

## Expanding Walter J. Ong's Relationist Spirit: A Bibliographic Review Article

Thomas J. Farrell

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Résumé de l'article

The pioneering media ecology theorist Walter J. Ong (1912-2003; Ph.D. in English, Harvard University, 1955) is a tough act to follow. Question: Are there perhaps ways in which media ecology theorists today can follow his example by further developing themes in his mature work from the early 1950s onward? I have selected five themes from Ong's 1982 book *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* in Methuen's *New Accents* book series for attention in my bibliographic review. I have appropriated the word relationist for use here from Ong's 1977 statement of what he himself styles as his relationist thesis about the history of the word in Western cultural history. In brief, I suggest through my categorized and briefly annotated bibliography how media ecology theorists today can develop certain themes in Ong's work by following what I am here styling as the relationist spirit that he himself followed in his mature work from the early 1950s onward.

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## Expanding Walter J. Ong's Relationist Spirit: A Bibliographic Review Article

Thomas J. Farrell

University of Minnesota Duluth.

[tfarrell@d.umn.edu](mailto:tfarrell@d.umn.edu)

**Abstract:** The pioneering media ecology theorist Walter J. Ong (1912-2003; Ph.D. in English, Harvard University, 1955) is a tough act to follow. Question: Are there perhaps ways in which media ecology theorists today can follow his example by further developing themes in his mature work from the early 1950s onward? I have selected five themes from Ong's 1982 book *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* in Methuen's New Accents book series for attention in my bibliographic review. I have appropriated the word relationist for use here from Ong's 1977 statement of what he himself styles as his relationist thesis about the history of the word in Western cultural history. In brief, I suggest through my categorized and briefly annotated bibliography how media ecology theorists today can develop certain themes in Ong's work by following what I am here styling as the relationist spirit that he himself followed in his mature work from the early 1950s onward.

The American Jesuit Renaissance specialist and pioneering media ecologist Walter J. Ong (1912-2003; Ph.D. in English, Harvard University, 1955) published his summative book *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* in Methuen's New Accents book series in 1982. It is his most widely read and his most widely translated book. It has been translated into eleven other languages.

Thomas M. Walsh has compiled a complete bibliography of Ong's 400 or so distinct publications (not counting translations and reprintings as distinct publications) in "Walter J. Ong, S.J.: A Bibliography 1929-2006" in *Language, Culture, and Identity: The Legacy of Walter J. Ong, S.J.*, edited by Sara van den Berg and Thomas M. Walsh (Hampton Press, 2011, pp. 185-245).

In my book *Walter Ong's Contributions to Cultural Studies: The Phenomenology of the Word and I-Thou Communication*, 2nd ed. (Hampton Press, 2015), I survey Ong's life and eleven of his books and selected articles. The first edition of my book in 2000 received the 2001 Marshall McLuhan Award for the Outstanding Book in the Field of Media Ecology from the Media Ecology Association.

Ong is generally acknowledged and honored as a pioneering media ecology theorist by members of the Media Ecology Association. Even so, the media ecology theorists Marshall McLuhan (1911-1980; Ph.D. in English, Cambridge University, 1943) and Neil Postman (1931-2003; Ph.D. in education, Columbia University, 1958)) tend to be mentioned more often by media ecology theorists today than Ong is. No doubt the reasons for this are many and complex. No doubt Ong is a tough act to follow. Nevertheless, my point in writing this article is to suggest that one way in which media ecology theorists today could follow Ong's example in their own work is by discussing one or more of the five themes in his work that I discuss here in what I style his relationist spirit. I myself have followed Ong's relationist spirit, to the best of my ability, in my own publications, including in the present bibliographic review in which I

highlight five themes in Ong's 1982 book *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word*. However, despite whatever merit my publications may have, I surely have not exhausted the possibilities of Ong's relationist spirit – which is my rationale for writing the present bibliographic review for the possible benefit of other media ecology theorists today.

In addition, I should note here Ong's own practice in compiling the "References" in his 1986 book *Hopkins, the Self, and God* (University of Toronto Press, 1986, pp. 161-172), the published version of Ong's 1981 Alexander Lectures at the University of Toronto. In it, Ong lists several books that he does not refer to in the text of his book – books that further develop his theme of the inward turn of consciousness.

Now, in Ong's frequently cited 1975 *PMLA* article "The Writer's Audience is Always a Fiction," he astutely discusses how various authors have constructed their fictional audiences. In the present bibliographic review, I assume that you have read Ong's 1982 book and that you might be interested in knowing where else in Ong's publications he also discusses each theme and that you also might be interested in knowing where else in works by other authors each theme is discussed – in most cases independently of any acknowledged influence by Ong. In any event, the five themes in Ong's 1982 book that I have selected for attention here are the following (with the relevant pages in Ong's 1982 book):

- (I) Visuality (pp. 117-123)
- (II) Orality (pp. 1-77)
- (III) Commonplaces and Composing Processes (pp. 108-112)
- (IV) Agonistic Structures (pp. 43-45 and 69-71)
- (V) The Inward Turn of Consciousness (pp. 178-179)

To be sure, Ong in his 1982 book also discusses certain other recurring themes in his thought, so the present bibliographic essay is somewhat selective in highlighting these five themes. Moreover, in his wide-ranging body of work, he discusses numerous other recurring themes (e.g., the Spanish Renaissance mystic St. Ignatius Loyola, S.J.; the French Jesuit paleontologist and spiritual writer Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, S.J.; the Victorian Jesuit poet Gerard Manley Hopkins, S.J.; the English Renaissance poet and pamphleteer John Milton; the American-born modernist poet and influential literary critic T. S. Eliot). But the five recurring themes that I have selected for the present bibliographic review are arguably the most important themes in Ong's work.

