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Rapsode

“Oral discourse has commonly been thought of even in oral milieus as weaving or stitching – *rhapsōidein*, to ‘rhapsodize’, basically means in Greek ‘to stitch songs together’.” (Ong 2000 s. 13) Fortellersspesialist som hadde (har) som yrke å huske fortellinger og framføre dem muntlig.

En rapsode er “a singer in ancient Greece. Ancient scholars suggested two etymologies. The first related the word with the staff (*rhabdos*) on which the singer leaned during his performance. In that view, the rhapsode is a “singer with a staff.” The second connected the word with the poetic act of sewing (*rhaptein*) the poem (*oide*). Thus, the rhapsode is a “stitcher of songs.” Modern scholars prefer the second etymology, which is attested in a fragment of Hesiod (7th century bc) and in Pindar’s Nemean ode 2, lines 1-3. Both passages use the word *rhaptein* to describe the act of poetic composition. [...] The common opinion is that rhapsodes were exclusively reciters of the compositions of others, which they consigned to memory. In the oral tradition of epic poetry, they represent the stage that followed that of the *aoidoi*, or bards, who created poems on traditional epic subjects each time they performed. The ancient testimonies, however, do not permit such a clear and secure distinction, at least through the 6th century bc. Inscriptions show that rhapsodes continued to perform through the 3rd century ad.” (<http://www.britannica.com/>; lesedato 02.10.12) En forsker skiller mellom de greske “reciters (*rhapsodes*) rather than those of lyric poets or composers (*aoidoi*)” (Goody 2000 s. 35).

“Framför allt vid eller efter festliga måltider lyssnade man gärna [...] i timmar, ja nätterna igenom. [...] Den diktande sångaren, *aoiden* (ordet är besläktat med ode som från början betyder sång), ackompanjerade sig själv på lyra. Mycket tidigt övergick man till att recitera dikterna i stället för att sjunga dem till lyra: man får tänka sig ett halvmelodiskt recitativ. [...] Så småningom avlöstes den bofaste, kreative aoiden av den professionelle recitatören, *rapsoden*, som vandrade omkring och med stav i hand föredrog sin repertoar. Övergången kan hänga samman med steget från muntligt improviserad hjältesång till skriftligt avfattad text.” (Linnér 1985 s. 17-18)

I ulike kulturer ble og blir sangere av epos og andre episke historier kalt “bard” (engelsk), “guslar” (serbisk), “griot” (i noen afrikanske land), “dyali” (mandinka), “baj-gewel” (wolof), “mwimbaji” (swahili) og annet (Kesteloot og Dieng 1997 s. 52).

“[M]usic may act as a constraint to fix a verbatim oral narrative. Drawing on his own intensive fieldwork in Japan, Eric Rutledge (1981) reports on a still extant, but vestigial, Japanese tradition, in which an oral narrative, *The Tale of the Heike*, is chanted to music, with some few ‘white voice’ sections unaccompanied instrumentally and some purely instrumental interludes. The narrative and musical accompaniment are memorized by apprentices, who begin as young children working with an oral master. The masters (there are not many left) undertake to train their apprentices in verbatim recitation of the chant through rigorous drill over several years, and succeed remarkably, though they themselves make changes in their own recitations of which they are unaware. Certain movements in the narrative are more error-prone than others. At some points the music stabilizes the text completely, but at others it generates errors of the same sorts found in manuscript copying, such as those produced by homoioteleuton – a copyist (or oral performer) skips from one occurrence of a concluding phrase to a later occurrence of the same concluding phrase, leaving out the intervening material.” (Ong 2000 s. 63)

Et epos’ deler (dets “cantos”/“sanger”) “were originally a unit of length, the amount which an oral poet could sing in one evening” (Merchant 1986 s. 49).

Grekeren Homer kan ha vært en rapsode (eller en aoide som holdt til ved et kongehoff). Det er mye usikkerhet om han har levd og hvem han var: “Ifølge en av teoriene var Homer kvinne. En annen teori hevder at han var blind. En tredje at han ikke var noe enkeltindivid, men en diktergruppe. En fjerde at han diktet Iliaden, men ikke Odysseen. [...] Sannheten er at ingen ennå har fastslått hvem Homer var eller nøyaktig når han levde, selv om det finnes en del velfunderte beregninger. Anslagsvis levde han eller annen gang i det 8. eller 7. århundre f.Kr., dvs. omkring 500 år etter beleiringen av Troja [...] Det er mulig at Homer – og det er her teorien om den blinde mannen kommer inn – tegnet et bilde av seg selv i Odysseen omtrent slik enkelte filmregissører gir seg selv en liten birolle i dreieboka. Ved hoffet hos den gjestfrie kong Alkinoos er det en skald som ifølge Odysseen “sangmøen elsket og gav både lykke og vanhell, såsom hun røvet ham synet, men skjenket ham sangen, den søte”.” (Severin 1988 s. 24) Hvis denne skalden/epossangeren var fastboende ved hoffet, var han en aoide, ikke rapsode.

I Odyssevs’ hjem befinner det seg en epossanger: “In Book 22 Phemius, the bard in Odysseus’s palace in Ithaca, claims immunity from the sentence passed on the suitors:

You will regret it afterwards if you kill

a bard, the singer for gods and men.
I am self-taught, and God planted in my heart
the various ways of song.
(22, 345-8)” (Merchant 1986 s. 6)

