

Bibliotekarstudentens nettleksikon om litteratur og medier

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Intensiv lesing

Intens, gjentakende lesing av lite antall tekster/bøker (f.eks. Bibelen, fromhetsbøker, lærebøker). Vanligvis leses det intensivt fra religiøse tekster, men også for å innarbeide fagstoff fra en autoritativ tekst. Dette er primært lesing for å oppnå en religiøs-emosjonell berikelse eller bekrefte leserens fromhet. De samme tekstene leses mange ganger. Andreas W. Daum kaller intensiv lesing for “den ritualiserte lektyre av få tekster” (2002 s. 238). Det kan også kalles asketisk lesing (Barthes 1970b s. 17). Tekstene ble ofte mer lyttet til og “gjenkjent” enn reelt lest (Chartier 2003 s. 92). Lesingen trenger ikke å være praktisk nyttig, men bør gi visdom og bidra til meditasjon (Cavallo og Chartier 2001 s. 140). Intensiv lesing er “sakral”, i motsetning til “profan” (Plaul 1983 s. 42).

En religiøs norm for intensiv lesing og memorering av tekstene finnes i Salmenes bok i Det gamle testamente, bl.a. i salme 119, der det står: “Hvordan holder den unge stien sin ren? / Ved å ta vare på dine ord.” (vers 9) og “Jeg gjemmer ditt ord i hjertet / så jeg ikke skal synde mot deg.” (vers 11), “Hvor høyt jeg elsker din lov! / Jeg grunner på den hele dagen.” (vers 97). I Johannes-evangeliet kapittel 14, vers 23 sier Jesus: “Den som elsker meg, vil holde fast på mitt ord, og min Far skal elske ham, og vi skal komme og bo hos ham”.

“[A]dvice about reading widely and differentially rather than always thoroughly coexisted with equally long-lived advice to read carefully from a narrow canon of the “best books.” Already Seneca had mocked those who collected more books than they could read and recommended focusing on a few well-tried authors. Petrarch alluded to Seneca when he drew up a list of some forty “favorite” books, to which he returned again and again, while he ventured into other books only, to use Seneca’s words, “as a scout.” [...] A book on how to read with profit by the Jesuit Francesco Sacchini (1614) was not only reprinted in many Latin editions, presumably for use by Jesuits, but also appealed to their archenemies in religion [...] Like that other Jesuit, Antonio Possevino, who recommended a select (and aggressively purged) rather than a universal library, Sacchini emphasized choosing and reading carefully a core of “good” books – by which he meant books that would further piety and the ancient classics which were to be read with great care. “I urge that when a young man finds himself with some free time, he

conscientiously devote himself not to reading new books but rather to re-reading and going over attentively those books which he knows already from the guidance of his teacher. ... It is much better in the beginning to learn a few things well, than to taste many things. ... Therefore if you set out to read a book, order requires that you read it from beginning to end: in this way you will understand more easily and retain much better the whole subject of the book.” ” (Blair 2003)

Den intensive lese måten var vanlig i Europa fram til midt på 1700-tallet (Chartier 2003 s. 91). Selv om noen av tekstene var ikke-religiøse, var lesernes forhold til disse likevel halvveis sakralt (Chartier 2003 s. 92). De få bøkene som ble lest, ble gjenlest, memorert og lært utenat, samt sitert fra til andre, og overlevert fra generasjon til generasjon (Cavallo og Chartier 2001 s. 35). Det dreier seg oftest om religiøse tekster som oppfattes som hellige og som absolutte autoriteter. Leserens forhold til disse tekstene er preget av ærbødighet og lydighet. Tekstenes autoritet var ofte forbundet med en høytlesers autoritet, f.eks. en prest, lærer eller far i autoritære høytlesingssituasjoner (Franzmann, Hasemann og Löffler 1999 s. 31).

