



Speakers of nothings

Babbling in eighteenth-century pamphlets

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Author: Perras (Jean-Alexandre)

Abstract: If the babbler is one “who speaks continually, and says only meaningless things” (Furetière), to what extent can babbling writing be a writing of the superfluous, or even of nothing? Writing about nothing overturns the axiological categories of the eighteenth century, according to which the quality of literary works was assessed, and highlights one of the modalities of babbling: that of assuming the vanity and superfluity of all speech.

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