### **Theme I: Visuality (Ong, 1982, pp.117-123)**

- (1) Ong's *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue: From the Art of Discourse to the Art of Reason* (Harvard University Press, 1958). What Ong refers to in his massively researched 1958 book as the aural-to-visual shift in Western cultural history involves the shift from what he refers to in his 1969 essay as the shift from the world-as-event sense of life to the world as view sense of life (for specific page references to the aural-to-visual shift, see the "Index" [p. 396]).
- (2) Ong's *The Barbarian Within: And Other Fugitive Essays and Studies* (Macmillan, 1962). In it, Ong says the following: "In this historical perspective, medieval scholastic logic appears as a kind of pre-mathematics, a subtle and unwitting preparation for the large-scale operations in quantitative modes of thinking which will characterize the modern

world. In assessing the meaning of [medieval] scholasticism, one must keep in mind an important and astounding fact: in the whole history of the human mind, mathematics and mathematical physics come into their own, in a way which has changed the face of the earth and promises or threatens to change it even more, at only one place and time, that is, in Western Europe immediately after the [medieval] scholastic experience [in short, in print culture]. Elsewhere, no matter how advanced the culture on other scores, and even along mathematical lines, as in the case of the Babylonian, nothing like a real mathematical transformation of thinking takes place – not among the ancient Egyptians or Assyrians or Greeks or Romans, not among the peoples of India nor the Chinese nor the Japanese, not among the Aztecs or Mayas, not in Islam despite the promising beginnings there, any more than among the Tartars or the Avars or the Turks. These people can all now share the common scientific knowledge, but the scientific tradition itself which they share is not a merging of various parallel discoveries made by their various civilizations. **It represents a new state of mind.** However great contributions other civilizations may hereafter make to the tradition, our scientific world traces its origins back always to seventeenth and sixteenth century Europe [in short, to Copernicus and Galileo], to the place where for some three centuries and more the [medieval] arts course taught in universities and para-university schools had pounded into the heads of youth a study program consisting almost exclusively of a highly quantified logic and a companion physics, both taught on a scale and with an enthusiasm never approximated or even dreamt of in ancient academies” (p. 72; emphasis added). What Ong here refers to as “a new state of mind” undoubtedly contributed significantly to the development of modern science and of modern capitalism in the print culture that emerged in Europe after the Gutenberg printing press emerged there in the mid-1450s. Ong’s statement about “a new state of mind” is a key consideration in my 2008 article “The West versus the Rest: Getting Our Cultural Bearings from Walter J. Ong” in the journal *Explorations in Media Ecology*, 7.4, pp. 271-281.

- (3) Ong’s 1969 article “World as View and World as Event” in the journal *American Anthropologist*, 71.4, pp. 634-647. His 1969 article is reprinted in volume three of his *Faith and Contexts*, edited by Thomas J. Farrell and Paul A. Soukup (Scholars Press, 1995, pp. 69-90). But for further discussion of Ong’s expansive conceptualizations of the world-as-view sense of life and the world-as-event sense of life pertaining to the nine characteristics of orally based thought and expression that Ong operationally defines and explains in his 1982 book *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (pp. 36-68), see my 2012 article “Walter Ong and Harold Bloom Can Help Us Understand the Hebrew Bible” in the journal *Explorations in Media Ecology*, 11.3&4, pp. 255-272.
- (4) Ong’s 1970 essay “‘I See What You Say’: Sense Analogues for Intellect” as reprinted in his 1977 book *Interfaces of the Word: Studies in the Evolution of Consciousness and Culture* (Cornell University Press, pp. 122-144). It is also reprinted in volume three of his *Faith and Contexts*, edited by Thomas J. Farrell and Paul A. Soukup (Scholars Press, 1995, pp. 91-111).
- (5) Ong’s *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (Methuen, 1982, pp. 117-123).
- (6) My online essay “Walter J. Ong’s Philosophical Thought” (dated September 20, 2020) at opednews.com: [https://www.opednews.com/articles/Walter-J-Ong-s-Philosophi-by-Thomas-Farrell-Communication\\_Communications\\_Consciousness-200920-664.html](https://www.opednews.com/articles/Walter-J-Ong-s-Philosophi-by-Thomas-Farrell-Communication_Communications_Consciousness-200920-664.html)
- (7) Marshall McLuhan’s *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* (University of Toronto Press, 1962) – Ong advised us to read it with a grain of salt. Ong’s review of

