

SECOND EDITION

THE RHETORICAL TRADITION

READINGS FROM CLASSICAL TIMES
TO THE PRESENT

PATRICIA BIZZELL AND BRUCE HERZBERG

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Winner of the 1992 CCCC Outstanding Book Award, *The Rhetorical Tradition* examines rhetorical theory from classical antiquity to the present day through a comprehensive anthology of primary texts. Extensive introductions and headnotes make it an ideal text for the beginning student of the history of rhetoric as well as an essential reference for professional scholars.

The second edition includes 84 selections — 33 new to this edition — from 57 major figures, including 13 women. Included here are foundational texts such as Plato's *Gorgias* and *Phaedrus*; important but otherwise unavailable works such as Book IV of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and selections from Erasmus's *Ecclesiastes*; and recent writings by such contemporary figures as Gloria Anzaldúa and Stanley Fish.

Women rhetoricians are now represented in each part, and two separate parts cover eighteenth- and nineteenth-century rhetoric. A new glossary of rhetorical terms has been included and the bibliographies and introductions have been carefully updated.

Accompanying the selections are substantial introductions to each period and to each selection; these provide a general grounding in the history of rhetorical theory and set each selection in a social and intellectual context.

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THE RHETORICAL TRADITION

Readings from Classical Times to the Present

Second Edition

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Acknowledgments

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Preface

Since 1989, when we sent the first edition of *The Rhetorical Tradition* to the printer, there has been an explosion of new work on the history of rhetoric by scholars in classics, composition studies, English literature, history, philosophy, rhetoric, and speech communication. Courses in the history of rhetoric have proliferated in the graduate programs of these disciplines as well. There has certainly been, as we anticipated in the preface to the first edition, a renewed interest in historical antecedents in all fields that deal with the ways humans make meaning in language.

The first edition was of necessity organized around the long-standing canon of Western rhetoric and its major authors: Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Quintilian, Augustine, Erasmus, Ramus, Bacon, Campbell, and Blair, to cite some important names from before the twentieth century. We still believe, as stated in the preface to the first edition, that these canonical works are theoretically and pedagogically rich, and also provide important historical contexts for contemporary work. Even so, in the first edition we chose to include in addition some works traditionally regarded as “minor,” such as those of Gorgias, Thomas Wilson, and Vico, which we felt also made important contributions. These canonical but traditionally marginalized thinkers on rhetoric will still be found in the second edition, in some cases with enlarged selections, along with additional “minor” figures from the traditional canon such as Geoffrey of Vinsauf and Herbert Spencer.

Given the state of scholarship at the time we assembled the first edition, it would have been very difficult to represent any alternative Western traditions, such as women’s rhetorics or rhetorics of color, even though a very few proponents of these strands were included, among them Christine de Pizan, Sarah Grimké, and Henry Louis Gates Jr. Thanks to new scholarship, however, we have been able to include more work by men and women of color and white women in this second edition, such as Mary Astell, Maria W. Stewart, Frederick Douglass, Virginia Woolf, and Gloria Anzaldúa. To be sure, much more needs to be done to recover and analyze the diverse components of Western rhetoric. The old canonical “major” names listed above still loom large. But we believe that a significantly greater number of European and European American women and African American and Hispanic women and men are represented here. We hope that these new additions will, at the very least, point to directions for future scholarship.

Because of the increased diversity in our selections, we considered changing the title of the anthology to *Rhetorical Traditions*. We realized, of course, that the singular title could appear to convey a monolithic view of human language-using potential. But upon reflection, we decided that all the writers we included really were working within a common Western tradition, even if reacting against it. Also, we did not want the title to suggest greater diversity than we had actually achieved,

especially given our decision to remain within the Western tradition in our selections. We therefore decided to retain the recognizable singular title.

The second edition of *The Rhetorical Tradition* incorporates other changes as well, many of them suggested by the first edition's helpful readers and reviewers and by new scholarly developments. We have significantly enlarged Part One, the section on classical rhetoric, with new material on Sophistic rhetoric (the *Dissoi Logoi*), new selections from Aristotle, additional selections from Cicero, and—representing stylistic rhetoric—*On the Sublime*. Although we still believe that rhetoric focusing on the political and epistemological powers of discourse, as we put it in the preface to the first edition, is the most generative strand for contemporary work on language in use, we have added material on stylistic rhetoric in several places—for example, the *Poetria Nova* (in Part Two), Hume's essay on taste (Part Four), and Spencer on style (Part Five). New material from Erasmus also allows us to pay more attention to the rhetoric of sermons, a strand continued in Part Five with excerpts from Phoebe Palmer and Frances Willard. Also, we have moved some selections from the first edition to new sections of the anthology to better reflect current periodization (Christine de Pizan to the medieval section, for example).

Unchanged is *The Rhetorical Tradition's* focus on rhetorical theory. Once again, we have concentrated on work that deals with language in use. We have excluded transcripts of rhetorical performances and other texts that exhibit rhetorical organizing principles, tropes, and so on. The availability of work in English translation has been another constraint upon our choices. Also, given rhetoric's great diversity and the difficulty of representing it fully in an already lengthy collection, we have omitted very recent work on rhetoric from the fields of composition studies, speech communication, and English. For an overview of this work, readers may wish to consult *The Bedford Bibliography for Teachers of Writing*.

In the second edition of *The Rhetorical Tradition*, we have continued to favor complete works, or lengthy excerpts from works that could not be printed in their entirety. The first edition included fifty-six selections from forty-four authors; covering virtually the same historical span, from the fifth century B.C.E. to the twentieth century C.E., the second edition includes eighty-four selections from fifty-seven authors. Our audience still comprises students new to the rhetorical tradition. We have continued to provide biographical and critical headnotes for each author, accompanied by updated bibliographies. Selections are still grouped chronologically in major periods, each with its own historical and critical introduction and bibliography, now updated. We decided, however, that the advent of men and women of color and white women on the speaker's platform in dramatically greater numbers in the nineteenth century gave this period a distinctive character. Abandoning the view of some traditional histories of rhetoric that the nineteenth century did little more than elaborate theoretical developments from the eighteenth, we separated the Enlightenment—a single section in the first edition—into two, making a total of six sections for this edition: classical, medieval, Renaissance, eighteenth century, nineteenth century, and modern and postmodern.

The bibliographies, which are still intended to be introductory, cite a few important studies, take note of current issues, and point the way for further research. For the benefit of beginning students, the bibliographies continue to cite only works published in English. To make *The Rhetorical Tradition* a more useful teaching text, we have included a glossary, new to this edition, prepared by Julia Anne Garbus.

A note on conventions: Footnotes in the excerpts have been numbered sequentially (that is, they do not correspond to footnote numbers that may appear in the source edition). Also, the footnotes are marked to indicate that they are by the selection author [Au.], by the translator [Tr.], or by us [Ed.]. We have added notes, where needed, to the selections to provide glosses on obscure terms and to give internal references. In a few instances, we have retained an earlier editor's footnotes for the particular edition reprinted here; such footnotes are marked with the editor's initials in brackets. As for translators' footnotes, we have retained only the explanatory notes and internal references to material included in our selections. To indicate dates, we have adopted the notations B.C.E. (before the common era) and C.E. (of the common era) in place of the traditional and ethnocentric B.C. (before Christ) and A.D. (*anno Domini*, in the year of the Lord).

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Even more than the first edition, the second edition of *The Rhetorical Tradition* represents a collaborative effort by many hands. We must first mention the many users of the first edition who have generously corresponded with us about the book, requesting changes, pointing out problems, and insisting on what must stay. Our heartfelt thanks for all of these suggestions.

In addition, we have had the benefit of careful reviews of the first edition. We wish to thank the following scholars who answered a detailed questionnaire to help us see what might need to be added or deleted: Lillian Bridwell-Bowles, University of Minnesota; Jody D. Brown, Ferrum College; Stuart C. Brown, New Mexico State University; Adrienne Christiansen, Macalester College; J. Rocky Colavito, Northwestern State University; Catherine Ann Collins, Willamette University; Robert Eddy, Fayetteville State University; D. C. Elder, Washington State University; Keith V. Erickson, University of Southern Mississippi; David Faldet, Luther College; Rosalind J. Gabin, State University of New York, Binghamton; Fredric G. Gale, University of Arkansas; Victoria J. Gallagher, North Carolina State University; John Hagaman, Western Kentucky University; Carol Harding, Western Oregon State; Frank Hubbard, Marquette University; Carol Jablonski, University of South Florida; Stephen Julian, Nyack College; Kevin Koch, Loras College; Shirley Wilson Logan, University of Maryland; Michael Mendelson, Iowa State University; Roxanne D. Mountford, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute; Christine Oravec, University of Utah; Jo Alyson Parker, Saint Joseph's University; William M. Purcell, Seattle Pacific University; John D. Schaeffer, Northern Illinois University; Edward Schiappa, University of Minnesota; Mary M. Schmelzer, Saint Joseph's University; Thomas J. Schorle, Robert Morris College; Henrietta Nickels Shirk, University of North Texas; Paul Sladky, Augusta College; Sheila Teahan, Michigan State University; David Wallace, Iowa State University; Barbara Warnick, University of Washington; Thomas Willard, University of Arizona; Linda T. Woodson, The University of Texas at San Antonio; and Heping Zhao, California State University, Fullerton. Especially helpful were the detailed reviews of the first edition, with many suggestions for additions to both primary and secondary materials, provided by Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, Richard Leo Enos, S. Michael Halloran, Martin Jacobi, Shirley Wilson Logan, Raymie E. McKerrow, James J. Murphy, Edward Schiappa, and Richard Young.

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THE RHETORICAL TRADITION

Readings from Classical Times to the Present

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

In parturition begins the centrality of the nervous system. The different nervous systems, through language and the ways of production, erect various communities of interests and insights, social communities varying in nature and scope. And out of the division and the community arises the “universal” rhetorical situation.

—KENNETH BURKE

Rhetoric has a number of overlapping meanings: the practice of oratory; the study of the strategies of effective oratory; the use of language, written or spoken, to inform or persuade; the study of the persuasive effects of language; the study of the relation between language and knowledge; the classification and use of tropes and figures; and, of course, the use of empty promises and half-truths as a form of propaganda. Nor does this list exhaust the definitions that might be given. Rhetoric is a complex discipline with a long history: It is less helpful to try to define it once and for all than to look at the many definitions it has accumulated over the years and to attempt to understand how each arose and how each still inhabits and shapes the field.

This general introduction offers an overview of the historical development of rhetoric divided into conventional chronological periods: the Classical (from the birth of rhetoric in ancient Greece to about 400 C.E.), the Medieval (to about 1400), the Renaissance (to about 1700), the Enlightenment (from the late seventeenth through the eighteenth century), the Nineteenth Century, and the Modern and Post-modern (the twentieth century). The introductions to each of the six parts of *The Rhetorical Tradition* provide a more detailed historical and theoretical picture of the development of rhetoric.

THE ORIGINS OF RHETORIC

Rhetoric in its various incarnations has been a powerful force in public affairs and in education for most of its existence since the fifth century B.C.E., when it developed in Greek probate courts and flourished under Greek democracy. Rhetoric was, first and

foremost, the art of persuasive speaking. In civil disputes, persuasion established claims where no clear truth was available. Persuasive speech, too, could depose or empower tyrants, determine public policy, and administer laws. Public speaking was inseparable from the business of government and civil affairs, and early on some enterprising orators turned to teaching the art of persuasive speech as well as practicing it. Speeches required arguments that would convince and stories that would move. Speeches could be divided into parts, the parts had strategies, the strategies varied with the occasion and the audience, and the finished speech had to be memorized and finally delivered. Rhetoric thus came to designate both the practice of persuasive oratory and the description of ways to construct a successful speech.

Rhetoric selects, from the vast realm of human discourse, occasions for speaking and writing that can be regarded as persuasive in intent. Rhetoric categorizes the types of discourse it has selected, analyzes each of those types in terms of structure and purpose, and identifies the means for successfully constructing each type. In pursuing these goals, rhetoric comes to endorse codes for linguistic correctness and to make taxonomies of artful ways to use language. It suggests resources for evidence and argument and gives rules for accurate reasoning. And it divides the mind into faculties to which persuasive appeals, both logical and psychological, can be addressed.

The study of rhetoric dominated formal education in most of Europe and the United States until well into the nineteenth century. To study rhetoric was, for much of its history, to study Greek and Latin grammar, classical literature and history, and logic, as well as to practice the composition and delivery of speeches. But by and large, rhetoric has not been a form of inquiry seeking to extend its scope by looking into the various uses of discourse that might be considered persuasive. Rather, it has been chiefly prescriptive, intended to teach a practical art and to provide guidelines for discourse in several well-defined social, political, and artistic arenas. Nonetheless, a vital art inevitably produces a body of theory—some of it implicit in its practical systems, some of it abstract and speculative—that investigates philosophical underpinnings in addition to techniques and effects. So it is with rhetorical theory, which seeks to penetrate the complexities of communication and persuasion.

At its very inception, the study of rhetoric generated not only an elaborate system for investigating language practices but also a set of far-reaching, theoretical questions about the relationship of language to knowledge. The system of classical rhetoric was too powerful to be limited to the few forms of public speaking to which it was originally applied, and the questions about language and knowledge raised by classical rhetoricians were never to be put to rest. After the classical period, the bounds of rhetoric expanded, until today they encompass virtually all forms of discourse and symbolic communication. Yet the classical system remained the basis of rhetoric throughout its history and in large measure remains so today.

CLASSICAL RHETORIC

Late in the fourth century B.C.E., Aristotle reduced the concerns of rhetoric to a system that thereafter served as its touchstone. To speak of classical rhetoric is thus to speak of Aristotle's system and its elaboration by Cicero and Quintilian.

Types of Rhetorical Discourse

The classical system of rhetoric defines three principal kinds of public speech: the legal or forensic speech, which takes place in the courtroom and concerns judgment about a past action; the political or deliberative speech in the legislative assembly, concerned with moving people to future action; and the ceremonial or epideictic speech in a public forum, intended to strengthen shared beliefs about the present state of affairs. In the classical system, these three situations constitute the entire domain of rhetoric. Later rhetoricians expanded this list to include sermons, letters, and eventually all forms of discourse, even conversation, that could be seen as persuasive in intent.

Psychology and Audience Analysis

The rhetorical occasion always includes an audience, and the speaker must consider the motives that are likely to influence audiences of the three types of speech. Classical rhetoric accordingly examines the psychology and moral assumptions of the different kinds of people who may comprise an audience. Aristotle assumes that people always seek to serve their own self-interest and that different people perceive their self-interest differently; he thus compares young men and old, the rich and the poor, and rulers of democracies and of oligarchies. He treats most psychological attributes as human nature, common to all people in all circumstances (all young men have hot tempers and strong appetites, for example). Even for those attributes that are conditioned by social class, political interest, and history, he seeks the most general explanation. Audience analysis helps chiefly to determine the kinds of emotional appeals that might be used, for logical appeals (as we shall see) are not supposed to be subject to such vagaries.

The Preparation of a Speech

Classical rhetoric divides the process of preparing a persuasive speech into five stages:

1. Invention, the search for persuasive ways to present information and formulate arguments
2. Arrangement, the organization of the parts of a speech to ensure that all the means of persuasion are present and properly disposed
3. Style, the use of correct, appropriate, and striking language throughout the speech
4. Memory, the use of mnemonics and practice of the speech
5. Delivery, the use of effective gestures and vocal modulation to present the speech

This five-part composing process remains a cornerstone of the study of rhetoric.

The speaker is supposed to produce a discourse by proceeding stepwise through the stages. Although the speaker's specific choices in each stage of the process

depend on the occasion for his (or, rarely, her) speech, the five-part process is taken to be appropriate for composing any kind of speech. All of the parts are necessary to ensure production of a full range of appeals. The classical system assumes that there are three forms of persuasive appeal: to reason (*logos*), to emotion (*pathos*), and to the speaker's authority (*ethos*). We shall see how these forms are included in a speech as we examine each stage of the process.

Invention. In the classical system, the first stage of composing, invention, is the most important, because here rational arguments—appeals to *logos*—are devised. Logical appeals are regarded as superior to the other two. Aristotle assumes that rationality is the most uniform and universal of the human mental abilities, or faculties, and so logical arguments will presumably have the widest currency. At the same time, he argues that emotional appeals are needed in the effective speech, though he and his successors lament the fact that rational appeals alone are not enough. Classical rhetoric emphasizes *logos* as if in recognition that human beings respond most strongly to rational appeals, though this idea may be more a hope than a fact, an attempt to increase the power of rational appeals by valorizing them.

Classical rhetoric offers several methods of generating rational appeals. One is to consider the common topics, or *topoi* (commonplaces or *loci* in Latin), to see whether arguments can be developed in terms of any of them. The topics are stock formulas in which arguments may be cast. They include comparison and contrast, cause and effect, and argument a fortiori; they also include such seemingly nonrational appeals as puns on proper names. In addition to the universally applicable topics are special topics for particular kinds of speech or subject matter—the rules of evidence in criminal law, for example. When employing any of these heuristic devices, the rhetorician “invents” arguments in the sense of finding ways to combine and present evidence persuasively.

Rational appeals in classical invention are not designed to be equivalent to scientific demonstration. Aristotle draws important distinctions among demonstration, dialectic, and rhetoric and the type of knowledge found in each. Demonstration reveals unalterable truths about the physical world. Dialectic uses rigorous syllogistic logic to approach probable truths in questions about human affairs and philosophy that do not lend themselves to absolute certainty. Rhetoric also seeks probable truth in the realm of human affairs, relying on knowledge produced by demonstration and dialectic, along with traditional or received wisdom and the various means of finding persuasive connections, such as those suggested by the common topics.

Another form of rational appeal is the enthymeme, which, like the syllogism used in dialectic, deduces a conclusion from a general premise. But whereas the general premise of a syllogism is supposed to be true and its deduction therefore necessary, the general premise of an enthymeme is merely probable, leading to a tentative conclusion. Often this premise is not stated explicitly but is assumed to be part of the audience's common knowledge.

The rhetorician constructing an argument must draw on sources of knowledge that lie outside the domain of rhetoric. To ensure access to these sources, the rhetorician must be learned in philosophy, history, law, literature, and other fields of

study, a point heavily stressed by Cicero and Quintilian. Given the scope of rhetoric, however, the distinctions between *inside* and *outside* can blur, making unclear the nature of the rhetorician's activities with respect to knowledge. This problem is a continuing theme of rhetorical theory. In the classical view, rhetoric manages knowledge, conveying but not creating it; the rhetorician's activities are subordinate to the truth-seeking of the scientist and the philosopher. But people have not always agreed that philosophy or science has access to true knowledge. If, as some philosophers maintain, all knowledge is uncertain and constructed by argument, then rhetoric has all the more value because it studies the ways in which argument and persuasion create conviction, and because it creates the provisional agreements and shared values on which human community depends.

In Aristotle's day, the position that all knowledge is contingent was defended most ardently by the Sophists, who saw themselves as both philosophers and rhetoricians. In modern parlance, the Sophists treat rhetoric as epistemic, as making knowledge. Moreover, they tend to see all language use as rhetorical—that is, persuasive in intent. Through language, people collectively construct a value-laden worldview (the only kind of worldview available) and reach agreement on how to act together for their mutual benefit in light of that worldview. Different communities may see things differently because of their cultural traditions and historical circumstances. For the Sophists, there are no privileged nonrhetorical discourses and no privileged nonrhetorical knowledge.

The Sophists' position was attacked and discredited by Aristotle's teacher Plato. In traditional histories of rhetoric, the Sophists are often slighted, but their epistemic vision of rhetoric haunts the subject to the present day. Even Plato, who condemned the Sophists, came to see rhetoric as an essential component in the search for true knowledge. And in other eras the Sophistic view of rhetoric has reasserted itself. Today, philosophical skepticism about true or foundational knowledge has sparked renewed interest in Sophism.

Arrangement. In the stage of arrangement, the arguments devised through invention are placed in the most effective order. Aristotle says that all speeches have four parts: the introduction, the statement of the issue, the argument, and the conclusion. Logical appeals should go into the statement and argument, while appeals to pathos and ethos should appear in the introduction and conclusion. Cicero spells out a five-part structure with a more precise distribution of appeals: The introduction should contain ethical and pathetic appeals; the narration of the facts of the case, while ostensibly logical, should also be an occasion for pathetic appeals; the statement of position should hold the logical arguments in favor of the position; the refutation should make logical arguments against the opponent's position; and the conclusion should embody further pathetic and ethical appeals.

Emotional appeals are something of an embarrassment in the classical system. They are generated by a kind of invention process that examines the nature of emotions, the kinds of stimuli that may excite them, and the motives and inclinations of the different types of people to whom the emotional appeals might be directed. In the classical system, this process of formulating nonlogical appeals is distinguished

from logical invention, and it shifts by default from the invention stage to the arrangement stage. In the arrangement stage, the speaker considers the kind of discourse to be presented, the nature of the subject, and the characteristics of the audience, all of which guide decisions about the relative weight and placement of logical and emotional appeals. Arrangement itself is thus a form of nonlogical appeal, as later rhetoricians acknowledged. From the seventeenth century on, philosophers paid increasing attention to psychology, which put both arrangement and emotional appeals on a new footing. Psychological theories offered a “natural” sequence of mental operations leading from reasoning to belief to action. Psychology also confirmed in new ways the classical observation that reason could rarely persuade by itself.

Style. Style is separate from invention and arrangement in the classical five-part scheme. It dresses up previously formulated ideas in attractive verbal garb. Aristotle tends to treat style as decoration, a sop to the base human desire for sensual enticements. Nevertheless, he begins what would become the habitual, not to say obsessive, practice among rhetoricians of cataloging and illustrating large numbers of verbal figures. Several times in its long history, the study of rhetoric has contracted to little more than the study of style. Rhetoric in the schools has often consisted of memorizing long lists of figures of speech. In the Renaissance, for example, stylistic rhetoric texts filled with such lists abounded. Highly ornamented styles have often been valued for their beauty and ingenuity, and stylistic rhetoric came in time to be as closely allied with poetry as it was with oratory.

Stylistic rhetoric does not typically address the question of generating ideas, which is the province of invention. But for some rhetoricians, the search for effective figures is akin to invention. The rhetorical figures, like the topics of invention, can be seen as parallel to human thought processes. Hence, formulating ideas in figures and ornamenting arguments will make them structurally more understandable, memorable, and convincing. At the same time, the process of stylistic formulation can be seen as a heuristic method, in which ideas are discovered by the search for figurative expression. Metaphor in particular has been regarded as generative. The Sophists made this connection between style and generative thought and have been chastised for it. Renaissance stylistics would be denounced in turn. More recently, though, deconstructive critics have been working to rehabilitate this insight into the inventive power of style.

The sensual power of word magic to create belief was perhaps most potently felt while rhetoric was still employed largely in oral genres, and response to this power may have dwindled as rhetoric increasingly moved to written forms. Certainly the last two stages of the five-part composing process, memory and delivery, dwindled in importance with the turn to print, though they did not disappear entirely.

Memory. Classical rhetoric adopted the notion that memory could be improved by treating it as a system of visualized locations, somewhat similar to the way the commonplaces are imagined to reside in actual mental locations that one tours dur-

ing the invention process. The speaker memorizes the sequence of rooms in a building, assigns a vivid image to each section of the speech, and then associates the image with a location in the memorized building. This approach means memorizing two things rather than one, but there were those who found it workable.

For Plato, memory is a link not just with earthly places but with those heavenly places where ideal forms and true knowledge reside. The right method of cultivating memory, then, might give one access to these remote, transcendent realms of knowledge. Neoplatonists until well into the Renaissance sought to devise memory systems sufficiently sensitive to the supposedly parallel structures of mind and world to facilitate the acquisition of vast amounts of new knowledge. Hence the presence of memory in the system of rhetoric raises in yet another form the question of how knowledge is represented in the mind.

Delivery. For Aristotle, delivery is an art akin to acting, which he despises. Like memory, delivery has often received rather perfunctory treatment, even by Quintilian and others who take a brighter view than Aristotle and acknowledge its importance. The Roman rhetoricians understand that voice, gestures, and facial expressions materially affect the impact of all that has gone into a speech. Delivery is a system of nonverbal signs that has enormous power, a power recognized by eighteenth-century elocutionists and by twentieth-century electronic media analysts, among others.

The Influence of Classical Rhetoric

Rhetoric has frequently been treated as if it were chiefly a succession of reformulations of the classical system outlined above. There is some justice in this view. The fundamental concerns of rhetoric in all ages appear to be those defined in the classical period: purpose, audience, composition, argumentation, organization, and style. Not only do the classical categories of rhetorical study persist, but so do many of the particulars. In every period we find discussions of the common and special topics, the steps in composing, the figures of speech, and so on. And with respect to larger questions of theory, the status of knowledge as true or contingent continues even today to be unsettled. Yet for all the continuity of the rhetorical tradition, rhetoric has grown and changed. Classical rhetoric may name many of the fundamental concerns, but it does not exhaust the possibilities for understanding the nature of persuasive discourse, as a review of the history of rhetoric will suggest.

Late Classical Rhetoric in Rome

Roman rhetoricians (such as Cicero and Quintilian) draw largely on the Greeks (chiefly Gorgias, Plato, Isocrates, and Aristotle). Much of the work by the Roman writers is prescriptive, providing guidelines for employing the techniques arrayed in the five-part composing process. But Cicero and others also went beyond considerations of structure to speculate about the ways in which persuasion shaped belief and

action. Oratory in Cicero's time (the first century B.C.E.) was a powerful political weapon—one Cicero himself wielded—and rhetoric, however derivative its theory, was an art that helped organize civilized communal life. By the time of Quintilian (the first century C.E.), Rome was an empire and political oratory was suppressed. Rhetoric was still used in the law courts, but it also became a form of entertainment, focused on stylistic extravagance. Yet Quintilian envisions the creation, through rhetorical training that includes broadly humane learning, of a “good man speaking well” who might save the state.

MEDIEVAL RHETORIC

Early Christianity

If Quintilian's good speaker were to be found in early medieval times, perhaps he would be a member of the new faith, Christianity. But many of the Church fathers doubted that pagan rhetoric could serve the needs of the new religion. They saw rhetoric as part of the hated Greco-Roman culture, imbued with the hopeless moral corruption of the pagan world. Moreover, rhetorical invention generates probable knowledge through the commonplaces and the enthymeme, but Christian knowledge is absolute. Similarly, whereas rhetoric (and classical philosophy generally) relies on reason to produce knowledge, Christian knowledge comes from revelation. Augustine, at the turn of the fifth century C.E., makes at last a practical decision in favor of rhetoric by focusing on the issue of persuasion: Christianity cannot afford to eschew a powerful tool for defending and expounding its principles and beliefs.

The Later Middle Ages

Augustine's accommodation of rhetoric and Christianity did not result in much new work on rhetoric in the Middle Ages, however. Not long after Augustine's death, Boethius, one of the last scholars with classical training in Greek and Latin, wrote a brief summary of classical rhetoric. His summary, more widely available than the originals, reduced thousands of pages of theory and practical advice to a few lines on each of the most general points. This kind of work is typical of the treatment of rhetoric—and most other branches of learning—for almost eight hundred years after the times of Augustine and Boethius. Classical texts were rare, and the Church, while preserving them, also wished to preserve their rarity.

Rhetoric in the Middle Ages did produce sets of rules for the art of preaching and for the legal letters through which the far-flung Church and secular governments were administered. Manuals of preaching and of letter writing began to appear in great numbers after the twelfth century. Also persisting through the medieval period was the study of style, generally separated from other rhetorical concerns and associated with the composition of verse. The uses of rhetoric by both men and women in more informal kinds of political interaction—for example, in negotiations at a royal court—were also increasingly recognized, as in the work of Christine de Pizan.

THE RENAISSANCE

Stylistic Rhetoric

The study of figures gave names to every sort of phrase and sentence, a practice that became more widespread in the fifteenth century. The emphasis on style was stimulated by renewed interest in classical learning. It was not possible, in the Renaissance, to speak without “using” rhetoric, and a great occupation of clever rhetors in this period was amplification of the names of figures and copious demonstrations of their use for the delectation of other experts. Many rhetorical terms, too, found their way into the new science of vernacular grammar: colon, comma, apostrophe, and parenthesis. For stylistic rhetoric texts in the Renaissance, the idea that all language use could be treated rhetorically was confined for the most part to style, to the forms of statements and not to the social situations of their utterance.

Private Discourse in Rhetoric

Private discourse, however persuasive, had hitherto remained outside the boundaries of rhetoric. Now the art of letter writing, in the hands of the Renaissance humanists, grew to include private as well as public communications. By the late seventeenth century, private conversation, too, came to be seen as rhetorical, in guides such as Madeleine de Scudéry’s that placed rhetoric at the site of considerable political power in a society increasingly governed by monarchs and their advisers. Scudéry was well known both for her influence at the court of Louis XIV and for the high literary quality of the dialogues in which she explained and exemplified the art of courtly conversation.

Public Discourse by Women

Women’s literacy increased in the Renaissance, and although few women received instruction in rhetoric and almost all women were forbidden to speak in public, more women ventured into public forums. Often their motive was to promote their religious views, but always they found themselves forced to defend their very right to read, write, and speak. In the late seventeenth century, an early leader of the Society of Friends, or Quakers, Margaret Fell, was one of the first women to publish an aggressive defense of these rights. She attacked prevailing interpretations of such pronouncements against women’s speaking as are found in the writings of the Apostle Paul, which were frequently cited to silence women. Ironically, this sort of defense had to be mounted repeatedly over the next two centuries, as women’s arguments, even those well known at the time, like Fell’s, tended to go out of print rapidly and to be lost to later women writers. In this way the defense of the right to speak becomes almost a trope in women’s rhetoric, from the writings of Fell’s contemporary Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz in the late seventeenth century to Sarah Grimké’s defense of women abolitionists in the nineteenth century. While the scope of classical rhetoric was narrowing in the work of late Renaissance male theorists, women were enlarging their claims on rhetoric’s traditional powers.

Ramus

In the sixteenth century, the classical approach to rhetoric was assailed by the French philosopher Peter Ramus, who proposed a popular reform of the allied arts of dialectic and rhetoric. Dialectic sought to perfect the syllogism as a way of examining statements about the world. Logically perfect statements, as long as they were not inconsistent with divine revelation, were presumably true. Dialectic would thus grasp the truth (through the syllogism), while rhetoric would offer it to the public. Ramus, however, formally separates invention (and arrangement as well) from rhetoric and assigns it to dialectic. Ramus believes that contiguous fields of study should not overlap, especially where one field possesses a clearly superior method—as in this case, where dialectic is, he says, superior. Rhetoric in Ramus's scheme is confined to style, memory, and delivery. Ramistic rhetoric, taken up almost entirely with matters of style, flourished well into the seventeenth century, though it was vigorously opposed by Ciceronians, who argued for the continued importance of all five parts of the classical composing process.

Science, Epistemology, and Rhetoric

The Ramistic conception of dialectic was overturned by the inductive orientation of the new approach to science. Francis Bacon, at the turn of the seventeenth century, argues that the syllogism cannot discover anything new. The proper distinction to draw, Bacon says, is between inquiry, as the work of science, and recovery, as the work of rhetorical invention. Even though Bacon supports a rhetoric that includes all its traditional parts, one consequence of the new scientific movement of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries was the further estrangement of rhetoric from the source of knowledge. Some of Bacon's followers attack rhetoric as an unreliable tool for handling knowledge. And not only rhetoric but language itself comes under this attack.

But if language is unreliable, how is truth to be known? Can words and sentences, even if purged of ornament, stand for mental representations? Can language be purified for science or philosophy? Bacon addresses the problem this way: Human knowledge must be regarded as only a version of the objective truth, a version warped by prejudices, preconceptions, and imprecise language. Verbal representations of this knowledge introduce distortion because they are signs that may lose their definition, their link to the signified. Bacon hopes that careful observation and skeptical induction will overcome these epistemological limitations and reveal the truth of things, a truth that rhetoric may then disseminate. But by the very fact of elaborating the nature of mental and verbal "distortion," he reopens the possibility that the processes of thought and language are never neutral conveyors of truth.

THE ENLIGHTENMENT

John Locke also struggled with this problem. Human language must make use of generalizations, Locke contends, or else words will proliferate along with the multitude of things in the world until language becomes too cumbersome to use conve-

niently. Generalities don't actually exist: They are ideas, similarities perceived by human observers. But while Locke seems certain that the general idea comes first, he also suggests that it is in some sense created by language. In any case, there is no guarantee that the generality signified by a word will convey the same idea to all users of the language. This is a serious problem, and Locke and his successors blame rhetoric for making it worse. If only stylistic extravagance were curbed, they say, language might be closer to the things it names—if not to things out in the world, then at least to people's clear and distinct ideas about them.

For a number of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century rhetoricians, these complaints were a call for reform. Rhetoric was out of step with the times, it seemed, because invention relied on outdated deductive methods and stylistic rhetoric impeded the already difficult search for truth. Rhetoric ought to moderate its reliance on the topics for invention because those topics depend on received wisdom rather than observed fact. Furthermore, syllogistic reasoning should be limited, as in Bacon's scheme, to avoiding fallacies. And clearness (or "perspicuity") should of course be preferred to an ornamented style. These reforms proved to be widely influential and later allowed for the development of a more epistemologically sophisticated rhetoric.

The Eighteenth Century

Giambattista Vico, an Italian professor of rhetoric of the early eighteenth century, was one of the few in his day to challenge science's claim of epistemological superiority. Responding to the philosophy of René Descartes, Vico objects that the famous philosopher's method relies, no less than rhetoric does, on probability and belief rather than demonstration of absolute truth. Vico even sees rhetoric as superior to the Cartesian method, for rhetoric takes probability seriously, understands the ways in which argument produces belief, and trains young people for responsible civic action, while Cartesianism does not. An honest analysis of the function of language, Vico argues, will reveal the ways in which knowledge is actually formed, in contrast to the Cartesians' claims to have the real truth. Vico's ideas, however, had little influence in his own day. His elaboration of the epistemological doubts hinted at in Bacon conflicted with the positive thrust of the new theory of knowledge, a thrust that was supported by the growth of empirical scientific learning. Vico was seen as a reactionary, an opponent of scientific and philosophical progress.

But Bacon had already suggested an obvious and less contentious connection that rhetoric could make with epistemology—namely, through psychology. Rhetoric could observe the structure of the mind and thereby enhance communication. Rhetoric, after all, addresses the faculties of the mind. Should it not study the ways of making this address most efficient and effective? By taking a scientific attitude toward the study of language, rhetoric could ally itself with a power that would otherwise remain a dangerous enemy. Thus eighteenth-century rhetoricians endorse clarity as an ideal of style, support "natural" arrangement, and favor a rhetorical theory that follows "human nature" in appealing to reason and emotions. Moreover, they regard the classical authors as excellent observers of human nature. According to Locke's theory of uniform psychology, human nature presumably has not changed

since the classical authors' day; therefore, studying these writers' works could not conflict with the new "scientific" standards of psychology.

Bacon identifies along with each mental faculty a genre that especially addresses it: philosophy for Reason, history for Memory, and literature for Imagination. George Campbell, writing late in the eighteenth century, extends Bacon's taxonomy of faculties and genres. Scientific demonstration is but one form of communication, says Campbell, appealing to one faculty, Reason, through a preferred style, perspicuity or clarity. Campbell even steers close to Vico's argument here, pointing out that demonstration relies on belief in previous demonstrations, proofs, and axioms. Between science and rhetoric, then, Campbell sees a range of probabilistic reasoning, not a difference in kind. Rhetoric will give the best account not only of reason but also of the other faculties of the human mind, Campbell argues, for rhetoric studies human sentiments, passions, dispositions, and purposes in order to affect them.

Though Bacon, Campbell, and others repeat the traditional definitions of occasions for oratory—at the bar, in the pulpit, and in the legislature—one effect of the psychological turn was to be the emphasis on "universal" modes of discourse, modes that address not audiences but mental faculties. Thus rhetoric moves toward a more "scientific" theory and takes a proprietary interest in psychology.

Rhetoric and Psychology

Psychology had been a concern for rhetoric since the time of Aristotle. Indeed, Aristotle has more care for psychology than most of his rhetorical descendants do. Most rhetorical systems focus on reasoning, discourse structures, and style but have little to say about appealing to a variety of audiences, beyond the rather obvious advice to adjust style and learning to their capacities. Ironically, perhaps, the new approach to psychology in the eighteenth century does not focus attention on audiences at all. Instead, it treats all minds as essentially the same. This approach conforms to Locke's influential idea of universal psychology; it is democratic (in the sense of being uniform, hence egalitarian), and it is expedient for an expanded theory of communication. The scene of psychological rhetoric, in its textbooks and theories, is a mind, not a public forum.

NINETEENTH-CENTURY RHETORIC

So closely connected were rhetoric and psychology by the nineteenth century that the influential psychologist Alexander Bain taught rhetoric and wrote a textbook on written composition. Bain argues that figures of speech reflect the mental operations of comparison, contrast, and association and that the modes of discourse—description, narration, exposition, argument, and poetry—correspond to mental faculties. For Bain, invention and arrangement are more or less determined by the nature of the modes of discourse: That is, description presents an object whose parts must be set forth in some convenient order, narrative is the presentation of a chronological sequence of actions, and so on. For argument, invention combines knowledge of the

subject and syllogistic reasoning. As for style, clarity is still the standard, except, of course, for imaginative literature.

Challenges to Rhetoric and Psychology

The comfortable notion promoted by Bain's faculty psychology that all audiences were essentially the same was disrupted in the nineteenth century, as public speakers and their audiences became increasingly diverse. White women, who had begun to claim a public voice in the Renaissance, now mounted the speaker's platform in increasing numbers to agitate for a variety of social reforms. In doing so, they still had to defend their right to speak, and often they did so by drawing on religious authority. Women and men of color also addressed new audiences, although, as Maria Stewart learned, African American women sometimes faced stiff resistance to their public speaking even within the black community; and as Frederick Douglass experienced, white audiences often attempted to impose racist stereotypes on African American speakers. But no longer would the typical rhetorical situation in the West be one in which speaker and audience were all the same race and sex, and rhetorical theory, though slowly, began to take this diversity into account.

Though still seeking universals, psychology changed radically at the close of the nineteenth century, largely through the work of Sigmund Freud. The patient's speech is at the heart of psychoanalysis, but Freud and his followers were interested in what was hidden in this speech—in its source in nonverbal experiences and unconscious drives—not in its persuasive effects. Psychoanalysis pointed to mental realms apparently beyond the reach of verbal persuasion, and so rhetoric continued to rely for the structure of its appeals upon the older psychology of Bain. Yet the inadequacy of Bain's system was demonstrated not only by changes in the science of psychology but also by changing rhetorical situations.

In the nineteenth century, too, schools and colleges added a vast number of new subjects, responding at last to the demands of science, technology, and business as well as to the pressure for mass education. Rhetoric had had the lion's share of the curriculum, but competition from other disciplines now forced rhetoric into one- or two-semester courses. Narrowed in compass, rhetoric focused more and more on written composition. Soon written composition became an adjunct of newly formed departments of English literature, and separate departments of speech communication arose to take over instruction in oral delivery and the study of rhetoric's history. Moreover, education beyond the elementary level became increasingly available to white women and to men and women of color, and the traditional curriculum designed for a white male elite would not meet these new students' needs.

But if science, self, and society all escaped the domain of the rhetorical—at least for a time—they have returned in the modern era. In the late nineteenth century, philosopher and one-time rhetoric teacher Friedrich Nietzsche challenged the self-satisfied assumptions on which scientific knowledge appeared, to its defenders, to rest. What we are pleased to call Truth, says Nietzsche (echoing the Sophists), is a social arrangement, not a glimpse of ultimate reality. Scientists and philosophers delude themselves in thinking otherwise. They construct the world they wish to

believe in, using a language that is far from objective and neutral. Language can never be so, says Nietzsche: It is always partial, value-laden, intentional—in short, rhetorical. Nietzsche’s ideas, so dissonant in his own time, have made their mark in ours.

MODERN AND POSTMODERN RHETORIC

The Twentieth Century

A number of twentieth-century rhetoricians have offered rhetorically grounded theories of meaning, value, intention, and knowledge. I. A. Richards, for example, sees in rhetoric an approach to meaning that can correct the “proper meaning fallacy”—the idea (already attacked by Nietzsche) that there is a direct link between words and the things or ideas they represent. Rhetoric shows, for Richards, that meaning is a function of context. Words are meaningful only in discourse (not, that is, in dictionaries), and discourse is meaningful to people who understand language by relating its present use to their previous experience of it. Richards thus defines rhetoric broadly, as the study of communication and understanding.

Kenneth Burke follows a similar path in his work. Discourse of all kinds, he says, seeks to motivate people in some way, so we should seek meaning in intentions and effects. Language is a form of human action: It requires an agent with a purpose, a scene of action, a rhetorical strategy, and an actual speech or text. Seeing discourse this way, “dramatistically” as Burke calls it, is to see all language as motivated, hence as rhetorical. Burke also searches discourse for its ideological function of promoting identification with communities and their beliefs. In his analyses, rhetoric merges with political, psychological, sociological, religious, and aesthetic investigations of human behavior.

For Chaim Perelman, rhetoric is a powerful and necessary alternative to formal logic for the study of practical reasoning. Indeed, he says, formal logic is useless outside its own tiny, abstract realm. Echoing Vico, Perelman objects to the Cartesian implication that probabilistic argument is not rational and therefore not worthy of development because it does not produce absolute truth. But probabilistic arguments are the basis of legal, ethical, and practical decisions that guide our lives. Rhetoric can tell us, says Perelman, about the way that knowledge and belief are formed by arguments based on probable reasoning, experience, and established custom. Moreover, a rhetorical view of knowledge serves as a warning against the claim, often advanced in illiberal causes, that some knowledge is absolute and beyond argument. Even in science, as modern philosophers of science admit (or at least debate), knowledge arises through argument within communities that share assumptions and beliefs.

Rhetorical theory, following these lines of development, has come to focus today on the question of the source and status of knowledge. Philosophers like Mikhail Bakhtin, Michel Foucault, and Jacques Derrida, who do not work in the rhetorical tradition, nonetheless contribute to modern rhetorical theory through their important studies of language and its relation to knowledge. Foucault, for example, follows Nietzsche in attacking the idea that language is the passive conveyor of knowledge.

Discourse, he says, is part of the network of knowledge and power, shaped by disciplines and institutions with their complex interactions and motivations. Authority to speak about certain kinds of knowledge (*ethos*, we might say) comes from institutional certification; reasoning is a function of accepted modes of reference and discipline-specific processes of validation; and the persistence of institutions and their prerogatives depends upon power that is maintained and exercised through discourse itself. In thus regarding language as intentional, powerful, caught up in the creation of knowledge and its uses, Foucault offers a theory that is entirely in line with the modern approach to rhetoric.

Concern about the status of knowledge and its relationship to language is by no means limited to the fields of rhetoric and philosophy. Scientific knowledge now appears to progress not by rational observation and the accumulation of facts but by argument. The unconscious mind produces a kind of persuasive discourse, from the modern point of view, making psychoanalysis a form of rhetorical criticism. Such conclusions are echoed in virtually every field of knowledge: Our learning comes from interpretation, our disciplines grow by argument, our communities cohere through discourse, our ideologies are structures of persuasion. Reality itself is a function of the way we use language.

The epistemic questions raised by the human sciences and even the natural sciences point to the need to study speech acts and speech genres, discursive formations and discourse communities, the dramatic scenes of communication, the linguistic construction of consciousness, and the rhetorical construction of knowledge. And indeed, this is the program put forward by the rhetoricians of our age. For rhetorical theory now, language is always persuasive in intent, always imbued with ethics and ideology. Language, as Richard Weaver puts it, is sermonic. It is not first a mental system but a social one, founded on dialogue, not linguistics. Rhetoric is synonymous with meaning, for meaning is in use and context, not in words themselves. Knowledge and belief are products of persuasion, which seeks to make the arguable seem natural, to turn positions into premises—and it is rhetoric's responsibility to reveal these ideological operations. Such are the new concerns of rhetoric.

New Rhetorics

In examining its own ideological operations, rhetoric is looking critically at its own canon and its own exclusions. As white women and women and men of color have increasingly participated in public forums, they have begun to theorize the differences race and gender make in language use. This work parallels other contemporary theory that investigates the epistemic nature of rhetoric, since women's rhetorics and rhetorics of color typically find that language use is constitutive of gender and racial identities. Virginia Woolf was one of the first to forthrightly address the social and economic barriers to women's use of the full range of the powers of language. She argued that, because of these barriers, what women can really do with language is not yet known—a sister to Shakespeare, she notes, has not yet been published—but she suggests in the form of her own essays what distinctively feminine writing might be like. Later twentieth-century writers, following Woolf's

lead, have explicitly searched for language and rhetoric specific to women. Hélène Cixous describes an *écriture féminine* that draws its sensually expressive fluidity, she argues, from the nature of female sexuality. At the same time, characteristics specific to African American language and rhetoric have begun to be studied. Among theorists of rhetorics of color, Gloria Anzaldúa presents the most searching challenge, perhaps, to classical rhetorical models, in that she envisions, and enacts, communication across linguistic as well as cultural and ideological borders. For her, the full use of all her linguistic resources is crucial both to her sense of self and to her ability to communicate a complex cultural viewpoint to diverse audiences.

The epistemological and ideological orientation of rhetoric is not an entirely new development. Rhetoric has always been concerned with political action and the search for knowledge. The history of rhetoric is the story of a long struggle to understand the relationships between discourse and knowledge, communication and its effects, language and experience. Thus the latest theories of rhetoric recover its earliest and most abiding concerns and build on a long tradition that is now, more than ever, worthy of our close attention.

Part One

CLASSICAL RHETORIC

Introduction

The classical period in rhetoric begins with the Sophistic Movement in Greece during the fifth century B.C.E. and ends with Saint Augustine (d. 430 C.E.). Rhetoric became a major cultural force in this period, its development closely tied to the development of new forms of government and social organization.

Around the tenth century B.C.E. in the mountainous country of Greece, the palace centers of tribal groups were developing into small city-states. Each city-state was isolated from its neighbors and commanded just enough territory to support a small population at a barely comfortable level. Raids against neighboring city-states procured relatively little in the way of spoils or territory, but even this was enough to raise the victors' standard of living substantially. Hence military prowess was highly valued. A few families in each city-state were slightly more well off than the rest by virtue of holding more land, and they could afford heavy weapons and the leisure to train in using them. These families occupied a powerful position in the city-state, and the city-state king had to defer to them as counselors. Oligarchy thus became the typical form of government in the early city-states.

The city-states usually were not able to conquer or ally with one another. As the population gradually grew, then, they had to turn to the sea to look for room to expand. City-states established colonies in Asia Minor to the east and in southern Italy and Sicily to the west, and trade gradually increased. With trade, wealth began to grow, and the oligarchic form of government became unstable. On the one hand, as some families became significantly more well off than the rest, it was now possible for one man to have enough wealth to buy support that would make him the sole ruler, or tyrant. On the other hand, the larger populations of prosperous, if not wealthy, men in the cities sometimes took the political power that numbers gave them and created another new form of government, the democracy.

As these changes were occurring, it became increasingly difficult to rely for public order on a common understanding of "how things are done" and on the oligarchs' personal judgment to settle difficult disputes. Written law codes were introduced, such as Solon's reforms in Athens ca. 593 B.C.E. At this time only a few people were literate. Literacy slowly increased during the sixth century B.C.E.,

however, and with it came written works such as the lyric poetry of Sappho and the philosophy of Pythagoras.

Classicist Eric Havelock has argued that the advent of alphabetic literacy in Greece was a crucial catalyst in the cultural changes occurring throughout the period from the sixth to the fourth century B.C.E. He sees preliterate Greece immersed in what he calls a culture of “orality.” According to Havelock, when speech is the sole medium of verbal communication, both verbal style and thought processes are characterized by parataxis, the simple juxtaposition of ideas; by concrete imagery that appeals to the senses and the emotions; by ritualized references to authority in the form of proverbs, epithets, incantations, and other formulas; and by an agonistic posture in disputation. But Havelock argues that alphabetic literacy worked a decisive change:

The alphabet converted the Greek spoken tongue into an artefact [sic], thereby separating it from the speaker and making it into a “language,” that is, an object available for inspection, reflection, analysis. . . . It could be rearranged, reordered, and rethought to produce forms of statement and types of discourse not previously available because not easily memorizable. . . . The syntax of Greek began to adapt to an increasing opportunity offered to state propositions in place of describing events.¹

Hence, according to Havelock, Greek culture gradually took on the stylistic and cognitive characteristics of literacy, as opposed to orality: hypotaxis, the subordination of one idea to another in logical hierarchies; generalizations that appeal to reason and text-assisted memory for validation; a questioning relationship to authority and custom, encouraging the disinterested criticism of ideas; and, over all, a greater ability to think abstractly.

Havelock has suggested that the spread of literacy in the fifth century B.C.E. led to a more instrumental approach to all experience. Consideration of language as an artifact that could be examined and molded, he argues, brought about an upsurge in philosophical activity, that of the Pre-Socratics. Although scholars dispute the causal relationships drawn in Havelock’s argument, there is no doubt that the changes he describes did occur, especially in Athens.

Athens was unusual among city-states in that when it conquered its neighbors, it adopted them into the Athenian way of life rather than simply despoiling them. This practice was made possible partly by the Athenians’ sophisticated understanding of the stabilizing power of checks and balances in statecraft. After 510 B.C.E, the government of Athens was a democracy in which members of the old oligarchic families were encouraged to play leading roles as a check against the rise of tyrants. Be it noted that in Athenian democracy, political participation was restricted to free, native-born men. Women, slaves, and “metics” (foreigners) held lower status.

In 478 Athens organized the Delian League of Greek city-states for protection from Persia. Athens controlled the military and financial resources of the League and was by far its strongest member. In effect, the League became Athens’s small Greek empire, and Athens grew rich. In 449 Pericles, the new leader of the demo-

¹Eric Havelock, *The Literate Revolution in Greece and Its Cultural Consequences* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), pp. 7–8.

cratic party in Athens, made peace with Persia, and there followed a great flowering of culture, represented by Gorgias, Socrates, and other philosophers, the sculptor Phidias, the poet Pindar, the playwrights Sophocles, Euripides, and Aristophanes, the historians Herodotus and Thucydides, and the scientists Hippocrates and Democritus. Work on the Parthenon began in 447 B.C.E.

Athenian prosperity and expanding political hegemony aroused hostility among neighboring city-states, and the Peloponnesian War broke out among the Greeks in 431 B.C.E., continuing intermittently until 404. This war destroyed the Delian League and decimated Athens. The first half of the fourth century B.C.E. saw the city-states struggling among themselves, with none the clear victor. Athens managed to retain its democracy and its cultural leadership, however, and the period produced the philosophers Isocrates, Plato, and Aristotle. Greek unity was achieved by force when Philip II, king of the Macedonians, defeated Athens and Thebes at Chaeronea in 338 and subjugated all of Greece. His son Alexander, who succeeded him in 336, continued his empire-building activities and began a massive political reorganization of the Mediterranean and Near East, which would ultimately provide the basis for the power of Rome.

Part of the intellectual flowering of Greece from the sixth to the fourth century B.C.E. was an interest in the study of rhetoric. As classical rhetorical scholar Richard Leo Enos has shown, Greek culture was highly rhetorical even before this time. Lengthy speeches figured largely in the oral poetry of Homer and other rhapsodes. Written texts by historians such as Herodotus attempted to sway readers to a particular viewpoint on history. But the first study of how language achieves such rhetorical effects is often credited to the Pre-Socratic philosopher Empedocles (d. ca. 444 B.C.E.). He was interested in the power of language, and *rhetoric* in its earliest manifestation might be understood to designate the self-conscious study of the power of language, as opposed to the self-forgetful submission to its power induced by poetry. Empedocles experimented with the ability of such study to appropriate poetic language—he wrote his philosophy in hexameters, for example. Also, tenets of Empedocles' philosophy became important for other early philosophers interested in rhetoric, specifically his view that human knowledge must come from sense perception only, and is therefore necessarily limited and flawed, but is capable of being refined toward probable truth through the exploration of opposing positions.

The first “rhetoricians” in the Greek tradition, however, were interested in using this kind of language study for practical ends. Several classical historical accounts name Corax and Tisias as the first practitioners of a schematized rhetoric. They worked in the Greek colony of Syracuse in Sicily after 467 B.C.E., when Syracuse overthrew its tyrant and became a democracy. One account suggests that Corax excelled as a deliberative speaker in the new democratic assemblies and taught his fellow citizens, among them Tisias, the effective tripartite speech structure that he had devised. Another account identifies Corax as an outstanding forensic orator and Tisias as a logographer—or writer of forensic speeches for litigants to deliver—who compiled Corax's practices in handbook form. Such a handbook would be needed because the Greek legal system had no professional lawyers. People brought charges and defended themselves in person, and in a litigious society, people

might easily become embroiled in lawsuits. Tisias may also have been a pupil of Empedocles, as was Gorgias, the most famous of the Sicilian orators (ca. 480–ca. 380 B.C.E.). Gorgias excelled in ceremonial oratory, as shown by his “Encomium of Helen” (ca. 415; p. 44). When he and Tisias were sent to Athens on an embassy in 427, the performances of Gorgias caused a sensation.

The skillful use of language became increasingly important in a society that was rapidly changing. The spread of democracy gave oral deliberations a new importance, and the upper classes eagerly sought political careers. Moreover, economic changes gave rise to a new middle class whose money allowed them to climb socially by purchasing linguistic and philosophical training for their children. Many aristocrats bitterly protested such developments and maintained that leadership qualities were conferred primarily by noble birth and that education should focus on athletic and military training, as it had traditionally done. Athens was a center of this cultural ferment.

THE SOPHISTIC MOVEMENT

The Sophists were a diverse group of early philosophers who were interested in exploring all branches of knowledge. They wandered from city to city, expounding their views to those who could pay for the privilege of listening, and also committing their ideas to writing. These early literates fostered the spread of literacy and of a standard written form, or grapholect, of the Greek language. Unfortunately, few of their texts have survived, in part because of the scorn heaped on their work by those who came after, especially Plato. For many of these men, all we have are a few fragments. Classical scholarship has attempted to reconstruct their thinking from the fragments and from what was said about the Sophists by the Greek thinkers who came after them and built on their work, often while denouncing them.

Following Empedocles, the Sophists believed that human knowledge relies solely on sense perception and is therefore necessarily flawed. Certainty or absolute truth is not available to humans, the Sophists argued, but probable knowledge can be refined by pitting opposing positions against one another and examining the arguments thus brought forward. A modern version of this practice is the adversarial trial system in the United States, which assumes that the truth of a doubtful matter is best revealed by the jury’s rational judgment of the presentations of skilled speakers arguing opposing sides of the case.

This view of knowledge was highly controversial in its own day. On the one hand, it appeared to destabilize traditional society by denying that human beings can know anything about the transcendent or even that the transcendent exists. In the absence of transcendent sources of values such as respect for justice and the rule of law, it was feared, civil order would disintegrate. Moreover, the Sophists taught young people that they could improve themselves via Sophistic teaching. They did not need to defer to the wisdom of their elders or social betters—self-improvement was open to anyone who could pay for it, and anyone, no matter what his or her natural endowments, could make some progress under Sophistic teaching. Hence the traditional privileges of the aristocracy were undermined.

At the same time, the Sophistic view of knowledge was exciting precisely because it celebrated human potential. If people can achieve knowledge only by attempting to discriminate rationally among the flawed input of their senses, yet, even so, as demonstrated in the work of the Sophists and their followers, they can achieve more than earlier societies were able to produce, in the areas of science, medicine, and the arts, for example. Whatever area of knowledge the Sophists explored, it was clear that language—in which Greek culture was deeply interested—was crucial to the exploration. Not all the Sophists were equally engaged with rhetoric; judging by the surviving fragments, Protagoras, Gorgias, Prodicus, Hippias, Antiphon, Critias, and Thrasymachus seem to have had the most to say about it.