Phemius i *Odysseen* er “a bard living in Ithaka [...] He first appears in Homer’s *Odyssey* in Book 1. Phemius is forced to sing a song with his lyre to Penelope’s suitors, the wife of Odysseus. Against his will, Phemius sings a sad song about the Trojan War and Odysseus, who has gone away long ago and has not returned. This song appears to be painful for Penelope. She is upset with her husband’s long absence. Therefore, she gets out of her room and asks Phemius to sing something less painful. However, her son, Telemachus, tells Phemius to continue singing. He considers himself to be the master of the house, so he has the right to decide. Phemius appears in the *Odyssey* again in Book 22 when he begs Odysseus to spare his life. The bard tells Odysseus that he did not want to sing for the suitors. When Telemachus confirms it, Odysseus lets the bard live. However, the king commands Phemius to perform a joyful wedding song. It should be so loud as to drown out the sounds of the dying suitors. Phemius is one of the two bards presented in Homer’s *Odyssey*. The other bard is Demodocus, who performs three narrative songs during the poem. The bards’ role is to show the importance of oral storytelling and bards’ craft in the life of Ancient Greek society. Homer shows how bards’ narratives resonate with the thoughts and feelings of their audience. Besides, bards’ stories are related to the larger narrative, making them a harmonious part of the plot.” (<https://ivypanada.com/q/whats-the-role-of-phemius-in-the-odyssey/>; lesedato 08.12.22)
Phemius kaller seg “autodidaktos”, som i denne sammenheng betyr at det ikke er en tillært egenskap å framføre epos, men noe som oppstår i sangeren på en spontan og mirakuløs måte (William Marx i <https://journals.openedition.org/rief/6222>; lesedato 08.12.22). Demodokos ved faiakernes hoff er en aoide (Monte og Philippe 2014 s. 143).

“Homeros’ föregångare var muntligt skapande poeter, men sannolikt utnyttjade han själv skrivkonsten i sitt komponerande. Numera vet vi att skrivkonsten återinfördes i Grekland senast vid 700-talets mitt (efter det att den mykenska stavelseskriften under ett halvt årtusende varit bortglömd).” (Linnér 1985 s. 165)

På 500-tallet f.Kr. “Athens härskare Peisistratos söker stabilisera Homerostexten; rapsodernas ingrepp begränsas.” (Linnér 1985 s. 13) “Många av rapsoderna, de professionella recitatörerna, slöt sig samman i gillen (ett slags forntida PEN-klubbar). Vi vet till exempel att det på 500-talet f.Kr. fanns ett sådant på Chios, vars medlemmar uppgav sig vara ättlingar till Homeros (“Homeriderna”). [...] Vid mitten av 500-talet kommer vi in i en första stabiliseringsperiod. Iliaden och Odysseen blev vid den tiden ett glansnummer vid de reorganiserade festspel som vart fjärde år anordnades i Athen till skyddsgudinnans ära. I det sammanhanget sökte Athens dåvarande härskare, Peisistratos, begränsa ingreppen från rapsodernas sida. De källor som berör detta är emellertid sena och opålitliga, och den allmänna

meningen bland dagens Homerosforskare är att Peisistratos inte lyckades åstadkomma någon allmängiltig standardtext.” (Linnér 1985 s. 168)

“A modern experiment in which the *Iliad* was read in Greek by a team of reciters has shown that it takes three 8-hour days to complete it, and that must have been the way it was performed in Athens at the Panathenaic festival.” (John Victor Luce i <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/25528311.pdf>; lesedato 30.03.23)

En rapsode delvis gjenforteller og delvis komponerer en fortelling, f.eks. et epos, med tekstpartier som han kan utenat: faste hyllest-ord, genealogier, leveregler, refreng. Han kan en struktur eller et “skjema” som fylles ut i og med framføringen for et publikum. Noe ligger fast i fortellingen, noe skapes der og da. “Barden hade ingen skriftligt fixerad text att falla tillbaka på, utan varje framförande var unikt och han måste knyta an till den aktuella publikens speciella egenart och förväntningar. Det kunde till exempel gälla att förutse vilka släkttavlor som bäst passade in vid varje särskilt tillfälle” (Linnér 1985 s. 18).

I og med at mange av tilhørerne også kjenner “skjemaet” fra tidligere epos- framføringer, tar de stilling til rapsodens fortellerprestasjon ut fra hvordan rapsoden improviserer eller skaper detaljene og helheten i en bestemt framføring. En god framføring er vanligvis en som både er gjenkjennelig og forsterkende (medrivende og tilpasset publikum).

En rapsode kan ødelegge en manns (krigers) renommé, skape uvennskap mellom to herskere og dermed forårsake krig og død. “Han kunne også oppgløde en hær med sine mobiliserende ord. Eposet ble uten tvil født på slagmarken” (Kesteloot og Dieng 1997 s. 54). Rapsoden er altså nært knyttet til krigshandlinger, enten i virkeligheten eller ved gjengivelse i fortellingene. Mange epos og andre tekster framført av rapsoder er heltediktning som hyller store krigere ved å fortelle om deres enestående bragder. Rapsoden bevarer minnet om de største krigerne, de som tilkjempet seg mest ære på slagmarken. Krigerhelten og rapsoden kan sies å ha samme mål: sin egen udødelighet gjennom sitt ettermæle.

Den romerske dikteren Horats “comments, the epic poem centres upon men; exceptional men, but none the less human:

Many heroes lived before Agamemnon
but all of them, unknown, unmourned,
have slipped into dark oblivion
because no poet praised them.
(*Odes* IV, 9, 25-8)” (Merchant 1986 s. 4)

Rapsodens fortelling av epos og andre fortellinger er underlagt to prinsipper eller lover: en stabilitetslov og en variasjonslov (Kesteloot og Dieng 1997 s. 64). En muntlig fortelling bevarer gjennom år og århundrer noen narrative stereotypier

(formler, faste fraser, handlingsskjelett), mens annet forandres etter tid og anledning. En fortelling kan doble sin lengde (Kesteloot og Dieng 1997 s. 55), eller lengden kan være redusert ved at f.eks. opplysninger om ritualer er utelatt.

“Det græske epos betjener sig af en række særlige virkemidler; nogle er primært betinget af den metriske tvang, andre giver fremstillingen dybde og bredde. Man bemærker især følgende episke virkemidler:

Hexameter: Rytme (er blevet sunget af en rapsode).

Episke navne: digteren vælger navne, der passer til personen, således hedder en af Priamos' sønner Polydoros, Mangegave, i XXII. sang, vers 47, et ganske passende navn, da hans moder medbragte en stor medgift i ægteskabet. Ligeledes Kalypso (af det græske kalypto = jeg skjuler) idet hun skjuler Odysseus fra omverdenen ved at holde ham fangen på Ogygia. Episke navne gives især til bipersoner.

Patronymikon: en del viktige personer, mennesker såvel som guder, kan benævnes ved en afledning af deres faders navn, således hedder Achilleus Peleiden i I,1 efter hans fader Peleus, og såvel Agamemnon som Menelaos kaldes Atreiderne i I,16 efter deres fader Atreus. Tilsvarende kaldes Zeus Kronion i I,45 efter sin fader Kronos.