- McLuhan's 1962 book is reprinted in *An Ong Reader: Challenges for Further Inquiry*, edited by Thomas J. Farrell and Paul A. Soukup (Hampton Press, 2002, pp. 307-308).
- (8) Donald L. Fixico's *The American Indian Mind in a Linear World: American Indian Studies and Traditional Knowledge* (Routledge, 2003). For all practical purposes, what Fixico refers to as a linear world involves what Ong (1969) refers to as the world-as-view sense of life, and what Fixico refers to as American Indian traditional knowledge involves what Ong (1969) refers to as the world-as-event sense of life.
  - (9) John DeFrancis' *Visible Speech: The Diverse Oneness of Writing Systems* (University of Hawaii Press, 1989).
  - (10) Camille Paglia's *Sexual Personae: Art and Decadence from Nefertiti to Emily Dickinson* (Yale University Press, 1990).
  - (11) Robert Hahn's *Anaximander and the Architects: The Contributions of Egyptian and Greek Architectural Technologies to the Origins of Greek Philosophy* (State University of New York Press, 2001).
  - (12) Raymond Adolph Prier's *Thauma Idesthai: Sight and Appearance in Archaic Greek* (Florida State University Press, 1989).
  - (13) Andrea Wilson Nightingale's *Spectacles of Truth in Classical Greek Philosophy: Theoria in Its Cultural Context* (Cambridge University Press, 2004).
  - (14) Bernard Lonergan's *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, 5th ed., edited by Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (University of Toronto Press, 1992).
  - (15) Jas Elsner's *Roman Eyes: Visuality & Subjectivity in Art & Text* (Princeton University Press, 2007).
  - (16) Marco Mostert's *A Bibliography of Works in Medieval Communication* (Brepols, 2012).
  - (17) Johannes Hoff's *The Analogical Turn: Rethinking Modernity with Nicholas of Cusa* (William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2013).
  - (18) David Michael Levin's *Modernity and the Hegemony of Vision* (University of California Press, 1999).
  - (19) Richard Yeo's *Encyclopaedic Visions: Scientific Dictionaries and Enlightenment Culture* (Cambridge University Press, 2001).
  - (20) Gary Shapiro's *Archaeologies of Vision: Foucault and Nietzsche on Seeing and Saying* (University of Chicago Press, 2003).
  - (21) Martin Jay's *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought* (University of California Press, 1993).
  - (22) James L. Kugel's *The Great Shift: Encountering God in Biblical Times* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017). What Kugel refers to in his 2017 book as the great shift in biblical times involves what Ong refers to in his massively researched 1958 book as the aural-to-visual shift in Western cultural history.
  - (23) Werner H. Kelber's *The Oral and the Written Gospel: The Hermeneutics of Speaking and Writing in the Synoptic Tradition, Mark, Paul, and Q* (Fortress Press, 1983).

## **Theme II: Orality (Ong, 1982, pp. 1-77)**

- (1) Ong's *The Presence of the Word: Some Prolegomena for Cultural and Religious History* (Yale University Press, 1967).
- (2) Ong's 1969 article "World as View and World as Event" in the journal *American Anthropologist*, 71.4, pp. 634-647. His 1969 article is reprinted in volume three of his *Faith and Contexts*, edited by Thomas J. Farrell and Paul A. Soukup (Scholars Press,

1995, pp. 69-90). But for further discussion of Ong's expansive conceptualizations of the world-as-view sense of life and the world-as-event sense of life pertaining to the nine characteristics of orally based thought and expression that Ong operationally defines and explains in his 1982 book *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (Methuen, pp. 36-57), see my 2012 article "Walter Ong and Harold Bloom Can Help Us Understand the Hebrew Bible" in the journal *Explorations in Media Ecology*, 11.3&4, pp. 255-272.

