

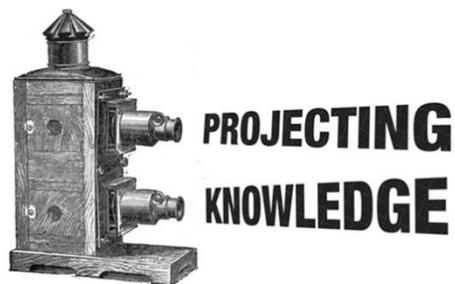


**Universiteit Utrecht**

*working papers #2*

on lantern readings  
or “the speech expected of certain members of society  
whenever they open their mouths.”  
(Green Open Access version)

*Nico de Klerk, October 2020*



THE NETHERLANDS 1880-1940

## Preface

The series of *Working papers* is meant to explore areas of interest to the research project *Projecting knowledge—the magic lantern as a tool for mediated science communication in the Netherlands, 1880-1940*. Documents and literature are reported and discussed, and ideas are elaborated; as well pointers to further materials for research may be suggested that fall outside the immediate remit of this project, most particularly undigitized business papers in foreign archives. The difference with other publications is that the *Working papers* do not have a shape or a length tailored to suit the conventions of scientific books or journals. Nonetheless, we think our findings, reflections or suggestions may be of interest to those working in the emergent field of lantern studies and connected topics.

This work is part of the research program *Projecting knowledge—the magic lantern as a tool for mediated science communication in the Netherlands, 1880-1940*, at Utrecht University, project number VC.GW17.079/6214. The project is funded by the Dutch Research Council, or NWO in its Dutch-language acronym.<sup>1</sup>

*For this paper I profoundly thank the Documentation Dpt. of the Musée nationale de l'Éducation, Rouen, for providing me with the seminal document Le fonds de vues sur verre du Musée pédagogique. Premier inventaire des "notices explicatives" (1978). Many thanks as well to emeritus professor Martyn Lyons, for pointing me to literature on French book -, publishing -, and library history to understand the emergence and function of lantern readings in turn-of-the-century public illustrated lectures in France, and to Richard Crangle, for elucidating some of the practices of British lantern reading publishers and for reading and commenting on a draft of this essay. Many thanks as well to the project team for reading and commenting on a draft: Frank Kessler, Jamilla Notebaard, and Dulce da Rocha Gonçalves.*

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<sup>1</sup> See: <https://www.nwo.nl/en/about-nwo>.

## Introduction

This working paper discusses the topic of lantern readings, the printed brochures that were meant to support non-professional lantern lecturers in their performance. In line with the scope of our research project I will limit this paper to public, educational lectures.

Compared to photographic and lantern projection technologies, equipment or slides, to date studies of lantern culture have paid scant attention to lantern readings and their delivery, still less to the public illustrated lecture as an interactive event. This essay is an attempt to put some weight on the other side of the scales.

As a scripted aide-mémoire the lantern reading was the basis of a sustained, predominantly non-character, direct address. An essential part of the public lantern lecture, it preceded, accompanied, and/or followed a sequence of projected slides that would otherwise have remained indeterminate, if not puzzling. For such a performance to go over well, however, the mere creation of coherence and continuity would have been insufficient. Its success also rested on a dispositif that established a simultaneous, mutual acknowledgment of lecturer and audience. Besides formal arrangements this meant that ritual—in a sociological, interactive sense—came into play. However, by definition situated aspects, both linguistic and non-linguistic, left few traces in these printed brochures. As I will discuss in the final part of this paper, this is one of the major challenges in the study of these brochures.

Given the small volume of Dutch archival materials and a shortage of research, I felt compelled to go beyond the geographic boundary of this research project. My discussion is therefore largely based on a few comprehensive, online collections of readings in the United Kingdom and France (where they are called *notices sur les vues* or *notices explicatives*), besides a number of lectures of (semi)-professional performers, advice literature, and instruction manuals from (online) publications and repositories in the United States and Austria. Research coming out of the recent, renewed interest in lantern culture was, of course, consulted as well. This enabled me to paint a composite, albeit still incomplete picture.

**keywords:** *lantern readings - public illustrated lectures - optical lantern - education - ritual - cultural performance - footing*

## Lantern v. film lecturing

In the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the rise of the photographically based, illustrated public lecture provided opportunities for a crop of new, often nonprofessional lecturers. Publishers, dealers, and other lantern-related businesses and organizations saw an opportunity, too, in producing so-called lantern readings that were specifically targeted at these newcomers. Published as brochures, these ready-made texts accompanied a fixed series of slides on general interest topics. The public lecture's wide popularity is not equally reflected in a country's material legacy. In the United Kingdom or France for example, lantern readings have survived in relatively large numbers (a few thousand titles to date), but still less abundant than the glass slides they came with. In the Netherlands, however, where the public illustrated lecture flourished between the late 1890s and the 1950s, only a very small number of readings have been retrieved—as opposed to tens of thousands of slides.<sup>2</sup> It is to be feared that many brochures, along with business papers, have been discarded in ways standard for everyday materials considered obsolete.

However, some four dozen printed brochures delivered in conjunction with silent *film* screenings, all issued by the Koloniaal Instituut, Amsterdam, during the 1910s and 1920s, have come down to us—possibly constituting the entire Dutch legacy of this type of text. We owe the survival of this relatively large number to their repeated use for a decade since their publication in 1918, coinciding with the institute's second film catalog.<sup>3</sup> Called *Toelichtingen* (Illustrations), these texts served as obligatory readings, assigned to subject experts, that complemented the information films the institute had sponsored in the early and mid-1910s. Screened in nontheatrical venues, these performances—"lectures" as they were actually called—were closely modeled after the lantern lecture, which this institute also deployed more or less in parallel; its first catalog of slide series was published in 1917.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> To date, for our project we have consulted the slide collections of the former Art History Institute of Utrecht University, at RKD-Netherlands Institute for Art History, The Hague (c. 23,000 slides) and the former Art History Institute of the University of Amsterdam, at University of Amsterdam-Allard Pierson (c. 20,000). Furthermore, we have located for upcoming research the slide collection of the former Koloniaal Instituut, Amsterdam, at Museum van Wereldculturen-Museum Volkenkunde, Leiden (c. 10,000); the private collection of Amsterdam zoo's inspector of livestock A.F.J. Portielje, at University of Amsterdam-Allard Pierson (c. 100 lantern slide boxes); Sonnenborgh Museum & Observatory, Utrecht (c. 1,200 slides); the collection of unaffiliated anthropologist Paul Julien, at Nederlands Fotomuseum, Rotterdam (c. 1,600 slides inventoried). The latter two have been partly digitized; for the Sonnenborgh collection see the magic lantern web resource Lucerna: <https://www.slides.uni-trier.de/>.

<sup>3</sup> *Achtste jaarverslag, 1918* ([Amsterdam: Vereeniging "Koloniaal Instituut", 1919]), 18.

<sup>4</sup> *Catalogus der lichtbeelden-verzameling (lantaarnplaten)*, ([Amsterdam: Vereeniging "Koloniaal Instituut", 1917]).

Negatief N. 48.

KOLONIAAL INSTITUUT - AMSTERDAM.

N 32

## TOELICHTING

bij de Kinematografische opname betreffende  
HET BATIKKEN.<sup>1)</sup>

Niet te vlug afdraaien.

Lengte 163 M.  
Gewicht 1.13 K. G.  
Tijdduur 12 Min.

De film vertoont het bedrijf in eene batikkerij in West Java, en laat alleen de hoofdbewerkingen in de gebruikelijke volgorde zien, zonder dat een bepaald doek als voorbeeld geheel wordt afgewerkt, aangezien daartoe te veel herhalingen van eenzelfde bewerking noodig zijn.

De film vangt aan met het oliën van het doek, dus nadat het scheuren, zoomen, uitwasschen en drogen zijn afgelopen.

### Oliën van het doek.

Men ziet twee mannen het doek dompelen in eene kuip, gevuld met een mengsel van katjang of wel djarakolie en loog. Het doek wordt hier flink doorgehaald, geknepen en uitgewrongen, waarna de mannen met het doek, over bamboe draagstellingen gehangen, naar de werkplaats gaan, alwaar het doek in de zon wordt gedroogd. Het oliën geschiedt ook wel door kneden met de voeten.

Al deze bewerkingen behooren te worden herhaald. Door het opvolgend oliën, en het drogen in de zon, ondergaat de vezel eene chemische verandering, waardoor zij later de verf beter houdt, terwijl voorts het al te zeer indringen van was en verf wordt voorkomen.

1) Bij deze film behoort eene uitvoerige inleiding, die op aanvraag ter inzage wordt verstrekt.

- 1 -

De rode titels zijn van Palthe  
en komen dus niet in het negatief.  
voor.

Nonetheless, this seeming similarity between lantern and film lecture should not obscure that their respective business models may well have contributed to these different survival rates.

Before delving into the lantern reading I therefore want to reflect a little on this difference and point out why there is no easy genealogy between these forms of lecturing.<sup>5</sup> Particularly in commercial cinema theaters during the period of early cinema—the cut-off point of which is commonly set in the mid-1910s<sup>6</sup>—, programs of mostly short films changed frequently: weekly, twice weekly or more, depending on location, company, type of venue, business hours, etc.; in the years thereafter weekly changes remained common.<sup>7</sup> Consequently, there may not have been much to throw away in the first place, as there was no compelling need for lecturers to put their comments in writing, let alone print—even less if we accept that lecturers were under pressure to distinguish themselves from colleagues in nearby theaters.<sup>8</sup> Commercial film lecturing appears to have been a matter of preparation based on previews or on synopses in program bills whenever made available by production or distribution companies; of improvisation; or the personality of the lecturer. For all we know, which isn't much to begin with, lecturers sooner relied on relevant professional experience from variety or the legitimate theater, the fairground; on lines of work that required some form of public speech, such as teaching or preaching; or on informal advice from colleagues.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> See also: Richard Crangle, "Next slide please": the lantern lecture in Britain, 1890-1910', Richard Abel, Rick Altman (eds.), *The sounds of early cinema* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001a), 46.

<sup>6</sup> <https://domitor.org/early-cinema-overview/>.

<sup>7</sup> For a case study that traces this development in the collection of handbills of Dutch film distributor-cum-exhibitor Jean Desmet, see: Nico de Klerk, *Showing and telling: film heritage institutes and their performance of accountability* (Wilmington, DE – Malaga: Vernon Press, 2017), 47-58. For other countries see: Charles Musser, *The emergence of cinema: the American screen to 1907* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1991), 417-447; Eileen Bowser, *The transformation of cinema: 1907-1915* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1990), 21-36; Corinna Müller, *Frühe deutsche Kinematografie. Formale, wirtschaftliche und kulturelle Entwicklungen* (Stuttgart – Weimar: J.B. Metzler, 1994), 43-47, 186-190; Janet Staiger, 'Waren anpreisen, Kunden gewinnen, Ideale verkünden. Nachdenken über Geschichte und Theorie der Filmwerbung', Vinzenz Hediger, Patrick Vonderau (eds.), *Demnächst in Ihrem Kino. Grundlagen der Filmwerbung und Filmvermarktung* (Marburg: Schüren, 2009 [2005]), 18-61.

<sup>8</sup> A recent handbook states: "Another problem [besides questions of historiography, ethics, and periodization] faced by the historian of film lecturing is that of the scarcity of documents." However, no explanation for this problem, either more or less informed, is suggested; see: Germain Lacasse, 'The film lecturer', André Gaudreault, Nicolas Dulac, Santiago Hidalgo (eds.), *A companion to early cinema* (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 2012), 488.

<sup>9</sup> Besides classified ads, see the memoirs of Dutch film lecturer Max Nabarro, a rare contemporary, albeit anecdotal egodocument, excerpts of which were published in: *Een stem voor het doek: Max Nabarro, explicateur* (Amsterdam: Nederlands Filmmuseum, 1992). The memories of another Dutch film lecturer, albeit at one generation's remove, are related in: Ivo Blom, Ine van Dooren, "'Ladies and gentlemen, hats off, please!': Dutch film lecturing and the case of Cor Schuring", *Iris*, 22 (1996), 81-101.

Secondly, in most countries film lecturing was a relatively short-lived phenomenon, largely extinct before the end of the era of silent cinema as a whole. In the Netherlands during those years, not all cinema theaters employed a lecturer, while those that did not all the time. One reason, I venture, is that in small cinemas and even in bigger ones in times of adverse economic conditions (notably World War I), their employment cut into a theater's profit margin. At such moments a lecturer's contribution to a film show might have been considered easily 'detachable'. Clearly, though, all my hedges—"there seemed", "for all we know", "I venture"—point up the need for deeply researched studies that chart the ups and downs of both commercial and nontheatrical film lecturing in a given market.<sup>10</sup>

From available sources in the Netherlands, such as (digitized) program bills, film reviews, and advertizements in newspapers and the trade press, one learns that the lecturer was not standardly mentioned, not even by theaters that were known to employ one. Ads, of course, commonly focused on what was new, a series of films for instance, not on what was known, such as a theater's lecturer; cost (size or rates per word or line) may have come into it as well. And film reviews, ever since the ascent, around 1910, of the feature film, were increasingly based on separate press screenings that did not require a lecturer's services nor, plausibly, a theater's orchestra—instances of cost-cutting measures as well. It was the program's juxtaposition of attractions that was the key notion of the young industry. Rather than a definition of what was essential and what was auxiliary to a lineup, the concept of the program demarcates the frame of the occasion, along with the cognitive and social orientations that came with it: going to the movies. This is not to deny that some film lecturers were able to create names for themselves. But given the largely incomplete or anecdotal evidence it remains an open question whether overall they were bigger crowd-pullers than the films exhibited. Specifically local circumstances may well have played a role, too.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> For the Netherlands see: Ansje van Beusekom, 'Louis Hartlooper (1864-1922): explicateur te Utrecht', *Jaarboek Mediageschiedenis* 6 (Amsterdam: IISG Beheer, 1995), 182-194. Although a case study of an exceptional, in some respects unrepresentative figure, the article provides insight into contemporary Dutch practices and debates.

