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SUMMARIES

McLuhan's literacy theory

The point of contact with E. Havelock

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McLuhan (1911~1980) had studied under Ivor A. Richards and Frank R. Leavis, been influenced by New criticism, written his doctoral dissertation on Thomas Nashe and the verbal arts at Cambridge in 1942, and started his academic career as a scholar of English literature in the 1940s. To be a media guru in 1960s it was necessary for Marshall to encounter several other geniuses.

First, this paper points out a unique literacy theory in his main works, *The Gutenberg Galaxy* (1962) and *Understanding Media* (1964). It then inquires into its uniqueness in a comparison with ideas at that time (e.g. Shannon and Weaver's information theory and Mumford's stage theory of civilization), and preceding literacy theories (e.g. Milman Parry and his assistant Albert Lord's oral formulaic hypothesis). This inquiry explains the major influence of Eric A. Havelock (1903~1988).

Havelock, British classicist, had moved on to Victoria College at the University of Toronto in 1929 and published his controversial work *Preface to Plato* in 1963, in which he took notice of Plato's much debated rejection of poetry in the Republic and claimed the division between Plato and early Greek philosophy.

Even though he was a senior of the so-called Toronto School of Communication and had a strong influence on McLuhan, less attention has been given to him. This paper elucidates the point of contact between McLuhan and Havelock, supplying clues for studies of the formative period of McLuhan's media theory.