- (3) David M. Smith's 1997 essay "World as Event: Aspects of Chipewyan Ontology" as reprinted in the ambitious anthology *Of Ong and Media Ecology*, edited by Thomas J. Farrell and Paul A. Soukup (Hampton Press, 2012, pp. 117-141).
- (4) Ong's *Rhetoric, Romance, and Technology: Studies in the Interaction of Expression and Culture* (Cornell University Press, 1971). In Ong's 1971 book (pp. 10-11), he makes the following statement about Erich Neumann's Jungian account of the stages of consciousness in his 1954 book *The Origins and History of Consciousness*, translated by R. F. C. Hull (Pantheon Books): "The stages of psychic development as treated by Neumann are successively (1) the infantile undifferentiated self-contained whole symbolized by the uroboros (tail-eater), the serpent with its tail in its mouth, as well as be other circular or global mythological figures [including Nietzsche's imagery about the eternal return?], (2) the Great Mother (the impersonal womb from which each human infant, male or female, comes, the impersonal femininity which may swallow him [or her] up again), (3) the separation of the world parents (the principle of opposites, differentiation, possibility of change, (4) the birth of the hero (rise of masculinity and of the personalized ego) with its sequels in (5) the slaying of the mother (fight with the dragon: victory over primal creative but consuming femininity, chthonic forces), and (6) the slaying of the father (symbol of thwarting obstruction of individual achievement, [thwarting] what is new), (7) the freeing of the captive (liberation of the ego from endogamous [i.e., "married" within one's psyche] kinship libido and the emergence of the higher femininity, with woman now as person, anima-sister, related positively to ego consciousness), and finally (8) the transformation (new unity in self-conscious individualization, higher masculinity, expressed primordially in the Osiris myth but today entering new phases with heightened individualism [such as Nietzsche's overman] – or, more properly, personalism – of modern man [sic])." Ong also sums up Neumann's Jungian account of the stages of consciousness in his (Ong's) book *Fighting for Life: Contest, Sexuality, and Consciousness* (Cornell University Press, 1981, pp. 18-19; but also see the "Index" for further references to Neumann [p. 228]), the published version of Ong's 1979 Messenger Lectures at Cornell University. In addition, Ong discusses Erik H. Erikson's Freudian account of the eight stages of psycho-sexual development in his beautiful 1967 seminal book *The Presence of the Word: Some Prolegomena for cultural and religious History* (Yale University Press, pp. 104-105). Taking hints from Ong, I discuss both Neumann's Jungian account and Erikson's Freudian account of ego consciousness in my 1991 essay "Secondary Orality and Consciousness Today" in the 1991 essay collection *Media, Consciousness, and Culture: Explorations of Walter Ong's Thought*, edited by Bruce E. Gronbeck, Thomas J. Farrell and Paul A. Soukup (Sage Publications, pp. 194-209).
- (5) Ong's *Interfaces of the Word: Studies in the Evolution of Consciousness and Culture* (Cornell University Press, 1977). In Ong's "Preface" to his 1977 (pp. 9-13), he says the following in the first sentence: "The present volume carries forward work in two earlier volumes by the same author, *The Presence of the Word* (1967) and *Rhetoric, Romance, and Technology* (1971)." He then discusses these two earlier volumes. Then he says, "The thesis of these two earlier works is sweeping, but it is not reductionist, as

reviewers and commentators, so far as I know, have all generously recognized: the works do not maintain that the evolution from primary orality through writing and print to an electronic culture, which produces secondary orality, causes or explain everything in human culture and consciousness. Rather, the thesis is relationist: major developments, and very likely even all major developments, in culture and consciousness are related, often in unexpected intimacy, to the evolution of the word from primary orality to its present state. But the relationships are varied and complex, with cause and effect often difficult to distinguish” (pp. 9-10). Thus, Ong himself claims (1) that his thesis is “sweeping” but (2) that the shifts do not “cause or explain everything in human culture and consciousness” and (3) that the shifts are related to “major developments, and very likely even all major developments, in culture and consciousness.” Major cultural developments include the rise of modern science, the rise of modern capitalism, the rise of representative democracy, the rise of the Industrial Revolution, and the rise of the Romantic Movement in philosophy, literature, and the arts. For all practical purposes, Ong implicitly works with this thesis in his massively researched 1958 book *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue: From the Art of Discourse to the Art of Reason* (Harvard University Press) – his major exploration of the influence of the Gutenberg printing press that emerged in the mid-1450s. Taking a hint from Ong’s massively researched 1958 book, Marshall McLuhan worked up some examples of his own in his sweeping 1962 book *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* (University of Toronto Press). Next in Ong’s 1977 “Preface,” he explains certain lines of investigation that he further develops in *Interfaces of the Word*. Then he says, “At a few points, I refer in passing to the work of French and other European structuralists – variously psychoanalytic, phenomenological, linguistic, or anthropological in cast” (p. 10). Ong liked to characterize his own thought as phenomenological and personalist in cast. However, Ong is not everybody’s cup of tea, figuratively speaking. Consider, for example, Ong’s own modesty in the subtitle of his 1967 book *The Presence of the Word: Some Prolegomena for Cultural and Religious History* (Yale University Press), the expanded published version of Ong’s 1964 Terry Lectures at Yale University. His wording “Some Prolegomena” clearly acknowledges that he does not explicitly claim that his thesis as he formulated it in his 1977 “Preface” does “explain everything in human culture and consciousness” – or every cause -- but that the shifts he points out are “sweeping.” Now, please note just how careful and cagey Ong’s wording is when he says that his account of the evolution of certain changes does not “explain everything in human culture and consciousness” – or every cause. On the one hand, Ong’s terminology about primary oral culture (and primary orality, for short; and his earlier terminology about primarily oral culture) is sweeping inasmuch as it refers to all of our pre-historic human ancestors. On the other hand, his cagey remark about sorting out cause and effect does not automatically rule out the possibility that certain changes somehow contributed to the eventual historical development of writing systems and specifically phonetic alphabetic writing (= literacy) as well as to the historical development of human settlement in agriculture (or agrarian) societies and economies. Finally, as a thought experiment, consider what you would have to say to directly contradict Ong’s thesis: “NO, major developments, and very likely even all major developments, in culture and consciousness are NOT related, NOT often in unexpected intimacy, to the evolution of the word from primary orality to its present state. NO, the relationships are NOT varied and complex, with cause and effect often difficult to

distinguish.” But how many people are prepared to embrace such a counter-thesis? Are you?

