

# Bibliotekarstudentens nettleksikon om litteratur og medier

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## Palindrom

(\_litterær\_praksis) Også kalt “speilord” (Weller 1977 s. 12). Et språklig uttrykk, en setning eller lengre tekst som kan leses både forfra og bakfra. Oftest er det den samme teksten (hvis en ser bort fra noen kommaer, ordmellomrom og lignende) som leses begge veier, slik som i dette palindromet: “A man, a plan, a canal – Panama” (Leigh Mercer).

“The *palindrome* is a special case of an anagram defined as words, phrases, verses or sentences that read the same backward or forward. Verse palindromes were known as early as the Middle Ages, e.g. in the works of Walther von der Vogelweide, Gottfried von Strassburg or Peter Suchenwirt, in the Baroque era e.g. in texts of Zesen and Schottelius, and even some Modernist writers such as the Expressionist Georg Trakl (1887-1914) composed palindromes. It is not surprising that Oskar Pastior devoted a complete book to the palindrome entitled *Kopfnuß Januskopf* (1990). Further palindromes can be found in *Contra-Texte* by Reinhold Koehler (1919-70), in Herbert Pfeiffer’s *OH CELLO VOLL ECHO* (1992) or in fascinating text-image palindromes by Brigitta Falkner (*TobrevierSchreiverbot*, 1996; *FABULA RASA oder Die methodische Schraube*, 2001).” (Jörgen Schäfer i <http://cybertext.hum.jyu.fi/articles/77.pdf>; lesedato 13.08.15)

“Characteristically, the palindrome is an old symbol of the idea of perpetuum mobile, the autopoietic force that keeps itself going. [...] seems to stand for autopoiesis, paradox and undecidability, something which possibly accounts for its boom in postmodern literature. [...] Palindromic letter revolution and reversion is readable as an artistic form of cultural critique and as a culture’s desire for reorganization and reversal.” (Erika Greber i [https://thenabokovian.org/sites/default/files/2018-01/NABOKV-L-0012152\\_\\_body.html](https://thenabokovian.org/sites/default/files/2018-01/NABOKV-L-0012152__body.html); lesedato 19.10.21)

På døpefonter i Hellas står ofte palindromet “NION ANOMHMATA MH MONAN OIN” som betyr (en litt nedkortet versjon av) “vask mine synder, ikke bare mitt ansikt”.

“Was it a cat I saw?”, “Are we not drawn onward, we few, drawn onward to new era?”, “Satan, oscillate my metallic sonatas”, “Yo, banana boy”, “Madam, I’m Adam” (Adams første ord til Eva), “Ma is as selfless as I am”, “Dammit, I’m mad!”, “Able was I ere I saw Elba” (om Napoleons eksil), “Agnes i senga”, “Ein

Neger mit Gazelle zagt im Regen nie” (den siste er fra den tyske filosofen Arthur Schopenhauer; sitert fra Hocke 1959 s. 36).

Den sveitsiske maleren og dikteren André Thomkins lagde mange palidromer, bl.a. “Dogma I am God” og “Nie Reime, da kann Akademie rein”. “Fascinasjonen for palindromer, som Thomkins frembrakte gjennom nøye søken i språket, ligger i dens symmetri, som for Thomkins ikke uten ironi synes å gi et flyktig innblikk i den hemmelige, hellige verdensorden” (<http://www.spoerri.at/download/andre-thomkins.pdf>; lesedato 10.01.13). “Dogma I am God” uttrykker at alle gudsbeviser er sirkelslutninger, og at Gud bare kan nås gjennom tro, ikke gjennom logisk forklaring (ifølge den siterte nettsiden).