Protagoras, the first, most famous, and most influential of the Sophists, advised the great political orator Pericles. Most scholars agree that Plato and Aristotle took Protagoras seriously as a philosopher and rhetorician, no matter how much they may have disagreed with him. Protagoras encouraged the study of the precise meaning of words—a further instance of the objectification of language that comes with literacy, as Havelock explains. Protagoras also developed the technique of exploring probable truth via opposing arguments, or “dissoi logoi.” The anonymous treatise *Dissoi Logoi* (ca. 400 B.C.E.; p. 48) is very Protagoran in approach. Protagoras even went so far as to say that opposing arguers should strive to make the weaker case appear the stronger. But most classical scholars agree that this directive was not intended to pervert justice but rather to make sure that all possible avenues are explored.

In the Sophists’ view, because the exploration of opposing views has to be conducted through language, which is fraught with emotional and cultural baggage, it can never be “objective” in the modern sense. The Sophists sought to call attention to the function of language in inducing belief, rather than encouraging audiences to give themselves up uncritically to its power to move and persuade. Gorgias (ca. 480–380 B.C.E.) is a primary exponent of this critical view of language. His own elaborately musical prose at once incorporates the devices of the poets and points out how these devices can manipulate listeners (see his “Encomium of Helen,” p. 44). We can be said to be “deceived” when we are convinced of a probable truth by the power of crafted language. But there need be no moral turpitude in this deception, if probable knowledge, based in our deceptive, limited sensory organism, is all that humans can achieve anyway.

Gorgias with his eloquence persuaded Athens to come to the aid of his hometown, Leontini in Sicily, against its aggressive neighbor Syracuse—precipitating the war that eventually debilitated Athens. Perhaps this linkage of Sophistic rhetoric with dangerous statecraft helped to discredit it in the eyes of later thinkers such as Plato, Isocrates, and Aristotle, who lived amid the social and political turmoil that followed Athens’s golden age, in which the Sophists had dominated. Plato encouraged the view that the Sophists were concerned merely with the manipulative aspects of how humans acquire knowledge—that is, with how people could be persuaded that they had learned the truth, whether or not truth was in fact conveyed. Plato’s condemnation of the Sophists became authoritative for centuries and

contributed to the loss of Sophistic texts and neglect of the remaining fragments. The scholarly tradition depicts only Plato and Aristotle as concerned with truth, meaning absolute truth that can be demonstrated by empirical evidence or insight into divinely instilled ideals. Modern rehabilitative readings of the Sophists have not disputed that the Sophists thought absolute knowledge impossible to attain but have preferred the Sophists' views for that reason, as more congruent with modern ideas about knowledge. The Sophists, like many contemporary theorists, believe that only provisional or probable knowledge is available to human beings.

Does the Sophist view of the function of language in persuasion actually destroy social order? Historian of rhetoric John Poulakos has argued that, as cosmopolitan intellectuals, the Sophists were well equipped to launch criticism of all things traditional. In so doing, they adapted the customary Athenian interest in public athletic competitions and theatrical performances to their own public battles among ideas, couched in technically dazzling language. In their verbal competitions, the idea that the stronger and better would prevail—a main tenet of traditional competition—was undermined by the playfulness of their techniques. Similarly, they overthrew the idea that philosophical discussion should aim to measure the actual by the ideal; they preferred to suggest possibilities—simply aiming to make people see that what has always been so does not necessarily have to continue. As for what course of action to pursue, then, the Sophists suggested that, rather than agonizing over what is proper or improper according to unchanging social rules, people should consider their immediate circumstances and what would be expedient at the moment. This is the Sophistic doctrine of *kairos*, that is, the idea that the elements of a situation, its cultural and political contexts, rather than transcendent unchanging laws, will produce both the best solutions to problems and the best verbal means of presenting them persuasively.

But as French classicist Jacqueline de Romilly has pointed out, the Sophists by no means advocated anarchy. They did say that the transcendent is inaccessible to humans, or even that it does not exist. Prodicus, for example, sounding much like a modern anthropologist, suggests in one fragment that people denominated as gods those natural forces that were beneficial to them, and “persons who first invented shelters or found new means of obtaining food or hit upon useful techniques were called names like Demeter, Dionysus, and the like.”² If society's laws for human behavior do not come from some godly source, then one cannot presume them to be ideally designed to suit human nature. Antiphon pointed out that human laws and natural laws are often antithetical, in that human law may require people to do things that go against their natural appetites. Nevertheless, it is often to people's advantage to obey human law, even if doing so requires suppressing some natural instincts. Protagoras, for instance, advocated the voluntary commitment to obey human laws in one's own ultimate self-interest—an early version of what later political theorists would term the “social contract.” Powerful language that induces people to take on this commitment, then, is actually an instrument for social stability.

²Rosamond Kent Sprague, ed., *The Older Sophists* (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1972), p. 83.

Moreover, the Sophists' ability to see many sides of an issue encouraged cultural tolerance, which would be a stabilizing factor in a diverse society, as Athens increasingly was because of the influx of foreigners seeking to enjoy Athenian cultural and political advantages or to avoid the ravages of war elsewhere. The Sophists traveled widely and thus came to know that customs varied greatly from place to place. This cross-cultural perspective is reflected in the *Dissoi Logoi*, for example, when the author observes that Spartan women have more freedom to engage in athletic exercises than Ionian women do. These insights, derived from a comparison of customs and political goals, may have contributed to the pan-Hellenism frequently advocated by Sophists. They saw the possibility of communities uniting, not on grounds of a common (Greek) culture, but on grounds of a common recognition that humanity could express itself in many ways and was not subject to an absolute standard that could mark some ways for annihilation.

ISOCRATES AND EDUCATION IN RHETORIC

Isocrates and Plato, who were close in age, reacted in two ways to the earlier Sophists. Both attempted to distinguish themselves from these men who had been their teachers. Plato was concerned with what human beings can know, but he wanted to find pathways to absolute truth. He rejected the Sophists' view that humans are not capable of achieving this truth. Isocrates, on the other hand, emphasized the active rather than the contemplative side of Sophism. He studied with Tisias, Prodicus, Socrates, and Gorgias, and eventually saw himself primarily as an educator. In his school, the first of its kind, his main purpose was to train talented men to become ethical and effective political leaders. Isocrates, too, wanted to claim that he taught philosophy, but for him the word meant a sort of applied intellectualism, something like modern political science, as he explains in his "Against the Sophists" (ca. 390 B.C.E.; p. 72) and *Antidosis* (353 B.C.E.; p. 75). By becoming a professional educator, Isocrates aligned himself firmly with the Sophistic idea that education could improve the natural talents of all comers—and that it should be useful to the state. He also placed himself in direct competition with Plato when the latter opened his Academy a few years after Isocrates opened his school.

Until recently, Isocrates (436–338 B.C.E.) has been known to modern scholars mainly as one of the Ten Attic Orators. The Ten comprised a canon of the best orators of the lively era 450–350 B.C.E., a canon well established by the time of Quintilian, a rhetorician in Imperial Rome (discussed below). Some, such as Demosthenes, were noted for their brilliant and effective political oratory, and some, such as Lysias, for their limpid prose style. The speech by Demosthenes in defense of his political career, "On The Crown," is still widely regarded as the most impressive speech of the classical era. Isocrates was also noted for his prose style, best exemplified in speeches composed to be read rather than heard, and for his vigorous advocacy of pan-Hellenism during the confusion that followed the Peloponnesian War. After a brief period as a logographer, however, Isocrates built his career around his role as an educator in Athens.

As Plato emphasizes in his dialogues attacking them, many Sophists charged

fees for teaching rhetoric as they moved from town to town. Isocrates also charged for his instruction, but he was the first to settle in his own school, which was organized for advanced pupils and had entrance requirements and a course of study lasting several years. His aim, as noted above, was to prepare civic leaders. Isocrates never claimed to impart wisdom in his school, thereby distinguishing himself not only from Sophists as characterized in Plato's attacks but also perhaps from Plato himself with his quest for absolute knowledge. Isocrates argues that public business won't wait while the philosopher pursues abstruse studies. Truth is not available to finite humans in any transcendent, absolute form. Thus it is the philosopher's higher duty to educate men for their current affairs, to help them learn to make wise decisions in the face of limited knowledge, and to use rhetoric to unify people in support of these decisions. By all accounts Isocrates was tremendously successful at performing this duty of the philosopher. Not only did he educate many famous Greek orators and political leaders, but his school became the model for the Roman world and ultimately for Christendom. His influence is still visible in modern conceptions of liberal education.

Isocrates saw natural talent, practice in varied situations, and instruction in general principles as the three elements of rhetorical and philosophical success—that is, as the three elements requisite to becoming a valuable citizen. He ranked their importance in the order listed, weighing the student's contribution much more heavily than the teacher's. Nevertheless, talent could be developed by skilled instruction. If this included moral instruction, rhetoric could be rescued from Platonic charges that it was merely manipulative. Isocrates never claimed that a virtuous teacher could impart his virtue directly to his students. But such a teacher could influence them by being a virtuous audience for their rhetorical efforts. Even if the student is motivated at first only by the desire for personal triumph, if he seeks to move a virtuous audience he must choose material that will appeal to such an audience—that is, he must concern himself with the noble. Isocrates hoped that prolonged contact with the noble would inspire the pupil. Such an educational system is founded on emulation.

Isocrates was not the only thinker to link education with philosophy and rhetoric. Almost any man practicing philosophy and rhetoric in this period did so in an educational setting; if he was not the head of a school, his social circle likely included the sons of friends given over to him for informal instruction. This context foregrounded the personal element in knowing and persuading. Intense homoerotic relationships often developed between mentor and pupil, which apparently were considered appropriate aids to emulation. Homosexuality was an accepted form of sexual expression in ancient Greece and usually took the form of an attachment between a mature man and a young boy or adolescent. In the most socially approved version of such a relationship, the younger partner accepted a passive sexual role out of gratitude for the older partner's kindnesses to him, which often included intellectual, artistic, or athletic instruction, and out of admiration for his accomplishments in these areas. Such relationships were encouraged by the fact that education, like the rest of ancient Greek society, was usually strictly segregated by sex. Al-

though Plato did admit some women to his Academy, the school of Isocrates, like most others, was for men only.

ASPASIA AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN

Did women receive higher education elsewhere than in the schools dominated by men? There is much scholarly debate on the position of women in classical Greece. Women were supposed to remain sequestered within the home and to be concerned solely with domestic matters. Greek literature contains many contemptuous references to women and often praises homosexual relationships as a far better source of emotional sustenance than marriage. Women generally received less education than men, had far fewer legal rights, and were greatly restricted in their public roles. All this suggests that women would have been unable to contribute much to the development of classical philosophy or rhetoric, and indeed, no theoretical texts on these subjects by Greek (or Roman) women have survived.

On the other hand, women did not appear to be totally oppressed. Even a woman who did nothing but tend her home might have considerable responsibilities, for she might be in charge of numerous servants and slaves engaged in domestic and handicraft activities. Also, women participated in some public religious ceremonies. By the second and first centuries B.C.E., women with great advantages of wealth or birth might even hold public office, as surviving inscriptions indicate. Henri-Irénée Marrou, a historian of classical education, says that a few schools existed for upper-class Greek girls that were very similar to the schools for their brothers.³ Sappho, one of the first Greek lyric poets, headed such a school. Girls attended in their teenage years, before marriage, and studied poetry, music, dance, and athletics. Advanced students studied rhetoric, philosophy, and political theory. According to Marrou, by the second and first centuries B.C.E. it was not unusual for girls of the upper classes to attend such schools. Cities sponsored competitions for them in recitation, music, and athletics. A few learned women appear in classical history, such as Diotima, whom Plato depicts in the *Symposium* as teaching philosophy to Socrates (although she may be a fictional character).

Aspasia, mistress of Pericles (p. 56), is mentioned in Plato's "Menexenus" and other classical sources as being a much-sought-after teacher of rhetoric and political theory. The persistent tradition concerning Aspasia's rhetorical skills suggests that here was one woman, at least, who had an impact on the public rhetoric of her day. Some sources suggest that she taught the so-called Socratic method to Socrates.

If some women were receiving advanced education and producing work in philosophy and rhetoric themselves, then it becomes more difficult to explain the absence of any surviving texts by them. No doubt in classical times the occasions for a woman to use rhetoric in public were very few—perhaps only on family ceremonial occasions, if there were no male relative to deliver a eulogy, for example. Yet

³Henri-Irénée Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity*, trans. George Lamb (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1956, 1982), pp. 33–35.

many examples suggest that some women at least knew about rhetoric, even if they didn't usually practice it. These include the examples mentioned above, as well as the playwright Aristophanes' creation in *Ecclesiazusae* (ca. 392 B.C.E.) of a female character who delivers a speech of over a hundred lines in a political assembly, before men. Classicist G. B. Kerferd has suggested that, although women certainly were oppressed in classical Greece, one important strand of Sophistic social thought argued for greater equality for them. This strand influenced even that enemy of Sophism, Plato, as seen by the equality between the sexes that he recommended for the oligarchy of his ideal state (in *Republic*). The position of women became a topic for debate, with the literature reflecting extreme views both for and against. Conflicting evidence in the historical record thus reflects the social ferment of the times. But, Kerferd speculates, because change stopped far short of a modern feminist position, works of the losing party of women were neglected and lost just as the works of the male Sophists were.⁴

PLATO: TRUE AND FALSE RHETORIC

Plato (ca. 428–347 B.C.E., p. 80) is not usually characterized as an educator, as is his rival Isocrates, but rather as a philosopher in the modern sense of the word, even though he wrote all of his important works while head of his Academy. At the end of Plato's *Phaedrus* his own teacher Socrates says that he wishes to plant seeds of knowledge in well-disposed young minds and perpetuate himself in this way rather than through biological reproduction. If Plato held such seminal aspirations for his own work, they have certainly been richly fulfilled by his eminent position in the history of Western thought.

Rhetorical theorist Kenneth Burke has suggested that Socrates' homosexuality, as described by Plato, may be taken as a symbol of Socrates'—and by extension Plato's—philosophical project. Refusal to reproduce the tribe biologically symbolizes refusal to reproduce tribal wisdom culturally. Rather, for Plato, education must be based in a relationship between essentially distinct individuals—not two who cleave together as one flesh—who come together with the aim of transcending history, not leaving offspring to carry it on. In this relationship, discourse should be used as a means to uncover absolute truth, not merely to induce belief in probable truth or received wisdom.⁵

Rhetoric thus becomes a key subject for Plato, for true and false rhetoric must be distinguished. His two most important works on rhetoric attack the false—the *Gorgias* (ca. 386 B.C.E.; p. 87)—and define the true—the *Phaedrus* (ca. 370 B.C.E.; p. 138). For Plato, false rhetoric is precisely that of the Sophists, rhetoric that relies on *kairos* or the situation in order to determine provisional truth or probable knowledge. Plato faults the Sophists for not using rhetoric to try to discover absolute truth. He ignores the fact that they do not do so because they do not believe that absolute truth is accessible to humans and suggests that the Sophists' neglect of it comes

⁴G. B. Kerferd, *The Sophistic Movement* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 159–62.

⁵Kenneth Burke, *A Grammar of Motives* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1954), p. 426.

from a frivolous, or worse, malicious intent simply to entertain and manipulate their audiences. In the *Gorgias*, Plato shows the severe political consequences of Sophistic rhetoric as he depicts it, in the brutality of Callicles. Perhaps this example lends some support to the idea that Plato condemns Sophistic rhetoric at least in part because he blames it for the political chaos in Athens. John Poulakos points out, at any rate, that Plato seems to need this version of Sophistic rhetoric in order to define his own philosophical positions against it. Without Sophism, says Poulakos, Plato's rhetoric would have been very different.⁶

True rhetoric, as displayed in the *Phaedrus*, becomes the method whereby the philosopher and his pupil free themselves from conventional beliefs and all worldly encumbrances in the pursuit and eventual attainment of transcendent absolute truth. Plato sanctions two uses of rhetoric to reach truth. One use is to convey truth that is already in the rhetor's possession to an ignorant audience—by any effective means, so long as the virtuous rhetor keeps the audience's best interests at heart. An example of this use of rhetoric in the *Phaedrus* might be Socrates' speech on the soul as a charioteer with two battling horses, a speech that aims to manipulate Phaedrus with spiritually uplifting ethical and pathetic appeals.

The second use of rhetoric is more methodological. This use is illustrated in the *Phaedrus* by the lengthy passages of give-and-take between the older and younger man. Here Socrates does not simply seek to convey a preconceived truth to Phaedrus, but he actually works out the truth in his own mind by talking to Phaedrus about it and correcting the less experienced thinker's misconceptions. This process might be likened to clearing away the conventional underbrush so that the truth can be seen. Whereas Plato's first use of rhetoric might be regarded as manipulative, even if in a good cause, the second is more truly collaborative, requiring the informed participation of all parties. This is the highest form of rhetoric, in Plato's view.

The way Plato practices philosophy is rhetorical in the sense that he frames his treatises as conversations among a few interlocutors. This format allows him to model the face-to-face questioning that seeks truth, while at the same time using a full range of dramatic and literary devices to persuade his readers to accept his own view of the truth. (Richard Leo Enos points out, for example, that in the *Gorgias* Plato stacks the deck rhetorically by compelling Gorgias to assent to a discussion of abstract terms that Gorgias would never have tried to define out of context, and to limit himself to short replies instead of the extended speeches at which he excelled.)⁷ With its deft characterizations, this format also allows Plato to imply that the absolute truth he seeks is not to be uncovered by people's rational abilities, or *logos*, alone; ethical and pathetic elements necessarily accompany conversations among real people. Indeed, by using Socrates as a literary persona through which to express his own philosophical views (whether or not these views were learned from Socrates) Plato supplements the logical appeal of his arguments with the ethical

⁶John Poulakos, *Sophistical Rhetoric in Classical Greece* (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1995), p. 77.

⁷Richard Leo Enos, *Greek Rhetoric before Aristotle* (Prospect Heights, Ill.: Waveland Press, 1993), pp. 97–99.

appeal of Socrates' advanced age and reputed wisdom and the pathetic appeal of his well-known martyrdom. Yet at the same time that Plato stresses the importance of oral questioning, he frames his philosophy in written form, which, as he points out in the *Phaedrus*, is distinguished precisely by its unresponsiveness to questioning. Irony cannot operate undetected in speech, for a nuance can always be questioned; but what is to prevent the written text from deceiving?

ARISTOTLE: SYSTEMATIC RHETORIC

Aristotle (384–322 B.C.E.), originally Plato's pupil, taught in Plato's school for many years and conducted his own Peripatetic School in Athens, 334–323 B.C.E. He apparently began working on his *Rhetoric* (p. 179) while serving as tutor to the young Alexander the Great, and stopped working on it around 330. Scholars disagree about whether the text should be regarded as completed, or even whether Aristotle was its chief author: The existing text may be no more than lecture notes compiled by students in Aristotle's classes on rhetoric.

Aristotle was perhaps a more "academic" thinker on rhetoric than any of his predecessors. He had no public role as a rhetorician; no speeches written by him are extant. He appears to have been totally absorbed by his activities as a teacher and scholar. He founded what came to be known as the Peripatetic School. Aristotle attempted to place all branches of human knowledge in systematic order. He wrote extensively in almost every area of knowledge known to the ancient world, including rhetoric. Aristotle did not appear to agonize over the good and bad uses of rhetoric, as his predecessors had done, especially Isocrates and Plato. He seemingly did not feel particularly hostile to the Sophists or need to devote much time to refuting their ideas. John Poulakos suggests that he evaluated them simply on the basis of their contributions to Hellenic thought: important, but now outmoded.⁸ What interested Aristotle was how to sort through what was known about rhetoric in his own day and to put what was useful in usable order.

Aristotle defines rhetoric as the art of discovering the means of persuasion available for any occasion. This art of discovery requires that the rhetor investigate systematically both the situation with which he (almost always he) is presented and his own inner resources for handling it. Aristotle classifies speech into three categories, determined by the situation in which each would be used: deliberative or political oratory, intended to recommend a future course of action; epideictic or ceremonial oratory, intended to praise or blame a current state of affairs; and forensic or legal oratory, intended to provoke judgment concerning a past action. These were the three main types used in Greek life, and after Aristotle the three dominant categories for all oratorical study.

Aristotle's *Rhetoric* deals with the process of speech composition. The first two books focus on the rhetor's attempts to organize what he knows and to structure his arguments. This invention process can be guided by formal procedures called *heuristics*, such as the "common topics" or *topoi*. Aristotle conceptualized these as

⁸Poulakos, p. 152.

“places to look” for arguments; we would think of them more as structural devices. For example, a topic might be comparison (“Here is how *A* is like *B* or unlike *B*”) or “greater and lesser” (“Here is how *A* is greater than *B* or less than *B*”). The rhetor should also consider his audience, in terms of both their particular cultural predilections and their individual emotions, which are conditioned by age and social class. To this end, Aristotle pioneered the study of what we would call psychology, of the individual and of the group. Book III of the *Rhetoric* considers how to place the content of the speech in effective order—which argument to make first, and so on. Then the rhetor polishes his style and prepares to deliver the speech, planning his gestures, dress, and other nonverbal means of enhancing his message. Although Aristotle does not mention the need to commit the speech to memory, classical rhetoric was replete with memorizing techniques, often involving spatial metaphors. The composing process that Aristotle treats in his *Rhetoric*, plus attention to memory, would become formalized into five “canons” or stages by the time of Cicero (see below).

The arguments that one discovers or “invents” should appeal to reason (*logos*), emotion about the subject under discussion (*pathos*), and trust in the speaker’s character (*ethos*). For Aristotle, the appeal to reason was by far the most important. In emphasizing it, he differentiated himself from earlier rhetoricians, sometimes even conveying the idea that he would prefer to conduct persuasion by reason alone. His treatment of *pathos* and *ethos*, however, shows that he realized that these more emotional elements were also usually necessary for persuasion. The pathetic appeal seeks to align the audience’s emotions with the speaker’s position (for example, arousing the audience’s anger against an enemy nation one wishes to attack). The ethical appeal evokes the speaker’s moral authority (“I am old and wise and of a noble family”) or the shared concerns of speaker and audience. Even rational appeals are not devoid of ethical and pathetic elements, for they rely upon either the enthymeme, a syllogism that takes its major premise from received wisdom, which the audience has been conditioned to respect, or the example, an illustration that must be recognizable and meaningful to audience members as a part of their own cultural history. Thus assent is gained to truths that must be only provisional or probable, not certain, such truths being the usual domain of rhetoric.

Aristotle differentiates among kinds of knowledge more rigidly than any of his predecessors. For him, absolute truth is available only through scientific demonstration. It is thus more materialist or scientific than the idealist or transcendent absolute truth sought by Plato. Dialectic, a rigorous form of argumentative dialogue between experts, can test whether absolute truth has been achieved; dialectic does not, however, play any role in the discovery of absolute truth. Neither does rhetoric, in Aristotle’s scheme, but that does not mean that rhetoric is useless to Aristotle—far from it. It may be used to convey absolute truth to the ignorant. It may also be used to arrive at probable truth in situations where demonstration is not possible. Like Isocrates, Aristotle values rhetoric as an aid to reaching agreement on questions of value or preference that demand immediate action in everyday life. If for Isocrates this study has a political bent, and a philosophical angle for Plato, for Aristotle the interest seems to be psychological.

The manuscript of Aristotle's treatise on rhetoric was lost after the death of Theophrastus, who took over his school, and it was not recopied and circulated until Cicero's day (see below). Perhaps for this reason, Aristotle was less influential on the Romans than were Plato or Isocrates. Several classificatory schemes derived from Aristotle's work, such as the three kinds of speech and the five canons of composing, were widely used, but otherwise his rhetorical theory was less influential than that of either of his eminent predecessors until the twentieth century.

THE RISE OF ROME AND THE RHETORIC OF CICERO

Aristotle's pupil Alexander conquered an enormous territory. By the time he died in 323 B.C.E., Alexander the Great's domain stretched from the eastern Mediterranean, including Greece and Egypt, to the Indus River valley in Pakistan. No one could hold this empire together. Alexander's generals divided it up, eventually establishing three dynasties: the Antigonids in Greece; the Ptolemies in Egypt and Palestine; and the Seleucids in Turkey and in the territories further east. These imperial states shared a Hellenistic culture, with Greek as the common tongue and Greek customs prevailing among the aristocratic and educated classes. No matter what one's origins, one could be accepted as "Greek" by adopting Hellenistic culture.

The Hellenistic world was dominated by great cities, much larger and more socially complex than the old Greek city-states. These cities grew up around the centers of imperial government and were cosmopolitan on a scale never seen before, as trade mingled the various Hellenized peoples. Greek-influenced art and learning flourished throughout the area Alexander had conquered, and learned professions such as medicine and engineering developed. By the third century B.C.E., the city of Alexandria at the mouth of the Nile had become the center of Hellenistic scholarship, with a huge library under royal patronage.

Rhetoric continued to flourish in the two hundred years following the death of Aristotle. Although despotic governments did not always allow the free exercise of deliberative rhetoric, forensic and epideictic rhetoric were always required. Even deliberative rhetoric found a place in the diplomatic and trade negotiations that linked the Hellenistic Mediterranean. Aristotle's heir Theophrastus wrote many treatises on rhetoric (all now lost) and thus ensured the transmission of a Peripatetic view of rhetoric. Another strand was added with the founding of the Stoic school of philosophy by Zeno at Athens around 300 B.C.E. The Stoics valued simplicity, brevity, and correctness in discourse. They also greatly extended and ramified the classification of tropes and figures.

The most significant development in rhetoric in this period was the work on "stasis" of the Greek rhetorician Hermagoras in the second century B.C.E. None of his writings survive, but modern scholars have reconstructed his ideas, relying in part on their extensive treatment in the work of Cicero, Quintilian, and other later writers. Stasis theory guides forensic orators in defining the key questions in any case. Aristotle had suggested in the *Rhetoric* (Book III) that there are four key questions: Did something happen? If so, was harm done? If so, was it great harm? If so, was the great harm justified? Hermagoras built upon these questions in developing his

four questions. First, conjecture: What are the signs that *X* committed an act? This derives from Aristotle's first question. Second, definition: If *X* committed an act, was it criminal? This combines Aristotle's second and third questions, on the nature of the harm done. Third, quality: If *X* committed a crime, were there extenuating circumstances? This derives from Aristotle's fourth question. Finally, objection: If *X* does deserve to be tried for committing this act, is the trial being conducted properly? In modifying Aristotle's questions, Hermagoras gives them a more legalistic focus, perhaps appropriate to the more complex social order of his day.

By the first century B.C.E., instruction in rhetoric had become a regular feature of the education of upper-class young men, whether in schools or with tutors, throughout the territory Alexander had conquered. Instruction in precepts was accompanied by composition of the *progymnasmata*, writing exercises in various modes, such as the fable, and by declamation of practice speeches, often in response to imaginary legal or political situations. These exercises were valued for their practicality, as they prepared for the kinds of rhetoric used in adult life, and at the same time for their ability to inculcate social values. The Greek language was often the medium of this training, because the best teachers of rhetoric continued to be Greek and because the language was deemed to have a beautifying influence on young people's use of their native tongues.

Meanwhile, a new power was emerging in Rome, on the western hinterlands of the Hellenistic world. Originally an oligarchic city-state but enjoying more fertile and open terrain than its Greek counterparts, Rome was able to ally with the surrounding settlements it conquered, offering the freemen Roman citizenship and intermarrying with local oligarchies. Greek ideas about rhetoric entered Roman culture via the Greek colonies in southern Italy that Rome absorbed, as Richard Leo Enos has shown (in *Roman Rhetoric*). By the middle of the third century B.C.E., the Roman alliance controlled the entire Italian peninsula, and by the beginning of the second century B.C.E., having beaten Carthage and the Antigonid and Seleucid rulers, Rome became the dominant political force in the old Hellenistic empire.

Rome had been governed by a system that supposedly balanced democracy and oligarchy. Democratic assemblies voted on laws and holders of civic offices. But most of the officeholders were from the aristocratic or "patrician" class, and the final legislative authority rested with a senate composed of former officeholders. Economic changes resulting from Rome's military success unbalanced this system. During the second century B.C.E., Roman conquests all around the Mediterranean basin brought great wealth through the new provinces' tax payments to the Roman generals and senators. Gradually the democratic assemblies' power diminished to mere formalities, and the senate controlled the empire. Displaced farmers and landless soldiers became an impoverished, disenfranchised mob in Rome.

Rome's growing middle class, called the "equestrian" class, was made up of families who had achieved wealth through managing military supply contracts and tax-collecting enterprises. They competed with the patricians for a share of the loot from the provinces but were usually unable to break into the patrician-controlled senate. This bourgeoisie began to vie with the aristocrats for influence over the dangerously large mob. The patricians offered the poor state-supported welfare, free

food, and brutal entertainment. The equestrians offered them positions as soldiers to fight, not for Rome, but for a general who would ensure that they got generous shares of the spoils.

The first century B.C.E., the time of Cicero, saw Rome wracked by conflict as one general after another added to Rome's conquests and then attempted to set himself up as a tyrant and destroy the senate's power. The most successful of these was Julius Caesar. By 50 B.C.E., he had conquered much of northern Europe, and he then attacked those in Rome opposed to his taking complete power. He defeated the senatorial army and his principal military opposition, General Pompey. But in 44 B.C.E. he was assassinated. A struggle for power ensued, involving, among others, Caesar's subordinate officer, Mark Antony, and Caesar's nephew and chosen heir, Octavius. Cicero died in a last-ditch effort to prevent Mark Antony from becoming tyrant. But the eventual victor was Octavius, or Caesar Octavian, who defeated Antony and his new wife, the Egyptian queen Cleopatra, in 31 B.C.E. Octavian consolidated his power by reducing the senate to a powerless advisory body and accepting from it the title of Augustus, which made him officially a demigod. The reign of Imperial Rome—Rome governed by a tyrant or, more politely, an emperor—might be said to begin from this time.

Cicero (106–43 B.C.E.; p. 283) was born well before these dramatic changes took place, and he spent the last years of his life resisting them. He is generally regarded as the next great rhetorician in the classical tradition after Aristotle. The anonymous *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (p. 243) was thought to be his work until the Renaissance. It is the oldest surviving rhetoric manual in Latin, roughly contemporary with Cicero's youthful work, *De Inventione* (ca. 86 B.C.E.). Numerous similarities between the two works suggest the standardization of education in Rome by the first century B.C.E.—that is, education in rhetoric following Greek models. These two works were by far the most widely read classical rhetorics until the Renaissance.

In *De Inventione* Cicero summarizes the categories for rhetorical study that were apparently commonplace at the time of his schooling. One set of categories delimits Aristotle's kinds of discourse, with which rhetoric is properly concerned: deliberative, forensic, and ceremonial. Another set delineates the five-part process derived from Aristotle for composing a speech: Step one is invention, when heuristics are used to generate arguments; step two is arrangement, when the best arguments are selected and placed in effective order; step three is style, ensuring that the best words are used to convey the arguments; step four is memory, that is, the use of mnemonic devices to learn a written speech by heart; and step five is delivery of the speech, attending to effective use of the voice, gesture, costume, and other nonverbal aids to persuasion. These five canons of rhetoric—invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery—became standard from classical times forward, even influencing modern studies of composition. *De Inventione* gives detailed information only on invention (evidently the complete text has not survived, or else it never was completed); consequently, during its long reading history it was usually supplemented with the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, which treats all five canons.

The upper-class men who received the training reflected in these handbooks would use it to argue legal cases, to participate in political life, and to perform at

private entertainments and family occasions such as funerals. Cicero used his training in all these ways, beginning his career as a lawyer. His family, though wealthy, was equestrian, not patrician, and so could not launch him into politics from the first. But Cicero always aspired to public service. He achieved a series of political offices, culminating in the very high rank of consul, before being assassinated by Mark Antony's agents in 43 B.C.E.

Cicero is perhaps the most variously accomplished of all the classical rhetoricians. He was the most brilliant lawyer in Rome, and many of his forensic speeches, such as the "Pro Milone," are still regarded as exemplary oratory. Moreover, he was a potent political force, defending Roman law from the threats of both popular demagoguery and tyranny, as in his series of speeches attacking Antony, known as the *Phillipics*. His prose style attracted admiration from his own to the present day. It is a style characterized by amplification and heightened emotion. Yet he deplored the excessive ornamentation of the Asianists, whose style had developed in the Greek colonies from the earlier Sophistic Movement. At the same time, he defended Latin against the purism of the Neo-Atticists, who wished to regularize the language in light of ancient models. Cicero argued that the usage of the well-educated men and women of any era should set the era's linguistic standards, even if this meant that the language would change over time. Cicero also argued that the skillful rhetorician should vary his style depending on the effect he wants to produce: plain for exposition, middle for engaging attention, and high or grand for arousing noble emotion.

In addition to leading a varied and demanding public life, Cicero was a prolific writer, producing seven main treatises on rhetoric, among other works. The most important of these for its theory is his dialogue *De Oratore* (*Of Oratory*; 55 B.C.E.; p. 289), in which the character Crassus is generally believed to express Cicero's views while the opposition of Antonius helps to draw them out. Although Cicero never conducted a school or taught formally, his treatises suggest that he was a mentor to younger public servants. His works circulated privately among his friends and became tremendously influential in Western culture through late classical, medieval, and Renaissance times up to the present. Cicero's style in Latin has come to be regarded as a model of excellence. Moreover, his rhetorical treatises are valued not only for the knowledge they convey about earlier rhetoricians but also for the way they fuse the earlier tradition into a new vision of rhetoric for public service.

In composing *De Oratore*, Cicero had the benefit of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, newly arrived in Rome. While showing Aristotle's influence, the treatise also combines the views of Isocrates and Plato. Like Isocrates, Crassus argues that natural ability is by far the most important requisite for success in public speaking, and that rules of thumb are of limited assistance. Frequent practice, particularly in real-life situations, can go far toward developing natural ability, but in spite of what Antonius says in *De Oratore*, practice alone does not suffice to reach the level of excellence to which Cicero aspires. Broad learning in history, literature, and law is essential, says Crassus, implicitly nodding toward Plato's idea that the rhetor must discover the truth elsewhere before conveying it to the audience. The orator must bring considerable knowledge to the rhetorical situation, even knowledge well beyond what the particular situation calls for.

Cicero goes beyond both Isocrates and Plato in his aspirations for the orator's beneficial social power. Isocrates depicted the orator as taking moral tone from the audience. In the *Antidosis*, Isocrates berates the Athenians for producing corrupt orators by responding only to base appeals. Plato sought to detach his orator from any audience at all, except perhaps a fellow seeker for absolute truth: The life of the mind is more important than worldly affairs and ultimately seeks to transcend them. Cicero implies that the audience will take its moral tone from the orator. Hence the orator must be broadly learned so as to elevate the audience, to make it prefer the most moral solutions to common problems. If the orator's own times do not adequately present noble models for emulation, such models must be found in books, for it is the orator's duty not only to prove the case and to engage the hearers' attention, but also to move them to right action. In other words, the best orator is one who can fulfill three offices: teaching, pleasing, and moving.

IMPERIAL ROME AND THE RHETORIC OF QUINTILIAN

Cicero's noble aspirations for rhetoric in the Roman Republic were eclipsed by the political exigencies of the Empire. Over the next three hundred years, the government fluctuated as popular generals toppled "dynasties" of a few decades' standing and as the emperor's personality influenced everyone's lives. Rome was declining in political dominance and internal stability, albeit slowly, and the decisive fall finally came in 476 C.E. when the Visigoths sacked the city.

From 96 to 180 C.E., however, the so-called period of Five Good Emperors, Roman society was relatively stable and culture flourished. Monumental architecture and roads were built throughout the Empire. The comfortable upper classes, now culturally enriched by citizens from the provinces, especially Spain and Gaul, produced the literary artists Martial, Juvenal, Lucian, and Apuleius and the historians Tacitus, Suetonius, and the Greek Plutarch. Stoic philosophy promoted detachment from what seemed a hopelessly corrupt world, and Christianity, pointing to a better life after death, spread in spite of intermittent but violent persecution. Around 250 C.E., Plotinus introduced Neoplatonism, a competitor with Christianity that read Plato and Aristotle as mystical allegories.

Tacitus wrote a dialogue on oratory (ca. 100 C.E.) that imitates Cicero's *De Oratore* while lamenting the decline of the art in his own day. The young wasted their time in decadent pleasures, he claimed, while education was ineffectual and political repression emasculating. Nevertheless, the historical accounts of Suetonius, his contemporary, show a wide variety of orators and rhetoric teachers functioning in Rome. Even if one could not criticize the imperial government, deliberative rhetoric was still needed in local politics and diplomacy; forensic rhetoric was still important; and epideictic rhetoric reached new heights of display as a popular form of entertainment.

Hence rhetorical training still remained the basis of Roman education, whether undertaken with private tutors or in small schools. Boys and girls of the privileged classes might attend grammar school together, and according to H.-I. Marrou, the emperor Trajan even provided for some indigent boys and girls to receive grammar

school education.⁹ Two grammar handbooks produced near the end of this period (by Donatus, ca. 350 C.E.) became the standard texts used in Europe until the Renaissance. The study of grammar was regarded as an important prerequisite to the acquisition of the elaborate declamatory style taught in the secondary-level schools, such as Quintilian's, which were schools of rhetoric.

Young women as well as young men sometimes pursued these higher-level studies in rhetoric, and also in philosophy. Indeed, classicist Robert W. Cape has argued that women had more opportunities for education in Rome than in Greece, and that their cultivated abilities in "sermo," or private conversation, which was regarded rhetorically, were highly valued. As noted in Quintilian (see below), a mother's verbal abilities provided an elevating early influence on her children, particularly the boys, who were much more likely to become public speakers. But women might occasionally speak in public as well, at a family occasion such as a funeral or even in a court of law, where they had the legal right to defend themselves. Cape cites records of a few women who actually did so, and also mentions the name of Hortensia, who engaged in political oratory when she protested a new tax on women to the ruling triumvirs. Although no extant Roman text discusses women's rhetoric specifically, and few written remains of these women orators exist, further research on Roman women seems promising.¹⁰

The form of oratory perhaps most characteristic of this imperial period was a highly stylized ceremonial speech called a declamation. Declamations were usually a form of private entertainment in which the orator might portray a participant in some fantastic historical event (a "suasoria") or complicated crime (a "controversia"), or extravagantly praise an athlete, a bride, or a trifle. Historian Aubrey Gwynn, S.J., cites the following example of a controversia:

The law requires that children should support their parents or be imprisoned. A man has slain one of his brothers as a tyrant and another because he was taken in adultery, though his father begged for mercy. The man is captured by pirates, who write to the father for a ransom. The father answers that he will pay them double if they will cut off his son's hands. The son is released by the pirates, and refuses to support his father.¹¹

In declamations, traditional values were lauded, sometimes ironically, since these speeches could be used to express dangerous political views covertly. Stylistic embellishment was the mark of a good declamation.

This declamatory rhetoric developed from the work of the Asianists of Cicero's time, so called because they originated in Asia Minor (Turkey) among Greek colonists who had preserved and developed the fifth century B.C.E. Sophistic Movement. The eastern Mediterranean produced many famous orators and rhetoric teachers who strongly influenced education in and performance of rhetoric at Rome. Hence Graeco-Roman rhetoric from around the time of Quintilian to the sack of

⁹Marrou, p. 303.

¹⁰Robert W. Cape Jr., "Roman Women in the History of Rhetoric and Oratory," in *Listening to Their Voices: The Rhetorical Activities of Historical Women*, ed. Molly Meijer Wertheimer (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1997), pp. 112–32.

¹¹Aubrey Gwynn, S.J., *Roman Education from Cicero to Quintilian* (Oxford, Great Britain: Clarendon Press, 1926), pp. 159–60.

Rome in 476 was, and is, commonly termed the “Second Sophistic.” The label was invented by a Sophist of the third century C.E., Philostratus, to characterize the orators he describes in his *Lives of the Sophists* (ca. 230 C.E.). Participants in the Second Sophistic shared with the earliest Greek Sophists an interest in etymologies, grammar, and the power of stylistic variety and abundance, to which they added an antiquarian nostalgia for earlier Greek culture, regardless of their own ethnic origins. They were, however, more likely to be associated with home cities than to be wanderers, and they often held important civic positions, sometimes under imperial patronage. They might be involved in local government or diplomatic ventures, but their greatest fame came from their masterful displays of elaborate declamatory rhetoric.

One of the leading lights of the Second Sophistic was the Greek rhetorician Hermogenes, who began his career as a child prodigy at declamation. Later he wrote a treatise on style in which he attempted to characterize the one ideal style, based on qualities found primarily in Demosthenes, a project implicitly opposed to Cicero’s definition of three major types of good style (plain, middle, grand). Another work that pushed considerations of literary style in the direction of philosophical questions was *On the Sublime* (p. 346), written in Greek by an unknown author in the first century C.E. (the author is sometimes called Pseudo-Longinus because the essay was once thought to be the work of a Greek rhetorician, Longinus, of the first century B.C.E.). These works show the tendency of the Second Sophistic to produce rhetoric with more literary than political implications. Indeed, throughout the classical period, rhetoric and literature were not separated as they have been in the modern period. The study of literature was thought to provide resources for the orator, and writers often showed their rhetorical training in their literary works.

Quintilian (ca. 35–96 C.E.), the last great rhetorician of the classical period, lived at the beginning of the Second Sophistic but attempted to resist its values in his one surviving work, the massive *Institutes of Oratory* (*Institutio Oratoria*, 95 C.E.; p. 364). He called for students to emulate the style of Cicero, which was less ornamented than that of the latter-day Sophists, and he urged that rhetorical skill be used only for moral ends. Like Cicero, Quintilian began his career as a lawyer, but instead of moving on to fame in politics, he made his name as a teacher in a school subsidized by the emperor. Unlike Cicero, Quintilian retired with honor and wealth. Among his pupils were many famous writers, perhaps including Tacitus, who waxed cynical about the moral standards of Roman rhetorical schools such as Quintilian’s, arguing that young men were emasculated by the focus on declamation, a pointless exercise, while tyranny raged unchecked.

Quintilian did not attempt wholesale reform of Roman education, let alone Roman politics. His resistance to prevailing standards emerges in various ways, however. Although his students did concentrate on performing declamations, Quintilian used his own experience as a lawyer to make their subjects closer to real life. He condemned brutal punishment in education, instead calling for teacher and student to be inspired by familial love. In place of pettifogging stylistic exercises, Quintilian insisted that the student read widely in the great works of earlier ages, Greek and Latin, as the surest way to develop his own mastery of language. Cicero

is continually held up as a stylistic model against the elaborate ornamentation then fashionable. Throughout, the *Institutes* is infused with the spirit of a kindly and learned teacher, unequaled in any other classical treatise.

Quintilian's project for rhetorical education is the most ambitious of any classical writer: He wants to produce the "good man speaking well," one who combines a Platonic commitment to virtue and absolute truth with the Isocratean and Ciceronian focus on effective public service. To produce this man, parents and teachers must begin at birth to draw out the boy's natural abilities and equip him with broad learning. The *Institutes* is organized by the order in which a man would study and practice rhetoric from childhood to old age. The first books deal with fundamentals such as grammar; the middle books with the five parts of the rhetorical composing process (invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery); and the final books with the adult orator's public career, including advice on how to leave it gracefully. Quintilian is seeking a moral leader, and he goes into far greater detail than other writers on how such a paragon can be produced—even in a corrupt age.

Whether Quintilian added anything new to rhetorical theory is open to debate. He depicts himself as a mere compiler and synthesizer and downplays any contribution of his own. Yet the modern reader may be struck by two special features of Quintilian's work. One of these is his developmental understanding of learning. More than any other classical educator, he seems to realize that learning is a complex and lengthy process. It is strongly influenced by social surroundings and proceeds in stages reflecting the ages and natural talents of the students, stages that pedagogy must take into account. The other feature is his moral earnestness, in a way more intense than Plato's. It seems that, for Quintilian, we must have rhetoric to save the world: The good man speaking well is almost messianic.

The man who became Saint Augustine (see Part Two) began life very much as Cicero and Quintilian had begun it, receiving rhetorical training from his well-to-do family so as to become a lawyer. Like Quintilian, too, he became a rhetoric teacher to make money, though he tells us that Cicero's love of learning inspired him to keep wrestling with the Christianity his mother hoped he would embrace. Augustine's baptism in 387 C.E. might be imagined as the appearance, at last, of the good man speaking well. Given the changes in the political climate since Cicero, the speaker's goodness had to be ratified by religion rather than civic virtue. The medieval transformation of rhetoric, following Augustine, to the service of Christian preaching restored a meaningful content to an art enervated by political oppression.

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Beatrice Zedler has translated seventeenth-century classicist Gilles Ménage's compendium, *The History of Women Philosophers* (1984), which surveys sources on classical women. See also A. W. Gomme, "The Position of Women in Athens in the Fifth and Fourth Centuries" (*Classical Philology* 20 (1925): 1–25); Sarah Pomeroy's *Goddesses, Whores, Wives and Slaves* (1975); Mary Lefkowitz's *Women in Greek Myth* (1986); Eve Cantarella's *Pandora's Daughters: The Role and Status of Women in Greek and Roman Antiquity* (1981; trans. 1987); and Sue Blundell's *Women in Ancient Greece* (1995). Cheryl Glenn discusses possibilities and obstacles for classical women's rhetorical practice in *Rhetoric Retold: Re-gendering the Tradition from Antiquity through the Renaissance* (1997). Robert W. Cape Jr., in "Roman Women in the History of Rhetoric and Oratory" (in *Listening to Their Voices*, ed. Molly Meijer Wertheimer, 1997), argues that Roman women were better educated than Greek women and had more opportunities for rhetorical training and performance. For additional references on women in antiquity, see Cape's bibliography and the headnote on Aspasia (p. 56).

For a careful and thorough discussion of Greek homosexuality, see K. J. Dover's *Greek Homosexuality* (1978).

In *Black Athena: The Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Civilization* (2 vols.; 1987, 1991), Martin Bernal argues that the elements of Greek culture were derived from black African culture in Egypt via Semitic cultures of Palestine, a genealogy concealed by racist and anti-Semitic nineteenth-century classicists. For critiques of Bernal's hypotheses by contemporary classicists, linguists, and anthropologists, see *Black Athena Revisited*, ed. Mary R. Lefkowitz and Guy MacLean Rogers (1996).

A sampling of recent scholarship primarily by rhetoricians within English studies can be found in *Essays on Classical Rhetoric and Modern Discourse*, ed. Connors, Ede, and Lunsford (1984), and *Rhetoric and Praxis: The Contribution of Classical Rhetoric to Practical Reasoning*, ed. Moss (1986). On relations between classical rhetoric and contemporary composition studies, see Kathleen Welch's *The Contemporary Reception of Classical Rhetoric: Appropriations of Ancient Discourse* (1990).

Gorgias

ca. 480–ca. 380 B.C.E.

Gorgias was born in Leontini in Sicily, which is considered by many scholars to be the birthplace of the formal study of rhetoric. He may have studied philosophy with Empedocles, a Pre-Socratic philosopher, and may have known the early rhetoricians Corax and Tisias. Gorgias became one of the best known of the Sophists. In 427 he brought Sicilian rhetoric to mainland Greece when he was sent by his native city on an embassy to Athens, perhaps with Tisias. Gorgias received such acclaim for his speaking that he remained in Greece, demonstrating and teaching rhetoric. He specialized in ceremonial oratory and, according to one tradition, could produce it extemporaneously on subjects suggested by the audience at his public performances. He was also a noted advocate of pan-Hellenism. Like other Sophists, Gorgias traveled from city to city; he died in Thessaly.

Gorgias was awarded many honors not usually given to foreigners in Greece, such as invitations to speak at the festivals. That Gorgias's performances were eagerly anticipated is suggested by Socrates at the beginning of Plato's *Gorgias*, when he compares listening to the orator to consuming a banquet (an image, of course, with ironic repercussions when the dialogue later relates Gorgianic rhetoric to cookery). Several chroniclers describe a solid gold statue of Gorgias, set up—perhaps by himself—at Delphi. Isocrates, who had been his student, claims (in the *Antidosis*) that, although not exactly wealthy, Gorgias amassed more than any other Sophist because he lived long, lacked a wife and children to support, and wandered too much to become liable for taxes in any city.

Gorgias's style has often been characterized as overly antithetical and symmetrical in structure and overly alliterative and assonant in sound. How could the Greek audience have valued so highly a style that jingles unpleasantly to modern ears? One possible answer is that the Greek audience was conditioned by its oral culture to respond to such auditory spellbinding. Listening to Gorgias apparently aroused not only intense sensual pleasure but also a shared sense of participation in a kind of wisdom available no other way. The power of his words was akin to magic, conjuring up conviction where no knowledge had existed before. At the same time that Gorgias's rhetoric provided this magical experience, however, which was like the power of poetry, its very artificiality called attention to its manipulative effects. In other words, Gorgianic rhetoric pointed up the fact that language can be crafted to suit particular purposes; powerful speech is not simply the result of the speaker's inspiration or the audience's transport.

Recent scholarship has begun to treat Gorgias more seriously as a philosopher. Following Empedocles, Gorgias believed that provisional knowledge is the only knowledge we can attain. He denied the existence of transcendent essences. Therefore, he thought, if we are to believe anything, we must be distracted from the limitations of provisional knowledge. Provisional knowledge must be presented to us with the aid of rhetoric that appeals ethically and pathetically as well as logically—

it must appeal to our whole person. Like King Oedipus, we achieve confidence in our own wisdom only through deception, not knowing that we do not know. But without this confidence, we cannot act, cannot govern wisely.

These views are expressed in the few texts by Gorgias that have survived. In his philosophical treatise “On Nature” (probably written before he came to Greece, ca. 444 B.C.E.), Gorgias poses a series of paradoxes: Nothing exists; or if it does exist, we cannot know it; or if we can know it, we cannot communicate our knowledge to another person. These paradoxes seem so counter to ordinary experience, and indeed so nihilistic, as to invite interpretation as parody. They are often read, however, as pointing to the nonexistence of transcendent essences and the impossibility of describing any such thing. Hence, human encounters with the world and the exchange of knowledge about it are necessarily limited, provisional, and shared experiences that rely upon a shared deception effected by language.

The “Encomium of Helen” (ca. 414; included here) argues for the totalizing power of language. Gorgias excuses Helen for succumbing to Paris if he persuaded her, for “speech is a powerful lord.” Gorgias compares the power of language to magic and drugs, and even characterizes it as deceitful, a damning admission to many scholars and one that has led some to see the “Encomium” as an ironic *jeu d’esprit*. But other scholars assert that Gorgias is making the strongest possible case for the power of language to change the whole person. Indeed, he seems to regard Helen as more intimately, thoroughly violated by persuasion than she would have been by forcible rape. And this power holds even in “the verbal disputes of the philosophers.” Language creates and changes the opinions that are our only available knowledge.

Selected Bibliography

Collected here are general references on the Sophistic Movement, as well as sources on Gorgias. Few writings of the Sophists remain, and scholars have pieced together their ideas in part by relying on references to them in other classical sources. For example, the long speech attributed to Protagoras in Plato’s dialogue by that name is generally taken to be a trustworthy picture of the Sophist’s thought. Fragments of Sophistic texts do exist, however. The principal translations of them are Rosamond Kent Sprague’s *The Older Sophists* (1972), the source of George A. Kennedy’s version of the “Encomium of Helen” included here; Kathleen Freeman’s *The Pre-Socratic Philosophers: A Companion to Diels-Kranz, “Fragments der Vorsokratiker”* (1966); and Freeman’s *Ancilla to the Pre-Socratic Philosophers* (1971). Both of Freeman’s works include much helpful commentary. Kennedy has also published a new translation of Gorgias’s “Encomium of Helen” in an appendix to his translation of Aristotle, *Aristotle, On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse* (1991). Another translation of the “Encomium,” though an incomplete one, illustrates Gorgias’s alliterative style more vividly than the version in Sprague: LaRue Van Hook, “The Encomium on Helen, by Gorgias” (*The Classical Weekly* 6 [1913]: 122–23). *Contrasting Arguments* (1979), T. L. Robinson’s translation of a lengthy anonymous Sophistic text, the *Dissoi Logoi* (p. 48), contains excellent commentary on that text.

Gorgias and the Sophists generally were often slighted in histories of rhetoric, but this situation is changing. A good introductory survey is Everett Lee Hunt’s “On the Sophists” (in

The Province of Rhetoric, ed. Joseph Schwartz and John A. Rycenga, 1965). Histories of the movement are W. K. C. Guthrie, *The Sophists* (1971); G. B. Kerferd, *The Sophistic Movement* (1981); and Jacqueline de Romilly, *Great Sophists in Periclean Athens* (1988; trans. Janet Lloyd, 1992). In addition to providing a history of the Sophists, Richard Leo Enos's *Greek Rhetoric before Aristotle* (1993) and John Poulakos's *Sophistical Rhetoric in Classical Greece* (1995) discuss their reception by later classical thinkers. A study of an individual Sophist that also contains much information about the whole movement is Edward Schiappa's *Protagoras and Logos: A Study in Greek Philosophy and Rhetoric* (1991). Eric Havelock's *The Liberal Temper in Greek Politics* (1957) provides social and political background.

Overtly rehabilitative and revisionist work on the Sophists includes Werner Jaeger's *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture* (3 vols., 1954–1961), Samuel IJsseling's *Rhetoric and Philosophy in Conflict* (1976), and Susan Jarratt's *Rereading the Sophists: Classical Rhetoric Refigured* (1991).

Scholars exploring the philosophical and especially the epistemological implications of Sophistic thought include Mario Untersteiner's major work, *The Sophists* (1954); Charles P. Segal, "Gorgias and the Psychology of Logos" (*Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 66 [1962]: 99–155); Richard Engnell, "Implications of the Rhetorical Epistemology of Gorgias" (*Western Speech* 37 [1973]: 175–84); and Richard Leo Enos, "The Epistemology of Gorgias's Rhetoric: A Re-examination" (*Southern Speech Communication Journal* 42 [1976]: 35–51).

Eric Charles White employs Gorgias's tragic theory of knowledge for literary criticism in *Kaironomia: On the Will-to-Invent* (1987).

Encomium of Helen¹

1. What is becoming to a city is manpower, to a body beauty, to a soul wisdom, to an action virtue, to a speech truth, and the opposites of these are unbecoming. Man and woman and speech and deed and city and object should be honored with praise if praiseworthy and incur blame if unworthy, for it is an equal error and mistake to blame the praisable and to praise the blamable. 2. It is the duty of one and the same man both to speak the needful rightly and to refute (the unrightfully spoken. This it is right to refute) those who rebuke Helen, a woman about

whom the testimony of inspired poets has become univocal and unanimous as had the ill omen of her name, which has become a reminder of misfortunes. For my part, by introducing some reasoning into my speech, I wish to free the accused of blame and, having reproved her detractors as prevaricators and proved the truth, to free her from their ignorance.

3. Now it is not unclear, not even to a few, that in nature and in blood the woman who is the subject of this speech is preeminent among preeminent men and women. For it is clear that her mother was Leda, and her father was in fact a god, Zeus, but allegedly a mortal, Tyndareus, of whom the former was shown to be her father because he was and the latter was disproved because he was said to be, and the one was the most powerful of men and the other the lord of all.

4. Born from such stock, she had godlike beauty, which taking and not mistaking, she kept. In many did she work much desire for her love,

Translated by George A. Kennedy.

¹The beautiful Helen, wife of Menelaus, King of Sparta, was abducted by Paris, a prince of the city of Troy in Asia Minor. To get her back, the Greeks united in a war against Troy that destroyed the city. Helen returned to Greece with Menelaus. These events supposedly took place ca. 1000 B.C.E. Their retelling in the oral poetry eventually codified in Homer's *Iliad* formed a central element in Greek culture. [Ed.]

and her one body was the cause of bringing together many bodies of men thinking great thoughts for great goals, of whom some had greatness of wealth, some the glory of ancient nobility, some the vigor of personal agility, some command of acquired knowledge. And all came because of a passion which loved to conquer and a love of honor which was unconquered. 5. Who it was and why and how he sailed away, taking Helen as his love, I shall not say. To tell the knowing what they know shows it is right but brings no delight. Having now gone beyond the time once set for my speech, I shall go on to the beginning of my future speech, and I shall set forth the causes through which it was likely that Helen's voyage to Troy should take place.