- (6) Ong’s *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (Methuen, 1982, pp. 1-77).
- (7) H. M. Chadwick and Nora K. Chadwick’s *The Growth of Literature [Out of Oral Tradition]*, 3 vols. (Cambridge University Press, 1932, 1936, and 1940). A classic.
- (8) Milman Parry’s *The Making of Homeric Verse: The Collected Papers of Milman Parry*, edited by Adam Parry (Oxford University Press, 1971).
- (9) Albert B. Lord’s *The Singer of Tales* (Harvard University Press, 1960). Ong’s review of Lord’s 1960 book is reprinted in *An Ong Reader: Challenges for Further Inquiry*, edited by Thomas J. Farrell and Paul A. Soukup (Hampton Press, 2002, pp. 301-306).
- (10) Eric A. Havelock’s *Preface to Plato* (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1963). Ong’s review of Havelock’s 1963 book is reprinted in *An Ong Reader: Challenges for Further Inquiry*, edited by Thomas J. Farrell and Paul A. Soukup (Hampton Press, 2002, pp. 309-312).
- (11) Marshall McLuhan’s *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* (University of Toronto Press, 1962).
- (12) Mircea Eliade’s *The Myth of the Eternal Return*, translated from the French by Willard Trask (Pantheon Books, 1954; orig. French ed., 1949). A classic.
- (13) Donald L. Fixico’s *The American Indian Mind in a Linear World: American Indian Studies and Traditional Knowledge* (Routledge, 2003). For all practical purposes, what Fixico refers to as American Indian tradition knowledge involves what Ong (1969) refers to as the world-as-event sense of life, and what Fixico refers to as the linear world involves what Ong (1969) refers to as the world-as-view sense of life.
- (14) David Abram’s *The Spell of the Sensuous: Perception and Language in a More-Than-Human World* (Random House, 1996).
- (15) John Miles Foley’s *Teaching Oral Traditions* (Modern Language Association, 1998).
- (16) Jeffrey Walker’s *Rhetoric and Poetic in Antiquity* (Oxford University Press, 2000).
- (17) Mark W. Edwards’ *Sound, Sense, and Rhythm: Listening to Greek and Latin Poetry* (Princeton University Press, 2002).
- (18) David Robey’s *Sound and Structure in the Divine Comedy* (Oxford University Press, 2000).
- (19) Adam Fox’s *Oral and Literate Culture in England 1500-1700* (Clarendon Press/ Oxford University Press, 2000).
- (20) Bruce R. Smith’s *The Acoustic World of Early Modern England: Attending to the O-Factor [of the O-Shape of the Globe Theater in 1599]* (University of Chicago Press, 1999).
- (21) James I. Wimsatt’s *Hopkins’s Poetics of Speech Sound: Sprung Rhythm, Lettering, Inscapes* (University of Toronto Press, 2006).
- (22) Gerd Hurm’s *Rewriting the Vernacular Mark Twain: The Aesthetics and Politics of Orality in Samuel Clemens’s Fiction* (WVT Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 2003).
- (23) Willi Erzgraber’s *James Joyce: Oral and Written Discourse as Mirrored in Experimental Narrative Art*, translated by Amy Cole (Peter Lang, 2002).
- (24) James L. Kugel’s *The Great Shift: Encountering God in Biblical Times* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017). What Kugel refers to in his 2017 book as the great shift in biblical times involves what Ong refers to in his massively researched 1958 book as the aural-to-visual shift in Western cultural history.
- (25) Werner H. Kelber’s *The Oral and the Written Gospel: The Hermeneutics of Speaking and Writing in the Synoptic Tradition, Mark, Paul, and Q* (Fortress Press, 1983).