“Ifølge Guinness’ Rekordbok er det “regn timer” på 9 bokstaver som er det lengste norske ordet som er palindrom – og dermed kan leses både forlengs og baklengs. Verdens lengste enkeltord som er palindrom er det finske ordet for såpesteinselger, nemlig “saippuakivikauppias” på 19 bokstaver. Blant andre, og mer hjemlige eksempler finnes setninger som “Agnes i senga”, “Kari i Irak” eller “alle reisetrette skal ete laks etter te, sier Ella” eller svenskenes “Ni talar bra latin”. [...] Ifølge de fleste kilder var det grekeren Sotades som var hjernen bak prinsippet med å snu ord om. Sotades var en gresk poet som brukte palindromene i kritiske vers mot herskeren Ptolemy. Ptolemy hadde imidlertid ingen humoristisk sans og fikk derfor Sotades kastet på havet. Men palindromene fikk leve videre. Fortsatt kan man på fontener i Hellas og Tyrkia lese gamle inskripsjoner med palindromer som sier: “Nispon anomimata mi monan opsin”. For de uinnvidde betyr dette “vask (mine) synder, ikke bare (mitt) ansikt”. [...] Steinar Asp er en glimrende “palindromør”:

IDA, ÅT ELLI LILLETÅA DI? / DU, RAMLA ODIN I DO, ALMA RUD?  
DRO B. MO ANNA OM BORD? / RENI RAZAMS MAZARINER / RÅLEKRE  
LERKELÅR  
SPANSK SNAPS / ELLEF E. RYDS DYREFELLE / NES ER KRESEN /  
KØLNLØK  
VIL EDY L. DAL ADLYDE LIV? / ELLE FELGENS SNEGLEFELLE  
ELSA, PER G. NAG ANGREP ASLE / N. ELA SITTE RETT I SALEN  
AGNES I. ÅLO LÅ I SENGÅ / TAR APPARAT / I NITTINI / OLA LO  
E.J. LADEMS MEDALJE / OL-FJOLS, LO J. FLO / VIL K. RAM ETE  
METEMARK, LIV?  
KORKETRENEREN ER EN ERTEKROK / D. URE DRO RETT ETTER  
ORDERUD  
ØNSKER MR. EK SNØ? / ER ROBIN I BORRE? / TOR I OPEL BLE POIROT  
ELSA RE GA S. RO TO MOTORSAGER, ASLE / SIRIS IRIS  
VIL DU BLI ILBUD, LIV ? / LITT TIL / SØT TØS / AMMER EMMA? / ELSA  
REDDER ASLE  
ASLE TEMMET ELSA / AINAMOR I ROMANIA / VIS TILLIT, SIV /  
NESEVESEN  
SØLEKAKELØS / OLA LO / TO GRAM, MARGOT / TI GRAM, MARGIT

RUT AINA P'S SPANIATUR / S.Ø. LIGREN ER ENERGILØS  
ELSA TOK SAMS MASKOT, ASLE / RUT N. EG, AGENTUR  
ODA R. ODLE'S ELDORADO / R.E. KRON SNORKER  
LIV MO TROR TOM VIL / ANNA KLØR ØLKANNA / MAIS I SIAM / ENOKS  
KONE  
KARI I IRAK / STIV VITS / SLAVEVALS / ELINS SNILE / LUKSUSKUL  
SIVLE REDDER ELVIS / SULDALBLADLUS / DUBLINILBUD / NED MED  
EMDEN  
ENERGITIGRENE / SEDLER ELDES / REDDALSLADDER (Reddal er et sted i  
Grimstad).

Asp har konstruert flere fantasifulle palindromer bestående av sammensatte ord:  
RESSURSRUSSER / RUSSERDRESSUR / TROMSMORT / ETNEJENTE  
RENARANER / NESNAHANSEN / ROKOKKOKOR / MOROROM /  
LEGEREGEL  
REGLESELGER / REPOSSOPER/TATERETAT/ PURISTSIRUP /  
RORBUBROR  
SUMOMUS / KARVEVRAK / REVYTYVER / LUDOMODUL /  
MELKEKURUKEKLEM" (Sverre Bjørstad Graff i [https://www.abcnyheter.no/  
nyheter/2002/09/20/41025/agnes-i-senga; lesedato 08.11.06](https://www.abcnyheter.no/nyheter/2002/09/20/41025/agnes-i-senga; lesedato 08.11.06))

