Turning to the medieval and Renaissance sermon, one encounters a development of rhetorical theory and practice of major scope. The manifestations of rhetoric in secular literature are much smaller in comparison, even if the entire bulk of vernacular prose and poetry of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries be thrown into the scale. This is natural enough when one considers that formal composition required formal education, and that the great majority of people who received formal training were in holy orders. There is, however, no reason to draw a sharp line between sermon eloquence and secular eloquence. Even when their objectives differed sharply – which was not always – their methods were the same. The same rhetorical techniques of invention, arrangement, amplification, and elocution applied to sermon, epic, and pamphlet alike. For this reason a rhetor like Donne could easily shift late in life from poetry to pulpit; and for the same reason Lyly and Nashe were eager auditors of Henry Smith.

Approaching the Chrysostom of sixteenth century France, Michel Menot, whose sermon rhetoric is at once as medieval and as patristic as that of John Donne, Gilson says, 'Heureusement, nulle époque ne fut plus consciente que le moyen âge des fins qu'elle poursuivait et des moyens requis pour les atteindre: ... et l'histoire littéraire aurait tout intérêt à chercher la clef de son art oratoire dans les Artes Praedicandi qu'il nous a laissés.'

We are in a period when Berengar of Tours, a friend of Abelard, attacked St. Bernard for neglecting the rules of rhetoric in his sermons: 'St. Bernard's unpardonable crime consisted in perpetrating a mixture of literary genres. ... There were people then in the twelfth century so much wrapped up in rhetoric, so full of the Ars Poetica, that in the face of the mysticism of St. Bernard they can put no better question than this: are these sermons composed according to the rules? ... The Canticle is a nuptial song, a song of joy; and so a funeral oration ought not to be mixed up with it.'

The full Ciceronian conception of the doctus orator, which is the basis of John of Salisbury's humanism in the twelfth century, is expressed by St. Bonaventure in the thirteenth: 'If however we consider speech by reason of its end, it exists in order to express, to instruct, and to move. But it never expresses anything except through the mediation of a form, never teaches except through the mediation of the light of conviction, never moves except through the mediation of virtue or power. ... And accordingly Augustine concludes that he alone is the true doctor, who can impress form, infuse light, and give virtue or power to the heart of the hearer. ... And from that it is clear how wonderful this contemplation is, by which Augustine in many books leads one by the hand to divine wisdom.' In the sixteenth century Erasmus speaks in precisely the same way of the function of rhetoric: '... the mysteries of the Faith owe their power over the minds and conduct of men, in large degree, to the grace and eloquence of their presentation.'

In the seventeenth century Donne's views both of the proper style of Scripture and the proper style for preaching are the same: 'There are not so eloquent books in the world, as the Scriptures. ... The style of the Scriptures is a diligent, and an artificial style; and a great part thereof in a musical, in a metrical, in a measured composition, in verse. ... So the Holy
Ghost hath spoken in those Instruments, whom he chose for the penning of the Scriptures, and so he would in those whom he sends for the preaching thereof: he would put in them a care of delivering God’s messages, with consideration, with meditation, with preparation: and not barbarously, not suddenly, not occasionally, not extemporarily, which might derogate from the dignity of so great a service.¹⁷

However, Donne would have agreed with Erasmus that the sermon differs from the oration in having as its end teaching rather than delight.⁸ This may contradict the practice of Donne; but examination will reveal that just as ‘the jerkiness and brokenness of Andrews’ sermons’ (Ibid., p. 175) are the result of his primary interest in edification by exegesis, so the elaborate anaphoras and allegories of Donne are primarily a commentary on a text. The further prominent fact that distinguishes many sermons from profane prose is the habit of frequently citing Scripture or the Fathers. Professor Gilson was the first to set this practice in the important light it deserves. It is a basic mode of exegesis and of argumentation, which in the medieval sermon achieved a remarkable degree of precision. Just as the Fathers had by a concordance of texts from Old and New Testaments built up a Speculum of the Faith, so the Medieval and Renaissance preachers used a careful concordance of texts as a mode of exegesis.⁹

