La danse dans l'espace germanique
Un dossier dirigé par Jean-Louis Georget et Guillaume Robin
Les élections régionales en Allemagne à la veille des législatives du 24 septembre
Herr Professor Doktor : aperçus de la satire universitaire en Allemagne

Les artistes alternatifs de la RDA des années 1980
Un dossier dirigé par Marianne Beauviche et Jean Mortier
La migration et l'intégration
Les bonnes pratiques du vivre ensemble : l'accueil des demandeurs d'asile en Suède, Allemagne et France
Le retour de la Sarre à l'Allemagne il y a 60 ans
Réception de La Grande Vadrouille en Allemagne
lendemains

Études comparées sur la France / Vergleichende Frankreichforschung
Ökonomie • Politik • Geschichte • Kultur • Literatur • Medien • Sprache

1975 gegründet von Evelyne Sinnassamy und Michael Nerlich
Herausgegeben von Evelyne Sinnassamy und Michael Nerlich (1975-1999),

Herausgeber / directeurs: Andreas Gelz, Christian Papilloud.
Wissenschaftlicher Beirat / comité scientifique: Clemens Albrecht • Wolfgang Asholt • Hans Manfred Bock • Corinne Defrance • Alexandrine Gafen • Rolan • Corine Höhne • Dietmar Hüser • Alan Montandon • Beate Ochsner • Joachim Umlauf • Harald Weinrich • Friedrich Wolffzettel

l’esperance de l’endemain
Ce sont mes festes.

Redaktion / Rédaction: Frank Reiser, Cécile Rol
Rübteuf
Umschlaggestaltung / Maquette couverture: Redaktion / Rédaction

Titelbild: Victor Hugo deklamiert vor den Parnassiens (Montage zweier zeitgenössischer Gemälde)
www.lendemains.eu

lendemains erscheint vierteljährlich mit je 2 Einzelheften und 1 Doppelheft und ist direkt vom Verlag und durch jede Buchhandlung zu beziehen. Das Einzelheft kostet 23,00 €, das Doppelheft 46,00 €; der Abonnementspreis (vier Heftnummern) beträgt für Privatpersonen 58,00 € (für Schüler und Studenten sowie Arbeitslose 52,00 € – bitte Kopie des entsprechenden Ausweises beifügen) und für Institutionen 74,00 € pro Jahr zuzüglich Porto- und Versandkosten. Der Abonnementspreis für vier Heftje plus Online-Zugriff beträgt 92,50 €. Abonnementsrechnungen sind innerhalb von vier Wochen nach ihrer Ausstellung zu begleichen. Das Abonnement verlängert sich jeweils um ein weiteres Jahr, wenn nicht bis zum 30. September des laufenden Jahres eine Kündigung zum Jahresende beim Verlag eingegangen ist. Änderungen der Anschrift sind dem Verlag unverzüglich mitzuteilen.

Anschrift Verlag/Vertrieb:
Narr Francke Attempto Verlag GmbH + Co. KG
Dischingerweg 5, D-72070 Tübingen, Tel.: +49 7071 9797-0, Fax: +49 7071 97 97-11, info@narr.de.

lendemains, revue trimestrielle (prix du numéro 23,00 €, du numéro double 46,00 €; abonnement annuel normal – quatre numéros – 58,00 € + frais d’envoi: étudiants et chômeurs – s.v.p. ajouter copie des pièces justificatives – 52,00 €; abonnement d’une institution 74,00 €; abonnement annuel de quatre numéros plus accès en ligne 92,50 €) peut être commandée / abonné à Narr Francke Attempto Verlag GmbH + Co. KG, Dischingerweg 5, D-72070 Tübingen, tél.: +49 7071 9797-0, fax: +49 7071 979711, info@narr.de.

Die in lendemains veröffentlichten Beiträge geben die Meinung der Autoren wieder und nicht notwendigerweise die der Herausgeber und der Redaktion. / Les articles publiés dans lendemains ne reflètent pas obligatoirement l’opinion des éditeurs ou de la rédaction.