<sup>11</sup> For instance, Michaela Herzig and Martin Loiperdinger suggest that, besides the screening of local views in the German town of Trier, cameraman-cum-cinema owner Peter Marzen's lecturing in the local dialect drew large audiences; see their: "'Vom Guten das Beste". Kinematographenkonzurrenz in Trier', *KINtop*, #9 (2000), 38-51.

Lecturing in photographically illustrated, public lantern shows, on the other hand, lasted close to three quarters of a century in the Low Countries, and plausibly elsewhere. But more important than its duration is that, unlike film lecturing, the lantern lecture was an inherent, inseparable element of these performances. Its texts were published and distributed within a business that was intent on comprehensiveness and topicality, not on novelty<sup>12</sup>; their print runs matched the longer life cycle of their corresponding slide sets.<sup>13</sup>

The public illustrated lecture coincided with and supported a general, international wave of popular uplift and emancipatory initiatives as well as new education legislation during the decades around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Its popularity was enabled and sustained by replicable, mass-produced photographic slides that replaced the unique, often more expensive hand-painted slides common in other lecture genres. However, their scale of production was not a straightforward outcome of industrial processes of standardization and rationalization. Besides understandable resistance from those who felt their interests were being threatened—painters, draughtsmen, engravers—, projected photographic images took some time to be marketed. An important reason was that they necessitated a change in the technological setup of a lecture's dispositif, particularly the development of projection equipment to match the visual qualities of photographic transparencies. Moreover, their industrial production first occurred in stereoscopy, accompanied by promotional discourse on its educational virtues—despite the obvious, practical disadvantages of its use in assemblies of spectators.<sup>14</sup> Once obstacles were overcome and changes effected by independent applications and innovations, unevenly but roughly by the late 1860s; and once new businesses emerged that marketed these products as enabling

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<sup>12</sup> One small case study sketches the career of Dutch freelance lecturer J.A.C. Nonhebel, who for two decades lectured on a limited number of barely changing topics; Frank Kessler, 'The educational magic lantern dispositif', Sarah Dellmann, Kessler (eds.), *A million pictures: magic lantern slides in the history of learning* (New Barnet: John Libbey, 2020), 188-189.

<sup>13</sup> In the United Kingdom, print runs of 500 to 1,000 copies of several editions of factual lecture readings seem to have been common in the late-19<sup>th</sup> century; after World War I lecturers made do with duplicate typescripts or manuscripts; Crangle (2001a), 43. A French source mentions initial print runs of 5,000 copies, not seldom followed by subsequent runs; Johanna Natali, Marco Matozzi, Jacques Perriault, *Le fonds de vues sur verre du Musée pédagogique. Premier inventaire des "notices explicatives"* (Paris: Institut national de Recherches pédagogiques (INRP), 1978), 16.

<sup>14</sup> Jens Ruchatz, *Licht und Wahrheit. Eine Mediumgeschichte der fotografischen Projektion* (München: Wilhelm Fink, 2003), 175-307.

One contemporary source, albeit for different reasons, commented on this distinction: "The delight which one person has in looking through a stereoscope a thousand persons can have at once—so that there is sympathetic and social pleasure." Quoted in: Erkki Huhtamo, *Illusions in motion: media archaeology of the moving panorama and related spectacles* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2013), 275; Huhtamo dates his source, American dye chemist John Fallon's *Six tours through foreign lands. A guide to Fallon's great work of art. A complete mirror of the universe, from the earliest times down to the present day*, approximately in the 1860s. (284, n. 52).

other uses as well as opportunities to sell more slides<sup>15</sup>), conditions were in place for a new practice.<sup>16</sup>

The mass-produced lantern reading was meant to allow a larger number of lecturers, of lesser experience, to enter the field of the illustrated lecture. In fact, for educational slide sets, which often broached new or unfamiliar topics, accompanying texts were indispensable. Moreover, they relied less, if at all, on well-known narratives the way, say, fairy tales, biblical or Dickensian stories did. In Dutch newspapers this was reflected in an enduring way of advertizing in which the post-modifier *met lichtbeelden* (“with slides”) was put within parentheses and/or in smaller print than the word *lezing* (“lecture”), its title or the lecturer’s name (see the illustrations on the following page). In addition, it was common for newspaper reviews to report on the lecture only, whether or not taking notes had been frustrated by dimmed house lights that projection required.<sup>17</sup> Nor, incidentally, did Dutch newspapers register a development similar to early 20<sup>th</sup>-century public illustrated lectures in France. There, a practice, copied from the academe, of integrating projected slides and lecture to allow simultaneous comment on the visuals had begun to replace the common practice of projection after the lecture.<sup>18</sup>

### Ritual

A performative as well as interactive event, my notion of the public lecture for this essay will be mostly limited, in accordance with our research project’s scope, to a dispositif of knowledge dissemination through what were collectively called “associations of rational

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<sup>15</sup> See for instance: Walter D. Welford, Henry Sturmy (eds.), *The indispensable handbook to the optical lantern: a complete cyclopædia on the subject of optical lanterns, slides & accessory apparatus* (London: Iliffe & Son, 1888), which contains numerous examples of sets of around a hundred slides or more (although a few topics consisting of many hundreds of slides were said to be mere “large series from which sets can be made up.”). See also some sets in the catalogues of the Media History Digital Library (<http://mediahistoryproject.org/>), such as *W.B. Moore’s illustrated and descriptive catalogue and price list of stereopticons, lantern slides, moving picture machines, accessories for projection* (1902) and *Liesegang’s Glassphotogramme für Lichtbilder-Apparate* (1903), *Lichtbilder in Woodbury-Druck* (1905).

<sup>16</sup> Nathalie Boulouche, ‘L’image de lumière comme tableau noir’, Denise Borlée, Hervé Ducet (eds.), *La plaque photographique. Un outil pour la fabrication et la diffusion des savoirs (XIX<sup>e</sup>-XX<sup>e</sup> siècle)* (Strasbourg: Presses Universitaires de Strasbourg, 2019), 25, 365 n. 7; Ruchatz (2003), 168-169, 208.

<sup>17</sup> For instance, a Dutch reporter mentioned that he was unable to make “substantial notes” as “the slides required that the lights had to be constantly dimmed”; ‘De Violier’, *De Maasbode*, 38, #8936, May 17, 1906, 1<sup>st</sup> section, 2, <https://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=MMKB04:000191118:mpeg21:p001>.

This and the following translations from all the non-English sources are by the author.

<sup>18</sup> Marianne Altit-Morvillez, ‘Les plaques de projection des conférences d’Émile Espérandieu (1857-1939) à l’École antique de Nîmes’, Borlée, Ducet (2019), 240-241.

**Chr. Volksbond.**  
**Cursusvergadering**  
**Maandag 15 Januari,**  
 des avonds 8 uur,  
**in het gebouw der „LOGE”,**  
**Fluweele Burgwal.**  
 Spreker: Dr. L. HELDRING.  
 Onderwerp: **DOOR PALESTINA**  
**(met lichtbeelden).** 2416  
**HET BESTUUR.**  
 den Haag, 13 Januari 1900.

*Haagsche Courant, January 15, 1900*

**op Dinsdag 29 Nov. a.s.,**  
 in 't Café van den Heer WOL-  
 HEKKER, te houden door den Heer  
**C. DOETS,** Directeur der Am-  
 bachtsschool te Hoogeveen, over:  
**„De verhouding der Ambach-  
 ten tot de Kunst in het verleden,  
 heden en in de toekomst”,** toe te  
 lichten **met lichtbeelden.**  
**Aanvang 8 uur.**  
 voor Leden en Belangstellenden.  
 Bestuur der Afd. Assen van de Vereen  
 ter bevordering v/h. Ambachts-  
 onderwijs in Drenthe.

*Provinciale Drentsche en Asser Courant, November 18, 1910*

**HANDELS LABORATORIUM**  
 voor Textiel onderzoek van  
**Leliegracht 22. — J. W. LASEUR. — Amsterdam.**  
**CURSUS IN TEXTIEL KUNDE**  
**MET LICHTBEELDEN, MONSTERS EN PROEVEN.**  
 Aanvang half October. Duur ca. 5 maanden.  
**GRONDSTOFFENLEER**  
 Spinnen - Weven - Appretuur - Warenkennis - Textielonderzoek.  
 Prospectus met ultv. Inlichtingen en leerplan op aanvraag aan bovenstaand adres

*Algemeen Handelsblad, October 4, 1920*

**VOLKSUNIVERSITEIT.**  
**Moderne Nederlandsche Schilderkunst**  
**(met lichtbeelden)** door Dr. G. KNUTTEL Wzn.  
 Aanvang Dinsdag 14 Januari, des avonds half acht  
 in Maison de Brufjn, Eusebius buitensingel 50.  
 Toegang op vertoon van Cursuskaart of tegen betaling  
 van f 3.50 's avonds aan de zaal.

*Arnhemsche Courant, January 11, 1930*

**DR. PAUL JULIËN**  
 De bekende spreker voor den K.R.O.  
 houdt op Woensdag 14 Februari te  
 8.15, in de Tivoli-bovenzaal, voor  
 de Nederl. Reisvereniging voor  
 Kath. afd. R'dam, de lezing met  
**lichtbeelden** en film „Onder de  
 Pygmeëen van Equatoriaal Afri-  
 ka”. Kaarten 40 cents bij H. J.  
 Chapel, Leeuwenstr. 15. Toegang  
 voor alle Kath. ook niet-leden.

*De Maasbode, February 7, 1940*

**Maand van Vriendschap met de  
 Sowjet-Unie**  
 De vereniging Nederland—U.S.S.R. houdt  
 de volgende lezing **met lichtbeelden**  
**De Sport in de Sowjet-Unie**  
 door de heer L. D. Kramer, die in de  
 Sowjet-Unie een studie over de sport  
 maakte, op Donderdag 25 Mei, gebouw  
 Lückner, Rozengracht 207, zaal open  
 7.30 uur. Aanvang 8 uur. Entrée 25 ct.

*De Waarheid, May 23, 1950*

recreation”.<sup>19</sup> They provided illustrated edification or instruction other than what is called in its common, institutionally circumscribed sense, teaching. The latter assumes a stable repeat audience—a class—that responds in ways that fulfill the expectation of its active involvement during and/or after lessons. Theoretically, the content of a lantern reading for a general public could well have been more or less identical to one for pupils and students, but it would have sharply differed in a number of other aspects.

In focusing on these aspects I take my lead from anthropologist Milton B. Singer’s term *cultural performance*. Coined to identify those events for which performance, verbal or otherwise, is requisite, a cultural performance is considered prominent in and significant for a culturally defined community or society; in fact, the performance itself may be constitutive—think of national commemorative events. It is therefore deserving of and executed with more circumspection than other performative events, such as busking, and commonly scheduled at specific time slots at designated venues.<sup>20</sup> As well it is programmatically and organizationally elaborate, and typically involves a form of staging. Being public and relatively formal, the distribution of roles and obligations of performer(s) and audience are quite distinct and uneven, although in small communities, where performers also practice more mundane professions, such distinctions may alternate with more porous relations.<sup>21</sup> For these reasons I propose that photographically illustrated lectures, particularly during their heyday as a mainstream medium—roughly the late-19<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries—, potentially fall into the category of cultural

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<sup>19</sup> Martin Hewitt, ‘Beyond scientific spectacle: image and word in nineteenth-century popular lecturing’, Joe Kember, John Plunkett, Jill A. Sullivan (eds.), *Popular exhibitions, science, and showmanship, 1840-1910* (London – Brookfield: Pickering & Chatto, 2012), 81.

<sup>20</sup> The research field of geographies of science, albeit mainly concerned with situated intellectual history, provides support for this term, stating for instance that “[c]ertain socially produced spaces are privileged sites because from them emanate discourses that exercise immense power in society”; David N. Livingstone, ‘Science, sites and speech: scientific knowledge and the spaces of rhetoric’, *History of the Human Sciences*, 20, #2 (May 2007), 73. For an overview see Livingstone’s book *Putting science in its place: geographies of scientific knowledge* (Chicago - London: University of Chicago Press, 2003).

<sup>21</sup> Milton Singer, ‘Search for a great tradition in cultural performances’, *Semiotics of cities, selves, and cultures: explorations in semiotic anthropology* (Berlin – Boston: De Gruyter – Mouton, 1991), 24-41, and: *When a Great Tradition modernizes: an anthropological approach to Indian civilization* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1972), 70-74; see also: Richard Bauman, ‘Performance’, *Folklore, cultural performances, and popular entertainments: a communications-centered handbook* (New York – Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 46-48; Charles O. Frake, ‘Plying frames can be dangerous: some reflections on methodology in cognitive anthropology’, *Language and cultural description* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1980), 55.

According to Stephen Greenblatt, in Christian-era Europe the distribution of roles between performers and audience only became a mainstream arrangement during the Renaissance. Medieval performances of mystery and miracle plays were a communal affair in which all participants were performers, if not in a way quite literally professionals, as a play’s sections were the responsibility of various guilds; see his: ‘Witness to a mystery’, *New York Review of Books*, LXVII, #10 (June 11, 2020), 19.

performance.<sup>22</sup> I say “potentially”, because while a select class of events—besides public lectures, think of dramatic performances or award ceremonies—may be counted as cultural performances, each instance is subject to an evaluation as to whether it has lived up to the expectation and reputation a given society has conferred on it. This, of course, is intrinsic of such events, as their open display for an audience means a risk each time they are being performed, which may in the long run contribute to their transformation, decay or disappearance.<sup>23</sup>

Singer’s work, based on longitudinal research in India, was primarily concerned with large-scale cultural change. But many of the aspects he discussed—verbal performance, formality, and distribution of roles—were rehearsed in sociologist Erving Goffman’s essay on the lecture.<sup>24</sup> And although this essay describes the lecture in the abstract—systematic data collection and analysis were not his forte<sup>25</sup>—, Goffman’s uniquely perceptive observations of everyday interactive events warrant its use as a point of orientation. Specifically, he understood the lecture in ritual terms.<sup>26</sup> Derived from Émile Durkheim’s notion of sacred objects, ritual in Goffman’s view identifies a moment whenever two or more people are aware of each other’s presence and share a focus of attention during which time mutual respect is expected in order to get the course of action of everyone involved, individually or coordinately, done without trouble. Thus, ritual occurs as much in fleeting situations, such as passing each other on a street, as in prolonged or involved ones, such as delivering and attending a lecture.<sup>27</sup>

In this view a lecture is a reciprocal arrangement that assumes distinct obligations: one party is expected to speak in a certain way at a scheduled length while the other is to

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<sup>22</sup> For a description, from a socioeconomic perspective, of how the American public lecture circuit developed into a culturally significant phenomenon, see: Donald M. Scott, ‘The popular lecture and the creation of a public in mid-nineteenth-century America’, *Journal of American History*, 66, #4 (March 1980), 791-809.