"A palindrome is any sequence of units that reads the same way in both directions. Although words and phrases are the most common form of palindrome to most of us, there are also numerical palindromes, art palindromes, and even biological palindromes. The word "palindrome" was first coined by English writer Ben Jonson during the seventeenth century from the Greek words *palin* ("again") and *dromos* ("direction"). Palindromes as a literary form date back to at least A.D. 79, based on a Latin word square found at Herculaneum, which reads SATOR AREPO TENET OPERA ROTAS ("The sower Arepo holds works wheels"). This palindrome is particularly interesting in that it works both horizontally and vertically, as does a similar Hebrew palindrome." (Sheila Singhal i [http://elephanta  
day.blogspot.no/2012/04/elephant-no-196-palindrome.html; lesedato 04.01.13](http://elephanta.day.blogspot.no/2012/04/elephant-no-196-palindrome.html; lesedato 04.01.13))

S A T O R  
A R E P O  
T E N E T  
O P E R A  
R O T A S

Midtordet er TENET. Actionfilmen og thrilleren *Tenet* (2020; regissert av Christopher Nolan) handler om reversering av tiden. "Invertert tid. Parallele plan. "Bestefar-paradokset" (om du reiser tilbake i tid og tar livet av bestefaren din, blir du født da?). Hemmelige byer fra Sovjettiden. En morgendag som tilsynelatende har bestemt seg for å gå til krig mot nåtiden, bestefarparadoks eller ikke. Materie fra fremtiden som skyller i land i vår. [...] *Konseptet* er alt i Nolans filmer. Denne

gangen er det biljakter i revers, mennesker som løper baklengs og bygg som kollapser og reiser seg igjen, kort sagt: baklengs film.” (Morten S. Nilsen i <https://www.vg.no/rampelys/film/i/MRMmp5/filmanmeldelse-tenet-en-bombastisk-hodepine>; lesedato 04.09.20)

“Linguistic palindromes are found in all languages, and in their earliest forms were particularly popular for religious inscriptions. Nor have they always limited to reasonably short forms. At least two full-length English-language novels have been written as palindromes: *Satire: Veritas* (1980) by David Stephens, with a length of 58,795 words; and *Dr. Awkward & Olson in Oslo* (1986) by Lawrence Levine, with a length of 31,954 words. Most palindromes, however, are short, consisting of a single phrase or sentence, such as the one most of us learned as children: “Madam, I’m Adam.” Similar sentences include, “Was it a rat I saw?” or “Never odd or even” or “A Toyota’s a Toyota.” [...] For many years, people appear to have delighted in coming up with the longest-possible palindromic words. Other languages far outstrip English in this particular context. The longest palindromic word in English is thought to be “tattarrattat” from *Ulysses* by James Joyce. Seems pretty good, until you see things like the Finnish word *saippuakivikauppias* (“soapstone vendor”), the even longer *saippuakuppinippukauppias* (“soap dish wholesale vendor”), or my personal favourite: *koortsmeetsysteemstrook*, a Dutch word for “thermometer.” (Sheila Singhal i <http://elephantaday.blogspot.no/2012/04/elephant-no-196-palindrome.html>; lesedato 04.01.13)

“A 1986 article called *Dr. Awkward and Olson in Oslo*, by Lawrence Levine, begins: “The long voyage between my first tentative effort at constructing a short palindrome of some 40 letters, and the eventual completion of a palindromic novel numbering 31,594 words (or approximately 104,000 letters) some 20 years later, was an unrelenting lesson in many disciplines. There were lessons in trial and error...” Levine carefully states his creed as a creator of these bidirectional hunks of text: “One must not cheat by inventing words or coining new spellings.” ” (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2012/dec/17/higher-education-research-wordplay>; lesedato 08.01.13)

“In 1980, David Stephens wrote a 58,000 letter palindrome “*Satire: Veritas.*” Lawrence Levine wrote a palindromic novel of 31,957 words, *Dr. Awkward and Olson in Oslo* in 1986. “In Eden, I,” a poem by Richard Cox published in *Word ways* takes the traditional ‘Madam, I’m Adam’ palindrome further. Each line reads the same forward and backwards. Here are some excerpts:

Eve. Drowsy Baby’s word. Eve  
Madam, I’m Adam  
Named under a ban, a bared nude man.  
Miss, I’m Cain, a monomaniac. Miss, I’m ...  
Diamond-eyed no-maid!