“The monastic *lectio* was a spiritual exercise which involved steady reading to oneself, interspersed by prayer, and pausing for rumination on the text as a basis for *meditatio*.” (Towheed, Crone og Halsey 2011 s. 277) Raymond Studzinskis bok *Reading To Live: The Evolving Practice of Lectio Divina* (2009) “traces the practice of *lectio divina* from its roots in the ascetic movement in the early church and monasticism to its rediscovery in recent times. The benefits *lectio* brings become clear as Origen, Augustine, Bernard, and many others throughout history testify to its power in their lives. Modern commentators from a variety of disciplines spell out *lectio*'s potential for the world of the twenty-first century. [...] *Lectio divina*, the ancient practice of prayerful reading, is a font whose waters are waiting to quench the thirst of spiritual seekers, both beginners on the spiritual journey and experienced travelers. The art of holy reading transforms lives. Through the practice of *lectio* individuals and communities discover God's living word addressed to them in their particular “now,” to enlighten, challenge, encourage, and suggest. [...] This book invites people of all faiths to embrace the venerable practice of *lectio divina*. It provides abundant creative testimonies to its practice and to its life-changing effects.” (<https://www.litpress.org/Products/CS231P/reading-to-live.aspx>; lesedato 29.08.16)

“German historian Rolf Engelsing has identified a *Leserevolution*, or reading revolution, in the second half of the eighteenth century.” (Ross, McKechnie og Rothbauer 2006 s. 30-31) “Engelsing's description of a late eighteenth-century shift from the rereading of a few prized texts to the consumption of many ephemeral ones [...] Before that time, Engelsing argues, people of all social classes owned a few books that they read “intensively”: slowly, repeatedly, reverently. The classic example of such reading would be the Bible, a book read year after year, never outdated, but paradoxically linked via inscriptions on the flyleaf with the passage of time in readers' own lives. Toward the end of the eighteenth century, in

Engelsing's account, the proliferation of new books gave rise to a model of "extensive" reading – skimming and skipping, devouring and discarding – from which we have yet to emerge. [...] Where Engelsing distinguished mutually exclusive practices, his critics see a repertoire of styles that readers could switch on and off at will. Elizabeth Eisenstein uses the example of early eighteenth-century journals to argue that rather than one mode of reading replacing the other, both coexisted in any given historical moment. Eisenstein quotes Francis Bacon – "some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed and some few to be chewed and digested" – but takes his aphorism one step further, showing that a single book could be read extensively by one reader and intensively by another." (Leah Price i <http://isites.harvard.edu/fs/docs/icb.topic1323613.files/>; lesedato 15.04.16)

Det meste av Engelsing's empiri "concerns only a small sampling of burghers in Bremen. But it has an attractive before-and-after simplicity, and it provides a handy formula for contrasting modes of reading a very early and very late in European history. Its main drawback, as I see it, is its unilinear character. Reading did not evolve in one direction, extensiveness. It assumed many different forms among different social groups in different eras. [...] Yet an American historian of the book, David Hall, has described a transformation in the reading habits of New Englanders between 1600 and 1850 in almost exactly the same terms as those used by Engelsing. Before 1800, New Englanders read a small corpus of venerable "steady sellers" – the Bible, almanacs, the *New England Primer*, Philip Doddridge's *Rise and Progress of Religion*, Richard Baxter's *Call to the Unconverted* – and read them over and over again, aloud, in groups, and with exceptional intensity. After 1800 they were swamped with new kinds of books – novels, newspapers, fresh and sunny varieties of children's literature – and they read through them ravenously, discarding one thing as soon they could find another." (Robert Darnton i Towheed, Crone og Halsey 2011 s. 27-28)

"Those who practised the traditional mode of reading continued to revert to the edifying 'old solaces', the Bible, the catechism and the calendar." (Wittmann 1999 s. 289) Tekstene ble en slags "herrer over livet", og lesingen preget i høy grad leserens måte å tenke og snakke på (Chartier 2003 s. 92). Formuleringer i de tekstene som ble lest intensivt, ble en kjent referanse for leserne og kunne få stor betydning for deres livsførsel. Men " 'intensive', repetitive reading could be a ritual devoid of meaning, while 'extensive' reading could be performed with passionate intensity" (Wittmann 1999 s. 286).