### **Theme III: Commonplaces and Composing Processes (Ong, 1982, pp. 108-112)**



- (1) Ong's *The Presence of the Word: Some Prolegomena for Cultural and Religious History* (Yale University Press, 1967). Ong discusses two kinds of commonplaces: analytic commonplaces and cumulative commonplaces. This is Ong's most extensive discussion of the commonplaces and composing processes (for specific pages references to commonplaces, see the "Index" [p. 347]).
- (2) Ong's *The Barbarian Within: And Other Fugitive Essays and Studies* (Macmillan, 1962).
- (3) Ong's *Rhetoric, Romance, and Technology: Studies in the Interaction of Expression and Culture* (Cornell University Press, 1971).
- (4) Ong's *Interfaces of the Word: Studies in the Evolution of Consciousness and Culture* (Cornell University Press, 1977).
- (5) Ong's *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (Methuen, 1982, pp. 108-112).
- (6) T. W. Baldwin's *William Shakspeare's Small Latine & Lesse Greeke*, 2 vols. (University of Illinois Press, 1944). A classic.
- (7) E. R. Curtius' *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, translated from the German by Willard R. Trask (Pantheon Books, 1953; orig. German ed., 1948). A classic.
- (8) Albert B. Lord's *The Singer of Tales* (Harvard University Press, 1960). What Lord refers to as formulas and formulaic elements are analogous to what Ong refers to as cumulative commonplaces, and what Lord refers to as themes in narrative storytelling are analogous to what Ong refers to as analytic commonplaces.
- (9) Wolfgang Mieder's *International Bibliography of Paremiology and Phraseology*, 2 vols. (Walter de Gruyter, 2009). The proverbs studied by Mieder and other proverb scholars are examples of what Ong refers to as cumulative commonplaces.
- (10) Mortimer J. Adler's *Syntopicon, Great Books of the Western World*, 2nd ed., Vols. 1 and 2 (Encyclopedia Britannica, 1990). The so-called "topics" that Adler identifies in the *Syntopicon* are examples of what Ong refers to as analytic commonplaces.
- (11) John Miles Foley's *Homer's Traditional Art* (Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999).  
Balanced and judicious, in my estimate.
- (12) Dennis R. MacDonald's *The Homeric Epics and the Gospel of Mark* (Yale University Press, 2000).
- (13) MacDonald's *Does the New Testament Imitate Homer?: Four Cases from Acts of the Apostles* (Yale University Press, 2003).
- (14) MacDonald's *The Gospels and Homer: Imitations of Greek Epic in Mark and Luke-Acts* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2015).
- (15) MacDonald's *Luke and Vergil: Imitations of Classical Greek Literature* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2015).
- (16) MacDonald's *The Dionysian Gospel: The Fourth Gospel and Euripides* (Fortress Press, 2017).
- (17) Keith D. Miller's *Voice of Deliverance: The Language of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Its Sources* (Free Press, 1992).
- (18) Miller's *Martin Luther King's Biblical Epic: His Final, Great Speech* (University Press of Mississippi, 2012).
- (19) Mieder's "*Making a Way Out of No Way*": *Martin Luther King's Sermonic Proverbial Rhetoric* (Peter Lang, 2010).
- (20) Harvey Cox's *The Market as God* (Harvard University Press, 2016).
- (21) Heinrich Plett's 1999 article "Rhetoric and Intertextuality" in the journal *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric*, 17, pp. 313-329. The author argues, correctly in my estimate, that the use of what are known in rhetorical studies as commonplaces

produces what is known in literary studies today as intertextuality.

#### **Theme IV: Agonistic Structures (Ong, 1982, pp. 43-45 and 69-71)**

- (1) Ong's *Fighting for Life: Contest, Sexuality, and Consciousness* (Cornell University Press, 1981). This is Ong's most focused discussion of agonistic structures.
- (2) Ong's 1982 essay "The Agonistic Base of Scientifically Abstract Thought: Issues in *Fighting for Life: Contest, Sexuality, and Consciousness*" as reprinted in *An Ong Reader: Challenges for Further Inquiry*, edited by Thomas J. Farrell and Paul A. Soukup (Hampton Press, 2002, pp. 479-495). Two other selections reprinted in *An Ong Reader* are related to his recurring theme of agonistic structures (pp. 277-300 [1962], and 345-348 [1967]).
- (3) Ong's other 1982 essay reprinted as "Introduction to Milton's *Logic*" in volume four of Ong's *Faith and Context*, edited by Thomas J. Farrell and Paul A. Soukup (Scholars Press, 1999, pp. 111-142).
- (4) Ong's *The Presence of the Word: Some Prolegomena for Cultural and Religious History* (Yale University Press, 1967).
- (5) Ong's *Rhetoric, Romance, and Technology: Studies in the Interaction of Expression and Culture* (Cornell University Press, 1971).
- (6) Ong's *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (Methuen, 1982, pp. 43-45 and 69-71).
- (7) Johan Huizinga's *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-Element in Culture*, translated from the 1944 German edition, but without identifying the translator (Routledge, 1949). A classic.
- (8) Erich Neumann's *The Origins and History of Consciousness*, translated from the German by R. F. C. Hull (Pantheon Books, 1954).
- (9) G. E. R. Lloyd's *Polarity and Analogy: Two Types of Argumentation in Early Greek Thought* (Cambridge University Press, 1966).
- (10) Ward Parks' *Verbal Dueling in Heroic Narrative: The Homeric and Old English Tradition* (Princeton University Press, 1990).
- (11) Douglas L. Cairns' *Aidos: The Psychology and Ethic of Honour and Shame in Ancient Greek Literature* (Clarendon Press, 1993).
- (12) Philip Carl Salzman's *Culture and Conflict in the Middle East* (Humanity Books/Prometheus Books, 2008).
- (13) Jacob Burckhardt's *The Greeks and Greek Civilization*, translated from the German by Sheila Stern; edited by Oswyn Murray (St. Martin's Press, 1998).
- (14) C. M. Bowra's *Heroic Poetry* (Macmillan, 1952).
- (15) Ulrich Broich's *The Eighteenth-Century Mock-Heroic Poem*, translated from the German by David Henry Wilson (Cambridge University Press, 1990).
- (16) Barbara Koziak's *Retrieving Political Emotion: Thumos, Aristotle, and Gender* (Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000).
- (17) Mark D. Morelli's essay "Reversing the Counter-Position: The *Argumentum ad Hominem* in Philosophical Dialogue" in the annual periodical edited by Fred Lawrence of Boston College, the *Loneragan Workshop* 6 (Atlanta: 1986): pp. 195-230. In Aristotle's hierarchy of values, philosophical dialogue was more prestigious than public debate involving civic rhetoric. In civic rhetoric, Aristotle sees the use of *ethos* as one appeal (along with *logos* and *pathos*). Because Aristotle has no objection to the use of the *argumentum ad hominem* in philosophical dialogue, one assumes that he would have no problem with it in civic rhetoric.
- (18) William M. A. Grimaldi's essay "The Auditors' Role in Aristotelian Rhetoric" in *Oral and*