Donne is quite explicit about his rhetorical aims in preaching. His intention was to arrange his rhetorical effects in such a way as ‘to trouble the understanding, to displace, and disorder the judgement ... or to empty it of former apprehensions, and to shake belief, with which it had possessed it self before, and then, when it is thus melted to pour into new molds, when it is thus mollified, to stamp and imprint new forms, new images, new opinions in it.’ (Mitchell, p. 191) Donne is here stating the Attic or anti-Ciceronian concept of style espoused by the Senecans. His words describe the aims set themselves by Montaigne and Bacon in their essays. In The Advancement Bacon contrasts the two modes of delivering knowledge as the modes of aphorism and orderly method: ‘But the writing in aphorisms hath many excellent virtues, whereto the writing in Method doth not approach. For first, it trieth the writer, whether he be superficial or solid: for Aphorism, except they should be ridiculous, cannot be made but of the pith and heart of sciences; for discourse of illustration is cut off: recitals of examples are cut off; discourse of connection and order is cut off; descriptions of practice are cut off.... And lastly, Aphorisms, representing a knowledge broken do invite men to inquire farther; whereas Methods, carrying the show of a total do secure men, as if they were at farthest.’ (Everyman, p. 142) Both Montaigne and Bacon made compromises, gradually admitting examples, authorities, and descriptions, but persisting in their original intention of employing an aphoristic style in order to dislocate the mind from its customary courses.¹⁰

That Donne was consciously Senecan, Mitchell admits when he mentions Donne’s especial devotion to the manner of Tertullian (p. 108). Tertullian had for centuries been called ‘our Seneca’ by Christians. However, Mitchell misses the entire aim of Donne’s rhetoric when he apologizes: ‘To some extent, also, this characteristic reached adversely on his prose, and combined with a partiality for Tertullian and Augustine, and even for Seneca, to make him indifferent to the cultivation of a flowing style.’¹¹

The second of 2 articles from a chapter in From Cicero to Joyce, soon to be published by McGraw-Hill.
Notes

The specifically pamphlet-like effects of many sixteenth and seventeenth century sermons has often been noted. In his *English Pulpit Oratory from Andrewes to Tillotson* (London: 1932), W. E. Mitchell cites such vivid effects in Henry Smith (p. 212) at the same time that he admits the resemblance to St. Augustine. The explanation is easy. The Elizabethan pamphleteers received the same training as the preachers or the dramatists. Moreover, their tracts are mainly moral in aim, since rhetoric was inseparably bound up with the 'colours of good and evil' and with *laus et vituperatio*. The *exemplum* had long been a major rhetorical device, whether in the brief form of the *cria* or in the longer form which occurs in Chaucer's *Pardoner's Tale*. (See C. S. Baldwin's *Medieval Rhetoric and Poetic*, New York, 1939, pp. 234-236 and pp. 245-247 for evidence of the large place given in sermon manuals to *exempla*.) The form of the *exemplum* permitted the use of many rhetorical figures including character and *prosopopoeia*. Crane has amply shown the inseparable nature of the character and the moral discourse. (W. G. Crane, *Wis and Rhetoric in the Renaissance*, New York, 1937, pp. 132-161). This union of interests is just as true of Nashe as of Overbury, Addison, Johnson, Crabbe, or Jane Austen. With the substituition of sentimental for rational ethics, the *character* necessarily disappeared. Thus Mitchell misconceives the function of the character in the sermon (pp. 215-221).

The matter of sermon invention or obtaining of suitable matter for discourse, varies greatly depending on whether the preacher preferred patristic or scholastic modes of exegesis. Donne's method of composition as described by Izaak Walton was patristic. (Walton's *Lives*, ed. H. A. Dobson, 2 vols., *Temple Classics*, gen. ed. I. Gollancz, London, J. M. Dent & Co., 1898, I p. 79.) That is, he expanded his text by a free grammatical commentary or *enarratio*. This was the method of Menot and of many medieval and Renaissance preachers. The amplification of the matter was in several modes, as *exempla*, parable or simile, *icon, indicatio* or authority, proverbs, and *anaphora*. These modes are listed by Erasmus in his *Ecclesiastae* and taken up by Sherry. (Crane, *op. cit.*, pp. 99-100.) The modes of amplification in the medieval *Ars Praedicandi* and *Ars Concionandi* analysed by Etienne Gilson (*Les Idées et les Lettres*, Paris, 1921, pp. 94 ff.) cover the same ground, stressing etymology, contraries, contemporary instances, concordant authorities, shifts from literal to allegorical or tropological explanation, and cause and effect.