6. For either by will of Fate and decision of the gods and vote of Necessity did she do what she did, or by force reduced or by words seduced (or by love possessed). Now if through the first, it is right for the responsible one to be held responsible; for god's predetermination cannot be hindered by human premeditation. For it is the nature of things, not for the strong to be hindered by the weak, but for the weaker to be ruled and drawn by the stronger, and for the stronger to lead and the weaker to follow. God is a stronger force than man in might and in wit and in other ways. If then one must place blame on Fate and on a god, one must free Helen from disgrace.

7. But if she was raped by violence and illegally assaulted and unjustly insulted, it is clear that the raper, as the insulter, did the wronging, and the raped, as the insulted, did the suffering. It is right then for the barbarian who undertook a barbaric undertaking in word and law and deed to meet with blame in word, exclusion in law, and punishment in deed. And surely it is proper for a woman raped and robbed of her country and deprived of her friends to be pitied rather than pilloried. He did the dread deeds; she suffered them. It is just therefore to pity her but to hate him.

8. But if it was speech which persuaded her and deceived her heart, not even to this is it difficult to make an answer and to banish blame as follows. Speech is a powerful lord, which by means of the finest and most invisible body effects the divinest works: it can stop fear and banish grief and create joy and nurture pity. I shall

show how this is the case, since 9. it is necessary to offer proof to the opinion of my hearers: I both deem and define all poetry as speech with meter. Fearful shuddering and tearful pity and grievous longing come upon its hearers, and at the actions and physical sufferings of others in good fortunes and in evil fortunes, through the agency of words, the soul is wont to experience a suffering of its own. But come, I shall turn from one argument to another. 10. Sacred incantations sung with words are bearers of pleasure and banishers of pain, for, merging with opinion in the soul, the power of the incantation is wont to beguile it and persuade it and alter it by witchcraft. There have been discovered two arts of witchcraft and magic: one consists of errors of soul and the other of deceptions of opinion. 11. All who have and do persuade people of things do so by molding a false argument. For if all men on all subjects had (both) memory of things past and (awareness) of things present and foreknowledge of the future, speech would not be similarly similar, since as things are now it is not easy for them to recall the past nor to consider the present nor to predict the future. So that on most subjects most men take opinion as counselor to their soul, but since opinion is slippery and insecure it casts those employing it into slippery and insecure successes. 12. What cause then prevents the conclusion that Helen similarly, against her will, might have come under the influence of speech, just as if ravished by the force of the mighty? For it was possible to see how the force of persuasion prevails; persuasion has the form of necessity, but it does not have the same power. For speech constrained the soul, persuading it which it persuaded, both to believe the things said and to approve the things done. The persuader, like a constrainer, does the wrong and the persuaded, like the constrained, in speech is wrongly charged. 13. To understand that persuasion, when added to speech, is wont also to impress the soul as it wishes, one must study: first, the words of astronomers who, substituting opinion for opinion, taking away one but creating another, make what is incredible and unclear seem true to the eyes of opinion; then, second, logically necessary debates in which a single speech, written with art but not spoken with truth, bends a great crowd

and persuades; <and> third, the verbal disputes of philosophers in which the swiftness of thought is also shown making the belief in an opinion subject to easy change. 14. The effect of speech upon the condition of the soul is comparable to the power of drugs over the nature of bodies. For just as different drugs dispel different secretions from the body, and some bring an end to disease and others to life, so also in the case of speeches, some distress, others delight, some cause fear, others make the hearers bold, and some drug and bewitch the soul with a kind of evil persuasion.

15. It has been explained that if she was persuaded by speech she did not do wrong but was unfortunate. I shall discuss the fourth cause in a fourth passage. For if it was love which did all these things, there will be no difficulty in escaping the charge of the sin which is alleged to have taken place. For the things we see do not have the nature which we wish them to have, but the nature which each actually has. Through sight the soul receives an impression even in its inner features. 16. When belligerents in war buckle on their warlike accouterments of bronze and steel, some designed for defense, others for offense, if the sight sees this, immediately it is alarmed and it alarms the soul, so that often men flee, panic-stricken, from future danger <as though it were> present. For strong as is the habit of obedience to the law, it is ejected by fear resulting from sight, which coming to a man causes him to be indifferent both to what is judged honorable because of the law and to the advantage to be derived from victory. 17. It has happened that people, after having seen frightening sights, have also lost presence of mind for the present moment; in this way fear extinguishes and excludes thought. And many have fallen victim to useless labor and

dread diseases and hardly curable madresses. In this way the sight engraves upon the mind images of things which have been seen. And many frightening impressions linger, and what lingers is exactly analogous to <what is> spoken. 18. Moreover, whenever pictures perfectly create a single figure and form from many colors and figures, they delight the sight, while the creation of statues and the production of works of art furnish a pleasant sight to the eyes. Thus it is natural for the sight to grieve for some things and to long for others, and much love and desire for many objects and figures is engraved in many men. 19. If therefore, the eye of Helen, pleased by the figure of Alexander,² presented to her soul eager desire and contest of love, what wonder? If, <being> a god, <love has> the divine power of the gods, how could a lesser being reject and refuse it? But if it is a disease of human origin and a fault of the soul, it should not be blamed as a sin, but regarded as an affliction. For she came, as she did come, caught in the net of Fate, not by the plans of the mind, and by the constraints of love, not by the devices of art.

20. How then can one regard blame of Helen as just, since she is utterly acquitted of all charge, whether she did what she did through falling in love or persuaded by speech or ravished by force or constrained by divine constraint?

21. I have by means of speech removed disgrace from a woman; I have observed the procedure which I set up at the beginning of the speech; I have tried to end the injustice of blame and the ignorance of opinion; I wished to write a speech which would be a praise of Helen and a diversion to myself.

²Alexander is another name for Paris. [Ed.]

Anonymous

ca. 403–395 B.C.E.

The *Dissoi Logoi*, or *Opposing Arguments*, draws its title from its first few words; the original text is untitled and concerns more than opposing arguments. The treatise was written by an anonymous author around 403 to 395 B.C.E. Although numerous scholarly speculations have been put forward concerning the author's identity, it remains unknown. Most scholars agree, however, that the author was a Sophist (and therefore probably male) who was strongly influenced by Protagoras and was even possibly his student, and by Hippias, Gorgias, and Socrates. Translator T. M. Robinson believes that the text, written in a Doric Greek dialect, may have been lecture notes prepared by this unknown Sophist, a native speaker of an Ionian dialect, to organize his thoughts for a Doric-speaking audience.¹

The text we have, which is incomplete, consists of the following divisions: the first five sections (the fifth is untitled) explore opposing arguments on a number of topics. Sections six through nine (the last three untitled) investigate, in order, the questions of whether "wisdom and moral excellence" can be taught, whether political offices should be assigned by lot, what qualities the excellent rhetorician should have, and how his (or her) memory might be trained. Since the text appears to conclude at the end of section six, some scholars have argued that it is a disjointed assemblage of unrelated observations. Robinson, although believing the text to be incomplete, contends that the topics of all nine extant sections are related to the general theme of good government and how it is to be maintained through discourse. To understand this theme, one would need to know about methods of argument, the qualities and training of the orator, and so on.²

The "opposing arguments" of the first five sections typically take the same form. Two abstract terms, such as "good and bad" or "seemly and shameful," are first presented as being "the same thing" because the same thing may be good for some people but bad for others. Death is bad for those who die but good for the undertakers, to give one pithy example. This approach may seem to advocate a sort of situational ethics, which in some cases leads to cultural relativism. In other words, only an individual's perspective can determine the value of a given object, act, experience, and so on. This approach realizes the famous dictum of Protagoras that "of all things the measure is man, of things that are that they are, and of things that are not that they are not."³

Next, the two terms are presented as being essentially different, usually through arguments that emphasize the absurdity of calling the same action both good and bad, or both seemly and shameful, and so on. This approach seems to endorse the idea that these abstract qualities exist independent of the particular situation or

¹T. M. Robinson, *Contrasting Arguments: An Edition of the "Dissoi Logoi"* (New York: Arno Press, 1979), p. 51.

²Robinson, p. 79.

³Rosamond Kent Sprague, ed., *The Older Sophists* (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1972), p. 18.

object in which they are manifested—an approach that Plato would take one step further, assigning such abstract qualities a transcendent essence.

Can we infer that the author takes a position among these competing arguments? Much scholarly debate has focused on this question. The use of the first person cannot help us decide, because it was typical Sophist practice to argue for more than one side of an issue using “I.” This practice, no doubt, heightened the performative value of the verbal display, but it also had a serious intellectual purpose: to encourage the exploration of all possible sides of a question. The scholarly tradition credits Protagoras as the first Sophist to teach this method of intellectual exploration, but it became characteristic of the whole Sophistic Movement. At the very least, the practice destabilized the unquestioned authority of arguments based on essential qualities. As the lengthiest surviving text by an ancient Greek Sophist, the *Dissoi Logoi* continues to provide a rich ground for scholarly investigation of the movement’s philosophical and rhetorical views.

Selected Bibliography

T. M. Robinson’s *Contrasting Arguments: An Edition of the “Dissoi Logoi”* (1979) is the source of the translation included here. Robinson’s introduction and notes also provide the most complete current scholarly discussion of the text. Protagoras and the method of presenting contrasting arguments, or *dissoi logoi*, and sometimes also the *Dissoi Logoi* text itself, are discussed in most histories of the Sophistic Movement. See especially G. B. Kerferd, *The Sophistic Movement* (1981); Jacqueline de Romilly, *Great Sophists in Periclean Athens* (1988; 1992); and Edward Schiappa, *Protagoras and Logos: A Study in Greek Philosophy and Rhetoric* (1991). Other references can be found in the bibliography for Gorgias (p. 43).

Dissoi Logoi

I. ON GOOD AND BAD

On the matter of what is good and what is bad contrasting arguments are put forward in Greece by educated people: some say that what is good and what is bad are two different things, others that they are the same thing, and that the same thing is good for some but bad for others, or at one time good and at another time bad for the same person. For myself, I side with the latter group, and I shall examine the view by reference to human life, with its concern for food and drink and sex. For these things are bad for those who are sick, but good for the person who is healthy

and needs them. Or again, lack of restraint in these matters is bad for those who lack restraint, but good for those who sell these commodities and make money out of them. And illness is bad for the sick but good for the doctors. And death is bad for those who die, but good for the undertakers and the grave-diggers. Farming also, when it makes a handsome success of producing crops, is good for the farmers, but bad for the merchants. And it is bad for the ship-owner if his merchantships are involved in a collision or get smashed up, but good for the shipbuilders. Furthermore, it is bad for everyone else, but good for the blacksmiths if a tool corrodes or loses its sharp edge or gets broken to pieces. And undoubtedly it is bad for everyone else, but good for the potters if pot-

Translated by T. M. Robinson.

tery gets smashed. And it is bad for everyone else, but good for the cobbler if footwear wears out or gets ripped apart. Again, when it comes to contests, be they gymnastic, or artistic, or military—for example, when it comes to games (i.e., foot-races)—victory is good for the winner, but bad for the losers. And the same is also true for wrestlers and boxers and all those who take part in artistic contests as well; for example, lyre-playing is good for the winner, but bad for the losers. And in the matter of war (I shall speak first of the most recent events) the Spartan victory over the Athenians and their allies was good for the Spartans, but bad for the Athenians and their allies; and the victory which the Greeks won over the Persians was good for the Greeks, but bad for the non-Greeks. Again, the capture of Troy was good for the Achaeans, but bad for the Trojans. And the same holds for what happened to the Thebans and to the Argives. And the battle between the Lapiths and the Centaurs was good for the Lapiths, but bad for the Centaurs. And it is certainly the case that the fabled battle of the gods and Giants, and its victorious outcome, was good for the gods, but bad for the Giants. Another view is that what is good is one thing and what is bad is another thing; as the name differs, so likewise does the reality. I myself also distinguish the two in the above-mentioned manner. For I think it not even clear what sort of thing would be good and what sort of thing bad if each of the two were the same thing and not different things; the situation would be an astonishing one indeed. And I think that the man who says the above-mentioned things would not even be able to make a reply if someone were to put the following question: "Tell me now, did you ever before now do to your parents anything that was good?" He might say, "Yes, I did a great deal that was *very* good." "In that case you ought to do them a great deal that is *very bad*, if what is good and what is bad are the same thing. Tell me, did you ever before now do to your relatives anything that was good? In such a case you were doing them something bad. Or tell me, did you ever before now do harm to your enemies? In such a case you did them a great deal that was very beneficial. And please answer me this as well: Are you not in the position of pitying beg-

gars because they are in a very bad way and also (contrariwise) congratulating them for being well off, if the same thing is good and bad?" And there is nothing to stop the King of Persia from being in the same condition as beggars. For what is for him a great deal of good is also a great deal of evil, if the same thing is good and evil. And we can assume that these things have been said for every case. However, I shall also go through each individual case, beginning with eating and drinking and sexual intercourse. For, in the same way as has been mentioned above, if the same thing is good and bad, it is good for those who are ill should they do these things. And being sick is bad for the sick and also good for them if what is good and what is bad are the same thing. And for all else that has been mentioned in the above argument this holds good. Not that I am saying what the good *is*; I am trying rather to point out that it is not the same thing which is bad and good, but that each is different from the other.

2. ON SEEMLY AND SHAMEFUL

Contrasting arguments are also put forward on what is seemly and shameful. For some say that what is seemly and what is shameful are two different things; as the name differs, so likewise does the reality. Others, however, say that the same thing is both seemly and shameful. For my part, I shall attempt an exposition of the matter along the following lines: for example, it is seemly for a boy in the flower of his growth to gratify a respectable lover, but it is shameful for a handsome boy to gratify one who is *not* his lover. And it is seemly for women to wash indoors, but shameful to do it in a wrestling school; but for men it is seemly to wash in a wrestling-school or gymnasium. And to have sexual intercourse with one's husband in private, where one will be concealed from view by walls, is seemly: to do it outside, however, where somebody will see, is shameful. And it is seemly to have sexual intercourse with one's own husband, but very shameful with someone else's. Yes—and for the husband too it is seemly to have sexual intercourse with his own wife, but shameful with someone else's. And for the husband it is shame-

ful to adorn himself and smear himself with white lead and wear gold ornaments, but for the wife it is seemly. And it is seemly to treat one's friends kindly, but shameful to treat one's enemies in such a way. And it is shameful to run away from one's enemies, but seemly to run away from one's competitors in a stadium. And it is shameful to slaughter those who are friends or fellow-citizens, but seemly to slaughter one's enemies. And the above points apply to every case. However, I shall go on to what cities and nations consider shameful. To Spartans, for example, it is seemly that girls should exercise naked or walk around bare-armed or without a tunic, but to Ionians this is shameful. And (in Sparta) it is seemly that boys should *not* learn arts or letters, but to Ionians it is shameful not to know all these things. Among Thessalians it is seemly for a man first to select the horses from the herd and then train them and the mules *himself*, and seemly for a man first to select a steer and then slaughter, skin, and cut it up *himself*; in Sicily, however, such activities are shameful, and the work of slaves. To Macedonians it appears to be seemly that girls should love and have intercourse with a man before marrying a man, but shameful to do this once they are married. To Greeks both practices are shameful. The Thracians count it an adornment that their girls tattoo themselves, but in the eyes of everyone else tattoo-marks are a punishment for wrongdoers. And the Scythians consider it seemly that, after killing a man, one should on the one hand scalp him and carry the frontal hair on one's horse's brow and on the other hand gild or silver over the skull and drink from it and offer libations to the gods; among the Greeks no one would want to go into the same house as a person who had done that sort of thing. Massagetes cut up their parents and then eat them, and it seems to them an especially seemly form of entombment to be buried inside one's children; if a person did this in Greece he would be driven out of Greece and die a miserable death for doing things that are shameful and horrible. The Persians consider it seemly for men, too, to adorn themselves, like women, and to have sexual intercourse with their daughter or mother or sister; the Greeks consider such actions shameful and unlawful. Again, to Lydians it appears seemly that

girls should prostitute themselves to earn money, and in that way get married; among the Greeks no one would be willing to marry any such girl. And Egyptians differ from everyone else in their views on what is seemly. For here it appears seemly that women should weave and do manual work, but there it appears seemly that *men* should do such things and that women should do what men do here. Kneading clay with the hands, or dough with the feet, is for them seemly, but for us just the opposite. I think that if one were to order all mankind to bring together into a single pile all that each individual considered shameful, and then again to take from this mass what each thought seemly, nothing would be left, but they would all, severally, take away everything. For not everyone has the same views. I shall bring forward as additional evidence some verses:

For if you make this distinction you will see the other law that holds for mortal men: there is nothing that is in every respect seemly or shameful, but the Right Moment takes the same things and makes them shameful and then changes them round and makes them seemly.

To put the matter generally, all things are seemly when done at the right moment, but shameful when done at the wrong moment. What then have I managed to do? I said I would demonstrate that the same things are shameful and seemly, and I demonstrated it in all the above-mentioned cases. It is also said, when what is shameful and what seemly is under discussion, that each differs from the other. For if one were to ask those who say that the same thing is shameful and seemly whether any *seemly* thing has ever been done by them, they will have to agree that what they did was *shameful*, if what is shameful and what is seemly are the same thing. And if they know that a particular man is handsome, they know that this same man is also ugly; and if white, also black. And if it is seemly to treat the gods with respect, it is also shameful to treat the gods with respect, if the same thing is shameful and seemly. And it can be assumed that I have made the same point in each and every instance. Turning to their (specific) argument: If it is seemly for a woman to adorn herself, it is shameful for a woman to adorn herself, if the

same thing is shameful and seemly. And this applies to all the other cases: In Sparta it is seemly for girls to exercise naked, in Sparta it is shameful for girls to exercise naked—and similarly in all the other instances. They say that if some people were to bring together from every part of the world those things that are shameful, and were then to call people together and command them to take what each considered seemly, everything would be taken away as seemly. I personally profess my astonishment if things that were shameful when they were brought together are going to turn out to be seemly, and not the sort of things they were when they came. Certainly if they had brought horses or cattle or sheep or people they would not have taken something else away. For they would not even have taken brass away if they had brought gold, nor lead if they had brought silver coin. Do they really then take away things that are seemly in place of the shameful that they brought? Come now, if someone had brought along an ugly man, would he have taken him away handsome instead? They also adduce as witnesses poets—who write their poetry to give pleasure, not to propound truth.

3. ON JUST AND UNJUST

Contrasting arguments are also put forward on the matter of what is just and what is unjust. Some say that what is just and what is unjust are two different things, others that the same thing is just and unjust. For my part, I shall attempt to bolster the latter view. And I shall say first of all that it is just to tell lies and to deceive. Opponents of this view might say that doing these things to one's enemies is shameful and base; yet they would *not* say that it is shameful and base to do them to those whom one holds very dear—parents, for example. For if it were necessary that one's father or mother should consume some medicament (whether in solid or liquid form), but he or she was unwilling, is it not just to give them the medicament in their food or in their drink and not say that it is in it? So it is already clear that it is just to tell lies and to deceive one's parents, and for that matter to steal the property of one's friends and use violence on those whom one holds very dear.

For example, if some member of one's household had been brought to grief in some way and were on the point of doing away with himself with a sword or rope or some other implement, it is just to steal these implements, should one be able to, or, should one arrive late on the scene and come upon him with the implement in his hand, to take it away from him by force. And surely it is just to enslave one's enemies, should one prove able to capture an entire city and sell it into slavery? And breaking into buildings which are the public property of one's fellow-citizens appears to be just. For if one's father has been overpowered by his enemies and jailed, under sentence of death, is it not just to break in through the wall and steal one's father away and so save him? Or take oath-breaking. If a man were captured by the enemy and undertook on oath to betray his city if they set him free, would this man be acting justly if he *kept* his oath? I for my part do not think so, but rather that he would save his city and his friends and the ancestral temples by breaking his oath. So it is already clear that oath-breaking too is just. And temple-robbery as well.

I am excluding those temples which are the private possessions of particular cities; but is it not just to take and use for war-purposes those temples which are the public property of Greece—those of Delphi and Olympia—if the foreign invader is on the point of capturing Greece, and if preservation depends on money? And it is just to slaughter those who are dearest, since both Orestes and Alcmaeon did—and the god declared that they had acted justly. I shall turn to the arts—particularly the compositions of poets. For in the writing of tragedies and in painting the best person is the one who deceives the most in creating things that are *like* the real thing. And I want to adduce evidence from older poetry, like that of Cleobuline:

I saw a man stealing and deceiving by force,
And gaining his ends by force in this way was a
very just action.

These lines were in existence a long time ago.
The next are from Aeschylus:

God does not stand aloof from just deception.
There are occasions when God respects an oppor-
tune moment for lies.

To this view also there is an opposing view, to the effect that what is just and what is unjust are different things; as the name differs, so likewise does the reality. For if one were to ask those who say that the same thing is just and unjust whether they had ever up to then performed any just action towards their parents, they will say Yes. But in that case it was also an *unjust* action; for they concede that the same thing is just and unjust. Or take another point. If somebody knows that some man is just, he in that case knows that the same man is *unjust* and by the same token big and small. But if a man *has* been very *unjust* in his actions he ought to be executed!—For he has brought about (a situation that warrants death?). Let that suffice for these points. I shall turn to the (specific) arguments they use when they claim that they can demonstrate that the same thing is both just and unjust. For, if what they say is true, (the fact? to demonstrate?) that stealing the enemy's possessions is just is to demonstrate that this very action is *unjust*; and likewise for all the other cases. They adduce as evidence arts in which what is just and what is unjust have no place. And poets never write their poems to pound truth but to give pleasure.

4. ON TRUTH AND FALSEHOOD

Contrasting arguments are also put forward on what is true and what is false. The one view affirms that the true statement and the false statement are different things; the other group affirms that the two statements are on the contrary the same. I for my part also hold the latter view: first, because the two statements are expressed in the same words; and next, because whenever a statement is made, if the event has taken place in the way indicated by the statement, the statement is true; but if the event has *not* taken place in the way indicated, the same statement is false. For example, suppose a statement consists of an accusation against somebody of temple-robbery. If the act did in fact take place, the statement is true; if not, the statement is false. And likewise with the statement of the man defending himself against the charge. And lawcourts in fact judge the same statement to be both true and false. For

the fact is, even if, sitting next to one another in a row, we were (as a group) to say, "I am an initiate," we shall all be saying the same thing, but only I shall be telling the truth, since only I *am* an initiate. It is clear, then, that the same statement is false when the false is present to it, and true when the true is present to it (just as a person is the same person, though at one time a child, at another a youth, at another an adult, and at another an old man). It is also said that the false statement is different from the true statement; as the name differs, so likewise does the reality. For if anyone were to ask those who say that the same statement is false and true which of the two their own statement is, if the reply were "false," it is clear that a true statement and a false statement *are* two different things, but if he were to reply "true" then this same statement is also *false*. And if at any time he said something true or testified that something was true, then he also testified that these same things were false. And if he knows that a certain man is an honest man, he knows the same man is a liar. And in accord with their thesis they say that a statement is true if the event to which it refers took place, but false if it did not. It is therefore important to ask jurymen in their turn what their *judgment* is (jurymen, of course, not being personally present at the events). Even they themselves agree that that with which the false is intermingled is false, and that that with which the true is intermingled is true. But this view is totally different (from their original thesis).

5. "The demented, the sane, the wise and the ignorant both say and do the same things. First of all they call things by the same name: 'earth,' 'man,' 'horse,' 'fire,' and everything else. And they do the same things: they sit, eat, drink, lie down, and so on, in the same way. What is more, the same thing is also both bigger and smaller, and more and less, and heavier and lighter. For in those respects all objects are the same. The talent is heavier than the mina and lighter than two talents; the same thing then is both lighter and heavier. And the same man is alive and is not alive; and the same things exist (are the case) and do not exist (are not the case). For what exists (is the

case) here does not exist (is not the case) in Libya; nor does what exists (is what is the case) in Libya exist (turn out to be the case) in Cyprus. And so on in all other instances, using the same argument. Consequently, things both exist (are the case) and do not exist (are not the case).” Those who say this—that the demented and the wise and the ignorant do and say the same things, and all the other things that follow from the argument—are in error. For if one were to ask them if dementedness differs from sanity or wisdom from ignorance, they say “Yes.” For it is quite obvious, even from the actions of each group, that they will grant this point. So even if they do the same things (as the demented do) the wise are not demented, nor the demented wise, nor is everything turned into confusion. And one ought to bring up the question whether it is those who are sane or those who are demented who speak at the right *moment*. For whenever one asks them they say that the two groups say the same things, only the wise say them at the right moment and the demented at moments when it is not proper. And in saying this they seem to me to have added the small phrases “when it is proper” and “when it is not proper,” with the result that it is no longer the *same* thing. I myself do not think that things *are* altered by the addition of such qualifications, but rather when an accent is altered. For example: “Γλαῦκος” (Glaucus) and “γλαυκός” (green), or “Ξάνθος” (Xanthus) and “ξανθός” (blonde), or “Ξοῦθος” (Xuthus) and “ξουθός” (nimble). The above differed by a difference in the placing of the accent: the following by being spoken with longer or shorter vowel-lengths: “Τύρος” (Tyre) and “τυρός” (cheese), “σάκος” (shield) and “σακός” (enclosure), and yet others by a change in the ordering of their letters: “κάρτος” (strength) and “κρατός” (of a head), “ὄνος” (ass) and “νόος” (mind). Since, therefore, there is such a difference when nothing is taken away, what if in that case somebody does either add something or take something away? I shall give an example of the sort of thing I mean. If a man were to take away one from ten, there would no longer be ten or even one, and so on in the same way in all other instances. As for the affirmation that the same man exists and does

not exist I ask, “Does he exist in some particular respect or in every respect?” Thus if anyone denies that the man in question exists, he is making the mistake of asserting “in *every* respect.” The conclusion is that all these things exist in *some* way.

6. ON WHETHER WISDOM AND MORAL EXCELLENCE ARE TEACHABLE

There is a certain view put forward which is neither true nor new, to the effect that wisdom and moral excellence can be neither taught nor learnt. Those who say this use the following proofs: That it is impossible, if you impart something to some other person, for you to retain possession of that thing. This is one proof. Another is that, had wisdom and moral excellence been able to be taught, there would have existed recognized teachers of them—the way there have been recognized teachers of the arts. A third proof is that those men in Greece who became wise would have taught wisdom to their own children and their friends. A fourth proof is that before now there have been people who frequented sophists and gained no benefit. A fifth proof is that a large number of people who did not associate with sophists have become eminent. I myself consider this line of reasoning exceedingly simple-minded. For I know that teachers *do* teach those letters which each one happens to possess himself, and that harp-players *do* teach people how to play the harp. As for the second proof—that there do not in fact exist acknowledged teachers—what in that case do the *sophists* teach, if not wisdom and moral excellence? And what were the followers of Anaxagoras and Pythagoras? As for the third proof, Polyclitus *did* teach his son how to make statues. Even if an individual man does *not* teach (his own wisdom) nothing will have been proved; but if he *is* able to teach it, there is your proof that it is *possible* to do so. The fourth point (is valid only) if those in question do not become wise after associating with *skilled* sophists. (I say *skilled*) because a lot of people do *not* learn their letters, even though they have taken a course in them. There is also an important natural talent

whereby a person becomes capable, without having learned his competence from sophists, of comprehending the greater part (of a subject) with ease (provided he is also naturally well-endowed), after learning (only?) a small part (of it) from those from whom we also learn words. And some of these latter things (be it a greater or smaller number) one person learns from his father and another from his mother. And if someone is not convinced that we learn our words, but feels sure we are born knowing them, let him ascertain the truth from the following evidence: should a person send a child to Persia immediately it was born and have it brought up there without ever hearing the speech of Greece, the child would speak Persian; should one bring the child from Persia to Greece, the child would speak Greek. *That* is the way we learn words, and we do not know who it was who taught us. With that my argument is completed, and you have its beginning, end, and middle. I am not saying that wisdom and moral excellence *are* teachable, but that the above-mentioned proofs do not satisfy me.

7. Some of the public speakers say that offices should be assigned by lot; but this opinion of theirs is not a very good one. If only somebody would ask him (i.e., the man who says this), "Why in that case don't you assign your household slaves their jobs by lot, so that the ox-driver, if he draws the job of cook as his lot, will cook, while the cook will drive oxen, and so on in all other instances? And why don't we bring together smiths and cobblers, carpenters and goldsmiths, and assign them jobs by lot, forcing them to perform whatever craft each one draws by lot, not the craft of which each has expert knowledge?" Likewise in the case of artistic contests: one could make the contestants draw lots, and each compete in whatever contest he draws. A flute-player will perhaps be playing the harp, or a harpist the flute. And in war an archer or hoplite will be a cavalryman, and a cavalryman will be an archer; with the result that everyone will be doing things of which they have neither the knowledge nor the capability. And they say that this is a good method, and exceedingly democratic. I personally consider it the *least* democratic of all methods. For there are in cities men who

hate the people (*demos*), and if ever the lot falls to them they will *destroy* the people (*demos*). But the people itself ought to keep watch and elect all those who are well-disposed towards itself, and ought to choose as its army-commanders those who are suitable for the job, and to choose others to serve as guardians of the law, and so on.

8. I consider it a characteristic of the same man and of the same art to be able to converse in brief questions and answers, to know the truth of things, to plead one's cause correctly, to be able to speak in public, to have an understanding of argument-skills, and to teach people about the nature of everything—both how everything is and how it came into being. First of all, will not the man who knows about the nature of everything also be able to *act* rightly in regard to everything? Furthermore, the man acquainted with the skills involved in argument will also know how to speak correctly on every topic. For the man who intends to speak correctly must speak on the topics of which he has knowledge; and he will, one must at any rate suppose, have knowledge of *everything*. For he has knowledge of all argument-skills, and all arguments are about everything that is. And the man who intends to speak correctly on whatever matter he speaks about must know () and (how to) give sound advice to the city on the performance of good actions and prevent them from performing evil ones. In knowing these things he will also know the things that differ from them—since he will know everything. For these (objects of knowledge) are part of *all* (objects of knowledge), and the exigency of the situation will, if need be, provide him with those (other objects), so as to achieve the same end. Even if he does not know how to play the flute, he will always prove able to play the flute should the situation ever call for his doing this. And the man who knows how to plead his cause must have a correct understanding of what is just; for that is what legal cases have to do with. And in knowing this he will know both that which is the contrary of it, and the (other things?) different in kind (from it?). He must also know all the laws. If, however, he is going to have no knowledge of the facts, he will have no knowledge of the laws either. For

who is it knows the rules (laws) of music? The man acquainted with music. Whereas the man unacquainted with music is also unacquainted with the rules that govern it. At any rate, if a man knows the truth of things, the argument follows without difficulty that he knows everything. As for the man who is able to converse in brief questions and answers, he must under questioning give answers on every subject. So he must have knowledge of every subject.

9. A very great and most attractive discovery that has been made for the way we live is (the power of) memory; it is useful for all purposes, for both general education and practical wisdom. This is true, (as you will see) if you concentrate your attention (upon the matter). For by following this course your mind will come to perceive

more “as a whole” that which you have learned. Second, you must, whenever you hear anything, go over it carefully. For by frequent repetition of what you hear you commit it to memory. Third, you must, whenever you hear anything, connect it to what you know, as in the following example: you need to remember the name Chrysippus? Then you ought to connect it with χρυσός (gold) and ἵππος (horse). Another example, the name Pylilampes: you should connect it with πῦρ (fire) and λάμπειν (to gleam). These examples have to do with names. In the case of things you must act as follows: if you need to remember “courage” you should connect it with Ares and Achilles; you should likewise connect “metal-working” with Hephaestus, and “cowardice” with Epeius. . . .

Aspasia

fl. fifth century B.C.E.

Aspasia, the daughter of Axiochus, was born in Miletus, an Ionian Greek city in Asia Minor. After she came to Athens around 440 B.C.E., she lived with the famous political leader Pericles (she could not marry him because she was a foreigner), and her social circle encompassed many Athenian cultural and political leaders, including Socrates. Aspasia was famous both in her own day and later, through several classical sources, as a teacher of rhetoric, although none of her texts are known to have survived. Some sources say that she wrote several of Pericles' important speeches and taught Socrates what is now known as the Socratic method.

Madeleine Henry, who has carefully evaluated all the available sources on Aspasia's life, points out that no hard evidence survives from the fifth century B.C.E. concerning her date of birth, adult relationships, or intellectual life. Piecing together her biography from later sources is a hazardous enterprise, especially since, as Henry points out, historical images of her have been continually reinvented as images of classical Athens have been reassessed. Moreover, whatever Aspasia's intellectual contributions to fifth-century Athens may have been, posterity has persistently viewed them through a lens that emphasized not only her gender but also her putatively illicit sexuality. Obviously, this approach hinders any effort to create a "usable" Aspasia for modern rhetorical studies. Yet, to have the activities of any classical-era woman preserved in such detail is remarkable, and it argues that, at the very least, Aspasia did have an impact on the Athenian society of her day.

The clouded historical record concerning Aspasia may be attributed in part to the many social and legal restrictions that had been imposed on Athenian women by the fifth century B.C.E. Women had long participated in some public religious and familial rituals, as well as engaging in private conversations on philosophical and rhetorical issues with children under their instruction and also with peers. Women were occasionally admitted to the Academy of Plato, and some probably also functioned as private teachers of philosophy and rhetoric, as suggested by the role of Diotima in Plato's *Symposium*, which parallels what history suggests for Aspasia.

Nevertheless, these public and private rhetorical activities were occulted by the fact that no women were politically active Athenian citizens, not even women born free in Athens and married to Athenian men. Legally, women were considered on a par with minor children and were required to be under the care and control of a man throughout their lives, usually the father or husband. Married women of the upper classes were confined to the home except on a few religious or family occasions (such as a funeral). Even within the home, they seldom socialized with men other than family members; they remained in seclusion when their husbands entertained, and female company at a banquet would typically be provided by slaves or prostitutes. Lower-class married women had somewhat more freedom of movement and could work in the fields or assist at their husband's trade.

Further restrictions obtained for women such as Aspasia who were not native-born Athenians. Legally barred from marrying an Athenian citizen, they could

marry only other “metics,” or foreigners. If a woman was not someone’s wife—or someone’s slave—virtually the only social roles open to her were varieties of prostitution. She might be a common prostitute or a better-educated and more expensive one, called a hetaera, who socialized with men at banquets, providing entertainment and cultured conversation as well as sexual services; or she might enter a long-term, but legally unprotected, relationship as someone’s concubine. As a metic, Aspasia was legally barred from marrying Pericles, but he established her as his concubine.

Remarkably, given that a concubine would usually live in wifely seclusion, Aspasia’s home became something of an intellectual salon. Even more remarkably, she received not only the Athenian male elite but also their wives, according to Plutarch’s life of Pericles (excerpted here). Plutarch depicts her home as a location for philosophical and rhetorical conversations in mixed company. Among her visitors was Socrates, who, it is said, first encountered Alcibiades there while the young man was Pericles’ ward.

Was Aspasia a hetaera when Pericles met her? So say some sources, adding that she ran a house of prostitution; her name, which may be translated as “Welcomer” or “Gladhander,” might seem to be a prostitute’s professional nickname. But others attribute this charge to the Athenians’ hatred of her, because she was so influential with the era’s leaders and stepped so far outside what was considered the bounds of proper womanhood. Henry believes that she was never a prostitute, but that the image of her as sexually promiscuous and manipulative entered the historical record via Greek comedy that was critical of Pericles.¹ Jacqueline de Romilly refers to her simply as a “cultivated Milesian woman.”² It seems clear that she was unpopular in Athens. According to one story, the truth of which is disputed, a trumped-up charge of impiety was actually lodged against her, but Pericles pleaded successfully for her acquittal.

After Pericles divorced his wife, Aspasia apparently lived with him until his death in 429 B.C.E. His devotion to her was noted in Plutarch’s life of Pericles and elsewhere. Tradition states that they had a son together, and Plutarch recounts that after Pericles’ two sons by his wife died in a plague, he obtained the repeal of a law he himself had passed forbidding the sons of foreign women to become Athenian citizens, so that his son by Aspasia could become his legal heir. This was an extraordinary step for a man of Pericles’ eminence to take for the child of a woman who was viewed by many as little better than a prostitute. After the death of Pericles, Aspasia married a lower-class man, a sheep dealer named Lysicles (possibly the only sort of match available to one with her background), and under her tutelage he later became an important Athenian leader.

One classical source, Athenaeus, says that Aspasia “was the specialist in sophistic learning and teacher of speechwriting to Pericles.”³ The kind of verbal skill

¹Madeleine Henry, *Prisoner of History: Aspasia of Miletus and Her Biographical Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 20ff.

²Jacqueline de Romilly, *Great Sophists in Periclean Athens* (1988; trans. Janet Lloyd, Oxford, Great Britain: Clarendon of Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 25.

³Quoted in Eva C. Keuls, *The Reign of the Phallus: Sexual Politics in Ancient Athens* (New York: Harper and Row, 1985), p. 198.

attributed to hetaerae never rose above the level of coarse jokes, but Aspasia's abilities were of an entirely different order. Plutarch says, "Aspasia, some say, was courted and caressed by Pericles upon account of her knowledge and skill in politics" (see excerpt included here)—that is, rather than for her beauty—and "she had the repute of being resorted to by many of the Athenians for instruction in the art of speaking" (see excerpt included here).

Several sources depict her as teaching rhetoric to Socrates. For example (in a passage excerpted here), Plutarch notes that Socrates would sometimes visit her. In *Deipnosophistae*, Athenaeus several times associates Aspasia with Socrates, and he says flatly that she was "Socrates' teacher in rhetoric" (see excerpt included here). In this passage she is shown teaching Socrates to woo the man he loves, Alcibiades, not with sexual allure but with intellectual inducements. A dialogue attributed to her by Xenophon is cited without question by Cicero as an illustration of what he calls "inductive" argument, a Socratic approach (*De Inventione* I, XXXI; excerpted here). Rhetorician C. Jan Swearingen has suggested that Diotima in Plato's *Symposium* is a semifictional character modeled on Aspasia.⁴ And Plato's dialogue "Menexenus" (excerpted here) has her teaching Socrates a funeral oration modeled after one she wrote for Pericles to deliver (a famous one attributed to him by Thucydides). Socrates repeatedly expresses admiration for her skill.

How plausible is it that a woman could have possessed this skill? Plato could be read as making fun of her in "Menexenus." The speech attributed to her is exaggerated in style, with just the sorts of embellishments that Socrates elsewhere condemns, and full of historical errors that create an absurdly positive view of Athens. Menexenus responds to Socrates' praise of this speech by saying, "You are always making fun of the rhetoricians" (see excerpt included here). Moreover, the speech purports to commemorate the fallen soldiers of the Corinthian war, but both Aspasia and Socrates were dead by the time the war began. Classicist Edmund F. Bloedow suggests that Plato intended to criticize the mindless patriotism of the Athenians of his day, underscoring the dangers of listening to such rhetoric by putting the speech in the mouth of the most (professionally) seductive of the founders of Athenian oratory, Aspasia, who comes under attack here as "a co-architect of the Sophistic movement."⁵ Feminist rhetoricians Susan Jarratt and Rory Ong further suggest that the elaborate trope of autochthony⁶ that Plato puts in Aspasia's mouth is a way of forcing her to testify to her own devaluation as a female.⁷ Other scholars, however, propose that Socrates really did admire Aspasia and that Plato is doing no more than poking fun at this ad-

⁴C. Jan Swearingen, "A Lover's Discourse: Diotima, Logos, and Desire," in *Reclaiming Rhetorica: Women in the Rhetorical Tradition*, ed. Andrea A. Lunsford (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1995), p. 33.

⁵Edmund F. Bloedow, "Aspasia and the 'Mystery' of the 'Menexenos,'" *Wiener Studien* 9 (1975):48.

⁶Autochthony, a common trope in funeral orations for fallen soldiers, refers to the imagined birth of male heroes from the soil of the motherland rather than from human wombs.

⁷Susan Jarratt and Rory Ong, "Aspasia: Rhetoric, Gender, and Colonial Ideology," in *Reclaiming Rhetorica: Women in the Rhetorical Tradition*, ed. Andrea A. Lunsford (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1995), p. 18ff.

miration with the exaggerated deference Socrates pays to a second-rate performance in the “Menexenus.”⁸

The surviving fragments of dialogue attributed to Aspasia do indicate a distinctive view of rhetoric. That she might have developed such a view is suggested by the possibility that she received some sort of education encouraging reflection. Jarratt and Ong have pointed out that Aspasia’s birth in Miletus locates her in an important source of early Greek philosophy.⁹ Somehow she gained an education that contributed to her influence in Athens, and she may have done so as a pupil of a philosopher in her native town. Feminist historian of rhetoric Cheryl Glenn observes that, at any rate, she certainly seemed to be well educated by the time she arrived in Athens.¹⁰

The dialogues on love reported by Athenaeus and Cicero hint at an egalitarian view of rhetoric. While promoting a view of love that rejects dominance and submission and that encourages the partnership of intellectual equals, Aspasia treats her interlocutors as her intellectual equals, not attempting to knock them down with agonistic argument but rather gently drawing them toward her own point of view by means of premises they provide and endorse. Cicero suggests that Socrates preferred this method “because he wished to present no arguments himself, but preferred to get a result from the material which the interlocutor had given him—a result which the interlocutor was bound to approve as following necessarily from what he had already granted” (see excerpt included here). It is easy to imagine that such an indirect method originated with a woman who was legally powerless, in a compromised and vulnerable position, but who attempted to advise and influence men of great power.

The fact remains that apparently no texts authored by Aspasia have survived. Like Socrates, she is known to us only through the representations of others. Including her in a history of rhetoric, therefore, is problematic. As Glenn explains, however, there is evidence that some women did function as rhetors even under the oppressive classical social order, and of these Aspasia is by far the best known and most influential. If indeed she did teach Socrates the so-called Socratic method, her contribution to the history of both philosophy and rhetoric is far-ranging. At the very least, recognizing her activity here erects a monument to the rhetorical labors of Aspasia and other classical women and marks the spot where a more substantial edifice may be built if the search for textual remains succeeds.

Selected Bibliography

As noted above, no texts written by Aspasia have survived. Our excerpts are drawn from Benjamin Jowett’s translation of “Menexenus” in *The Dialogues of Plato* (vol. IV; 1871); H. M. Hubbell’s translation of Cicero’s *De Inventione* in the Loeb Classical Library series

⁸See Keuls, 198–99, and Eva Cantarella, *Pandora’s Daughters: The Role and Status of Women in Greek and Roman Antiquity* (1981; trans. Maureen B. Fant, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), pp. 54–55.

⁹Jarratt and Ong, pp. 10–12.

¹⁰Cheryl Glenn, *Rhetoric Retold: Regendering the Tradition from Antiquity through the Renaissance* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1997), p. 36.

(vol. II; 1949); Charles Burton Gulick's translation of *Deipnosophistae* by Athenaeus (vol. II; 1927); and the translations by various hands of Plutarch's *Lives*, revised and edited by Arthur Hugh Clough (vol. I; 1864).

Plato's "Menexenus" has traditionally presented many problems to scholars; a helpful survey is in W. K. C. Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy*, volume 4, *Plato: The Man and His Dialogues: Earlier Period* (1975). Edmund F. Bloedow, in "Aspasia and the 'Mystery' of the 'Menexenus'" (*Wiener Studien* 9 [1975]: 34–48), argues that these problems can be addressed by considering why Plato chose to place the funeral oration in the mouth of Aspasia.

Madeleine Henry's *Prisoner of History: Aspasia of Miletus and Her Biographical Tradition* (1995) is a thorough consideration not only of the classical remains pertaining to the life of Aspasia but also of later Western interpretations of her in philosophy, literature, and art up to the modern period. Cheryl Glenn makes a strong case for recuperating Aspasia in the history of rhetoric in "sex, lies, and manuscript: Refiguring Aspasia in the History of Rhetoric" (*College Composition and Communication* 45 [May 1994]: 180–99). Glenn's bibliography is also helpful. A more extensive discussion of Aspasia that locates her in her cultural milieu can be found in Glenn's *Rhetoric Retold: Regendering the Tradition from Antiquity through the Renaissance* (1997). For both information on the clouded historical record concerning Aspasia and informed speculation on what her role might have been, see also Susan Jarratt and Rory Ong, "Aspasia: Rhetoric, Gender and Colonial Ideology," and C. Jan Swearingen, "A Lover's Discourse: Diotima, Logos, and Desire," both in *Reclaiming Rhetorica: Women in the Rhetorical Tradition*, ed. Andrea A. Lunsford (1995).

Jacqueline de Romilly's *Great Sophists in Periclean Athens* (1988; trans. Lloyd, 1992) has little to say about Aspasia but provides an excellent introduction to her cultural setting. Discussing Aspasia and providing an excellent general background on women and sexual politics in ancient Greece are Eva Cantarella, *Pandora's Daughters: The Role and Status of Women in Greek and Roman Antiquity* (1981; trans. Fant, 1987), and Eva Keuls, *The Reign of the Phallus: Sexual Politics in Ancient Athens* (1985). For a more explicitly legal focus, see Roger Just, *Women in Athenian Law and Life* (1989).

Plato

From *Menexenus*

SOCRATES: Whence come you, Menexenus? Are you from the agora?

MENEXENUS: Yes, Socrates; I have been at the council.

SOCRATES: And what might you be doing at the council? And yet I need hardly ask, for I see that you believe yourself to have arrived at the

end of education and of philosophy. You think that you have had enough of them, and, being now grown up, are going higher, and intend to govern us old men like the rest of your family, which has always provided some one who kindly took care of us.

MENEXENUS: Yes, Socrates, I shall be ready to hold office, if you allow and advise that I should, but not if you think otherwise. I went to the coun-

Translated by Benjamin Jowett.

cil chamber because I heard that the council was about to choose some one who was to speak over the dead. For you know that there is to be a public funeral?

SOCRATES: Yes, I know that. And whom did they choose?

MENEXENUS: No one; they delayed the election until to-morrow, but I believe that either Aeschines or Dion will be chosen.

SOCRATES: O Menexenus! death in battle is certainly in many respects a noble thing. The dead man gets a fine and costly funeral, although he may have been poor, and a speech is made over him by a wise man who weighs his words, and has long ago prepared what he has to say, although he who is praised may not have been good for much. The speakers praise him for what he has done and for what he has not done—that is the beauty of them—and they steal our souls with their embellished words; in every conceivable form they praise the city; and they praise those who died in the war, and all our ancestors who went before us; and they praise ourselves also who are still alive, until I feel quite elevated by their laudations, and I stand listening to their words, Menexenus, and become enchanted by them, and all of a sudden I imagine myself to have grown up into a greater and nobler and finer man than I was before. And if, as often happens, there are any foreigners who accompany me to the speech, I become suddenly conscious of having a sort of exaltation over them, and they seem to experience a corresponding feeling of admiration at me, and at the greatness of the city, which appears to them, when they are under the influence of the speaker, more wonderful than ever. This consciousness of dignity lasts me more than three days, and not until the fourth or fifth day do I come to my senses and know where I am; in the mean time I fancy that I am living in the Islands of the Blest. Such is the art of our rhetoricians, and in such manner does the sound of their words keep ringing in our ears.

MENEXENUS: You are always making fun of the rhetoricians, Socrates; this time, however, I am inclined to think that the speaker who is chosen will not have much to say, for the choice has been quite sudden, and he will be compelled almost to improvise.

SOCRATES: But why, my friend, should he not have plenty to say? Every rhetorician has speeches ready made; nor is there any difficulty in improvising that sort of stuff. Had the orator to praise Athenians among Peloponnesians, or Peloponnesians among Athenians, he must be a good rhetorician who could succeed and gain credit. But there is no difficulty in a man's winning applause when he is contending for fame among the persons who are being praised.

MENEXENUS: Do you think not, Socrates?

SOCRATES: Indeed "not."

MENEXENUS: Do you think that you could speak yourself if there was a necessity, and if the council was to choose you?

SOCRATES: That I should be able to speak is no great wonder, Menexenus, considering that I had an excellent mistress in the art of rhetoric; she who made so many good speakers, and one who was the best among all Hellenes—Pericles the son of Xanthippus.

MENEXENUS: And who was she? I suppose that you mean Aspasia.

SOCRATES: Yes, that I do; and I had also Connus the son of Metrobius, as a master, and he was my master in music, as she was in rhetoric. No wonder that a man who has received such an education should be a finished speaker; even the pupil of very inferior masters, say, for example, one who had learned music of Lamprus, and rhetoric of Antiphon the Rhamnusian, might make a figure if he were to praise the Athenians among the Athenians.

MENEXENUS: And what would you be able to say if you had to speak?

SOCRATES: Of my own wit, most likely nothing; but yesterday I heard Aspasia composing a funeral oration about these very dead. For she had been told, as you were saying, that the Athenians were going to choose a speaker, and she repeated to me the sort of speech which he should deliver, partly improvising and partly from previous thought, putting together fragments of the funeral oration which Pericles spoke, and, I believe, she composed.

MENEXENUS: And can you remember what Aspasia said?

SOCRATES: I ought to be able, for she taught

me, and I was all but beaten because I had a bad memory.

MENEXENUS: Then why will you not rehearse what she said?

SOCRATES: Because I am afraid that my mistress may be angry with me if I publish her speech.

MENEXENUS: Nay, Socrates, let us have the speech, whether Aspasia's or any one else's, no matter about that. I hope that you will oblige me.

SOCRATES: But I am afraid that you will laugh at me if I continue the games of youth in old age.

MENEXENUS: Far otherwise, Socrates: let us by all means have the speech.

SOCRATES: Truly I have such a disposition to oblige you, that if you bid me dance naked I should not like to refuse, since we are alone. Listen, then. If I remember rightly, she began as follows, with the mention of the dead: —

There is a tribute of deeds and of words. The departed have already had the first, when going forth on their destined journey they were attended on their way by the state and by their friends; the tribute of words remains to be given to them, as it meet and by law ordained. For noble words are a memory and crown of noble actions, which is given to the doers of them by the hearers. A word is needed which will duly praise the dead and gently admonish the living, exhorting the brethren and descendants of the departed to imitate their virtue, and consoling their fathers and mothers and the survivors, if any, who may chance to be alive of the previous generation. What sort of a word will this be, and how shall we rightly begin the praises of these brave men? In their life they rejoiced their own friends with their virtue, and their death they gave in exchange for the salvation of the living. And I think that we should praise them in the order in which nature made them good, for they were good because they were sprung from good fathers. Wherefore let us first of all praise the goodness of their birth; secondly, their nurture and education; and then let us set forth how noble their actions were, and how worthy of the education which they had received.

And first as to their birth. Their ancestors were not strangers, nor are these their descendants sojourners only, whose fathers have come from another country; but they are the children of the soil,

dwelling and living in their own land. And the country which brought them up is not like other countries, a step-mother to her children, but their own true mother; she bore them and nourished them and received them, and in her bosom they now repose. It is meet and right, therefore, that we should begin by praising the land which is their mother, and that will be a way of praising their noble birth.

The country is worthy to be praised, not only by us, but by all mankind; first, and above all, as being dear to the gods. This is proved by the strife and contention of the gods respecting her. And ought not that country which the gods praise to be praised by all mankind? The second praise which may be fairly claimed by her, is that at the time when the whole earth was sending forth and creating diverse animals, tame and wild, this our mother was free and pure from savage monsters, and out of all animals selected and brought forth man, who is superior to the rest in understanding, and alone has justice and religion. And a great proof that she was the mother of us and of our ancestors, is that she provided the means of support for her offspring. For as a woman proves her motherhood by giving milk to her young ones (and she who has no fountain of milk is not a mother), so did this our land prove that she was going to be the mother of men, for in those days she alone and first of all brought forth wheat and barley for human food, which is the best and noblest sustenance for man, whom she regarded as her true offspring. And these are truer proofs of motherhood in a country than in a woman, for the woman in her conception and generation is but the imitation of the earth, and not the earth of the woman. And of the fruit of the earth she gave a plenteous supply, not only to her offspring, but to others also; and after that she made the olive to spring up as a boon to their descendants, and to be the help of their toils. And when she had herself nursed them and brought them up to manhood, she gave them gods to be their rulers and teachers. Their names are known, and need not now be repeated; they are the gods who first ordered our lives, and taught us the arts of daily existence, and the possession and use of arms for the guardianship of the country.

Thus born into the world and thus educated, the ancestors of the departed lived and made themselves a government, which I ought briefly to commemorate. For government is the nurture of man, and the government of good men is good, and of bad men bad. And I must show that our ancestors were trained under a good government, and for this

reason were good, as our contemporaries are good, among whom our departed friends are to be reckoned. Then as now, and indeed always, from that time to this, speaking generally, our government was an aristocracy—a form of government which receives various names, according to the fancies of men, and is sometimes called democracy, being really an aristocracy of the many who love virtue. For kings we have always had, once hereditary and now elected, and authority is mostly in the hands of the people, who dispense offices and power to those who appear to be most deserving of them. Neither is a man rejected from weakness or poverty or obscurity of origin, nor honored by reason of the opposite, as in other states, but there is one principle—he who appears to be wise and good is a governor and ruler. The basis of this our government is equality of birth; for other states are made up of all sorts and unequal conditions of men, and therefore their governments are unequal; there are tyrannies and there are oligarchies, in which the one party are slaves and the others masters. But we and our citizens are brethren, the children all of one mother, and we do not claim to be one another's masters or servants; but the natural equality of birth compels us to seek for legal equality, and to recognize no superiority except in the reputation of virtue and wisdom. . . .

These, O ye children and parents of the dead, are the words which they bid us proclaim to you, and which I do proclaim to you with the utmost good-will. And on their behalf I beseech you, the children, to imitate your fathers, and you, parents, to be of good cheer about yourselves; for we will nourish your age, and take care of you both publicly and privately in any place in which one of us may meet one of you who are the parents of the dead. And the care which the city shows you yourselves know; for she has made provision by law concerning the parents and children of those who die in war; and the highest authority is specially intrusted with the duty of watching over them above all other citizens, in order to see that there is no wrong done to them. She herself takes part in the nurture of the children, desiring as far as it is possible that their orphanhood may not be felt by them; she is a parent to them while they are children, and

when they arrive at the age of manhood she sends them to their several duties, clothing them in complete armor; she displays to them and recalls to their minds the pursuits of their fathers, and puts into their hands the instruments of their fathers' virtues; for the sake of the omen, she would have them begin and go to rule in the houses of their fathers arrayed in their strength and arms. And she never ceases honoring the dead every year, celebrating in public the rites which are proper to each and all; and in addition to this, holding gymnastic and equestrian festivals, and musical festivals of every sort. She is to the dead in the place of a son and heir, and to their sons in the place of a father, and to their parents and elder kindred in the place of a protector—ever and always caring for them. Considering this, you ought to bear your calamity the more gently; for thus you will be most endeared to the dead and to the living, and your sorrows will heal and be healed. And now do you and all, having lamented the dead together in the usual manner, go your ways.

Such, Menexenus, was the oration of Aspasia the Milesian.

MENEXENUS: Truly, Socrates, I marvel that Aspasia, who is only a woman, should be able to compose such a speech; she must be a rare one.

SOCRATES: Well, if you are incredulous, you may come with me and hear her.

MENEXENUS: I have often met Aspasia, Socrates, and know what she is like.

SOCRATES: Well, and do you not admire her, and are you not grateful for her speech?

MENEXENUS: Yes, Socrates, I am very grateful to her or to him who told you, and still more to you who have told me.

SOCRATES: Very good. But you must take care not to tell of me, and then at some other time I will repeat to you many more excellent political speeches of hers.

MENEXENUS: Fear not; only tell me, and I will keep the secret.

SOCRATES: Then I will keep my promise.