Epitheton ornans: mennesker og guder forbindes ofte med et eller flere bestemte prydende adjektiver, epitheton ornans, også når prydadjektivet kan forekomme irrelevant eller i direkte modstrid med situationen. Således kaldes Achilleus fodrappen, fx i I,121 og 364. Athene omtales ofte som lysblaaøiede Jomfru, således i I,44.

Metaforer: metaforen overfører en egenskap fra et begrep til et andet. En fugl kan flyve, det kan ord ikke, men alligevel forstår man godt uttrykket bevingede Ord i II,7, for ord kan enten glemmes eller ligesom blive svævende i luften uden at falde til jorden. Bevingede ord er ord, der huskes. Undertiden er et epitheton ornans, prydadjektiv, tillige en metafor, fx liliearmede om gudinden Hera i I,208. En mindre smigrende metafor findes i I,159, hvor Agamemnon tiltales som Hundøi (dvs. hundøjede).

Sammenligninger: sammenligningen er beslægtet med metaforen, men den indledes med et lille forbehold, et “som” eller “ligesom”. En typisk sammenligning finnes i I,225: “med Blik som en Hund, med Mod som en Daahjort”.

Homeriske lignelser: lignelsen er en fyldig sammenligning med en hel lille handling; sammenligningen er som et bilde, medens lignelsen har filmisk karakter. Lignelsen indledes og avsluttes gerne med et som eller saaledes, så ingen kan være tvivl om, hvor lignelsen begynner, og hvor virkeligheten tager over. Billederne tages enten fra naturen eller tilhørernes dagligdag, således sammenlignes

Achilleus i XXII,26-31 med stjernen Orions Hund, og Hektor i XXII, 93-95 med en øgle, der er vild af galskab.

Formelvers: ganske mange både hele og halve vers gentages som en formel, det gælder således indledninger til direkte tale, f.eks. "Ham gjensvared Athene, den lysblaaøiede Jomfru" i f.eks. I,206 og XXII,177. Et andet eksempel på et formelvers findes i I,477: "Men da sig reiste ved Grye den rosenfingrede Dagning".

Dialog: giver handlingen spænding, liv og tempo.

Monolog: giver indblik i personers tanker og motiver for deres handlinger.

Højtidelig tiltale (apostrofe): Højtidelig tiltale, fx 1. sang v. 45: "Åh vor fader Kronion, du drot over drotter til hobe" og v. 123: "Hil dig, fremmede mand..." (Malene H. Johansen i <http://nrsbgym.dk/~hj/old/Homers%20virkemidler>; lesedato 02.11.16)

Rytmen i Homers epos "uteslöt ord av typen U U U, – U – och U – – U, av vilka det finns många i grekiskan. Sångarna kringgick svårigheterna framför allt genom att artificiellt förlänga vokaler, till exempel *äthanatos*, odödlig. Vidare hittade de på många andra former, särskilt sammansatta ord, som var reguljära ordbildningar men ökända i dagligt tal. De behöll också vissa uråldriga ord vilkas exakta betydelse varken de själva eller någon annan längre kände till. [...] Dess i mycket ålderdomliga karaktär bidrog i hög grad till att skapa den högtidliga stämningen kring framförandet. [...] Den rytmiska enheten i Homeros' poesi är hexametern, en rad med sex versfötter. Den sista består alltid av två stavelser, antingen en spondé (– –) eller en troké (– U). Av de fem första kan någon eller alla vara antingen en daktyl (– U U) eller en spondé. [...] Raden kan innehålla mellan tolv och sjutton stavelser och trettio två olika kombinationer av daktyl och spondé." (Linnér 1985 s. 114-115)

De homeriske lignelsene og tilsvarende lange, fortellende sammenligninger i andre epos har blitt kalt "extended similes" (Sowerby 1996 s. 77).

"In the 1930s, Greek scholars were distressed when literary analysis revealed that Homer (and other epic preliterate poets) created through a process that involved fitting stock phrases and formulaic narrative units together. Critics at that time resisted the thought that the great artist Homer was not original in the same way that modern print-based writers are expected to be." (Murray 2000 s. 153)

"Orally recorded interviews with the twentieth-century bards supplemented records of their performances. From these interviews, and from direct observation, we know how the bards learn: by listening for months and years to other bards who never sing a narrative the same way twice but who use over and over again the standard formulas in connection with the standard themes. Formulas are of course

somewhat variable, as are themes, and a given poet's rhapsodizing or 'stitching together' of narratives will differ recognizably from another's. Certain turns of phrases will be idiosyncratic. But essentially, the materials, themes and formulas, and their use belong in a clearly identifiable tradition. Originality consists not in the introduction of new materials but in fitting the traditional materials effectively into each individual, unique situation and/or audience." (Ong 2000 s. 60)

Den amerikanske forskeren Milman Parry "claims this system is marked by two qualities, economy and depth. In order to fit the name of his main character, Odysseus, into the metrical lines, the oral poet has a wide range of combinations of different forms of the name and attributes (so-called noun-epithet formulae) available, but there is exactly one form for every metrical position – so the bard did not have to take any decision at all as to which combination to utilize in a given line; he could proceed quite mechanically. This is what Parry called the "economy" of the system. "Depth" is his term for the fact that for the main characters of the epics, there is a wide range of formulae ready for use, for different metrical positions and different grammatical cases. This entails important consequences for our interpretation of the Homeric epics: the choice of a particular attribute for an epic character is not an expression of a specific meaning, but is exclusively determined by the metrical conditions of the line in which the character is named; basically, all these combinations mean nothing more than just "Odysseus," "Achilleus," or "Agamemnon." [...] Parry's new approach explains a number of characteristics of the Homeric language which had been difficult to understand before, such as the fact that his language uses words and forms from several Greek dialects. For a long time, scholars had wondered whether this was a mark of a certain geographical origin, a region where dialects overlapped and mixed, or whether Homer lived in a period where rapid linguistic change occurred, but this seemed difficult to imagine because there was such a wild mixture of forms. According to Parry, this variety was used because the improvising bards kept whichever form had proved to be metrically convenient." (Thomas A. Schmitz i www.researchgate.net/file.PostFileLoader.html; lesedato 15.10.15)