This goes beyond a clever trick to become real poetry. Some lines have an almost Miltonic meter: “Even in Eden I win Eden in Eve”. (Karen Drayne i <http://www.philobiblon.com/isitabook/games.index.html>; lesedato 03.06.09)

“One of the more bizarre forms of palindrome is the acoustical palindrome. This is when a recorded spoken phrase sounds the same played backwards or forwards. Composer John Oswald is credited with this particular discovery in 1974, when he was working on audiotapes of William S. Burroughs reading his works. Apparently, whenever Burroughs said “I got”, it still sounded like “I got” when played backwards. Music also abounds in palindromes. *Haydn's Symphony No. 47* in G has long been called “The Palindrome” because the third movement is a musical palindrome. It goes forwards twice, backwards twice, and ends up in the same place. Many other composers have also written musical palindromes, including Mozart (*Scherzo-Duetto di Mozart*), Stravinsky (*The Owl and the Pussycat*) and Berg (*Lulu* interlude). There is also the unusual table canon form, which is a rectangular piece of sheet music played by two musicians facing one another across a table, with the music between them. One is thus reading the music upside-down, similar to the SATOR AREPO square mentioned earlier. Popular music has also gotten into the act. Bands such as Soundgarden, They Might Be Giants, The Grateful Dead, and even ABBA have all incorporated palindromes in either album titles, lyrics or music. One of the more interesting popular music palindromes is a 2003 installation commissioned from sculptor Roman De Salvo and composer Joseph Waters for the city of San Diego, California. Crab Carillon took the form of 488 tuned chimes constructed as a safety railing on the 25th Street overpass. The chimes could be struck by pedestrians as they crossed the walkway, with a melody that played the same from either direction.” (Sheila Singhal i <http://elephantaday.blogspot.no/2012/04/elephant-no-196-palindrome.html>; lesedato 04.01.13)

“Comic books have also dabbled in palindromes. Volume 3 of *Les Terres creuses* by Luc and Francois Schuten features a mirror image for each frame. Similarly, *Watchmen* No. 5, “Fearful Symmetry” is more or less a palindrome from beginning to end, with the design of the first and last pages – then the second and second-last pages and so forth – mirroring each other until the centre spread, which is roughly symmetrical in layout as well. [...] In the world of numerals, a palindromic number is simply one that can be read the same backwards and forwards, such as 1221. Palindromic dates [f.eks. 01.02.2010] get people particularly excited, depending on how they are transcribed numerically. [...] Weirdly, the world of biology also appears to have naturally-occurring palindromes. DNA often has strands of nucleotides that always pair the same way, but in reverse order. In other words, the sequence ACCTAGGT will pair with TGGATCCA, forming a palindrome. Palindromes are also thought to be prevalent in proteins – which may be due to the similar structure of the RNA that directs protein synthesis.” (Sheila Singhal i <http://elephantaday.blogspot.no/2012/04/elephant-no-196-palindrome.html>; lesedato 04.01.13)

Richard Cox' dikt "In Eden, I," i tidsskriftet *Word*, "takes the traditional 'Madam, I'm Adam' palindrome further. Each line reads the same forward and backwards. Here are some excerpts:

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Miss, I'm Cain, a monomaniac. Miss, I'm ...  
Diamond-eyed no-maid!

This goes beyond a clever trick to become real poetry. Some lines have an almost Miltonic meter: "Even in Eden I win Eden in Eve". Writing ordinary words in reverse order can completely change their significance." (<http://www.philobiblon.com/isitabook/games/>; lesedato 08.01.13)

Den tyske kunstneren Timm Ulrichs har lagd følgende visuelle palindrom, der det tyske ordet "stets" ("alltid") kan leses alle veier i en stjerneform:

```
      s      S      s
      t      t      t
s     t     e     t     s
      t      t      t
      s      S      s
          s
```

(her hentet fra Weller 1977 s. 16). Den sirkellignende formen signaliserer noe evig, og t-ene ligner kors og kan minne om graver.