Cicero

From *De Inventione*

XXXI. All argumentation, then, is to be carried on either by induction or by deduction.¹

Induction is a form of argument which leads the person with whom one is arguing to give assent to certain undisputed facts; through this assent it wins his approval of a doubtful proposition because this resembles the facts to which he has assented. For instance, in a dialogue by Aeschines Socraticus Socrates reveals that Aspasia reasoned thus with Xenophon's wife and with Xenophon himself: "Please tell me, madam, if your neighbor had a better gold ornament than you have, would you prefer that one or your own?" "That one," she replied. "Now, if she had dresses and other feminine finery more expensive than you have, would you prefer yours or hers?" "Hers, of course," she replied. "Well now, if she had a better husband than you have, would you prefer your husband or hers?" At this the woman blushed. But Aspasia then began to speak to Xenophon. "I wish you would tell me, Xenophon," she said, "if your

neighbor had a better horse than yours, would you prefer your horse or his?" "His," was his answer. "And if he had a better farm than you have, which farm would you prefer to have?" "The better farm, naturally," he said. "Now, if he had a better wife than you have, would you prefer yours or his?" And at this Xenophon, too, himself was silent. Then Aspasia: "Since both of you have failed to tell me the only thing I wished to hear, I myself will tell you what you both are thinking. That is, you, madam, wish to have the best husband, and you, Xenophon, desire above all things to have the finest wife. Therefore unless you can contrive that there be no better man or finer woman on earth you will certainly always be in dire want of what you consider best, namely, that you be the husband of the very best of wives, and that she be wedded to the very best of men." In this instance, because assent has been given to undisputed statements, the result is that the point which would appear doubtful if asked by itself is through analogy conceded as certain, and this is due to the method employed in putting the question. Socrates used this conversational method a good deal, because he wished to present no arguments himself, but preferred to get a result from the material which the interlocutor had given him—a result which the interlocutor was bound to approve as following necessarily from what he had already granted.

Translated by H. M. Hubbell.

¹I have kept the traditional terms, induction and deduction, but it should be understood that Cicero was describing a rhetorical, not a logical, kind of reasoning, and that his use of such terms is loose and, at times, careless. The process which he calls induction might more accurately be described as analogy, and under deduction he describes not the syllogism of Aristotle, but the enthymeme or epicheireme, a rhetorical adaptation of the syllogism. [Tr.]

Athenaeus

From *Deipnosophistae*

But further: not one of the scandals uttered by Plato concerning Socrates is mentioned even by any comic poet; for example, that he was the son of a strapping midwife, or that Xanthippe was a shrew who poured slops over his head, or that he lay down to sleep with Alcibiades under the same coverlet. And yet this last must inevitably have been proclaimed with the ringing of bells by Aristophanes, who was present at the symposium, according to Plato; Aristophanes would never have hushed up this bit of gossip, seeing that he accused Socrates of corrupting the young men. The clever Aspasia, to be sure, who was Socrates' teacher in rhetoric, says in the verses which are extant under her name and which are quoted by Herodicus, the disciple of Crates: "Socrates, I have not failed to notice that thy heart is smitten with desire for the son of Deinomache and Cleinias. But hearken, if thou wouldst prosper in thy suit. Disregard not my message, and it will be much better for thee. For so soon as I heard, my body was suffused with the glow of joy, and tears not unwelcome fell from my eyelids. Restrain thyself, filling thy soul with the conquering Muse; and with her aid thou shalt win him; pour her into the ears of his desire. For she is the true beginning of love in both;

through her thou shalt master him, by offering to his ear gifts for the unveiling of his soul."¹

So, then, the noble Socrates goes a-hunting, employing the woman of Miletus as his preceptor in love, instead of being hunted himself, as Plato has said, being caught in Alcibiades' net. And what is more, he does not leave off weeping, being, I fancy, unfortunate in his pursuit. For seeing what a state he was in, Aspasia says: "Why art thou all tears, dear Socrates? Can it be that the thunderbolt of desire, rankling in thy breast, stirs thee up—the bolt which crashed from the eyes of the lad invincible, whom I promised to make tame for thee?" And that Socrates really had a passion for Alcibiades is disclosed by Plato in the *Protagoras*, although Alcibiades was little short of thirty years old. Plato says: "Where do you come from, Socrates? But I know for certain: you have come from the hunt, and the beauty of Alcibiades is your quarry. As a matter of fact, when I saw the man the other day he looked handsome still, though a man, between ourselves, Socrates, who is already covered with a beard under his chin. SOCRATES. Well, what of it? Don't you approve Homer when he says that the most beautiful age is that of the bearded man, the age which Alcibiades himself has now attained?"

Translated by Charles Burton Gulick.

¹Referring to the gifts brought by the bridegroom when the bride removed her veil. [Tr.]

Plutarch

From *Lives*

After this, having made a truce between the Athenians and Lacedæmonians for thirty years, he ordered, by public decree, the expedition against the isle of Samos, on the ground, that, when they were bid to leave off their war with the Milesians they had not complied. And as these measures against the Samians are thought to have been taken to please Aspasia, this may be a fit point for inquiry about the woman, what art or charming faculty she had that enabled her to captivate, as she did, the greatest statesmen, and to give the philosophers occasion to speak so much about her, and that, too, not to her disparagement. That she was a Milesian by birth, the daughter of Axiochus, is a thing acknowledged. And they say it was in emulation of Thargelia, a courtesan of the old Ionian times, that she made her addresses to men of great power. Thargelia was a great beauty, extremely charming, and at the same time sagacious; she had numerous suitors among the Greeks, and brought all who had to do with her over to the Persian interest; and by their means, being men of the greatest power and station, sowed the seeds of the Median faction up and down in several cities. Aspasia, some say, was courted and caressed by Pericles upon account of her knowledge and skill in politics. Socrates himself would sometimes go to visit her, and some of his acquaintance with him; and those who frequented her company would carry their wives with them to listen to her. Her occupation was anything but creditable, her house being a home for young courtesans. Æschines tells us, also, that Lysicles, a sheep-dealer, a man of low birth and character, by keeping Aspasia company after Pericles's death, came to be a chief man in Athens. And in Plato's *Menæxenus*, though we do not take the introduction as quite serious, still thus much seems to be historical,

Translation revised and edited by Arthur Hugh Clough.

that she had the repute of being resorted to by many of the Athenians for instruction in the art of speaking. Pericles's inclination for her seems, however, to have rather proceeded from the passion of love. He had a wife that was near of kin to him, who had been married first to Hipponicus, by whom she had Callias, surnamed the Rich; and also she brought Pericles, while she lived with him, two sons, Xanthippus and Paralus. Afterwards, when they did not well agree, nor like to live together, he parted with her, with her own consent, to another man, and himself took Aspasia, and loved her with wonderful affection; every day, both as he went out and as he came in from the market-place, he saluted and kissed her.

In the comedies she goes by the nicknames of the new *Omphale* and *Deianira*, and again is styled *Juno*. *Cratinus*, in downright terms, calls her a harlot.

To find him a *Juno* the goddess of lust
Bore that harlot past shame,
Aspasia by name.

It should seem also that he had a son by her; *Eupolis*, in his *Demi*, introduced Pericles asking after his safety, and *Myronides* replying—

“My son?” “He lives: a man he had been long,
But that the harlot-mother did him wrong.”

Aspasia, they say, became so celebrated and renowned, that *Cyrus*, also who made war against *Artaxerxes* for the Persian monarchy, gave her whom he loved the best of all his concubines the name of Aspasia, who before that was called *Milto*. She was a *Phocæan* by birth, the daughter of one *Hermotimus*, and, when *Cyrus* fell in battle, was carried to the king, and had great influence at court. These things coming into my memory as I am writing this story, it would be unnatural for me to omit them.

Isocrates

436–338 B.C.E.

Isocrates was a young boy when Gorgias first brought Sicilian rhetoric to Athens. Because his father owned a highly profitable flute factory, Isocrates received the finest education money could buy, studying with Gorgias and other Sophists and perhaps also with Socrates. Gorgias is depicted on Isocrates' memorial stone, showing him a globe. Isocrates was forced to earn his living after his wealthy family was ruined in the Peloponnesian War. At first he supported himself as a logographer, writing speeches for other people to deliver in their own defense in the law courts. Apparently he regarded this profession as rather disgraceful, for in later life he vehemently denied ever having practiced it. When Isocrates was in his early forties, around 393 B.C.E., he opened the first school of rhetoric in Athens. It was a tremendous success, restoring his wealth and establishing his fame as the mentor of many important political leaders.

Isocrates is included in the canon of the Ten Attic Orators, although tradition has it that he was a poor speaker—supposedly, his voice was weak and he suffered from stage fright. His quality as an orator is known through “speeches” written primarily for publication, not delivery, a genre for which he was one of the first to compose. Historian of rhetoric Kathleen Welch has suggested that Isocrates decided to put his efforts into written rather than spoken texts because he realized the potential power of the new technology of literacy. She argues that he himself may even have circulated the rumor concerning his inadequacies as a speaker, in order to protect and justify the time he spent in private, composing written texts. Isocrates' style is antithetical and symmetrical, but without many of the aural devices employed by Gorgias. His major contribution both to Greek writing and to later prose was to develop the periodic sentence. Although politically Isocrates supported his native city of Athens, he felt that pan-Hellenism was a higher goal. Hence he sometimes exposed himself to attacks on his patriotism for promoting strong leaders, such as Philip of Macedon, who showed promise of uniting Greece. Tradition says that Isocrates died of grief upon learning that Philip had defeated and subjugated the Greek forces at Chaeronea.

Isocrates was the contemporary of Plato, who was only a few years younger and who opened his Academy a few years after Isocrates opened his school. Both men distanced themselves from what they saw as the extravagant claims of earlier Sophists, but their own views on philosophy, rhetoric, and education were quite disparate. As historian of rhetoric William Benoit and others have shown, Isocrates rejected Plato's view of philosophy as the search for absolute truth, seeing it as more properly the study of how to address immediate practical problems. Rhetoric, then, in Isocrates' opinion, was a powerful tool for investigating such problems—where only probable, not certain, knowledge was available—and for moving people to action for the common good. This was opposed to Plato's view that rhetoric was

useful only as the purveyor of truth to mentally inferior audiences—truth discovered by philosophical inquiry or science. Education, for Isocrates, should form men who are capable of serving the state, whereas Plato concentrated on helping individuals develop their innate capacities for seeking absolute truth. Rhetoric was unimportant in the curriculum of Plato's school, but it was central to Isocrates' educational project. In fact, rhetoric was not even taught at the Academy until much later, when Aristotle, as an advanced pupil there, began to offer lectures on rhetoric in response to the tremendous success of Isocrates in this area.

Plato won the battle with Isocrates over the definitions of philosophy and rhetoric, at least in the Western philosophical tradition. Plato is regarded as the founder of Western philosophical thought, and his views on rhetoric have been tremendously influential, whereas Isocrates has been relegated to the status of minor philosopher and accorded very little intensive study. Historian of rhetoric Takis Poulakos has suggested that this relative neglect is due also to Isocrates' lack of interest in establishing rhetoric as a fully theorized discipline; his focus was always relentlessly practical. Plato allows Socrates to praise Isocrates in the *Phaedrus* (p. 138), but most scholars, among them James A. Coulter and Ronna Burger, agree that this praise is meant to be an ironic putdown. Nevertheless, Isocrates triumphed over Plato in his conception of education.

Isocrates was perhaps the first to institute systematic training for older students that would fit them to lead in public life. Although, like the earlier Sophists, he charged high fees for this training, unlike them he stayed in one city and worked with his students for several years. This allowed Isocrates to develop a more mentoring relationship with them, which several acknowledged with gratitude after they concluded their studies. He admitted only older adolescent boys who had already mastered the stylistic studies associated with grammar. He proposed to rehearse them under his critical guidance in various kinds of speeches, which they would first compose in writing and then speak aloud, a new and controversial procedure in his day. These speeches were to address serious subjects, not to indulge in flights of fancy as earlier Sophists sometimes had, and were to evidence the reflection that written composition made possible, rather than grasping any weapon that might lead to victory, as in extemporaneous oral address. Ultimately, teacher and students would pursue some of the issues in political philosophy that the speeches might be expected to raise. Many scholars credit Isocrates with establishing a pattern of education for well-to-do young men that prevailed throughout Greece and then Rome. The system spread to Europe with the Roman conquests and was eventually codified in the trivium of grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic that remained unchanged until the Renaissance and that was influential in liberal education thereafter, up to the present day.

Isocrates typically discusses rhetorical theory and education together. His "Against the Sophists" (ca. 390 B.C.E.; included here), which exists now only as a fragment, was written to publicize his school shortly after it opened. And in the *Antidosis* (353 B.C.E.; excerpted here), Isocrates imagines defending himself against a capital charge by reviewing his whole life as an educator. His theory of rhetoric

changes little from the work written early in his educational career to the one composed as an old man in his eighties.

In “Against the Sophists,” Isocrates distinguishes himself from anyone who purveys general principles, whether these refer to the “foreknowledge” needed to live a good life or the formulae needed to compose good speeches. Thus he rejects both the philosophers—such as Plato—seeking absolute truth and the handbook writers seeking universally applicable techniques for composing. Some ancient sources speak of a handbook on rhetoric written by Isocrates himself, but it is now lost, and many modern scholars, such as Michael Cahn, believe that, true to his principles, he never wrote one. To Isocrates, all general principles must fail because they screen out the particulars of a given situation, which must be considered in all truly good moral and rhetorical decisions. “Fitness for the occasion”—*kairos*—is all, to Isocrates.

Hence what is important to rhetorical success can be ranked in descending order from particular to general. Most important is the individual’s own natural ability, which the teacher can develop but not create. Next in importance is practice framing speeches for particular situations, the contents of which speeches the teacher can criticize but not prescribe. Finally, of least importance are general principles that have emerged as useful to the teacher, who should be a practiced rhetorician. Isocrates perhaps contradicts himself by reintroducing the general principles he has condemned, but in his scheme they are so subordinate as to be more like rules of thumb, emerging only provisionally from the specificity of many particular occasions.

In “Against the Sophists” Isocrates seems most eager to dissociate himself from the claim that he can teach virtue. He does suggest that the study of rhetoric can be morally improving, but the process of improvement itself seems to be rhetorical, acting by persuasion rather than empirical demonstration or insight. The existing fragment of “Against the Sophists” breaks off before Isocrates can explain how this persuasion is to be achieved, but he goes into more detail in the *Antidosis*.

Isocrates probably lost an actual lawsuit in which he was judged sufficiently wealthy to be compelled to fund a “liturgy,” or public project, for Athens (perhaps fitting out a warship). The title *antidosis* refers to such a suit. Isocrates felt that the negative judgment resulted as much from misunderstanding of his teaching—exacerbated by his pan-Hellenism—as from overestimation of his wealth. He thus wrote for publication a very long “speech” in which he imagines himself, like Socrates, facing the capital charge of corrupting the young. Written about thirty-five years after “Against the Sophists,” when the author was eighty-two, the *Antidosis* most fully represents the rhetorical and educational theories of Isocrates. It is excerpted here; what follows is a synopsis of the whole work.

SUMMARY OF *ANTIDOSIS*

The *Antidosis* begins with the author summarizing the actual circumstances that prompt him to compose a lengthy self-defense. The trial on a capital charge is openly adopted as a fiction. The prosecutors’ indictment against Isocrates echoes

the one read against Socrates: “charging that I corrupt young men by teaching them to speak and gain their own advantage in the courts contrary to justice.”¹ Isocrates insists that he has wronged no one. None of his speeches or his students has been vicious, as he proves with many examples. He discusses at length his illustrious pupil the Athenian general Timotheus, concluding that the man’s worst fault was his inability or unwillingness to protect himself from lying orators who inflamed public opinion against him. Isocrates now hints that he himself, like Timotheus, has not done enough to gain public good will through fair speech.

Isocrates then begins an exposition of his blameless theory of rhetorical education by dividing education into gymnastics, which trains the body, and philosophy, which trains the mind. He sees himself as a teacher of philosophy who should “impart all the forms of discourse in which the mind expresses itself.”² But such instruction does not impart a “science” of “virtue.” He argues that teaching can improve the ability to speak, however. This is surely not corrupting, for why, asks Isocrates, would I hurt myself by producing students who would discredit me? And why would students seek me out if they expected to be hurt? Misuse of oratorical ability is the fault of the orator, not of oratory.

At this point begins the passage excerpted below, with a long panegyric on the civilizing powers of the “logos.” Speech facilitates the construction of “true wisdom,” which for Isocrates resides in the ability “by his powers of conjecture [assessing probabilities] to arrive generally [usually] at the best course” in a particular situation (see excerpt included here). Isocrates suggests that the aspiring orator, even if motivated solely by desire for fame, will thereby be shaped by the best of conventional morality. If he emulates moral behavior merely to impress his audience, virtue will become a habit with him and gradually modify the inner man as well.

The corruption that now attends some displays of oratorical ability, Isocrates contends, must be laid at the door of corrupt public opinion, which refuses to be moved by noble examples and goals and so encourages young men to dissipation. On the contrary, the highest praise should go to those who unite philosophy and rhetoric, the inner and the outer man, because they “never speak without weighing their words” (see excerpt included here).

After the passage excerpted below, Isocrates concludes by berating the Athenians for their low standards. He rejects the use of cheap pathetic devices in his own defense (although he does allude to his advanced age) and vows to rely solely upon his words.

Traditional scholarship has typically treated Isocrates as a minor philosopher because he is not concerned with the pursuit of absolute or transcendent knowledge of the Platonic kind. Indeed, Isocrates explicitly rejects the possibility of teaching such knowledge and suggests that it is extremely hard to come by. He makes very few

¹Isocrates, *Antidosis*, in *On the Peace. Areopagiticus. Against the Sophists. Antidosis. Panathenaicus*, trans. George Norlin (London: W. Heinemann, 1928–29; rpt. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979), p. 203.

²Norlin, p. 289.

references to the gods or other possible sources of transcendent knowledge. Perhaps Isocrates is not concerned with the existence or availability of absolute knowledge because he defines his primary task as service to the state. Hence he is most concerned with developing the probabilistic wisdom used in practical affairs of serious import, a kind of knowledge that is developed and applied socially.

Isocrates almost seems to regard the search for transcendent truth as immoral because the search brings social isolation—as Socrates was isolated. Isocrates believes the community has an undeniable claim on the philosopher-rhetor. He must try to be a useful citizen and to make useful citizens of the young men entrusted to his care.

Selected Bibliography

The excerpts printed here are taken from the Loeb Classical Library volume, *Isocrates, On the Peace. Areopagiticus. Against the Sophists. Antidosis. Panathenaicus* (trans. George Norlin, 1929). This is the standard translation; Norlin's commentary is also helpful.

Although garnering increased attention recently, Isocrates has received surprisingly little scholarly treatment that focuses on his work alone, as can be seen by the brevity of William Benoit's "A Brief Bibliography of Works on Isocrates in English" (*Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 11 [1981]: 263–64). The standard account of Isocrates' importance is Werner Jaeger's "The Rhetoric of Isocrates and Its Cultural Ideal" (in *The Province of Rhetoric*, ed. Joseph Schwartz and John A. Rycenga, 1965). For a good short summary, see Benoit's "Isocrates on Rhetorical Education" (*Communication Education* 33 [1984]: 109–20). Takis Poulakos has eloquently defended Isocrates from Platonic strictures and has praised his commitment to forming men who could serve the state in *Speaking for the Polis: Isocrates' Rhetorical Education* (1997). Recent studies also include Michael Cahn, "Reading Rhetoric Rhetorically: Isocrates and the Marketing of Insight" (*Rhetorica* 12 [1989]: 121–44), and Andrew Ford, "The Price of Art in Isocrates: Formalism and the Escape from Politics" (in *Rethinking the History of Rhetoric*, ed. Takis Poulakos, 1993). Isocrates is discussed in R. C. Jebb's *The Attic Orators from Antiphon to Isaeos* (2 vols., 1962), George Kennedy's *The Art of Persuasion in Greece* (1963), Kathleen E. Welch's *The Contemporary Reception of Classical Rhetoric* (1990), and John Poulakos's *Sophistical Rhetoric in Classical Greece* (1995).

Isocrates is often compared with contemporary rhetoricians and philosophers whom he knew and with whom, often, he had theoretical disputes. See, for example, LaRue Van Hook, "Alcidamas versus Isocrates: The Spoken versus the Written Word" (*The Classical Weekly* 12 [1919]: 89–94); Terry M. Perkins, "Isocrates and Plato: Relativism vs. Idealism" (*Southern Speech Communication Journal* 50 [1984]: 49–66); and William Benoit's two essays, "Isocrates and Aristotle on Rhetoric" (*Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 20 [1990]: 251–59) and "Isocrates and Plato on Rhetoric and Rhetorical Education" (*Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 21 [1991]: 60–71), both of which include helpful bibliographies. On Plato's treatment of Isocrates in the *Phaedrus*, see James A. Coulter, "*Phaedrus* 279a: The Praise of Isocrates" (*Greek Roman and Byzantine Studies* 8 [1967]: 225–36), and Ronna Burger, "Isocrates the Beautiful" in her *Plato's "Phaedrus": A Defense of a Philosophical Art of Writing* (1980). For the influence of Isocrates on later developments in rhetoric, see R. H. Wagner, "The Rhetorical Theory of Isocrates" (in *Readings in Rhetoric*, ed. Lionel Crocker and Paul A. Carmack, 1965), and H. M. Hubbell, *The Influence of Isocrates on Cicero, Dionysius, and Aristides* (1913).

Against the Sophists¹

If all who are engaged in the profession of education were willing to state the facts instead of making greater promises than they can possibly fulfill, they would not be in such bad repute with the lay-public. As it is, however, the teachers who do not scruple to vaunt their powers with utter disregard of the truth have created the impression that those who choose a life of careless indolence are better advised than those who devote themselves to serious study.

Indeed, who can fail to abhor, yes to condemn, those teachers, in the first place, who devote themselves to disputation,² since they pretend to search for truth, but straightway at the beginning of their professions attempt to deceive us with lies?³ For I think it is manifest to all that foreknowledge of future events is not vouchsafed to our human nature, but that we are so far removed from this prescience⁴ that Homer, who has been conceded the highest reputation for wisdom, has pictured even the gods as at times debating among themselves about the future⁵—not that he

Translated by George Norlin.

¹Isocrates regards himself as one of the sophists (see *Antid.* 220), but sets himself apart from the “common herd” of sophists. [Tr.]

²Captious argumentation in the field of ethics. He is not thinking of Socrates, who did not teach for pay, nor of Plato’s dialectic, which was not yet famous, but of the minor Socratics, especially Antisthenes and Euclides, who taught for money while affecting contempt for it. In general he is thinking of such quibblers as are later shown up in Plato’s *Euthydemus*. [Tr.]

³Theirs is a cloud morality, not truth to live by on earth. [Tr.]

⁴There is, according to Isocrates, no “science” which can teach us to do under all circumstances the things which will insure our happiness and success. Life is too complicated for that, and no man can foresee exactly the consequences of his acts—“the future is a thing unseen.” All that education can do is to develop a sound judgment (as opposed to knowledge) which will meet the contingencies of life with resourcefulness and, in most cases, with success. This is a fundamental doctrine of his “philosophy” which he emphasizes and echoes again and again in opposition to the professors of a “science of virtue and happiness.” [Tr.]

⁵Homer’s epic poem, the *Iliad*, describes the Greek conquest of Troy, a war in which the gods are depicted as taking sides. [Ed.]

knew their minds but that he desired to show us that for mankind this power lies in the realms of the impossible.

But these professors have gone so far in their lack of scruple that they attempt to persuade our young men that if they will only study under them they will know what to do in life and through this knowledge will become happy and prosperous. More than that, although they set themselves up as masters and dispensers of goods so precious, they are not ashamed of asking for them a price of three or four minae!⁶ Why, if they were to sell any other commodity for so trifling a fraction of its worth they would not deny their folly; nevertheless, although they set so insignificant a price on the whole stock of virtue and happiness, they pretend to wisdom and assume the right to instruct the rest of the world. Furthermore, although they say that they do not want money and speak contemptuously of wealth as “filthy lucre,” they hold their hands out for a trifling gain and promise to make their disciples all but immortal!⁷ But what is most ridiculous of all is that they distrust those from whom they are to get this money—they distrust, that is to say, the very men to whom they are about to deliver the science of just dealing—and they require that the fees advanced by their students be entrusted for safe keeping⁸ to those who have never been under their instruction, being well advised as to their security, but doing the opposite of what they preach. For it is permissible to those who give any other instruction to be exacting in matters open to dispute, since nothing prevents those who have been made adept in other lines of training from being dishonorable in the matter of contracts. But men who inculcate virtue and

⁶Socrates speaks with the same sarcasm of a sophist named Evenus, who professed to teach all the virtues necessary to a good man and a good citizen for five minae. [Tr.]

⁷That is, to make them all but gods. [Tr.]

⁸For their security, they required that the fees charged to their students be deposited with third parties until the end of the course. [Tr.]

sobriety — is it not absurd if they do not trust in their own students before all others?⁹ For it is not to be supposed that men who are honorable and just-dealing with others will be dishonest with the very preceptors who have made them what they are.

When, therefore, the layman puts all these things together and observes that the teachers of wisdom and dispensers of happiness are themselves in great want but exact only a small fee from their students, that they are on the watch for contradictions in words¹⁰ but are blind to inconsistencies in deeds, and that, furthermore, they pretend to have knowledge of the future but are incapable either of saying anything pertinent or of giving any counsel regarding the present, and when he observes that those who follow their judgments are more consistent and more successful than those who profess to have exact knowledge, then he has, I think, good reason to condemn such studies and regard them as stuff and nonsense, and not as a true discipline of the soul.

But it is not these sophists alone who are open to criticism, but also those who profess to teach political discourse.¹¹ For the latter have no interest whatever in the truth,¹² but consider that they are masters of an art if they can attract great numbers of students by the smallness of their charges and the magnitude of their professions and get something out of them. For they are themselves so stupid and conceive others to be so dull that, although the speeches which they compose are worse than those which some laymen improvise, nevertheless they promise to make their students such clever orators that they will not overlook any of the possibilities which a subject affords. More than that, they do not attribute any of this power either to the practical experience or to the native ability of the student, but undertake to transmit the science of discourse as

⁹*Cf.* the same ridicule in Plato, *Gorg.* 519 c, 460 E. [Tr.]

¹⁰The aim of “eristic” (ἐρις means contention) is to show up the contradictions in the accepted morality. [Tr.]

¹¹The whole field of “deliberative” oratory, but the most “useful” branch of it in “litigious Athens” was the forensic. [Tr.]

¹²Their interest was not in the triumph of justice but in making “the worse reason appear the better.” [Tr.]

simply as they would teach the letters of the alphabet, not having taken trouble to examine into the nature of each kind of knowledge, but thinking that because of the extravagance of their promises they themselves will command admiration and the teaching of discourse will be held in higher esteem — oblivious of the fact that the arts are made great, not by those who are without scruple in boasting about them, but by those who are able to discover all of the resources which each art affords.

For myself, I should have preferred above great riches that philosophy had as much power as these men claim; for, possibly, I should not have been the very last in the profession nor had the least share in its profits. But since it has no such power, I could wish that this prating might cease. For I note that the bad repute which results therefrom does not affect the offenders only, but that all the rest of us who are in the same profession share in the opprobium.¹³

But I marvel when I observe these men setting themselves up as instructors of youth who cannot see that they are applying the analogy of an art with hard and fast rules to a creative process. For, excepting these teachers, who does not know that the art of using letters remains fixed and unchanged, so that we continually and invariably use the same letters for the same purposes, while exactly the reverse is true of the art of discourse?¹⁴ For what has been said by one speaker is not equally useful for the speaker who comes after him; on the contrary, he is accounted most skilled in this art who speaks in a manner worthy of his subject and yet is able to discover in it topics which are nowise the same as those used by others. But the greatest proof of the difference between these two arts is that oratory is good only if it has the qualities of fitness for the occasion,¹⁵ propriety of style, and originality of treatment, while in the case of letters there is no such need whatsoever. So that those who make use of such analogies ought more justly to pay out than to accept fees, since they attempt to teach others

¹³*Cf.* *Antid.* 168. [Tr.]

¹⁴That is, mechanical formulas are not sufficient. There must be inventiveness, resourcefulness, in a word, creative imagination. [Tr.]

¹⁵A fundamental requisite. [Tr.]

when they are themselves in great need of instruction.

However, if it is my duty not only to rebuke others, but also to set forth my own views, I think all intelligent people will agree with me that while many of those who have pursued philosophy have remained in private life,¹⁶ others, on the other hand, who have never taken lessons from any one of the sophists have become able orators and statesmen. For ability, whether in speech or in any other activity, is found in those who are well endowed by nature and have been schooled by practical experience.¹⁷ Formal training makes such men more skillful and more resourceful in discovering the possibilities of a subject; for it teaches them to take from a readier source the topics which they otherwise hit upon in haphazard fashion. But it cannot fully fashion men who are without natural aptitude into good debaters or writers, although it is capable of leading them on to self-improvement and to a greater degree of intelligence on many subjects.

But I desire, now that I have gone this far, to speak more clearly on these matters. For I hold that to obtain a knowledge of the elements out of which we make and compose all discourses is not so very difficult if anyone entrusts himself, not to those who make rash promises, but to those who have some knowledge of these things. But to choose from these elements those which should be employed for each subject, to join them together, to arrange them properly, and also, not to miss what the occasion demands but appropriately to adorn the whole speech with striking thoughts and to clothe it in flowing and melodious phrase¹⁸—these things, I hold, require much study and are the task of a vigorous and imaginative mind:¹⁹ for this, the student must not only have the requisite aptitude but he must learn the different kinds of discourse and practise himself in their use; and the

¹⁶Isocrates himself. [Tr.]

¹⁷Isocrates insists that the requisites of a good orator are first natural ability, second practical experience, and third formal training. See *Antid.* 186–88. [Tr.]

¹⁸Prose should have the same finish and charm as poetry. [Tr.]

¹⁹Unmistakably this phrase is parodied in Plato, *Gorgias* 463 A: δοχεῖ τοῖσιν μοι, ὦ Γοργία, εἶναί τι ἐπιτήδευμα τεχνικὸν μὲν οὖν, ψυχῆς δὲ οὐλοχαστικῆς καὶ ἀνδρείας καὶ φύσει δεινῆς προσομιλεῖν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις. [Tr.]

teacher, for his part, must so expound the principles of the art with the utmost possible exactness as to leave out nothing that can be taught, and, for the rest, he must in himself set such an example of oratory that the students who have taken form under his instruction and are able to pattern after him will, from the outset, show in their speaking a degree of grace and charm which is not found in others. When all of these requisites are found together, then the devotees of philosophy will achieve complete success; but according as any one of the things which I have mentioned is lacking, to this extent must their disciples of necessity fall below the mark.

Now as for the sophists who have lately sprung up and have very recently embraced these pretensions,²⁰ even though they flourish at the moment, they will all, I am sure, come round to this position. But there remain to be considered those who lived before our time and did not scruple to write the so-called arts of oratory.²¹ These must not be dismissed without rebuke, since they professed to teach how to conduct lawsuits, picking out the most discredited of terms,²² which the enemies, not the champions, of this discipline might have been expected to employ—and that too although this facility, in so far as it can be taught, is of no greater aid to forensic than to all other discourse. But they were much worse than those who dabble in disputation; for although the latter expounded such captious theories that were anyone to cleave to them in practice he would at once be in all manner of trouble, they did, at any rate, make professions of virtue and sobriety in their teaching, whereas the former, although exhorting others to study political discourse, neglected all the good things which this study affords, and became nothing more than professors of meddlesomeness and greed.²³

And yet those who desire to follow the true

²⁰The sophists before mentioned. The teaching of the older sophists is discussed in the *Antidosis*. [Tr.]

²¹Especially the first to write such treatises, Corax and Tisias of Syracuse. τέχνη, like *ars* in Latin, was the accepted term for a treatise on rhetoric. [Tr.]

²²Again and again Isocrates expresses his repugnance to this kind of oratory, and in general it was in bad odor. The precepts of Corax (Crow), for example, were called “the bad eggs of the bad Corax.” [Tr.]

²³The same complaint is made by Aristotle. *Rhet.* i.1.10. [Tr.]

precepts of this discipline may, if they will, be helped more speedily towards honesty of character²⁴ than towards facility in oratory. And let no one suppose that I claim that just living can be taught;²⁵ for, in a word, I hold that there does not exist an art of the kind which can implant sobri-

²⁴For the kind of political discourse which Isocrates extols, and its ethical influence see *Antid.* 275. [Tr.]

²⁵See *Antid.* 274 ff. [Tr.]

ety and justice in depraved natures. Nevertheless, I do think that the study of political discourse can help more than any other thing to stimulate and form such qualities of character.

But in order that I may not appear to be breaking down the pretensions of others while myself making greater claims than are within my powers, I believe that the very arguments by which I myself was convinced will make it clear to others also that these things are true.

From *Antidosis*

We ought, therefore, to think of the art of discourse just as we think of the other arts, and not to form opposite judgments about similar things, nor show ourselves intolerant toward that power which, of all the faculties which belong to the nature of man, is the source of most of our blessings. For in the other powers which we possess, as I have already said on a former occasion, we are in no respect superior to other living creatures; nay, we are inferior to many in swiftness and in strength and in other resources; but, because there has been implanted in us the power to persuade each other and to make clear to each other whatever we desire, not only have we escaped the life of wild beasts, but we have come together and founded cities and made laws and invented arts; and, generally speaking, there is no institution devised by man which the power of speech has not helped us to establish. For this it is which has laid down laws concerning things just and unjust, and things honorable and base; and if it were not for these ordinances we should not be able to live with one another. It is by this also that we confute the bad and extol the good. Through this we educate the ignorant and appraise the wise; for the power to speak well is taken as the surest index of a sound understanding, and discourse which is true and lawful and just is the outward image of a good and faithful soul. With this faculty we both contend against others on matters which are open to dispute and

seek light for ourselves on things which are unknown; for the same arguments which we use in persuading others when we speak in public, we employ also when we deliberate in our own thoughts; and, while we call eloquent those who are able to speak before a crowd, we regard as sage those who most skillfully debate their problems in their own minds. And, if there is need to speak in brief summary of this power, we shall find that none of the things which are done with intelligence take place without the help of speech, but that in all our actions as well as in all our thoughts speech is our guide, and is most employed by those who have the most wisdom.

But without reflecting at all on these truths, Lysimachus has dared to attack those who aspire to an accomplishment which is the source of blessings so many and so great. But why should we be surprised at him when even among the professors of disputation¹ there are some who talk no less abusively of the art of speaking on general and useful themes than do the most benighted of men, not that they are ignorant of its power or of the advantage which it quickly gives to those who avail themselves of it, but because they think that by decrying this art they will enhance the standing of their own.

I could, perhaps, say much harsher things of them than they of me, but I refrain for a double

¹Lysimachus represents the Aristotelian point of view. The professors of disputation or *eristics* taught arguing-to-win without regard to truth or virtue. [Ed.]

reason. I want neither to descend to the level of men whom envy has made blind nor to censure men who, although they do no actual harm to their pupils are less able to benefit them than are other teachers. I shall, however, say a few words about them, first because they also have paid their compliments to me; second, in order that you, being better informed as to their powers, may estimate us justly in relation to each other; and, furthermore, that I may show you clearly that we who are occupied with political discourse and whom they call contentious are more considerate than they; for although they are always saying disparaging things of me, I shall not answer them in kind but shall confine myself to the simple truth.

For I believe that the teachers who are skilled in disputation and those who are occupied with astronomy and geometry and studies of that sort² do not injure but, on the contrary, benefit their pupils, not so much as they profess, but more than others give them credit for. Most men see in such studies nothing but empty talk and hair-splitting; for none of these disciplines has any useful application either to private or to public affairs; nay, they are not even remembered for any length of time after they are learned because they do not attend us through life nor do they lend aid in what we do, but are wholly divorced from our necessities. But I am neither of this opinion nor am I far removed from it; rather it seems to me both that those who hold that this training is of no use in practical life are right and that those who speak in praise of it have truth on their side. If there is a contradiction in this statement, it is because these disciplines are different in their nature from the other studies which make up our education; for the other branches avail us only after we have gained a knowledge of them, whereas these studies can be of no benefit to us after we have mastered them unless we have elected to make our living from this source, and only help us while we are in the process of learning. For while we are occupied with the subtlety and exactness of astronomy and geometry and are forced to apply our minds to difficult prob-

²Compare Socrates' views, Xen. *Memorabilia* iv. 7. 2ff. [Tr.]

lems, and are, in addition, being habituated to speak and apply ourselves to what is said and shown to us, and not to let our wits go wool-gathering, we gain the power, after being exercised and sharpened on these disciplines, of grasping and learning more easily and more quickly those subjects which are of more importance and of greater value. I do not, however, think it proper to apply the term "philosophy" to a training which is no help to us in the present either in our speech or in our actions, but rather I would call it a gymnastic of the mind and a preparation for philosophy. It is, to be sure, a study more advanced than that which boys in school pursue, but it is for the most part the same sort of thing; for they also when they have labored through their lessons in grammar, music,³ and the other branches, are not a whit advanced in their ability to speak and deliberate on affairs, but they have increased their aptitude for mastering greater and more serious studies. I would, therefore, advise young men to spend some time on these disciplines,⁴ but not to allow their minds to be dried up by these barren subtleties, nor to be stranded on the speculations of the ancient sophists, who maintain, some of them, that the sum of things is made up of infinite elements; Empedocles that it is made up of four, with strife and love operating among them; Ion, of not more than three; Alcmaeon, of only two; Parmenides and Melissus, of one; and Gorgias, of none at all.⁵ For I think that such curiosities of thought are on a par with jugglers' tricks which, though they do not profit anyone, yet attract great crowds of the empty-minded, and I hold that men who want to do some good in the world must banish utterly from their interests all vain speculations and all activities which have no bearing on our lives.

³A broad term including the study of poetry. [Tr.]

⁴Compare Callicles' similar view about the study of philosophy in Plato, *Gorgias* 484 c. [Tr.]

⁵The fruitlessness of the speculations of the early philosophers (physicists) is shown, according to Isocrates, in the utter diversity of their views, for example, regarding the first principles or primary elements from which the world was created. At one extreme was Anaxagoras, who held that the primary elements were infinite in number; at the other was Gorgias, who in his nihilistic philosophy denied that there was any such thing as being or entity at all. Cf. *Hel.* 3; Xen. *Memorabilia* i. 1.14ff.; Plato, *Sophist* 242. [Tr.]

Now I have spoken and advised you enough on these studies for the present. It remains to tell you about “wisdom” and “philosophy.” It is true that if one were pleading a case on any other issue it would be out of place to discuss these words (for they are foreign to all litigation), but it is appropriate for me, since I am being tried on such an issue, and since I hold that what some people call philosophy is not entitled to that name, to define and explain to you what philosophy, properly conceived, really is. My view of this question is, as it happens, very simple. For since it is not in the nature of man to attain a science by the possession of which we can know positively what we should do or what we should say, in the next resort I hold that man to be wise who is able by his powers of conjecture to arrive generally at the best course, and I hold that man to be a philosopher who occupies himself with the studies from which he will most quickly gain that kind of insight.

What the studies are which have this power I can tell you, although I hesitate to do so; they are so contrary to popular belief and so very far removed from the opinions of the rest of the world, that I am afraid lest when you first hear them you will fill the whole courtroom with your murmurs and your cries. Nevertheless, in spite of my misgivings, I shall attempt to tell you about them; for I blush at the thought that anyone might suspect me of betraying the truth to save my old age and the little of life remaining to me. But, I beg of you, do not, before you have heard me, judge that I could have been so mad as to choose deliberately, when my fate is in your hands, to express to you ideas which are repugnant to your opinions if I had not believed that these ideas follow logically on what I have previously said, and that I could support them with true and convincing proofs.

I consider that the kind of art which can implant honesty and justice in depraved natures has never existed and does not now exist, and that people who profess that power will grow weary and cease from their vain pretensions before such an education is ever found.⁶ But I do hold that people can become better and worthier if they

conceive an ambition to speak well,⁷ if they become possessed of the desire to be able to persuade their hearers, and, finally, if they set their hearts on seizing their advantage—I do not mean “advantage” in the sense given to that word by the empty-minded, but advantage in the true meaning of that term;⁸ and that this is so I think I shall presently make clear.

For, in the first place, when anyone elects to speak or write discourses which are worthy of praise and honor, it is not conceivable that he will support causes which are unjust or petty or devoted to private quarrels, and not rather those which are great and honorable, devoted to the welfare of man and our common good; for if he fails to find causes of this character, he will accomplish nothing to the purpose. In the second place, he will select from all the actions of men which bear upon his subject those examples which are the most illustrious and the most edifying; and, habituating himself to contemplate and appraise such examples, he will feel their influence not only in the preparation of a given discourse but in all the actions of his life. It follows, then, that the power to speak well and think right will reward the man who approaches the art of discourse with love of wisdom and love of honor.

Furthermore, mark you, the man who wishes to persuade people will not be negligent as to the matter of character; no, on the contrary, he will apply himself above all to establish a most honorable name among his fellow-citizens; for who does not know that words carry greater conviction when spoken by men of good repute than when spoken by men who live under a cloud, and that the argument which is made by a man’s life is of more weight than that which is furnished by words?⁹ Therefore, the stronger a man’s desire to persuade his hearers, the more zealously will he strive to be honorable and to have the esteem of his fellow-citizens.

And let no one of you suppose that while all other people realize how much the scales of persuasion incline in favor of one who has the

⁷Cf. *Against the Sophists* 15. [Tr.]

⁸Compare his discussion of true advantage in *Nicoles* 2; *Peace* 28–35. [Tr.]

⁹Cf. Aristotle, *Rhet.* 1356 a; *χρηωτάτη πίστις τὸ ἦθος.* [Tr.]

⁶Cf. *Against the Sophists* 121. [Tr.]

approval of his judges, the devotees of philosophy alone are blind to the power of goodwill. In fact, they appreciate this even more thoroughly than others, and they know, furthermore, that probabilities and proofs and all forms of persuasion support only the points in a case to which they are severally applied, whereas an honorable reputation not only lends greater persuasiveness to the words of the man who possesses it, but adds greater luster to his deeds, and is, therefore, more zealously to be sought after by men of intelligence than anything else in the world.

I come now to the question of “advantage”—the most difficult of the points I have raised. If any one is under the impression that people who rob others or falsify accounts or do any evil thing get the advantage, he is wrong in his thinking; for none are at a greater disadvantage throughout their lives than such men; none are found in more difficult straits, none live in greater ignominy; and, in a word, none are more miserable than they. No, you ought to believe rather that those are better off now and will receive the advantage in the future at the hands of the gods who are the most righteous and the most faithful in their devotions, and that those receive the better portion at the hands of men who are the most conscientious in their dealings with their associates, whether in their homes or in public life, and are themselves esteemed as the noblest among their fellows.

This is verily the truth, and it is well for us to adopt this way of speaking on the subject, since, as things now are, Athens has in many respects been plunged into such a state of topsy-turvy and confusion that some of our people no longer use words in their proper meaning but wrest them from the most honorable associations and apply them to the basest pursuits. On the one hand, they speak of men who play the buffoon and have a talent for mocking and mimicking as “gifted”—an appellation which should be reserved for men endowed with the highest excellence; while, on the other hand, they think of men who indulge their depraved and criminal instincts and who for small gains acquire a base reputation as “getting the advantage,” instead of applying this term to the most righteous and the most upright, that is, to men who take advantage of the good and not

the evil things of life. They characterize men who ignore our practical needs and delight in the mental juggling of the ancient sophists as “students of philosophy,” but refuse this name to those who pursue and practice those studies which will enable us to govern wisely both our own households and the commonwealth—which should be the objects of our toil, of our study, and of our every act.

It is from these pursuits that you have for a long time now been driving away our youth, because you accept the words of those who denounce this kind of education. Yes, and you have brought it about that the most promising of our young men are wasting their youth in drinking bouts, in parties, in soft living and childish folly, to the neglect of all efforts to improve themselves; while those of grosser nature are engaged from morning until night in extremes of dissipation which in former days an honest slave would have despised. You see some of them chilling their wine at the “Nine-fountains”;¹⁰ others, drinking in taverns; others, tossing dice in gambling dens; and many, hanging about the training schools of the flute girls.

And as for those who encourage them in these things, no one of those who profess to be concerned for our youth has ever haled them before you for trial, but instead they persecute me, who, whatever else I may deserve, do at any rate deserve thanks for this, that I discourage such habits in my pupils.

But so inimical to all the world is this race of sycophants that when men pay a ransom¹¹ of a hundred and thirty minae¹² for women who bid fair to help them make away with the rest of their property besides, so far from reproaching them, they actually rejoice in their extravagance; but when men spend any amount, however small, upon their education, they complain that they are being corrupted. Could any charge be more unjust

¹⁰A famous spring near the Acropolis, first called Callirhoe (Fair-flowing). Later, when enclosed and adorned by Pisistratus, it was called the Fountain of Nine Spouts. See Thuc, ii. 15; Gardner, *Ancient Athens*, p. 18. [Tr.]

¹¹The ransom of slaves captured in war. Isocrates is probably thinking of some notorious case. [Tr.]

¹²The mina = 100 drachmas. A drachma was the standard wage of a day-laborer. [Tr.]

than this against our students? For, while in the prime of vigor, when most men of their age are most inclined to indulge their passions, they have disdained a life of pleasure; when they might have saved expense and lived softly, they have elected to pay out money and submit to toil; and, though hardly emerged from boyhood, they have come to appreciate what most of their elders do not know; namely, that if one is to govern his youth rightly and worthily and make the proper start in life, he must give more heed to himself than to his possessions, he must not hasten and seek to rule over others¹³ before he has found a master to direct his own thoughts, and he must not take as great pleasure or pride in other advantages as in the good things which spring up in the soul under a liberal education. I ask you, then, when young men have governed themselves by these principles, ought they not to be praised rather than censured, ought they not to be recognized as the best and the most sober-minded among their fellows?

I marvel at men who felicitate those who are eloquent by nature on being blessed with a noble gift, and yet rail at those who wish to become eloquent, on the ground that they desire an immoral and debasing education. Pray, what that is noble by nature becomes shameful and base when one attains it by effort? We shall find that there is no such thing, but that, on the contrary, we praise, at least in other fields, those who by their own devoted toil are able to acquire some good thing more than we praise those who inherit it from their ancestors. And rightly so; for it is well that in all activities, and most of all in the art of speaking, credit is won, not by gifts of fortune, but by efforts of study. For men who have been gifted with eloquence by nature and by fortune, are governed in what they say by chance, and not by any standard of what is best, whereas those who have gained this power by the study of philosophy and by the exercise of reason never speak without weighing their words, and so are less often in error as to a course of action.

¹³Cf. Plato, *Gorgias* 491. [Tr.]

Plato

ca. 428–347 B.C.E.

Plato was born to a wealthy aristocratic family in Athens at about the time that Gorgias paid his first visit there. The traditional stories of Plato's boyhood depict a handsome, well-educated youth much like some of Socrates' interlocutors in the Platonic dialogues. It is said that Plato enjoyed both comic and tragic theater, befriended Aristophanes, and attempted to compose his own tragedies. When Plato was about twenty years old, he began to associate with Socrates (ca. 470–399 B.C.E.), who kept no formal school. After his mentor's execution—Plato attended the trial—he traveled to Italy, Sicily, and perhaps Egypt. This journey was motivated in part by dismay at the death of Socrates, but scholars also speculate about what Plato may have studied in the Greek colonies of Italy and Sicily, where rhetoric flourished, or in Egypt, an ancient source of hermetic learning. Returning to Athens in 387, Plato opened a school in the grove of Academus, a religious site sacred to the Muses, where he wrote and taught for the rest of his life. He made two more trips to Sicily in his sixties.

PLATO'S IMPORTANCE TO RHETORIC

Unlike the school of his contemporary Isocrates, Plato's Academy was not known for producing political leaders. He failed at tutoring both the elder and the younger Dionysius, successive tyrants of Syracuse in Sicily. Plato's school, however, produced philosophers, most notably Aristotle. The curriculum emphasized mathematics, natural science, and political theory. Scholars debate about whether rhetoric was taught—at least before Aristotle, as an advanced pupil, began to offer lectures on the subject—but clearly discussions of the kind depicted in Plato's written dialogues were important to learning in the Academy. And, as shown in the *Symposium*, in which a woman named Diotima instructs Socrates, these discussions sometimes included women. Unlike Isocrates, Plato occasionally admitted female students to his school.

In spite of their differences, however, both Isocrates and Plato had a tremendous influence on the future course of Western education. If Isocrates influenced its curricular structure, Plato influenced its philosophical content, through his own work and that of his students. Plato's achievements as educator, literary artist, and philosopher of ethics, politics, aesthetics, and rhetoric defy summary. He was a prolific writer, and many of his works survive.

Although, as scholar of classical rhetoric Edward Schiappa explains, some evidence points to Plato's having coined the term *rhetoric*, Plato has become known as rhetoric's implacable foe, largely responsible for its unsavory reputation in the Western tradition. This notion that Plato condemns all rhetoric is an error, but it arises from the fact that Plato developed his philosophical project in opposition to the Sophistic Movement and the kind of rhetoric he associated with it. Competing

notions of rhetoric, in turn, arose from differing ideas about what kind of knowledge was available to human beings.

Plato believed that transcendent truth exists and is accessible to human beings. We can recognize it because we somehow “knew” it before our birth, when our souls were with the Divine. Finding truth now, when we exist in the flesh, is difficult, however, because it requires remembering what has been covered over in our minds by the experience of carnality and temporality. To Plato, the philosopher’s task is to help others remember by clearing away the worldly debris that obscures the truth, or, to use the metaphor Socrates advances in Plato’s *Theaetetus*, the philosopher is a midwife who aids the other mind to bring forth those true ideas hidden in the mind’s secret places before its own birth. Since this process of inquiry takes place through verbal exchange, the definition of rhetoric’s proper province is central to Plato’s understanding of knowledge.

The Sophists, in contrast, did not believe that humans can obtain absolute knowledge, and consequently they concerned themselves only with probabilities, which Plato regarded as mere appearances of truth. Sophistic discourse for Plato is synthetic, emotional, and rhetorical in a pejorative sense. It seeks to induce belief without regard for whether the belief is transcendentally true. Plato envisioned another kind of rhetoric: discourse that is more analytic, objective, and dialectical. He believed that such discourse can delineate the truth behind appearances. Plato viewed the Sophists as moral relativists who therefore had no reason not to be manipulative, deceitful, or downright corrupting in their use of discourse. He associated their uses of rhetoric with the kind of political discourse that, he believed, was corrupting Athens under democratic rule. But Plato saw himself as didactic, not manipulative, using discourse to shape his audience for its own good.

The dialogue form embodies Plato’s ambivalence about the function of language in aiding philosophical inquiry. It is a written genre, and yet it depicts oral discourse. In the dialogue, Socrates, who left no written work, develops his ideas by talking with the people around him. For Plato’s Socrates, as for the Sophists, oral exchange is valuable because it responds flexibly to *kairos*, the immediate social situation in which solutions to philosophical problems must be proposed. Socrates deems such responsiveness impossible for a fixed, written text. For Plato, the relative merits of oral and written philosophy seem less clear. Both Plato and his contemporary Isocrates blurred oral and written genres in their written works: Isocrates by writing “speeches” intended from the first to be read, not heard; Plato by composing the closet drama of his dialogues.

Modern questions about Plato’s view of rhetoric are complicated by the fact that the ideas expressed in various dialogues do not fit together neatly into a systematic theory. Moreover, scholars agree that it would be a mistake to assume that Plato endorses every view placed in the mouth of Socrates. Generations of readers have preferred to treat the dialogues as literary works, with lines given to the various characters as much for dramatic effect as to propound philosophical ideas. Considered as products of a literary artist’s career, the *Gorgias* (ca. 386) is generally regarded as an “early” work, and the *Phaedrus* (ca. 370, contemporary with the *Republic* and the *Symposium*) as “mature.” The *Gorgias* was probably written just

after Plato returned from his first trip to Sicily, when he was opening his school. Thus it may be seen as a public declaration of educational principles, similar in aim to Isocrates' "Against the Sophists" (p. 72), to which it often seems to respond implicitly. Many scholars also believe that in this dialogue Plato defends his own decision to follow the path of a contemplative philosopher and educator, rather than that of an active politician. The *Phaedrus*, like Isocrates' *Antidosis* (p. 75), can be seen as a retrospective statement on the author's work as an educator; Plato continued to revise the piece intermittently throughout his life. The *Gorgias* develops Plato's most extensive condemnation of false rhetoric, and the *Phaedrus* displays his most complete realization of true rhetoric.

GORGIAS

The *Gorgias* (reprinted in full here) is one of the most dramatically staged of Plato's dialogues. As the discussion progresses, it becomes more heated and even violent, with Callicles and Socrates trading insults and threats. The scene is laid mainly within an opulent Athenian home, where Gorgias has just finished an oratorical performance, probably one in which he spoke extemporaneously and at length on any subject the audience suggested. This scene depicts how the Sophists took part in Greek society (see also the discussion of Gorgias on p. 42). The aged Gorgias is attended by his vigorous young follower Polus. The host, Callicles, is a mature and powerful man. The group is joined by Socrates, whom we should imagine as older than Callicles but not yet of advanced age, attended by the boy Chaerephon. As the dialogue unfolds, Socrates takes on progressively more accomplished opponents—first the rather feeble Gorgias, then the impulsive Polus, and then the masterful Callicles. The end of the dialogue probably brought the actual trial of Socrates to mind for Plato's audience, as Callicles taunts Socrates with being unable to defend himself in a court of law and Socrates counters with a grim picture of Callicles' appearance before a higher court after death.

The question at issue here is the value of rhetoric. First, Gorgias says that rhetoric is valuable because it confers the power to be more convincing on any subject than even experts. Under pressure from Socrates, Gorgias waffles on whether he as a rhetoric teacher is responsible for, or capable of, teaching his students how to use this power beneficially. Gorgias appears quite ineffectual in his exchanges with Socrates here, perhaps enacting Plato's negative view of the older Sophists. Historians of rhetoric Richard Leo Enos and John Poulakos have both pointed out that Plato sets up a dramatic situation that puts Gorgias at a disadvantage. Gorgias is not allowed to make any of the long speeches for which he was famous, but only to give short answers to questions posed by Socrates. Moreover, Gorgias is made to agree to a discussion of abstract terms, such as *art* or *justice*, which he probably would have said could not be adequately defined in the abstract but required exploration within specific social contexts. Furthermore, Gorgias's defender Polus—as usual with Sophists in Plato's dialogues—is inadequate.

Polus comes to his aged mentor's aid by arguing that since Socrates does not deny that rhetoric confers the power Gorgias says it does, he should admit that

rhetoric is beneficial to orators, for it enables them to get what they want. Socrates counters that if orators exercise their power at other people's expense, they are destroying their souls; hence rhetoric is terribly harmful, not beneficial, to them.

At this point Callicles takes over the interchange with Socrates. Scholars have speculated that Callicles is not based on any one historical personage, but rather is a composite that embodies the worst political opportunism of the Athenian demagogues Plato attacked. Callicles responds to Socrates' condemnation of rhetoric as a tool of exploitation by arguing that exploiting other people is not evil if one is strong enough to do it. Since rhetoric enhances one's strength, it is clearly beneficial. Callicles means mental strength, the ability to dominate, and this is the greatest good a person can attain. Socrates counterattacks by pointing out that the strong man must do nothing to diminish his strength, the best source of which is his goodness. But rhetoric, by helping him satisfy his desires, may lead him to pursue pleasure to the detriment of his strength; hence rhetoric may not be beneficial. Socrates now presents his own position, that rhetoric is beneficial only when it enables one to bring just punishment upon oneself or a loved one, for correction maintains the health of the soul, which is the greatest good.

Underlying this discussion of rhetoric's value is the question of the relation between rhetoric and knowledge. Gorgias voices a damaging admission near the start of the dialogue when he says that rhetoric is not concerned with all language, but only with public political and judicial deliberations. Evidently public deliberations treat questions that have only probable, uncertain answers. Socrates then sets up a distinction between knowledge and belief, the true and the probable. Socrates admits that the mind must be persuaded to grasp both knowledge and belief, but given the way Gorgias has limited rhetoric's domain, evidently rhetoric deals only with belief. The orator can induce belief in questions of justice but cannot convey true knowledge of the just. One can master rhetoric without acquiring any moral knowledge that will direct how one uses rhetoric.