"At first, Parry emphasized that this formulaic system was a clear mark of a long poetic tradition. It became increasingly clear to him that it was a specific characteristic of orally improvising bards when he performed fieldwork in what was then Yugoslavia in 1933-5. There was still a vivid tradition of oral epic in this area then. Parry recorded a number of such songs and observed striking structural similarities to the Homeric epics: there were recurring metrical formulae, stereotypical introductory lines for direct speech, and fixed noun-epithet combinations. After Parry's untimely death, his research assistant Albert Lord (1912-91) continued his work. It was Lord who published, in 1960, the most systematic account of this hypothesis in his book *The Singer of Tales* [...]: Homer, so this book claimed, was an oral bard improvising his narrative and quite similar in nature to the singers who are still active in some cultures in the modern world. Generations of such bards had learned from each other the difficult trade of

extemporizing lines in the complex formsystem of the dactylic hexameter; in the course of many centuries, they have thus produced a complicated system of formulae and recurring elements. The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are merely a small part of this tradition, transmitted by chance, which consisted of a large number of oral epic narratives, similar to the Homeric epics, that were sung in Homer's time.” (Thomas A. Schmitz i www.researchgate.net/file.PostFileLoader.html; lesedato 15.10.15)

“Redan från antiken vet vi att det har funnits människor som kunnat Iliaden och Odysseen utantill. Parry upptecknade hos serberna ett muntligt komponerat bröllopsepos på 13 331 verser. Åtskilliga och ännu mer drastiska exempel på minnesfärdighet har belagts hos andra folk. Kirgisiska barder har muntligen avfattat versioner av ett klassiskt epos och givit det gigantiskt omfång, i två fall 250 000 rader.” (Linnér 1985 s. 164)

“Oral poets' memory of songs sung is agile: it was 'not unusual' to find a Yugoslav bard singing 'from ten to twenty ten-syllable lines a minute' (Lord 1960, p. 17). Comparison of the recorded songs, however, reveals that, though metrically regular, they were never sung the same way twice. Basically the same formulas and themes recurred, but they were stitched together or 'rhapsodized' differently in each rendition even by the same poet, depending on audience reaction, the mood of the poet or of the occasion, and other social and psychological factors.” (Ong 2000 s. 59-60)

“The exact date when this new system [= alfabetisk skrift] was introduced in Greece is still debated, but it looks as if this must have been at the beginning of the eighth century bc at the latest, possibly some time before that. Hence it is clear that the composition of the Homeric epics did not take place in an exclusively oral society; we have to take into account the possibility that their poet knew and made use of the new technique of writing when he conceived of these works. Moreover, more thorough studies of the style of the epics have produced further evidence which call the Parry–Lord theses into question. The epics, it has been shown, do not use all noun-epithet formulae for the characters without any distinction, but reserve some of them exclusively for speeches of the characters, others for the text of the main narrator – can we believe that an orally improvising bard would have been capable of making such a fine distinction? Recent studies criticize Parry for relying on concordances when he analyzed Homer's use of names and epithets. Parry failed to take into account that characters are also referred to by way of circumlocutions or pronouns. Scholars, especially in Germany, have pointed out that there are subtle correspondences between passages separated by many thousands of lines, and have argued that this can only have been achieved if the poet used writing for composing his work. An end to this debate is not in sight. It is clear that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are intimately linked to a very ancient oral tradition, but it remains a matter of contention in which relation our epics stand to

this tradition.” (Thomas A. Schmitz i www.researchgate.net/file.PostFileLoader.html; lesedato 14.10.15)

Den amerikanske forskeren Albert Bates Lord “characterized the oral epic as “composition during performance.” In his examination of the Rajasthani epic of Pabuji, [R. Morton] Smith finds that two performers, one year apart, produced “versions of an 11-12 hour epic that were ‘identical,’ ” the differences being limited “to the level of singing ‘ho’ in one performance and ‘ha’ in the other, or using two different words meaning ‘king’ ” (1966: 55). Even different singers over time “sang what was in essence the same text. Divergences were naturally greater between two pairs of performers than between two performances by a single pair, but even so the similarities were far more striking than the dissimilarities.” By this he means that in two performances with unrelated singers, 23 percent of the text sung was held identically in common, 18 percent was equivalent, and 36 percent consisted of formulae known to both sets of performers, though used at this point only by one. Only 23 percent, he claims, could be said to be truly unique to one or the other performance. On the other hand, only another 23 percent was truly in common. [...] Lord [...] writes that the singer “builds his performance on the stable skeleton of narrative” (1964: 99), and it appears to be similar to Smith’s own contention that the singer learns by heart not the entire text but “all major occurrences of the story, and all obligatory formulae; performance consists of recalling and matching these.” Naturally enough, any given singer will accomplish this in much the same way whenever he performs (Smith 1966: 57-58).” (Goody 2000 s. 13-15)

Å bli rapsode krevde (og krever) lang opplæring. Det å huske lange, kompliserte genealogier og kunne gjenfortelle kompliserte historiske forløp gjør at antallet rapsoder i en befolkning var og er lavt (Kesteloot og Dieng 1997 s. 62). Den ferdig opplærte rapsode trer inn i sitt yrke som i en religion (Kesteloot og Dieng 1997 s. 52). Publikum visste å sette pris på en virtuos rapsode. Derimot kunne en rapsode som glemte noe i en genealogi eller klusset til en fortelling, falle i publikums unåde, ja få stokkepryl (Kesteloot og Dieng 1997 s. 65). Et tegn på det kompliserte i å holde orden på en lang fortelling er at trojaneren Pylemenes blir drept i femte sang i *Iliaden*, men dukker opp igjen i et par senere sanger i eposet.

I verket *Encyclopaedia londinensis, or, Universal dictionary of arts, sciences, and literature* (1810-29) blir det opplyst at greske rapsoder var ikledt blå klær mens de framførte *Odyssen* og røde klær når de framførte *Iliaden* (jamfør også Perrig 2009 s. 78). Det er ikke noe sikkert grunnlag for denne påstanden.

