonathan Brannen, Karl Kempton and others joined it.” (Bob Grumman i <https://www.thing.net/~grist/l&d/grumman/egrumn.htm>; lesedato 10.03.17)

“Toronto poet Shirley Camia maps the immigrant experience through lyric minimalism and vivid imagery in her second collection, *The Significance of Moths* [2016]. Divided into six sections – “In the Palm of an Evening,” “The Portrait Unravelling,” “Humbled Knowing,” “A Song from the Old Country,” “The Generation After,” and “Straddling Worlds” – her exploration starts with her grandmother’s death before slipping into flashbacks of her mother’s childhood in the Philippines. From there, she writes about her mother’s departure to Canada and her own childhood as the daughter of immigrants, interspersing the narrative with snapshots of visits to her parents’ home country. This portrait of a Filipino-Canadian family teems with Tagalog and Spanish words and phrases as well as multiple references to both of the author’s cultures. [...] Often writing in fragment sentences that are then further fractured, Camia practices a minimalism of ornate but sparse language, gliding from one image or observation to another in a way that recalls the form and tradition of the haiku. Because of her style and subject matter, it is hard not to compare Camia to Souvankham Thammavongsa, a master of minimalism in contemporary Canadian poetry. Despite a certain similarity, there are also obvious differences between the two authors. Notably, Camia’s book is more explicitly narrative in its structure and her language even more pared down in its absence of punctuation and capitalization. In their concision, her poems read like concentrated versions of longer works, their images and characters evoking greater backstories and a raw, palpable tension, lending a heft to Camia’s slight volume.” (<http://www.contemporaryverse2.ca/en/reviews/excerpt/the-significance-of-moths>; lesedato 16.02.17)

Den tyske dikteren Günter Eich hevdet at “Etvert dikt er for langt!” (sitert fra Willberg 1989 s. 57).

“You Call That Poetry?! How seven letters managed to freak out an entire nation. [...] When Aram Saroyan received \$750 from the NEA [National Endowment for the Arts i USA] for his poem “lighght,” people were left scratching their heads: How could one misspelled word be considered poetry? [...] On a cool autumn evening in 1965, a 22-year-old poet named Aram Saroyan typed seven letters that would amount to one of the most controversial poems in history. [...] Dead center on the sheet of paper curled in his Royal manual typewriter, he clacked out this single misspelled word:

lighght

[...] One day another of Saroyan’s friends, the poet Ted Berrigan, got a look at his latest one-word poem, *eyeye*, on a sheet of typewriter paper. “He said, ‘What the fuck is this?’” Saroyan recalls, “which I thought was a promising response.” [...] “Lighght” is something you *see* rather than *read*. Look at “lighght” as a poem and you might not get it. Look at it as a kind of photograph, and you’ll be closer. “The difference between “lighght” and another type of poem with more words is that it doesn’t have a reading process,” says Saroyan, who lives in Los Angeles and teaches writing at the University of Southern California. His *Complete Minimal Poems* was published in June by Ugly Duckling Presse. “Even a five-word poem has a beginning, middle, and end. A one-word poem doesn’t. You can see it all at once. It’s *instant*.” [...] What you’re left with is more sensation than thought. The poem doesn’t describe luminosity – the poem is luminosity. That way of looking at language became Saroyan’s playing field for years. “I got intrigued by the look of individual words,” he says. “The word ‘guarantee,’ for instance, looks to me a bit like a South American insect.” ” (Ian Daly i <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/articles/68913/you-call-that-poetry>; lesedato 18.07.18)

Saroyans “lighght” ble opprinnelig publisert med lysegule bokstaver på et hvitt ark (Joëlle Gauthier i <http://nt2.uqam.ca/fr/dossiers-thematiques/esthetiques-minimalistes-ii>; lesedato 15.02.19).

“A year after “lighght” appeared in *The Chicago Review*, George Plimpton decided to include it in the second volume of *The American Literary Anthology*, which he was editing for the National Endowment for the Arts, then barely five years old. Under the NEA’s newly established Literature Program, every author featured in the anthology received a cash award. Plimpton picked Saroyan’s “lighght,” so the NEA cut him a check for \$750 – the same as all the other authors in the anthology. [...] When Representative William Scherle, a Republican from Iowa, caught wind of the one-word poem, he launched a national campaign against the indefensible wastefulness of the newly established NEA, and urged the removal of its chairperson, Nancy Hanks. Jesse Helms had his hackles raised, too. Pretty soon, Michael Straight, deputy chairperson of the Endowment at the time, “was personally called to the offices of 46 members of Congress to explain the matter,” according to NEA documents. Mailbags of letters from fuming taxpayers clogged