This point is underlined in the exchange with Polus, since Polus imagines that the rhetor uses rhetoric to achieve his desires at others' expense, which he would not do if he had gained knowledge of the just and good along with his rhetorical power. Socrates sets up the famous opposition between cosmetics, cookery, sophistic (political oratory), and rhetoric (forensic oratory) on the one hand, and gymnastics, medicine, legislation, and justice on the other. This opposition suggests that rhetoric is not just morally neutral, but actually pernicious, for it can be used to conceal the truth and offer a counterfeit in its place. For the remainder of the dialogue, Socrates hammers home the theme of what seems to be true (belief, the probable, the conventional—what rhetoric purveys) versus what is true (knowledge, the certain, the transcendent—what philosophy seeks).

Socrates rejects convention in favor of his own insight. Callicles, too, claims to be independent of social convention. He will pursue his desires, he says, no matter what anyone thinks. Socrates is able to show, however, that Callicles is actually the slave of convention. Callicles uses rhetoric to get what he wants, but to do so he must flatter convention. He must seek to become similar to his audience in order to persuade them. Socrates, to the contrary, really is independent because he rejects

conventional belief in order to be free to pursue truth. This is the point of Socrates' concluding insistence on the judgment after death—it symbolizes the transcendent knowledge he seeks. If such knowledge does not in fact exist, Socrates' argument, and his defense of his conduct, falls to the ground.

PHAEDRUS

The *Phaedrus* (reprinted in full here) is also based on a distinction between knowledge and belief, but the dramatic situation is very different. The *Phaedrus* is unusual among Platonic dialogues for having a rural setting and only two characters, Socrates and the handsome young Phaedrus. It is also unusual in that Socrates makes several long speeches. But what has most puzzled readers is that this dialogue, supposedly about rhetoric, has love as its ostensible subject. Some of the themes raised in the *Gorgias* provide clues to this puzzle. In the *Gorgias*, when Socrates depicts Callicles as the slave of convention, he implies that the rhetor who conforms in order to persuade changes his own inner nature—he cannot hope to manipulate while remaining untouched himself. Moreover, Socrates links this danger of conformity to a similar danger for the lover, who conforms to the views of his beloved in order to please and to achieve his desire. Socrates forges this link through a play on the word *Demus*, which is the name of the boy Callicles admires, and which also refers to the populace Callicles must persuade to achieve his political desires. Athenian homosexuality provides Socrates with a symbol of what is wrong with conforming to convention—the superior soul is retarded in its development by the need to conform to the opinions of the immature or inferior soul.

The idea that persuader and persuaded come to resemble one another is important to the *Phaedrus* in that the dialogue's subtext focuses on how we learn. In the *Gorgias* Socrates says that the mind requires persuasion to grasp true knowledge as well as belief. But the *Gorgias* asks what kind of persuasion leads to true knowledge. The relationship between Socrates and Phaedrus illustrates this kind of persuasion and how it comes about. It is a kind of persuasion that combats the power of convention and seeks to rise above it, rather than trying to exploit convention so as to satisfy base desires. For this persuasion to function, the student should take care to choose a teacher who will raise the student to the teacher's higher level, and the teacher should take care to choose a student who will not drag the teacher down. Phaedrus and Socrates are such a student and teacher.

The discussion in the *Phaedrus* is a model lesson on rhetoric that is organized inductively. Three speeches are presented in ascending order of quality, first the one by Lysias that Phaedrus reads and then the two composed on the spot, Sophist-fashion, by Socrates. Socrates does not allow Phaedrus to compose his own speech on love because he does not want the discussion to descend to Phaedrus's level. Indeed, Socrates is embarrassed by his own first speech because by composing it he has descended somewhat toward Phaedrus's conception of love, which Socrates knows is inferior to his own. In his second speech, Socrates attempts to raise Phaedrus to his superior level. At the same time, he does more than lecture. Discussion is an important part of this "class," and it is very friendly, even flirtatious.

There must be discussion so that Phaedrus can practice the higher level of discourse to which Socrates would raise him, and there must be flirtation to symbolize the total quality of the transformation that Socrates wishes to effect.

Indeed, this is why love must be the subject of a discussion about rhetoric. Socrates suggests that persuasion-to-belief—bad rhetoric—is like the lust of the nonlover, which exploits the object of lust at the same time it destroys the one who lusts. But persuasion-to-knowledge—good rhetoric—is like love, which seeks only to make the beloved a better person, to bring the beloved closer to transcendent good, and not to satisfy the carnal desires of the lover. We must sense Socrates' attraction to Phaedrus so that we can note that he refuses to gratify it, even though Phaedrus seems quite willing. At the same time, the motion toward transcendence must begin with carnality, with the physical attraction between two people, even if the goal is to progress beyond this level. The lovers must have bodies, in other words, if eventually, in Socrates' striking image, the lovers' bodies are to grow wings.

The nature of the good rhetoric that encourages wings to grow must be explored carefully. Socrates begins by avoiding Gorgias's initial mistake: Socrates says that rhetoric is the art of influencing the soul through words, in all kinds of speaking, not just in public deliberations. To influence the soul, the rhetor must know the truth. To know the truth, the rhetor must first make distinctions among things, defining his terms carefully—that is, he must analyze—and then he must be able to recombine his ideas in an organic form, in which each part is necessarily linked to what comes before and after—that is, he must synthesize. Thinking and speaking seem to be interrelated here for Socrates. One improves one's thinking by doing the analytic and synthetic groundwork for speaking, and one's speaking cannot be truly good, cannot communicate knowledge, unless it is informed by careful thinking. The rhetor should also apply analysis and synthesis to the subject of rhetoric itself, but not for such useless purposes as cataloging the parts of a speech. Rather he should catalog the kinds of human soul so that he can adapt his discourse to whomever he addresses. This is Socrates' version of *kairos*.

Ultimately the goal of this thinking and speaking is true, transcendent knowledge. When Phaedrus mocks the provenance of Socrates' Egyptian tale on the invention of writing, Socrates reproaches him for focusing on the tale's conventional aspects. One should focus on the transcendent truth the tale contains. This rebuke reinforces the condemnation of writing conveyed in the tale, a condemnation based on the culture-bound nature of writing. Socrates says, in effect, that a written text can only remind us of what we already know: that is, it depends on contextual information for its interpretation. Oral dialogue between congenial souls is far superior to writing because it can lead to truth.

The good rhetoric employed in such dialogue thus seems very close to dialectic. Socrates characterizes this dialogue with a reproductive metaphor. The teacher who is raising the student toward transcendence plants seeds in the student's soul that will eventually flower and, in turn, reproduce themselves in other souls. This kind of reproduction is superior to mere physical reproduction because it propagates only transcendent knowledge, not the beliefs of the tribe, which are typically inculcated

in young children. At the same time, it is necessary to have two parties to this process. Socrates—and by extension Plato—reject the possibility of a totally autonomous method (a method Descartes would later seek in isolated meditation). Good rhetoric may not itself generate truth, but it is an absolutely necessary pathway to truth.

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Eric Havelock develops his theory of orality and literacy in *A Preface to Plato* (1963). For an extension and correction of his work, see C. Jan Swearingen, "The Rhetor as Eiron: Plato's Defense of Dialogue" (*PRE/TEXT* 3 [1982]: 289–336). Also building on Havelock, Thomas Cole's *The Origins of Rhetoric in Ancient Greece* (1991) shows how the advent of

literacy and the attendant ability to detach a text's content from its verbal form contributed to Plato's view of rhetoric.

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Gorgias

or On Rhetoric; Reputative

CALLICLES: To join in a fight or a fray, as the saying is, Socrates, you have chosen your time well enough.

SOCRATES: Do you mean, according to the proverb, we have come too late for a feast?

CALLICLES: Yes, a most elegant feast; for Gorgias gave us a fine and varied display but a moment ago.

SOCRATES: But indeed, Callicles, it is Chaerephon here who must take the blame for this; he forced us to spend our time in the marketplace.

CHAEREPHON: No matter, Socrates: I will take the curing of it too; for Gorgias is a friend of mine, so that he will give us a display now, if you think fit, or if you prefer, on another occasion.

CALLICLES: What, Chaerephon? Has Socrates a desire to hear Gorgias?

CHAEREPHON: Yes, it is for that very purpose we are here.

CALLICLES: Then whenever you have a mind to pay me a call—Gorgias is staying with me, and he will give you a display.

SOCRATES: Thank you, Callicles: but would he consent to discuss with us? For I want to find out from the man what is the function of his art, and what it is that he professes and teaches. As for

the rest of his performance, he must give it us, as you suggest, on another occasion.

CALLICLES: The best way is to ask our friend himself, Socrates: for indeed that was one of the features of his performance. Why, only this moment he was pressing for whatever questions anyone in the house might like to ask, and saying he would answer them all.

SOCRATES: What a good idea! Ask him, Chaerephon.

CHAEREPHON: What am I to ask?

SOCRATES: What he is.

CHAEREPHON: How do you mean?

SOCRATES: Just as, if he chanced to be in the shoemaking business, his answer would have been, I presume, "a shoemaker." Now, don't you see my meaning?

CHAEREPHON: I see, and will ask him. Tell me, Gorgias, is Callicles here correct in saying that you profess to answer any questions one may ask you?

GORGAS: He is, Chaerephon; indeed, I was just now making this very profession, and I may add that nobody has asked me anything new for many years now.

CHAEREPHON: So I presume you will easily answer, Gorgias.

GORGAS: You are free to make trial of that, Chaerephon.

POLUS: Yes, to be sure; and, if you like, Chaerephon, of me. For I think Gorgias must be

Translated by W. R. M. Lamb.

quite tired out, after the long discourse he has just delivered.

CHAEREPHON: Why, Polus, do you suppose you could answer more excellently than Gorgias?

POLUS: And what does that matter, if I should satisfy you?

CHAEREPHON: Not at all; since it is your wish, answer.

POLUS: Ask.

CHAEREPHON: Then I ask you, if Gorgias chanced to be skilled in the same art as his brother Herodicus, what should we be justified in calling him? What we call his brother, should we not?

POLUS: Certainly.

CHAEREPHON: Then we should make a right statement if we described him as a doctor.

POLUS: Yes.

CHAEREPHON: And if he were expert in the same art as Aristophon, son of Aglaophon, or his brother,¹ what name should we rightly give him?

POLUS: Obviously that of painter.

CHAEREPHON: But as it is, we would like to know in what art he is skilled, and hence by what name we should rightly call him.

POLUS: Chaerephon, there are many arts among mankind that have been discovered experimentally, as the result of experiences: for experience conducts the course of our life according to art, but inexperience according to chance. Of these several arts various men partake in various ways, and the best men of the best. Gorgias here is one of these, and he is a partner in the finest art of all.

SOCRATES: Fine, at any rate, Gorgias, is the equipment for discourse that Polus seems to have got: but still he is not performing his promise to Chaerephon.

GORGAS: How exactly, Socrates?

SOCRATES: He does not seem to me to be quite answering what he is asked.

GORGAS: Well, will you please ask him?

SOCRATES: No, if you yourself will be so good as to answer, why, I would far rather ask you. For I see plainly, from what he has said, that Polus has had more practice in what is called rhetoric than in discussion.

POLUS: How so, Socrates?

SOCRATES: Because, Polus, when Chaerephon has asked in what art Gorgias is skilled, you merely eulogize his art as though it were under some censure, instead of replying what it is.

POLUS: Why, did I not reply that it was the finest?

SOCRATES: You certainly did: but nobody asked what was the quality of his art, only what it was, and by what name we ought to call Gorgias. Just as Chaerephon laid out the lines for you at first, and you answered him properly in brief words, in the same way you must now state what is that art, and what we ought to call Gorgias; or rather, Gorgias, do you tell us yourself in what art it is you are skilled, and hence, what we ought to call you.

GORGAS: Rhetoric, Socrates.

SOCRATES: So we are to call you a rhetorician?

GORGAS: Yes, and a good one, if you would call me what—to use Homer's phrase—"I vaunt myself to be."²

SOCRATES: Well, I shall be pleased to do so.

GORGAS: Then call me such.

SOCRATES: And are we to say that you are able to make others like yourself?

GORGAS: Yes, that is what I profess to do, not only here, but elsewhere also.

SOCRATES: Then would you be willing, Gorgias, to continue this present way of discussion, by alternate question and answer, and defer to some other time that lengthy style of speech in which Polus made a beginning? Come, be true to your promise, and consent to answer each question briefly.

GORGAS: There are some answers, Socrates, that necessitate a lengthy expression: however, I will try to be as brief as possible; for indeed it is one of my claims that no one could express the same thing in briefer terms than myself.

SOCRATES: That is just what I want, Gorgias: give me a display of this very skill—in brevity of speech; your lengthy style will do another time.

GORGAS: Well, I will do that, and you will admit that you never heard anyone speak more briefly.

¹Polygnotus, the famous painter who decorated public buildings in Athens from about 470 B.C. [Tr.]

²The regular phrase of a Homeric hero in boasting of his valor, parentage, etc.; cf. *Il.* vi. 211, xiv. 113. [Tr.]

SOCRATES: Come then; since you claim to be skilled in rhetorical art, and to be able to make anyone else a rhetorician, tell me with what particular thing rhetoric is concerned: as, for example, weaving is concerned with the manufacture of clothes, is it not?

GORGIAS: Yes.

SOCRATES: And music, likewise, with the making of tunes?

GORGIAS: Yes.

SOCRATES: Upon my word, Gorgias, I do admire your answers! You make them as brief as they well can be.

GORGIAS: Yes, Socrates, I consider myself a very fair hand at that.

SOCRATES: You are right there. Come now, answer me in the same way about rhetoric: with what particular thing is its skill concerned?

GORGIAS: With speech.

SOCRATES: What kind of speech, Gorgias? Do you mean that which shows sick people by what regimen they could get well?

GORGIAS: No.

SOCRATES: Then rhetoric is not concerned with all kinds of speech.

GORGIAS: No, I say.

SOCRATES: Yet it does make men able to speak.

GORGIAS: Yes.

SOCRATES: And to understand also the things about which they speak.

GORGIAS: Of course.

SOCRATES: Now, does the medical art, which we mentioned just now, make men able to understand and speak about the sick?

GORGIAS: It must.

SOCRATES: Hence the medical art also, it seems, is concerned with speech.

GORGIAS: Yes.

SOCRATES: That is, speech about diseases?

GORGIAS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: Now, is gymnastic also concerned with speech about the good and bad condition of our bodies?

GORGIAS: Quite so.

SOCRATES: And moreover it is the same, Gorgias, with all the other arts; each of them is concerned with that kind of speech which deals with the subject matter of that particular art.

GORGIAS: Apparently.

SOCRATES: Then why, pray, do you not give the name "rhetorical" to those other arts, when they are concerned with speech, if you call that "rhetoric" which has to do with speech?

GORGIAS: Because, Socrates, the skill in those other arts is almost wholly concerned with manual work and similar activities, whereas in rhetoric there is no such manual working, but its whole activity and efficacy is by means of speech. For this reason I claim for the rhetorical art that it is concerned with speech, and it is a correct description, I maintain.

SOCRATES: Now, do I understand what sort of art you choose to call it? Perhaps, however, I shall get to know this more clearly. But answer me this: we have arts, have we not?

GORGIAS: Yes.

SOCRATES: Then amongst the various arts some, I take it, consist mainly of work, and so require but brief speech; while others require none, for the art's object may be achieved actually in silence, as with painting, sculpture, and many other arts. It is to such as these that I understand you to refer when you say rhetoric has no concern with them; is not that so?

GORGIAS: Your supposition is quite correct, Socrates.

SOCRATES: But there is another class of arts which achieve their whole purpose through speech and—to put it roughly—require either no action to aid them, or very little; for example, numeration, calculation, geometry, draught-playing, and many other arts: some of these have the speech in about equal proportion to the action, but most have it as the larger part, or absolutely the whole of their operation and effect is by means of speech. It is one of this class of arts that I think you refer to as rhetoric.

GORGIAS: You are right.

SOCRATES: But, mind you, I do not think it is any one of these that you mean to call rhetoric; though, so far as your expression went, you did say that the art which has its effect through speech is rhetoric, and one might retort, if one cared to strain at mere words: So, Gorgias, you call numeration rhetoric! But I do not believe it is either numeration or geometry that you call rhetoric.

GORGIAS: Your belief is correct, Socrates, and your supposition just.

SOCRATES: Come now, and do your part in finishing off the answer to my question. Since rhetoric is in fact one of these arts which depend mainly on speech, and there are likewise other arts of the same nature, try if you can tell me with what this rhetoric, which has its effect in speech, is concerned. For instance, suppose some one asked me about one or other of the arts which I was mentioning just now: Socrates, what is the art of numeration? I should tell him, as you did me a moment ago, that it is one of those which have their effect through speech. And suppose he went on to ask: With what is its speech concerned? I should say: With the odd and even numbers, and the question of how many units there are in each. And if he asked again: What art is it that you call calculation? I should say that this also is one of those which achieve their whole effect by speech. And if he proceeded to ask: With what is it concerned? I should say—in the manner of those who draft amendments in the Assembly—that in most respects calculation is in the same case as numeration, for both are concerned with the same thing, the odd and the even; but that they differ to this extent, that calculation considers the numerical values of odd and even numbers not merely in themselves but in relation to each other. And suppose, on my saying that astronomy also achieves its whole effect by speech, he were to ask me: And the speech of astronomy, with what is it concerned? I should say: With the courses of the stars and sun and moon, and their relative speeds.

GORGIAS: And you would be right, Socrates.

SOCRATES: Come then and do your part, Gorgias: rhetoric is one of those arts, is it not, which carry out their work and achieve their effect by speech?

GORGIAS: That is so.

SOCRATES: Then tell me what they deal with: what subject is it, of all in the world, that is dealt with by this speech employed by rhetoric?

GORGIAS: The greatest of human affairs, Socrates, and the best.

SOCRATES: But that also, Gorgias, is ambiguous, and still by no means clear. I expect you have heard people singing over their cups the old

catch, in which the singers enumerate the best things in life,—first health, then beauty, and thirdly, as the maker of the catch puts it, wealth got without guile.

GORGIAS: Yes, I have heard it; but what is the point of your quotation?

SOCRATES: I mean that, supposing the producers of those blessings which the maker of the catch commends—namely, the doctor, the trainer, and the money-getter—were to stand before you this moment, and the doctor first should say: “Gorgias is deceiving you, Socrates; for it is not his art, but mine, that deals with man’s greatest good.” Then supposing I were to ask him: “And who are you, to say so?” He would probably reply: “A doctor.” “Well, what do you mean? That the work of your art is the greatest good?” “What else, Socrates,” I expect he would reply, “is health? What greater good is there for men than health?” And supposing the trainer came next and said: “I also should be surprised indeed, Socrates, if Gorgias could show you a greater good in his art than I can in mine.” Again I should say to him in his turn: “And who are you, sir? What is your work?” “A trainer,” he would reply, “and my work is making men’s bodies beautiful and strong.” After the trainer would come the money-getter, saying—with, I fancy, a fine contempt for every one: “Pray consider, Socrates, if you can find a good that is greater than wealth, either in Gorgias’ view or in that of anyone else at all.” “Why then,” we should say to him, “are you a producer of that?” “Yes,” he would say. “And who are you?” “A money-getter.” “Well then,” we shall say to him, “do you judge wealth to be the greatest good for men?” “Of course,” he will reply. “But look here,” we should say; “our friend Gorgias contends that his own art is a cause of greater good than yours.” Then doubtless his next question would be: “And what is that good? Let Gorgias answer.” Now come, Gorgias; imagine yourself being questioned by those persons and by me, and tell us what is this thing that you say is the greatest good for men, and that you claim to produce.

GORGIAS: A thing, Socrates, which in truth is the greatest good, and a cause not merely of freedom to mankind at large, but also of dominion to single persons in their several cities.

SOCRATES: Well, and what do you call it?

GORGIAS: I call it the ability to persuade with speeches either judges in the law courts or statesmen in the council-chamber or the commons in the Assembly or an audience at any other meeting that may be held on public affairs. And I tell you that by virtue of this power you will have the doctor as your slave, and the trainer as your slave; your money-getter will turn out to be making money not for himself, but for another,—in fact for you, who are able to speak and persuade the multitude.

SOCRATES: I think now, Gorgias, you have come very near to showing us the art of rhetoric as you conceive it, and if I at all take your meaning, you say that rhetoric is a producer of persuasion, and has therein its whole business and main consummation. Or can you tell us of any other function it can have beyond that of effecting persuasion in the minds of an audience?

GORGIAS: None at all, Socrates; your definition seems to me satisfactory; that is the main substance of the art.

SOCRATES: Then listen, Gorgias: I, let me assure you, for so I persuade myself—if ever there was a man who debated with another from a desire of knowing the truth of the subject discussed, I am such a man; and so, I trust, are you.

GORGIAS: Well, what then, Socrates?

SOCRATES: I will now tell you. What the real nature of the persuasion is that you speak of as resulting from rhetoric, and what the matters are with which persuasion deals, I assure you I do not clearly understand; though I may have my suspicions as to what I suppose you to mean by it, and with what things you think it deals. But nevertheless I will ask you what you do mean by the persuasion that results from rhetoric, and with what matters you think it deals. Now why is it that, having a suspicion of my own, I am going to ask you this, instead of stating it myself? It is not on your account, but with a view to the argument, and to such a progress in it as may best reveal to us the point we are discussing. Just see if you do not think it fair of me to press you with my question: suppose I happened to ask you what Zeuxis was among painters, and you said “a figure painter,” would it not be fair of me to ask you what sort of figures he painted, and where?

GORGIAS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: Would this be the reason—that there are also other painters who depict a variety of other figures?

GORGIAS: Yes.

SOCRATES: But if no one besides Zeuxis were a painter, your answer would have been right?

GORGIAS: Yes, of course.

SOCRATES: Come then, tell me now about rhetoric: do you think rhetoric alone effects persuasion, or can other arts do it as well? I mean, for example, when a man teaches anything, does he persuade in his teaching? Or do you think not?

GORGIAS: No, to be sure, Socrates, I think he most certainly does persuade.

SOCRATES: Then let us repeat our question with reference to the same arts that we spoke of just now: does not numeration, or the person skilled in numeration, teach us all that pertains to number?

GORGIAS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: And persuades also?

GORGIAS: Yes.

SOCRATES: So that numeration also is a producer of persuasion?

GORGIAS: Apparently.

SOCRATES: Then if we are asked what kind of persuasion, and dealing with what, we shall reply, I suppose: The instructive kind, which deals with the amount of an odd or an even number; and we shall be able to demonstrate that all the other arts which we mentioned just now are producers of persuasion, and what kind it is, and what it deals with, shall we not?

GORGIAS: Yes.

SOCRATES: Hence rhetoric is not the only producer of persuasion.

GORGIAS: You are right.

SOCRATES: Since then it is not the only one that achieves this effect, but others can also, we should be justified in putting this further question to the speaker, as we did concerning the painter: Then of what kind of persuasion, and of persuasion dealing with what, is rhetoric the art? Or do you not consider that such a further question would be justified?

GORGIAS: Yes, I do.

SOCRATES: Then answer me, Gorgias, since you agree with me on that.

GORGAS: Well then, I mean that kind of persuasion, Socrates, which you find in the law courts and in any public gatherings, as in fact I said just now; and it deals with what is just and unjust.

SOCRATES: I, too, I may tell you, had a suspicion that it was this persuasion that you meant, and as dealing with those things, Gorgias; but you must not be surprised if I ask you by-and-by some such question as may seem to be obvious, though I persist in it; for, as I say, I ask my questions with a view to an orderly completion of our argument—I am not aiming at you, but only anxious that we do not fall into a habit of snatching at each other's words with a hasty guess, and that you may complete your own statement in your own way, as the premises may allow.

GORGAS: And I think you are quite right in doing so, Socrates.

SOCRATES: Come then, let us consider another point. Is there something that you call "having learned"?

GORGAS: There is.

SOCRATES: And again, "having believed"?

GORGAS: Yes.

SOCRATES: Then do you think that having learned and having believed, or learning and belief, are the same thing, or different?

GORGAS: In my opinion, Socrates, they are different.

SOCRATES: And your opinion is right, as you can prove in this way: if some one asked you—Is there, Gorgias, a false and a true belief?—you would say, Yes, I imagine.

GORGAS: I should.

SOCRATES: But now, is there a false and a true knowledge?

GORGAS: Surely not.

SOCRATES: So it is evident again that they³ are not the same.

GORGAS: You are right.

SOCRATES: But yet those who have learned have been persuaded, as well as those who have believed.

GORGAS: That is so.

SOCRATES: Then would you have us assume two forms of persuasion—one providing belief

without knowledge, and the other sure knowledge?

GORGAS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: Now which kind of persuasion is it that rhetoric creates in law courts or any public meeting on matters of right and wrong? The kind from which we get belief without knowledge, or that from which we get knowledge?

GORGAS: Obviously, I presume, Socrates, that from which we get belief.

SOCRATES: Thus rhetoric, it seems, is a producer of persuasion for belief, not for instruction in the matter of right and wrong.

GORGAS: Yes.

SOCRATES: And so the rhetorician's business is not to instruct a law court or a public meeting in matters of right and wrong, but only to make them believe; since, I take it, he could not in a short while instruct such a mass of people in matters so important.

GORGAS: No, to be sure.

SOCRATES: Come then, let us see what actually is our account of rhetoric: for I confess I am not yet able to distinguish what my own account of it is. When the city holds a meeting to appoint doctors or shipbuilders or any other set of craftsmen, there is no question then, is there, of the rhetorician giving advice? And clearly this is because in each appointment we have to elect the most skillful person. Again, in a case of building walls or constructing harbors or arsenals, our only advisers are the master-builders; or in consulting on the appointment of generals, or on a maneuver against the enemy, or on a military occupation, it is the general staff who will then advise us, and not the rhetoricians. Or what do you say, Gorgias, to these instances? For as you claim to be an orator yourself and to make orators of others, it is proper to inquire of you concerning your own craft. And here you must regard me as furthering your own interest: for it is quite likely that some one within these walls has a wish to become your pupil—indeed I fancy I perceive more than one, yes, a number of them, who, perhaps, would be ashamed to press you with questions. So, when you are being pressed with mine, consider that you are being questioned by them as well: "What shall we get, Gorgias, by coming to hear you? On what matters shall we be enabled to give advice

³I.e., knowledge and belief. [Tr.]

to the state? Will it be only on right and wrong, or on those things besides which Socrates was mentioning just now?" So try to give them an answer.

GORGAS: Well, I will try, Socrates, to reveal to you clearly the whole power of rhetoric: and in fact you have correctly shown the way to it yourself. You know, I suppose, that these great arsenals and walls of Athens, and the construction of your harbors, are due to the advice of Themistocles, and in part to that of Pericles, not to your craftsmen.

SOCRATES: So we are told, Gorgias, of Themistocles; and as to Pericles, I heard him myself when he was advising us about the middle wall.⁴

GORGAS: So whenever there is an election of such persons as you were referring to, Socrates, you see it is the orators who give the advice and get resolutions carried in these matters.

SOCRATES: That is just what surprises me, Gorgias, and has made me ask you all this time what in the world the power of rhetoric can be. For, viewed in this light, its greatness comes over me as something supernatural.

GORGAS: Ah yes, if you knew all, Socrates, — how it comprises in itself practically all powers at once! And I will tell you a striking proof of this: many and many a time have I gone with my brother or other doctors to visit one of their patients, and found him unwilling either to take medicine or submit to the surgeon's knife or cautery; and when the doctor failed to persuade him I succeeded, by no other art than that of rhetoric. And I further declare that, if a rhetorician and a doctor were to enter any city you please, and there had to contend in speech before the Assembly or some other meeting as to which of the two should be appointed physician, you would find the physician was nowhere, while the master of speech would be appointed if he wished. And if he had to contend with a member of any other profession whatsoever, the rhetorician would persuade the meeting to appoint him

before anyone else in the place: for there is no subject on which the rhetorician could not speak more persuasively than a member of any other profession whatsoever, before a multitude. So great, so strange, is the power of this art. At the same time, Socrates, our use of rhetoric should be like our use of any other sort of exercise. For other exercises are not to be used against all and sundry, just because one has learned boxing or wrestling or fighting in armor so well as to vanquish friend and foe alike: this gives one no right to strike one's friends, or stab them to death. Nor, in all conscience, if a man took lessons at a wrestling-school, and having got himself into good condition and learned boxing he proceeded to strike his father and mother, or some other of his relations or friends, should that be a reason for hating athletic trainers and teachers of fighting in armor, and expelling them from our cities. For they imparted their skill with a view to its rightful use against enemies and wrongdoers, in self-defense, not provocation; whereas the others have perverted their strength and art to an improper use. So it is not the teachers who are wicked, nor is the art either guilty or wicked on this account, but rather, to my thinking, those who do not use it properly. Now the same argument applies also to rhetoric: for the orator is able, indeed, to speak against every one and on every question in such a way as to win over the votes of the multitude, practically in any matter he may choose to take up: but he is no whit the more entitled to deprive the doctors of their credit, just because he could do so, or other professionals of theirs; he must use his rhetoric fairly, as in the case of athletic exercise. And, in my opinion, if a man becomes a rhetorician and then uses this power and this art unfairly, we ought not to hate his teacher and cast him out of our cities. For he imparted that skill to be used in all fairness, while this man puts it to an opposite use. Thus it is the man who does not use it aright who deserves to be hated and expelled and put to death, and not his teacher.

SOCRATES: I expect, Gorgias, that you as well as I have had no small practice in arguments, and have observed the following fact about them, that it is not easy for people to define to each other the matters which they take in hand to discuss,

⁴Built about 440 B.C. between the two walls built in 456 B.C., one connecting the Piraeus, and the other Phalerum, with Athens. The "middle wall" ran parallel to the former, and secured from hostile attack a narrow strip of land between Athens and the Piraeus. Socrates was born in 469 B.C. [Tr.]

and to make such exchange of instruction as will fairly bring their debate to an end: no, if they find that some point is in dispute between them, and one of them says that the other is speaking incorrectly or obscurely, they are annoyed and think the remark comes from jealousy of themselves, and in a spirit of contention rather than of inquiry into the matter proposed for discussion. In some cases, indeed, they end by making a most disgraceful scene, with such abusive expressions on each side that the rest of the company are vexed on their own account that they allowed themselves to listen to such fellows. Well, what is my reason for saying this? It is because your present remarks do not seem to me quite in keeping or accord with what you said at first about rhetoric. Now I am afraid to refute you, lest you imagine I am contentiously neglecting the point and its elucidation, and merely attacking you. I therefore, if you are a person of the same sort as myself, should be glad to continue questioning you: if not, I can let it drop. Of what sort am I? One of those who would be glad to be refuted if I say anything untrue, and glad to refute anyone else who might speak untruly; but just as glad, mind you, to be refuted as to refute, since I regard the former as the greater benefit, in proportion as it is a greater benefit for oneself to be delivered from the greatest evil than to deliver some one else. For I consider that a man cannot suffer any evil so great as a false opinion on the subjects of our actual argument. Now if you say that you too are of that sort, let us go on with the conversation; but if you think we had better drop it, let us have done with it at once and make an end of the discussion.

GORGIAS: Nay, I too, Socrates, claim to be of the sort you indicate; though perhaps we should have taken thought also for the wishes of our company. For, let me tell you, some time before you and your friend arrived, I gave the company a performance of some length; and if we now have this conversation I expect we shall seriously protract our sitting. We ought, therefore, to consider their wishes as well, in case we are detaining any of them who may want to do something else.

CHAEREPHON: You hear for yourselves, Gorgias and Socrates, the applause by which these gentlemen show their desire to hear anything you may say; for my own part, however, Heaven for-

bid that I should ever be so busy as to give up a discussion so interesting and so conducted, because I found it more important to attend to something else.

CALLICLES: Yes, by all that's holy, Chaerephon; and let me say, moreover, for myself that among the many discussions which I have attended in my time I doubt if there was one that gave me such delight as this present one. So, for my part, I shall count it a favor even if you choose to continue it all day long.

SOCRATES: Why, Callicles, I assure you there is no hindrance on my side, if Gorgias is willing.

GORGIAS: After that, Socrates, it would be shameful indeed if I were unwilling, when it was I who challenged everybody to ask what questions they pleased. But if our friends here are so minded, go on with the conversation and ask me anything you like.

SOCRATES: Hark you then, Gorgias, to what surprises me in your statements: to be sure, you may possibly be right, and I may take your meaning wrongly. You say you are able to make a rhetorician of any man who chooses to learn from you?

GORGIAS: Yes.

SOCRATES: Now, do you mean, to make him carry conviction to the crowd on all subjects, not by teaching them, but by persuading?

GORGIAS: Certainly I do.

SOCRATES: You were saying just now, you know, that even in the matter of health the orator will be more convincing than the doctor.

GORGIAS: Yes, indeed, I was—meaning, to the crowd.

SOCRATES: And “to the crowd” means “to the ignorant”? For surely, to those who know, he will not be more convincing than the doctor.

GORGIAS: You are right.

SOCRATES: And if he is to be more convincing than the doctor, he thus becomes more convincing than he who knows?

GORGIAS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: Though not himself a doctor, you agree?

GORGIAS: Yes.

SOCRATES: But he who is not a doctor is surely without knowledge of that whereof the doctor has knowledge.

GORGIAS: Clearly.

SOCRATES: So he who does not know will be more convincing to those who do not know than he who knows, supposing the orator to be more convincing than the doctor. Is that, or something else, the consequence?

GORGIAS: In this case it does follow.

SOCRATES: Then the case is the same in all the other arts for the orator and his rhetoric: there is no need to know the truth of the actual matters, but one merely needs to have discovered some device of persuasion which will make one appear to those who do not know to know better than those who know.

GORGIAS: Well, and is it not a great convenience, Socrates, to make oneself a match for the professionals by learning just this single art and omitting all the others?

SOCRATES: Whether the orator is or is not a match for the rest of them by reason of that skill, is a question we shall look into presently, if our argument so requires: for the moment let us consider first whether the rhetorician is in the same relation to what is just and unjust, base and noble, good and bad, as to what is healthful, and to the various objects of all the other arts; he does not know what is really good or bad, noble or base, just or unjust, but he has devised a persuasion to deal with these matters so as to appear to those who, like himself, do not know to know better than he who knows. Or is it necessary to know, and must anyone who intends to learn rhetoric have a previous knowledge of these things when he comes to you? Or if not, are you, as the teacher of rhetoric, to teach the person who comes to you nothing about them—for it is not your business—but only to make him appear in the eyes of the multitude to know things of this sort when he does not know, and to appear to be good when he is not? Or will you be utterly unable to teach him rhetoric unless he previously knows the truth about these matters? Or what is the real state of the case, Gorgias? For Heaven's sake, as you proposed just now, draw aside the veil and tell us what really is the function of rhetoric.

GORGIAS: Why, I suppose, Socrates, if he happens not to know these things he will learn them too from me.

SOCRATES: Stop there: I am glad of that statement. If you make a man a rhetorician he must needs know what is just and unjust either previously or by learning afterwards from you.

GORGIAS: Quite so.

SOCRATES: Well now, a man who has learned building is a builder, is he not?

GORGIAS: Yes.

SOCRATES: And he who has learned music, a musician?

GORGIAS: Yes.

SOCRATES: Then he who has learned medicine is a medical man, and so on with the rest on the same principle; anyone who has learned a certain art has the qualification acquired by his particular knowledge?

GORGIAS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: And so, on this principle, he who has learned what is just is just?

GORGIAS: Absolutely, I presume.

SOCRATES: And the just man, I suppose, does what is just.

GORGIAS: Yes.

SOCRATES: Now the just man must *wish* to do what is just?

GORGIAS: Apparently.

SOCRATES: Hence the just man will never wish to act unjustly?

GORGIAS: That must needs be so.

SOCRATES: But it follows from our statements⁵ that the rhetorician must be just.

GORGIAS: Yes.

SOCRATES: Hence the rhetorician will never wish to do wrong.

GORGIAS: Apparently not.

SOCRATES: Then do you remember saying a little while ago that we ought not to complain against the trainers or expel them from our cities, if a boxer makes not merely use, but an unfair use, of his boxing? So in just the same way, if an orator uses his rhetoric unfairly, we should not complain against his teacher or banish him from our city, but the man who does the wrong and misuses his rhetoric. Was that said or not?

GORGIAS: It was.

SOCRATES: But now we find that this very per-

⁵I.e., that he must know what is just, and that he who knows this must be just. [Tr.]

son, the rhetorician, could never be guilty of wrongdoing, do we not?

GORGIAS: We do.

SOCRATES: And in our first statements, Gorgias, we said that rhetoric dealt with speech, not on even and odd, but on the just and unjust, did we not?

GORGIAS: Yes.

SOCRATES: Well then, I supposed at the time when you were saying this that rhetoric could never be an unjust thing, since the speeches it made were always about justice; but when a little later you told us that the orator might make even an unjust use of his rhetoric, that indeed surprised me, and thinking the two statements were not in accord I made those proposals,—that if, like myself, you counted it a gain to be refuted, it was worth while to have the discussion, but if not, we had better have done with it. And now that we have come to examine the matter, you see for yourself that we agree once more that it is impossible for the rhetorician to use his rhetoric unjustly or consent to do wrong. Now, to distinguish properly which way the truth of the matter lies will require, by the Dog,⁶ Gorgias, no short sitting.

POLUS: How is this, Socrates? Is that really your opinion of rhetoric, as you now express it? Or, think you, because Gorgias was ashamed not to admit your point that the rhetorician knows what is just and noble and good, and will himself teach these to anyone who comes to him without knowing them; and then from this admission I daresay there followed some inconsistency in the statements made—the result that you are so fond of—when it was yourself who led him into that set of questions!⁷ For who do you think will deny that he has a knowledge of what is just and can also teach it to others? I call it very bad taste to lead the discussion in such a direction.

SOCRATES: Ah, sweet Polus, of course it is for

⁶This favorite oath of Socrates was derived from Egypt, where the god Anubis was represented with a dog's head; cf. 482 B. [Tr.]

⁷The defective construction of this sentence is probably intended to mark the agitated manner of Polus in making his protest. [Tr.] The name "Polus" means young colt, and Polus's entry into the discussion here suggests in its style the awkward, impulsive gait of a colt. [Ed.]

this very purpose we possess ourselves of companions and sons, that when the advance of years begins to make us stumble, you younger ones may be at hand to set our lives upright again in words as well as deeds. So now if Gorgias and I are stumbling in our words, you are to stand by and set us up again—it is only your duty; and for my part I am willing to revoke at your pleasure anything that you think has been wrongly admitted, if you will kindly observe one condition.

POLUS: What do you mean by that?

SOCRATES: That you keep a check on that lengthy way of speaking, Polus, which you tried to employ at first.

POLUS: Why, shall I not be at liberty to say as much as I like?

SOCRATES: It would indeed be a hard fate for you, my excellent friend, if having come to Athens, where there is more freedom of speech than anywhere in Greece, you should be the one person there who could not enjoy it. But as a setoff to that, I ask you if it would not be just as hard on me, while you spoke at length and refused to answer my questions, not to be free to go away and avoid listening to you. No, if you have any concern for the argument that we have carried on, and care to set it on its feet again, revoke whatever you please, as I suggested just now; take your turn in questioning and being questioned, like me and Gorgias; and thus either refute or be refuted. For you claim, I understand, that you yourself know all that Gorgias knows, do you not?

POLUS: I do.

SOCRATES: Then are you with him also in bidding us ask at each point any questions we like of you, as one who knows how to answer?

POLUS: Certainly I am.

SOCRATES: So now, take whichever course you like: either put questions, or answer them.

POLUS: Well, I will do as you say. So answer me this, Socrates: since you think that Gorgias is at a loss about rhetoric, what is your own account of it?

SOCRATES: Are you asking what art I call it?

POLUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: None at all, I consider, Polus, if you would have the honest truth.

POLUS: But what do you consider rhetoric to be?

SOCRATES: A thing which you say—in the treatise which I read of late —“made art.”

POLUS: What thing do you mean?

SOCRATES: I mean a certain habitude.

POLUS: Then do you take rhetoric to be a habitude?

SOCRATES: I do, if you have no other suggestion.

POLUS: Habitude of what?

SOCRATES: Of producing a kind of gratification and pleasure.

POLUS: Then you take rhetoric to be something fine—an ability to gratify people?

SOCRATES: How now, Polus? Have you as yet heard me tell you what I say it is, that you ask what should follow that—whether I do not take it to be fine?

POLUS: Why, did I not hear you call it a certain habitude?

SOCRATES: Then please—since you value “gratification”—be so good as gratify me in a small matter.

POLUS: I will.

SOCRATES: Ask me now what art I take cookery to be.

POLUS: Then I ask you, what art is cookery?

SOCRATES: None at all, Polus.

POLUS: Well, what is it? Tell me.

SOCRATES: Then I reply, a certain habitude.

POLUS: Of what? Tell me.

SOCRATES: Then I reply, of production of gratification and pleasure, Polus.

POLUS: So cookery and rhetoric are the same thing?

SOCRATES: Not at all, only parts of the same practice.

POLUS: What practice do you mean?

SOCRATES: I fear it may be too rude to tell the truth; for I shrink from saying it on Gorgias’ account, lest he suppose I am making satirical fun of his own profession. Yet indeed I do not know whether this is the rhetoric which Gorgias practices, for from our argument just now we got no very clear view as to how he conceives it; but what I call rhetoric is a part of a certain business which has nothing fine about it.

GORGIAS: What is that, Socrates? Tell us, without scruple on my account.

SOCRATES: It seems to me then, Gorgias, to be

a pursuit that is not a matter of art, but showing a shrewd, gallant spirit which has a natural bent for clever dealing with mankind, and I sum up its substance in the name *flattery*. This practice, as I view it, has many branches, and one of them is cookery; which appears indeed to be an art but, by my account of it, is not an art but habitude or knack. I call rhetoric another branch of it, as also personal adornment and sophistry—four branches of it for four kinds of affairs. So if Polus would inquire, let him inquire: he has not yet been informed to what sort of branch of flattery I assign rhetoric; but without noticing that I have not yet answered that, he proceeds to ask whether I do not consider it a fine thing. But I am not going to reply to the question whether I consider rhetoric a fine or a base thing, until I have first answered what it is; for it would not be fair, Polus: but if you want the information, ask me what sort of branch of flattery I assert rhetoric to be.

POLUS: I ask you then; so answer, what sort of branch it is.

SOCRATES: Now, will you understand when I answer? Rhetoric, by my account, is a semblance⁸ of a branch of politics.

POLUS: Well then, do you call it a fine or a base thing?

SOCRATES: A base one. I call it—for all that is bad I call base—since I am to answer you as though you had already understood my meaning.

GORGIAS: Nor do I myself, upon my word, Socrates, grasp your meaning either.

SOCRATES: And no wonder, Gorgias, for as yet my statement is not at all clear; but Polus⁹ here is so young and fresh!

GORGIAS: Ah, do not mind him; but tell me what you mean by rhetoric being a semblance of a branch of politics.

SOCRATES: Well, I will try to express what rhetoric appears to me to be: if it is not in fact what I say, Polus here will refute me. There are things, I suppose, that you call body and soul?

GORGIAS: Of course.

SOCRATES: And each of these again you believe to have a good condition?

⁸I.e., an unreal image or counterfeit: Quintilian (ii. 15.25) renders *simulacrum*. [Tr.]

⁹Socrates alludes to the meaning of πῶλος (a colt). [Tr.]

GORGIAS: I do.

SOCRATES: And again, a good condition that may seem so, but is not? As an example, let me give the following: many people seem to be in good bodily condition when it would not be easy for anyone but a doctor, or one of the athletic trainers, to perceive that they are not so.

GORGIAS: You are right.

SOCRATES: Something of this sort I say there is in body and in soul, which makes the body or the soul seem to be in good condition, though it is none the more so in fact.

GORGIAS: Quite so.

SOCRATES: Now let me see if I can explain my meaning to you more clearly. There are two different affairs to which I assign two different arts: the one, which has to do with the soul, I call politics; the other, which concerns the body, though I cannot give you a single name for it offhand, is all one business, the tendance of the body, which I can designate in two branches as gymnastic and medicine. Under politics I set legislation in the place of gymnastic, and justice to match medicine. In each of these pairs, of course—medicine and gymnastic, justice and legislation—there is some intercommunication, as both deal with the same thing; at the same time they have certain differences. Now these four, which always bestow their care for the best advantage respectively of the body and the soul, are noticed by the art of flattery which, I do not say with knowledge, but by speculation, divides herself into four parts, and then, insinuating herself into each of those branches, pretends to be that into which she has crept, and cares nothing for what is the best, but dangles what is most pleasant for the moment as a bait for folly, and deceives it into thinking that she is of the highest value. Thus cookery assumes the form of medicine, and pretends to know what foods are best for the body; so that if a cook and a doctor had to contend before boys, or before men as foolish as boys, as to which of the two, the doctor or the cook, understands the question of sound and noxious foods, the doctor would starve to death. Flattery, however, is what I call it, and I say that this sort of thing is a disgrace, Polus—for here I address you—because it aims at the pleasant and ignores the best; and I say it is not an art, but a habitude, since it has no

account to give of the real nature of the things it applies, and so cannot tell the cause of any of them. I refuse to give the name of art to anything that is irrational: if you dispute my views, I am ready to give my reasons. However, as I put it, cookery is flattery disguised as medicine; and in just the same manner self-adornment personates gymnastic: with its rascally, deceitful, ignoble, and illiberal nature it deceives men by forms and colors, polish and dress, so as to make them, in the effort of assuming an extraneous beauty, neglect the native sort that comes through gymnastic. Well, to avoid prolixity, I am willing to put it to you like a geometer¹⁰—for by this time I expect you can follow me: as self-adornment is to gymnastic, so is sophistry to legislation; and as cookery is to medicine, so is rhetoric to justice.¹¹ But although, as I say, there is this natural distinction between them,¹² they are so nearly related that sophists and orators are jumbled up as having the same field and dealing with the same subjects, and neither can they tell what to make of each other, nor the world at large what to make of them. For indeed, if the soul were not in command of the body, but the latter had charge of itself, and so cookery and medicine were not surveyed and distinguished by the soul, but the body itself were the judge, forming its own estimate of them by the gratifications they gave it, we should have a fine instance of what Anaxagoras described, my dear Polus—for you are versed in these matters: everything would be jumbled together, without distinction as between medicinal and healthful and tasty concoctions. Well now, you have heard what I state rhetoric to be—the counterpart of cookery in the soul, acting here as that does on the body. It may, indeed, be absurd of me, when I do not allow you to make long speeches, to have extended mine to so considerable a length. However, I can fairly claim indulgence: for when I spoke briefly you did not understand me; you were unable to make any use of the answer I gave you, but required a full exposition. Now if I on my part cannot tell what use

¹⁰I.e., in the concise mathematical manner, such as that which later appeared in the writings of Euclid. [Tr.]

¹¹Administrative justice is here specially meant. [Tr.]

¹²I.e., sophistry and rhetoric. [Tr.]

to make of any answers you may give me, you shall extend your speech also; but if I can make some use of them, allow me to do it; that will only be fair. And now, if you can make any use of this answer of mine, do so.

POLUS: Then what is it you say? Do you take rhetoric to be flattery?

SOCRATES: Well, I said rather a branch of flattery. Why, at your age, Polus, have you no memory? What will you do later on?

POLUS: Then do you think that good orators are considered to be flatterers in their cities, and so worthless?

SOCRATES: Is that a question you are asking, or are you beginning a speech?

POLUS: I am asking a question.

SOCRATES: To my mind, they are not considered at all.

POLUS: How not considered? Have they not the chief power in their cities?

SOCRATES: No, if you mean power in the sense of something good for him who has it.

POLUS: Why, of course I mean that.

SOCRATES: Then, to my thinking, the orators have the smallest power of all who are in their city.

POLUS: What? Are they not like the despots, in putting to death anyone they please, and depriving anyone of his property and expelling him from their cities as they may think fit?

SOCRATES: By the Dog, I fear I am still in two minds, Polus, at everything you say, as to whether this is a statement on your own part, and a declaration of your own opinion, or a question you are putting to me.

POLUS: Why, I am asking you.

SOCRATES: Very well, my friend: then are you asking me two things at once?

POLUS: How two?

SOCRATES: Were you not this moment saying something like this: Is it not the case that the orators put to death anyone they wish, like the despots, and deprive people of property and expel them from their cities as they may think fit?

POLUS: I was.

SOCRATES: Then I tell you that there are two questions here, and I will give you answers to them both. For I say, Polus, that the orators and the despots alike have the least power in their cities, as I stated just now; since they do nothing

that they wish to do, practically speaking, though they do whatever they think to be best.

POLUS: Well, and is not that a great power to have?

SOCRATES: No, judging at least by what Polus says.

POLUS: I say no! Pardon me, I say yes.

SOCRATES: No, by the——, you do not; for you said that great power is a good to him who has it.

POLUS: Yes, and I maintain it.

SOCRATES: Then do you regard it as a good, when a man does what he thinks to be best, without having intelligence? Is that what you call having a great power?

POLUS: No, I do not.

SOCRATES: Then will you prove that the orators have intelligence, and that rhetoric is an art, not a flattery, and so refute me? Else, if you are going to leave me unrefuted, the orators who do what they think fit in their cities, and the despots, will find they have got no good in doing that, if indeed power is, as you say, a good, but doing what one thinks fit without intelligence is—as you yourself admit, do you not?—an evil.

POLUS: Yes, I do.

SOCRATES: How then can the orators or the despots have great power in their cities, unless Socrates is refuted by Polus, and admits that they do what they wish?

POLUS: Hark at the man——!

SOCRATES: I deny that they do what they wish: there, refute me.

POLUS: Did you not admit just now that they do what they think best?

SOCRATES: Yes, and I admit it now.

POLUS: Then do they not do what they wish?

SOCRATES: I say no.

POLUS: When they do what they think fit?

SOCRATES: Yes.

POLUS: What shocking, nay, monstrous answers, Socrates!

SOCRATES: Spare your invective, peerless Polus—if I may address you in your own style:¹³

¹³The assonance in ὦ λῆστε Πῶλε is a mocking allusion to the nicely balanced clauses and jingling phrases which Polus imitated from his master Gorgias. Something of this style appears in Polus's speech above, 448 c. [Tr.]

but if you have a question to ask me, expose my error; otherwise, make answer yourself.

POLUS: Well, I am ready to answer, in order that I may know what you mean.

SOCRATES: Then is it your view that people wish merely that which they do each time, or that which is the object of their doing what they do? For instance, do those who take medicine by doctor's orders wish, in your opinion, merely what they do—to take the medicine and suffer the pain of it—or rather to be healthy, which is the object of their taking it?

POLUS: To be healthy, without a doubt.

SOCRATES: And so with seafarers and such as pursue profit generally in trade; what they wish is not what they are doing at each moment—for who wishes to go on a voyage, and incur all its danger and trouble? It is rather, I conceive, the object of their voyage—to get wealth; since it is for wealth that they go on it.

POLUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: And is it not just the same in every case? If a man does something for an object, he does not wish the thing that he does, but the thing for which he does it.

POLUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: Now is there any existent thing that is not either good or bad or between these—neither good nor bad?

POLUS: Most assuredly nothing, Socrates.

SOCRATES: Well, do you call wisdom and health and wealth and everything else of that kind good, and their opposites bad?

POLUS: I do.

SOCRATES: And by things neither good nor bad do you mean such things as sometimes partake of the good, sometimes of the bad, and sometimes of neither—for example, sitting, walking, running, and sailing, or again, stones and sticks and anything else of that sort? These are what you mean, are they not? Or are there other things that you describe as neither good nor bad?

POLUS: No, these are what I mean.

SOCRATES: Then do people do these intermediate things, when they do them, for the sake of the good things, or the good things for the intermediate?

POLUS: The intermediate, I presume, for the good.

SOCRATES: Thus it is in pursuit of the good that we walk, when we walk, conceiving it to be better; or on the contrary, stand, when we stand, for the sake of the same thing, the good: is it not so?

POLUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: And so we put a man to death, if we do put him to death, or expel him or deprive him of his property, because we think it better for us to do this than not?

POLUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: So it is for the sake of the good that the doers of all these things do them?

POLUS: I agree.

SOCRATES: And we have admitted that when we do things for an object, we do not wish those things, but the object for which we do them?

POLUS: Quite so.

SOCRATES: Then we do not wish to slaughter people or expel them from our cities or deprive them of their property as an act in itself, but if these things are beneficial we wish to do them, while if they are harmful, we do not wish them. For we wish what is good, as you say; but what is neither good nor bad we do not wish, nor what is bad either, do we? Is what I say true in your opinion, Polus, or not? Why do you not answer?

POLUS: It is true.

SOCRATES: Then, as we agree on this, if a man puts anyone to death or expels him from a city or deprives him of his property, whether he does it as a despot or an orator, because he thinks it better for himself though it is really worse, that man, I take it, does what he thinks fit, does he not?

POLUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: Now is it also what he wishes, supposing it to be really bad? Why do you not answer?

POLUS: No, I do not think he does what he wishes.

SOCRATES: Can such a man then be said to have great power in that city, if to have great power is something good, according to your admission?

POLUS: He cannot.

SOCRATES: Then I spoke the truth when I said that it is possible for a man to do what he thinks fit in a city and yet not to have great power nor to do what he wishes.

POLUS: As if you, Socrates, would not accept the liberty of doing what you think fit in your city rather than not, and would not envy a man whom you observed to have put some one to death as he thought fit, or deprived him of his property or sent him to prison!

SOCRATES: Justly, do you mean, or unjustly?

POLUS: Whichever way he does it, is it not enviable in either case?

SOCRATES: Hush, Polus!

POLUS: Why?

SOCRATES: Because we ought not to envy either the unenviable or the wretched, but pity them.

POLUS: What! Is that the state in which you consider those people, of whom I speak, to be?

SOCRATES: Yes, for so I must.

POLUS: Then do you consider that a man who puts another to death as he thinks fit, and justly puts him to death, is wretched and pitiable?

SOCRATES: Not I; but not enviable either.

POLUS: Did you not say just now that he was wretched?

SOCRATES: Only he who unjustly put some one to death, my friend, and I called him pitiable as well: if he acted justly, then he is unenviable.

POLUS: I suppose, at any rate, the man who is put to death unjustly is both pitiable and wretched.

SOCRATES: Less so than he who puts him to death, Polus, and less so than he who is put to death justly.

POLUS: In what way can that be, Socrates?

SOCRATES: In this, that to do wrong is the greatest of evils.

POLUS: What, is this the greatest? Is not to suffer wrong a greater?

SOCRATES: By no means.

POLUS: Then would you wish rather to suffer wrong than to do it?

SOCRATES: I should wish neither, for my own part; but if it were necessary either to do wrong or to suffer it, I should choose to suffer rather than do it.

POLUS: Then you would not accept a despot's power?

SOCRATES: No, if you mean by a despot's power the same as I do.

POLUS: Why, what I mean is, as I did just now,

the liberty of doing anything one thinks fit in one's city—putting people to death and expelling them and doing everything at one's own discretion.

SOCRATES: My gifted friend, let me speak, and you shall take me to task in your turn. Suppose that in a crowded market I should hide a dagger under my arm and then say to you: "Polus, I have just acquired, by a wonderful chance, the power of a despot; for if I should think fit that one of those people whom you see there should die this very instant, a dead man he will be, just as I think fit; or if I think fit that one of them shall have his head broken, broken it will be immediately; or to have his cloak torn in pieces, torn it will be: so great is my power in this city." Then suppose that on your disbelieving this I showed you my dagger; I expect when you saw it you would say: "Socrates, at this rate every one would have great power, for any house you thought fit might be set ablaze on these methods, and the Athenian arsenals also, and the men-of-war and all the rest of the shipping, both public and private." But surely this is not what it is to have great power—merely doing what one thinks fit. Or do you think it is?

POLUS: Oh no, not in that way.

SOCRATES: Then can you tell me why you disapprove of this kind of power?

POLUS: I can.

SOCRATES: Why, then? Tell me.

POLUS: Because it is inevitable that he who acts thus will be punished.

SOCRATES: And is it not a bad thing to be punished?

POLUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: So, my remarkable friend, you have come round again to the view that if doing what one thinks fit is attended by advantage in doing it, this is not merely a good thing but at the same time, it seems, the possession of great power; otherwise it is a bad thing and means little power. And let us consider another point besides; do we not admit that sometimes it is better to do those things that we were mentioning just now—to put people to death and banish them and deprive them of property—while sometimes it is not?