En bokhistoriker avslørte at i 1883 i "the Moscow provinces [...] There are certain superstitions surrounding the psalter, namely that he who reads it from cover till cover forty times is absolved of certain sins, and that it serves as a means of divining, particularly in those cases where the perpetrator of a theft of property is to be found." (Towheed, Crone og Halsey 2011 s. 166)

“[T]he process of modernizing reading habits sprang not so much from the residences and courts as from the Protestant commercial towns of northern and central Germany. The Catholic regions of the Empire did not begin to participate in the process until later. Unlike the Protestants, they lacked the tradition of individual Bible reading, a quasi-religious act providing a fundamental stimulus to reading. In Catholic areas the clerics are the necessary intermediaries between the Word of God and the faithful, and no other book has a similar existential importance to that of the Bible for the Reformed, the Bible whose presence in each family is verified, and the text of which could be recited to oneself after learning it by heart from multiple recitals and readings.” (Wittmann 1999 s. 294)

“The most widespread form of interaction with the printed word continued to be ‘unruly’ reading, a mode of reading that was naïve, non-reflexive and undisciplined, and for the most part performed aloud.” (Towheed, Crone og Halsey 2011 s. 41)

Den nederlandske middelaldermunken Thomas à Kempis skrev den religiøse veiledningsboka *Om Kristi etterfølgelse* på 1400-tallet. Han anbefalte sine elever å ta en bok mellom hendene “slik Simeon den rettferdige tok Jesusbarnet i armene for å bære og omfavne han”, og når boka er slutt å takke Gud for hvert ord fra hans munn (sitert fra Manguel 1998 s. 31). På slutten av 1700-tallet leste en tysk baker ved navn Ordemann, bosatt i Bernburg i Anhalt, Kempis’ bok 37 ganger etter hverandre i løpet av 11 år (1781-92) (Barbier 2000 s. 177).

“In one of the most widely diffused manuals on note-taking, the Jesuit Jeremias Drexel explained: “Reading is useless, vain and silly when no writing is involved, unless you are reading [devotionally] Thomas à Kempis or some such. Although I would not want even that kind of reading to be devoid of all note-taking.” [...] This process of “excerpting” was said to aid the memory in at least two ways: the act of writing itself helped to ingrain the passage in the memory, and the excerpts could then be learned by heart to exercise the memory.” (Blair 2003)

Den italienske filosofen og forfatteren Machiavelli skrev til Francesco Vettori at han kledte seg i finklær når han skulle lese sine yndlingsforfattere (Chatelain 2003 s. 23). Han tok på seg “royal and courtly clothes” for å “speak” with the ancient authors” (William J. Connell i <http://eprints.unifi.it/>; lesedato 15.10.12)

Intensiv innebærer “reading a book, particularly the Bible, carefully and repeatedly [...] About 1854, a man who grew up in Ridgefield, Connecticut recalled his youth: “Books and newspapers – which are now diffused even among the country towns, so as to be in the hands of all, young and old – were then scarce, and were read respectfully, and as if they were grave matters, demanding thought and attention. They were not toys and pastimes, taken up every day, and by everybody, in the short intervals of labor, and then hastily dismissed, like waste paper. The aged sat down when they read, and drew forth their spectacles, and put them deliberately

and reverentially on the nose. These instruments [spectacles] were not as now, little tortoise-shell hooks, attached to a ribbon, and put off and on with a jerk; but they were of silver or steel, substantially made, and calculated to hold on with a firm and steady grasp, showing the gravity of the uses to which they were devoted. Even the young approached a book with reverence, and a newspaper with awe. How the world has changed!” [...] Goodrich, Samuel G. (1857), *Recollections of Lifetime*” (<http://www.purplemotes.net/2007/03/18/novel-content-creation/>; lesedato 03.06.16).

