from oral kerygma to the written Gospel is not a linear movement, but involves a transformation of thought and consciousness. Ong discusses the relationship between the Bible and tradition and the Church as an oral-chirographic interpretative community. His conclusion is that "It is not merely that the biblical text is preceded by oral tradition, which the text simply sets down, but that ... the biblical text itself comes into being as an interpretation of what went before, the definitive written ecclesiastical hermeneutic of an original oral kerygma." The collection closes with a useful selected bibliography of epic studies by John M. Foley.

The studies in this collection answer, each in its way, the question of the importance of the oral traditional roots of some significant literary and religious documents of Western civilization. They all are on a high scholarly level. Their authors have successfully fulfilled their task—to recapture essential meaning from contexts lost for centuries or even millennia.

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This record of a three-day conference on "Literature and History," which was sponsored by the Russian Literature Program of the University of Pennsylvania and held in Philadelphia in the spring of 1983, presents eleven articles dealing with a great variety of the "extratextual" relations of literary works. The comparative and interdisciplinary mix of contributors and commentators—eight Slavists (two historians) and five English experts—reflects the "strategy . . . to foster a dialogue between American theory and the experience of Russian literature" (p. 15). The editor suggests, moreover, that the five articles on Russian literature "intimate both a radically revisionary history of Russian literature and a new approach to the history of any literature" (p. 30). Equipped with introduction, commentary, and epilogue, the essays are gathered under three headings: (1) Literary Institutions (2) Controlling the Play of Meanings (3) Narrative and the Shape of Events. Most prominent among the numerous references are ideas of Hegel, Freud, Russian Formalism, Bakhtin, and Derrida.

Part One opens with a case study by Stanley Fish (Duke) regarding the historical relativity of institutional (scholarly) criticism ("Paradise Lost, 1942-1982"). In a stimulating tour of modern schools of criticism Fish shows how assumption shapes judgment and concludes that re-evaluations are "necessary self-expressions" of changing times (i.e., the critic as medium of Zeitgeist); this extreme determinism was duly challenged. Next, William Mills Todd (Stanford) in "Institutions of Literature . . ." sketches the emergence of writing as a profession in early nineteenth-century Russia. Patronage, literary circles, publishers, periodicals, royalties, types of literature and audiences all enter Todd's excellent account. Third, the well-documented "Popular Philistinism and the Course of Russian Modernism" by Jeffrey Brooks (Chicago) reveals an unsuspected continuity between Soviet institutional anti-Modernism and the prerevolutionary opposition to the literary avant-garde (especially Symbolism) on
the part of the younger intelligentsia. Last, Donald Fanger (Harvard) looks at the "Case of Tertz/Sinyavsky" and explains why the work of this writer alternates paradoxically between the artistic imperative of creative freedom and the ethical imperative which traditionally dominated Russian literature.

Part Two brings arguments for and against absolute relativism of interpretation. Arkady Plotnitsky (Pennsylvania) calls for a "theoretical revolution" and musters Nietzsche, Freud, Bataille, and Derrida in order to end the alleged sway of Hegelianism over much current theory and interpretation. His proposed "multiple and heterogeneous histories" of the "The Historical Unconscious" (title) provoked rebuttal. Also intrigued by Derrida, but more critical, Michael Holquist (Indiana) discovers a familiar archetype in the French thinker (the "stoic comedian," Bakhtin's subversive "clown") and then uses Bakhtin's idea of the "social self" to tether highflying "deconstructionism" to the ground of social reality ("The Surd Heard: Bakhtin and Derrida"). In contrast to the uneasy quest for the "historical unconscious," Morse Peckham (South Carolina) approaches literature from a "general theory of interpretation." He treats literary works as "documents" whose field of meaning can be circumscribed ("controlled") by modeling their "situation" with recourse to cultural history and biography. Peckham believes that the "redundancy" typical of cultural systems can be used to confirm the validity of such models and thus counterveil the "interpretive uncertainty" stemming from variables of the multiple "semiotic transformations" which constitute all texts.

Part Three begins with "History and Anachronism," a survey of the perception of history in works from Homer to the present. Defining anachronism as a "clash of period styles or mentalities," Thomas M. Greene (Yale) develops a typology of attitudes ("naive," "abusive," and so on) and then discusses "pathetic/tragic" anachronism as the "perennial drama of all complex cultures." Robert Belknap (Columbia) returns to the tradition of Aristotelean poetics as extended by Russian Formalism. Convinced of the heuristic value of plot analysis, Belknap proceeds to end the confused use of fabula and siuzhet by distinguishing between "reader's plot" and "characters' plot" and also between two kinds of "incidents" ("The Minimal Unit of Plot"). The welcome conceptual clarity still awaits an equally satisfying extension to terminology. In "Political History and Literary Chronotope . . .," Katerina Clark (Indiana) corrects Western claims as to the demise of "Socialist Realism." Characterizing Socialist Realism in terms of Bakhtin's "chronotope" (symbol of a given ideologital unity of time and space), Clark links Soviet doctrinal teleology with prerevolutionary Symbolist—Social Democrat affinities (an interesting counterpoint to Brooks' paper). The last article, "Metaphors of History in War and Peace and Doctor Zhivago," is by Elliott Mossman (Pennsylvania) who contrasts Tolstoi's mechanistic with Pasternak's organic images of history and explores Pasternak's ironic exploitation of these divergent conceptions. Mossman's essay (which ends with fine homage to Darwin) implies the addition of a "philosophical" category to Greene's typology of "anachronisms."

Most of these articles make notable contributions to the discipline. Gary Saul Morson (Northwestern) has provided a comprehensive introduction which outlines the current "post-Structuralist" situation of literary criticism. There is essential background regarding Russian Formalism, the Bakhtin circle, Structuralism, American literary theory, and the extraordinary role of literature in Russian culture. Morson's editorial commentary adds vital dimension.