<sup>23</sup> In the 1970s anthropologist Richard Bauman described (verbal) performance in similar terms as consisting “in the assumption of responsibility to an audience for a display of communicative competence”, while from the point of view of the audience the performer “is thus marked as subject to evaluation for the way it [the performance] is done, for the relative skill and effectiveness of the performer’s display of competence” and “the enhancement of experience” thus accomplished; Richard Bauman, *Verbal art as performance* (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 1977), 11, 26-27.

<sup>24</sup> Erving Goffman, ‘The lecture’, *Forms of talk* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1981a), 160-196

<sup>25</sup> Besides praise, a trenchant critique of his work on situated talk as being fundamentally flawed by not allowing his objects of research to speak for themselves (meaning it was not based on recordings), is: Emanuel A. Schegloff, ‘Goffman and the analysis of conversation’, Paul Drew, Anthony Wootton (eds.), *Erving Goffman: exploring the interaction order* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988), 89-135.

<sup>26</sup> Scott (1980) acknowledges the importance of ritual in public lecturing, but does not develop it.

<sup>27</sup> Erving Goffman, *Relations in public: microstudies of the public order* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972 [1971]), 62-94.

meanwhile listen and give more or less narrowly prescribed forms of feedback (applause, questions afterwards, etc.).<sup>28</sup> But for these parties to become what he calls *ratified* participants in the event, mutual acknowledgment is not merely presupposed, as in mainstream stage plays (while at the same time ostensibly denied by the performers during the play). It needs to be demonstrated during each performance, too, specifically because lectures, unlike plays, are non-character platform presentations. This means that, notwithstanding their privileged position as “an entity held to be of value”,<sup>29</sup> speakers who show no acknowledgment of their listeners but rigidly stick to their prepared text may soon find that the very limits on the audience’s feedback have become a shield of silence from which not the least sign of recognition, let alone approval, will come forth. Worse, the *shared* interactive situation in which they and their audience find themselves (rather than a fictional v. an everyday realm) creates an embarrassment that neither party can rightly get out of without risking further embarrassment.

It follows from this that lecturers will be under some pressure to make clear, whether heartfelt or not, that their elevated position, their “value”, is for the mere convenience of the event and should not be taken as a reflection of personality. During their talk they may find it expedient to cut *themselves* down to size, before their listeners might do, and profess a sense of modesty before the occasion for which they have been elected to discourse—much like a 1902 advisory article’s recommendation: “When lecturing in a strange place make a few graceful remarks about the organizers of the lecture.”<sup>30</sup> As well they may briefly alternate their talk with digressions, anecdotes, jokes and other witticisms to establish rapport. Unscripted as these remarks may seem, one shouldn’t be surprised that often they are not, certainly when coming from seasoned lecturers. Furthermore, unforeseen impediments—the noise of a latecomer, failing sound or image equipment, or a lecturer’s own flub—will be smoothly accommodated or addressed and display speakers’ alertness to the situation. Simultaneously, such moments are opportunities par excellence to demonstrate that they and their listeners have a “shared awareness of what [they] are

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<sup>28</sup> J. Maxwell Atkinson, ‘Public speaking and audience responses: some techniques for inviting applause’, Atkinson, John Heritage (eds.), *Structures of social action: studies in conversation analysis* (Cambridge – Paris: Cambridge University Press – Editions de la Maison des Sciences de l’Homme, 1984), 371.

<sup>29</sup> Goffman (1981a), 187.

<sup>30</sup> T. Perkins, ‘On lantern lectures’, quoted in: Joe Kember, “‘Go thou and do likewise’: advice to lantern and film lecturers in the trade press, 1897-1909”, *Early Popular Visual Culture*, 8, #4 (November 2010), 426.

doing”.<sup>31</sup> And here, too, no compelling reason can be thought up why lecturers should not meet these incidents with a ready-made response, too.

Based on unrecorded, at best observed in non-experimental, social situations, Goffman’s essay is nonetheless instructive for identifying a lecture’s ‘fault lines’. It grounds the rules and pointers in advice literature ranging from Michael Faraday’s recommendations (e.g. “His whole behaviour should evince a respect for his audience, and he should in no case forget that he is in their presence.”<sup>32</sup>), Francisque Sarcey’s discommendations (“When reading, eyes fixed on the page, one never takes in the crowd and magnetize it; when reciting, one’s gaze plunges inward, hypnotized by memory’s travail”<sup>33</sup>), to today’s upbeat online advice (e.g. “a joke or two can do a lot to keep your audience listening” or “talking without any enthusiasm for the topic can deplete energy in the room and eclipse your message.”<sup>34</sup>). But while his observations are implied to have general application, the essay actually deals with rather formal and, above all, impersonal lectures. With that I mean events in which speakers do not come from the midst of their audience’s community, but are outsiders of some repute invited to “a strange place” (a set-up similar to lecturing before a dispersed community of professional peers gathered at a conference). In Dutch newspapers this is the kind of occasion one typically finds in newspaper reviews, prompted by name recognition. While constituting evidence at one remove from the actual lectures commonly reported summarily, they are nonetheless valuable for mentioning the wider event in which a public illustrated lecture was embedded. They convey a sense of a lecture’s significance, substantively as well as socially, and tell us about administrators, chairpersons, emcees or others prominent in an event’s organization who appear on stage to mark the occasion, welcome and thank sponsors, advisers or co-workers, point out dignitaries in the audience, or acclaim the merit of the occasion before introducing the featured speaker, usually with a compressed CV. This linguistic red carpet prevents an invited lecturer from unceremoniously strolling on stage

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<sup>31</sup> Frake (1980), 54.

<sup>32</sup> Michael Faraday, ‘The art of lecturing’, *Advice to lecturers: an anthology taken from the writings of Michael Faraday & Lawrence Bragg*, ed. by George Porter, James Friday (London: Mansell Information/Publishing, 1974), unpaginated.

<sup>33</sup> Francisque Sarcey, ‘Méthode pour faire une conférence’, *Souvenirs d’âge mûr* (Paris: Paul Ollendorff, 1892), 144.

<sup>34</sup> See: respectively: Tanya Golash-Boza, ‘How to deliver an outstanding public lecture’, *Get a life, PhD* blogspot (April 30, 2013), <http://getalifephd.blogspot.com/2013/04/how-to-deliver-outstanding-public.html>; Katherine Lee, ‘10 Tips for speaking like a Ted Talk pro: advice from the experts on how to make any presentation sing’, *Monitor on Psychology*, 48 #2 (February 2017), <https://www.apa.org/monitor/2017/02/tips-speaking>.

and start speaking as well as from exiting without a thanksgiving on behalf of the organizers, if not all those present. This type of lecture, however, only partly covers the scope of my topic, as public illustrated lectures came in less impersonal shapes, too.

### Guidance

From research on rural and small-town France during the last third of the 19<sup>th</sup> century one learns that many lecturers actually did come from the midst of their audiences. Since the mid-1860s the Ligue française de l'Enseignement had been mobilizing teachers, for their sheer number as well as for their experience in speaking before an audience, to lecture at *conférences populaires* and *universités populaires*, in addition to their day jobs as teachers or at night at continuation schools for adults and adolescents.<sup>35</sup> The fact that these lectures were delivered by people familiar with their audience may well have allowed easier conversational give-and-take, despite commonly perceived differences—local manifestations of control over public illustrated lectures between highly rivalrous state- and (Catholic) church-led initiatives may have affected social relations on the ground. To date not much is known about the everyday routines, methods or interactions of these teachers.<sup>36</sup>

It has been argued, however, that despite the increasing popularity of these lectures since the 1870s,<sup>37</sup> aided since the 1880s by the projection of photographic slides, these speakers were unable to compensate their unfamiliarity with the growing number of often

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<sup>35</sup> Anne Quillien, 'Les plaques photographiques du Musée pédagogique', Borlée, Ducet (2019), 39-46; Natali, Mozzati, Perriault (1978), 4. See also: Édouard Petit, 'Post-Scolaires (oeuvres)', *Nouveau dictionnaire de pédagogie et d'instruction primaire*, ed. by Ferdinand Buisson (Paris: Hachette, 1911); <http://www.inrp.fr/edition-electronique/lodel/dictionnaire-ferdinand-buisson/document.php?id=3424>; Henri Gilbault, *Conférences populaires. Guide pratique à l'usage des conférenciers populaires* (Paris: Bibliothèque d'Éducation, 1905), 11-12, 16.

It has been calculated that in America many lecturers "were local people—teachers, ministers, fraternal leaders, and neighborhood amateurs", too; Terry Borton, '238 eminent American "magic lantern" showmen: the Chautauqua lecturers', *The Magic Lantern Gazette*, 25, #1 (Spring 2013), 3.

<sup>36</sup> Laurent Besse, Carole Christen, 'L'histoire de l'éducation populaire en chantier. Quelques points de repère', Christen, Besse (eds.), *Histoire de l'éducation populaire 1815-1945. Perspectives françaises et internationales* (Villeneuve d'Ascq: Presses universitaires de Septentrion, 2017), 45-46. Despite the authors' acknowledgment of insights from related studies, notably histories of sports and cinema, this introductory overview of the field of popular education sadly fails to appreciate the contemporary importance of the public lantern lecture as well as the pioneering research by Natali, Mozzati, Perriault (1978) and Jacques Perriault's *Mémoires de l'ombre et du son. Une archéologie de l'audio-visuel* (Paris: Flammarion, 1981), 91-119. In general, the social aspects of the lantern lecture, whether in personal or impersonal events, warrant more research.

<sup>37</sup> French educator Octave Gréard, in his *Éducation et instruction* (1887), estimated that in France, around 1870, the number of people enrolled in continuation courses amounted to c. 800,000; quoted in: Perriault (1981), 96.

new topics and provide meaningful exposition to the visuals.<sup>38</sup> In small communities the dearth of public libraries and the lack of proper books and other source materials were considered the main obstacles. Moreover, the associations involved in organizing public illustrated lectures were not very forthcoming; besides slides, they commonly provided bibliographic references only, apparently with little guidance as to where they could be found. These circumstances accelerated the introduction of mass-produced printed readings, the *notices*, in the 1890s, when the organization of illustrated lectures became state-supported and centralized through the Société nationale des Conférences populaires and, later, the Musée pédagogique de l'État (the latter became both repository and lending library of the joint slide collections of the Ligue française de l'Enseignement, the Société nationale des Conférences populaires as well as the Société du Havre).<sup>39</sup>

The tardy development of public libraries in France has been recorded.<sup>40</sup> But the picture, though still sketchy, has been sharpened by more recent research. Book historian Martyn Lyons, for instance, has pointed out that since the 1850s, a time when “[t]he public library existed only in embryonic form”, empowering circumstances emerged with a national network of bookshops, down to small provincial towns, making “[f]or a brief historical moment, the retail bookshop (...) a vital agent of cultural uniformity”. Nonetheless, he has to backtrack a bit when he writes that bookstores, like public libraries, appear to have differed significantly from one place to another.<sup>41</sup> Historian of publishing Jean-Yves Mollier, in addition, has researched a number of widely read periodicals and best-selling book series that popularized science during the last quarter of the 19th century.<sup>42</sup>

Lyons also noted that in mid-century teachers in certain regions actually “relied for their income on collecting fees from parents”, although the latter often had important reasons to keep their children at home temporarily or permanently. Often forced, therefore

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<sup>38</sup> Perriault, ‘Introduction’, Natali, Matozzi, Perriault (1978), [i] (unpaginated section); Daniel Raichvarg, Jean Jacques, *Savants et ignorants. Une histoire de la vulgarisation des sciences* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1991), 178-179.

<sup>39</sup> Quillien (2019), 48-52; Perriault (1981), 107-108; Natali, Mozzati, Perriault (1978), 4-7, 15. The latter source did mention the bi-weekly *Le Volume* (1899), which contained lecture suggestions for teachers specifically; *ibid.*, 16. Perriault mentions that, in France, the idea of a lantern reading already circulated in the 1870s; Perriault (1981), 112.

<sup>40</sup> Agnès Marcetteau-Paul, ‘Les bibliothèques municipales’, Dominique Varry (ed.), *Histoire des bibliothèques françaises. Les bibliothèques de la Révolution et du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle 1789-1914* (Paris: Promodis, 1991), 437-453. The author points to the huge local and regional differences that only further research can detail; Martyn Lyons, *Le triomphe du livre. Une histoire sociologique de la lecture dans la France du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris: Promodis, 1987), 169-173.

<sup>41</sup> Martyn Lyons, *Reading culture & writing practices in nineteenth-century France* (Toronto – Buffalo – London: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 48-49.

<sup>42</sup> Jean-Yves Mollier, ‘Diffuser les connaissances au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, un exercice délicat’, *Romantisme*, 108, #2 (2000), 91-101.

to take up a second job, one wonders whether under these conditions they could have afforded these books.<sup>43</sup> And while it is hoped that their financial situation had improved by the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a contemporary practical guide noted teachers-cum-lecturers' unfamiliarity with relevant books and journals.<sup>44</sup> But that, possibly, was part truth and part sales talk, as it drew its readers' attention to the titles that could be borrowed from the well-stocked library of the then Musée pédagogique, backed up by a catalog and a sample order form. In addition it listed various collections of brochures and periodicals with articles that "can be transformed into lectures" besides featuring a few ready-made readings.<sup>45</sup> For us today, moreover, this guide suggests the magnitude of the Musée's factual support, amplified by the (incomplete) collection of almost 900 *notices* that accompanied an estimated 2,000 topics for projection. At the time housed at the Musée pédagogique, they can now be consulted at the (website of the) Musée national de l'Éducation (henceforth MUNAÉ), in Rouen.<sup>46</sup> Not all these printed texts, though, were full-blown readings. Often they merely provided skeleton information to a set's slides for speakers to elaborate upon. The introduction to a *notice* titled *Jeanne d'Arc* explains:

In order to ease the task for lecturers who will have no documents at hand, we have limited ourselves here by providing concise information to each picture, monument or painting presented.<sup>47</sup>

Whether or not this "concise information" actually eased a speaker's task, the length of such vignettes was not standardized and varied from a brief paragraph to up to a few pages. (The same author wrote a number of *three-page* evocations of the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 for slides showing a painting of a significant scene).<sup>48</sup>

A variety of similar practices could be found elsewhere. For instance, news reports in the Netherlands, based on a press release by the Vereeniging tot het houden van Voordrachten met Lichtbeelden (Association for Delivering Illustrated Lectures), reported

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<sup>43</sup> Martyn Lyons, *Readers and society in nineteenth-century France: workers, women, peasants* (Basingstoke – New York: Palgrave, 2001), 8.