Redaktionelle Post und Manuskripte für den Bereich der Literatur- und Kulturwissenschaft/Courrier destiné à la rédaction ainsi que manuscrits pour le ressort lettres et culture: Prof. Dr. Andreas Gelz, Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg, Romanisches Seminar, Platz der Universität 3, D-79085 Freiburg, e-mail: andreas.gelz@romanistik.uni-freiburg.de, Tel.: +49 761 203 3188.

Redaktionelle Post und Manuskripte für den Bereich Sozialwissenschaften, Politik und Geschichte / Courrier destiné à la rédaction ainsi que manuscrits pour le ressort sciences sociales, politique et histoire: Prof. Dr. Christian Papilloud, Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg, Institut für Soziologie, Emil-Auberhalden-Str. 26-27, D-06099 Halle (Saale), e-mail: christian.papilloud@soziologie.uni-halle.de, Tel.: +49 345 55 24250.

Die vorliegende Studie ist die erste Monographie über das gesamte Erzählwerk Cécile Wajsbrots. Da Wajsbrot mehrfach die Bedeutung von Orten und Räumen für ihre Erzählten betont hat, konzentriert Huesmann seine kontextualisierenden Analysen, in denen er hermeneutische und semiotische Methoden integriert, auf die Aspekte „Raum und Bewegung“. Aufgrund persönlicher Konflikte der Nachwirkungen des II. Weltkriegs, des Holocaust und des Verlustes der Heimat oder aber in der Auseinandersetzung mit der Kunst bewegen sich die handelnden Figuren der inhaltlich und formal ansonsten sehr unterschiedlichen Romane stets in einem Raum zwischen zwei Welten.

© 2017 • Narr Francke Attempto Verlag GmbH + Co. KG
Druck und Bindung: CPI buchbäuer. Birkenbach
Gedruckt auf alterungsbeständigem Papier.
ISSN 0170-3803

Herbert Huesmann
Das Erzählwerk Cécile Wajsbrots
Eine literarische Suchbewegung
edition lendemains, Vol. 43
2017, 550 Seiten
€(D) 98,00
ISBN 978-3-8233-9125-9
eISBN 978-3-8233-9125-8

Herbert Huesmann
Das Erzählwerk Cécile Wajsbrots
Eine literarische Suchbewegung
edition lendemains, Vol. 43
2017, 550 Seiten
€(D) 98,00
ISBN 978-3-8233-9125-9
eISBN 978-3-8233-9125-8
Sommaire

Editorial ......................................................................................................................... 3

Dossier
Marco Thomas Bosshard (ed.)

Epische Versdichtung im Frankreich des 19. Jahrhunderts zwischen Oralität, Auralität und Literalität

Marco Thomas Bosshard: Einleitung: Zum Status des Epos in der Moderne .......... 5

Joyce Coleman: From Orality to Aurality ........................................................................ 16

Marco Thomas Bosshard: Victor Hugo und die epische Dichtung: Von den Salons der 1820er Jahre zu den Aufführungen aus den Châtiments und der Légende des siècles in den Pariser Theatern 1870/71 ........................................... 25

Daniel Madelénat: „Grande‘ poésie et oralité: La guerre de 1870-1871 .......... 58

Henning Hufnagel: Parnasse und Mündlichkeit: Beredtes Verstummen im statuarischen Text. Mit einer Coda zu Mallarmé .......................................................... 77

Comptes rendus

Charlotte Krauss / Urs Urban (ed.): Das wiedergefundene Epos. Inhalte, Formen und Funktionen epischen Erzählens vom Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts bis heute / L’épopée retrouvée. Motifs, formes et fonctions de la narration épique du début du XXe siècle à l’époque contemporaine (Wiebke Schuld) .... 112

Jia Zhao: L’ironie dans le roman français depuis 1980. Echenoz, Chevillard, Toussaint, Gailly (Florence Leca Mercier) .............................................................. 115