It may seem strange that the scholastic divines, and the Calvinists especially, frequently used a rhetorical method of dividing and sub-dividing their sermons. We have already seen the Puritans using rhetoric in exegesis, however, and it is only necessary to recall that Ramus had amputated invention and disposition or arrangement, from rhetoric and called it dialectics. The text is approached by a consideration of the circumstances who, why, when, where, to whom; Baldwin cites Alain de Lille's manual on this method. (*Medieval Rhetoric*, p. 238.) Gilson specifically contrasts it with the grammatical sermon and relates it to the Aristotelian categories. (*Les Idées*, pp. 125-126.) The exordium was despised by these scholastic preachers, Perry Miller has shown. (*The New England Mind*, New York, 1939, pp. 332-333, 340.) However, after the explication and confirmation, the Puritan preacher might use rhetorical figures in the application of his sermon (pp. 347-349). The middle part of the scholastic sermon, the confirmation, was often a *quaestio disputata* in the full dialectical sense. (Gilson, *op. cit.*., p. 135.) In the Middle Ages the frequency of preaching to clerics made it natural for two modes of division of text to arise even within the scholastic camp - an exoteric and an esoteric. (*ibid.*, p. 113.)

2 Nashe says of Smith: 'Hence alone did it proceed, that thou wert such a plausible pulpit man, that before thou entredst into the rough waies of theologie, thou refinedst, preparedst, and purifiestd thy minde with sweete Poetrie.' (*The Works of Thomas Nashe*, edited from the original texts by R. B. McKerrow, London: A. H. Bullen, 1904, I. 193.4-7). Mitchell notes that 'Smith shared to the full Donne's delight in allegory and cabbalistic speculation' (*ibid.*, p. 149). Obviously, Smith was in the patristic camp, and, therefore a lover of poetry as understood by Boccaccio in his *Genealogia Deorum Gentilium*. Even under the Commonwealth patristic exegesis and oratory flourished at Oxford. Harris was praised because 'the particular excellencies of Nazianzen, Basil, Chrysostome, Austen, Ambrose, Bernard, seemed all to encounter in him. He taught Rhetorick to speak in our Mother-tongue, ...' (Mitchell, p. 118). As already shown, Puritan preaching tended to scholastic modes and to the plain style. Perry Miller's lengthy treatment of this is conclusive (*op. cit.*, pp. 331-362). See in particular his analysis of Wright's *Five Sermons in Five Several Styles* (1656) than which there could be no more immediate or convincing evidence of the full recognition, not only of different applications of rhetorical technique but of the theological assumptions behind each mode (pp. 333-337).
3 'La Technique du Sermon Medieval' in *Les Idées*, pp. 95-96. Gilson gives a review (note 2, p. 96) of scholarship in this field and finds it totally deficient. The fine work of G. R. Owst, *Literature and Pulpit in Mediaeval England*, Cambridge: The University Press, 1933), appeared subsequently. Owst, however, is vague about the rhetorical theory of the *artes praedicandi* and in concentrating too much on parallels and anticipations of related vernacular literature, fails to bring down the bigger game which is on every hand. For, as Gilson shows: 'Lire un sermon du moyen âge sans avoir present à la pensée toute cette technique, et sa raison d'être, c'est se condamner à n'y comprendre absolument rien' (p. 104). See also p.149. Spurred by Gilson, Th. -M. Charland edited several of these *artes*. (*Artes Praedicandi*, Paris, 1936.)