Noen “skoler” av rapsoder framfører epos mer rytmisk enn andre “skoler”. Det kan også være systematiske forskjeller i hvordan innholdet gjengis i et epos i hver av disse rapsode-grupperingene.

I middelaldereposet *Beowulf* er det en beskrivelse av “a bard at work”:

“At times one of the king’s thanes,
a proud man with a store of songs,
who remembered a great many old traditions,
composed a new tale, putting it together truthfully.
In turn the man began cleverly to tell
of Beowulf’s journey, artfully reciting that apt story
with skilful repetitions. He told everything
he had heard said of Sigemund’s deeds of valour,
and many unknown things.”

(Terence McCarthys oversettelse; linje 867B-876; her sitert fra Merchant 1986 s. 7)

“Det hendte nok ikke sjelden at skaldene mintes kamp og seier eller hyllet høvdingene i mektige ord mens hendingene ennå var ferske, ja til og med mens likene lå blodige på slagmarken. Men da valgte de helst å uttrykke seg i korte kvad. Disse kvadene ble overlevert muntlig fra en sangergenerasjon til den neste, og først et par hundre år eller mer etter storhendingene var tiden kommet da en dikter kunne smelte sangene som var i omløp, sammen til et større heltedikt. Dikteren var den som ga stoffet skriftlig form og dermed et avgjørende preg, som det bevarte for fremtiden.” (Jan W. Dietrichson i *Beowulf-kvadet* 1976 s. 14)

“[T]he Anglo Saxons were capable of strong emotions, best captured in poetry. However, these works were not written down. Rather, they were recited or sung. Some men even devoted their lives to this purpose. These skilled minstrels were known as scop. The scop was an Anglo-Saxon poet who was commissioned by the early Germanic kings or soldiers to entertain them by reciting the poetry to the accompaniment of a harp or a similarly stringed instrument. From the Old English word “scieppan”, scop means to create, form or shape. The scop was also referred to as a gleeman, from the Old English word “gleoman”, who was a musician or performer. Though the scop was a performer, like the gleeman, the work of the scop was more artistic, as the name denotes. Unlike the gleeman, scop also wrote and performed their own poetry. Also, they had to be able to insert fitting verse where necessary, depending upon the occasion or celebration.” (Judith Mathieu i <http://csis.pace.edu/grendel/Proj2004A4/beowulf.htm/scop.htm>; lesedato 15.05.20)

“Scop, an Anglo-Saxon minstrel, usually attached to a particular royal court, although scop also traveled to various courts to recite their poetry. In addition to being an entertainer who composed and performed his own works, the scop served as a kind of historian and preserver of the oral tradition of the Germanic peoples. The Old English poem “Widsith” (probably 7th century), a fictional biography of a scop, gives an idea of the status and role of the scop in society.” (<https://www.britannica.com/art/scop>; lesedato 13.04.19)

“Scops were known to travel from village to village; however, many had permanent posts in the king’s court or mead halls. Usually, they performed for great feasts, celebrations, or the homecoming of soldiers from war. Their performances were usually short, but there were usually many lines of verse. *Beowulf* itself is over

3000 lines long. Any given song could deal with events from the present, such as battles won or recent adventures had. In *Beowulf*, the scop announced Beowulf's triumph over Grendel the morning after the deed. Some songs might deal with figures from the past like the ancestors of the Anglo Saxons. Other subjects reflected in the poetry include the sea, brave deeds, glory of warriors, and the love of home. Scops were also commissioned to write elegies or songs for the dead. It was considered an honor to have a scop sing one's praise or mourn one's death. But, regardless of the subject matter, the theme was lofty and its tone was earnest. The poetry demanded that the audience keep true to the values of loyalty, family, kinship, and religion, as in such works as the "The Wanderer" and "Caedmon's Hymn". In the warrior society, sacrifice was a theme that was central to the life the warriors lived. The poems that the scops read had a strength that stirred the hearts of their listeners. However, scop's message was not idyllic or lighthearted. If the scop sang of heroes, he also sang of the hardship, wounds, and death that often accompanied them. The entertainment they provided was not meant to be relaxing; it was meant to produce thought and stern feelings." (Judith Mathieu i <http://csis.pace.edu/grendel/Proj2004A4/beowulf.htm/scop.htm>; lesedato 15.05.20)

"The scops were very important to Anglo-Saxon society. The scops were messengers of traditional morality. They used the poetry to motivate their listeners to live good and honest lives. Also, because most of the historic events were recorded in poetry, they were carried by the scops to places far and near. By traveling with these stories, the scops helped to preserve the history of the Germanic people for generations later. The Anglo Saxon people believed that poetry was the closest thing to immortality. Thanks to the work of these oral historians, we can still read about their culture, achievements, and beliefs. The dream of being remembered has become a reality." (Judith Mathieu i <http://csis.pace.edu/grendel/Proj2004A4/beowulf.htm/scop.htm>; lesedato 15.05.20)

"*Widsith*, Modern English *Far Traveler*, Old English poem, probably from the 7th century, that is preserved in the Exeter Book, a 10th-century collection of Old English poetry. "Widsith" is an idealized self-portrait of a scop (minstrel) of the Germanic heroic age who wandered widely and was welcomed in many mead halls, where he entertained the great of many kingdoms." (<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Widsith>; lesedato 29.01.21)

"The word "hakawati" is a derivative of the Lebanese word "hekaya," meaning story. A hakawati is a teller of tales, legends and fables; a storyteller, a performer, and someone who earns his living by fascinating and captivating an audience with his tales. In the old days, each village had its own hakawati, but the truly great ones left their homes and traveled around the country recounting their tales to earn their living. The storyteller tells traditional tales such as 1001 Nights, chronicles of legendary Arab heroes, or stories from Holy Scriptures. By playing around with accent, tone, and pitch, the storyteller mimics many characters in his stories. A storyteller could go on twisting the same tale daily over numerous months, always

ending on a cliffhanger to keep his audience aching for more, the counterpart of today's series. According to a legend from the eighteenth century, Ahmad al Saidawi, one of the top hakawatis of his era, told the story of King Baybars for three hundred and seventy-two evenings in a coffee shop in Aleppo, Syria. This may have been a record. [...] This wealthy and beautiful thread of culture in the fabric of the region, though a bit worn, is now luckily being strengthened once again. Ever since the Lebanese-American painter-writer, Rabih Alameddine wrote his book *The Hakawati* [2008] that gained critical approval around the globe, this prosperous Arabic tradition of storytelling has drawn great interest internationally. Dima Matta, a university lecturer, writer, and performer, reset the trend of storytelling gatherings in Beirut in 2014 with her cliffhangers storytelling events. Matta, who listened to her father's tales of the Lebanese Civil War and his adolescence in his family's village during many of Beirut's recurrent power cuts, said she sees the new storytelling events as a prolongation of the Middle Eastern hakawati folklore, but also as a way of documenting personal histories that would otherwise go unsaid." (Ghadir Hamadi i <https://www.annahar.com/english/article/705184-the-hakawati-a-revival-of-an-ancient-tradition>; lesedato 18.06.21)