<sup>44</sup> Gilbault (1905), 7.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 19-37

<sup>46</sup> A pioneering inventory retrieved c. 600 of a then estimated 900 archived readings; Natali, Mozzati, Perriault (1978), 20-21.

<sup>47</sup> J.-E. Bulloz, *Jeanne d'Arc* (Paris: Maison artistique d'Éditions photographiques et de Vulgarisation par l'Image, 1900a), 1; Bibliothèque nationale de France-Gallica (henceforth BnF).

<sup>48</sup> J.-E. Bulloz, *Les héros de 1870* (Paris: Maison artistique d'Éditions photographiques et de Vulgarisation par l'Image, 1900b); BnF.

that its production of Dutch-language readings in the late 1890s was said to have been inspired by British and most particularly French examples.<sup>49</sup> In 1900, this association published a brochure on astronomy whose author advocated the selection of a small number of slides to lecture on, while the remaining ones were meant to be clustered and commented on more concisely. Thus the lecture could be kept to the point and the topic simple.<sup>50</sup> In the 1910s, the aforementioned Koloniaal Instituut produced short manuals with factual information that could be adapted to lectures and causeries for both its traveling exhibits and its slide series on the cultivation of tropical cash crops.<sup>51</sup> A Dutch booklet on prehistory, published in a popular science series, was essentially an eight-page instruction manual, its space partly devoted to illustrations and a bibliography. It contains such sentences as, “Speaker begins by giving us a brief summary of the latest theories of the origin of the planets”—theories a prospective lecturer was apparently expected to read up on from the bibliography—, while “speaker” is to end with a brief discussion of “the big issue of the descent of man”.<sup>52</sup> An Austrian source, too, explicitly urged lecturers to do their research:

Only he who has seriously and thoroughly considered a topic, so that he is capable of freely reproducing this material in a manner appropriate to his audiences’ level of understanding and without violating scientific truths, is entitled to lecture about that topic. Only such lecturers and teachers offer their audience something worthwhile. That is why the *Lichtbilderdienst* provides preparatory materials either as captions to the images or as model texts with bibliographic references and facts.<sup>53</sup>

And an anonymous British lecturer reported, “I simply get the ordinary commercial lantern reading, read it well several times until I understand the subject then turn it up in the encyclopaedia and read everything pertaining to it (...). Visit our public libraries and look up

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<sup>49</sup> ‘Voordrachten met lichtbeelden’, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 72, #22286 (June 6, 1899), evening edn., 2<sup>nd</sup> section, 6-7, <http://resolver.kb.nl/resolve?urn=ddd:010163005:mpeg21:p006>, and similar reports in a number of other Dutch newspapers around this date. Unfortunately, no correspondence has been retrieved yet between this association and its French sister organizations.

<sup>50</sup> A.H. Gerhard, *Sterrenkunde* (Amsterdam: Vereeniging tot het houden van Voordrachten met Lichtbeelden, n.d. [1900]), 10-11.

<sup>51</sup> Three of these manuals, all written by biologist-cum-photographer A.H. Blaauw, have been retrieved: one about the cultivation of coffee, *Korte handleiding voor de bespreking van de koffiecultuur bij de lantaarnplaten, afbeeldingen en voorwerpen van de reis-collectie van het Koloniaal Instituut* (Amsterdam: Koloniaal Instituut, n.d. [1918]), and two similarly titled brochures devoted to the rice and tea cultures.

<sup>52</sup> F. G. Geerling, *De wonderen der voorwereld* ([Amsterdam: Instituut voor Arbeidersontwikkeling, 1925]), 2, 7.

<sup>53</sup> *Wegweiser des Lichtbilderdienstes samt Bildergruppenverzeichnissen, Leihordnungen und Angabe aller vom Bundesministerium für Unterricht vorgesehene einschlägigen Hilfen für Bildungspflege, Unterricht und Vortragskultur* (Wien: Bundesministerium für Unterricht, 1928), 6.

any books on the subject, and last, but not least (...) select a number of amusing anecdotes applicable to the subject”, after which he wrote his own lecture.<sup>54</sup> In the United Kingdom, however, as we learn from the seminal work of Richard Crangle, the readings’ emergence has a different history. Their publishing began much earlier, in the 1820s, and for particular reasons:

[T]he practice of publishing readings always lay at the heart of the commercial slide trade: the basic idea of selling or hiring slides to amateurs was always that anyone could purchase or hire the knowledge and equipment to produce a show in just the same way as the “person of the art” who had been practising the trade for years.<sup>55</sup>

The number of lantern readings uploaded on the site of the British Magic Lantern Society (henceforth MLS) shows that with the rise of public educational, illustrated lectures towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century—leaving aside religious and temperance propaganda—the “amateurs” had become an increasingly important target group for publishers and dealers. Besides opening up the possibility to perform beyond speakers’ private circles, these brochures, like those at MUNAÉ, were meant to set a standard of some kind and increase the quality of public illustrated lectures’ performances. The abovementioned French practical guide, moreover, called for increased formality, along with its suggestion that local notables, even representatives of supra-local organizations, grace a performance with their presence. But this may have been prompted by considerations of propaganda, given the rivalry between state-supported lantern organizations and their Catholic counterparts, which was at its fiercest point during the late 19<sup>th</sup>-century.<sup>56</sup>

The lantern reading’s history remains sketchy overall, though, like so many other aspects of the medium of the illustrated lecture. For one thing, however prominent or obvious, practices were certainly not undisputed. A contemporary French manual, albeit on *unillustrated* lectures, fulminated against the abovementioned state-supported organizations’ “deplorable extremity of sending ready-made, printed lectures to their

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<sup>54</sup> A.B., ‘Lecturers should learn their lectures’ (1902), quoted in: Kember (November 2010), 427-428. Despite the similarities to French practices, in the United Kingdom public libraries were well established during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries; see: Thomas Kelly, *A history of public libraries in Great Britain, 1845-1965* (London: Library Association, 1973), Appendix IV, 468-487.

<sup>55</sup> Richard Crangle, ‘How to read a reading: a short history of the humble slide reading’, *New Magic Lantern Journal*, 9, #6 (Summer 2004), 89; see also: Erkki Huhtamo, ‘The white behind the picture: toward a media archaeology of the screen’, *Dellmann, Kessler* (2020), 291-292.

<sup>56</sup> Frank Kessler, Sabine Lenk, ‘Projecting faith: French and Belgian Catholics and the magic lantern before the First World War’, *Material Religion*, 16, #1 (2020), 61-83; <https://doi.org/10.1080/17432200.2019.1696560>.

members in the provinces to be read and reread.”<sup>57</sup> Statements about audiences, their seating (or standing) arrangements in various types of venue, their deportment and the degree and nature of interaction with performer(s) are suppositional at best, given the current lack of social histories of stage performances in general. For instance, British theater histories, which are usually about the established theater trade, merely allow one to speculate that changes in audience behavior may have had a muted effect on illustrated lectures, mainly because for most of the time the latter were performed with dimmed house lights, while in London theaters, for instance, this only became standard in the 1880s, after which date “the social aspects of play-going” diminished.<sup>58</sup> Closely related topics, such as audience composition, programming, mode of performance (the tour v. the stand-alone show), or lectures’ performative setups, hardly allow statements of any general scope. The desired “holistic perspective”, to borrow a term by British historian and archivist Frank Gray, still has a lot of holes.<sup>59</sup>

### Footing

As far as the ritual aspect of public lantern lectures is concerned clearly one must do with what is available and see how far it takes one. This is what I will endeavor in the rest of this essay.<sup>60</sup> A brief excursion on American photographer Mathew B. Brady serves as a starting point. Brady is not a name one would immediately expect in the context of the optical lantern. But captions he wrote for a lantern show he was invited to give in New York, on January 30, 1896, appeared as ‘Brady’s lecture book’ in a rather hagiographic account half a century later.<sup>61</sup> The show was meant to bestow a “Grand Testimonial Benefit” on Brady, whose business, once thriving and famous for his portraits of public figures as well as

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<sup>57</sup> Paul Crouzet, *Littérature et conférences populaires* (s.l.: Pranava Books, n.d. [facsimile of brochure orig. publ. in 1897]), 47-48

<sup>58</sup> Jim Davis, Victor Emeljanow, ‘Victorian and Edwardian audiences’, Kerry Powell (ed.), *The Cambridge companion to Victorian and Edwardian theatre* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 95. Indeed, in the early 1850s Charles Dickens rhetorically (and self-servingly) liked to contrast low, unruly theater audiences with the ideal orderliness of a “lecture room”; *Ibid*, 100.

<sup>59</sup> Frank Gray, ‘Engaging with the magic lantern’s history’, Ludwig Vogel-Bienek, Richard Crangle (eds.), *Screen culture and the social question 1880-1914* (New Barnet: John Libbey, 2014), 173.

<sup>60</sup> In that regard this text is to some extent complementary—“*un autre sujet*”—to: Alain Boillat, ‘Le spectacle de lanterne magique considéré sous l’angle de la conférence. Quelques traces écrites d’une performance orale’, Kaveh Askari, Scott Curtis, Frank Gray et al. (eds.), *Performing new media, 1890-1915* (New Barnet: John Libbey, 2015), 227-235.

<sup>61</sup> Roy Meredith, *Mr. Lincoln’s cameraman: Mathew B. Brady* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1946), [263-362] (the entire section of ‘Brady’s lecture book’ is unpaginated).

scenes of the American Civil War, had been ailing in the postbellum era and, after a long period of poverty and debt, eventually had to be sold in the summer of 1895. As the lecture would consist of what he designated as his “War views”, the captions largely reflected Brady’s persona of the self-styled “photographic historian” of the Civil War. And although he had made precious few photographs that showed ongoing battle and certainly had not been the only photographic entrepreneur to record the war, he had managed to remain steadily associated with the war’s “terrible reality” and the portraits of relevant personalities, taken in the field or in his studio, such as President Lincoln, the Union generals Grant, Sheridan, and Sherman as well as Confederate general Lee.

In a number of captions, however, another persona can be detected. There he presented himself as a man who had been in the thick of things, sharing experiences with what he called “the boys”, the ordinary soldiers. So, besides being a legend, albeit somewhat tarnished in his later years, Brady also took care to present himself as a regular guy and ingratiate himself with his veteran audience, especially “his life-long comrades of the Seventh Regiment”, who had in fact initiated the event.<sup>62</sup> Besides rare instances of how close Brady’s self-authored captions might have approximated his performance (unfortunately they must remain near-ideal instances: he died two weeks before the scheduled event), analytically they exemplify how, in printed form, speaking capacities have become, quite literally, figures of speech (although transcription practices do not easily render aspects of voice, except in rough, phonetic simulations of dialect, sociolect, ethnolect or idiolect).<sup>63</sup> See the two illustrations of slide and caption below, in which I have differentiated the two personas by italic and normal typeface.

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 255.

<sup>63</sup> With regard to aspects of voice in printed plays, readers—including at one time, I suppose, actors rehearsing a role—have to be aided by stage directions. See for instance:

“MARTHA [*looks about the room. Imitates Bette Davis*]: What a dump. Hey, what’s that from? ‘What a dump!’”

And for spectators who may not have immediately recognized this brief impersonation of the Hollywood film star, the playwright would have been obliged to work an explicit reference into the dialog, which occurs a few lines further down:

“MARTHA: It’s from some goddamn Bette Davis picture...”; Edward Albee, *Who’s afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1977 [1962]), 11. As a matter of fact this is one way how performers’ ostensible denial of an audience’s presence, mentioned above, camouflages their acknowledgment.

Educational lantern readings do not use stage directions beyond scare quotes. An example is the following ironic reference to the modernizing efforts in a medieval town: “Rouen, in spite of its ‘improvements’ and modernized air, is still one of the finest memorial cities of old France.”; *Paris Exhibition, 1900* (Bradford: Riley Bros., 1900), 10; MLS.



no. 30. 'Filling their canteens'

*"Comrades all remember how eagerly they made a rush for the old well when on a long and dusty march they came to a plantation with its cool 'Spring House' or its deep dark well. This view shows the familiar scene of filling the canteens. The well has been covered with canvas and a guard placed over it to prevent any waste of water, for a well, however deep and copious soon becomes dry when the army commence to draw water."*<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Meredith (1946), [285].



no. 39. 'General W.T. Sherman on horse'

"General Sherman was familiarly known as 'Old Tecumseh'. His full name was William Tecumseh Sherman. This photograph was taken of him in the Union Lines before Atlanta July 19, 1864. *His 'boys' will be glad to see him as he looked during the war.*"<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid., [292].

In order to describe the lecture as an interactive, ritual phenomenon one needs an analytical tool that accounts for such changes of persona. A tool, that is, that accommodates the distinct strands of speech a lecture commonly consists of: self- and other-authored, rehearsed and spontaneous (or seemingly so), substantive and phatic, straightforward or allusive, inclusive or directed at a subset of participants (like Brady's "Comrades" and "boys"), degree of commitment or accountability, all of which are constitutive of the various personas that speakers project (or seem to inhabit) as they go along. One can see this in Brady's comment on one of his own statements: "If the spot where it stood could be wiped off the face of the Earth it would be well"—about a slide showing building that served as a Confederate prison; or in his imitation of the speech of escaped slaves that were subsequently employed by the Union army amid "Massa Linkum's sojers"—an instance of ethnolect; and in referring to a former self: "At the request [of the] *N.Y. Tribune* we published these company views..."<sup>66</sup> Such changes are not unique to lecturing; they are part of any interaction involving talk, not in the least everyday, spontaneous conversation. It concerns such commonplace matters as a change of voice to convey, say, irony or insinuation, or to mimic someone or something; a change from extempore to more ready-made utterances (sayings, maxims, quotations, etc., including reading out printed materials); and the alternation of utterances that are either more or less attributable to the perceived identity of the speaker, as in speaking in one's own name or on behalf of another person or organization.