Den amerikanske forfatteren Susan Warners roman *The Wide, Wide World* (1850) ble en bestselger. På grunn av bevarte fanbrev til forfatteren, vet forskere i dag en del om hvordan romanen ble lest og oppfattet. “Many other readers shared her conviction that *The Wide, Wide World* could help them do right: a young girl writing in 1881 compared Warner’s novel to the Bible and then talked about her everyday use of it: “When I feel angry or out of temper I read in the book and find out how Ellen fought against temptations, and I am instantly put right in tune again and feel good desires ...” ” (Jennifer L. Brady i <http://www.common-place.org/vol-12/no-01/brady/>; lesedato 19.06.13).

“Villaen Berghof i de bayerske alper var Hitlers favorittsted. I bokhylla på det private arbeidsrommet sto Shakespeares samlede. Samt en skinninnbundet spesialutgave av Hitlers absolutte favorittforfatter, Karl May (1842-1912). Mays eksotiske eventyrromaner fra det Ville Vesten, Orienten og Sør-Amerika er blant tidenes mest solgte bøker på tysk. Hitler slukte dem som gutt, men forlot dem ikke som voksen: Ifølge venner leste han Karl May slik andre leser Bibelen – om og om igjen, i små porsjoner.” (*Dagbladet* 4. desember 2009 s. 56)

“One day, young Hitler went rummaging through his father’s book collection and came across several of a military nature, including a picture book on the War of 1870-71 between the Germans and the French. By Hitler’s own account, this book became an obsession. He read it over and over, becoming convinced it had been a glorious event.” (<http://www.historyplace.com/worldwar2/riseofhitler/boyhood.htm>; lesedato 24.08.16)

Under en demonstrasjon mot “umoralske” skolebøker i Kanawha County i West Virginia i USA på 1970-tallet hadde en av demonstrantene en plakate der det med store bokstaver stod: “I have a “Bible” I don’t need those dirty books” (Marshall 1977 s. 243; det er uklart hvorfor “Bible” ble satt i hermetegn). Bibelen var for denne demonstranten den absolutte autoritet som gjorde lesing av de fleste andre bøker unødvendig.

“Professor Grant Horner’s unusual, challenging, and life-changing Bible-Reading System is unlike any other you have ever seen. [...] I began in 1983 (adapting and tweaking the basic design of another system) as a brand-new convert; within 3 years I knew the text of my Bible very well. Twenty-five years later it is essentially

imprinted on my mind and heart. I have been all over the country and have taught this system in many churches. [...] On day one, you read Matthew 1, Genesis 1, Romans 1, and so forth. On day 2, read Matthew 2, Genesis 2, etc. On day 29, you will have just finished Matthew, so go to Mark 1 on the Gospel list; you'll also be almost to the end of 2nd Corinthians and Proverbs, you'll be reading Psalm 29 and Genesis 29, and so forth. When you reach the last chapter of the last book in a list – start over again. Rotate all the way through all the Scriptures constantly. [...] After you've read any particular book once or twice, your speed in that book usually *doubles or triples* because you're familiar with it and can move quickly and confidently – because you are no longer merely decoding the text but thinking it through in the context of all of the scripture! Even an 'average' reader, if focusing on moving through the text, rather than trying to figure everything out, can usually do this in about an hour a day – 5-6 minutes per chapter. Many people report moving confidently through the ten chapters in 35-40 minutes. If it is taking you longer, then you are 'reading wrong' – stay relaxed, focus, and just keep it moving. Moderate but consistent speed is the key.” (http://www.communicatejesus.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/professor_grant_horners_bible_reading_system.pdf; lesedato 27.04.16)