Den serbiske epossangeren (guslaren) Avdo Mededovic "was a keen elaborator. On one occasion he heard another *guslar* singing a song of several thousand lines that was 'new' to him, and although Avdo was not particularly trying to learn it he immediately afterwards gave on request a version that lengthened the first major theme, for example, from 176 lines to 558. Yet he lengthened it precisely by working in analogous material from his repertoire, material which in turn he seems to have acquired by learning from others, not by his own invention." (Kirk 1965 s. 25). En slik serbokroatisk sanger kunne ha et repertoar på opptil 300 sanger, hver på ca. 1000-15000 vers (Chevrel 1997 s. 79).

Under slaget på Kosovo-sletta i 1389 ble guslarer/rapsoder utnyttet av den serbiske militære ledelsen for å lovprise det som skulle bli Balkan-kongenes store seier over muslimene. Den albanske forfatteren Ismail Kadare tenker seg situasjonen slik:

"Skaldene er alltid de siste som faller i kamp, hadde fyrst Lazar sagt dagen i forveien, før han ga ordre til at alle rapsodene, de serbiske med *gusle* [et strengeinstrument brukt under framføringene] såvel som valakerne og bosnierne med sine fløyter, og dessuten de fra de albanske Alpene med sin enstrengede *lahuta*, skulle samle seg på en liten høyde like ved teltet hans for å følge kamphandlingenes gang derfra, utenfor fare. Som vanlig er rapsodene skjebnens favoritter, hadde en av fyrstens nestkommanderende utbrutt med et skjevt smil og et glimt av misunnelse i øynene, men fyrsten hadde svart: Hvis vi mistet dem, hvem skulle da synge vår pris.

I ettermiddagens løp hadde rapsodene altså tatt plass ved lederens telt og fulgt med på troppebevegelsene, iblant med tårer i øynene.

Det var brennende hett, og Kosovosletten lå badet i et skrekkelig lys. I det vanvittige gjenskinnet så ikke troppenes forflytninger ut til å følge noen bestemt orden. Da de tyrkiske styrkene på et visst tidspunkt ga etter for de kristnes press mot midtfeltet og bøyde seg som en bue, steg det opp seiersskrik fra den øverstkommanderendes telt. Disse ropene ble gjentatte ganger fornyet, men rapsodene klarte ikke å følge skikkelig med på kampen. Med slitne øyne observerte de bannernes bevegelser og så Korset få overtak på Halvmånen, men det altfor sterke lyset var og ble gunstig for luftspeilinger. Omtrent som under gårsdagens fyllefester ... “De går for hardt frem!” ropte en gammel bosnisk rapsode, den samme som natten i forveien hadde minnet om at ingen, ikke engang fyrstene, burde drikke forut for slaget.” (Kadare 1999 s. 41-42)

Senere, da slaget er tapt for fyrst Lazar, blir det antydning at rapsodene kan komme til å forbanne fyrsten i stedet: “- Når han er så flink til å forbanne folk, er det fordi han er rapsode, forklarte en mann med fillete trøye. Lovprise eller forbanne, det er jobben hans.” (Kadare 1999 s. 54). En av rapsodene kommer med en kort framføring etter nederlaget: “Vladans hånd som grep etter lahutaen, så ut til å skjelve. [...] Den deprimerende lyden steg opp noen sekunder, alene. Så fulgte ordene, og Gjorg så rapsoden blekne. Teksten kom til, tynget av sorg som gamle gravstøtter: Reis dere, serbere. Albanerne røver Kosovo fra oss!” (Kadare 1999 s. 58-59).

Rapsoders fortellinger har blitt modernisert og adaptert. Det afrikanske eposet *Soundjata* har blitt adaptert til nasjonalsang i Mali, og eposet *Kajoor* har inspirert en “Sang for ungdommen” i Senegal (Kesteloot og Dieng 1997 s. 66). *Soundjata* er en hyllest til grunnleggeren av Mali som rike. Dette eposet innledes med en lovprisning av griotens rolle som vitne og historiker – den som innehar det kollektive minnet om fortiden (Kesteloot og Dieng 1997 s. 86-87).

“The *griot* does not of course do history in our sense of the word, but adjusts the story to the audience. Alters the tale in response to responses. Celebrates the past. Glorifies the rulers. Enforces traditional values.” (Rosenstone 1995 s. 228)

Den britiske journalisten og reisebokforfatteren William Dalrymple ga i 2010 ut boka *Nine Lives: In Search of the Sacred in Modern India*. I kapitlet “The Singer of Epics” skriver Dalrymple om “en mann som fremfører de hinduiske eposene muntlig, gjennom sang. Disse eposene er lange, *Mahabharata* har for eksempel 100 000 vers. At det eksisterer tradisjoner for å huske slike tekster for fri muntlig resitasjon, er jo fantastisk. Dalrymple forteller med en melankolsk mine at denne tradisjonen nå er i ferd med å dø ut. Hvorfor? Fordi analfabetismen er på sakte retur, også på den indiske landsbygda. Dermed forsvinner selve livsgrunnlaget for den muntlig bevarte fortellingen.” (*Morgenbladet* 7.–13. mai 2010 s. 33)