Den franske dikteren Michelle Grangaud har utgitt en rekke palindrom- og anagram-tekster. Hun ble medlem av den franske eksperimentelle forfattergruppa Oulipo i 1995. Den franske Oulipo-forfatteren George Perecs "Grand Palindrome" (1969) er 5,556 bokstaver lang.

Amerikaneren Barry Duncan, "master palindromist, was locked in an epic struggle with the alphabet. He was totally absorbed in the completion of a commissioned piece. [...] He'd been working on it for as many as twelve hours a day. Then, on April 6, after an estimated two hundred hours of toil, Barry Duncan unleashed on this world the greatest palindrome of his life. "Far and away the best reversible

work I've ever, ever done," he calls it. You know palindromes – words or phrases that read the same forward or backward. "Party booby trap." "Lisa Bonet ate no basil." [...] "I'm just all the time doing it," he says. "I write hundreds a day, probably." [...] It's true that Duncan has developed his own terminology and taxonomy for palindromes. One way that he categorizes them is by length. Those of one hundred or more characters are labeled simply "long." Palindromes of one hundred or more words he calls "epic." And palindromes of one thousand or more characters are called "mega." [...] He's also identified some guidelines for palindrome-writing. One cardinal rule to which he always returns involves "doubling in the middle," which he calls a "near-fatal error" and the mark of an inexperienced palindromist. As he explained in our first conversation about palindromes, "If I say to you, 'straw,' and you thought, well, 'straw warts,' that's a palindrome, but the w is doubled, so it only calls attention to the palindrome. What you want is for some letter to be the reversible hinge. So if you said to me, 'straw,' I would think, 'straw arts.' And then that w is removable, and it could be 'strap arts,' 'stray arts.'" [...] Duncan even has names for different types of palindromes. Consider the following piece, which he wrote before a performance at the Cambridge venue Club Passim by a former colleague named Abdul-Wahab, who played the oud and was accompanied by a flamenco guitarist.

Miss apt A-W on oud?  
 No! Set a date, son:  
 Duo now at Passim.

Duncan refers to this type of composition as a three-layer vertical stack, or "3LVS," and he considers it to be the "most visually and emotionally satisfying reversible arrangement." The satisfaction comes from the tidiness: the third line is the exact opposite of the first line, and the second line is a self-contained palindrome that serves to "keep the peace between the first and third lines." He says that he finds them "very tense and very elegant," but that it's rare for a palindrome to work out naturally as a 3LVS. [...] In order to share some of his writing, he produced a small collection, which he titled *Assorted Palindromes and One Song* [1994]. It wasn't long before a close friend dubbed it "The Relationship Killer." " (Gregory Kornbluh i <http://www.believmag.com/issues/201109/>; lesedato 08.01.13)

Et eksempel på en Duncan-palindrom: "RE: NO GAS IN AGE? BEWARE. Warren, old as sin, am red. Lost – or reviled – a female. (No, a hag!) Elder, it passes old lot. Fossil. Lip sags, eh? Flesh sags. Poor devil! At one, nips. A store, cafe, zoo. "Pops." No, is elder, has gas till it's late. Menace. No bristle, few warts on nose. Hoots. Peels, eh? Park, late: talk, rap. He sleeps, too. (He's on no straw. We felt, sir: Bone. Cane. Metal.) Still, it sags. Ah! Red lesions pop, ooze. Face rots. A spine, not alive, droops. Gash self? He's (gasp) ill, is soft, old, loses sap, tired. Leg? Aha, one lame! Fade. Liver rots. Older man is sad loner, raw. Era we began is

a goner.” (siter fra <http://www.believermag.com/issues/201109/>; lesedato 08.01.13)