Ottmar Ette / Gesine Müller (ed.): Visualisierung, Visibilisierung und Verschriftlichung. Schrift-Bilder und Bild-Schriften im Frankreich des 19. Jahrhunderts (Markus Raith) .......................................................... 118

Pierre-Marc de Biasi / Agnès Castiglione / Dominique Viart (ed.):
Pierre Michon. La lettre et son ombre (Elisa Bricco) .............................................. 123

Violaine Houdart-Merot / Christine Mongenot (ed.): Pratiques d’écriture littéraire à l’université (Christine Michler) ......................................................... 127
Sommaire

Nathalie Denizot: La scolarisation des genres littéraires
(Laetitia Perret-Truchot) ............................................................... 130

Jacques Berchtold (ed.): Goethe et la France (Alain Montandon) ............... 133
Creation myths are not a thing of the past. On personal, familial, religious, political, and other levels, we still tell ourselves stories of how we came to be who we are, stories carefully shaped to make this arrival of ourselves, or some feature of life that we identify with, an important and generally beneficial event.

Literary scholars are no exception. The myths we like to tell ourselves about how we came to be the guardians and interpreters of texts often involve a transition from times of illiteracy and of orally delivered literature – lost as soon as spoken, or mangled in mis-remembered versions – to the surer, greater time of literate authors producing texts that would be preserved in print for appreciation by astute, critical, privately reading readers. In the one case, creativity, even genius, is fluid and ephemeral; in the other, authors enjoy the security that their compositions will live on, in just the form they chose, free from interference and disintegration.

Lately, of course, that paradigm has been loosening up, with texts returning to fluidity as electronic media proliferate. Maybe for this reason, scholars are becoming more alert to and sympathetic with a fact that has underlain the myth all along: that the voice has been, is still, and probably will always be with us, as a means of offering, experiencing, and inflecting text.

Nonetheless, it’s a hard myth to give up – especially as its appeal has been reinforced by theories that align a range of desirable characteristics on the side of literacy, fixed texts, and private reading/readers. Beginning in the early 1960s, work by Eric Havelock and by Jack Goody (with Ian Watt and on his own) developed an evolutionary paradigm by which the alleged movement from ‘orality’ to ‘literacy’ paralleled cultural and psychological transitions from simple, traditional, un-self-aware modes of thought to their positively valued opposites. These theories were based on relatively quick ‘bright-line’ transitions: in Havelock’s case, from earlier scripts to the first fully alphabetic writing system, in ancient Greek culture; and for Goody and Watt, from complete illiteracy to widespread literacy as contemporary ‘traditional’ cultures were exposed to modern ‘civilization’. In his Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word (1982), Walter Ong then adapted this schema to European history by assuming that these transitions took place gradually, from the near-complete ‘primary’ orality of the Dark Ages through many increments to full literacy in the age of mass publication, and then on, with the invention of radio and later technology, to ‘secondary orality’.1

Ong’s list of characteristic ‘oral’ traits was a long and influential one. Primary orality (complete or near-complete illiteracy) entailed a mentality that was additive rather than subordinative; aggregative; redundant or ‘copious’; conservative or traditionalist; close to the human lifeworld; agonistically toned; empathetic and participatory; ahiistorical; and situational (Ong 1982: 36-57). The history of the
transition from orality to (pre-electronic) literacy was reflected in the gradual development of the contrasting 'literate' qualities in individuals, cultures, and literatures: self-awareness, individuality, originality; an analytic, historicized, objective worldview.