Tibetanske *Geser*-sangere holdt en lanse i høyre hånd og tok venstre hånd opp til øret for å høre “stemmene” bak det de framførte (Arthur Thomas Hatto i <https://>

link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-663-01808-7_1; lesedato 25.02.21). “The epic *King Geser* has been in wide circulation in Chinese Inner Mongolian and Tibetan areas thanks to its continuous singing by generations of local artists. Because artists have brought their individual cultural contexts into it, the epic exhibits distinctive ethnic qualities in different places. Variations are most apparent in singing styles, learning styles, and religious associations. [...] 56 Mongolian and 134 Tibetan artists who were actively performing in the 1980s and 1990s. Each of the 56 Mongolian performers could sing one or more chapters of epic: 13 reside in Qinghai, 28 in Xinjiang, ten in Inner Mongolia, three in Liaoning, and two in Gansu province. Of the 134 Tibetan artists, 45 reside in Tibet, 73 in Qinghai, four in Gansu, six in Sichuan, and six in Yunan province. [...] There is a popular saying among Mongolians: any story is easier to tell than *Geser*. This is because they believe Geser to be a god, and therefore sublime and not to be spoken of casually. The Mongolian artist Blobsang has said that *Geser* is sacred and that only a highly skilled and devoted person can sing it. This particular epic is usually sung in areas where disasters have taken place with the aim of summoning Geser to lend his help and protection. During festivals, *Geser* epic can also be sung to bring about happiness and confer blessings. Outside of these specific performance contexts Blobsang tells only assorted anecdotes related to the epic. When he does sing the epic, he must sit straight, covering his legs with his Mongolian robe, and must not cross his legs, smoke, or drink alcohol. Usually, he dares not even mention the name of Geser lest the King overhear him and grow angry.” (Yang Enhong i https://journal.oraltradition.org/wp-content/uploads/files/articles/13ii/8_enhong.pdf; lesedato 25.02.21)

“Every Mongolian artist says a silent prayer in order to receive King Geser’s permission for his performance. In the prayer, they announce the volumes or chapters they wish to perform and ask Geser to pardon them if they sing anything incorrectly. Some artists practice certain unique rituals: Sulufenga says that before he sings of Geser’s expeditions he calculates the timing and the direction of these expeditions. Only when the direction of the traditional Eight Diagrams matches the direction of the expedition will he begin singing. If the two directions do not match, he will have to change the expedition in order for Geser to achieve victories. His calculation follows certain prompts, such as “Calculations on the chart of Eight Diagrams tell the precise direction of Geser’s expedition; the Heavenly, Stems, Earthly, Branches must coordinate well.” Allegedly, anyone who is able to memorize these lines can discover the right timing and directions. Prior to their performance, Tibetan artists must sit for a while in order to relax and concentrate; this preliminary enables them to play their roles and begin singing. Some Tibetan artists pour a glass of wine, dip their ring finger into it, and then flick drops of wine toward the sky, earth, and human realm in order to win protection from these three levels. They then sip a bit of wine and begin to sing. Most of the artists living in Mgolog, in Qinghai province, and the Nagchu district in Tibet observe this ritual. Many performers count beads, close their eyes, and sit for a while before praying. There are two kinds of prayers: one is meditation, in which the performer seeks the

Buddha and King Geser to bless his performance; the other requires the performer to say aloud the prayers that serve as the prelude for the singing of epic.” (Yang Enhong i https://journal.oraltradition.org/wp-content/uploads/files/articles/13ii/8_enhong.pdf; lesedato 25.02.21)

“As the Gesar epic began to circulate and be recorded, pre-performance rituals blended into the performance itself and have consequently become part of written versions. In current notebooks, hand-copied versions, and wood-engraved versions, many chapters and volumes begin with prayers that pay respect to the gods and seek their protection and blessing. Such prayers previously served as preparations for the performance and were standard rituals unrelated to the epic. Since prayers gradually appeared at the beginning of epic performances, they in time became the opening of the poem itself. [...] High standards are required of the Mongolian artists who narrate and sing: they perform not only *Gesar*, but also *Jianggar*, *Holbo*, and other stories of praise [...] Tibetan artists wear very particular costumes and use specific tools while singing. In our fieldwork, we always observed the artists wearing traditional garments while in performance. But some singers recalled seeing their forebears wearing specially tailored sorcerer’s attire, an indication that they were acting both as artists singing *Gesar* and as sorcerers communicating to the gods. The garments in question are customarily made of red silk, with lions embroidered on the sleeves and dragons and large birds on the front and back.” (Yang Enhong i https://journal.oraltradition.org/wp-content/uploads/files/articles/13ii/8_enhong.pdf; lesedato 25.02.21)

Griot

Uttales “griå” med trykk på å-en.

Tradisjonsbundet og profesjonell afrikansk musiker og historieforteller. Yrkesforteller og epossanger. Griotene er både trubadurer og historiefortellere, og kan fungere som historikere og rådgivere (Kesteloot 2001 s. 26).

Den første kjente skriftlige versjonen av ordet er “guiriot”, fra 1637 (Kesteloot og Dieng 1997 s. 53).

“Én og samme griot kan framføre en fullstendig eller forkortet versjon, alt etter publikum ... eller prisen som blir betalt” (Kesteloot og Dieng 1997 s. 30).

Afrikanske epos er fortellinger som under framføringen kan “avbrytes” av rene sanger, dans, miming, griotens dialog med publikum og spisepauser (Kesteloot og Dieng 1997 s. 49). “Inte minst Afrika har visat sig erbjuda en mängd intressant jämförelsematerial. Här har man, till exempel funnit att en oral dikt aldrig existerar som en helhet utan som ett förråd ur vilket rapsoden plockar olika partier.” (Linnér 1985 s. 167) Lilyan Kesteloot og Bassirou Dieng beskriver griotenes framføringer som en slags teaterforestillinger der verken grioten eller publikum synes det haster å komme til slutten av historien. Publikum skal først og fremst underholdes.

Griotene kan være utkledd med fjær, bjeller og glitrende tøy. Grioter som framfører epos om kongelige familier og religiøse epos (om nasjonale og religiøse helter og helgener), opptrer derimot vanligvis med stor verdighet og et minimum av gester (Kesteloot og Dieng 1997 s. 49).