the agency's boxes, most of them variations on a theme: *We can't afford to lower taxes but we can pay some beatnik weirdo \$500 to write one word...and not even spell it right?! "If my kid came home from school spelling like that,"* one congressman said, according to the now-defunct arts and literature quarterly *Sabine*. "I would have stood him in the corner with a dunce cap." Plimpton, for his part, wasn't about to step out of the fray. After Scherle denounced the poem in the House of Representatives, Plimpton traveled to Iowa to campaign against him. Scherle ultimately lost his re-election bid in 1974. And then Plimpton was asked by a congressman to explain Saroyan's poem. According to *Sabine*, he responded, "You are from the Midwest. You are culturally deprived, so you would not understand it anyway." "Lighght," it turns out, was more than just a groundbreaking poem. It was the perfect metaphor for the often hairy business of mixing government with art" (Ian Daly i <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/articles/68913/you-call-that-poetry>; lesedato 18.07.18).

"But there is something uniquely enduring about "lighght" – a peculiar energy that goes beyond the realm of controversy or the resurrection of poetic taxonomies. That single word still manages to make people *think* – even Saroyan. [...] "So apparently the crux of the poem is to try and make the ineffable, which is light – which we only know about because it illuminates something else – into a *thing*. An extra 'gh' does it. Embossing it does it. Engraving it in stone, and letting the light play off the actual word, does it, too. It's sculptural on that level." In *Complete Minimal Poems*, "lighght" is restored to its place at the center of a single white page. Minimalist poetry, Saroyan says, might be having another moment. But lighght isn't the only word in there that should get people thinking again. "I realized recently that my poem "lobstee" was written in Stockholm, where the billboards in Swedish had more diphthongs, and I liked that look," says Saroyan. "The double 'aa' in 'aapple' looked good to me. I love Gertrude Stein's line about 'A rose is a rose is a rose.' She said that was the first time the rose has been really red in English literature in the past two centuries." " (Ian Daly i <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/articles/68913/you-call-that-poetry>; lesedato 18.07.18)

Saroyan har også skapt en tekst som kun består av en omdannet versjon av bokstaven m. Hans "m" har fått et ekstra "bein" ned, slik at det altså går fire streker ned i stedet for tre på bokstaven. "Composed by Aram Saroyan in the seventies, it has actually garnered a bit of fame: it was cited in *The Guinness Book of Records* as the world's shortest poem!" (Bob Grumman sitert fra <http://www.thing.net/~grist/1&d/grumman/egrumn.htm>; lesedato 18.02.19)

"Aram Saroyan's *Complete Minimal Poems* [...] squeezed so much into so little. Almost all of his poems, even those complete with syntax, are textual objects of contemplation. We are forced to slow down to see them. Read too fast and they can be lost. [...] There's something of minimalist brilliance even in those poems imbued with syntax:

whistling in the street a car turning in the room ticking

This is but a line, but it is filled with cinematic jump cuts. Our attention is redirected after every few words when another image is slipped into the sequence, ending not with resolution, but with continuity (ticking). The poem doesn't end so much as suggest movement forward." (<http://dbqp.blogspot.com/2007/07/13-minutes-277-pages-of-poetry.html>; lesedato 13.08.18)

Den amerikanske forfatteren John Barth har skrevet om "the contemporary "skinny poems" of, say, Robert Creeley. There are even single-word poems, or single words that ought to be poems; the best one I know of I found in the Guinness Book of World Records, listed as the "most succinct word"; the Tierra del Fuegian word "mamihlapinatapei." In the language of the Land of Fire, "mamihlapinatapei" is said to mean: looking into each other's eyes, each hoping that the other will initiate what both want to do but neither chooses to commence." (Barth i <https://www.nytimes.com/1986/12/28/books/a-few-words-about-minimalism.html>; lesedato 22.04.20)

Den anonymt utgitte diktsamlingen *Klokkene* (2019; på England forlag) består av 23 ord fordelt på tre deler og fem dikt.

Konsentrasjonslyrikk er ofte hermetisk diktning. Se https://www.litteraturogmedieleksikon.no/gallery/hermetisk_diktning.pdf

Alle artiklene og litteraturlista til hele leksikonet er tilgjengelig på <https://www.litteraturogmedieleksikon.no>