Even in Ong's gradualistic version of orality-literacy theory, the two modalities are conceived of as radically distinct and mutually incompatible. The anthropologist Ruth Finnegar (1973) dubbed this perspective the 'Great Divide'. Orality stands at one pole, literacy at the other; the only relationship the two can have is the replacement of one by the other. The superior technology of writing and then of printing supersedes the inferior technology of memorization and recitation; simultaneously, the letter supersedes the voice, the eye supersedes the ear. The underlying model is evolution, as first conceived in the nineteenth century and extended to culture by early anthropologists. Ong's dichotomy of oral vs. literate traits recalls Edward Burnett Tylor's theory that human history records a passage from savagery through barbarism to civilization. Tylor developed the concept of 'survivals' to explain why 'primitive' elements such as witchcraft or superstitions persisted into modern times. 'According to the doctrine of survivals', the folklorist Richard Dorson explains, 'the irrational beliefs and practices of the European peasantry, so at variance with the enlightened views of the educated classes, preserve the fragments of an ancient, lower culture, the culture of primitive man' (Dorson 1968: 193). The concept foreshadows the term 'oral residue', which Ong introduced to explain why oral traits would persist into the age of literacy. Ong accounted for rhetorical flourishes in written literature, and even popular genres such as the Western, with the pseudo-scientific observation that 'habits of thought and expression inseparable from the older, more familiar [oral] medium are simply assumed to belong equally to the new until this is sufficiently "interiorized" for its own techniques to emerge from the chrysalis and for those more distinctive of the older medium to atrophy' (Ong 1965: 26). Like the older model of evolution, literacy marches on, discarding old solutions as better ones are found; technological change in the means of producing and recording text is in and of itself a sufficient explanation for profound psychological and cultural transformations.

This model has had a long run, and still appears in modern discussions of the history of literature, reading, or 'the book'. It is the academics' creation myth, because it validates the sort of people we are: scholars, close readers, studiers of sources and analogues and authorial devices. Our totem is the fixed text, which authenticates our analyses; how much harder and less satisfying it can be to chase oral variants of confused origin – to function in an environment where, as Phillips Barry said of the ballad, 'there are texts, but no text' (Barry 1961).

It is thus not surprising that the counter-arguments to Ong and his colleagues derived largely not from literary studies but from the social sciences. In a series of articles collected into her Literacy and Orality: Studies in the Technology of Communication (1988), Finnegar deliberately reversed the order of Ong's famous title, and quickly scrambled his neat categories. From her own fieldwork and the anthropological literature, she pointed to the presence of allegedly 'literate' traits among some
nonliterate tribal people, and their relative absence among others (Finnegan 1988a: 56). The conclusion to be drawn, she argued, was that ‘orality’ was not one absolute category, with an invariable set of concomitant traits. Rather, there could be multiple oralties, each the product of an array of environmental, historical, and cultural factors. The traits postulated by Ong and other theorists are free-floating human characteristics, not inevitable concomitants of how one experiences text. Finnegans extended the argument into literary forms, offering examples of oral compositions that demonstrate self-reflexivity, irony, esthetic critiques, and other traits allegedly reserved for literate authors and their compositions.

In his Literacy in Theory and Practice (1984), another anthropologist, Brian Street, constructed the same argument from the opposite direction. His fieldwork in pre-revolutionary Iran identified multiple literacies, which configured differently based on the uses to which they were put. Using Arabic script to read the Koran created one sort of mentality; using Arabic script to conduct commercial transactions in Farsi created another. Research by the psychologists Sylvia Scribner and Michael Cole (1981) further showed that the acquisition of analytical skills allegedly associated with literacy actually resulted from schooling. Working with the Vai people of Liberia, Scribner and Cole compared the effects of nonliteracy, non-schooled literacy in the Vai’s own script, Arabic literacy learned in religious schools, and formal, Western-style education in English. Only the last form of learning produced the skill-set claimed by the Great Divide theory to be inherent in literacy itself. The idea of grouping words or things into abstract categories – for example, of deriving the concept, ‘circle’ from looking at wheels, plates, coins, etc. – was a product of training, not an invariable concomitant of literacy itself.

The work of the social scientists established several important points. Orality and literacy cannot be associated with essentialist divisions of mentalities and skills. The distribution of and changes in such qualities may be affected by many more factors than the single one of modes or technologies of textual reception (witness the current resurgence of printed books despite the many predictions of their imminent obsolescence). Orality and literacy are not monolithic or incompatible categories; rather, there can be many intersecting, co-existing forms of each. When writing enters a system, or as more people learn to read and have access to reading material, these developments can and usually do add to the range of textual interactions rather than extinguishing earlier forms. „This kind of mixture is and has been a common and ordinary feature of cultures throughout the centuries“, Finnegans notes (1988c: 141).