Mange afrikanske epos er på ti tusen verselinjer eller mer. Hvert epos fantes og finnes fortsatt i ulike versjoner, med forskjellig lengde. “En *bandakat*, en musiserende og omreisende griot [i wollof-kulturen] er mye friere overfor tradisjonen [enn en *baj-gewel*], og hvis han blant sine sanger tar med et utdrag fra en fortelling, så kreves det ikke samme nøyaktighet av han som av en *baj-gewel*” (Kesteloot og Dieng 1997 s. 55). Det afrikanske eposet *Ozidi* framføres derimot alltid på sju kvelder og i fire timer hver av kveldene (Kesteloot og Dieng 1997 s. 49).

Det skal ha vært grioter i det vestafrikanske landet Guinea-Bissau som oppfant den store versjonen av strengeinstrumentet kora, med 21 strenger, og som ble brukt i framføring av fortellinger av grioter som Lalo Kéba Dramé, Wandifing Diabaté, Soundioulou Sissoko, Kaliba Kouyaté og Lamine Konté Bounda (Kesteloot & Dieng 1997 s. 122).

Grioter kan gjennom generasjoner ha tilhold hos en afrikansk konge- eller annen herskerfamilie (Kesteloot 2001 s. 26). Noen grioter lærer opp sine sønner til å bli grioter. Kvinner kan være grioter, men kan ikke framføre de høystatuspregete sjangrene epos og historiske krøniker (Kesteloot og Dieng 1997 s. 53).

Begrepene som brukes om grioters virksomhet kan være vide. Hos en afrikansk stamme som heter Boulou-Fang, betyr ordet “mvet” både hele den episke sjangeren, det enkelte verk og musikkinstrumentet som ledsager framføringen av verket (Kesteloot og Dieng 1997 s. 29). Framføringen av en mvet kan vare fra kl. 6 om kvelden til kl. 8 neste morgen. Et slikt epos kan være på 70.000 verselinjer (Kesteloot og Dieng 1997 s. 49). Om mwimbaji-griotene i Tanzania skriver J. Knappert: “They have a prodigious memory and can memorise a poem of a thousand stanzas in a week” (siteret fra Kesteloot og Dieng 1997 s. 51).

“[T]he Haya people of northwestern Tanzania [...] The Haya epic ballad *Kachwenyanja* (PSG 90-125) deploys a form of warrior’s lyric self-praise at several crucial points to strengthen and enrich the logic of its own plot with the lyric genre’s characteristic temporal sequence – such self-praise is to be recited in the royal presence before a battle, then repeated in modified form after a success in battle to receive a royal reward. The hero fails literally in this; the heroine succeeds metaphorically. [...] the five hundred lines of the bard Muzee’s performance of the ballad *Kachwenyanja* (the story of a warrior who dies in service to the king and is avenged and memorialized by his newly married wife) [...] in recurring patterns of repetition and contrast: aab, aba, aabb, and others. [...] Haya epic ballads are sung narratives composed of between several hundred and more than a thousand

nonmetric poetic “lines.” [...] The tradition of Haya epic ballad singing is probably only about two centuries old, although some of its mythological content appears older. Traditionally, the ballads were sung by specialist bards who usually were also land-holding farmers. Dr. M. M. Mulokozi, Haya scholar at the Institute for Kiswahili Research at the University of Dar es Salaam, wrote his Ph.D. dissertation and several articles about the tradition. One of these, available on the Internet, is about one of the tradition’s most famous bards, Habib Suliman. The genre of classic ballads included stories about spirits and gods, heroes, kings, and lovers. In the past, the ballads were sung at the courts of the kings of the seven kingdoms of Hayaland and at wedding celebrations at the homes of patrilineal clan patriarchs. Today, when there are no more royal rulers, bards apparently perform mostly in public bars, although I am told wedding performances still occur.” (Seitel 2003)

I Afrika finnes det epos der helten tilhører en bestemt profesjon, f.eks. er jeger eller fisker, og der eposets målgruppe tilhører samme yrke (Kesteloot og Dieng 1997 s. 45).

En mektig afrikansk slekt kunne ha sin egen, “private” griot (Kesteloot og Dieng 1997 s. 65). En griot kunne ha stor innflytelse på en konge eller annen hersker, til de grader at han kunne gi støtet til et giftermål eller forårsake en krig (Kesteloot og Dieng 1997 s. 71). I sine fortellinger kunne griotene smigre, kritisere, informere og utnytte tilhøreren. Griotens fortelling kan gjerne både underholde og more, og den kan minne om hva som er tradisjonelle, gode verdier og beundringsverdige oppførsel, og slik bidra til sosialt samhold (Dehon 2014 s. 351).

Griotene i Elfenbenskysten har blitt kalt “panegyrikere”, “genealoger” og “historikere” (Dehon 2014 s. 129). De har ofte fungert som “profesjonelle smigrere” som bidrar til å opprettholde den afrikanske elitens makt (Dehon 2014 s. 146).

Mwindo-eposet blant Nyanga-folket i Kongo ble framført med et spyd som var stukket ned i bakken, et spyd som symbolsk tilhørte ånden Karisi, eposets “far” (Arthur Thomas Hatto i https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-663-01808-7_1; lesedato 25.02.21).

I Afrika finnes det andre muntlige fortellinger som er like lange som eposene (Kesteloot og Dieng 1997 s. 27) Også disse historiene kan være ledsaget av musikk når de fortelles. Fortellingene handler blant annet om ulykkelige kjærlighetspar à la *Tristan og Isolde* – de afrikanske fortellingene heter blant annet *Soumba og Lancine*; *Prinsesse Niélé og kongens griot*; *Samba Durowel og Penda Tianowel*; *Olendé* (Kesteloot og Dieng 1997 s. 50). Noen fortellinger er langt mer poetiske og filosofiske enn de tradisjonelle eposene. Dette gjelder f.eks. fortellingene til Demba Lamine Diouf og A. M. Sambe i Senegal (Kesteloot og Dieng 1997 s. 66).

Rappere innen hiphop-subkulturen bør ha en “flow” i sin framføring som innebærer at de ikke stotrer, ikke trenger fyllord og holder takten. Slike rappers improviserte talesynging har blitt sammenlignet med afrikanske grioters framføringer (Krekow, Steiner og Taupitz 1999 s. 131 og 157).

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