“3 Benefits of Reading the Bible Every Day [...] Daily Bible reading is an excellent habit that can benefit every Christian in many ways. We'll discuss three main benefits in this post. [...] When we read the Bible, we're fed by God's Word and supplied for our Christian life. Jesus mentioned this in Matthew 4:4 when He said, “Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out through the mouth of God.” Other verses in the Bible also make it clear that God's Word is nourishment to us. For example, 1 Peter 2:2 says, “As newborn babes, long for the guileless milk of the word in order that by it you may grow unto salvation.” And in the Old Testament, Jeremiah 15:16 says, “Your words were found and I ate them, and Your word became to me the gladness and joy of my heart.” When we eat physical food, we're supplied with the nutrients we need to live and be healthy. We get the energy to go to work, exercise, and spend time with family and friends. Conversely, when we skip a meal, we feel weak, tired, and even grumpy. And if we keep missing meals, we become susceptible to even greater problems, like illness. Similarly, when we eat spiritual food we're supplied to live our Christian life. But when we're away from God's Word for a while, we can become spiritually weak, tired, and “grumpy,” or, unable to handle difficulties well. We become more susceptible to temptation, doubts, and other kinds of spiritual sickness. We simply don't have the means to cope with the many challenges that come into our lives as believers. It's very important, therefore, that we're supplied by reading and feeding on God's Word every day. To maintain a healthy and even joyful Christian life, we need daily Bible reading to receive the spiritual nourishment in God's Word for us.” (<http://biblesforamerica.org/three-benefits-of-reading-bible-every-day/>; lesedato 14.06.16)

“What if we don’t understand what we’re reading? We may wonder whether we should keep reading the Bible. Or maybe we’re discouraged because by the afternoon we’ve forgotten what we read in the morning. Should we keep on reading, even when we don’t remember much? The answer is, yes, definitely. This is because a great benefit of reading God’s Word is that it washes us. Ephesians 5:26 says, “That He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of the water in the word.” The “her” here is the church, which is composed of all the believers in Christ, and “the washing of the water in the word” here indicates something different from the washing of our sins by the Lord’s blood. [...] The washing water of life is in God’s Word. So even if we don’t remember or fully understand what we read, our daily Bible reading still washes us from so many negative things. [...] Knowing what’s in the Bible is like knowing our spiritual ABCs. Becoming familiar with the words, facts, stories, and expressions in the Bible forms in us the building blocks the Lord can use to show us more of the truth in His Word. This helps us to know Him in a deeper way and allows Him to speak to us more and more through the Word. God has given us a powerful and wonderful gift in His Word. By reading it, we’re not only spiritually educated but also washed and nourished within. If you’d like some help with reading the Bible regularly, take a look at our post on building up a habit of daily Bible reading.” (<http://biblesforamerica.org/three-benefits-of-reading-bible-every-day/>; lesedato 14.06.16)

Nederst på nettsiden <http://biblesforamerica.org/> hadde i juni 2016 bibellesere skrevet inn kommentarer, bl.a.: “I believe that you can find perfect health by reading the Bible one hour a day.” “It’s definitely worth building up a life-long Bible-reading habit!” “As I read this I believe the Holy Spirit was saying when you are in the Word on a daily basis it gets deep down inside of you and it becomes a part of you and the Holy Spirit is powerfully present to work through you each second of the day.”

“I have been reading the Bible daily, usually before work, and each night before bed for just over 5 years now. I have read through the entire Bible roughly 8 times. (Different translations and repeats). To be honest, it has become so much a part of my day, I’ll get up as early as needed to spend time with the Bible on any day. [...] It amazes me how much this has become a part of my life. When I first started reading every day, my goal was to simply read through it, read the notes, start again. As I’ve read it through so many times now, I too read much more slowly. I absolutely prefer the DR [= den engelske oversettelsen som kalles *The Douay–Rheims Bible*] as my daily reader for a number of reasons, including the book intros and notes. In a nutshell, reading the Bible has become as much a daily activity for me as praying the rosary. I actually feel as though my day is not complete if I don’t read some portion of it!” (anonymt innlegg signert “Steve” på <http://forums.catholic.com/showthread.php?t=858601>; lesedato 22.06.16)

J. K. Rowlings fantasybøker om Harry Potter ble ifølge konservative amerikanske kristne farlige blant annet fordi de ble “read over and over by children in the same way the Bible should be read” (sitert fra Jenkins 2008 s. 202).

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