These insights open the way into a broader, less judgmental, and indeed more interesting exploration of forms of textual reception across time and space. It calls into question Ong’s term, ‘secondary orality’, with its implication that the hearing of texts represents a sort of cultural lapse, a reversion or regression to pre-literate times. It’s true that before writing was invented, people had no choice but to hear texts. But they went on, choosing to hear texts after writing was invented, and continuously from that point to the present, when audiobooks, podcasts, and even
websites and live performances devoted to purely oral storytelling (such as *The Moth*) are thriving.

The penetration of this viewpoint into literary studies, however, has been slow and incomplete – perhaps because it threatens the creation myth that accords literary scholars such importance. In my field, medieval literature, Dennis H. Green (1984, 1990) was the first to explore its implications, particularly for German texts, while I argued the issue for English and French (Coleman 1996). Yet I regularly see, in current medieval scholarship, the assumption that private reading replaced the hearing of texts, accompanied by the further assumption that this development was a valuable evolution in human capacity. The creation myth lives on.

Part of the difficulty of conceptualizing the complexities of multi-modal literary production and reception is the restricted vocabulary passed on from the Great Divide theory. There are only the two primary terms, each of which sustains a multitude of definitions. As commonly used, ‘oral’ or ‘orality’ can mean, as a society, not possessing any writing system’, ‘as an individual or group, not knowing how to read or write’, ‘the extemporaneous oral composition and performance of texts’, ‘the oral performance of remembered texts’, ‘the hearing of texts’, and/or ‘textual traits allegedly associated with nonliterate composition or performance’. ‘Literate’ or ‘literacy’ can mean, as a society, possessing one or more writing systems’, ‘as an individual or group, able to read and (possibly) write’, ‘the writing of texts’, ‘the reading of texts to auditors’, ‘the private but vocalized reading of texts to oneself’, ‘the private, silent reading of texts’, and/or ‘textual traits allegedly associated with written as opposed to orally composed texts’.

Within such a conceptually handicapped system, any textual practice that seems to combine ‘oral’ and ‘literate’ has difficulty achieving its own identity; instead, it is likely to be assimilated to one or the other pole. Reading aloud to listeners, for example, can be considered ‘oral’, because the listeners are assumed to be nonliterate, or it can be considered ‘literate’, because of the presence of a reader. Or, the practice can be dismissed as ‘oral residue’. In place of these limited options, and in order to explore the range of phenomena it has tended to obscure, I will lay out some of the modalities by which people have experienced and still do experience text.4 By ‘text’ I will mean here any formally arranged string of words, fitting within an accepted genre, whether or not writing was involved in its creation, storage, and presentation. I will mostly confine my survey, based on my own limited area of competence, to Western history until about 1500, but I hope it lays a useful foundation for the later influence of printing and electronic media.

We can begin by accepting that until the development of writing systems, all texts were composed in the author’s head, or by several authors working together; stored in memory; and performed orally. In those dim ancestral days, the system of extemporaneous composition by assembling oral formulae presumably developed. This system was identified by Milman Parry (1928) and Albert Lord (1960) among early twentieth-century Serbo-Croatian tavern-performers, and extrapolated by them back to the time of Homer (c. 850 BCE) and *Beowulf* (c. 800 CE). Finnegan has identified
a range of other possible oral modalities. For example, in some South Pacific cultures, poets will compose orally in the company of friends, who critique the work as it emerges, then undertake to memorize, rehearse, and perform it – thus achieving a fixed oral text. In some cases the poets will compose while floating in the ocean breakers, literally taking their meters from the rhythm of the waves (Finnegan 1988b).