Nick Montfort og William Gillespies *2002: A Palindrome Story* (2002) er en “collaboratively-authored narrative palindrome, exactly 2002 words in length ... first published in a limited edition of 202 copies on ... 2002.” (Sumana Roy i <https://www.berfrois.com/2014/06/sumana-roy-are-we-a-palindrome-people/>; lesedato 19.10.21) “*2002* was first published in a limited edition of 202 inscribed copies on New Years Day, 2002. On February 20th, 2002 (20-02-2002) 2002 was published on the Web. On November 11, 2002 (11-11-2002) 2002 was published as an illustrated book. [...] Spaces, punctuation, and line breaks are used freely. In *2002*, the authors took the liberty of assuming an accented e (é) is the same letter as e, and that an i with an umlaut (ï) is the same as an i. Other than that it is perfect. The palindrome was written by Nick Montfort and William Gillespie with the assistance of an Eraware computer program named Deep Speed. Design of the HTML version and the book were done by Ingrid Ankerson. Illustrations were provided by Shelley Jackson. The creators of the book have had the historically rare privilege of experiencing two palindromic years: 1991 and 2002. No generation of people has lived through two palindromic years since 1001, and none will again until 2112.” (<http://spinelessbooks.com/2002/>; lesedato 25.10.21)

“[T]he mirror metaphor has been applied to palindrome structures. Largely a visual phenomenon, the palindrome epitomizes the spatiality of language and scripture, something indicated already on the metaphorological plane of classical terminology: “running back again” (*palindromos*), “stepping back” (*versus retrogradus*). Allowing for reversibility of the linear discourse, the palindrome represents the very idea of transformation and metamorphosis. Palindromic reversion is a device for breaking up the linearity of speech and, by implication, the irreversibility of time. Irreversibility “thematizes itself in the palindrome form by eating itself up” (a quotation from Oskar Pastior, the outstanding contemporary German palindrome poet). Sequentiality and causality of time and space are annihilated in the palindromic motion. [...] Aleksandr Bubnov in *A lira darila*, 1992, [...] displaying cannibalist motifs). [...] Bubnov, a well-versed author of intricate palindromes who recently received a Ph.D. with a dissertation on the linguistic features of the Russian palindrome. It seems that in post-Soviet Russia, in a cultural situation in which people would like to reverse history and make a whole era disappear, an artistic form like the palindrome which can demonstrate the reversibility of time by retrograde devices of letter magic has its own fascination and attraction. [...] In the work of its foremost practitioners, Velemir Khlebnikov and Vladimir Nabokov, as well as some of their postmodern successors, the palindrome is closely linked to death, cannibalism, beheading, murder. [...] Such a semantic janus-face is quite in line with the palindrome’s old Baroque name: *versus diabolicus* (a name which for its part also indicates the ancient affinity of the palindrome to magic and sorcery).” (Erika Greber i [https://thenabokovian.org/sites/default/files/2018-01/NABOKV-L-0012152\\_\\_body.html](https://thenabokovian.org/sites/default/files/2018-01/NABOKV-L-0012152__body.html); lesedato 19.10.21)



“Bill Bryson, in his history of the English language, *The Mother Tongue*, puts the form at at least two thousand years old, citing our knowledge of Greek and Roman palindromes. The word itself derives from the Greek palindromes – “running back again” – and Bryson dates its English debut to 1629. He even claims to have found the first recorded palindrome in English, by the poet John Taylor (“Lewd I did live, & Evil did I dwell”), though, as Bryson points out, the ampersand [= &] is a bit of a disqualifier. [...] The growing interest in palindromes themselves can be tracked, indirectly, by the exponential increase in length of the Guinness-recognized world’s longest palindrome: from 242 words in 1971; to 11,125 in 1980; to 44,444 in 1984, sometime after which they seem to have stopped keeping the record.” (Gregory Kornbluh i <http://www.believmag.com/issues/201109/>; lesedato 08.01.13)

“Welcome to the home of The Palindromist, a long running print magazine (since 1996) about palindromes and the people who write them. [...] You can join the conversation in our discussion forum: share your palindromes, discuss famous ones or how to write them, or talk about other fun kinds of wordplay.