POLUS: To be sure.

SOCRATES: Then here is a point, it seems, that is admitted both on your side and on mine.

POLUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: Then when do you say it is better to do these things? Tell me where you draw the line.

POLUS: Nay, I would rather that you, Socrates, answered that.

SOCRATES: Well then I say, Polus, if you prefer to hear it from me, that it is better when these things are done justly, and worse when unjustly.

POLUS: So hard to refute you, Socrates! Nay, a mere child could do it, could he not, and prove your words are untrue?

SOCRATES: Then I shall be most grateful to the child, and equally to you, if you refute me and rid me of foolery. Come, do not grow weary in well-doing toward your friend, but refute me.

POLUS: Well, to be sure, Socrates, there is no need to refute you with ancient instances; for those happenings of but a day or two ago are enough to refute you, and prove that many a wrongdoer is happy.

SOCRATES: What sort of thing do you mean?

POLUS: I suppose you see that Archelaus, son of Perdiccas, is ruler of Macedonia?¹⁴

SOCRATES: Well, if I do not, at any rate I hear it.

POLUS: Do you consider him happy or wretched?

SOCRATES: I do not know, Polus; I have never met the man.

POLUS: What? Could you find out by meeting him, and cannot otherwise tell, straight off, that he is happy?

SOCRATES: No, indeed, upon my word.

POLUS: Then doubtless you will say, Socrates, that you do not know that even the Great King is happy.

SOCRATES: Yes, and I shall be speaking the truth; for I do not know how he stands in point of education and justice.

POLUS: Why, does happiness entirely consist in that?

SOCRATES: Yes, by my account, Polus; for a good and honorable man or woman, I say, is happy, and an unjust and wicked one is wretched.

POLUS: Then this Archelaus, on your statement, is wretched?

SOCRATES: Yes, my friend, supposing he is unjust.

POLUS: Well, but how can he be other than unjust? He had no claim to the throne which he now occupies, being the son of a woman who was a slave of Perdiccas' brother Alcetas, and in mere justice he was Alcetas' slave; and if he wished to do what is just, he would be serving Alcetas and would be happy, by your account; but, as it is, he has become a prodigy of wretchedness, since he has done the most enormous wrong. First of all he invited this very master and uncle of his to his court, as if he were going to restore to him the kingdom of which Perdiccas had deprived him; and after entertaining him and his son Alexander—his own cousin, about the same age as himself—and making them drunk, he packed them into a carriage, drove them away by night, and murdered and made away with them both. And after all these iniquities he failed to observe that he had become a most wretched person, and had no repentance, but a while later he refused to make himself happy by bringing up, as he was justly bound, his brother, the legitimate son of Perdiccas, a boy about seven years old who had a just title to the throne, and restoring the kingdom to him; but he cast him into a well and drowned him, and then told his mother Cleopatra that he had fallen in and lost his life while chasing a goose. So now, you see, as the greatest wrongdoer in Macedonia, he is the most wretched of all the Macedonians, not the happiest; and I dare say some Athenians could be found who would join you in preferring to change places with any other Macedonian of them all, rather than with Archelaus!

SOCRATES: At the beginning of our discussion, Polus, I complimented you on having had, as I consider, a good training in rhetoric, while you seem to have neglected disputation; and now, accordingly, this is the argument, is it, with which any child could refute me? By this statement, you think, I now stand refuted at your hands, when I assert that the wrongdoer is not happy? How so,

¹⁴Archelaus usurped the throne of Macedonia in 413 B.C., and ruled till his death in 399 B.C. Euripides, Agathon, and other distinguished Athenians were guests at his court; Socrates was also invited, but declined to visit him (Aristot. *Rhet.* ii. 23. 8), and this is probably the point of Socrates' next remark. [Tr.]

my good friend? Why, I tell you I do not admit a single point in what you say.

POLUS: No, because you do not want to; for you really agree with my statement.

SOCRATES: My gifted friend, that is because you attempt to refute me in rhetorical fashion, as they understand refuting in the law courts. For there, one party is supposed to refute the other when they bring forward a number of reputable witnesses to any statements they may make, whilst their opponent produces only one, or none. But this sort of refutation is quite worthless for getting at the truth; since occasionally a man may actually be crushed by the number and reputation of the false witnesses brought against him. And so now you will find almost everybody, Athenians and foreigners, in agreement with you on the points you state, if you like to bring forward witnesses against the truth of what I say: if you like, there is Nicias, son of Niceratus, with his brothers, whose tripods are standing in a row in the Dionysium;¹⁵ or else Aristocrates, son of Scellias, whose goodly offering again is well known at Delphi; or if you choose, there is the whole house of Pericles or any other family you may like to select in this place. But I, alone here before you, do not admit it, for you fail to convince me: you only attempt, by producing a number of false witnesses against me, to oust me from my reality, the truth. But if on my part I fail to produce yourself as my one witness to confirm what I say, I consider I have achieved nothing of any account toward the matter of our discussion, whatever it may be; nor have you either, I conceive, unless I act alone as your one witness, and you have nothing to do with all these others. Well now, this is one mode of refutation, as you and many other people understand it; but there is also another which I on my side understand. Let us therefore compare them with each other and consider if there is a difference between them. For indeed the points which we have at issue are by no means of slight importance: rather, one might say,

¹⁵These tripods were prizes won by dramatic performances supported as a public service by Nicias and his brothers, and they were placed in the precincts of the temple of Dionysus. The persons here mentioned are selected as instances of public men who won high reputation in their time through the pursuit of material wealth and influence. [Tr.]

they are matters on which it is most honorable to have knowledge, and most disgraceful to lack it; for in sum they involve our knowing or not knowing who is happy and who is not. To start at once with the point we are now debating, you consider it possible for a man to be happy while doing wrong, and as a wrongdoer, since you regard Archelaus as a wrongdoer, and yet happy. We are to conclude, are we not, that this is your opinion?

POLUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: And I say it is impossible. There we have one point at issue. Very good; but then, will a man be happy in wrongdoing if he comes in for requital and punishment?

POLUS: Not at all, since in that case he would be most wretched.

SOCRATES: But if the wrongdoer escapes requital, by your account he will be happy?

POLUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: Whereas in my opinion, Polus, the wrongdoer or the unjust is wretched anyhow; more wretched, however, if he does not pay the penalty and gets no punishment for his wrongdoing, but less wretched if he pays the penalty and meets with requital from gods and men.

POLUS: What a strange doctrine, Socrates, you are trying to maintain!

SOCRATES: Yes, and I will endeavor to make you too, my friend, maintain it with me: for I count you as a friend. Well now, these are the points on which we differ; just examine them yourself. I think I told you at an earlier stage that wrongdoing was worse than being wronged.

POLUS: Certainly you did.

SOCRATES: And you thought that being wronged was worse.

POLUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: And I said that wrongdoers were wretched, and I was refuted by you.

POLUS: Upon my word, yes.

SOCRATES: At least to your thinking, Polus.

POLUS: Yes, and true thinking too.

SOCRATES: Perhaps. But you said, on the other hand, that wrongdoers are happy, if they pay no penalty.

POLUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: Whereas I say they are most wretched, and those who pay the penalty, less so. Do you wish to refute that as well?

POLUS: Why, that is still harder to refute, Socrates, than the other!

SOCRATES: Not merely so, Polus, but impossible; for the truth is never refuted.

POLUS: How do you mean? If a man be caught criminally plotting to make himself a despot, and he be straightway put on the rack and castrated and have his eyes burned out, and after suffering himself, and seeing inflicted on his wife and children, a number of grievous torments of every kind, he be finally crucified or burned in a coat of pitch, will he be happier than if he escape and make himself despot, and pass his life as the ruler in his city, doing whatever he likes, and envied and congratulated by the citizens and the foreigners besides? Impossible, do you tell me, to refute that?

SOCRATES: You are trying to make my flesh creep this time, my spirited Polus, instead of refuting me; a moment ago you were for calling witnesses. However, please refresh my memory a little: "criminally plotting to make himself a despot," you said?

POLUS: I did.

SOCRATES: Then neither of them will ever be happier than the other—neither he who has unjustly compassed the despotic power, nor he who pays the penalty; for of two wretched persons neither can be *happier*; but still more wretched is he who goes scot-free and establishes himself as despot. What is that I see, Polus? You are laughing? Here we have yet another form of refutation—when a statement is made, to laugh it down, instead of disproving it!

POLUS: Do you not think yourself utterly refuted, Socrates, when you make such statements as nobody in the world would assent to? You have only to ask anyone of the company here.

SOCRATES: Polus, I am not one of your statesmen: indeed, last year, when I was elected a member of the Council, and, as my tribe held the Presidency, I had to put a question to the vote, I got laughed at for not understanding the procedure.¹⁶ So do not call upon me again to take the votes of the company now; but if, as I said this moment,

¹⁶Socrates refers humorously to his noble act in refusing to put to the vote an illegal proposal against the generals who fought at Arginusae, 406 B.C. By saying "last year" he fixes the supposed date of this conversation at 405 B.C. [Tr.]

you have no better disproof than those, hand the work over to me in my turn, and try the sort of refutation that I think the case requires. For I know how to produce one witness in support of my statements, and that is the man himself with whom I find myself arguing; the many I dismiss: there is also one whose vote I know how to take, whilst to the multitude I have not a word to say. See therefore if you will consent to be put to the proof in your turn by answering my questions. For I think, indeed, that you and I and the rest of the world believe that doing wrong is worse than suffering it, and escaping punishment worse than incurring it.

POLUS: And I, that neither I nor anyone else in the world believes it. You, it seems, would choose rather to suffer wrong than to do it.

SOCRATES: Yes, and so would you and everyone else.

POLUS: Far from it; neither I nor you nor anybody else.

SOCRATES: Then will you answer?

POLUS: To be sure I will, for indeed I am eager to know what on earth you will say.

SOCRATES: Well then, so that you may know, tell me, just as though I were asking you all over again, which of the two seems to you, Polus, to be the worse—doing wrong or suffering it?

POLUS: Suffering it, I say.

SOCRATES: Now again, which is fouler—doing wrong or suffering it? Answer.

POLUS: Doing it.

SOCRATES: And also more evil, if fouler.

POLUS: Not at all.

SOCRATES: I see: you hold, apparently, that fair and good are not the same, nor evil and foul.

POLUS: Just so.

SOCRATES: But what of this? All fair things, like bodies and colors and figures and sounds and observances—is it according to no standard that you call these fair in each case? Thus in the first place, when you say that fair bodies are fair, it must be either in view of their use for some particular purpose that each may serve, or in respect of some pleasure arising when, in the act of beholding them, they cause delight to the beholder. Have you any description to give beyond this of bodily beauty?

POLUS: I have not.

SOCRATES: And so with all the rest in the same

way, whether they be figures or colors, is it for some pleasure or benefit or both that you give them the name of “fair”?

POLUS: It is.

SOCRATES: And sounds also, and the effects of music, are not these all in the same case?

POLUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: And further, in all that belongs to laws and observances, surely the “fairness” of them cannot lie beyond those limits of being either beneficial or pleasant or both.

POLUS: I think not.

SOCRATES: And is it not just the same with the “fairness” of studies also?

POLUS: Doubtless; and this time, Socrates, your definition is quite fair, when you define what is fair by pleasure and good.

SOCRATES: And foul by their opposites, pain and evil?

POLUS: That needs must follow.

SOCRATES: Thus when of two fair things one is fairer, the cause is that it surpasses in either one or both of these effects, either in pleasure, or in benefit, or in both.

POLUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: And again, when one of two foul things is fouler, this will be due to an excess either of pain or of evil: must not that be so?

POLUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: Come then, what was it we heard just now about doing and suffering wrong? Were you not saying that suffering wrong is more evil, but doing it fouler?

POLUS: I was.

SOCRATES: Well now, if doing wrong is fouler than suffering it, it is either more painful, and fouler by an excess of pain or evil or both; must not this also be the case?

POLUS: Yes, of course.

SOCRATES: Then let us first consider if doing wrong exceeds suffering it in point of pain—if those who do wrong are more pained than those who suffer it.

POLUS: Not so at all, Socrates.

SOCRATES: Then it does not surpass in pain.

POLUS: No, indeed.

SOCRATES: And so, if not in pain, it can no longer be said to exceed in both.

POLUS: Apparently.

SOCRATES: It remains, then, that it exceeds in the other.

POLUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: In evil.

POLUS: So it seems.

SOCRATES: Then it is by an excess of evil that doing wrong is fouler than suffering it.

POLUS: Yes, obviously.

SOCRATES: Now it is surely admitted by the mass of mankind, as it was too by you in our talk a while ago, that doing wrong is fouler than suffering it.

POLUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: And now it has been found to be more evil.

POLUS: So it seems.

SOCRATES: Then would you rather have the evil and foul when it is more than when it is less? Do not shrink from answering, Polus; you will get no hurt by it: but submit yourself bravely to the argument, as to a doctor, and reply yes or no to my question.

POLUS: Why, I should not so choose, Socrates.

SOCRATES: And would anybody else in the world?

POLUS: I think not, by this argument at least.

SOCRATES: Then I spoke the truth when I said that neither you nor anyone else in the world would choose to do wrong rather than suffer it, since it really is more evil.

POLUS: Apparently.

SOCRATES: So you see, Polus, that when one proof is contrasted with the other they have no resemblance, but whereas you have assent of every one else except myself, I am satisfied with your sole and single assent and evidence, and I take but your vote only and disregard the rest. Now let us leave this matter where it stands, and proceed next to examine the second part on which we found ourselves at issue—whether for a wrongdoer to pay the penalty is the greatest of evils, as you supposed, or to escape it is a greater, as I on my side held. Let us look at it this way: do you call paying the just penalty, and being justly punished, for wrongdoing the same thing?

POLUS: I do.

SOCRATES: And can you maintain that all just things are not fair, in so far as they are just? Consider well before you speak.

POLUS: No, I think they are, Socrates.

SOCRATES: Then take another point: if a man does anything, must there be something which is also acted upon by this doer of the thing?

POLUS: I think so.

SOCRATES: And does it suffer what the doer does, and is the effect such as the agent's action makes it? I mean, for example, when one strikes a blow something must needs be struck?

POLUS: It must.

SOCRATES: And if the striker strikes hard or quick, the thing struck is struck in the same way?

POLUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: Hence the effect in the thing struck is such as the striker makes it?

POLUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: And so again, if one burns, something must be burned?

POLUS: Yes, of course.

SOCRATES: And if one burns severely or sorely, the thing burned is burned according as the burner burns it?

POLUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: And again, if one cuts, the same may be said? For something is cut.

POLUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: And if the cut is large or deep or sore, the cut made in the thing cut is such as the cutter cuts it?

POLUS: Apparently.

SOCRATES: Then putting it all in a word, see if you agree that what I was just saying applies to all cases—that the patient receives an effect of the same kind as the agent's action.

POLUS: I do agree.

SOCRATES: Then this being admitted, is paying the penalty suffering something, or doing it?

POLUS: Suffering it must be, Socrates.

SOCRATES: And at the hands of an agent?

POLUS: Yes, of course; at the hands of the punisher.

SOCRATES: And he who punishes aright punished justly?

POLUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: Doing what is just, or not?

POLUS: What is just.

SOCRATES: And he who pays the penalty by being punished suffers what is just?

POLUS: Apparently.

SOCRATES: And what is just, I think we have agreed, is fair?

POLUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: Then of these two, the one does what is fair and the other, he who is punished, suffers it.

POLUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: And so, if fair, good? For that is either pleasant or beneficial.¹⁷

POLUS: It must be so.

SOCRATES: So he who pays the penalty suffers what is good?

POLUS: It seems so.

SOCRATES: Then he is benefited?

POLUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: Is it the benefit I imagine—that he becomes better in soul if he is justly punished?

POLUS: Quite likely.

SOCRATES: Then is he who pays the penalty relieved from badness of soul?

POLUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: And so relieved from the greatest evil? Look at it this way; in a man's pecuniary resources do you perceive any other badness than poverty?

POLUS: No, only poverty.

SOCRATES: And what in his bodily resources? You would say that badness there is weakness or disease or ugliness or the like?

POLUS: I would.

SOCRATES: And in soul too you believe there is a certain wickedness?

POLUS: Of course.

SOCRATES: And do you not call this injustice, ignorance, cowardice, and so forth?

POLUS: Certainly I do.

SOCRATES: So now in property, body, and soul, these three, you have mentioned three vices—poverty, disease, and injustice?

POLUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: Then which of these vices is the foulest? Is it not injustice—in short, the vice of the soul?

POLUS: Far the foulest.

SOCRATES: And if foulest, then also most evil?

POLUS: How do you mean, Socrates?

SOCRATES: Just this: the foulest is foulest in

¹⁷As was agreed above, 474 D, E. [Tr.]

each case because it produces the greatest pain or harm of both; this follows from our previous admissions.

POLUS: Quite so.

SOCRATES: And foulest of all, we have just agreed, is injustice and, in general, vice of soul?

POLUS: Yes, we have.

SOCRATES: So then either it is most painful, that is, foulest of these vices by an excess of painfulness, or else of harmfulness, or in both ways?

POLUS: Necessarily.

SOCRATES: Then do you think that being unjust, licentious, cowardly, and ignorant is more painful than being poor and sick?

POLUS: No, I do not, Socrates, from what we have said.

SOCRATES: Portentous then must be the extent of harm, and astonishing the evil, by which the soul's vice exceeds all the others so as to be the foulest of all, since it is not by pain, on your view of the matter.

POLUS: Apparently.

SOCRATES: But further, I suppose, whatever has an excess of harm in the greatest measure, must be the greatest evil in the world.

POLUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: So injustice, licentiousness, and in general, vice of soul, are the greatest evils in the world?

POLUS: Apparently.

SOCRATES: Now what is the art that relieves from poverty? Is it not money-making?

POLUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: And what from disease? Is it not medicine?

POLUS: It must be.

SOCRATES: And what from wickedness and injustice? If you are not ready for that offhand, consider it thus: whither and to whom do we take those who are in bodily sickness?

POLUS: To the doctor, Socrates.

SOCRATES: And whither the wrongdoers and libertines?

POLUS: To the law court, do you mean?

SOCRATES: Yes, and to pay the penalty?

POLUS: I agree.

SOCRATES: Then is it not by employing a kind of justice that those punish who punish aright?

POLUS: Clearly so.

SOCRATES: Then money-making relieves us from poverty, medicine from disease, and justice from licentiousness and injustice.

POLUS: Apparently.

SOCRATES: Which then is the fairest of these things?

POLUS: Of what things, pray?

SOCRATES: Money-making, medicine, justice.

POLUS: Justice, Socrates, is far above the others.

SOCRATES: Now again, if it is fairest, it causes either most pleasure or benefit or both.

POLUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: Well then, is it pleasant to be medically treated, and do those who undergo such treatment enjoy it?

POLUS: I do not think so.

SOCRATES: But it is beneficial, is it not?

POLUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: Because one is relieved of a great evil, and hence it is worth while to endure the pain and be well.

POLUS: Of course.

SOCRATES: Is this then the happiest state of body for a man to be in—that of being medically treated—or that of never being ill at all?

POLUS: Clearly, never being ill.

SOCRATES: Yes, for what we regarded as happiness, it seems, was not this relief from evil, but its nonacquisition at any time.

POLUS: That is so.

SOCRATES: Well now, which is the more wretched of two persons who have something evil either in body or in soul, he who is medically treated and is relieved of the evil, or he who is not treated and keeps it?

POLUS: To my thinking, he who is not treated.

SOCRATES: And we found that paying the penalty is a relief from the greatest evil, wickedness?

POLUS: We did.

SOCRATES: Because, I suppose, the justice of the court reforms us and makes us juster, and acts as a medicine for wickedness.

POLUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: Happiest therefore is he who has no vice in his soul, since we found this to be the greatest of evils.

POLUS: Clearly so.

SOCRATES: Next after him, I take it, is he who is relieved of it.

POLUS: So it seems.

SOCRATES: And that was the man who is reformed, reprimanded, and made to pay the penalty.

POLUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: Hence the worst life is led by him who has the vice and is not relieved of it.

POLUS: Apparently.

SOCRATES: And this is the man who in committing the greatest wrongs and practicing the greatest injustice has contrived to escape reproof and chastisement and penalty alike, as you say Archelaus has succeeded in doing, and the rest of the despots and orators and overlords?

POLUS: So it seems.

SOCRATES: Because, I conceive, my excellent friend, what these persons have contrived for themselves is very much as though a man who was the victim of the worst diseases should contrive not to submit to the doctor's penalty for his bodily transgressions and take the prescribed treatment, from a childish fear of cautery or incision, as being so painful. Or do you not agree to this view of it?

POLUS: I do.

SOCRATES: Since he was ignorant, it would seem, of the virtue of bodily health and fitness. For it is very probable, from what we have just agreed, that something like this is done also by those who evade their due penalty, Polus; they perceive its painfulness, but are blind to its benefits, and are unaware how much more wretched than lack of health in the body it is to dwell with a soul that is not healthy, but corrupt, unjust, and unholy; and hence it is that they do all they can to avoid paying the penalty and being relieved of the greatest of evils, by providing themselves with money and friends and the ability to excel in persuasive speech. But if what we have agreed is true, Polus, do you observe the consequences of our argument? Or, if you like, shall we reckon them up together?

POLUS: Yes, if you do not mind.

SOCRATES: Then does it result that injustice and wrongdoing is the greatest evil?

POLUS: Yes, apparently.

SOCRATES: And further, it appeared that paying the penalty is a relief from this evil?

POLUS: It looks like it.

SOCRATES: Whereas not paying it is a retention of the evil in us?

POLUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: Thus wrongdoing is second of evils in greatness; but to do wrong and not pay the penalty is the greatest and takes the first place among all evils.

POLUS: It seems so.

SOCRATES: Well now, my friend, was this the point at issue between us, that you counted Archelaus, who did the greatest wrong, happy because he paid no penalty, whilst I on the contrary thought that anyone—whether Archelaus or any other person you please—who pays no penalty for the wrong he has done, is peculiarly and preeminently wretched among men, and that it is always the wrongdoer who is more wretched than the wronged, and the unpunished than the punished? Is not this what I stated?

POLUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: Then has it not been proved that this was a true statement?

POLUS: Apparently.

SOCRATES: Very well: so if this is true, Polus, what is the great use of rhetoric? For you see by what we have just agreed that a man must keep a close watch over himself so as to avoid wrongdoing, since it would bring a great deal of evil upon him; must he not?

POLUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: But if he is guilty of wrongdoing, either himself or anyone else he may care for, he must go of his own freewill where he may soonest pay the penalty, to the judge as if to his doctor, with the earnest intent that the disease of his injustice shall not become chronic and cause a deep incurable ulcer in his soul. Or what are we to say, Polus, if our former conclusions stand? Must not our later ones accord with them in this way, and in this only?

POLUS: Yes, what else, indeed, are we to say, Socrates?

SOCRATES: Then for pleading in defense of injustice, whether it is oneself or one's parents or friends or children or country that has done the wrong, rhetoric is of no use to us at all, Polus;

except one were to suppose, perchance, to the contrary, that a man ought to accuse himself first of all, and in the second place his relations or anyone else of his friends who may from time to time be guilty of wrong; and, instead of concealing the iniquity, to bring it to light in order that he may pay the penalty and be made healthy; and, moreover, to compel both himself and his neighbors not to cower away but to submit with closed eyes and good courage, as it were, to the cutting and burning of the surgeon, in pursuit of what is good and fair, and without reckoning in the smart: if his crimes have deserved a flogging, he must submit to the rod; if fetters, to their grip; if a fine, to its payment; if banishment, to be banished; or if death, to die; himself to be the first accuser either of himself or of his relations, and to employ his rhetoric for the purpose of so exposing their iniquities that they may be relieved of that greatest evil, injustice. Shall this be our statement or not, Polus?

POLUS: An extraordinary one, Socrates, it seems to me, though perhaps you do find it agrees with what went before.

SOCRATES: Well, either that must be upset, or this necessarily follows.

POLUS: Yes, that certainly is so.

SOCRATES: And so again conversely, supposing it is our duty to injure somebody, whether an enemy or anyone else—provided only that it is not against oneself that wrong has been done by such enemy, for this we must take care to avoid¹⁸—but supposing our enemy has wronged some one else, we must make every exertion of act and word to prevent him from being punished or coming to trial, or if he does, we must contrive that our enemy shall escape and not be punished; nay, if he has carried off a great lot of gold, that he shall not refund it but keep and spend it on himself and his, unjustly and godlessly, or if he has committed crimes that deserve death, that he shall not die; if possible, never die, but be deathless in his villainy, or failing that, live as long a time as may be in that condition. Such are the

¹⁸The parenthesis humorously anticipates an objection that might be made, in a particular case, to this theory of what a really thorough enmity would be: if our enemy has robbed us of gold, of course we cannot, as is presently urged, take care that “he shall not refund it.” [Tr.]

purposes, as it seems to me, Polus, for which rhetoric is useful, since to him who has no intention of doing wrong it is, I consider, of no great use, if indeed there is any use in it at all; for in our previous argument it was nowhere to be found.

CALLICLES: Tell me, Chaerephon, is Socrates in earnest over this, or only joking?

CHAEREPHON: To my thinking, Callicles, prodigiously in earnest: still, there is nothing like asking him.

CALLICLES: Upon my word, just what I want to do. Tell me, Socrates, are we to take you as serious just now, or joking? For if you are serious and what you say is really true, must not the life of us human beings have been turned upside down, and must we not be doing quite the opposite, it seems, of what we ought to do?

SOCRATES: Callicles, if men had not certain feelings, each common to one sort of people, but each of us had a feeling peculiar to himself and apart from the rest, it would not be easy for him to indicate his own impression to his neighbor. I say this because I notice that you and I are at this moment in much the same condition, since the two of us are enamored each of two things—I of Alcibiades, son of Cleinias, and philosophy, and you of two, the Athenian Demus, and the son of Pylilampes.¹⁹ Now I always observe that, for all your cleverness, you are unable to contradict your favorite, however much he may say or whatever may be his account of anything, but are ever changing over from side to side. In the Assembly, if the Athenian Demus disagrees with some statement you are making, you change over and say what it desires; and just the same thing happens to you in presence of that fair youth, the son of Pylilampes; you are unable to resist the counsels and statements of your darling, so that if anyone showed surprise at the strangeness of the things you are constantly saying under that influence, you would probably tell him, if you chose to speak the truth, that unless somebody makes your favorite stop speaking thus, you will never stop speaking thus either. Consider yourself

¹⁹Pylilampes' son was named Demus, and was famous for his beauty; cf. Aristoph. *Wasps*, 97. “Demus” was the ordinary word for the “people” of a city. [Tr.]

therefore obliged to hear the same sort of remark from me now, and do not be surprised at my saying it, but make my darling, philosophy, stop talking thus. For she, my dear friend, speaks what you hear me saying now, and she is far less fickle to me than any other favorite: that son of Cleinias is ever changing his views, but philosophy always holds the same, and it is her speech that now surprises you, and she spoke it in your own presence. So you must either refute her, as I said just now, by proving that wrongdoing and impunity for wrong done is not the uttermost evil; or, if you leave that unproved, by the Dog, god of the Egyptians, there will be no agreement between you, Callicles, and Callicles, but you will be in discord with him all your life. And yet I, my very good sir, should rather choose to have my lyre, or some chorus that I might provide for the public, out of tune and discordant, or to have any number of people disagreeing with me and contradicting me, than that I should have internal discord and contradiction in my own single self.

CALLICLES: Socrates, you seem to be roistering recklessly in your talk, like the true demagogue that you are; and you are declaiming now in this way because Polus has got into the same plight as he was accusing Gorgias of letting himself be led into by you. For he said, I think, when you asked Gorgias whether, supposing a man came to him with no knowledge of justice but a desire to learn rhetoric, he would instruct the man, Gorgias showed some shame and said he would, because of the habit of mind in people which would make them indignant if refused—and so, because of this admission, he was forced to contradict himself, and that was just what suited you—and Polus was right, to my thinking, in mocking at you as he did then; but this time he has got into the very same plight himself. For my own part, where I am not satisfied with Polus is just that concession he made to you—that doing wrong is fouler than suffering it; for owing to this admission he too in his turn got entangled in your argument and had his mouth stopped, being ashamed to say what he thought. For you, Socrates, really turn the talk into such low, popular clap-trap, while you give out that you are pursuing the truth—into stuff that is “fair,” not by

nature, but by convention.²⁰ Yet for the most part these two—nature and convention—are opposed to each other, so that if a man is ashamed and dares not say what he thinks, he is forced to contradict himself. And this, look you, is the clever trick you have devised for our undoing in your discussions: when a man states anything according to convention you slip “according to nature” into your questions; and again, if he means nature, you imply convention. In the present case, for instance, of doing and suffering wrong, when Polus was speaking of what is conventionally fouler, you followed it up in the sense of what is naturally so. For by nature everything is fouler that is more evil, such as suffering wrong: doing it is fouler only by convention. Indeed this endurance of wrong done is not a man’s part at all, but a poor slave’s, for whom it is better to be dead than alive, as it is for anybody who, when wronged or insulted, is unable to protect himself or anyone else for whom he cares. But I suppose the makers of the laws are the weaker sort of men, and the more numerous. So it is with a view to themselves and their own interest that they make their laws and distribute their praises and censures; and to terrorize the stronger sort of folk who are able to get an advantage, and to prevent them from getting one over *them*, they tell them that such aggrandizement is foul and unjust, and that wrongdoing is just this endeavor to get the advantage of one’s neighbors: for I expect they are well content to see themselves on an equality, when they are so inferior. So this is why by convention it is termed unjust and foul to aim at an advantage over the majority, and why they call it wrongdoing: but nature, in my opinion, herself proclaims the fact that it is right for the better to have advantage of the worse, and the abler of the feebler. It is obvious in many cases that this is so, not only in the animal world, but in the states and races, collectively, of men—that right has been decided to consist in the sway and advantage of the stronger over the weaker. For by what man-

²⁰The distinction between “natural,” or absolute, and “conventional,” or legal, right, first made by the Ionian Archelaus who taught Socrates in his youth, is developed at length in the *Republic* (i. 388 foll.), and was a constant subject of discussion among the sophists of Plato’s time. [Tr.]

ner of right did Xerxes march against Greece, or his father against Scythia? Or take the countless other cases of the sort that one might mention. Why, surely these men follow nature—the nature of right—in acting thus; yes, on my soul, and follow the law²¹ of nature—though not that, I dare say, which is made by us; we mold the best and strongest amongst us, taking them from their infancy like young lions, and utterly enthral them by our spells and witchcraft, telling them the while that they must have but their equal share, and that this is what is fair and just. But, I fancy, when some man arises with a nature of sufficient force, he shakes off all that we have taught him, bursts his bonds, and breaks free; he tramples underfoot our codes and juggleries, our charms and “laws,” which are all against nature; our slave rises in revolt and shows himself our master, and there dawns the full light of natural justice. And it seems to me that Pindar adds his evidence to what I say, in the ode where he says—

Law the sovereign of all,
Mortals and immortals,

which, so he continues, —

Carries all with highest hand,
Justifying the utmost force: in proof I take
The deeds of Hercules, for unpurchased —

the words are something like that—I do not know the poem well—but it tells how he drove off the cows as neither a purchase nor a gift from Geryones; taking it as a natural right that cows or any other possessions of the inferior and weaker should all belong to the superior and stronger.

Well, that is the truth of the matter; and you will grasp it if you will now put philosophy aside and pass to greater things. For philosophy, you know, Socrates, is a charming thing, if a man has to do with it moderately in his younger days; but if he continues to spend his time on it too long, it is ruin to any man. However well endowed one may be, if one philosophizes far on into life, one must needs find oneself ignorant of everything

²¹Callicles boldly applies the word νόμος, which so far has been used in the sense of man-made law or convention, in its widest sense of “general rule” or “principle.” [Tr.]

that ought to be familiar to the man who would be a thorough gentleman and make a good figure in the world. For such people are shown to be ignorant of the laws of their city, and of the terms which have to be used in negotiating agreements with their fellows in private or in public affairs, and of human pleasures and desires; and, in short, to be utterly inexperienced in men’s characters. So when they enter upon any private or public business they make themselves ridiculous, just as on the other hand, I suppose, when public men engage in your studies and discussions, they are quite ridiculous. The fact is, as Euripides has it—

Each shines in that, to that end presses on,
Allotting there the chiefest part o’ the day,
Wherein he haply can surpass himself —²²

whereas that in which he is weak he shuns and vilifies; but the other he praises, in kindness to himself, thinking in this way to praise himself also. But the most proper course, I consider, is to take a share of both. It is a fine thing to partake of philosophy just for the sake of education, and it is no disgrace for a lad to follow it: but when a man already advancing in years continues in its pursuit, the affair, Socrates, becomes ridiculous; and for my part I have much the same feeling toward students of philosophy as toward those who lisp or play tricks. For when I see a little child, to whom it is still natural to talk in that way, lisping or playing some trick, I enjoy it, and it strikes me as pretty and ingenuous and suitable to the infant’s age; whereas if I hear a small child talk distinctly, I find it a disagreeable thing, and it offends my ears and seems to me more befitting a slave. But when one hears a grown man lisp, or sees him play tricks, it strikes one as something ridiculous and unmanly, that deserves a whipping. Just the same, then, is my feeling toward the followers of philosophy. For when I see philosophy in a young lad I approve of it; I consider

²²Eurip. fr. *Antiope*. Zethus and Amphion, twins born to Zeus by Antiope, were left by her on Mt. Cithaeron, where Zethus grew up as a man of the field, and Amphion as a musician. Here probably Amphion is speaking in defense of the quieter life; further on, in the quotations given in 486 B.C., Zethus reproaches him with his effeminacy. [Tr.]

it suitable, and I regard him as a person of liberal mind: whereas one who does not follow it I account illiberal and never likely to expect of himself any fine or generous action. But when I see an elderly man still going on with philosophy and not getting rid of it, that is the gentleman, Socrates, whom I think in need of a whipping. For as I said just now, this person, however well endowed he may be, is bound to become unmanly through shunning the centers and marts of the city, in which, as the poet²³ said, "men get them note and glory"; he must cower down and spend the rest of his days whispering in a corner with three or four lads, and never utter anything free or high or spirited. Now I, Socrates, am quite fairly friendly to you, and so I feel very much at this moment as Zethus did, whom I have mentioned, towards Amphion in Euripides.²⁴ Indeed I am prompted to address you in the same sort of words as he did his brother: "You neglect, Socrates, what you ought to mind; you distort with a kind of boyish travesty a soul of such noble nature; and neither will you bring to the counsels of justice any rightly spoken word, nor will you accept any as probable or convincing, nor advise any gallant plan for your fellow." And yet, my dear Socrates—now do not be annoyed with me, for I am going to say this from goodwill to you—does it not seem to you disgraceful to be in the state I consider you are in, along with the rest of those who are ever pushing further into philosophy? For as it is, if somebody should seize hold of you or anyone else at all of your sort, and drag you off to prison, asserting that you were guilty of a wrong you had never done, you know you would be at a loss what to do with yourself, and would be all dizzy and agape without a word to say; and when you came up in court, though your accuser might be ever so paltry a rascal, you would have to die if he chose to claim death as your penalty. And yet what wisdom is there, Socrates, in "an art that found a man of goodly parts and made him worse," unable either to succor himself, or to deliver himself or anyone else from the greatest dangers, but

²³Homer, *Il.* ix. 441. [Tr.]

²⁴That is, Callicles reproaches Socrates for choosing private study over public, political action. [Ed.]

like to be stripped by his enemies of all his substance, and to live in his city as an absolute outcast? Such a person, if one may use a rather low expression, can be given a box on the ear with impunity. No, take my advice, my good sir, "and cease refuting; some practical proficiency induce,"—something that will give you credit for sense: "to others leave these pretty toys,"—call them vaporings or fooleries as you will,— "which will bring you to inhabit empty halls"; and emulate, not men who probe these trifles, but who have means and repute and other good things in plenty.

SOCRATES: If my soul had happened to be made of gold, Callicles, do you not think I should have been delighted to find one of those stones with which they test gold, and the best one; which, if I applied it, and it confirmed to me that my soul had been properly tended, would give me full assurance that I am in a satisfactory state and have no need of other testing?

CALLICLES: What is the point of that question, Socrates?

SOCRATES: I will tell you. I am just thinking what a lucky stroke I have had in striking up with you.

CALLICLES: How so?

SOCRATES: I am certain that whenever you agree with me in any view that my soul takes, this must be the very truth. For I conceive that whoever would sufficiently test a soul as to rectitude of life or the reverse should go to work with three things which are all in your possession—knowledge, goodwill, and frankness. I meet with many people who are unable to test me, because they are not wise as you are; while others, though wise, are unwilling to tell me the truth, because they do not care for me as you do; and our two visitors here, Gorgias and Polus, though wise and friendly to me, are more lacking in frankness and inclined to bashfulness than they should be: nay, it must be so, when they have carried modesty to such a point that each of them can bring himself, out of sheer modesty, to contradict himself in face of a large company, and that on questions of the greatest importance. But you have all these qualities which the rest of them lack: you have had a sound education, as many here in Athens will agree; and you are well disposed to me. You

ask what proof I have? I will tell you. I know, Callicles, that four of you have formed a partnership in wisdom—you, Tisander of Aphidnae, Andron, son of Androtion, and Nausicydes of Cholargos;²⁵ and I once overheard you debating how far the cultivation of wisdom should be carried, and I know you were deciding in favor of some such view as this—that one should not be carried away into the minuter points of philosophy, but you exhorted one another to beware of making yourselves overwise, lest you should unwittingly work your own ruin. So when I hear you giving me the same advice as you gave your own most intimate friends, I have proof enough that you really are well disposed to me. And further, as to your ability to speak out frankly and not be bashful, you not only claim this yourself, but you are borne out too by the speech that you made a short while ago. Well, this is clearly the position of our question at present: if you can bear me out in any point arising in our argument, that point can at once be taken as having been amply tested by both you and me, and there will be no more need of referring it to a further test; for no defect of wisdom or access of modesty could ever have been your motive in making this concession, nor again could you make it to deceive me: for you are my friend, as you say yourself. Hence any agreement between you and me must really have attained the perfection of truth. And on no themes could one make more honorable inquiry, Callicles, than on those which you have reproached me with—what character one should have, and what should be one's pursuits and up to what point, in later as in earlier years. For I assure you that if there is any fault of conduct to be found in my own life it is not an intentional error, but due to my ignorance: so I ask you not to break off in the middle of your task of admonishing me, but to make fully clear to me what it is that I ought to pursue and by what means I may attain it; and if you find me in agreement with you now, and afterwards failing to do what I agreed to, regard me as a regular

²⁵Andron is one of the wise men who meet in the house of Callias, *Protag.* 315; Nausicydes may be the wealthy meal-merchant mentioned in Aristoph. *Eccles.* 426, and Xen. *Mem.* ii. 7. 6. Of Tisander nothing is known. [Tr.]

dunce and never trouble any more to admonish me again—a mere good-for-nothing. Now, go right back and repeat to me what you and Pindar hold natural justice to consist in: is it that the superior should forcibly despoil the inferior, the better rule the worse, and the nobler have more than the meaner? Have you some other account to give of justice, or do I remember aright?

CALLICLES: Why, that is what I said then, and I say it now also.

SOCRATES: Is it the same person that you call “better” and “superior”? For I must say I was no more able then to understand what your meaning might be. Is it the stronger folk that you call superior, and are the weaker ones bound to hearken to the stronger one—as for instance I think you were also pointing out then, that the great states attack the little ones in accordance with natural right, because they are superior and stronger, on the ground that the superior and the stronger and the better are all the same thing; or is it possible to be better and yet inferior and weaker, and to be superior and yet more wicked? Or is the definition of the better and the superior the same? This is just what I bid you declare in definite terms—whether the superior and the better and the stronger are the same or different.

CALLICLES: Well, I tell you plainly, they are all the same.

SOCRATES: Now, are the many superior by nature to the one? I mean those who make the laws to keep a check on the one, as you were saying yourself just now.

CALLICLES: Of course.

SOCRATES: Then the ordinances of the many are those of the superior.

CALLICLES: Certainly.

SOCRATES: And so of the better? For the superior are far better, by your account.

CALLICLES: Yes.

SOCRATES: And so their ordinances are by nature “fair,” since they are superior who made them?

CALLICLES: I agree.

SOCRATES: Then is it the opinion of the many that—as you also said a moment ago—justice means having an equal share, and it is fouler to wrong than be wronged. Is that so, or not? And mind you are not caught this time in a bashful fit.

Is it, or is it not, the opinion of the many that to have one's equal share, and not more than others, is just, and that it is fouler to wrong than be wronged? Do not grudge me an answer to this, Callicles, so that—if I find you agree with me—I may then have the assurance that comes from the agreement of a man so competent to decide.

CALLICLES: Well, most people do think so.

SOCRATES: Then it is not only by convention that doing wrong is fouler than suffering it, and having one's equal share is just, but by nature also: and therefore it looks as though your previous statement was untrue, and your count against me incorrect, when you said that convention and nature are opposites and that I, forsooth, recognizing that, am an unscrupulous debater, turning to convention when the assertion refers to nature, and to nature when it refers to convention.

CALLICLES: What an inveterate driveller the man is! Tell me, Socrates, are you not ashamed to be word-catching at your age, and if one makes a verbal slip, to take that as a great stroke of luck? Do you imagine that, when I said "being superior," I meant anything else than "better"? Have I not been telling you ever so long that I regard the better and the superior as the same thing? Or do you suppose I mean that if a pack of slaves and all sorts of fellows who are good for nothing, except perhaps in point of physical strength, gather together and say something, that is a legal ordinance?

SOCRATES: Very well, most sapient Callicles: you mean that, do you?

CALLICLES: Certainly I do.

SOCRATES: Why, my wonderful friend, I have myself been guessing ever so long that you meant something of this sort by "superior," and if I repeat my questions it is because I am so keen to know definitely what your meaning may be. For I presume you do not consider that two are better than one, or that your slaves are better than yourself, just because they are stronger than you are. Come now, tell me again from the beginning what it is you mean by the better, since you do not mean the stronger: only, admirable sir, do be more gentle with me over my first lessons, or I shall cease attending your school.

CALLICLES: You are sarcastic, Socrates.

SOCRATES: No, by Zethus, Callicles, whom

you made use of just now²⁶ for aiming a good deal of sarcasm at me: but come, tell us whom you mean by the better.

CALLICLES: I mean the more excellent.

SOCRATES: So you see, you are uttering mere words yourself, and explaining nothing. Will you not tell us whether by the better and superior you mean the wiser, or some other sort?

CALLICLES: Why, to be sure, I mean those, and very much so.

SOCRATES: Then one wise man is often superior to ten thousand fools, by your account, and he ought to rule and they to be ruled, and the ruler should have more than they whom he rules. That is what you seem to me to intend by your statement—and I am not word-catching here—if the one is superior to the ten thousand.

CALLICLES: Why, that is my meaning. For this is what I regard as naturally just—that being better and wiser he should have both rule and advantage over the baser people.

SOCRATES: Stop there now. Once more, what is your meaning this time? Suppose that a number of us are assembled together, as now, in the same place, and we have in common a good supply of food and drink, and we are of all sorts—some strong, some weak; and one of us, a doctor, is wiser than the rest in this matter and, as may well be, is stronger than some and weaker than others; will not he, being wiser than we are, be better and superior in this affair?

CALLICLES: Certainly.

SOCRATES: Then is he to have a larger ration than the rest of us because he is better, or ought he as ruler to have the distribution of the whole stock, with no advantage in spending and consuming it upon his own person, if he is to avoid retribution, but merely having more than some and less than others? Or if he chance to be the weakest of all, ought he not to get the smallest share of all though he be the best, Callicles? Is it not so, good sir?

CALLICLES: You talk of food and drink and doctors and drivel: I refer to something different.

SOCRATES: Then tell me, do you call the wiser better? Yes or no?

CALLICLES: Yes, I do.

²⁶Above, 486 A. [Tr.]

SOCRATES: But do you not think the better should have a larger share?

CALLICLES: Yes, but not of food and drink.

SOCRATES: I see; of clothes, perhaps; and the ablest weaver should have the largest coat, and go about arrayed in the greatest variety of the finest clothes?

CALLICLES: What have clothes to do with it?

SOCRATES: Well, shoes then; clearly he who is wisest in regard to these, and best, should have some advantage. Perhaps the shoemaker should walk about in the biggest shoes and wear the largest number.

CALLICLES: Shoes—what have they to do with it? You keep on drivelling.

SOCRATES: Well, if you do not mean things of that sort, perhaps you mean something like this: a farmer, for instance, who knows all about the land and is highly accomplished in the matter, should perhaps have an advantage in sharing the seed, and have the largest possible amount of it for use on his own land.

CALLICLES: How you keep repeating the same thing, Socrates!

SOCRATES: Yes, and not only that, Callicles, but on the same subjects too.

CALLICLES: I believe, on my soul, you absolutely cannot ever stop talking of cobblers and fullers, cooks and doctors, as though our discussion had to do with them.

SOCRATES: Then will you tell me in what things the superior and wiser man has a right to the advantage of a larger share? Or will you neither put up with a suggestion from me nor make one yourself?

CALLICLES: Why, I have been making mine for some time past. First of all, by “the superior” I mean, not shoemakers or cooks, but those who are wise as regards public affairs and the proper way of conducting them, and not only wise but manly, with ability to carry out their purpose to the full; and who will not falter through softness of soul.

SOCRATES: Do you perceive, my excellent Callicles, that your count against me is not the same as mine against you? For you say I am ever repeating the same things, and reproach me with it, whereas I charge you, on the contrary, with never saying the same thing on the same subject; but at

one moment you defined the better and superior as the stronger, and at another as the wiser, and now you turn up again with something else: “the manlier” is what you now tell us is meant by the superior and better. No, my good friend, you had best say, and get it over, whom you do mean by the better and superior, and in what sphere.

CALLICLES: But I have told you already: men of wisdom and manliness in public affairs. These are the persons who ought to rule our cities, and justice means this—that these should have more than other people, the rulers than the ruled.

SOCRATES: How so? Than themselves, my friend?

CALLICLES: What do you mean?

SOCRATES: I mean that every man is his own ruler; or is there no need of one’s ruling oneself, but only of ruling others?

CALLICLES: What do you mean by one who rules himself?

SOCRATES: Nothing recondite; merely what most people mean—one who is temperate and self-mastering, ruler of the pleasures and desires that are in himself.

CALLICLES: You will have your pleasantry! You mean “the simpletons” by “the temperate.”

SOCRATES: How so? Nobody can fail to see that I do not mean that.

CALLICLES: Oh, you most certainly do, Socrates. For how can a man be happy if he is a slave to anybody at all? No, natural fairness and justice, I tell you now quite frankly, is this—that he who would live rightly should let his desires be as strong as possible and not chasten them, and should be able to minister to them when they are at their height by reason of his manliness and intelligence, and satisfy each appetite in turn with what it desires. But this, I suppose, is not possible for the many; whence it comes that they decry such persons out of shame, to disguise their own impotence, and are so good as to tell us that licentiousness is disgraceful, thus enslaving—as I remarked before—the better type of mankind; and being unable themselves to procure achievement of their pleasures they praise temperance and justice by reason of their own unmanliness. For to those who started with the advantage of being either kings’ sons or able by their own parts to procure some authority or

monarchy or absolute power, what in truth could be fouler or worse than temperance and justice in such cases? Finding themselves free to enjoy good things, with no obstacle in the way, they would be merely imposing on themselves a master in the shape of the law, the talk and the rebuke of the multitude. Or how could they fail to be sunk in wretchedness by that “fairness” of justice and temperance, if they had no larger portion to give to their own friends than to their enemies, and that too when they were rulers in their own cities? No, in good truth, Socrates—which you claim to be seeking—the fact is this: luxury and licentiousness and liberty, if they have the support of force, are virtue and happiness, and the rest of these embellishments—the unnatural covenants of mankind—are all mere stuff and nonsense.

SOCRATES: Far from ignoble, at any rate, Callicles, is the frankness with which you develop your thesis: for you are now stating in clear terms what the rest of the world think indeed, but are loth to say. So I beg you not to give up on any account, that it may be made really evident how one ought to live. Now tell me: do you say the desires are not to be chastened if a man would be such as he ought to be, but he should let them be as great as possible and provide them with satisfaction from some source or other, and this is virtue?

CALLICLES: Yes, I say that.

SOCRATES: Then it is not correct to say, as people do, that those who want nothing are happy.

CALLICLES: No, for at that rate stones and corpses would be extremely happy.

SOCRATES: Well, well, as you say, life is strange. For I tell you I should not wonder if Euripides’ words were true, when he says:

Who knoweth if to live is to be dead,
And to be dead, to live?

and we really, it may be, are dead; in fact I once heard one of our sages say that we are now dead, and the body is our tomb,²⁷ and the part of the

²⁷The sage was perhaps Philolaus, a Pythagorean philosopher contemporary with Socrates. The phrase *σῶμα σῆμα*, suggesting a mystical similarity between “body” and “tomb,” was part of the Orphic doctrine. [Tr.]

soul in which we have desires is liable to be overpersuaded and to vacillate to and fro, and so some smart fellow, a Sicilian, I daresay, or Italian,²⁸ made a fable in which—by a play of words—he named this part, as being so impressionable and persuadable, a jar, and the thoughtless he called uninitiate: in these uninitiate that part of the soul where the desires are, the licentious and fissured part, he named a leaky jar in his allegory, because it is so insatiate. So you see this person, Callicles, takes the opposite view to yours, showing how of all who are in Hades—meaning of course the invisible—these uninitiate will be most wretched, and will carry water into their leaky jar with a sieve which is no less leaky. And then by the sieve, as my storyteller said, he means the soul: and the soul of the thoughtless he likened to a sieve, as being perforated, since it is unable to hold anything by reason of its unbelief and forgetfulness. All this, indeed, is bordering pretty well on the absurd; but still it sets forth what I wish to impress upon you, if I somehow can, in order to induce you to make a change, and instead of a life of insatiate licentiousness to choose an orderly one that is set up and contented with what it happens to have got. Now, am I at all prevailing upon you to change over to the view that the orderly people are happier than the licentious; or will no amount of similar fables that I might tell you have any effect in changing your mind?

CALLICLES: The latter is more like the truth, Socrates.

SOCRATES: Come now, let me tell you another parable from the same school²⁹ as that I have just told. Consider if each of the two lives, the temperate and the licentious, might be described by imagining that each of two men had a number of jars, and those of one man were sound and full, one of wine, another of honey, a third of milk, and various others of various things, and that the sources of each of these supplies were scanty and difficult and only available through much hard toil: well, one man, when he has taken his fill, neither draws off any more nor troubles himself a

²⁸“Sicilian” may refer to Empedocles; “Italian” to one of the Pythagoreans. [Tr.]

²⁹Probably of Pythagoras. [Tr.]

jot, but remains at ease on that score; while the other finds, like his fellow, that the sources are possible indeed, though difficult, but his vessels are leaky and decayed, and he is compelled to fill them constantly, all night and day, or else suffer extreme distress. If such is the nature of each of the two lives, do you say that the licentious man has a happier one than the orderly? Do I, with this story of mine, induce you at all to concede that the orderly life is better than the licentious, or do I fail?

CALLICLES: You fail, Socrates. For that man who has taken his fill can have no pleasure any more; in fact it is what I just now called living like a stone, when one has filled up and no longer feels any joy or pain. But a pleasant life consists rather in the largest possible amount of inflow.

SOCRATES: Well then, if the inflow be large, must not that which runs away be of large amount also, and must not the holes for such outflow be of great size?

CALLICLES: Certainly.

SOCRATES: Then it is a plover's life³⁰ you are describing this time, not that of a corpse or a stone. Now tell me, is the life you mean something like feeling hunger and eating when hungry?

CALLICLES: Yes, it is.

SOCRATES: And feeling thirst and drinking when thirsty?

CALLICLES: Yes, and having all the other desires, and being able to satisfy them, and so with these enjoyments leading a happy life.

SOCRATES: Bravo, my fine fellow! Do go on as you have begun, and mind you show no bashfulness about it. I too, it seems, must try not to be too bashful. First of all, tell me whether a man who has an itch and wants to scratch, and may scratch in all freedom, can pass his life happily in continual scratching.

CALLICLES: What an odd person you are, Socrates—a regular stump-orator!

SOCRATES: Why, of course, Callicles, that is how I upset Polus and Gorgias, and struck them with bashfulness; but you, I know, will never be upset or abashed; you are such a manly fellow. Come, just answer that.

³⁰Referring to this bird's habit of drinking water and then ejecting it. [Tr.]

CALLICLES: Then I say that the man also who scratches himself will thus spend a pleasant life.

SOCRATES: And if a pleasant one, a happy one also?

CALLICLES: Certainly.

SOCRATES: Is it so if he only wants to scratch his head? Or what more am I to ask you? See, Callicles, what your answer will be, if you are asked everything in succession that links on to that statement; and the culmination of the case, as stated—the life of catamites—is not that awful, shameful, and wretched? Or will you dare to assert that these are happy if they can freely indulge their wants?

CALLICLES: Are you not ashamed, Socrates, to lead the discussion into such topics?

SOCRATES: What, is it I who am leading it there, noble sir, or the person who says outright that those who enjoy themselves, with whatever kind of enjoyment, are happy, and draws no distinction between the good and bad sorts of pleasure? But come, try again now and tell me whether you say that pleasant and good are the same thing, or that there is some pleasure which is not good.

CALLICLES: Then, so that my statement may not be inconsistent through my saying they are different, I say they are the same.

SOCRATES: You are spoiling your first statements,³¹ Callicles, and you can no longer be a fit partner with me in probing the truth, if you are going to speak against your own convictions.

CALLICLES: Why, you do the same, Socrates.

SOCRATES: Then I am just as much in the wrong if I do, as you are. But look here, my gifted friend, perhaps the good is not mere unconditional enjoyment: for if it is, we have to face not only that string of shameful consequences I have just shadowed forth, but many more besides.

CALLICLES: In your opinion, that is, Socrates.

SOCRATES: And do you, Callicles, really maintain that it is?

CALLICLES: I do.

SOCRATES: Then are we to set about discussing it as your serious view?

³¹Cf. 482 D, where Callicles blamed Polus for not saying what he really thought. [Tr.]

CALLICLES: Oh yes, to be sure.

SOCRATES: Come then, since that is your opinion, resolve me this: there is something, I suppose, that you call knowledge?

CALLICLES: Yes.

SOCRATES: And were you not saying just now that knowledge can have a certain courage coupled with it?

CALLICLES: Yes, I was.

SOCRATES: And you surely meant that they were two things, courage being distinct from knowledge?

CALLICLES: Quite so.

SOCRATES: Well now, are pleasure and knowledge the same thing, or different?

CALLICLES: Different, I presume, O sage of sages.

SOCRATES: And courage too, is that different from pleasure?

CALLICLES: Of course it is.

SOCRATES: Come now, let us be sure to remember this, that Callicles the Acharnian said pleasant and good were the same, but knowledge and courage were different both from each other and from the good.

CALLICLES: And Socrates of Alopece refuses to grant us this; or does he grant it?

SOCRATES: He does not; nor, I believe, will Callicles either, when he has rightly considered himself. For tell me, do you not regard people who are well off as being in the opposite condition to those who are badly off?

CALLICLES: I do.

SOCRATES: Then if these conditions are opposite to each other, must not the same hold of them as of health and disease? For, you know, a man is never well and ill at the same time, nor gets rid of health and disease together.

CALLICLES: How do you mean?

SOCRATES: Take, for instance, any part of the body you like by itself, and consider it. A man, I suppose, may have a disease of the eyes, called ophthalmia?

CALLICLES: Certainly.

SOCRATES: Then I presume he is not sound also at that time in those same eyes?

CALLICLES: By no conceivable means.

SOCRATES: And what say you, when he gets

rid of his ophthalmia? Does he at that time get rid too of the health of his eyes, and so at last is rid of both things together?

CALLICLES: Far from it.

SOCRATES: Because, I imagine, this would be an astonishing and irrational result, would it not?