Once writing was invented, texts that had previously existed only in some form of oral tradition could be written down, either directly by those who knew them, or by having a performer dictate them to a literate person; and new texts could be ‘born written’. Professional entertainers – previously restricted to oral modalities – now had the opportunity to memorize written texts for later, probably re-creative performance. The performers might be able to read the text themselves, and might indeed carry a copy as aide-mémoire; or they might memorize by having a literate person read the text to them or by listening carefully to another performer’s rendition. Some time later, they might record or dictate their personalized version of the text, which – as variant texts surviving in different manuscripts show – could have diverged considerably from their model. Actors, who had always needed to memorize their lines, presumably from coaching by someone who already knew them, now could have recourse as well to scrolls or books.

Writing also created more book-bound readers: those who read to themselves, privately and silently; who read aloud to themselves; who read aloud to one or more auditors; and/or who listened to someone else read to them. Meanwhile, the most educated men began their educations with rhetorical manuals whose last section was usually devoted to pronuntiatio, the formal presentation or recitation of Latin texts. University lectures consisted of the master reading the text aloud to his students, and preachers trained to deliver effective homilies. Orality and literacy thus intersected at every phase of textual encounter, from the most popular to the most elevated.

It is hard to pin these intersecting phenomena down to precise terminology, but as a working practice, I would call text produced, stored, and performed without any recourse to writing, ‘oral’; text performed from memorization of a written text, ‘memorial’; text read aloud to auditors, ‘aural’ or ‘public reading’; and text read privately, whether vocalized or not, ‘literate’ or ‘private reading’. The corresponding general terms would be ‘orality’, ‘memorality’, ‘aurality’, and ‘literacy’.

It is only in the category of literacy, as here defined, that one can easily and enduringly achieve the modern goal of the fixed text, considered necessary for the proper appreciation of the author’s achievements. The fluidity of oral, memorial, or aural texts was sometimes seen as a drawback in earlier times as well, by the guardians of sacred works or by certain ambitious authors. Guillaume de Machaut maintained a master copy of his works, the „livre ou je met [sic] toutes mes choses“ (Williams 1969), which he carefully maintained and updated. Geoffrey Chaucer prays in the epilogue to his Troilus and Criseyde (c. 1385) that „non myswrite the, / Ne the mysymetre for deaufte of tonge“ (no one copy you incorrectly / Nor distort your
meter by 'translating' you into another dialect; cf. Chaucer 1987: 5, 1795sq.). In a manuscript culture, texts were liable to accidental or deliberate alteration by scribes, a tendency that the medievalist Paul Zumthor has labeled mouvance (Zumthor 1972). Some works survive in such different versions that the only way now to fully represent the textual tradition is to print parallel texts, each from a different manuscript. Episodes of romances could be interpolated into other romances; even 'classics' such as the Roman de la Rose were freely cut or expanded (Huot 1993). It might have been a deplorable practice, from our current author-centered view; but the upside for medieval patrons and audiences was that they got texts redacted precisely to their own tastes, whether in dialect, complexity, or focus. If they liked Lancelot, they could have more Lancelot. If they disliked moralizing commentary in a romance, they could instruct their scribe to jump over that section when copying. The process should seem familiar in our time, when the Internet empowers anyone to seize and reshape text to their own purposes, regardless of authorial 'ownership'.

Probably the most popular and prevalent modality, after the introduction of writing, was aurality. This miscegenated category – so challenging, as we have seen, to the Great Divide theory – combines the prestige and authority of the written text with the performativity and audience-involvement of oral presentation. Scholars have tended to dismiss aurality as a 'transitional' phenomenon, assuming that it is a symptom of nonliteracy or book-scarcity. Yet in a way it combines the best of both worlds. The text remains – littera scripta manet – but as read aloud it is enhanced by the reader’s skills and the audience’s reactions. Between them, they would shape the text differently in every performance, favoring certain characters, skipping to different sections of the text, interrupting or enriching the reading with commentary and reminiscence. In this, aurality participates in the property folklorist Richard Bauman has called the „emergent quality of performance“, which „resides in the interplay between communicative resources, individual competence, and the goals of the participants, within the context of particular situations“ (Bauman 1977: 38). The experience is intensified by the presence of other auditors, and by the mix of senses – not just hearing but also sight, smell, and touch, perhaps even taste if there was food or drink – that rendered the experience rich and memorable.