For such modulations Goffman proposed the analytical term *footing*: the alignment between speaker and listener(s) as expressed in the way an utterance is framed—in this case as either part of the lecture proper, or a self-directed comment, an aside, quote, innuendo, etc.<sup>67</sup> Because I focus on the texts of lecture readings, I will only be concerned with their implications for speaker positions, which Goffman, in his inimitable vocabulary, rechristened *production format*. (He distributed the hearer over various positions, ranging from overt to concealed and from directly to indirectly addressed, with the term *participation status*.<sup>68</sup>) Production format encompasses three distinct, social capacities,

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid., [272], [290], [308], respectively.

<sup>67</sup> Erving Goffman, 'Footings', *Forms of talk* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1981b), 124-159.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid, 131-137.

already suggested above: the generation of speech sound (which he named *animator*), the selection of utterances (*author*), and the position, and its implied degree of responsibility, taken through the uttered text (*principal*).<sup>69</sup> Footing is not primarily concerned with the suasive aspects of a lecture, although some of its ritual work may resemble, even overlap with, rhetorical maneuvers, for instance when authoritative sources are quoted.

Printed lantern readings make the increased precision of the term *production format* immediately clear. While speakers, of course, animated their lecture as a whole, the text they delivered was commonly authored by subject experts or by name authors. (Usually at one remove from the spoken reading, authors could nevertheless be identical to the animator—Charles Dickens and travel writer E. Burton Holmes were famous examples, Mathew Brady almost.) As principals, speakers were to a greater or lesser extent spokespersons for these authors, depending on their performance (in the case of fictional stories, however, the way lecturers animated characters' direct speech would have been their own preserve). But they might also lecture on or in behalf of other parties, notably the organizations that engaged, sponsored or employed the speaker. Moreover, their delivery could implicitly support specific notions of professionalism, performance style, etc.<sup>70</sup> It is here that footing actually took on a contested aspect and set a lot of pens in motion.

### **Amateurs**

Professional lecturers never merely animated a reading, they performed it. While their acting out, when successful, may likely have blurred the abovementioned analytical distinctions and moved listeners to construe a lecturer's I's and we's as something close to (imagined) personality or autobiography, fundamentally they merely projected themselves *as* animators, authors, and/or principals within their performance.<sup>71</sup> Preparation was not just a matter of anticipating audience response, but also of embedment and consequent appropriation of the figure they wanted to cut. As an early 20<sup>th</sup>-century article admonished: "Suppose your topic is topographical, then take care that you have yourself visited the

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 144-146.

<sup>70</sup> Kember (November 2010), 419.

<sup>71</sup> Goffman (1981b), 148-149.

places described.” Effectively it also instructed the lecturer in what was the camouflaging of authors as well as unwanted animators and principals:

If any event in history has taken place in any spot shown on a picture on the screen, (...) read carefully what the most graphic historian has written about the real event, or learn almost by heart what the novelist or poet has said about the incident (...). If you cannot trust your memory, and must perforce read it, have it carefully looked out beforehand, do not fumble over the pages of the book seeking for it in the dim light of the lecture room. But quote naturally and do not drag in your quotation in a set and formal manner.<sup>72</sup>

No wonder that the professionals were critical of those they considered merely capable of reading the reading, the “amateurs”, a term that acquired a derisory connotation in the trade press. During the years that the public illustrated lecture became a fixture on the entertainment agenda the pages of the *The Optical Magic Lantern Journal and Photographic Enlarger* reflected their antipathy. A few examples:

Some people imagine that if they buy (at the cheapest possible price) either a new or second-hand bi-unial lantern, hire a set of slides, read the lecture without rehearsal, and chance as to whether the pictures are placed on the screen properly, introduce a little music by an amateur, and they think success is bound to follow. The reverse is the case.<sup>73</sup>

I can call to mind many of my brother lanternists who used to work up a subject for an original lecture, and buy slides to illustrate it; it might be some place they had visited, or it might not. For instance, I have a dozen times given a lecture on Egypt, though I have never been there, but I recollect the pleasure it was to me to read up and collect all the information I could, and then select slides to suit me. I would not have had any stereotype set of slides in those days, but now, anybody can give a ‘lecture’ if they can read the book sent with the hired slides. It may be Rome to-day, Scotland to-morrow, and the ascent of Mount Blanc the day after; these are not ‘lectures’, they are simply readings.<sup>74</sup>

The illustration of one of the greatest living authorities on natural history having his lecture ‘sandwiched’ between a dramatic piece and a concert is no doubt very deplorable from a lecturer's point of view, but it is a question of environment, this lecturing on scientific subjects, natural history, or what not.

I speak with some knowledge of lecturers and their ways, and it is evident that they do not always study the class of audience they have to entertain as well as instruct. Possibly that dramatic piece, or that concert, was all the majority of the audience of that ‘greatest living authority’ cared for, and if folks will try and ram dull subjects down the throats of a mixed audience, the lantern will not only take a back seat, but keep it!<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> T. Perkins quoted in: Kember (November 2010), 425.

<sup>73</sup> C. Goodwin Norton, ‘Success and non-success of lantern exhibitions’, *The Optical Magic Lantern Journal and Photographic Enlarger*, 4, #50 (July 1, 1893), 106.

<sup>74</sup> W. I. Chadwick, ‘Hire of lantern slides’, *ibid.*, 5, #66 (November 1, 1894), 181.

<sup>75</sup> H.A. Sanders, ‘Environment’, *ibid.*, 7, #90 (November 1896), 190.

Amateur slide makers, incidentally, received similar reproval, as in, “Let the beginner not attempt sunsets of the gorgeous order, after the manner of G.M.W. Turner (deceased).”<sup>76</sup>

Elsewhere similar complaints were vented: “An excellently read discourse exerts infinitely less effect than a middlingly spoken one”, a French pamphlet asserted.<sup>77</sup> And the Austrian *Lichtbilderdienst*, whose explicit purpose it was to stimulate the founding of a lecture culture, expounded:

In general, there was too much superficiality and pretense. People often cheaply rented another person’s lecture and read it out, after a fashion, without preparation or naming the actual author, while often the order or the timing of the images being shown did not coincide with what was said. (...) That is why users of the *Lichtbilderdienst’s* aids are strongly reminded, on the flyleaf of each individual sample text and in every caption folder, that the text is not meant to be read aloud, but only serves to prepare a spontaneous delivery.

Furthermore, users are reminded of the obligation to name the author of the subject, the creator of the images as well as, whenever specified, the publisher to whose courtesy one owes thanks for this or that.<sup>78</sup>

On the whole, however, the strident tone of these criticisms and the generalities that passed for evidence feed the suspicion that the contrast was overstated and to a significant extent discursive. The overstatement was in the very postulation of a contention between professionals and amateurs.<sup>79</sup> What it conveniently omitted was the category of local lecturers who wrote their own texts to their own illustrations for their own, irregular or even one-off public lectures (and whose performances were announced and reviewed in the pages of *The Optical Magic Lantern Journal*, too). While such lecturers’ enterprise and proficiency may well have put them on a par with professionals, their day jobs as well as the local aspect of their performances rather suggest an avocational mode of operation. Lantern culture nonetheless thrived on such enthusiasts (another contemporary denigrating

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<sup>76</sup> Quoted without reference in: Colin Gordon, *By gaslight in winter: a Victorian family history through the magic lantern* (London: Elm Tree Books, 1980), 26.

<sup>77</sup> Crouzet ([1897]), 47.

<sup>78</sup> *Wegweiser des Lichtbilderdienstes* (1928), 6-7.

<sup>79</sup> Joe Kember mentions another threat to the professional lecturer: “To some extent, the more renowned men were simply replaced within major lecturing agencies by new types of performer—such as Nansen, Amundsen or Churchill—who had gained their celebrity in other endeavours, and who came to the lantern on the promise of very large sums of money.” See his: “The “Battle for Attention” in British lantern shows, 1880-920”, Dellmann, Kessler (2020), 56. Documentation of another celebrity, German travel writer and filmmaker Colin Ross (who had managements in Germany and the U.S.A.), shows that for a two-week illustrated lecture tour of fifteen Dutch towns, organized by the German occupier in October 1941, he was paid 2,770.50 guilders—in today’s money almost €21,000; Nederlands Instituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie [Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies], Amsterdam, ‘Begrooting van ontvangsten en uitgaven van de Nederlandsch-Duitsche Kultuurgemeenschap’ [Dutch-German Cultural Fellowship], June 22, 1942, 2, Archief Nederlandsch-Duitsche Kultuurgemeenschap, 175/12; ‘Bericht der Rekeningskontrollstelle’, Appendix 8, *ibid.*, 175/15.

term<sup>80</sup>), while many local institutes relied on them for their public activities and for creating the very knowledge they transmitted.<sup>81</sup> As well university extensions and similar academic outreach activities created a market for academic staff, augmented by the so-called popular academies that emerged more or less simultaneously.

Unsurprisingly, the term *amateurs* came with less negative connotations in the brochures that had allowed those so designated to enter the lecture market in the first place. Apparently mindful of the indignation, the readings' publishers groomed their new and important type of customer a little for their performances, as in the 'Preliminary hints to amateur lecturers' that prefaced British publisher York & Son's readings for a number of years:

It is recommended to amateurs to carefully study the reading in private before attempting to render it in public. This will make the public reading more easy, and enable the reader (...) to deliver the lecture with greater effect.

This was followed by advice on the order and inspection of the slides to be projected. Similar to French custom, publishers encouraged lecturers to broaden their knowledge beyond the brochure's text, as a reading on the Spanish-American War shows: "These are little more than an epitome of the causes which brought about the war, and the events which followed. They furnish, however, information which the intelligent lecturer will easily amplify."<sup>82</sup> Or, in another reading: "Much of the information contained in this Lecture has been taken from the following works, to which all who are interested are referred for fuller particulars."<sup>83</sup> And both British and French brochures now and then contained pointers and hints to enliven the performance or bring it closer to home. For instance, a preliminary remark in a reading on Niagara Falls points out that "[i]f the operator is provided with some films of coloured gelatine their dexterous manipulation in front of the objective will very much increase the effectiveness of the winter views, [...] whose rapid

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<sup>80</sup> Jennifer Tucker, 'Making looking: lantern slides at the British Association for the Advancement of Science, 1850-1920', Dellmann, Kessler (2020), 133.

<sup>81</sup> Kember (2020), *Ibid.*, 54-56; Richard Crangle, 'Traces of instructional lantern slide use in two English cities', *ibid.* 127-128; Emily Hayes, "'Nothing but storytellers": from one thousand Royal Geographical Society lantern slides to A million pictures', *ibid.*, 145-156.

<sup>82</sup> *The Spanish-American War. Part II* (London: York & Son, 1898), 19; MLS.

<sup>83</sup> *Earthquakes and volcanoes* (Bradford: Riley Brothers, 1910), 4; MLS.

succession will form a delightful finale to the reading.”<sup>84</sup> In a brochure on saving fuel, a text slide listing price comparisons was footnoted with the suggestion that “the lecturer could do the same calculations based on local current prices of various fuels.”<sup>85</sup> And in a reading on the work of Louis Pasteur a footnote proposed to segue from a slide of micro-organisms to the lantern’s naked light beam and reveal the “considerable quantity of particles” in order to give audiences a sense of the ubiquity of germs.<sup>86</sup>

Interestingly, such suggestions were formulated in the terms of the professionals’ objections, admitting in so many words that their readings would certainly have been enhanced by gifted performers. This only points up that insofar there was any contention it was actually between the professionals and the companies that had introduced the amateur to the national lantern market, changing the business profoundly. What’s more, it alerts one to the possibility that the professional performers’ focus on delivery might actually have concealed—even to themselves—that the emergence of the amateur signified that demand for qualified lecturers had exceeded supply (thanks, as noted, to the increased opportunities created by institutes of popular uplift, education legislation, and increased educational possibilities in general, as well as by the photographic slide).

This is not to suggest that educational lectures per se were considered easier to perform than character-based stories or poetry. A look at MUNAÉ’s collection may lead one to believe it was, but this repository represents an institutional history that was exclusively devoted to factual and educational readings. In MLS’s ‘collectors’ collection’, however, the educational reading, called “lecture”, is a minority—although by no means a small one—among other genres, notably “stories”. As Richard Crangle explains, in the United Kingdom readings were to a significant extent also meant for domestic use, often in the form of “home entertainment package[s]” that contained a variety of topics.<sup>87</sup> Indeed, MLS brings to the fore the notion of a lantern *program* and its alternation of items of different length, content or mood. Its Readings Library boasts a number of so-called compilation brochures

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<sup>84</sup> James Comper Gray, *The falls of Niagara* (York & Son, n.d.), 5; MLS.

<sup>85</sup> *Comment économiser le chauffage domestique et culinaire* (Melun: Imprimerie administrative, 1918), 11, n. 1; BnF.

<sup>86</sup> Henri Coupin, *Pasteur* (Melun: Imprimerie administrative, 1904), 5, n. 1; MUNAÉ.

<sup>87</sup> Crangle (2004), 90.