4 E. Gilson, *The Mystical Theology of St. Bernard*, London, 1940, p. 168. Consider, likewise, the careful attention to rhetorical decorum which governed Dante. In his *De Vulgari Eloquentia* Dante defines poetry as 'nothing but a rhetorical fiction musically composed' ('fictio rethorica musicamente composita,' Bk. II, ch. iv); and deplores the works of those who have taken but a shallow draught of rhetoric. (See also the *Convivio* II, 12; 14; 15; IV, 8.) Citing Aristotle's *Rhetoric* (Bk. III) in his tenth epistle, Dante calls the opening of his poem the proem and shows further how the poet and the orator must have much in common. Gelli, lecturing on Dante in 1562, approvingly summarizes Dante's celebrated letter to Can Grande: 'Again he shows that Comedy differs from Tragedy in the style of its diction, the language of tragedy being lofty and inflated, while that of Comedy is un studied and homely; whence he concludes [and Gelli here quotes the original text of Dante's letter]: 'Et per hoc patet quod Comedia dicitur praeens opus. Nam si ad materiam aspiciamus, a principio horribilis et foetida est, quia Infernus; in fine prospera, desiderabilis et grata, quia Paradisus. Ad modum loquendi, remissus est modus et humilis, quia locutio vulgaris, in qua et multiformes comunicant; et sic patet, quia Comedia dicitur.' (P. Toynbee, *Dantis Aligherii Epitola*, Oxford, 1920; p. xxxvii). Dante scholarship has not yet begun to explore the implications of this doctrine of style which Dante received and applied with the same literal care as did poets of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The basic critical canons of Addison and Dr. Johnson, concerning poetic diction, differ little if any from those of Dante and John of Garland. See, for example, *Spectator* no. 285, and *The Lives of the Poets* (World Classics) I, pp. 49-53; 152; 205; 212; 306-307; 310; 334. It is noteworthy that Addison's ideal critic (*Spectator, no. 291*) is modelled on Cicero's ideal orator: a man with 'a good insight into all the parts of learning.'

5 *Saint Bonaventure: On the Reduction of the Arts to Theology*, translated by Charles Glenn Wallis, Annapolis: The Saint John's Press, 1938, p. 9. Cicero's concept of the union of wisdom and eloquence was in no way diminished by St. Augustine, as already shown.

6 Quoted by W. H. Woodward, *Desiderius Erasmus, Concerning the Aim and Method of Education*, Cambridge, 1904, p. 124. Although Erasmus is speaking of the language of Scripture, reiterating what he had been, and was to remain, a commonplace, Woodward has no sympathy with this ideal and seems to be oblivious of its ancestry. He quotes Erasmus on the secular uses of rhetoric: 'My greatest approbation is reserved for a rhetorical poem and poetical oratory ... the rhetorical art should transpire through the poem.' He comments: 'This is the evil influence of Lucan.' (loc. cit.). Yet this was the poetic ideal of Europe in the sixteenth century. Woodward notes that Colet required eloquence as the characteristic product of scholarship for St. Paul's. (loc. cit.).

7 Quoted by Evelyn Simpson, *A Study of the Prose Works of John Donne*, Oxford, 1924, p. 237. Donne even draws some of his sermon allegories from rhetoric, as: 'If we consider the manifold Topiques and places from which the sorrowes of the wicked arise, ...' (Logan Pear- stall Smith, *Selections from the Sermons of John Donne*, Oxford, 1919, p. 189.) And more generally: 'There [heaven] our curiosity shall have this noble satisfaction ... We shall not pass from Author to Author, as in a Grammar School, nor from Art to Art, as in an University; but as that General which united his whole Army, God shall create us all Doctors in a minute. That great Library, those infinite volumes of the Books of Creatures, shall be taken away ... the Scriptures themselves shall be taken away, quite away; no more preaching ... I shall know, not only as I know already, that a Beehive, that an Ant-hill is the same Book in *Decimo sexto*, as a kingdom is in Folio ...' (Ibid., p. 234.) This is the method of amplification by allegory or extended metaphor. For a wide selection of sixteenth and seventeenth century opinion to the same effect, see Mitchell, op. cit., pp. 198 ff. Henry Smith held that 'to preach simply is not to preach rudely.' (Mitchell, p. 210)

8 Mitchell gives the relevant texts, pp. 101 ff. See also Gilson's *Les Idées* for the fact that sermon eloquence necessarily departed from the aims of Ciceronian eloquence, but that it often achieves an intensely organized life of its own. (p. 149) This fact in no way undermined the Ciceronian program, however, since encyclopedic education.
was equally important for the preacher and the
statesman. (See Mitchell, p. 156) The endless
reference of Jacobean sermons to James as the
British Solomon is quite defensible in view of
the Ciceronian ideal of the scholar-prince which
was the pattern of education for the age. Henry
Peacham the Younger in The Valley of Varietie
(London: M. P. for James Becket, 1638) says
that we must bring the young prince 'to the
Rhetorick Schoole, and to nearne to be Elo-
quent: ... a good Prince by the benefit of
Eloquence, may easily keepe his subjects in awe
and order...' (pp. 110-111)

9 Les Idées, pp. 156-159. The examples of the
technique must really be studied in order to be
appreciated.

10 M. W. Croll devotes his 'Baroque Style in Prose'
(Studies in English Philology, eds. K. Malone
and M. B. Ruud; Minneapolis, 1929) to an
analysis of the effects intended by the Attic
stylists: 'The anti-Ciceronian period was some-
times described in the seventeenth century as
an 'exploded' period; ... For example, here is a
period from Sir Henry Wotton, a typical expres-
sion of the political craft of the age:
Men must beware of running down steep
places with weighty bodies; they once
in motion, suo feruntur pondere;
steps are not then voluntary.