[...]

- The Palindromist Manifesto

- The Authors List of Great Palindromes, a selective list of the best palindromes which gives credit to the gifted palindromists who created them.

- Sotades the Obscene of Maronea (275 BC) - Inventor of the Palindrome

- Political Palindromes

- “A Chronotype of Revolution”: a scholarly paper on palindromes in Russia and Eastern Europe by Erika Greber of the University of Munich.

[...]

The Palindromist magazine has been published since 1996 by Mark Saltveit. Major contributors include Jon Agee, John Connett, and Ove Michaelsen. [...] Mark Saltveit is widely recognized as one of the world's experts on palindromes. A Harvard graduate and standup comedian, he has written hundreds of palindromes, many articles on palindromes, and the book “A Man, A Plan .... 2002: The Year in Palindromes.” He gives talks on “The Mystical History of Palindromes” (recently at Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington) and presents a workshop on “How to Write Your Own Palindromes” – soon to be a book – for school children.” (<http://www.palindromist.org/about>; lesedato 10.01.13)

“Here are a number of very old palindromes from children's magazines of the 1800s. Most were in letters to the editor. It's amazing how literary youngsters were before TV and video games.

Dora saw tides united under a red nude tin used; it was a rod.

– Herbert, “Our Letter Box” in Our Young Folks magazine, July 1868

Draw pupil's lip upward.

– Willy Wisp, “Our Letter Box” in Our Young Folks, Aug. 1866

Redroot put up to order.

– Charles T., St. Louis, MO, “Our Letter Box” in *Our Young Folks*, April 1866

Red rum did emit revel ere Lever time did murder.

– Edward A. J., “Our Letter Box” in *Our Young Folks*, June 1866

Snug & raw was I ere I saw war & guns.

– Submitted by W.G.S. (W.G. Scribner of Lincoln, NE?), “Our Letter Box” in *Our Young Folks*, April 1866

Star, live on. No evil rats!

– Meg, “Our Letter Box” in *Our Young Folks*, May 1867

Did I trap a rat & tar a part? I did.

– Henry S. P. (age 13), “Our Letter Box” in *Our Young Folks*, June 1866”  
(<http://www.palindromist.org/about>; lesedato 10.01.13)

Amerikaneren John Agee har blant annet publisert *So Many Dynamos! and Other Palindromes* (1997), *Sit on a Potato Pan, Otis!: More Palindromes* (1999) og *Palindromania!* (2009). “Agee, whose previous palindromic volumes include *Go Hang a Salami! I'm a Lasagna Hog!* and *So Many Dynamos!*, makes another dizzying effort to exhaust the English-language palindrome supply. He provides animal lovers with the slogans “Revile liver!” and “Step on no pets,” along with some horses who cheer, “Yahoo! Hay!” City dwellers certainly will relate to the exclamation, “Dog doo? Good God!” while slackers will sigh along with, “No panic, I nap on.” Scrabble buffs might feel vexed by Agee's regular use of proper names (“Lee has a race car as a heel”; “Ed is loopy poolside”) and brand names (“Naive was I ere I saw Evian”; “Lonely Tylenol”). Novices can get in on the fun with simpler samples like “Petite P” and “Tip it.” Agee complements his palindromes with rough pen-and-ink sketches and gray wash on a white background; a spread of a prison-like stripe camouflage for “See referees?” takes the cake. He injects a note of mayhem with his liberal use of exclamation points and, judging by the volume's price, he gets the sales department in on the joke, too. Word-gamers are advised to proceed with caution into these verbal somersaults, which could ignite a serious compulsion to reverse spellings. Agee himself appears to be in an advanced stage of his self-imposed condition, considering his magnum opus: “A man, a plan, a cat, a bar, a cap, a mall, a ball, a map, a car, a bat, a canal: Panama.” Don't say we didn't warn you! All ages.” (<http://www.amazon.com/Sit-Potato-Pan-Otis-Palindromes/dp/product-description/0374318085>; lesedato 27.01.14)