CALLICLES: Very much so.

SOCRATES: Whereas, I take it, he gets and loses either in turn?

CALLICLES: I agree.

SOCRATES: And so with strength and weakness in just the same way?

CALLICLES: Yes.

SOCRATES: And speed and slowness?

CALLICLES: Certainly.

SOCRATES: And so too with good things and happiness and their opposites—bad things and wretchedness—does one take on each of these in turn, and in turn put it off?

CALLICLES: Absolutely, I presume.

SOCRATES: Then if we find any things that a man puts off and retains at one and the same moment, clearly these cannot be the good and the bad. Do we admit this? Now consider very carefully before you answer.

CALLICLES: Oh, I admit it down to the ground.

SOCRATES: So now for our former admissions: did you say that being hungry was pleasant or painful? I mean, hunger itself.

CALLICLES: Painful, I said; though eating when one is hungry I call pleasant.

SOCRATES: I see; but at all events hunger itself is painful, is it not?

CALLICLES: I agree.

SOCRATES: And so too with thirst?

CALLICLES: Quite so.

SOCRATES: Then am I to ask you any further questions, or do you admit that all want and desire is painful?

CALLICLES: I admit it; no, do not question me further.

SOCRATES: Very good; but drinking when one is thirsty you surely say is pleasant?

CALLICLES: I do.

SOCRATES: Now, in this phrase of yours the words “when one is thirsty,” I take it, stand for “when one is in pain”?

CALLICLES: Yes.

SOCRATES: But drinking is a satisfaction of the want, and a pleasure?

CALLICLES: Yes.

SOCRATES: So in the act of drinking, you say, one has enjoyment?

CALLICLES: Quite so.

SOCRATES: When one is thirsty?

CALLICLES: I agree.

SOCRATES: That is, in pain?

CALLICLES: Yes.

SOCRATES: Then do you perceive the conclusion,—that you say one enjoys oneself, though in pain at the same moment, when you say one drinks when one is thirsty? Or does this not occur at once, at the same place and time—in either soul or body, as you please? For I fancy it makes no difference. Is this so or not?

CALLICLES: It is.

SOCRATES: But further, you say it is impossible to be badly off, or to fare ill, at the same time as one is faring well.

CALLICLES: Yes, I do.

SOCRATES: But to enjoy oneself when feeling pain you have admitted to be possible.

CALLICLES: Apparently.

SOCRATES: Hence enjoyment is not faring well, nor is feeling pain faring ill, so that the pleasant is found to be different from the good.

CALLICLES: I cannot follow these subtleties of yours, Socrates.

SOCRATES: You can, but you play the innocent, Callicles. Just go on a little further, that you may realize how subtle is your way of reproving me. Does not each of us cease at the same moment from thirst and from the pleasure he gets by drinking?

CALLICLES: I cannot tell what you mean.

GORGIAS: No, no, Callicles, you must answer him, for our sakes also, that the arguments may be brought to a conclusion.

CALLICLES: But Socrates is always like this, Gorgias; he keeps on asking petty, unimportant questions until he refutes one.

GORGIAS: Why, what does that matter to you? In any case it is not your credit that is at stake, Callicles; just permit Socrates to refute you in such manner as he chooses.

CALLICLES: Well then, proceed with those little

cramped questions of yours, since Gorgias is so minded.

SOCRATES: You are fortunate, Callicles, in having been initiated into the Great Mysteries before the Little:³² I did not think that was the proper thing. So go on answering where you left off—as to whether each of us does not cease to feel thirst and pleasure at the same time.

CALLICLES: I grant it.

SOCRATES: And so with hunger and the rest, does he cease to feel the desires and pleasures at the same time?

CALLICLES: That is so.

SOCRATES: And also ceases to feel the pains and pleasures at the same time?

CALLICLES: Yes.

SOCRATES: But still he does not cease to have the good and bad at the same time, as you agreed; and now, you do not agree?

CALLICLES: I do; and what then?

SOCRATES: Only that we get the result, my friend, that the good things are not the same as the pleasant, nor the bad as the painful. For with the one pair the cessation is of both at once, but with the other two it is not, since they are distinct. How then can pleasant things be the same as good, or painful things as bad? Or if you like, consider it another way—for I fancy that even after that you do not admit it. Just observe: do you not call good people good owing to the presence of good things, as you call beautiful those in whom beauty is present?

CALLICLES: I do.

SOCRATES: Well now, do you give the name of good men to fools and cowards? It was not they just now but brave and wise men whom you so described. Or is it not these that you call good?

CALLICLES: To be sure it is.

SOCRATES: And now, have you ever seen a silly child enjoying itself?

CALLICLES: I have.

SOCRATES: And have you never seen a silly man enjoying himself?

CALLICLES: I should think I have; but what has that to do with it?

SOCRATES: Nothing; only answer.

³²Socrates means that one cannot hope to know great things without first learning the truth about little things. [Tr.]

CALLICLES: I have seen one.

SOCRATES: And again, a man of sense in a state of pain or enjoyment?

CALLICLES: Yes.

SOCRATES: And which sort are more apt to feel enjoyment or pain, the wise or the foolish?

CALLICLES: I should think there is not much difference.

SOCRATES: Well, that will suffice. In war have you ever seen a coward?

CALLICLES: Of course I have.

SOCRATES: Well now, when the enemy withdrew, which seemed to you to enjoy it more, the cowards or the brave?

CALLICLES: Both did, I thought; or if not that, about equally.

SOCRATES: No matter. Anyhow, the cowards do enjoy it?

CALLICLES: Very much.

SOCRATES: And the fools, it would seem.

CALLICLES: Yes.

SOCRATES: And when the foe advances, do the cowards alone feel pain, or the brave as well?

CALLICLES: Both.

SOCRATES: Alike?

CALLICLES: More, perhaps, the cowards.

SOCRATES: And when the foe withdraws, do they not enjoy it more?

CALLICLES: Perhaps.

SOCRATES: So the foolish and the wise, and the cowardly and the brave, feel pain and enjoyment about equally, according to you, but the cowardly more than the brave?

CALLICLES: I agree.

SOCRATES: But further, are the wise and brave good, and the cowards and fools bad?

CALLICLES: Yes.

SOCRATES: Then the good and the bad feel enjoyment and pain about equally?

CALLICLES: I agree.

SOCRATES: Then are the good and the bad about equally good and bad? Or are the bad in some yet greater measure good and bad?

CALLICLES: Why, upon my word, I cannot tell what you mean.

SOCRATES: You are aware, are you not, that you hold that the good are good by the presence of good things, and that the bad are so by the presence of bad things? And that the plea-

sure are the good things, and the pains bad things?

CALLICLES: Yes, I am.

SOCRATES: Hence in those who have enjoyment the good things—the pleasures—are present, so long as they enjoy?

CALLICLES: Of course.

SOCRATES: Then good things being present, those who enjoy are good?

CALLICLES: Yes.

SOCRATES: Well now, in those who feel pain are not bad things present, namely pains?

CALLICLES: They are.

SOCRATES: And it is by the presence of bad things, you say, that the bad are bad? Or do you no longer say so?

CALLICLES: I do say so.

SOCRATES: Then whoever enjoys is good, and whoever is pained, bad?

CALLICLES: Certainly.

SOCRATES: You mean, those more so who feel these things more, and those less who feel less, and those about equally who feel about equally?

CALLICLES: Yes.

SOCRATES: Now you say that the wise and the foolish, the cowardly and the brave, feel enjoyment and pain about equally, or the cowards even more?

CALLICLES: I do.

SOCRATES: Then just help me to reckon up the results we get from our admissions; for you know they say:

That which seemeth well, 'tis well
Twice and also thrice to tell,³³

and to examine too. We say that the wise and brave man is good, do we not?

CALLICLES: Yes.

SOCRATES: And that the foolish and cowardly is bad?

CALLICLES: Certainly.

SOCRATES: And again, that he who enjoys is good?

CALLICLES: Yes.

SOCRATES: And that he who feels pain is bad?

CALLICLES: Necessarily.

³³The saying—*καὶ δις γὰρ ὁ δεῖ χαλόν ἐστιν ἐνισπεῖν*—was attributed by some to Empedocles. [Tr.]

SOCRATES: And that the good and the bad feel enjoyment and pain in a like manner, or perhaps the bad rather more?

CALLICLES: Yes.

SOCRATES: Then is the bad man made bad or good in a like manner to the good man, or even good in a greater measure? Does not this follow, along with those former statements, from the assumption that pleasant things and good things are the same? Must not this be so, Callicles?

CALLICLES: Let me tell you, Socrates, all the time that I have been listening to you and yielding you agreement, I have been remarking the puerile delight with which you cling to any concession one may make to you, even in jest. So you suppose that I or anybody else in the world does not regard some pleasures as better, and others worse!

SOCRATES: Oh ho, Callicles, what a rascal you are, treating me thus like a child—now asserting that the same things are one way, now another, to deceive me! And yet I started with the notion that I should not have to fear any intentional deception on your part, you being my friend; but now I find I was mistaken, and it seems I must, as the old saying goes, e'en make the best of what I have got, and accept just anything you offer. Well then, what you now state, it seems, is that there are certain pleasures, some good, and some bad; is not that so?

CALLICLES: Yes.

SOCRATES: Then are the beneficial ones good, and the harmful ones bad?

CALLICLES: Certainly.

SOCRATES: And are those beneficial which do some good, and those evil which do some evil?

CALLICLES: I agree.

SOCRATES: Now are these the sort you mean—for instance, in the body, the pleasures of eating and drinking that we mentioned a moment ago? Then the pleasures of this sort which produce health in the body, or strength, or any other bodily excellence,—are these good, and those which have the opposite effects, bad?

CALLICLES: Certainly.

SOCRATES: And similarly in the case of pains, are some worthy and some base?

CALLICLES: Of course.

SOCRATES: So it is the worthy pleasures and pains that we ought to choose in all our doings?

CALLICLES: Certainly.

SOCRATES: And the base ones not?

CALLICLES: Clearly so.

SOCRATES: Because, you know, Polus and I, if you recollect, decided³⁴ that everything we do should be for the sake of what is good. Do you agree with us in this view—that the good is the end of all our actions, and it is for its sake that all other things should be done, and not it for theirs? Do you add your vote to ours, and make a third?

CALLICLES: I do.

SOCRATES: Then it is for the sake of what is good that we should do everything, including what is pleasant, not the good for the sake of the pleasant.

CALLICLES: Certainly.

SOCRATES: Now is it in every man's power to pick out which sort of pleasant things are good and which bad, or is professional skill required in each case?

CALLICLES: Professional skill.

SOCRATES: Then let us recall those former points I was putting to Polus and Gorgias.³⁵ I said, if you remember, that there were certain industries, some of which extend only to pleasure, procuring that and no more, and ignorant of better and worse; while others know what is good and what bad. And I placed among those that are concerned with pleasure the habitude, not art, of cookery, and among those concerned with good the art of medicine. Now by the sanctity of friendship, Callicles, do not on your part indulge in jesting with me, or give me random answers against your conviction, or again, take what I say as though I were jesting. For you see that our debate is upon a question which has the highest conceivable claims to the serious interest even of a person who has but little intelligence—namely, what course of life is best; whether it should be that to which you invite me, with all those manly pursuits of speaking in Assembly and practicing rhetoric and going in for politics after the fashion of you modern politicians, or this life of philosophy; and what makes the difference between these two. Well, perhaps it is best to do what I attempted a while ago, and distinguish them; and then, when we have

³⁴Cf. 468 c. [Tr.]

³⁵Cf. 464–5. [Tr.]

distinguished them and come to an agreement with each other as to these lives being really two, we must consider what is the difference between them and which of them is the one we ought to live. Now I daresay you do not yet grasp my meaning.

CALLICLES: No, I do not.

SOCRATES: Well, I will put it to you more plainly. Seeing that we have agreed, you and I, that there is such a thing as “good,” and such a thing as “pleasant,” and that the pleasant is other than the good, and that for the acquisition of either there is a certain practice or preparation—the quest of the pleasant in the one case, and that of the good in the other—but first you must either assent or object to this statement of mine: do you assent?

CALLICLES: I am with you entirely.

SOCRATES: Then try and come to a definite agreement with me on what I was saying to our friends here, and see if you now find that what I then said was true. I was saying, I think, that cookery seems to me not an art but a habitude, unlike medicine, which, I argued, has investigated the nature of the person whom she treats and the cause of her proceedings, and has some account to give of each of these things; so much for medicine: whereas the other, in respect of the pleasure to which her whole ministrations is given, goes to work there in an utterly inartistic manner, without having investigated at all either the nature or the cause of pleasure, and altogether irrationally—with no thought, one may say, of differentiation, relying on routine and habitude for merely preserving a memory of what is wont to result; and that is how she is enabled to provide her pleasures. Now consider first whether you think that this account is satisfactory, and that there are certain other such occupations likewise, having to do with the soul; some artistic, with forethought for what is to the soul’s best advantage, and others making light of this, but again, as in the former case, considering merely the soul’s pleasure and how it may be contrived for her, neither inquiring which of the pleasures is a better or a worse one, nor caring for aught but mere gratification, whether for better or worse. For I, Callicles, hold that there are such, and for my part I call this sort of thing flattery, whether in relation to the body or to the soul or to anything else, whenever anyone ministers to its

pleasure without regard for the better and the worse; and you now, do you support us with the same opinion on this matter, or do you gainsay us?

CALLICLES: Not I; I agree with you, in order that your argument may reach a conclusion, and that I may gratify Gorgias here.

SOCRATES: And is this the case with only one soul, and not with two or many?

CALLICLES: No, it is also the case with two or many.

SOCRATES: Then is it possible also to gratify them all at once, collectively, with no consideration of what is best?

CALLICLES: I should think it is.

SOCRATES: Then can you say what are the pursuits which effect this? Or rather, if you like, when I ask you, and one of them seems to you to be of this class, say yes, and when one does not, say no. And first let us consider flute-playing. Does it not seem to you one of this sort, Callicles, aiming only at our pleasure, and caring for naught else?

CALLICLES: It does seem so to me.

SOCRATES: And so too with all similar pursuits, such as harp-playing in the contests?

CALLICLES: Yes.

SOCRATES: And what of choral productions and dithyrambic compositions? Are they not manifestly, in your view, of the same kind? Or do you suppose Cinesias,³⁶ son of Meles, cares a jot about trying to say things of a sort that might be improving to his audience, or only what is likely to gratify the crowd of spectators?

CALLICLES: Clearly the latter is the case, Socrates, with Cinesias.

SOCRATES: And what of his father Meles? Did he ever strike you as looking to what was best in his minstrelsy? Or did he, perhaps, not even make the pleasantest his aim? For his singing used to be a pain to the audience. But consider now: do you not think that all minstrelsy and composing of dithyrambs have been invented for the sake of pleasure?

CALLICLES: I do.

³⁶A dithyrambic poet whose extravagant style was ridiculed by Aristophanes (*Frogs*, 153; *Clouds*, 333; *Birds*, 1379). [Tr.]

SOCRATES: Then what of the purpose that has inspired our stately and wonderful tragic poetry? Are her endeavor and purpose, to your mind, merely for the gratification of the spectators, or does she strive hard, if there be anything pleasant and gratifying, but bad for them, to leave that unsaid, and if there be anything unpleasant, but beneficial, both to speak and sing that, whether they enjoy it or not? To which of these two aims, think you, is tragic poetry devoted?

CALLICLES: It is quite obvious, in her case, Socrates, that she is bent rather upon pleasure and the gratification of the spectators.

SOCRATES: Well now, that kind of thing, Callicles, did we say just now, is flattery?

CALLICLES: Certainly.

SOCRATES: Pray then, if we strip any kind of poetry of its melody, its rhythm and its meter, we get mere speeches as the residue, do we not?

CALLICLES: That must be so.

SOCRATES: And those speeches are spoken to a great crowd of people?

CALLICLES: Yes.

SOCRATES: Hence poetry is a kind of public speaking.

CALLICLES: Apparently.

SOCRATES: Then it must be a rhetorical public speaking; or do you not think that the poets use rhetoric in the theaters?

CALLICLES: Yes, I do.

SOCRATES: So now we have found a kind of rhetoric addressed to such a public as is compounded of children and women and men, and slaves as well as free; an art that we do not quite approve of, since we call it a flattering one.

CALLICLES: To be sure.

SOCRATES: Very well; but now, the rhetoric addressed to the Athenian people, or to the other assemblies of freemen in the various cities—what can we make of that? Do the orators strike you as speaking always with a view to what is best, with the single aim of making the citizens as good as possible by their speeches, or are they, like the poets, set on gratifying the citizens, and do they, sacrificing the common weal to their own personal interest, behave to these assemblies as to children, trying merely to gratify them, nor care a jot whether they will be better or worse in consequence?

CALLICLES: This question of yours is not quite so simple; for there are some who have a regard for the citizens in the words that they utter, while there are also others of the sort that you mention.

SOCRATES: That is enough for me. For if this thing also is twofold, one part of it, I presume, will be flattery and a base mob-oratory, while the other is noble—the endeavor, that is, to make the citizens' souls as good as possible, and the persistent effort to say what is best, whether it prove more or less pleasant to one's hearers. But this is a rhetoric you never yet saw; or if you have any orator of this kind that you can mention, without more ado let me know who he is!

CALLICLES: No, upon my word, I cannot tell you of anyone, at least among the orators of today.

SOCRATES: Well then, can you mention one among those of older times whom the Athenians have to thank for any betterment that started at the time of his first harangues, as a change from the worse state in which he originally found them? For my part, I have no idea who the man is.

CALLICLES: Why, do you hear no mention of Themistocles and what a good man he was, and Cimon and Miltiades and the great Pericles, who has died recently,³⁷ and whom you have listened to yourself?

SOCRATES: Yes, Callicles, if that which you spoke of just now is true virtue—the satisfaction of one's own and other men's desires; but if that is not so, and the truth is—as we were compelled to admit in the subsequent discussion—that only those desires which make man better by their satisfaction should be fulfilled, but those which make him worse should not, and that this is a special art, then I for one cannot tell you of any man so skilled having appeared among them.

CALLICLES: Ah, but if you search properly you will find one.

SOCRATES: Then let us just consider the matter calmly, and see if any of them has appeared with that skill. Come now: the good man, who is intent on the best when he speaks, will surely not speak at random in whatever he says, but with a

³⁷429 B.C. We saw at 473 E that the supposed date of the discussion is 405 B.C., so that "recently" here is hardly accurate. [Tr.]

view to some object? He is just like any other craftsman, who having his own particular work in view selects the things he applies to that work of his, not at random, but with the purpose of giving a certain form to whatever he is working upon. You have only to look, for example, at the painters, the builders, the shipwrights, or any of the other craftsmen, whichever you like, to see how each of them arranges everything according to a certain order, and forces one part to suit and fit with another, until he has combined the whole into a regular and well-ordered production; and so of course with all the other craftsmen, and the people we mentioned just now, who have to do with the body—trainers and doctors; they too, I suppose, bring order and system into the body. Do we admit this to be the case, or not?

CALLICLES: Let it be as you say.

SOCRATES: Then if regularity and order are found in a house, it will be a good one, and if irregularity, a bad one?

CALLICLES: I agree.

SOCRATES: And it will be just the same with a ship?

CALLICLES: Yes.

SOCRATES: And further, with our bodies also, can we say?

CALLICLES: Certainly.

SOCRATES: And what of the soul? If it shows irregularity, will it be good, or if it has a certain regularity and order?

CALLICLES: Our former statements oblige us to agree to this also.

SOCRATES: Then what name do we give to the effect of regularity and order in the body?

CALLICLES: Health and strength, I suppose you mean.

SOCRATES: I do. And what, again, to the effect produced in the soul by regularity and order? Try to find the name here, and tell it me as before.

CALLICLES: Why not name it yourself, Socrates?

SOCRATES: Well, if you prefer it, I will; and do you, if I seem to you to name it rightly, say so; if not, you must refute me and not let me have my way. For it seems to me that any regularity of the body is called healthiness, and this leads to health being produced in it, and general bodily excellence. Is that so or not?

CALLICLES: It is.

SOCRATES: And the regular and orderly states of the soul are called lawfulness and law, whereby men are similarly made law-abiding and orderly; and these states are justice and temperance. Do you agree or not?

CALLICLES: Be it so.

SOCRATES: Then it is this that our orator, the man of art and virtue, will have in view, when he applies to our souls the words that he speaks, and also in all his actions, and in giving any gift he will give it, and in taking anything away he will take it, with this thought always before his mind—how justice may be engendered in the souls of his fellow-citizens, and how injustice may be removed; how temperance may be bred in them and licentiousness cut off; and how virtue as a whole may be produced and vice expelled. Do you agree to this or not?

CALLICLES: I agree.

SOCRATES: For what advantage is there, Callicles, in giving to a sick and ill-conditioned body a quantity of even the most agreeable things to eat and drink, or anything else whatever, if it is not going to profit thereby any more, let us say, than by the opposite treatment, on any fair reckoning, and may profit less? Is this so?

CALLICLES: Be it so.

SOCRATES: Because, I imagine, it is no gain for a man to live in a depraved state of body, since in this case his life must be a depraved one also. Or is not that the case?

CALLICLES: Yes.

SOCRATES: And so the satisfaction of one's desires—if one is hungry, eating as much as one likes, or if thirsty, drinking—is generally allowed by doctors when one is in health; but they practically never allow one in sickness to take one's fill of things that one desires: do you agree with me in this?

CALLICLES: I do.

SOCRATES: And does not the same rule, my excellent friend, apply to the soul? So long as it is in a bad state—thoughtless, licentious, unjust, and unholy—we must restrain its desires and not permit it to do anything except what will help it to be better: do you grant this, or not?

CALLICLES: I do.

SOCRATES: For thus, I take it, the soul itself is better off?

CALLICLES: To be sure.

SOCRATES: And is restraining a person from what he desires correcting him?

CALLICLES: Yes.

SOCRATES: Then correction is better for the soul than uncorrected license, as you were thinking just now.

CALLICLES: I have no notion what you are referring to, Socrates; do ask some one else.

SOCRATES: Here is a fellow who cannot endure a kindness done him, or the experience in himself of what our talk is about—a correction!

CALLICLES: Well, and not a jot do I care, either, for anything *you* say; I only gave you those answers to oblige Gorgias.

SOCRATES: Very good. So now, what shall we do? Break off our argument midway?

CALLICLES: You must decide that for yourself.

SOCRATES: Why, they say one does wrong to leave off even stories in the middle; one should set a head on the thing, that it may not go about headless. So proceed with the rest of your answers, that our argument may pick up a head.

CALLICLES: How overbearing you are, Socrates! Take my advice, and let this argument drop, or find some one else to argue with.

SOCRATES: Then who else is willing? Surely we must not leave the argument there, unfinished?

CALLICLES: Could you not get through it yourself, either talking on by yourself or answering your own questions?

SOCRATES: So that, in Epicharmus's phrase,³⁸ "what two men spake erewhile" I may prove I can manage single-handed. And indeed it looks as though it must of sheer necessity be so. Still, if we are to do this, for my part I think we ought all to vie with each other in attempting a knowledge of what is true and what false in the matter of our argument; for it is a benefit to all alike that it be revealed. Now I am going to pursue the argument as my view of it may suggest; but if any of you think the admissions I am making to myself are not the truth, you must seize upon them and refute me. For I assure you I myself do not say what I say as knowing it, but as joining in the search with you; so that if anyone who disputes

³⁸Epicharmus of Cos produced philosophic comedies in Sicily during the first part of the fifth century. The saying is quoted in full by Athenaeus, vii. 308 τὰ πρὸ τοῦ δὲ ἀνδρες ἔλεγον εἰς ἐγὼν ἀποχρέω. [Tr.]

my statements is found to be on the right track, I shall be the first to agree with him. This, however, I say on the assumption that you think the argument should be carried through to a conclusion; but if you would rather it were not, let us have done with it now and go our ways.

GORGAS: Well, my opinion is, Socrates, that we ought not to go away yet, but that you should go through with the argument; and I fancy the rest of them think the same. For I myself, in fact, desire to hear you going through the remainder by yourself.

SOCRATES: Why, to be sure, Gorgias, I myself should have liked to continue discussing with Callicles here until I had paid him an Amphion's speech in return for his of Zethus.³⁹ But since you, Callicles, are unwilling to join me in finishing off the argument, you must at any rate pull me up, as you listen, if it seems to you that my statements are wrong. And if you refute me, I shall not be vexed with you as you were with me; you will only be recorded in my mind as my greatest benefactor.

CALLICLES: Proceed, good sir, by yourself, and finish it off.

SOCRATES: Give ear, then; but first I will resume our argument from the beginning. Are the pleasant and the good the same thing? Not the same, as Callicles and I agreed. Is the pleasant thing to be done for the sake of the good, or the good for the sake of the pleasant? The pleasant for the sake of the good. And is that thing pleasant by whose advent we are pleased, and that thing good by whose presence we are good? Certainly. But further, both we and everything else that is good, are good by the advent of some virtue? In my view this must be so, Callicles. But surely the virtue of each thing, whether of an implement or of a body, or again of a soul or any live creature, does not arrive most properly by accident, but by an order or rightness or art that is apportioned to each. Is that so? I certainly agree. Then the virtue of each thing is a matter of regular and orderly arrangement? I at least should say so. Hence it is a certain order proper to each existent thing that by its advent in each makes it good? That is my view. So then a soul which has its own proper order is better than one which is

³⁹Cf. 485 above. [Tr.]

unordered? Necessarily. But further, one that has order is orderly? Of course it will be. And the orderly one is temperate? Most necessarily. So the temperate soul is good. For my part, I can find nothing to say in objection to this, my dear Callicles; but if you can, do instruct me.

CALLICLES: Proceed, good sir.

SOCRATES: I say, then, that if the temperate soul is good, one that is in the opposite state to this sensible⁴⁰ one is bad; and that was the senseless and dissolute one. Certainly. And further, the sensible man will do what is fitting as regards both gods and men; for he could not be sensible if he did what was unfitting. That must needs be so. And again, when he does what is fitting as regards men, his actions will be just, and as regards the gods, pious; and he who does what is just and pious must needs be a just and pious man. That is so. And surely he must be brave also: for you know a sound or temperate mind is shown, not by pursuing and shunning what one ought not, but by shunning and pursuing what one ought, whether they be things or people or pleasures or pains, and by steadfastly persevering in one's duty; so that it follows of strict necessity, Callicles, that the temperate man, as shown in our exposition, being just and brave and pious, is the perfection of a good man; and that the good man does well and fairly whatever he does; and that he who does well is blessed and happy,⁴¹ while the wicked man or evil-doer is wretched. And this must be the man who is in an opposite case to the temperate,—the licentious man whom you were commending.

So there is my account of the matter, and I say that this is the truth; and that, if this is true, anyone, as it seems, who desires to be happy must ensure and practice temperance, and flee from licentiousness, each of us as fast as his feet will carry him, and must contrive, if possible, to need no correction; but if he have need of it, either

himself or anyone belonging to him, either an individual or a city, then right must be applied and they must be corrected, if they are to be happy. This, in my opinion, is the mark on which a man should fix his eyes throughout life; he should concentrate all his own and his city's efforts on this one business of providing a man who would be blessed with the needful justice and temperance; not letting one's desires go unrestrained and in one's attempts to satisfy them—an interminable trouble—leading the life of a robber. For neither to any of his fellowmen can such a one be dear, nor to God; since he cannot commune with any, and where there is no communion, there can be no friendship. And wise men tell us, Callicles, that heaven and earth and gods and men are held together by communion and friendship, by orderliness, temperance, and justice; and that is the reason, my friend, why they call the whole of this world by the name of order,⁴² not of disorder or dissoluteness. Now you, as it seems to me, do not give proper attention to this, for all your cleverness, but have failed to observe the great power of geometrical equality among both gods and men: you hold that self-advantage is what one ought to practice, because you neglect geometry. Very well: either we must refute this statement, that it is by the possession of justice and temperance that the happy are happy and by that of vice the wretched are wretched; or if this is true, we must investigate its consequences. Those former results, Callicles, must all follow, on which you asked me if I was speaking in earnest when I said that a man must accuse himself or his son or his comrade if he do any wrong, and that this is what rhetoric must be used for; and what you supposed Polus to be conceding from shame is after all true—that to do wrong is worse, in the same degree as it is baser, than to suffer it, and that whoever means to be the right sort of rhetorician must really be just and well-informed of the ways of justice, which again Polus said that Gorgias was only shamed into admitting.

This being the case, let us consider what weight, if any, there is in the reproaches you cast

⁴²Κόσμος ("order") was the name first given to the universe by the Pythagoreans. [Tr.]

⁴⁰The argument here makes use of a more literal meaning of σῶφρων—"sound minded" (verging on "consciousness," as in what immediately follows). [Tr.]

⁴¹As the various meanings of σῶφροσύνη have been brought out to suggest that one side of that virtue involves the others, so here the apparent quibble of εὖ πράττειν ("act well" and "fare well") is intended to suggest a real dependence of happiness upon virtue. [Tr.]

upon me,⁴³ is it fairly alleged or not that I am unable to stand up for myself or any of my friends and relations, or to deliver them from the sorest perils, but am exposed like an outcast to the whim of anyone who chooses to give me—the dashing phrase is yours—a box on the ear; or strip me of my substance or expel me from the city; or, worst of all, put me to death; and that to be in such a case is the lowest depth of shame, as your account has it? But mine—though it has been frequently stated already, there can be no objection to my stating it once again—is this: I deny, Callicles, that to be wrongfully boxed on the ear is the deepest disgrace, or to have either my person cut or my purse; I hold that to strike or cut me or mine wrongfully is yet more of a disgrace and an evil, and likewise stealing and kidnapping and housebreaking, and in short any wrong whatsoever done to me or mine, are both worse and more shameful to the wrongdoer than to me the wronged. All this, which has been made evident in the form I have stated some way back in our foregoing discussion, is held firm and fastened—if I may put it rather bluntly—with reasons of steel and adamant (so it would seem, at least, on the face of it) which you or somebody more gallant than yourself must undo, or else accept this present statement of mine as the only possible one. For my story is ever the same, that I cannot tell how the matter stands, and yet of all whom I have encountered, before as now, no one has been able to state it otherwise without making himself ridiculous. Well now, once more I assume it to be so; but if it is so, and injustice is the greatest of evils to the wrongdoer, and still greater than this greatest, if such can be, when the wrongdoer pays no penalty, what rescue is it that a man must be able to effect for himself if he is not to be ridiculous in very truth? Is it not one which will avert from us the greatest harm? Nay, rescue must needs be at its shamefullest, if one is unable to rescue either oneself or one's own friends and relations, and second to it is inability in face of the second sort of evil, and third in face of the third, and so on with the rest; according to the gravity attaching to each evil is either the glory of being

able to effect a rescue from each sort, or the shame of being unable. Is it so or otherwise, Callicles?

CALLICLES: Not otherwise.

SOCRATES: Then of these two, doing and suffering wrong, we declare doing wrong to be the greater evil, and suffering it the less. Now with what should a man provide himself in order to come to his own rescue, and so have both of the benefits that arise from doing no wrong on the one hand, and suffering none on the other? Is it power or will? What I mean is, will a man avoid being wronged by merely wishing not to be wronged, or will he avoid it by providing himself with power to avert it?

CALLICLES: The answer to that is obvious: by means of power.

SOCRATES: But what about doing wrong? Will the mere not wishing to do it suffice—since, in that case, he will not do it—or does it require that he also provide himself with some power or art, since unless he has got such learning or training he will do wrong? I really must have your answer on this particular point, Callicles—whether you think that Polus and I were correct or not in finding ourselves forced to admit, as we did in the preceding argument, that no one does wrong of his own wish, but that all who do wrong do it against their will.

CALLICLES: Let it be as you would have it, Socrates, in order that you may come to a conclusion of your argument.

SOCRATES: Then for this purpose also, of not doing wrong, it seems we must provide ourselves with a certain power or art.

CALLICLES: To be sure.

SOCRATES: Now what can be the art of providing so that we suffer no wrong, or as little as possible? Consider if you take the same view of it as I do. For in my view it is this: one must either be a ruler, or even a despot, in one's city, or else an associate of the existing government.

CALLICLES: So you note, Socrates, how ready I am to praise, when you say a good thing? This seems to me excellently spoken.

SOCRATES: Then see if this next statement of mine strikes you as a good one too. It seems to me that the closest possible friendship between man and man is that mentioned by the sages of old time as "like to like." Do you not agree?

⁴³Socrates proceeds to recall the reproaches of Callicles, above, 486. [Tr.]

CALLICLES: I do.

SOCRATES: So where you have a savage, uneducated ruler as despot, if there were some one in the city far better than he, I suppose the despot would be afraid of him and could never become a friend to him with all his heart?

CALLICLES: That is so.

SOCRATES: Nor a friend to anyone who was much inferior to him either; for the despot would despise him and never show him the attention due to a friend.

CALLICLES: That is true also.

SOCRATES: Then the only friend of any account that remains for such a person is a man of his own temper, who blames and praises the same things, and is thus willing to be governed by him and to be subject to his rule. He is a man who will have great power in that state; him none will wrong with impunity. Is it not so?

CALLICLES: Yes.

SOCRATES: Hence if one of the young men in the city should reflect: In what way can I have great power, and no one may do me wrong?—this, it would seem, is the path he must take, to accustom himself from his earliest youth to be delighted and annoyed by the same things as his master, and contrive to be as like the other as possible. Is it not so?

CALLICLES: Yes.

SOCRATES: And so this man will have attained to a condition of suffering no wrong and having great power—as your party maintain—in the city.

CALLICLES: Certainly.

SOCRATES: And of doing no wrong likewise? Or is it quite the contrary, if he is to be like his unjust ruler, and have great influence with him? Well, for my part, I think his efforts will be all the opposite way, that is, towards enabling himself to do as much wrong as possible and to pay no penalty for the wrong he does; will they not?

CALLICLES: Apparently.

SOCRATES: And thus he will find himself possessed of the greatest evil, that of having his soul depraved and maimed as a result of his imitation of his master and the power he has got.

CALLICLES: You have a strange way of twisting your arguments, at each point, this way or that, Socrates! Surely you know that this imitator

will put to death anyone who does not imitate his master, if he pleases, and will strip him of his property.

SOCRATES: I know that, my good Callicles, if I am not deaf, as I have heard it so often of late from you and Polus, and from almost every one else in the town; but you in return must hear what I say—that he will put a man to death if he pleases, but it will be a villain slaying a good man and true.

CALLICLES: And is not this the very thing that makes one indignant?⁴⁴

SOCRATES: Not if one is a man of sense, as our argument indicates. Or do you suppose that the object of a man's efforts should be to live as long a time as possible, and to cultivate those arts which preserve us from every danger; such as that which you bid me cultivate—rhetoric, the art that preserves us in the law courts?

CALLICLES: Yes, on my word I do, and sound advice it is that I give you.

SOCRATES: But now, my excellent friend, do you think there is anything grand in the accomplishment of swimming?

CALLICLES: No, in truth, not I.

SOCRATES: Yet, you know, that too saves men from death, when they have got into a plight of the kind in which that accomplishment is needed. But if this seems to you too small a thing, I will tell you of a more important one, the art of piloting, which saves not only our lives but also our bodies and our goods from extreme perils, as rhetoric does. And at the same time it is plain-fashioned and orderly, not giving itself grand airs in a pretense of performing some transcendent feat; but in return for performing the same as the forensic art—bringing one safely over, it may be, from Aegina—it charges a fee, I believe, of two obols⁴⁵ or if it be from Egypt or the Pontus, at the very most—for this great service of bringing safe home, as I said just now, oneself and children and goods and womenfolk—on landing us in harbor it charges a couple of drachmae;⁴⁶ and the actual possessor of the art, after perform-

⁴⁴*Cf.* Callicles' warning (486 B) against the danger of being put to death on the false accusation of some paltryascal. [Tr.]

⁴⁵About fourpence. [Tr.]

⁴⁶About two shillings. [Tr.]

ing all this, goes ashore and strolls on the quay by his vessel's side, with an unobtrusive demeanor. For he knows, I expect, how to estimate the uncertainty as to which of his passengers he has benefited by not letting them be lost at sea, and which he has injured, being aware that he has put them ashore not a whit better than when they came aboard, either in body or in soul. And so he reckons out how wrong it is that, whereas a victim of severe and incurable diseases of the body who has escaped drowning is miserable in not having died, and has got no benefit at his hands, yet, if a man has many incurable diseases in that part of him so much more precious than the body, his soul, that such a person is to live, and that he will be doing him the services of saving him either from the sea or from a law court or from any other peril whatsoever: no, he knows it cannot be better for a man who is vicious to live, since he must needs live ill.

This is why it is not the custom for the pilot to give himself grand airs, though he does save our lives; nor for the engineer either, my admirable friend, who sometimes has the power of saving lives in no less degree than a general—to say nothing of a pilot—or anyone else: for at times he saves whole cities. Can you regard him as comparable with the lawyer? And yet, if he chose to speak as you people do, Callicles, magnifying his business, he would bury you in a heap of words, pleading and urging the duty of becoming engineers, as the only thing; for he would find reasons in plenty. But you nonetheless despise him and his special art, and you would call him “engineer” in a taunting sense, and would refuse either to bestow your daughter on his son or let your own son marry his daughter. And yet after the praises you sing of your own pursuits what fair ground have you for despising the engineer and the others whom I was mentioning just now? I know you would claim to be a better man and of better birth. But if “better” has not the meaning I give it, but virtue means just saving oneself and one's belongings, whatever one's character may be, you are merely ridiculous in caviling at the engineer and the doctor and every other art that has been produced for our safety. No, my gifted friend, just see if the noble and the good are not something different from saving and

being saved. For as to living any particular length of time, this is surely a thing that any true man should ignore, and not set his heart on mere life; but having resigned all this to Heaven and believing what the women say—that not one of us can escape his destiny—he should then proceed to consider in what way he will best live out his allotted span of life; whether in assimilating himself to the constitution of the state in which he may be dwelling—and so therefore now, whether it is your duty to make yourself as like as possible to the Athenian people, if you intend to win its affection and have great influence in the city: see if this is to your advantage and mine, so that we may not suffer, my distinguished friend, the fate that they say befalls the creatures who would draw down the moon—the hags of Thessaly,⁴⁷ that our choice of this power in the city may not cost us all that we hold most dear. But if you suppose that anyone in the world can transmit to you such an art as will cause you to have great power in this state without conforming to its government either for better or for worse, in my opinion you are ill-advised, Callicles; for you must be no mere imitator, but essentially like them, if you mean to achieve any genuine sort of friendship with Demus the Athenian people, ay, and I dare swear, with Demus son of Ppyrilampes⁴⁸ as well. So whoever can render you most like them is the person to make you a statesman in the way that you desire to be a statesman, and a rhetorician; for everybody is delighted with words that are designed for his special temper, but is annoyed by what is spoken to suit aliens—unless you have some other view, dear creature. Have we any objection to this, Callicles?

CALLICLES: It seems to me, I cannot tell how, that your statement is right, Socrates, but I share the common feeling; I do not quite believe you.

SOCRATES: Because the love of Demus, Callicles, is there in your soul to resist me: but if haply we come to examine these same questions more than once, and better, you will believe.

⁴⁷Socrates alludes to the popular theory that the practice of witchcraft is a serious danger or utter destruction to the practitioner. [Tr.]

⁴⁸Cf. above, 481 D. [Tr.]

Remember, however, that we said there were two treatments that might be used in the tendance of any particular thing, whether body or soul: one, making pleasure the aim in our dealings with it; the other, working for what is best, not indulging it but striving with it as hard as we can. Was not this the distinction we were making at that point?

CALLICLES: Certainly.

SOCRATES: Then the one, aiming at pleasure, is ignoble and really nothing but flattery, is it not?

CALLICLES: Be it so, if you like.

SOCRATES: And the aim of the other is to make that which we are tending, whether it be body or soul, as good as may be.

CALLICLES: To be sure.

SOCRATES: Then ought we not to make it our endeavor, in tending our city and its citizens, to make those citizens as good as possible? For without this, you see, as we found in our former argument, there is no use in offering any other service, unless the intentions of those who are going to acquire either great wealth or special authority or any other sort of power be fair and honorable. Are we to grant that?

CALLICLES: Certainly, if you so prefer.

SOCRATES: Then if you and I, Callicles, in setting about some piece of public business for the state, were to invite one another to see to the building part of it, say the most important erections either of walls or arsenals or temples, would it be our duty to consider and examine ourselves, first as to whether we understood the art of building or not, and from whom we had learned it? Would we have to do this, or not?

CALLICLES: Certainly.

SOCRATES: And so again, in the second place, whether we had ever erected any building privately for one of our friends or for ourselves, and whether such building was handsome or ugly? And if we found on consideration that we had been under good and reputable masters, and that there were many handsome buildings that had been erected by us with our masters' guidance, and many also by ourselves alone, after we had dispensed with our masters, it might, in those circumstances, be open to men of sense to enter upon public works: but if we had neither a master of ourselves to point to, nor any buildings at all,

or only a number of worthless ones, in that case surely it would be senseless to attempt public works or invite one another to take them in hand. Shall we agree to the correctness of this statement or not?

CALLICLES: Yes, to be sure.

SOCRATES: And so too with all the rest: suppose, for instance, we had undertaken the duties of state-physicians, and were to invite one another to the work as qualified doctors, we should, I presume, have first inquired of each other, I of you and you of me: Let us see now, in Heaven's name; how does Socrates himself stand as regards his body's health? Or has anyone else, slave or free, ever had Socrates to thank for ridding him of a disease? And I also, I fancy, should make the same sort of inquiry about you; and then if we found we had never been the cause of an improvement in the bodily condition of anyone, stranger or citizen, man or woman—by Heaven, Callicles, would it not in truth be ridiculous that men should descend to such folly that, before having plenty of private practice, sometimes with indifferent results, sometimes with success, and so getting adequate training in the art, they should, as the saying is, try to learn pottery by starting on a wine jar,⁴⁹ and start public practice themselves and invite others of their like to do so? Do you not think it would be mere folly to act thus?

CALLICLES: I do.

SOCRATES: And now, most excellent sir, since you are yourself just entering upon a public career, and are inviting me to do the same, and reproaching me for not doing it, shall we not inquire of one another: Let us see, has Callicles ever made any of the citizens better? Is there one who was previously wicked, unjust, licentious, and senseless, and has to thank Callicles for making him an upright, honorable man, whether stranger or citizen, bond or free? Tell me, if anyone examines you in these terms, Callicles, what will you say? What human being will you claim to have made better by your intercourse? Do you shrink from answering, if there really is some

⁴⁹That is, instead of a small pot involving little waste in case of failure. [Tr.]

work of yours in private life that can serve as a step to your public practice?

CALLICLES: You are contentious, Socrates!

SOCRATES: No, it is not from contentiousness that I ask you this, but from a real wish to know in what manner you can imagine you ought to conduct yourself as one of our public men. Or can it be, then, that you will let us see you concerning yourself with anything else in your management of the city's affairs than making us, the citizens, as good as possible? Have we not more than once already admitted that this is what the statesman ought to do? Have we admitted it or not? Answer. We have: I will answer for you. Then if this is what the good man ought to accomplish for his country, recall now those men whom you mentioned a little while ago, and tell me if you still consider that they showed themselves good citizens—Pericles and Cimon and Miltiades and Themistocles.

CALLICLES: Yes, I do.

SOCRATES: Then if they were good, clearly each of them was changing the citizens from worse to better. Was this so, or not?

CALLICLES: Yes.

SOCRATES: So when Pericles began to speak before the people, the Athenians were worse than when he made his last speeches?

CALLICLES: Perhaps.

SOCRATES: Not “perhaps,” as you say, excellent sir; it follows of necessity from what we have admitted, on the assumption that he was a good citizen.

CALLICLES: Well, what then?

SOCRATES: Nothing: but tell me one thing in addition,—whether the Athenians are said to have become better because of Pericles, or quite the contrary, to have been corrupted by him. What I, for my part, hear is that Pericles has made the Athenians idle, cowardly, talkative, and avaricious, by starting the system of public fees.⁵⁰

CALLICLES: You hear that from the folk with battered ears,⁵¹ Socrates.

⁵⁰This refers especially to the payment of dicasts or jurors, introduced by Pericles in 462–1 B.C. [Tr.]

⁵¹I.e., people who show their Spartan sympathies by an addiction to boxing; cf. *Protag.* 342 B. [Tr.]

SOCRATES: Ah, but what is no longer a matter of hearsay, but rather of certain knowledge, for you as well as for me, is that Pericles was popular at first, and the Athenians passed no degrading sentence upon him so long as they were “worse”; but as soon as they had been made upright and honorable by him, at the end of our Pericles' life they convicted him of embezzlement, and all but condemned him to death, clearly because they thought him a rogue.

CALLICLES: What then? Was Pericles a bad man on that account?

SOCRATES: Well, at any rate a herdsman in charge of asses or horses or oxen would be considered a bad one for being like that—if he took over animals that did not kick him or butt or bite, and in the result they were found to be doing all these things out of sheer wildness. Or do you not consider any keeper of any animal whatever a bad one, if he turns out the creature he received tame so much wilder than he found it? Do you, or do you not?

CALLICLES: Certainly I do, to oblige you.

SOCRATES: Then oblige me still further by answering this: is man also one of the animals, or not?

CALLICLES: Of course he is.

SOCRATES: And Pericles had charge of men?

CALLICLES: Yes.

SOCRATES: Well now, ought they not, as we admitted this moment, to have been made by him more just instead of more unjust, if he was a good statesman while he had charge of them?

CALLICLES: Certainly.

SOCRATES: And the just are gentle, as Homer said.⁵² But what say you? Is it not so?

CALLICLES: Yes.

SOCRATES: But, however, he turned them out wilder than when he took them in hand, and that against himself, the last person he would have wished them to attack.

CALLICLES: You wish me to agree with you?

SOCRATES: Yes, if you consider I am speaking the truth.

⁵²Our text of Homer contains no such saying. The nearest is that in *Od.* vi. 120, and ix. 175—ἢ ῥ' οἴγ' ὑβρισταί τε καὶ ἄγριοι, οὐδὲ δίκαιοι, “Wanton and wild are they, not just.” [Tr.]

CALLICLES: Then be it so.

SOCRATES: And if wilder, more unjust and worse?

CALLICLES: Be it so.

SOCRATES: Then Pericles was not a good statesman, by this argument.

CALLICLES: You at least say not.

SOCRATES: And you, too, I declare, by what you admitted. And now about Cimon once more, tell me, did not the people whom he tended ostracize him in order that they might not hear his voice for ten years? And Themistocles, did they not treat him in just the same way, and add the punishment of exile? And Miltiades, the hero of Marathon, they sentenced to be flung into the pit, and had it not been for the president, in he would have gone. And yet these men, had they been good in the way that you describe them, would never have met with such a fate. Good drivers, at any rate, do not keep their seat in the chariot at their first race to be thrown out later on, when they have trained their teams and acquired more skill in driving! This never occurs either in charioteering or in any other business; or do you think it does?

CALLICLES: No, I do not.

SOCRATES: So what we said before, it seems, was true, that we know of nobody who has shown himself a good statesman in this city of ours. You admitted there was nobody among those of the present day, but thought there were some among those of former times, and you gave these men the preference. But these we have found to be on a par with ours of the present day; and so, if they were orators, they employed neither the genuine art of rhetoric—else they would not have been thrown out—nor the flattering form of it.

CALLICLES: But still there can be no suggestion, Socrates, that any of the present-day men has ever achieved anything like the deeds of anyone you may choose amongst those others.

SOCRATES: My admirable friend, neither do I blame the latter, at least as servants of the state; indeed, I consider they have shown themselves more serviceable than those of our time, and more able to procure for the city the things she desired. But in diverting her desires another way instead of complying with them—in persuading

or compelling her people to what would help them to be better—they were scarcely, if at all, superior to their successors; and that is the only business of a good citizen. But in providing ships and walls and arsenals, and various other things of the sort, I do grant you that they were cleverer than our leaders. Thus you and I are doing an absurd thing in this discussion: for during all the time that we have been debating we have never ceased circling round to the same point and misunderstanding each other. I at all events believe you have more than once admitted and decided that this management of either body or soul is a twofold affair, and that on one side it is a menial service, whereby it is possible to provide meat for our bodies when they are hungry, drink when thirsty, and when they are cold, clothing, bedding, shoes, or anything else that bodies are apt to desire: I purposely give you the same illustrations, in order that you may the more easily comprehend. For as to being able to supply these things, either as a tradesman or a merchant or a manufacturer of any such actual things—baker or cook or weaver or shoemaker or tanner—it is no wonder that a man in such capacity should appear to himself and his neighbors to be a minister of the body; to every one, in fact, who is not aware that there is besides all these an art of gymnastics and medicine which really is, of course, ministrations to the body, and which actually has a proper claim to rule over all those arts and to make use of their works, because it knows what is wholesome or harmful in meat and drink to bodily excellence, whereas all those others know it not; and hence it is that, while those other arts are slavish and menial and illiberal in dealing with the body, gymnastics and medicine can fairly claim to be their mistresses. Now, that the very same is the case as regards the soul you appear to me at one time to understand to be my meaning, and you admit it as though you knew what I meant; but a little later you come and tell me that men have shown themselves upright and honorable citizens in our city, and when I ask you who, you seem to me to be putting forward men of exactly the same sort in public affairs; as if, on my asking you who in gymnastics have ever been or now are good trainers of the body, you were to tell me, in all seriousness, “Thearion,

the baker, Mithaecus, the author of the book on Sicilian cookery, Sarambus, the vintner—these have shown themselves wonderful ministers of the body; the first providing admirable loaves, the second tasty dishes, and the third wine.” Now perhaps you would be indignant should I say to you; “Sir, you know nothing about gymnastics; servants you tell me of, and caterers to appetites, fellows who have no proper and respectable knowledge of them, and who peradventure will first stuff and fatten men’s bodies to the tune of their praises, and then cause them to lose even the flesh they had to start with; and these in their turn will be too ignorant to cast the blame of their maladies and of their loss of original weight upon their regalers, but any people who chance to be by at the time and offer them some advice—just when the previous stuffing has brought, after the lapse of some time, its train of disease, since it was done without regard to what is wholesome—these are the people they will accuse and chide and harm as far as they can, while they will sing the praises of that former crew who caused the mischief. And you now, Callicles, are doing something very similar to this: you belaud men who have regaled the citizens with all the good cheer they desired. People do say they have made the city great; but that it is with the swelling of an imposthume, due to those men of the former time, this they do not perceive. For with no regard for temperance and justice they have stuffed the city with harbors and arsenals and walls and tribute and suchlike trash; and so whenever that access of debility comes they will lay the blame on the advisers who are with them at the time, and belaud Themistocles and Cimon and Pericles, who caused all the trouble; and belike they will lay hold of you, if you are not on your guard, and my good friend Alcibiades, when they are losing what they had originally as well as what they have acquired, though you are not the authors, except perhaps part-authors, of the mischief. And yet there is a senseless thing which I see happening now, and hear of, in connection with the men of former times. For I observe that whenever the state proceeds against one of her statesmen as a wrongdoer, they are indignant and protest loudly against such monstrous treatment: after all their long and valuable services to the

state they are unjustly ruined at her hands, so they protest. But the whole thing is a lie; since there is not a single case in which a ruler of a city could ever be unjustly ruined by the very city that he rules. For it is very much the same with pretenders to statesmanship as with professors of sophistry. The sophists, in fact, with all their other accomplishments, act absurdly in one point: claiming to be teachers of virtue, they often accuse their pupils of doing them an injury by cheating them of their fees and otherwise showing no recognition of the good they have done them. Now what can be more unreasonable than this plea? That men, after they have been made good and just, after all their injustice has been rooted out by their teacher and replaced by justice, should be unjust through something that they have not!⁵³ Does not this seem to you absurd, my dear friend? In truth you have forced me to make quite a harangue, Callicles, by refusing to answer.

CALLICLES: And you are the man who could not speak unless somebody answered you?

SOCRATES: Apparently I can. Just now, at any rate, I am rather extending my speeches, since you will not answer me. But in the name of friendship, my good fellow, tell me if you do not think it unreasonable for a man, while professing to have made another good, to blame him for being wicked in spite of having been made good by him and still being so?

CALLICLES: Yes, I do.

SOCRATES: Well, and you hear such things said by those who profess to give men education in virtue?

CALLICLES: I do; but what is one to say of such worthless people?

SOCRATES: And what is one to say of those who, professing to govern the state and take every care that she be as good as possible, turn

⁵³Socrates rings changes here on a well-known story involving Corax and Tisias, the first rhetoricians. In this story Tisias is depicted as Corax’s pupil, and he refuses to pay for his lessons. Corax takes him to court. Tisias argues that if the court decides against him, he should pay nothing, because obviously he has not been taught well enough to defend himself. Corax counters that if the court decides for Tisias, then obviously Tisias should pay for the lessons that enabled him to win. The case was dismissed. [Ed.]

upon her and accuse her, any time it suits them, of being utterly wicked? Do you see any difference between these men and the others? Sophist and orator, my estimable friend, are the same thing, or very much of a piece, as I was telling Polus; but you in your ignorance think the one thing, rhetoric, a very fine affair, and despise the other. Yet in reality sophistic is a finer thing than rhetoric by so much as legislation is finer than judicature, and gymnastic than medicine: in fact, for my own part, I always regarded public speakers and sophists as the only people who have no call to complain of the thing that they themselves educate, for its wickedness towards them; as otherwise they must in the same words be also charging themselves with having been of no use to those whom they say they benefit. Is it not so?

CALLICLES: Certainly.

SOCRATES: And they alone, I presume, could most likely afford to give away their services without fee, if their words were true. For when a man has received any other service, for example, if he has acquired a fast pace from a trainer's lessons, he might possibly cheat him of his due if the trainer freely offered himself and did not stipulate for a fee to be paid down by the other as nearly as possible at the moment when he imparted to him the fast pace he required; for it is not through a slow pace, I conceive, that men act unjustly, but through injustice; is it not?

CALLICLES: Yes.

SOCRATES: And so whoever removed this particular thing, injustice, need never have a fear of being unjustly treated; this benefit alone may be freely bestowed without risk, granted that one really had the power of making people good. Is it not so?

CALLICLES: I agree.

SOCRATES: Then this, it seems, is the reason why there is no disgrace in taking money for giving every other kind of advice, as about building or the rest of the arts.

CALLICLES: It does seem so.

SOCRATES: But about this business of finding the way to be as good as possible, and of managing one's own household or city for the best, it is recognized to be a disgrace for one to decline to give advice except for a payment in cash, is it not?

CALLICLES: Yes.

SOCRATES: The reason evidently being that this is the only sort of service that makes the person so served desire to do one in return; and hence it is felt to be a good sign when this service that one has done is repaid to one in kind; but when this is not so, the contrary is felt. Is the case as I say?

CALLICLES: It is.

SOCRATES: Then please specify to which of these two ministrations to the state you are inviting me—that of struggling hard, like a doctor, with the Athenians to make them as good as possible, or that of seeking to serve their wants and humor them at every turn? Tell me the truth. Callicles; for it is only right that, as you began by speaking to me frankly, you should continue to tell me what you think. So now speak out like a good, generous man.

CALLICLES: I say then, the way of seeking to serve them.

SOCRATES: So it is to a flatterer's work, most noble sir, that you invite me?

CALLICLES: Work for a mean Mysian,⁵⁴ if you prefer the name, Socrates; for unless you do as I say—

SOCRATES: Do not tell me, what you have so often repeated, that anyone who pleases will put me to death, lest I on my side should have to tell you that it will be a villain killing a good man; nor that anyone may strip me of whatever I have, lest I should have to say in my turn: Well, but when he has stripped me, he will not know what use to make of his spoil, but as he stripped me unjustly so will he use his spoil unjustly, and if unjustly, foully, and if foully, ill.

CALLICLES: It quite strikes me, Socrates, that you believe not one of these troubles could befall you, as though you dwelt out of the way, and could never be dragged into a law court by some perhaps utterly paltry rascal.