The members of this period stand farther apart
one from another than they would in a Ciceronian
sentence, there are no syntactic connectives be-
tween them whatever; and semicolons or colons
are necessary to its proper punctuation; In fact,
it has the appearance of having been disrupted by
an explosion from within.' (pp. 429-430)

It is easy to see how the aphorism was indis-
pensable to this mode of composition employed
by Bacon, Burton, Donne, and Browne. It is
equally important to recognize that a statecraft,
or theory of politics, as well as rhetoric, was the
mainstay of the Attic style. As Croll says: 'The
negligence of the anti-Ciceronian masters, their
disdain of revision, their dependence upon casual
and emergent devices of construction, might
sometimes be mistaken for mere indifference to
art or contempt of form: and it is, in fact, true
that Montaigne and Burton, even Pascal and
Browne, are sometimes led by a dislike of for-
mality into too licentious a freedom. Yet even
their extravagances are purposive, and express a
cred that is at the same time philosophical and
artistic. Their purpose was to portray, not a
thought, but a mind thinking, or, in Pascal's
words, la peinture de la pensee.' (Ibid., p. 430)

Thus the 'cutted period,' asymmetry of mem-
ers, sudden shifts from plain to metaphorical
statement, or from one metaphor to another, is
the result of a style 'always tending toward the
aphorism, or pensée, as its ideal form ...' In

brief, it is a Senecan style; ...' (Ibid., p. 435)

Gabriel Harvey's anti-Ciceronianism links it-
self explicitly with this mode of composition:
'The finest wittes preferre the loosest period in
M. Ascham's or Sir Philip Sidney before the
trickiest page in Euphues or Pap-hatcher.'
(Gregory Smith, Elizabethan Critical Essays,
2 vols, Oxford, 1904, ll, p. 274) It may seem
that Harvey is inconsistent here. How could
Ascham be considered anti-Ciceronian and
Euphues not?

Mitchell, p. 183. See also pp. 189-190. Owing
to a complete failure to distinguish between the
conflicting aims of patristic and scholastic cul-
ture within the medieval church, and therefore
in the Renaissance, Mitchell perpetuates and in-
creases the confusion of Miss Ramsay (Les Doc-
tines Medievales chez Donne, London-New
York, Oxford University Press, H. Milford,
1924) and Evelyn Simpson. One can correct
their basic misconceptions simply by pointing
out the meaning of their own statements. For
example, Miss Simpson cites Miss Ramsay to
the effect that Donne's philosophy, far from
being scholastic, 'is largely Neoplatonic in
character ... It was through St. Augustine,
Gregory of Nyssa, the pseudo-Dionysius, and
other Christian sources that Neo-Platonic ideas
became familiar to Donne as to other theological
students.' (A Study of the Prose Work of John
Donne, Oxford, 1924, p. 90.) This is to say that
Donne as a practitioner of grammatical exegesis
is an out-and-out patristic theologian. His Jesuit
training alone would confirm this fact. He was,
outfaced with the Schoolmen, but he never confused the two traditions as we often
do today.

When the full implications of this basic distinc-
tion are grasped, then it becomes plain that the
task facing modern scholars is nothing less than
the recasting of the whole of the histories of
European literature since the fifteenth century.
For example, the entire 'golden age' of Spanish
literature is an expression of patristic rhetoric
and exegesis. Unless, however, this expression is
seen as a basic revolt in method, as well as
style, and seen in its full medieval perspective,
such a task cannot even be begun. Borrowing
from current historical statements of the sup-
posed spread of Gongorismo or Concettismo or
the baroque from Spain and Italy to France and
England, Mitchell goes so far as to say: 'What
Italy learned from Spain in this connection was
to draw upon certain patristic and medieval
writers who had been fond of particular devices
and to imitate these devices; and the English
preachers ... etc.' (p. 137) Apart from the assump-
tion of a medieval homogeneity, the whole matter
is misconceived by the supposition of a merely
stylistic embellishment.