An analysis of pre-packaged slide sets in an 1892 American catalog shows that most of these, too, “were targeted at smaller exhibitors and home use” as well as “[s]chool houses of moderate size”; Terry Borton, Debbie Borton, ‘How many American lantern shows in a year?’, Richard Crangle, Mervyn Heard, Ine van Dooren (eds.), *Realms of light: uses and perceptions of the magic lantern from the 17th to the 21st century* (London: Magic Lantern Society, 2005), 114.

that struck a balance between education and entertainment.<sup>88</sup> In France, however, after the state had taken an active interest, public lecturing was meant to inform rather than entertain: many *notices* brought their audiences up-to-date with contemporary phenomena. To be sure, MUNAÉ, like MLS, has its share of traditional lecture topics, too—notably travel and geography, history or natural history (but as its topics were emphatically secular, not religion, unless it was of a more objective and reflective nature<sup>89</sup>). Yet proportionally it appears to contain a larger number of readings about then recent technologies (e.g. aviation, electric traction, intercontinental telegraphy, refrigeration, X-rays, the American skyscraper, the Paris underground); about sociomedical phenomena (hospital hygiene, combating infant mortality and venereal disease, mechanotherapy, serotherapy, collective health insurance, sport); about new products (petrol, reinforced concrete, the telephone, gramophone, automobile, bicycle, submarine); and about discoveries and new scientific insights in archaeology, botany, geology, microbiology, and more. In this perspective, the material legacy in both repositories, though incomplete, seems to adequately reflect their respective, major national practices in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

### Rapport

What we now call footing seems to have been purposefully employed by the amateurs' opponents in their reports and letters to the editor and by the publishers who promoted their entry into the business. But can the concept, even with only printed readings to go on, give a sense of the ways nonprofessionals shaped the situation in which they performed their lectures? While manuals and other advice literature merely outlined the width and breadth of lantern shows' arrangements and, explicitly or implicitly, audience expectations, their arguments were rather concerned with style and rhetoric. Still, they were equivocal, as the knowledge they imparted was often based on personal experience or opinion. The

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<sup>88</sup> Examples are: *A year within the Arctic Circle with captain Nares – The bashful man – The five senses* (London: York & Son, ≥1890-≤1893), containing a lecture, comedy, and poem, respectively. The latter two also appear in another compilation, preceded by *The telephone, the microphone, and the phonograph* (London: York & Son, ≥1878-≤1893). *The romance of history: or, fact and fiction* (London: York & Son, n.d.), a lecture on British historic buildings that segues smoothly into *Aladdin and the magic lantern*. And a series of pre-packaged lantern lecture programs titled *The onward reciter: a choice collection of recitations, readings, and dialogues*, specifically meant for “Band of Hope meetings, Sunday school gatherings, Templar lodges, etc.”, was published by various companies for a number of decades—the copies in this repository are dated between 1873 and 1905.

<sup>89</sup> See for instance: J. Hackin, *Le bouddhisme* (Paris: Radiguet & Massiot, [1900]); Médéric Toureur, *Les croisades* (Melun: Imprimerie administrative, 1905); MUNAÉ.

*Bulletin de la Ligue de l'Enseignement* recommended: "Don't show too many slides at a time, you will annoy the audience. A slide's interest is as much, if not more, in the explanation one gives than in the beauty of the image and the quality of projection."<sup>90</sup> A brief article on lecturing in a British journal, on the other hand, stated that a good lantern, a good lanternist, and good (that is, not cheap) slides come first, with the lecturer only coming in fourth place of importance for such qualities as "pleasant and distinctly clear voice", "master of the subject", and "brevity and conciseness in his explanation".<sup>91</sup>

Another obstacle to gaining insight in the amateurs' performances is that the readings, as supports for 'placeholder' lecturers, lacked audience design. That is, their texts were not shaped according to "what they know, believe, and suppose that [their] hearers (...) know, believe, and suppose."<sup>92</sup> By contrast, take a simple manifestation of audience design in the way a local lecturer adapted his talk to an audience of townsmen in the following outline of his topic, a hike along a regional river, the geography of which hardly needed further explanation:

The river Wharfe rises some two-and-half-miles above Oughtershaw, under Cam Fell, amidst scenes of stern solitude and moorland grandeur, 1273 feet above the level of the sea.

Down to Buckden it is a mountain stream, tumbling over the rocks in a series of cataracts, very fine when the river is flooded.

Below Kettlewell the limestone escarpments on either hand form a remarkable series of terraces...<sup>93</sup>

Lantern readings published for general use assumed no such detailed knowledge, simply because as a rule they did not distinguish between specific (say, local or professional) audiences. Nor did they ordinarily deal with local issues. Their rental signalled their repeatable use, regardless of any particular situation of delivery and any particular lecturer.

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<sup>90</sup> Quoted in: Natali, Mazzoti, Perriault (1978), 16-17.

<sup>91</sup> J.W. Wright, 'How to deliver a lecture', *The Optical Lantern and Cinematograph Journal*, vol. 1, #3/6 (January 1905), 67-68, <https://archive.org/details/opticallantern01lond/page/66/mode/2up>.

<sup>92</sup> Herbert H. Clark, Thomas B. Carlson, 'Hearers and speech acts', *Language*, 58, #2 (June 1982), 342-343. From conversation analysis comes a somewhat similar term: *orientation to co-participant*. It deals with "an orientation to what you know they know" in recorded, two-person dialogs; see: Harvey Sacks, 'Lecture 5: A single instance of a Q-A pair; Topical versus pair organization; Disaster talk', *Lectures on conversation, volume II*, ed. by Emanuel A. Schegloff (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1995 [1992]), part VIII, 564.

<sup>93</sup> Thomas Ryder, *My rambles in Upper Wharfedale, 'Queen of the Yorkshire Dales'* (Southampton: White Rose II, 2002 [1907]), 12. This edition is a "shortened text" of the original 133-page, 1907 lantern lecture, reproduced with "prints of over 100 of its large glass slides" and "additional recent photographs" in a 'Then and now' section.

But audience design is not just a matter of cognition. It is also ritual, that is as a way of responding to and connecting with an audience. Insofar as this involved changes of footing, through self-interruptions or other momentary suspensions of a speaker's official task, they were often unscripted. And although they could have been prepared, by definition the lantern readings contained less than what was actually said during their performance. As Goffman writes, ways of establishing rapport "seem to bear more than the text does on the situation *in* which the lecture is given, as opposed to the situation *about* which the lecture is given."<sup>94</sup>

Therefore, a crucial presumption for the following is *that the educational lecture in particular would have allowed more room for ritual work than other lantern genres*. The briefness of Brady's captions, for example, may well reflect his expectation of engaging in conversation or banter with his old comrades. By contrast, in performances of stories, poems, sermons, songs, and other more or less fixed texts spoken demonstrations of audience design were circumscribed by their often highly dialogic character, the compelling expectations created by meter and rhyme scheme, and/or their familiarity. Their recital would rather have resembled a set piece, the ritually interactive aspects of which were performed accomplished by *dramatics*.<sup>95</sup> Only their introductory sections<sup>96</sup> or a program's interstitial comments—the latter are missing entirely from these brochures—, would have been more tolerant of impromptu remarks.<sup>97</sup> Judging from the educational lantern readings that have come down to us it is clear that how performers were to acknowledge, and resonate among, their publics was largely left to themselves, preliminary hints notwithstanding. The unceremonious way many of these brochures begin and, even more abruptly, end attest to this. To be sure, as a reading could be included in a larger program, introductory remarks may have been cut from print on purpose, as their position would have changed from one performance to another. But precisely these circumstances would

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<sup>94</sup> Goffman (1981a), 179.

<sup>95</sup> In establishing a genealogy of lecturing, more particularly of linking public lantern and film lectures, such recitals would not qualify, at least not in the West.

<sup>96</sup> As in: "Dickens in delineating (...) Christmas and its social activities (...) enables us to almost imagine that we hear the joyous laughter of a jolly Christmas party as we read the story"; Charles Dickens, *Gabriel Grub: or, the goblins who stole the sexton* (s.l., s.n., [≥1836]), 189; MLS. Most stories in this repository dispensed with printed introductions.

<sup>97</sup> This can be taken as a gloss on Richard Crangle's statement that "[t]here was (...) quite a range of different requirements for verbal intervention by a lecturer or commentator, varying considerably according to the nature of the text and context."; see: Crangle (2001a), 42.

have put the burden even more on the lecturers and made their performance harder rather than easier.

Nevertheless, even when lantern readings duplicated the spoken lectures imperfectly, they do contain instances of *scripted* ritual work. These instances of modulating a reading's commonly impersonal mode of address compel one to gauge to what extent they supported the nonprofessionals in establishing rapport. I see them, first of all, as either traces of the readings' authors, probably remnants of their own lectures, or as the outcome of editorial decisions. This consideration is informed by the collections of MLS, MUNAÉ, and BnF (Bibliothèque nationale de France-Gallica). In the latter two the majority of *notices* bears an author's name, usually a subject expert. And as a whole these texts show greater uniformity and formality, no doubt a result of the centralized organization of the French educational lecture market, or markets: the Catholic church, too, partly in reaction to the state's anti-clerical propaganda, kept close tabs on its readings published since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century in periodicals as *L'Ange des Projections lumineuses* and *Les Conférences*.<sup>98</sup> MLS's readings show more variety in tone and in degree of formality. However, I should point out that while these collections together provide a measure of critical mass, certainly not all their readings contain such scripted modulations of discourse, and in those that do, their occurrences are few and far between.<sup>99</sup>

Secondly, although an anomalous phenomenon both within an individual brochure and throughout the entire collections consulted, these instances do allow arrangement according to changes in the alignment between speaker and audience. Consequently, I have grouped them into a few broad categories, although some can be accommodated by more than one of the specific capacities of footing involved. Quotation, for instance, is obviously a matter of author, but possibly of animator, too, while the category of hedges only marks shifts in principal. Still the order in which I describe them below is largely arbitrary (rather than, say, cumulative). But as art historian Robert S. Nelson has pointed out for the academic art historical lecture, delivery is intimately responsive to both the audience and

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<sup>98</sup> Kessler, Lenk (2020), 63-65.

<sup>99</sup> The reading *The romance of history: or, fact and fiction* that will be quoted a number of times hereafter, is exceptional, for its smooth change from its eponymous lecture to the story *Aladdin and the magic lantern* as well as for being the liveliest and most 'personal' of all the readings I have seen within MLS's category of lecture. It contains quite a few instances of scripted ritual work that I discuss below.

the slides projected. And while he, like Goffman, takes his examples from observed situations at best—some are even taken from a play featuring art history lectures!—, his article is a reminder that in real life changes of footing cannot always neatly be planned.<sup>100</sup>

I. The first category I distinguish is self-referencing. Of course, in the lantern readings consulted many self-mentions to the lecturer, whether in the subjective first person singular (“I”) or the more prevalent objective first person plural (“we”), are inconspicuous and routine placeholder terms used at interstitial moments and other metadiscourse. Often they merely mark a shift away from the impersonal mode of address characterized by the indefinite pronoun *one* (French *on*) or none at all. A few examples: “Before we move on to a description of the various machines that make up a port’s equipment, it seems interesting to us...”<sup>101</sup>; “As we have to limit ourselves, we will only focus on two of the abbey’s most admirable points...”<sup>102</sup>; “We can only trust that we have excited sufficient interest to pursue the subject farther in the mind of those who have never previously visited these shores....”<sup>103</sup>

- When deictic terms increase self-references become more interactively prominent. In fact, deixis in the following examples draws attention to more of a lecture’s elements than the speaker: it specifies the event, the audience, the slide, the lecture or the topic. Some examples: “This evening we give one illustration of a quaint corner of this building.”<sup>104</sup>; “I have so far assumed that you all know...”<sup>105</sup>; “This view, taken not far from the front, in Champagne, shows us a woman operating a harvester...”<sup>106</sup>; “I have got a very strange text for you to-night. Here it is—*A bag of holes*.”<sup>107</sup>; “I am going to talk to you this evening upon a subject that I dare say comparatively few of you know much about. You know your daily newspaper, of course. (...) Yes, but out of the millions of us who read the millions of

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<sup>100</sup> Robert S. Nelson, ‘The slide lecture, or The work of art history in the age of mechanical reproduction’, *Critical Inquiry*, 26, #3 (Spring 2000), 414-434.

<sup>101</sup> W. Holt, *L’outillage des grands ports de commerce moderne* (Paris: Gustave Vitry, 1912), 10; MUNAÉ.

<sup>102</sup> J.-E. Bulloz, *Basse Normandie. Orne, Calvados, Manche* (Paris: Maison artistique d’Éditions photographiques et de Vulgarisation par l’Image, 1900c), 13; BnF.

<sup>103</sup> *Mediterranean shores* (Aberdeen: John Avery & Co, [≥1881]), 40; MLS.

<sup>104</sup> *An architectural tour in Central France* (London: York & Son, n.d. [≤1904]), 12; MLS.

<sup>105</sup> *Earthquakes and volcanoes* (1910), 20; MLS.

<sup>106</sup> Anne-Marie Bernard, *L’effort de la femme française pendant la guerre* (Melun: Imprimerie administrative, 1919), 10; MUNAÉ.

<sup>107</sup> *A bag of holes* (s.l, s.n., n.d.), 3; MLS.

newspapers, how many give a thought to the manner in which we have them provided for us?”<sup>108</sup> And an intriguing example is the double shift, first to an objective, then to a subjective first-person self-reference: “What struck us most perhaps is the bravery of French women. I was told that there were thousands who had never before worked the land...”<sup>109</sup> (As each of these shifts is accompanied by a hedge—“perhaps”; “I was told”—they also imply different levels of responsibility for their statement’s credibility.) To what capacities “I” and “we” precisely refer, however, is harder to specify, an issue I will return to in the final section.

- Next, there are references, either explicit or suggested, to the performer in capacities other than animator: as researcher, author, photographer or other functions in the production of the lecture being delivered. Usually this is accomplished by blurring the deixis of pronominals to hide the distinction between speaker and other persons or organizations involved.<sup>110</sup> Examples are: “[W]e deliberately chose a motoring road for one day’s journey out of Edinburgh and back...”<sup>111</sup>; “I have till now set before you the result of much research...”<sup>112</sup>; “When at Rheims the officials kindly allowed us to explore the Cathedral at our own sweet will, and finding an open door we wandered about (...) until we reached the roof level, exactly opposite the Flèche, which we were able to photograph from the belfry.”<sup>113</sup>; “In selecting subjects for our consideration this evening, we have

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<sup>108</sup> *All about a London daily: from the paper mill to the breakfast table* (London: York & Son, 1898), 1; MLS.

<sup>109</sup> Bernard (1919), 8; MUNAÉ.