*Written Communication: Historical Approaches*, edited by Richard Leo Enos (Sage Publications, 1990, pp. 65-81).

- (19) Ong's *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue: From the Art of Discourse to the Art of Reason* (Harvard University Press, 1958). Basically, the Art of Discourse is agonistic and dialogical in spirit because it involves explicitly addressing real or imagined adversaries or adversarial positions. By contrast, the Art of Reason is basically not explicitly dialogical but monological in spirit because it does not involve explicitly advertent to real or imagined adversaries or adversarial positions, concentrating instead on presenting the author's own line of thought.
- (20) Thomas O. Sloane's *On the Contrary: The Protocol of Traditional Rhetoric* (Catholic University of America Press, 1997).
- (21) Mark S. Smith's *Poetic Heroes: Literary Commemorations of Warriors and Warrior Culture in the Early Biblical World* (William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2014).
- (22) Debra Scoggins Ballentine's *The Conflict Myth and the Biblical Tradition* (Oxford University Press, 2015).
- (23) Neil Forsyth's *The Old Enemy: Satan and the Combat Myth* (Princeton University Press, 1987).
- (24) St. Ignatius Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises*, translated with a commentary by George E. Ganss (Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1992).
- (25) Philip Gleason's *Contending with Modernity: [American] Catholic Higher Education in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford University Press, 1995).
- (26) Harold Bloom's *Agon: Towards a Theory of Revisionism* (Oxford University Press, 1982).
- (27) Pope Francis' short 135-page 2013 book *In Him Alone Is Our Hope: Spiritual Exercises Given [by then-Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio] to His Brother Bishops [of Spain] in the Manner of Saint Ignatius of Loyola*, edited by Romain Lize; translated by Vincent Capuano, S.J., and Andrew Matt (Magnificat).
- (28) Michel Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh*, translated by Robert Hurley; edited and with a "Foreword" by Frederic Gros (Pantheon Books, 2021). Foucault discusses the theme of interior spiritual combat.
- (29) Werner H. Kelber's *The Oral and the Written Gospel: The Hermeneutics of Speaking and Writing in the Synoptic Tradition, Mark, Paul, and Q* (Fortress Press, 1983).

### **Theme V: The Inward Turn of Consciousness (Ong, 1982, pp. 178-179)**

- (1) Ong's *Hopkins, the Self, and God* (University of Toronto Press, 1986).
- (2) *Frontiers in American Catholicism: Essays on Ideology and Culture* (Macmillan, 1957).
- (3) Ong's *The Barbarian Within: And Other Fugitive Essays and Studies* (Macmillan, 1962).
- (4) Ong's *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (Methuen, 1982, pp. 178-179).
- (5) St. Ignatius Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises*, translated with a commentary by George E. Ganss (Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1992).
- (6) Pierre Teilhard de Chardin's *The Divine Milieu*, translated by Sion Cowell (Sussex Academic Press, 2004).
- (7) David Riesman's *The Lonely Crowd: A Study of the Changing American Character* (Yale University Press, 1950).
- (8) Bernard Williams' *Shame and Necessity* (University of California Press, 1993).
- (9) Erich Fromm's *You Shall Be As Gods: A Radical Interpretation of the Old Testament and Its Tradition* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966).