Evidence can be assembled that tracks the practice of aurality consistently from ancient times through early to high to late medieval, on to the Renaissance and later times until, as noted, it appears in the form of our own audiobooks. In every context it can configure differently, and certainly in some cases illiteracy or scarcity of books played a part. However, in none or hardly any of its forms has aural reading been seen, by those who actually participated in it, as a make-do, less satisfactory form of textual encounter. Rather, it has been positively valued as a form of communal entertainment, education, and even propaganda, with well-understood criteria for successful performance on the part of the reader (or, to use a term I adopted to clarify the meaning of 'reader', the prelector).

In late medieval English texts, prelection is consistently classed among the „honest solaces“ enjoyed by the (literate, book-owning) upper classes (Coleman
1996: 130sq., 135sqq.). More formally, the French king Charles V „le Sage“ had his librarian, Gilles Malet, read Aristotle and other edifying texts to him and his court (ibid.: 117, 121). Malet was favored because he „souverainement bien lisoit et bel [bien] pontoit, et entendens homs estoit“ (Pizan 1936,2: 63). To „point“, in this context, means to place the emphases in the correct place while prelecting. Charles’ great-nephew Philippe le Bon, duke of Burgundy, used such readings as propaganda, to legitimize his territorial acquisitions, while Philippe’s son Charles le Téméraire, who sought to model himself after Julius Caesar, „moult voulentiers preste temps à oyr lire pour retenir les fais des anciens“ (Coleman 1996: 119sq., 123).

In their less official moments, the Anglo-Norman and French aristocracy enjoyed hearing romances and lyric poetry, whether read aloud or recited from memory. „Cunte, barun e chivaler“, says Denis Piramus, love dearly the lais of Marie de France,

E lire le funt, si unt delit,
E si les funt sovent reitre.
Les lais solent as dames pleire,
De joie les oient e de gré,
Qu’il sunt sulum lur volenté. (Piramus 1974: 42-48)

And they have them read, they take so much delight in them,
And have them often recited.
The lais are accustomed to please ladies,
They [the ladies] hear them joyfully and willingly,
Because they accord with their will.7

As humanism took over in the early Renaissance, Jacques Colin, François I’s lecteur du roi, read translations of Greek history to the king (Rothstein 2006: 737), while Elizabeth I of England read Demosthenes in the original with Roger Ascham (Coleman 1996: 144). Protestant diaries and Victorian novels include more domesticated scenes of evening readings at home, while the women sewed. Prelection continued to be regarded as a valued skill, not a regrettable necessity. In Walter Scott’s Guy Mannering (1829), Julia Mannering praises her father as „the best reader of poetry you ever heard. ... it is the reading of a gentleman, who produces effect by feeling, taste, and inflection of voice, not by action or mummery“. F. R. Leavis, in 1962, recalled with pleasure his father reading Dickens’ Dombey and Son to the family (Leavis 1962: 177). In 2014, a professor of anthropology at Stanford University reported that she likes to listen to audiobooks when she gardens, valuing the priority that it gives to audience over author: „The author becomes more transparent“, she notes; „the characters more real. Listening to Bring up the Bodies, I don’t think, what is the author, Hilary Mantel, up to? I feel the threat of death damp on my skin. And when I have listened to a book in a particular place – the ferns beneath the oak trees – I remember the book when I come back to that place, as if my hands in the soil were digging up the words“ (Luhrmann 2014).

It’s worth giving up a creation myth, perhaps, to create such memories.
—, The Muse Learns to Write: Reflections on Orality and Literacy from Antiquity to the Present, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1986.
Dossier


2 See chapter 6 for a discussion of anthropological Darwinism.
3 Author’s emphasis.
4 This overview is an abbreviated version of one provided in Coleman 1996: 34-51.
5 For a recent discussion of this concept, see Millett 2014.
6 Quotation from *Anciennes chroniques de Pise en Italie*, cited in Doutrepont 1909: 468.
7 Translated by Joyce Coleman.