<sup>110</sup> “Lecturers typically took credit for the photographic images that accompanied their talks, even if they had not taken the slides themselves”, Jennifer Lynn Peterson writes. Surely the availability of printed lantern readings ever since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century allowed lecturers to expand their alleged accomplishments. But when she observes that, in the United States, “illustrated travel lectures were marketed largely on the appeal of the lecturer rather than the subject matter”, I suppose this applied mainly to the stars of the business, notably John L. Stoddard, E. Burton Holmes or Edward L. Wilson, who exerted “a strong authorial presence” over their work; see also n. 79. Distributors and publishers that operated on a more industrial scale were more interested, I suppose, in the volume of selling or lending their catalogs of illustrated lectures, regardless of the lecturer; see her: *Education in the school of dreams: travelogues and early nonfiction film* (Durham – London: Duke University Press, 2013), 23-25; X. Theodore Barber, ‘The roots of travel cinema: John L. Stoddard, E. Burton Holmes and the nineteenth-century illustrated travel lecture’, *Film History*, 5, #1 (March 1993), 74.

<sup>111</sup> *The finest hundred miles in the Borders* (Edinburgh: Scottish Motor Traction Co. [>1920]), 3; MLS.

<sup>112</sup> *The romance of history: or, fact and fiction* (n.d.), 23; MLS.

<sup>113</sup> *An architectural tour in Central France* ([≤1904]), 10; MLS.

Here the amount of detail strongly suggests that the text—although anonymous—is autobiographical. It makes one wonder whether nonprofessionals felt comfortable presenting such detailed statements, and if so, whether they clipped or dropped them in performance. I presume throughout that nonprofessionals had no hand in composing or redacting the lantern readings.

intentionally chosen them as varied as possible..."<sup>114</sup>; "Surely we could not have a more striking realization of my title of *Fact and fiction*..."<sup>115</sup>

- Finally, a subset of self-references that is extremely rare in print: self-interruptions or self-corrections. Signalled by a sudden break in the flow of speech, they draw attention to the speaker as animator in an allegedly unintended way, as in: "Who shall say who told the first story—I mean, of course, the first *fairy* story..."<sup>116</sup> Obviously, given the commonly unforeseen occurrence of such interruptions, scripted instances rather represent faux-spontaneous speech.

II. The next category consists of those instances when speakers linguistically leave their elevated position and join the audience; the felicitous French term for this is *discours enveloppant*.<sup>117</sup> These instances, too, can be unremarkable and routine, as in: "The picture now before us..."<sup>118</sup> or "Now let me tell you..."<sup>119</sup> But other ones may have been included for enhanced effect, as in: "The war Japan has waged—and we know with what results—against one of the most formidable military powers in the world..."<sup>120</sup>; "This photograph brings together elements of various significance, it will be agreed, in the life of our city."<sup>121</sup>; "[L]et us unite in heartily singing 'God save the Queen'"<sup>122</sup>—here, of course, it is the very activity requested that is supposed to bring speaker and audience together. Other examples, furthermore, appear not only to envelop the auditorium but an entire community or country to which a speaker and his audience—"we"—are supposed to stand in a metonymical relation: "I have often wondered how it is that in this age of commemoration we do not organize some memorial to mark the spot and date..."<sup>123</sup>; "It is the soil that has seen us being born, it is the national flag, it is France... it is us and those whom we love, it is

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<sup>114</sup> *Fifty wonders in nature and art* (Dundee: Valentine & Sons, ≥1900 - ≤1902]), 3; MLS.

<sup>115</sup> *The romance of history: or, fact and fiction* (n.d.), 7; MLS.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.* (n.d.), 23.

<sup>117</sup> Natali, Mozzati, Perriault (1978), 14.

<sup>118</sup> *Paris Exhibition, 1900* (1900), 17; MLS.

<sup>119</sup> *All about a London daily* (1898), 22; MLS

<sup>120</sup> Paul Lemosof, *Le Japon* (Melun: Imprimerie administrative, 1904), 3; BnF. The author refers to the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905; MUNAÉ.

<sup>121</sup> Gaston Dez, *Salonique* (Melun: Imprimerie administrative, 1916), 14; MUNAÉ.

<sup>122</sup> *The Queen's Highland home* (Aberdeen: G.W. Wilson, 1888), 16; MLS.

<sup>123</sup> *The romance of history: or, fact and fiction* (n.d.), 7; MLS.

our blood, our ambitions..."<sup>124</sup> But with this last discourse a lecturer went beyond edifying his audience and engaged in sheer propaganda.

- Naturally a measure of rapport could be established by defining an audience in an appreciative way, sometimes marked by shifting to an inclusive use of "we" or "us": "Few of us, perhaps, would be able to agree upon one country which would have for us an equal interest, unless, indeed, we except the land whither I am to lead you to-night."<sup>125</sup>; "The Bull as you doubtlessly know is the emblem of Europe..."<sup>126</sup>; or the phrase quoted in a category above, "I have so far assumed that you all know...". Some of the most straightforward instances of this form of direct address occur in lectures for children, as in: "Boys! don't bet and don't gamble."<sup>127</sup>; "The first time Jesus came into the world was as a little child, and it is foremost to you, dear children, that he is offered as an example."<sup>128</sup>

- Related to this are moments when a speaker turns to a (supposedly) specific section of the audience, the addressees—the way Mathew Brady did with "the boys". See for instance: "When the car (...) runs across the open wastes of Soutra Hill, twelve hundred feet above sea level, some of us know what to expect."<sup>129</sup>; "Our temperance friends will be glad to find that in place of the usual rum-grog, it was found that a bowl of hot tea was amazingly relished by the men."<sup>130</sup>. Designating addressees comes with an obligation to create a balance to specifically address variously defined sections of an audience. One instance of this subset seems—in print—either to be a warning to some among the audience or, alternatively, a favorable juxtaposition of the spectators currently addressed with those absent presumed unfit for the occasion: "At the outset, then, let me say that all who do not take account of the religious interest of the play, not only fail to do it justice, but miss the purpose of those who present it."<sup>131</sup>

- This way of establishing rapport is also emphatically attempted by engaging an audience through mock dialogue, as in: "Its possession has always been valued by whoever wanted to control the coast of Flanders. Still, you say, it is located well away, hugging tightly against a

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<sup>124</sup> 'La patrie', *L'Ange des Projections lumineuses*, 1, #2 (November 15, 1902), 26; BnF.

<sup>125</sup> *Wanderings in Bible lands* (Bradford: Riley Brothers, 1887), 3; MLS.

<sup>126</sup> Amy Croft, *A day in London* (Dublin: David Baldwin, n.d.), 1<sup>st</sup> edn., 5; MLS.

<sup>127</sup> *A bag of holes* (n.d.), 7; MLS.

<sup>128</sup> 'Jésus enfant', *L'Ange des Projections lumineuses*, 1, #4 (January 1903), 54; BnF.

<sup>129</sup> *The finest hundred miles in the Borders* ([>1920]), 16; MLS.

<sup>130</sup> James Comper Gray, *A year within the Arctic Circle with Captain Nares* (s.l., s.n., ≥1876 - ≤1893), 28-29; MLS.

<sup>131</sup> Ernest N. Coulthard, *The Passion Play at Ober-Ammergau in 1910*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (London: Newton & Co., 1910), 3; MLS.

range of dunes, almost at the mouth of the Yser! But that's precisely why..."<sup>132</sup>; "Did Rembrandt, as Fromentin believes, insert this figure (...) simply because he needed a dash of light within these large shadows?"<sup>133</sup>

III. The latter example brings us to a category that consists of those moments when a speaker steps back momentarily in favor of known or unknown others—including entire speech communities—by quotation, reference, appeals to common knowledge, and conventional or archaic expressions and phrases; I assume that jokes and anecdotes, insofar as they were felt to be in the public domain, may be classified here as well. A small selection: "Jose Marti, the patriotic lawyer justly styled 'the brains of the insurrection'..."<sup>134</sup>; "One has only to look, says one of his biographers, at the extraordinary frame of his face and his eyes shining with youth..."<sup>135</sup>; "Ransome, in an article entitled 'The probable cause of the San Francisco Earthquake' says..."<sup>136</sup>; "[The painter] can show how 'Brave Broke, he waved his sword,/ Crying—'Shannons, let us board!' or, coming down to our own days, he can show the meaning of the signal 'Well done, Condor!'"<sup>137</sup>; "It is here, people say, that for a long time she hatched the plan she was to carry out, on July 13, 1793, stabbing and killing Marat to avenge the Girondins."<sup>138</sup>; "And now we hie to Warwick..."<sup>139</sup> In readings from belles-lettres quotes of long passages are quite common, if not expected; see: "The rest we will tell in John's own words, written many years after."<sup>140</sup>; see also *A night with Burns*<sup>141</sup>, *Sir Walter Scott and his country*<sup>142</sup>, *Corneille*<sup>143</sup>, or *The city of Rochester and its associations with the life of Charles Dickens*.<sup>144</sup> I round this section off with a jocular anecdote: "[B]ut pray don't hold me responsible for such treasonable opinions, or I shall answer, like the

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<sup>132</sup> Gaston Dez, *Le front belge, les dunes, l'Yser: Nieupoort et les dunes* (Melun: Imprimerie administrative, 1917), 13; MUNAÉ.

<sup>133</sup> Auguste Anglès, *Rembrandt* (Melun: Imprimerie administrative, 1914), 22; MUNAÉ.

<sup>134</sup> *The Spanish-American War, part II* (s.l., s.n., 1898), 21; MLS.

<sup>135</sup> Coupin (1904), 3; MUNAÉ.

<sup>136</sup> *Earthquakes and volcanoes* (1910), 13; MLS.

<sup>137</sup> *Royal Naval Exhibition, London, 1891* (London, York & Son, 1891), 11; MLS.

The quoted lines come from a song about a naval battle during the War of 1812, while "Well done, Condor" was signalled to the British navy's gun vessel of that name during the siege of Alexandria, Egypt, in 1882.

<sup>138</sup> Bulloz (1900), 7; BnF.

<sup>139</sup> *The Shakespeare country* (Aberdeen, [G.W. Wilson], 1890), 12; MLS.

<sup>140</sup> *The life and times of the Rev. John Wesley, the father of Methodism* (s.l., s.n., n.d.), 273; MLS.

<sup>141</sup> *A night with Burns* (Dundee: Valentine & Sons, 1893), 3; MLS.

<sup>142</sup> *Sir Walter Scott and his country* (Aberdeen: G.W. Wilson, n.d.), passim; MLS.

<sup>143</sup> Fernand Cauët, *Corneille* (Paris: Gustave Vitry, 1912); MUNAÉ.

<sup>144</sup> *The city of Rochester and its associations with the life of Charles Dickens* (Aberdeen: G.W. Wilson, ≥1878-≤1901): MLS.

Irishman who was accosted by his lawyer with ‘Dennis I’ll trouble you for the 6s. 8d. you owe me.’ ‘Sure it’s 6s. 8d. ye want, is it? and what for?’ ‘It’s for the opinion you had of me.’ ‘Oh, faix, then, I never had any opinion of ye at all.’”<sup>145</sup>

IV. Finally, hedges or the ways speakers, usually for unspecified reasons, do not wholly commit themselves to a statement. Although hedges may have functioned to reduce the gap between speaker and audience, they occur infrequently in readings of the instructional kind; indeed most contain no such mitigators at all. A logical explanation is that lantern readings were meant to impart knowledge that an author or publisher was expected to have considered well before the text went to print. Unless, of course, that knowledge itself was doubtful, as in: “This etching of 1643 is probably the first portrait the artist made of him.”<sup>146</sup> or “We believe that the photograph before us is the only existing view of it.”<sup>147</sup> But from an interactional point of view, hedges such as “I think”, “I guess”, “perhaps” or “possibly”, being such a commonplace feature of everyday speech, might well have occurred spontaneously. Who knows whether the preprinted instances were also put into these texts unthinkingly and, therefore, less meaningfully? See for instance: “...none perhaps offers so many attractions to the tourist...”<sup>148</sup>; Nowadays, perhaps, the Americans and their tall buildings give us proof of their superiority...”<sup>149</sup>; “...they were always tumbling into the sea (...) and being rescued by some passing fishing boat, for I don’t think any were actually drowned.”<sup>150</sup> A more elaborate and purposeful example, lastly, is: “According to not very trustworthy tradition, this custom commemorates...”<sup>151</sup>

In order to get some perspective on these and other instances of scripted ritual work, I would like to start at the opposite end of the lecturing business, the professionals, and from there work back towards the lantern readings. Actually, I take as my example one of the trade’s epitomes, American lecturer, photographer, and filmmaker E. Burton Holmes.

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<sup>145</sup> *The romance of history: or, fact and fiction* (n.d.), 5; MLS.

<sup>146</sup> Anglès (1914), 24; MUNAÉ.

<sup>147</sup> *The Queen’s Highland home* (1888), 8; MLS.

<sup>148</sup> *Paris Exhibition, 1900* (1900), 9; MLS.

<sup>149</sup> W. Holt, *Les hautes maisons américaines* (Paris: Gustave Vitry, 1914), 4; MUNAÉ.

<sup>150</sup> *The world on wings* (s.l., s.n., 1910), 3; MLS.

<sup>151</sup> *A day in Oxford* (Aberdeen: G.W. Wilson, ≤1889), 6; MLS.

Having set himself up as a travel lecturer, although professionally managed for a while, Holmes developed a distinctively elegant and polished, extempore style on the stage (enhanced by a sophisticated-sounding British accent<sup>152</sup>). In a long career, spanning c. 60 years from the early 1890s through the 1950s, Holmes worked in the major visual media of the time: lantern shows, photography, film—the latter both as an addition to the slides in his live shows and as ready-made items for cinema programs—, and television. Plausibly because Holmes’s films were considered lost until 2004<sup>153</sup>, he is still best known for his travel lectures, the texts of which were repeatedly collected in print.