- (10) M. David Litwa's *Becoming Divine: An Introduction to Deification in Western Culture* (Cascade Books/ Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2013).
- (11) Litwa's *Desiring Divinity: Self-deification in Early Jewish and Christian Mythmaking* (Oxford University Press, 2016).
- (12) Litwa's *The Early Christian Depiction of Jesus as a Mediterranean God* (Fortress Press, 2014).
- (13) Litwa's *We Are Being Transformed: Deification in Paul's Soteriology* (Walter de Gruyter, 2012).
- (14) Norman Russell's *The Doctrine of Deification in the Greek Patristic Tradition* (Oxford University Press, 2004).
- (15) Philip Cary's *Augustine's Invention of the Inner Self: The Legacy of a Christian Platonist* (Oxford University Press, 2000).
- (16) Ineke van 't Spijker's *Fictions of the Inner Life: Religious Literature and Formation of the Self in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Brepols, 2004).
- (17) A. N. Williams' *The Ground of Union: Deification in Aquinas and Palamas* (Oxford University Press, 1999).
- (18) Bernhard Blankenhorn's *The Mystery of Union with God: Dionysian Mysticism in Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas* (Catholic University of America Press, 2015).
- (19) Daria Spezzano's *The Glory of God's Grace: Deification According to St. Thomas Aquinas* (Sapientia Press of Ave Maria University, 2015; distributed by Catholic University of America Press).
- (20) Denis Renevy's *Language, Self and Love: Hermeneutics in the Writings of Richard Rolle and the Commentaries on the Song of Songs* (University of Wales Press, 2001).
- (21) Anthony Low's *Aspects of Subjectivity: Society and Individuality from the Middle Ages to Shakespeare and Milton* (Duquesne University Press, 2003).
- (22) Harold Bloom's *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human* (Riverhead Books/ Penguin Putnam, 1998).
- (23) Katharine Eisaman Maus' *Inwardness and Theater in the English Renaissance* (University of Chicago Press, 1995).
- (24) Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse's *The Imaginary Puritan: Literature, Intellectual Labor, and the Origins of Personal Life* (University of California Press, 1992).
- (25) Dror Wahrman's *The Making of the Modern Self: Identity and Culture in Eighteenth-Century England* (Yale University Press, 2004).
- (26) Larry Siedentop's *Inventing the Individual: The Origins of Western Liberalism* (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2014).
- (27) Michel Foucault's *Confessions of the Flesh: The History of Sexuality: Volume 4*, translated from the French by Robert Hurley; edited and with a "Foreword" by Frederic Gros (Pantheon Books, 2021). What Foucault refers to as technologies of the self in ancient Western philosophy and in ancient Western Christianity involve what Ong refers to as the inward turn of consciousness – which Ong associates with the historical development of phonetic alphabetic literacy not only in the emergence of Western philosophy as exemplified in Plato and Aristotle, but also in the emergence of the residually oral texts in the anthology of texts known as the Hebrew Bible. Ah, but what about the ancient competing texts that did not make the cut and become accepted as part of the canonical texts of the Hebrew Bible? Similarly, what about the later ancient competing texts that did not make the cut and become accepted as the canonical texts of the New Testament? In both historical cases, the process involved in winnowing out the texts that were not accepted involved the process of discernment of spirits expressed in each candidate text. Foucault discusses the process of discernment of

spirits in detail in connection with the practice of the examination of conscience/consciousness and the parallel practice of spiritual direction in ancient Western monasticism (esp. pp. 87-110). But if the process that Ong refers to as the inward turn of consciousness was indeed involved with the development of phonetic alphabetic literacy not only in ancient Greek culture but also in ancient Hebrew culture, what then should we say about the even more pronounced inward turn of consciousness in the West after the Gutenberg printing press emerged in the mid-1450s? Clearly Ong's terminology about the inward turn of consciousness is elastic and protean. In Chloe Taylor's book *The Routledge Guidebook to Foucault's The History of Sexuality* (Routledge, 2017), Professor Taylor says "*Confessions of the Flesh* is mentioned in the introduction to volume 2 as a forthcoming work, but like the volume on sexual ethics in the sixteenth century [a draft of which Foucault claimed was completed] it has never been published [until 2018 in French and in 2021 in English]" (p. 209). Volume 2 of *The History of Sexuality* is titled *The Use of Pleasure*, translated from the French by Robert Hurley (Pantheon Books, 1985); it comes equipped with an "Index" (pp. 281-293), as do volumes 1 and 3; but volume 4 does not have an "Index." In any event, the practice of confession in the context of ancient Western monasticism undoubtedly influenced the larger Western Christian practice of confession. In volume 4, Foucault hints that the theoretical framework of "the sexual ethic of [ancient] Western Christianity" "will be the starting point for the next study" in *The History of Sexuality* series, a next study that Foucault did not live to draft. In addition, in Volume 4, after Foucault discusses Saint Augustine, the bishop of Hippo, at length, Foucault also hints with the words "as we'll see" (p. 284) as to what he plans to cover in subsequent volumes of *The History of Sexuality*, implying that he plans at least one further volume about medieval Western Christianity before and leading University Press to the volume of sexual ethics in the sixteenth century that he claimed he had already drafted – which would coincide temporally with the Renaissance. But your guess is as good as mine as to whether Foucault's draft of sexual ethics in the sixteenth century will ever be published.

In conclusion, as I have said above, the five themes in Ong's work that I have selected for attention in the present bibliographic review do not exhaust all of the themes that can be found in Ong's 400 or so distinct publications. However, these five themes are important themes in his work. One reason his work is important is the sheer scope of the themes he discusses. Figuratively speaking, his work offers us a panoramic Mount Olympus view of our Western cultural history.