Den kroatisk forfatteren Dubravka Ugrešić, “in her extraordinary essay, “The Palindrome Conspiracy”, chose the palindrome as the most appropriate metaphor for the psycho-spiritual homelessness of migrants and exiles in the dislocated lives

most of us are compelled to sink into, whether it is between cities or countries. Leaving, return, leaving, all this between bouts of homelovingness and homesickness: that is the palindromic character of the lives we have chosen to inhabit. ‘Palindrome madness’ is also how truth and lies play themselves out, Ugrešić reminds us, as in the ‘devil’s verse’, ‘the one that is read the same backwards and forwards’, how ‘news’ comes to us from the back and forth between studio and site.” (Sumana Roy i <https://www.berfrois.com/2014/06/sumana-roy-are-we-a-palindrome-people/>; lesedato 19.10.21) “The most interesting insight into this reality is her discovery of the palindromic character of truth, what she calls “the palindrome madness” (p. 31) or “ ‘the devil’s verse’, the one that is read the same backwards and forwards, from left to right” (p. 73). The palindrome reality is a synonym of the culture of lies, its indispensable component, which allows the media to manipulate the same images and facts to tell different stories. One example she quotes is that at the time of war the same “photographs of dead bodies and burned houses have been adopted as *their victims* by both sides; both the side of the victim and that of the *executioner*” (p. 33). However, the palindrome truth, as the principle of reversibility of the self and other, carries within it the possibility of its subversion. As Ugrešić notes with irony, “In our normal understanding of European civilisation, it is normal for there to be two sides, right and left, an East and a West, and it doesn’t cross anyone’s mind to suggest that they are identical” (p. 31). This idea that the truth “may be read equally in a Western and in an Eastern way!” (p. 27) collapses the difference between here and there, refuses absolute difference, and allows us to re-imagine spatial relations. Playing on space and identity, palindromes – those devilish designs – challenge the established hierarchies of East and West and remind us that in the end we will always get back to the same point where we started. [...] her writing problematizes the centre-periphery model premised on the palindrome principle.” (Eva C. Karpinski i <https://www.dubravkaugresic.com/writings/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Postcards-from-Europe-Dubravka-Ugresic-as-Transnational-Public-Intellectual-or-Life-Writing-in-Fragments.pdf>; lesedato 19.10.21)

En utvidet betydning av palindrom innebærer at ordene leses opp-ned (arket med skriften dreies 180 grader). På en plakat foran en britisk svømmehall skal det ha stått denne beskjeden om at svømmetimedene heretter var avlyst på mandager:

NOW NO SWIMS ON MON

Ordene er identiske hvis de leses opp-ned. Dette kalles et ambigram: “A term coined by Douglas Hofstadter (see *Metamagical Themas* [...]) and friends for a graphic figure that spells a word or group of words that can be read in at least two different ways, usually symmetric when rotated 180 degrees (upside down) or when reflected along the vertical axis, as in a mirror.” (Joan M. Reitz i [http://lu.com/odlis/odlis\\_c.cfm](http://lu.com/odlis/odlis_c.cfm); lesedato 30.08.05) Teksten er altså leselig selv om ordene snus 180 grader. Dette har blitt kalt et symmetrisk ambigram, mens i et asymmetrisk ambigram er det andre, leselige ord som kommer til syne når teksten

snus. Et eksempel på et (asymmetrisk) ambigram i tegneseriemediet er den nederlandsk-amerikanske tegneren Gustave Verbeeks *The Upside Downs of Little Lady Lovekins and Old Man Muffaroo* (1903-05). I *The Upside Downs* sørget Verbeek for at “the billowing skirt of Lady Lovekins became Old Man Muffaroo’s supernaturally large hat when the page was inverted, the ribbons waving from her hat transformed into his trousers, and her hair becoming his wild moustache. Their potato-shaped heads also served the reversal well.” (Gravett 2011 s. 34)

Hansgeorg Stengels bok *Annasusanna* (1984; på tysk) handler om palindromer.

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