He prefaced his first volume of printed travelogues, in 1901, with the words: “To transfer the illustrated lecture from public platform to printed page is to give permanent form to the ephemeral.”<sup>154</sup> The statement, I think, is twice wrong, albeit for contrasting reasons. Insofar as it referred to impromptu remarks the ephemeral simply never made it into print at all. And insofar as it referred to the spoken lecture as a whole the ephemeral did not fade quite so quickly, if at all. Holmes’s style as well as his fame precluded, certainly complicated, the use of his travelogues by nonprofessional lecturers, or other lecturers tout court—even though he himself had not always been above using materials published by others. Besides, his lectures were copyrighted. And since 1897 the use of films, usually shot by himself or his assistants, to illustrate his lectures made them an even harder act to follow.<sup>155</sup> Holmes is doubtlessly an extraordinary example, but that makes it all the more clear why the preprinted lantern readings left their users fending for themselves.

A major consideration in my argument is that the most noticeable feature of self-made, professional lectures is self-referencing. In Holmes’s case, having undertaken all travels himself and being the writer and performer of the reports thereof, it was natural to refer to himself as the one through which an audience—and a readership—would experience his treks and trips and their events. A consistently first-person, largely present-

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<sup>152</sup> See his brief introduction to his production of *HISTORIC NEW ENGLAND* (USA, 1946 | color | sound | 21’), at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZhcAfZdvpU>.

<sup>153</sup> Press release ‘A world thought lost is found’, *Burton Holmes Historical Collection* (October 20, 2004), <https://www.burtonholmes.org/rediscovery/release.html>.

<sup>154</sup> E. Burton Holmes, ‘Foreword’, in: *The Burton Holmes Lectures, vol. I: Into Morocco* (Battle Creek, MI: Little-Preston, 1901), [9];

<sup>155</sup> Barber (March 1993), 79-82; Peterson (2013), 37-39.

tense narration marks his writings as it must have done his lectures. Here he is again, at the outset of his journey to Yellowstone Park:

Ask any traveller who has visited the Yellowstone National Park to describe it and he will reply: "It is indescribable."

My task is therefore not an easy one, since it is to describe the indescribable. Returning from Greece to the United States, I was dreading the long mid-summer railway-ride over fully two-thirds of our broad continent. "But", said a friend, "why do you go by rail? Why don't you travel west by water?" The thought was new to me, and I at once resolved to take advantage of that splendid water-way which leads from the Empire State to the Gates of the Great Northwest. Accordingly the porter is given instructions to "pat us off at Buffalo", where we begin our long voyage around America's vast inland seas.<sup>156</sup>

Of course, self-referencing was ideally suited for travel and expedition accounts. Besides heightening lecturers' reputation for their savoir-faire, particularly in faraway territories, it was the personal touch that could be exploited to great advantage through the use of I or we—even though, as noted, first-person narration conveyed a "constructed public persona" rather than pure autobiography.<sup>157</sup> But precisely the autobiographical aura that clung to it—"My task is therefore not an easy one", "Returning from Greece", or "said a friend"—might have made such name authors' texts ill-suited for use by nonprofessionals; like an oversized mantle they simply would not have become them without serious alterations.<sup>158</sup>

And there is more to this. In the last sentence from the quoted excerpt the change from "I" to "us" marks the moment when Holmes embarked the boat, after which he consistently uses the first person plural. This is vintage Holmes: an instance of *discours enveloppant*, it suggests both his presence among the other passengers and his audience. And one wouldn't be surprised if this particular moment also marked a change of projected illustration, as it is a likely instance of his aim that "[i]n an illustrated lecture the impression upon eye and ear should be simultaneous, that the suggestion of travel may be successfully produced."<sup>159</sup> What made Holmes's writing and lecturing so effective is that changes of footing appeared to be largely coincident with rhetoric.

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<sup>156</sup> E. Burton Holmes, *Burton Holmes Travelogues*, vol. 12: *'The Yellowstone National Park'* (Chicago – New York: The Travelogue Bureau, 1914 [1910]) 6-7.

<sup>157</sup> Peterson (2013), 24.

<sup>158</sup> However, American photographer Edward L. Wilson's published travel lectures *were* heavily used by amateurs, as their design seems to have been purposely adapted to this use, closely resembling the printed brochures discussed in this paper; see: *Wilson's lantern journeys: a series of descriptions of journeys at home and abroad for use with photographic views, the stereoscope, and magic lantern*, vol. III (Philadelphia: Edward L. Wilson, 1883); Barber (March 1993), 69.

<sup>159</sup> Holmes (1901), [9].

By contrast, to what extent the instances of scripted ritual work sampled above accomplished their task cannot be so easily ascertained, let alone argued. Apart from the fact that, on the page, some seem indistinguishable from rhetorical maneuvers, encompassing explanations for their anomaly remain elusive, at best partial. Their infrequency, for instance, would not have been sufficient to salt many a reading's factual quality with a semblance of spontaneity. Nor could they be taken as reminders to nonprofessional lecturers to acknowledge their audience at least once in a while, as not all nonprofessionals were inexperienced speakers—think of the teachers in France discussed above. And, coming back to the controversy stirred up by these brochures and the opportunities they offered to nonprofessionals, these instances may have suggested that audiences were listening to speakers who upheld professional standards, or at least their mere trappings. But that, of course, presupposes that other elements of their delivery passed muster.

In view of the statement above that the lantern lecture was a verbal performance “subject to evaluation for the way it is done”, the paucity, or sheer absence, of scripted modulations must have been insufficient to discipline speakers into assuming “responsibility (...) for a display of performative competence.”<sup>160</sup> That term implies that a speaker conformed “to the speech expected of certain members of society whenever they open their mouths”,<sup>161</sup> including forms of audience design, whether prepared or improvised. Indeed, Richard Crangle’s statement that “[t]he basic aim [of lantern readings’ publishers and dealers] was to enable the amateur or part-time lanternist to pronounce with authority on subjects which were otherwise the province of professionals”<sup>162</sup> may be the very reason why nonprofessionals felt uncomfortable with texts that were too stylish, too elaborate or too ‘personal’.<sup>163</sup> But whatever was accomplished, we must face the conclusion that performative competence, in instances of self-initiated authorship, accountability, audience design, and in other ways that speakers fended for themselves, has literally vanished into the air.

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<sup>160</sup> Bauman (1977), 11.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>162</sup> Richard Crangle, ‘Lantern readings’, David Robinson, Stephen Herbert, Crangle (eds.), *Encyclopaedia of the magic lantern* (London: Magic Lantern Society, 2001b), 248-249

<sup>163</sup> Barber (1993), 69. See also note 115.

As approximation and speculation seem to be the only roads open to potentially more satisfying explanations I venture the following. While the printed texts discussed are of interest, they clearly are deficient. And with no recordings of non-scholarly, public educational illustrated lectures of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century available, an evidence-based evaluation of changes of footing is nigh impossible. I will therefore continue my argument by analogy with a recorded public lecture illustrated using moving images.

### Conclusion

*D-day to Germany* is the title of an illustrated lecture by one-time American war correspondent Jack Lieb. His causerie accompanies a compilation of clips from his private films, his newsreel footage, and official films held by the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Washington, D.C., all shot during the final war year in Europe.<sup>164</sup> The recording shows the historic visuals of “more than a quarter of a century” ago, as Lieb points out on the comment track. This particular instance, recorded in 1976, is delivered in a first-person, informal mode. The text was not being read, as can be inferred from small hesitations, addled syntax (as in “The one place that intrigued me was my first trip to London”), and other characteristics of spontaneous talk, including an occasional lapse followed by an ostensibly self-directed comment (“And here is er... Oh gosh, twenty-five years has done a lot to my memory”). A likely reason for this extempore mode is that Lieb had performed it for a number of decades before widely different audiences, including his daughter’s fourth grade class. But by the time of this recording his narration may well have become routine. Nevertheless, while the talk would have been synchronized to the footage on the screen, his lines sometimes bleed over a subsequent scene or stop short before a scene’s ending when apparently he had nothing more to tell, at least not to the audience of this recorded instance. All in all, its narration is rather loose, largely held together by the locations shown and, as the title indicates, a familiar chronology (even though Lieb returned stateside months before the fall of Berlin). That being said, this recording may

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<sup>164</sup> Jack Lieb, D-DAY TO GERMANY (USA; footage shot in 1944, lecture recorded in 1976) 16mm | Kodachrome; b-w | sound | 47'; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fjVaa0RAUGg>.

Lieb's family donated this compilation to NARA in 1984; see: <https://unwritten-record.blogs.archives.gov/2014/06/05/a-newsreel-cameramans-view-of-d-day/>.

allow one to get more grip on and nuance the way one conceives of the printed changes of footing in the brochures.

Besides a few hedges and ‘enveloping’ expressions, self-references prevail. They ground the related, hazardous events in autobiography, as if to say, “At this important moment in history I was there (and I live to tell it)”. But while this may have made its delivery more personal, Lieb’s first-person narration embeds a number of slightly different personas between which he sometimes shifts more or less imperceptibly. These self-references ranged from an off-duty cameraman (“I was photographing these speakers...” [at Hyde Park’s Speakers’ Corner]), to a professional newsreel reporter (“Here we see the LCI [Landing Craft Infantry] number four with the commander moving out into the Channel”), a private person (“These are the shots I wanted to bring back to the family and friends”) or a postwar tourist in France (“[The city of Valognes] was completely destroyed. I was there several times since the war and it’s been rebuilt beautifully”). Interesting, too, is the juxtaposition of “I” and “we” in “We had to move on and soon I had to leave Paris”, where “I” was Lieb the newsreel correspondent and “we” the army in whose wake he traveled. And in a few cases his identification with the army seemed complete, as in: “We needed Cherbourg badly, because we thought we could use it as a port.”

Because of its greater frequency the pronoun “we” had more work to do, but what it referred to was not always clear-cut. In fact, in saying “we needed Cherbourg” Lieb might have implied the even broader category of “our side” or “the Allies”. Similar ambiguity can be heard in his comment on a scene on a naval ship: “And then, one afternoon, lieutenant [Patten] briefed the crew and told them that we would be sailing that afternoon”, where “we” can either mean the correspondents that had joined the soldiers on the ship—“them”—or both the soldiers and war correspondents (never mind that they were all transported at the same time on the same boat). Similar ambiguity occurred in the comment shortly after showing the landing on Utah Beach, “We’d stayed on the beach the first night...”

Lacking the smoothness and clarity that both manuals and brochures suggest, one may safely aver that Lieb was not a very gifted speaker, even though he had a lot of ‘mileage’. Basically he was an amateur who earned his living with a day job in film production, while giving this illustrated lecture on his wartime experiences on an irregular

basis. What is more intriguing is that all the little shifts of footing in his talk do not always seem to have a huge significance. They are perhaps not routine, but neither do they mark major changes in voice, vocabulary or stance. I prefer to think that Lieb was aware of these different personas simultaneously; in fact, the screened footage may have triggered one over the other momentarily (“We needed Cherbourg badly...”). This illustrates the fundamental difference with rhetoric, as changes of footing, scripted or not, are not just the preserve of speakers, but—invoking Robert S. Nelson again—they are co-determined by moves coming from elsewhere, whether it is the audience, the visuals or other elements in or even beyond the event. Secondly, it points to another fundamental issue: studying the concept of footing can only benefit from *recordings* to ascertain the relative significance of the changes in a speaker’s discourse—with the additional advantage of seeing this discourse in connection with these paralinguistic and nonlinguistic aspects.<sup>165</sup> All changes of footing mean something, but some mean more than other ones.<sup>166</sup>

As well, Lieb’s *causerie*’s live recording suggests new questions about nonprofessionals’ performance. For instance, how common was it to talk extempore or to alternate it with reading? Or, whenever self-mentions occurred, were their referents as ambiguous or as varied? In other words, did nonprofessional lecturers extend the references meant by “I” or “we” by shifting between more or less defined personas? And did this signal that they delivered a specific lecture repeatedly? If so, to what extent did they change the reading they were supposed to use along the way? And were self-references a measure of these changes? To the last question a partial answer may be given. While self-mentions seem to be highly characteristic of lectures that were animated and authored by the same person, it was not always necessary to use first-person pronouns in every other sentence. See for instance the following excerpt from the lecture on a local river hike cited above:

The great majority of people who annually visit Bolton Abbey and woods (...) seem to have a notion that they have seen ALL the beauties which Upper Wharfedale possesses. It is with a desire to remove that impression, and to bring other less-known, but equally delightful parts of this most favoured valley under notice, that I have laboured to get this Series of

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<sup>165</sup> For comparison, see the mass of largely unillustrated, academic lectures performed in recent times uploaded to YouTube.

<sup>166</sup> Goffman’s essay on footing opened with a printed, journalistic report that featured changes of footing that were, besides being obvious, also socially significant; see Goffman (1981b), 124-125.

Photographs together; to me, it has been a labour of love and pleasure—let us hope that it will be a pleasure to you to review on the screen.<sup>167</sup>

This introductory paragraph is followed by large chunks of merely descriptive text, some apparently based on observations by the lecturer, other ones reminiscent of impersonal guidebooks. What all this shows is that as long as a clear, personal frame had been set from the start self-references could actually be used sparsely. It points up that, unlike the often highly personalized accounts by well-known lecturers, the lack of self-references in published lantern readings actually *created* room for the nonprofessionals' ritual work by expanding on it. Together with the brochures' abrupt beginnings and endings, this enabled, if not forced, nonprofessional lecturers to come up with bits of self-initiated authorship and accountability on the spot. The drawbacks of published lectures, either by being too personal or unhelpful, may therefore have actually contributed to nonprofessionals' performative competence by default.

To conclude, and zooming out from Lieb's causerie and Ryder's local lecture, the latter point puts the lantern reading in perspective in the sense that for individual lecturers the reading may have been a moment or phase in their career, an opportunity to get started in the business at a time of great demand. The abovementioned series of questions could be seen as tracing a development of their gradual loosening from the printed text, in part effectuated by the brochure itself, and becoming more experienced, even perhaps professionalized. Or to put it in terms of footing, to develop their own mix of voices, texts, and stances. This approach would give the lantern reading a fluid, much less literal, definite significance, but rather conceives of it as a 'setting', to borrow a term from improvisational theater, for their performers' further development and elaboration (or, in the above quoted Austrian *Lichtbilderdienst's* advice, that the reading "serves to prepare a spontaneous delivery"). The controversy it sparked for a while was, therefore, not just misguided but also misdirected, as the 'amateurs' might well have gone on to join the professional ranks, leaving the lantern reading to a new crop of beginners.

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<sup>167</sup> Ryder (2002), 11.