SOCRATES: Then I am a fool, Callicles, in truth, if I do not suppose that in this city anyone, whoever he was, might find himself, as luck should have it, in any sort of plight. Of one thing,

⁵⁴The Mysians, like the Carians (*cf. Euthyd.* 285 c), were regarded as the lowest of the low. Callicles heatedly taunts Socrates with putting the matter in its worst light. [Tr.]

however, I am sure—that if ever I am brought before the court and stand in any such danger as you mention, it will be some villain who brings me there, for no honest man would prosecute a person who had done no wrong; and it would be no marvel if I were put to death. Would you like me to tell you my reason for expecting this?

CALLICLES: Do, by all means.

SOCRATES: I think I am one of few, not to say the only one, in Athens who attempts the true art of statesmanship, and the only man of the present time who manages affairs of state: hence, as the speeches that I make from time to time are not aimed at gratification, but at what is best instead of what is most pleasant, and as I do not care to deal in “these pretty toys”⁵⁵ that you recommend, I shall have not a word to say at the bar. The same case that I made out to Polus will apply to me; for I shall be like a doctor tried by a bench of children on a charge brought by a cook.⁵⁶ Just consider what defense a person like that would make at such a pass, if the prosecutor should speak against him thus: “Children, this fellow has done you all a great deal of personal mischief, and he destroys even the youngest of you by cutting and burning, and starves and chokes you to distraction, giving you nasty bitter drafts and forcing you to fast and thirst; not like me, who used to gorge you with abundance of nice things of every sort.” What do you suppose a doctor brought to this sad pass could say for himself? Or if he spoke the truth—“All this I did, my boys, for your health”—how great, think you, would be the outcry from such a bench as that? A loud one, would it not?

CALLICLES: I daresay: one must suppose so.

SOCRATES: Then you suppose he would be utterly at a loss what to say?

CALLICLES: Quite so.

SOCRATES: Such, however, I am sure would be my own fate if I were brought before the court. For not only shall I have no pleasures to plead as having been provided by me—which they regard as services and benefits, whereas I envy neither

those who provide them nor those for whom they are provided—but if anyone alleges that I either corrupt the younger men by reducing them to perplexity, or revile the older with bitter expressions whether in private or in public, I shall be unable either to tell the truth and say—“It is on just grounds that I say all this, and it is your interest that I serve thereby, gentlemen of the jury”—or to say anything else; and so I dare say any sort of thing, as luck may have it, will befall me.

CALLICLES: Then do you think, Socrates, that a man in such a case and with no power of standing up for himself makes a fine figure in a city?

SOCRATES: Yes, if he had that one resource, Callicles, which you have repeatedly admitted; if he had stood up for himself by avoiding any unjust word or deed in regard either to men or to gods. For this has been repeatedly admitted by us to be the most valuable kind of self-protection. Now if I were convicted of inability to extend this sort of protection to either myself or another, I should be ashamed, whether my conviction took place before many or few, or as between man and man; and if that inability should bring about my death, I should be sorely vexed: but if I came to my end through a lack of flattering rhetoric, I am quite sure you would see me take my death easily. For no man fears the mere act of dying, except he be utterly irrational and unmanly; doing wrong is what one fears: for to arrive in the nether world having one’s soul full fraught with a heap of misdeeds is the uttermost of all evils. And now, if you do not mind, I would like to tell you a tale to show you that the case is so.

CALLICLES: Well, as you have completed the rest of the business, go on and complete this also.

SOCRATES: Give ear then, as they say, to a right fine story, which you will regard as a fable, I fancy, but I as an actual account; for what I am about to tell you I mean to offer as the truth. By Homer’s account, Zeus, Poseidon, and Pluto divided the sovereignty among them when they took it over from their father. Now in the time of Cronos there was a law concerning mankind, and it holds to this very day among the gods, that every man who has passed a just and holy life departs after his decease to the Isles of the Blessed,

⁵⁵Socrates retorts the phrase of Euripides, which Callicles applied (above, 486 c to philosophic debate, upon the practical pursuits which Callicles recommended. [Tr.]

⁵⁶Cf. 464 d. [Tr.]

and dwells in all happiness apart from ill; but whoever has lived unjustly and impiously goes to the dungeon of requital and penance which, you know, they call Tartarus. Of these men there were judges in Cronos' time, and still of late in the reign of Zeus—living men to judge the living upon the day when each was to breathe his last; and thus the cases were being decided amiss. So Pluto and the overseers from the Isles of the Blessed came before Zeus with the report that they found men passing over to either abode undeserving. Then spake Zeus: "Nay," said he, "I will put a stop to these proceedings. The cases are now indeed judged ill; and it is because they who are on trial are tried in their clothing, for they are tried alive. Now many," said he, "who have wicked souls are clad in fair bodies and ancestry and wealth, and at their judgment appear many witnesses to testify that their lives have been just. Now, the judges are confounded not only by their evidence but at the same time by being clothed themselves while they sit in judgment, having their own soul muffled in the veil of eyes and ears and the whole body. Thus all these are a hindrance to them, their own habiliments no less than those of the judged. Well, first of all," he said, "we must put a stop to their foreknowledge of their death; for this they at present foreknow. However, Prometheus has already been given the word to stop this in them. Next they must be stripped bare of all those things before they are tried; for they must stand their trial dead. Their judge also must be naked, dead, beholding with very soul the very soul of each immediately upon his death, bereft of all his kin and having left behind on earth all that fine array, to the end that the judgment may be just. Now I, knowing all this before you, have appointed sons of my own to be judges; two from Asia, Minos and Rhadamanthus, and one from Europe, Aeacus. These, when their life is ended, shall give judgment in the meadow at the dividing of the road, whence are the two ways leading, one to the Isles of the Blessed, and the other to Tartarus. And those who come from Asia shall Rhadamanthus try, and those from Europe, Aeacus; and to Minos I will give the privilege of the final decision, if the other two be in any doubt; that the judgment upon this journey of mankind may be supremely just."

This, Callicles, is what I have heard and believe to be true; and from these stories, on my reckoning, we must draw some such moral as this: death, as it seems to me, is actually nothing but the disconnection of two things, the soul and the body, from each other. And so when they are disconnected from one another, each of them keeps its own condition very much as it was when the man was alive, the body having its own nature, with its treatments and experiences all manifest upon it. For instance, if anyone's body was large by nature or by feeding or by both when he was alive, his corpse will be large also when he is dead; and if he was fat, it will be fat too after his death, and so on for the rest; or again, if he used to follow the fashion of long hair, long-haired also will be his corpse. Again, if anyone had been a sturdy rogue, and bore traces of his stripes in scars on his body, either from the whip or from other wounds, while yet alive, then after death too his body has these marks visible upon it; or if anyone's limbs were broken or distorted in life, these same effects are manifest in death. In a word, whatever sort of bodily appearance a man had acquired in life, that is manifest also after his death either wholly or in the main for some time. And so it seems to me that the same is the case with the soul too, Callicles: when a man's soul is stripped bare of the body, all its natural gifts, and the experiences added to that soul as the result of his various pursuits, are manifest in it. So when they have arrived in presence of their judge, they of Asia before Rhadamanthus, these Rhadamanthus sets before him and surveys the soul of each, not knowing whose it is; nay, often when he has laid hold of the Great King or some other prince or potentate, he perceives the utter unhealthiness of his soul, striped all over with the scourge, and a mass of wounds, the work of perjuries and injustice; where every act has left its smirch upon his soul, where all is awry through falsehood and imposture, and nothing straight because of a nurture that knew not truth: or, as the result of an unbridled course of fastidiousness, insolence, and incontinence, he finds the soul full fraught with disproportion and ugliness. Beholding this he sends it away in dishonor straight to the place of custody, where on its arrival it is to endure the

sufferings that are fitting. And it is fitting that every one under punishment rightly inflicted on him by another should either be made better and profit thereby, or serve as an example to the rest, that others seeing the sufferings he endures may in fear amend themselves. Those who are benefited by the punishment they get from gods and men are they who have committed remediable offenses; but still it is through bitter throes of pain that they receive their benefit both here and in the nether world; for in no other way can there be riddance of iniquity. But of those who have done extreme wrong and, as a result of such crimes, have become incurable, of those are the examples made; no longer are they profited at all themselves, since they are incurable, but others are profited who behold them undergoing for their transgressions the greatest, sharpest, and most fearful sufferings evermore, actually hung up as examples there in the infernal dungeon, a spectacle and a lesson to such of the wrongdoers as arrive from time to time. Among them I say Archelaus also will be found, if what Polus tells us is true, and every other despot of his sort. And I think, moreover, that most of these examples have come from despots and kings and potentates and public administrators; for these, since they have a free hand, commit the greatest and most impious offenses. Homer also testifies to this; for he has represented kings and potentates as those who are punished everlastingly in the nether world—Tantalus and Sisyphus and Tityus; but Thersites, or any other private person who was wicked, has been portrayed by none as incurable and therefore subjected to heavy punishment; no doubt because he had not a free hand, and therefore was in fact happier than those who had. For in fact, Callicles, it is among the powerful that we find the specially wicked men. Still there is nothing to prevent good men being found even among these, and it deserves our special admiration when they are; for it is hard, Callicles, and deserving of no slight praise, when a man with a perfectly free hand for injustice lives always a just life. The men of this sort are but few; for indeed there have been, and I expect there yet will be, both here and elsewhere, men of honor and excellence in this virtue of administering justly what is committed to their charge. One in fact

there has been whose fame stands high among us and throughout the rest of Greece, Aristeides, son of Lysimachus; but most of those in power, my excellent friend, prove to be bad. So, as I was saying, whenever the judge Rhadamanthus had to deal with such a one, he knows nothing else of him at all, neither who he is nor of what descent, but only that he is a wicked person; and on perceiving this he sends him away to Tartarus, first setting a mark on him to show whether he deems it a curable or an incurable case; and when the man arrives there he suffers what is fitting. Sometimes, when he discerns another soul that has lived a holy life in company with truth, a private man's or any other's—especially, as I claim, Callicles, a philosopher's who has minded his own business and not been a busybody in his lifetime—he is struck with admiration and sends it off to the Isles of the Blessed. And exactly the same is the procedure of Aeacus: each of these two holds a rod in his hand as he gives judgment; but Minos sits as supervisor, distinguished by the golden scepter that he holds, as Odysseus in Homer tells how he saw him—

Holding a golden scepter, speaking dooms to the dead.

Now for my part, Callicles, I am convinced by these accounts, and I consider how I may be able to show my judge that my soul is in the best of health. So giving the go-by to the honors that most men seek I shall try, by inquiry into the truth, to be really good in as high a degree as I am able, both in my life and, when I come to die, in my death. And I invite all other men likewise, to the best of my power, and you particularly I invite in return⁵⁷ to this life and this contest, which I say is worth all other contests on this earth; and I make it a reproach to *you*, that you will not be able to deliver yourself when your trial comes and the judgment of which I told you just now; but when you go before your judge, the son of Aegina,⁵⁸ and he grips you and drags you up, you will gape and feel dizzy there no less

⁵⁷I.e., in return for Callicles' invitation to him to pursue the life of rhetoric and politics, 521 A. [Tr.]

⁵⁸Aegina, daughter of the river god Asopus, was the mother of Aeacus by Zeus. [Tr.]

than I do here, and some one perhaps will give you, yes, a degrading box on the ear, and will treat you with every kind of contumely.

Possibly, however, you regard this as an old wife's tale, and despise it; and there would be no wonder in our despising it if with all our searching we could somewhere find anything better and truer than this: but as it is, you observe that you three, who are the wisest of the Greeks in our day—you and Polus and Gorgias—are unable to prove that we ought to live any other life than this, which is evidently advantageous also in the other world. But among the many statements we have made, while all the rest are refuted this one alone is unshaken—that doing wrong is to be more carefully shunned than suffering it; that above all things a man should study not to seem but to be good both in private and in public; that if one becomes bad in any respect one must be corrected; that this is good in the second place,—next to being just, to become so and to be corrected by paying the penalty; and that every kind of flattery, with regard either to oneself or to others, to few or to many, must be avoided; and that rhetoric is to be used for this one purpose always, of pointing to what is just, and so in every other

activity. Take my advice, therefore, and follow me where, if you once arrive, you will be happy both in life and after life's end, as this account declares. And allow anyone to contemn you as a fool and foully maltreat you if he chooses; yes, by Heaven, and suffer undaunted the shock of that ignominious cuff; for you will come to no harm if you be really a good and upright man, practicing virtue. And afterwards having practiced it together, we shall in due course, if we deem it right, embark on politics, or proceed to consult on whatever we may think fit, being then better equipped for such counsel than we are now. For it is disgraceful that men in such a condition as we now appear to be in should put on a swaggering, important air when we never continue to be of the same mind upon the same questions, and those the greatest of all—we are so sadly uneducated. Let us therefore take as our guide the doctrine now disclosed, which indicates to us that this way of life is best—to live and die in the practice alike of justice and of all other virtue. This then let us follow, and to this invite every one else; not that to which you trust yourself and invite me, for it is nothing worth, Callicles.

Phaedrus

or On the Beautiful; *Ethical*

SOCRATES: Dear Phaedrus,¹ whither away, and where do you come from?

PHAEDRUS: From Lysias,² Socrates, the son of Cephalus; and I am going for a walk outside the wall. For I spent a long time there with Lysias,

Translated by H. N. Fowler.

¹Phaedrus, who appears in several dialogues as a follower of Socrates, is said by one classical source to have been Plato's favorite among his fellow students. [Ed.]

²Lysias, one of the Ten Attic Orators, was noted for his flowing and limpid style, which is represented accurately in the speech attributed to him here. Plato may have composed it, however. [Ed.]

sitting since early morning; and on the advice of your friend and mine, Acumenus, I am taking my walk on the roads; for he says they are less fatiguing than the streets.

SOCRATES: He is right, my friend. Then Lysias, it seems, was in the city?

PHAEDRUS: Yes, at Epicrates' house, the one that belonged to Morychus, near the Olympieum.

SOCRATES: What was your conversation? But it is obvious that Lysias entertained you with his speeches.

PHAEDRUS: You shall hear, if you have leisure to walk along and listen.

SOCRATES: What? Don't you believe that I consider hearing your conversation with Lysias

“a greater thing even than business,” as Pindar says?³

PHAEDRUS: Lead on, then.

SOCRATES: Speak.

PHAEDRUS: Indeed, Socrates, you are just the man to hear it. For the discourse about which we conversed, was in a way, a love-speech. For Lysias has represented one of the beauties being tempted, but not by a lover; this is just the clever thing about it; for he says that favors should be granted rather to the one who is not in love than to the lover.

SOCRATES: O noble Lysias! I wish he would write that they should be granted to the poor rather than to the rich, to the old rather than to the young, and so of all the other qualities that I and most of us have; for truly his discourse would be witty and of general utility. I am so determined to hear you, that I will not leave you, even if you extend your walk to Megara, and, as Herodicus says, go to the wall and back again.⁴

PHAEDRUS: What are you saying, my dear Socrates? Do you suppose that I, who am a mere ordinary man, can tell from memory, in a way that is worthy of Lysias, what he, the cleverest writer of our day, composed at his leisure and took a long time for? Far from it; and yet I would rather have that ability than a good sum of money.

SOCRATES: O Phaedrus! If I don't know Phaedrus, I have forgotten myself. But since neither of these things is true, I know very well that when listening to Lysias he did not hear once only, but often urged him to repeat; and he gladly obeyed. Yet even that was not enough for Phaedrus, but at last he borrowed the book and read what he especially wished, and doing this he sat from early morning. Then, when he grew tired, he went for a walk, with the speech, as I believe, by the Dog, learned by heart, unless it was very

³Pindar *Isthm.* i. 1. Μᾶτερ ἐμά, τὸ τεόν, χρύσασπι Θήβα, πράγμα καὶ ἀσχολίας ὑπέρτερον θήσομαι. “My mother, Thebes of the golden shield, I will consider thy interest greater even than business.” [Tr.]

⁴Herodicus, Sch.: ἰατρὸς ἦν καὶ τὰ γυμνάσια ἔξω τείχους ἐποίητο, ἀρχόμενος ἀπὸ τῶς διαστήματος οὐ μακροῦ ἀλλὰ συμμετρῶν, ἄχρι τοῦ τείχους, καὶ ἀναστρέφων. “He was a physician and exercised outside the wall, beginning at some distance, not great but moderate, going as far as the wall and turning back.” [Tr.]

long. And he was going outside the wall to practice it. And meeting the man who is sick with the love of discourse, he was glad when he saw him, because he would have someone to share his revel, and told him to lead on. But when the lover of discourse asked him to speak, he feigned coyness, as if he did not yearn to speak; at last, however, even if no one would listen willingly, he was bound to speak whether or no. So, Phaedrus, ask him to do now what he will presently do anyway.

PHAEDRUS: Truly it is best for me to speak as I may; since it is clear that you will not let me go until I speak somehow or other.

SOCRATES: You have a very correct idea about me.

PHAEDRUS: Then this is what I will do. Really, Socrates, I have not at all learned the words by heart; but I will repeat the general sense of the whole, the points in which he said the lover was superior to the nonlover, giving them in summary, one after the other, beginning with the first.

SOCRATES: Yes, my dear, when you have first shown me what you have in your left hand, under your cloak. For I suspect you have the actual discourse. And if that is the case, believe this of me, that I am very fond of you, but when Lysias is here I have not the slightest intention of lending you my ears to practice on. Come now, show it.

PHAEDRUS: Stop. You have robbed me of the hope I had of practicing on you. But where shall we sit and read?

SOCRATES: Let us turn aside here and go along the Ilissus; then we can sit down quietly wherever we please.

PHAEDRUS: I am fortunate, it seems, in being barefoot; you are so always. It is easiest then for us to go along the brook with our feet in the water, and it is not unpleasant, especially at this time of the year and the day.

SOCRATES: Lead on then, and look out for a good place where we may sit.

PHAEDRUS: Do you see that very tall plane tree?

SOCRATES: What of it?

PHAEDRUS: There is shade there and a moderate breeze and grass to sit on, or, if we like, to lie down on.

SOCRATES: Lead the way.

PHAEDRUS: Tell me, Socrates, is it not from some place along here by the Ilissus that Boreas is said to have carried off Oreithyia?

SOCRATES: Yes, that is the story.

PHAEDRUS: Well, is it from here? The streamlet looks very pretty and pure and clear and fit for girls to play by.

SOCRATES: No, the place is about two or three furlongs farther down, where you cross over to the precinct of Agra; and there is an altar of Boreas somewhere thereabouts.

PHAEDRUS: I have never noticed it. But, for Heaven's sake, Socrates, tell me; do you believe this tale is true?

SOCRATES: If I disbelieved, as the wise men do, I should not be extraordinary; then I might give a rational explanation, that a blast of Boreas, the north wind, pushed her off the neighboring rocks as she was playing with Pharmacea, and that when she had died in this manner she was said to have been carried off by Boreas.⁵ But I, Phaedrus, think such explanations are very pretty in general, but are the inventions of a very clever and laborious and not altogether enviable man, for no other reason than because after this he must explain the forms of the Centaurs, and then that of the Chimaera, and there presses in upon him a whole crowd of such creatures, Gorgons and Pegasi, and multitudes of strange, inconceivable, portentous natures. If anyone disbelieves in these, and with a rustic sort of wisdom, undertakes to explain each in accordance with probability, he will need a great deal of leisure. But I have no leisure for them at all; and the reason, my friend, is this: I am not yet able, as the Delphic inscription has it, to know myself; so it seems to me ridiculous, when I do not yet know that, to investigate irrelevant things. And so I dismiss these matters and accepting the customary belief about them, as I was saying just now, I investigate not these things, but myself, to know whether I am a monster more complicated and more furious than Typhon or a gentler and sim-

⁵The MSS. insert here ἢ ἐξ Ἀρείου πάγου λέγεται γὰρ αὐτῆς οὕτως ὁ λόγος, ὡς ἐχέθη ἀλλ' οὐχ ἐνθένδε ἤρπασθη, "or from the Areopagus, for this story is also told, that she was carried off from there and not from here." Schanz follows Bast and many editors in rejecting this as a gloss. [Tr.]

pler creature, to whom a divine and quiet lot is given by nature. But, my friend, while we were talking, is not this the tree to which you were leading us?

PHAEDRUS: Yes, this is it.

SOCRATES: By Hera, it is a charming resting place. For this plane tree is very spreading and lofty, and the tall and shady willow is very beautiful, and it is in full bloom, so as to make the place most fragrant; then, too, the spring is very pretty as it flows under the plane tree, and its water is very cool, to judge by my foot. And it seems to be a sacred place of some nymphs and of Achelous, judging by the figurines and statues. Then again, if you please, how lovely and perfectly charming the breeziness of the place is! and it resounds with the shrill summer music of the chorus of cicadas.⁶ But the most delightful thing of all is the grass, as it grows on the gentle slope, thick enough to be just right when you lay your head on it. So you have guided the stranger most excellently, dear Phaedrus.

PHAEDRUS: You are an amazing and most remarkable person. For you really do seem exactly like a stranger who is being guided about, and not like a native. You don't go away from the city out over the border, and it seems to me you don't go outside the walls at all.

SOCRATES: Forgive me, my dear friend. You see, I am fond of learning. Now the country places and the trees won't teach me anything, and the people in the city do. But you seem to have found the charm to bring me out. For as people lead hungry animals by shaking in front of them a branch of leaves or some fruit, just so, I think, you, by holding before me discourses in books, will lead me all over Attica and wherever else you please. So now that I have come here, I intend to lie down, and do you choose the position in which you think you can read most easily, and read.

PHAEDRUS: Hear then.

You know what my condition is, and you have heard how I think it is to our advantage to arrange these matters. And I claim that I ought not to be refused what I ask because I am not

⁶The cicadas' song suggests the presence of the Muses on this spot. [Ed.]

your lover. For lovers repent of the kindnesses they have done when their passion ceases; but there is no time when nonlovers naturally repent. For they do kindnesses to the best of their ability, not under compulsion, but of their free will, according to their view of their own best interest. And besides, lovers consider the injury they have done to their own concerns on account of their love, and the benefits they have conferred, and they add the trouble they have had, and so they think they have long ago made sufficient return to the beloved; but nonlovers cannot aver neglect of their own affairs because of their condition, nor can they take account of the pains they have been at in the past, nor lay any blame for quarrels with their relatives; and so, since all these evils are removed, there is nothing left for them but to do eagerly what they think will please the beloved. And besides, if lovers ought to be highly esteemed because they say they have the greatest love for the objects of their passion, since both by word and deed they are ready to make themselves hated by others to please the beloved, it is easy to see that, if what they say is true, whenever they fall in love afterwards, they will care for the new love more than for the old and will certainly injure the old love, if that pleases the new. And how can one reasonably entrust matters of such importance to one who is afflicted with a disease such that no one of any experience would even try to cure it? For they themselves confess that they are insane, rather than in their right mind, and that they know they are foolish, but cannot control themselves; and so, how could they, when they have come to their senses, think those acts were good which they determined upon when in such a condition? And if you were to choose the best from among your lovers, your choice would be limited to a few; whereas it would be made from a great number, if you chose the most congenial from nonlovers, so that you would have a better chance, in choosing among many, of finding the one most worthy of your affection.

Now if you are afraid of public opinion, and fear that if people find out your love affair you will be disgraced, consider that lovers, believing that others would be as envious of them as they are of others, are likely to be excited by posses-

sion and in their pride to show everybody that they have not toiled in vain; but the nonlovers, since they have control of their feelings, are likely to choose what is really best, rather than to court the opinion of mankind. Moreover, many are sure to notice and see the lovers going about with their beloved ones and making that their chief business, and so, when they are seen talking with each other, people think they are met in connection with some love-matter either past or future; but no one ever thinks of finding fault with nonlovers because they meet, since everyone knows that one must converse with somebody, either because of friendship or because it is pleasant for some other reason. And then, too, if you are frightened by the thought that it is hard for friendship to last, and that under other circumstances any quarrel would be an equal misfortune to both, but that when you have surrendered what you prize most highly you would be the chief sufferer, it would be reasonable for you to be more afraid of the lovers; for they are pained by many things and they think everything that happens is done for the sake of hurting them. Therefore they prevent their loves from associating with other men, for they fear the wealthy, lest their money give them an advantage, and the educated, lest they prove superior in intellect; and they are on their guard against the influence of everyone who possesses any other good thing. If now they persuade you to incur the dislike of all these, they involve you in a dearth of friends, and if you consider your own interest and are more sensible than they, you will have to quarrel with them. But those who are not in love, but who have gained the satisfaction of their desires because of their merit, would not be jealous of those who associated with you, but would hate those who did not wish to do so, thinking that you are slighted by these last and benefited by the former, so that there is much more likelihood that they will gain friendship than enmity from their love affair with you.

And then, too, many lovers are moved by physical passion before they know the character or have become acquainted with the connections of the beloved, so that it is uncertain whether they will wish to be your friends after their passion has ceased. But in the case of those who are

not in love, who were your friends before entering into the closer relation, the favors received are not likely to make the friendship less, but will remain as pledges of future joys. And then, too, it will be better for your character to yield to me than to a lover. For lovers praise your words and acts beyond due measure, partly through fear of incurring your displeasure, and partly because their own judgment is obscured by their passion. For such are the exhibitions of the power of Love: he makes the unsuccessful lovers think that things are grievous which cause no pain to others, and he compels the successful to praise what ought not to give pleasure; therefore those whom they love are more to be pitied than envied. But if you yield to me, I shall consort with you, not with a view to present pleasure only, but to future advantage also, not being overcome by passion but in full control of myself, and not taking up violent enmity because of small matters, but slowly gathering little anger when the transgressions are great, forgiving involuntary wrongs and trying to prevent intentional ones; for these are the proofs of a friendship that will endure for a long time. But if you have a notion that friendship cannot be firm unless one is in love, you should bear in mind that in that case we should not have great affection for sons or for fathers and mothers, nor should we possess faithful friends who have been gained not through passion but through associations of a different kind.

Besides, if you ought to grant favors to those who ask for them most eagerly, you ought in other matters also to confer benefits, not on the best, but on the most needy; for they will be most grateful, since they are relieved of the greatest ills. And then, too, at private entertainments you ought not to invite your friends, but beggars and those who need a meal; for they will love you and attend you and come to your doors and be most pleased and grateful, and will call down many blessings upon your head. Perhaps, however, you ought not to grant favors to those who beg for them, but to those who are most able to repay you; and not to those who ask merely, but to the most deserving; and not to those who will enjoy your youthful beauty, but to those who will share their good things with you when you are older; and not to those who, when they have suc-

ceeded, will boast to others of their success, but to those who will modestly keep it a secret from all; and not to those who will be enamored for a little while, but to those who will be your friends for life; and not to those who will seek a pretext for a quarrel when their passion has died out, but to those who will show their own merit when your youth is passed. Do you, then, remember what I have said, and bear this also in mind, that lovers are admonished by their friends, who think their way of life is bad, but no relative ever blamed a nonlover for bad management of his own interests on account of that condition.

Perhaps you may ask me if I advise you to grant favors to all nonlovers. But I think the lover would not urge you to be so disposed toward all lovers either; for the favor, if scattered broadcast, is not so highly prized by the rational recipient, nor can you, if you wish, keep your relations with one hidden from the rest. But from love no harm ought to come, but benefit to both parties. Now I think I have said enough. But if you feel any lack, or think anything has been omitted, ask questions.

What do you think of the discourse, Socrates? Is it not wonderful, especially in diction?

SOCRATES: More than that, it is miraculous, my friend; I am quite overcome by it. And this is due to you, Phaedrus, because as I looked at you, I saw that you were delighted by the speech as you read. So, thinking that you know more than I about such matters, I followed in your train and joined you in the divine frenzy.

PHAEDRUS: Indeed! So you see fit to make fun of it?

SOCRATES: Do I seem to you to be joking and not to be in earnest?

PHAEDRUS: Do not jest, Socrates, but, in the name of Zeus, the god of friendship, tell me truly, do you think any other of the Greeks could speak better or more copiously than this on the same subject?

SOCRATES: What? Are you and I to praise the discourse because the author has said what he ought, and not merely because all the expressions are clear and well rounded and finely turned? For if that is expected, I must grant it for your sake, since, because of my stupidity, I did not notice it. I was attending only to the rhetorical manner,

and I thought even Lysias himself would not think that satisfactory. It seemed to me, Phaedrus, unless you disagree, that he said the same thing two or three times, as if he did not find it easy to say many things about one subject, or perhaps he did not care about such a detail; and he appeared to be in youthful fashion to be exhibiting his ability to say the same thing in two different ways and in both ways excellently.

PHAEDRUS: Nonsense, Socrates! Why that is the especial merit of the discourse. He has omitted none of the points that belong to the subject, so that nobody could ever speak about it more exhaustively or worthily than he has done.

SOCRATES: There I must cease to agree with you; for the wise men and women of old, who have spoken and written about these matters, will rise up to confute me, if, to please you, I assent.

PHAEDRUS: Who are they? And where have you heard anything better than this?

SOCRATES: I cannot say, just at this moment; but I certainly must have heard something, either from the lovely Sappho or the wise Anacreon, or perhaps from some prose writers. What ground have I for saying so? Why, my dear friend, I feel that my own bosom is full, and that I could make another speech, different from this and quite as good. Now I am conscious of my own ignorance, and I know very well that I have never invented these things myself, so the only alternative is that I have been filled through the ears, like a pitcher, from the well springs of another; but, again because of my stupidity, I have forgotten how and from whom I heard it.

PHAEDRUS: Most noble Socrates, that is splendid! Don't tell, even if I beg you, how or from whom you heard it; only do as you say; promise to make another speech better than that in the book and no shorter and quite different. Then I promise, like the nine archons, to set up at Delphi a statue as large as life, not only of myself, but of you also.

SOCRATES: You are a darling and truly golden,⁷ Phaedrus, if you think I mean that Lysias has failed in every respect and that I can

⁷Truly golden: The statues Phaedrus is promising, like those erected to honor winners in the Olympic games, would be of gold. A gold statue of Gorgias was erected at Delphi. [Ed.]

compose a discourse containing nothing that he has said. That, I fancy, could not happen even to the worst writer. For example, to take the subject of his speech, who do you suppose, in arguing that the nonlover ought to be more favored than the lover, could omit praise of the nonlover's calm sense and blame of the lover's unreason, which are inevitable arguments, and then say something else instead? No, such arguments, I think, must be allowed and excused; and in these the arrangement, not the invention, is to be praised; but in the case of arguments which are not inevitable and are hard to discover, the invention deserves praise as well as the arrangement.

PHAEDRUS: I concede your point, for I think what you say is reasonable. So I will make this concession: I will allow you to begin with the premise that the lover is more distraught than the nonlover; and if you speak on the remaining points more copiously and better than Lysias, without saying the same things, your statue of beaten metal shall stand at Olympia beside the offering of the Cypselids.

SOCRATES: Have you taken my jest in earnest, Phaedrus, because, to tease you, I laid hands on your beloved, and do you really suppose I am going to try to surpass the rhetoric of Lysias and make a speech more ingenious than his?

PHAEDRUS: Now, my friend, you have given me a fair hold; for you certainly must speak as best you can, lest we be compelled to resort to the comic "you're another"; be careful and do not force me to say "O Socrates, if I don't know Socrates, I have forgotten myself," and "he yearned to speak, but feigned coyness." Just make up your mind that we are not going away from here until you speak out what you said you had in your breast. We are along in a solitary spot, and I am stronger and younger than you; so, under these circumstances, take my meaning, and speak voluntarily, rather than under compulsion.

SOCRATES: But, my dear Phaedrus, I shall make myself ridiculous if I, a mere amateur, try without preparation to speak on the same subject in competition with a master of his art.

PHAEDRUS: Now listen to me. Stop trying to fool me; for I can say something which will force you to speak.

SOCRATES: Then pray don't say it.

PHAEDRUS: Yes, but I will. And my saying shall be an oath. I swear to you by—by what god? By this plane tree? I take my solemn oath that unless you produce the discourse in the very presence of this plane tree, I will never read you another or tell you of another.

SOCRATES: Oh! Oh! You wretch! How well you found out how to make a lover of discourse do your will!

PHAEDRUS: Then why do you try to get out of it?

SOCRATES: I won't anymore, since you have taken this oath; for how could I give up such pleasures?

PHAEDRUS: Speak then.

SOCRATES: Do you know what I'm going to do?

PHAEDRUS: About what?

SOCRATES: I'm going to keep my head wrapped up while I talk, that I may get through my discourse as quickly as possible and that I may not look at you and become embarrassed.

PHAEDRUS: Only speak, and in other matters suit yourself.

SOCRATES: Come then, O tuneful Muses, whether ye receive this name from the quality of your song or from the musical race of the Ligyans, grant me your aid in the tale this most excellent man compels me to relate, that his friend whom he has hitherto considered wise, may seem to him wiser still.

Now there was once upon a time a boy, or rather a stripling, of great beauty: and he had many lovers. And among these was one of peculiar craftiness, who was as much in love with the boy as anyone, but had made him believe that he was not in love; and once in wooing him, he tried to persuade him of this very thing, that favors ought to be granted rather to the nonlover than to the lover; and his words were as follows:

There is only one way, dear boy, for those to begin who are to take counsel wisely about anything. One must know what the counsel is about, or it is sure to be utterly futile, but most people are ignorant of the fact that they do not know the nature of things. So, supposing that they do not know it, they come to no agreement in the beginning of their enquiry, and as they go on they reach the natural result—they agree neither with themselves nor with each other. Now you and I must not fall into the error which we condemn in

others, but, since we are to discuss the question, whether the lover or the nonlover is to be preferred let us first agree on a definition of love, its nature and its power, and then, keeping this definition in view and making constant reference to it, let us enquire whether love brings advantage or harm. Now everyone sees that love is a desire; and we know too that nonlovers also desire the beautiful. How then are we to distinguish the lover from the nonlover? We must observe that in each one of us there are two ruling and leading principles, which we follow whithersoever they lead; one is the innate desire for pleasures, the other an acquired opinion which strives for the best. These two sometimes agree within us and are sometimes in strife; and sometimes one, and sometimes the other has the greater power. Now when opinion leads through reason toward the best and is more powerful, its power is called self-restraint, but when desire irrationally drags us toward pleasures and rules within us, its rule is called excess. Now excess has many names, for it has many members and many forms; and whichever of these forms is most marked gives its own name, neither beautiful nor honorable, to him who possesses it. For example, if the desire for food prevails over the higher reason and the other desires, it is called gluttony, and he who possesses it will be called by the corresponding name of glutton, and again, if the desire for drink becomes the tyrant and leads him who possesses it toward drink, we know what he is called; and it is quite clear what fitting names of the same sort will be given when any desire akin to these acquires the rule. The reason for what I have said hitherto is pretty clear by this time, but everything is plainer when spoken than when unspoken; so I say that the desire which overcomes the rational opinion that strives toward the right, and which is led away toward the enjoyment of beauty and again is strongly forced by the desires that are kindred to itself toward personal beauty, when it gains the victory, takes its name from that very force, and is called love.⁸

Well, my dear Phaedrus, does it seem to you, as it does to me, that I am inspired?

⁸This somewhat fanciful statement is based on a supposed etymological connection between ἔρως and ῥώμη, ἐρρωμένως, ῥωσθεῖνα. [Tr.]

PHAEDRUS: Certainly, Socrates, you have an unusual fluency.

SOCRATES: Then listen to me in silence; for truly the place seems filled with a divine presence; so do not be surprised if I often seem to be in a frenzy as my discourse progresses, for I am already almost uttering dithyrambics.

PHAEDRUS: That is very true.

SOCRATES: You are responsible for that; but hear what follows; for perhaps the attack may be averted. That, however, is in the hands of God; we must return to our boy.

Well, then, my dearest, what the subject is, about which we are to take counsel, has been said and defined, and now let us continue, keeping our attention fixed upon that definition, and tell what advantage or harm will naturally come from the lover or the nonlover to him who grants them his favors.

He who is ruled by desire and is a slave to pleasure will inevitably desire to make his beloved as pleasing to himself as possible. Now to one who is of unsound mind everything is pleasant which does not oppose him, but everything that is better or equal is hateful. So the lover will not, if he can help it, endure a beloved who is better than himself or his equal, but always makes him weaker and inferior; but the ignorant is inferior to the wise, the coward to the brave, the poor speaker to the eloquent, the slow of wit to the clever. Such mental defects, and still greater than these, in the beloved will necessarily please the lover, if they are implanted by Nature, and if they are not, he must implant them or be deprived of his immediate enjoyment. And he is of necessity jealous and will do him great harm by keeping him from many advantageous associations, which would most tend to make a man of him, especially from that which would do most to make him wise. This is divine philosophy, and from it the lover will certainly keep his beloved away, through fear of being despised; and he will contrive to keep him ignorant of everything else and make him look to his lover for everything, so that he will be most agreeable to him and most harmful to himself. In respect to the intellect, then, a man in love is by no means a profitable guardian or associate.

We must next consider how he who is forced to follow pleasure and not good will keep the body of him whose master he is, and what care

he will give to it. He will plainly court a beloved who is effeminate, not virile, not brought up in the pure sunshine, but in mingled shade, unused to manly toils and the sweat of exertion, but accustomed to a delicate and unmanly mode of life, adorned with a bright complexion of artificial origin, since he has none by nature, and in general living a life such as all this indicates, which it is certainly not worth while to describe further. We can sum it all up briefly and pass on. A person with such a body, in war and in all important crises, gives courage to his enemies, and fills his friends, and even his lovers themselves, with fear.

This may be passed over as self-evident, but the next question, what advantage or harm the intercourse and guardianship of the lover will bring to his beloved in the matter of his property, must be discussed. Now it is clear to everyone, and especially to the lover, that he would desire above all things to have his beloved bereft of the dearest and kindest and holiest possessions; for he would wish him to be deprived of father, mother, relatives and friends, thinking that they would hinder and censure his most sweet intercourse with him. But he will also think that one who has property in money or other possessions will be less easy to catch and when caught will be less manageable; wherefore the lover must necessarily begrudge his beloved the possession of property and rejoice at its loss. Moreover the lover would wish his beloved to be as long as possible unmarried, childless, and homeless, since he wishes to enjoy as long as possible what is pleasant to himself.

Now there are also other evils, but God has mingled with most of them some temporary pleasure; so, for instance, a flatterer is a horrid creature and does great harm, yet Nature has combined with him a kind of pleasure that is not without charm, and one might find fault with a courtesan as an injurious thing, and there are many other such creatures and practices which are yet for the time being very pleasant; but a lover is not only harmful to his beloved but extremely disagreeable to live with as well. The old proverb says, "birds of a feather flock together"; that is, I suppose, equality of age leads them to similar pleasures and through similarity begets friendship; and yet even they grow tired of each other's society. Now compulsion of every kind is

said to be oppressive to every one, and the lover not only is unlike his beloved, but he exercises the strongest compulsion. For he is old while his love is young, and he does not leave him day or night, if he can help it, but is driven by the sting of necessity, which urges him on, always giving him pleasure in seeing, hearing, touching, and by all his senses perceiving his beloved, so that he is glad to serve him constantly. But what consolation or what pleasure can he give the beloved? Must not this protracted intercourse bring him to the uttermost disgust, as he looks at the old, unlovely face, and other things to match, which it is not pleasant even to hear about, to say nothing of being constantly compelled to come into contact with them? And he is suspiciously guarded in all ways against everybody, and has to listen to untimely and exaggerated praises and to reproaches which are unendurable when the man is sober, and when he is in his cups and indulges in wearisome and unrestrained freedom of speech become not only unendurable but disgusting.

And while he is in love he is harmful and disagreeable, but when his love has ceased he is thereafter false to him whom he formerly hardly induced to endure his wearisome companionship through the hope of future benefits by making promises with many prayers and oaths. But now that the time of payment has come he has a new ruler and governor within him, sense and reason in place of love and madness, and has become a different person; but of this his beloved knows nothing. He asks of him a return for former favors, reminding him of past sayings and doings, as if he were speaking to the same man; but the lover is ashamed to say that he has changed, and yet he cannot keep the oaths and promises he made when he was ruled by his former folly, now that he has regained his reason and come to his senses, lest by doing what he formerly did he become again what he was. He runs away from these things, and the former lover is compelled to become a defaulter. The shell has fallen with the other side up,⁹ and he changes his part and runs away; and the other is forced to run after him in

⁹This refers to a game played with oyster shells, in which the players ran away or pursued as the shell fell with one or the other side uppermost. [Tr.]

anger and with imprecations, he who did not know at the start that he ought never to have accepted a lover who was necessarily without reason, but rather a reasonable nonlover; for otherwise he would have to surrender himself to one who was faithless, irritable, jealous, and disagreeable, harmful to his property, harmful to his physical condition, and most harmful by far to the cultivation of his soul, than which there neither is nor ever will be anything of higher importance in truth either in heaven or on earth. These things, dear boy, you must bear in mind, and you must know that the fondness of the lover is not a matter of goodwill, but of appetite which he wishes to satisfy:

Just as the wolf loves the lamb, so the lover adores his beloved.

There it is, Phaedrus! Do not listen to me any longer; let my speech end here.

PHAEDRUS: But I thought you were in the middle of it, and would say as much about the nonlover as you have said about the lover, to set forth all his good points and show that he ought to be favored. So now, Socrates, why do you stop?

SOCRATES: Did you not notice, my friend, that I am already speaking in hexameters, not mere dithyrambics, even though I am finding fault with the lover? But if I begin to praise the nonlover, what kind of hymn do you suppose I shall raise? I shall surely be possessed of the nymphs to whom you purposely exposed me. So, in a word, I say that the nonlover possess all the advantages that are opposed to the disadvantages we found in the lover. Why make a long speech? I have said enough about both of them. And so my tale shall fare as it may; I shall cross this stream and go away before you put some further compulsion upon me.

PHAEDRUS: Not yet, Socrates, till the heat is past. Don't you see that it is already almost noon? Let us stay and talk over what has been said, and then, when it is cooler, we will go away.

SOCRATES: Phaedrus, you are simply a superhuman wonder as regards discourses! I believe no one of all those who have been born in your lifetime has produced more discourses than you, either by speaking them yourself or compelling others to do so. I except Simmias the Theban; but you are far

ahead of all the rest. And now I think you have become the cause of another, spoken by me.

PHAEDRUS: That is not exactly a declaration of war! But how is this, and what is the discourse?

SOCRATES: My good friend, when I was about to cross the stream, the spirit and the sign that usually comes to me came—it always holds me back from something I am about to do—and I thought I heard a voice from it which forbade my going away before clearing my conscience, as if I had committed some sin against deity. Now I am a seer, not a very good one, but, as the bad writers say, good enough for my own purposes; so now I understand my error. How prophetic the soul is, my friend! For all along, while I was speaking my discourse, something troubled me, and “I was distressed,” as Ibycus says, “lest I be buying honor among men by sinning against the gods.” But now I have seen my error.

PHAEDRUS: What do you mean?

SOCRATES: Phaedrus, a dreadful speech it was, a dreadful speech, the one you brought with you, and the one you made me speak.

PHAEDRUS: How so?

SOCRATES: It was foolish, and somewhat impious. What could be more dreadful than that?

PHAEDRUS: Nothing, if you are right about it.

SOCRATES: Well, do you not believe that Love is the son of Aphrodite and is a god?

PHAEDRUS: So it is said.

SOCRATES: Yes, but not by Lysias, nor by your speech which was spoken by you through my mouth that you bewitched. If Love is, as indeed he is, a god or something divine, he can be nothing evil; but the two speeches just now said that he was evil. So then they sinned against Love; but their foolishness was really very funny besides, for while they were saying nothing sound or true, they put on airs as though they amounted to something, if they could cheat some mere manikins and gain honor among them. Now I, my friend, must purify myself; and for those who have sinned in matters of mythology there is an ancient purification, unknown to Homer, but known to Stesichorus. For when he was stricken with blindness for speaking ill of Helen, he was not, like Homer, ignorant of the reason, but since he was educated, he knew it and straightway he writes the poem:

“That saying is not true; thou didst not go within the well-oared ships, nor didst thou come to the walls of Troy”;

and when he had written all the poem, which is called the recantation, he saw again at once. Now I will be wiser than they in just this point: before suffering any punishment for speaking ill of Love, I will try to atone by my recantation, with my head bare this time, not, as before, covered through shame.

PHAEDRUS: This indeed, Socrates, is the most delightful thing you could say.

SOCRATES: Just consider, my good Phaedrus, how shameless the two speeches were, both this of mine and the one you read out of the book. For if any man of noble and gentle nature, one who was himself in love with another of the same sort, or who had ever been loved by such a one, had happened to hear us saying that lovers take up violent enmity because of small matters and are jealously disposed and harmful to the beloved, don't you think he would imagine he was listening to people brought up among low sailors, who had never seen a generous love? Would he not refuse utterly to assent to our censure of Love?

PHAEDRUS: I declare, Socrates, perhaps he would.

SOCRATES: I therefore, because I am ashamed at the thought of this man and am afraid of Love himself, wish to wash out the brine from my ears with the water of a sweet discourse. And I advise Lysias also to write as soon as he can, that other things being equal, the lover should be favored rather than the nonlover.

PHAEDRUS: Be assured that he will do so: for when you have spoken the praise of the lover, Lysias must of course be compelled by me to write another discourse on the same subject.

SOCRATES: I believe you, so long as you are what you are.

PHAEDRUS: Speak then without fear.

SOCRATES: Where is the youth to whom I was speaking? He must hear this also, lest if he do not hear it, he accept a nonlover before we can stop him.

PHAEDRUS: Here he is, always close at hand whenever you want him.

SOCRATES: Understand then, fair youth, that the former discourse was by Phaedrus, the son of Pythocles (Eager for Fame) of Myrrhinus (Myrrhtown); but this which I shall speak is by Stesichorus, son of Euphemus (Man of pious Speech) of Himera (Town of Desire). And I must say that this saying is not true, which teaches that when a lover is at hand the nonlover should be more favored, because the lover is insane, and the other sane. For if it were a simple fact that insanity is an evil, the saying would be true; but in reality the greatest of blessings comes to us through madness, when it is sent as a gift of the gods. For the prophetess at Delphi and the priestesses at Dodona when they have been mad have conferred many splendid benefits upon Greece both in private and in public affairs, but few or none when they have been in their right minds; and if we should speak of the Sibyl and all the others who by prophetic inspiration have foretold many things to many persons and thereby made them fortunate afterwards, anyone can see that we should speak a long time. And it is worthwhile to adduce also the fact that those men of old who invented names thought that madness was neither shameful nor disgraceful; otherwise they would not have connected the very word mania with the noblest of arts, that which foretells the future, by calling it the manic art. No, they gave this name thinking that mania, when it comes by gift of the gods, is a noble thing, but nowadays people call prophecy the mantic art, tastelessly inserting a *T* in the word. So also, when they gave a name to the investigation of the future which rational persons conduct through observation of birds and by other signs, since they furnish mind (*nous*) and information (*historia*) to human thought (*oiesis*) from the intellect (*dianoia*) they called it the oionostic (*oionoistike*) art, which modern folk now call oiōnistic, making it more high-sounding by introducing the long *O*. The ancients, then testify that in proportion as prophecy (*mantike*) is superior to augury, both in name and in fact, in the same proportion madness, which comes from god, is superior to sanity, which is of human origin. Moreover, when diseases and the greatest troubles have been visited upon certain families through some ancient guilt, madness has

entered in and by oracular power has found a way of release for those in need, taking refuge in prayers and the service of the gods, and so, by purifications and sacred rites, he who has this madness is made safe for the present and the after time, and for him who is rightly possessed of madness a release from present ills is found. And a third kind of possession and madness comes from the Muses. This takes hold upon a gentle and pure soul, arouses it and inspires it to songs and other poetry, and thus by adorning countless deeds of the ancients educates later generations. But he who without the divine madness comes to the doors of the Muses, confident that he will be a good poet by art, meets with no success, and the poetry of the sane man vanishes into nothingness before that of the inspired madmen.

All these noble results of inspired madness I can mention, and many more. Therefore let us not be afraid on that point, and let no one disturb and frighten us by saying that the reasonable friend should be preferred to him who is in a frenzy. Let him show in addition that love is not sent from heaven for the advantage of lover and beloved alike, and we will grant him the prize of victory. We, on our part, must prove that such madness is given by the gods for our greatest happiness; and our proof will not be believed by the merely clever, but will be accepted by the truly wise. First, then, we must learn the truth about the soul divine and human by observing how it acts and is acted upon. And the beginning of our proof is as follows:

Every soul is immortal. For that which is ever moving is immortal; but that which moves something else or is moved by something else, when it ceases to move, ceases to live. Only that which moves itself, since it does not leave itself, never ceases to move, and this is also the source and beginning of motion for all other things which have motion. But the beginning is ungenerated. For everything that is generated must be generated from a beginning, but the beginning is not generated from anything; for if the beginning were generated from anything, it would not be generated from a beginning. And since it is ungenerated it must be also indestructible; for if the beginning were destroyed, it could never be gen-

erated from anything nor anything else from it, since all things must be generated from a beginning. Thus that which moves itself must be the beginning of motion. And this can be neither destroyed nor generated, otherwise all the heavens and all generation must fall in ruin and stop and never again have any source of motion or origin. But since that which is moved by itself has been seen to be immortal, one who says that this self-motion is the essence and the very idea of the soul, will not be disgraced. For everybody which derives motion from without is soulless, but that which has its motion within itself has a soul, since that is the nature of the soul; but if this is true—that that which moves itself is nothing else than the soul,—then the soul would necessarily be ungenerated and immortal.

Concerning the immortality of the soul this is enough; but about its form we must speak in the following manner. To tell what it really is would be a matter for utterly superhuman and long discourse, but it is within human power to describe it briefly in a figure; let us therefore speak in that way. We will liken the soul to the composite nature of a pair of winged horses and a charioteer. Now the horses and charioteers of the gods are all good and of good descent, but those of other races are mixed; and first the charioteer of the human soul drives a pair, and secondly one of the horses is noble and of noble breed, but the other quite the opposite in breed and character. Therefore in our case the driving is necessarily difficult and troublesome. Now we must try to tell why a living being is called mortal or immortal. Soul, considered collectively, has the care of all that which is soulless, and it traverses the whole heaven, appearing sometimes in one form and sometimes in another; now when it is perfect and fully winged, it mounts upward and governs the whole world; but the soul which has lost its wings is borne along until it gets hold of something solid, when it settles down, taking upon itself an earthly body, which seems to be self-moving, because of the power of the soul within it; and the whole, compounded of soul and body, is called a living being, and is further designated as mortal. It is not immortal by any reasonable supposition, but we, though we have never seen or rightly conceived a god, imagine an immortal

being which has both a soul and a body which are united for all time. Let that, however, and our words concerning it, be as is pleasing to God; we will now consider the reason why the soul loses its wings. It is something like this.

The natural function of the wing is to soar upwards and carry that which is heavy up to the place where dwells the race of the gods. More than any other thing that pertains to the body it partakes of the nature of the divine. But the divine is beauty, wisdom, goodness, and all such qualities; by these then the wings of the soul are nourished and grow, but by the opposite qualities, such as vileness and evil, they are wasted away and destroyed. Now the greater leader in heaven, Zeus, driving a winged chariot, goes first, arranging all things and caring for all things. He is followed by an army of gods and spirits, arrayed in eleven squadrons; Hestia alone remains in the house of the gods. Of the rest, those who are included among the twelve great gods and are accounted leaders, are assigned each to his place in the army. There are many blessed sights and many ways hither and thither within the heaven, along which the blessed gods go to and fro attending each to his own duties; and whoever wishes, and is able, follows, for jealousy is excluded from the celestial band. But when they go to a feast and a banquet, they proceed steeply upward to the top of the vault of heaven, where the chariots of the gods, whose well matched horses obey the rein, advance easily, but the others with difficulty; for the horse of evil nature weighs the chariot down, making it heavy and pulling toward the earth the charioteer whose horse is not well trained. There the utmost toil and struggle await the soul. For those that are called immortal, when they reach the top, pass outside and take their place on the outer surface of the heaven, and when they have taken their stand, the revolution carries them round and they behold the things outside of the heaven.

But the region above the heaven was never worthily sung by any earthly poet, nor will it ever be. It is, however, as I shall tell; for I must dare to speak the truth, especially as truth is my theme. For the colorless, formless, and intangible truly existing essence, with which all true knowledge is concerned, holds this region and is visible only

to the mind, the pilot of the soul. Now the divine intelligence, since it is nurtured on mind and pure knowledge, and the intelligence of every soul which is capable of receiving that which befits it, rejoices in seeing reality for a space of time and by gazing upon truth is nourished and made happy until the revolution brings it again to the same place. In the revolution it beholds absolute justice, temperance, and knowledge, not such knowledge as has a beginning and varies as it is associated with one or another of the things we call realities, but that which abides in the real eternal absolute; and in the same way it beholds and feeds upon the other eternal verities, after which, passing down again within the heaven, it goes home, and there the charioteer puts up the horses at the manger and feeds them with ambrosia and then gives them nectar to drink.

Such is the life of the gods; but of the other souls, that which best follows after God and is most like him, raises the head of the charioteer up into the outer region and is carried round in the revolution, troubled by the horses and hardly beholding the realities; and another sometimes rises and sometimes sinks, and, because its horses are unruly, it sees some things and fails to see others. The other souls follow after, all yearning for the upper region but unable to reach it, and are carried round beneath, trampling upon and colliding with one another, each striving to pass its neighbor. So there is the greatest confusion and sweat of rivalry, wherein many are lamed, and many wings are broken through the incompetence of the drivers; and after much toil they all go away without gaining a view of reality, and when they have gone away they feed upon opinion. But the reason of the great eagerness to see where the plain of truth is, lies in the fact that the fitting pasturage for the best part of the soul is in the meadow there, and the wing on which the soul is raised up is nourished by this. And this is a law of Destiny, that the soul which follows after God and obtains a view of any of the truths is free from harm until the next period, and if it can always attain this, is always unharmed; but when, through inability to follow, it fails to see, and through some mischance is filled with forgetfulness and evil and grows heavy, and when it has grown heavy, loses its wings and

falls to the earth, then it is the law that this soul shall never pass into any beast as its first birth, but the soul that has seen the most shall enter into the birth of a man who is to be a philosopher or a lover of beauty, or one of a musical or loving nature, and the second soul into that of a lawful king or a warlike ruler, and the third into that of a politician or a man of business or a financier, the fourth into that of a hard-working gymnast or one who will be concerned with the cure of the body, and the fifth will lead the life of a prophet or someone who conducts mystic rites; to the sixth, a poet or some other imitative artist will be united, to the seventh, a craftsman or a husbandman, to the eighth, a sophist or a demagogue, to the ninth, a tyrant.

Now in all these states, whoever lives justly obtains a better lot, and whoever lives unjustly, a worse. For each soul returns to the place whence it came in ten thousand years; for it does not regain its wings before that time has elapsed, except the soul of him who has been a guileless philosopher or a philosophical lover; these, when for three successive periods of a thousand years they have chosen such a life, after the third period of a thousand years becomes winged in the three thousandth year and go their way; but the rest, when they have finished their first life, receive judgment, and after the judgment some go to the places of correction under the earth and pay their penalty, while the others, made light and raised up into a heavenly place by justice, live in a manner worthy of the life they led in human form. But in the thousandth year both come to draw lots and choose their second life, each choosing whatever it wishes. Then a human soul may pass into the life of a beast, and a soul which was once human, may pass again from a beast into a man. For the soul which has never seen the truth can never pass into human form. For a human being must understand a general conception formed by collecting into a unity by means of reason the many perceptions of the senses; and this is a recollection of those things which our soul once beheld, when it journeyed with God and, lifting its vision above the things which we now say exist, rose up into real being. And therefore it is just that the mind of the philosopher only has wings, for he is always, so

far as he is able, in communion through memory with those things the communion with which causes God to be divine. Now a man who employs such memories rightly is always being initiated into perfect mysteries and he alone becomes truly perfect; but since he separates himself from human interests and turns his attention toward the divine, he is rebuked by the vulgar, who consider him mad and do not know that he is inspired.

All my discourse so far has been about the fourth kind of madness, which causes him to be regarded as mad, who, when he sees the beauty on earth, remembering the true beauty, feels his wings growing and longs to stretch them for an upward flight, but cannot do so, and, like a bird, gazes upward and neglects the things below. My discourse has shown that this is, of all inspirations, the best and of the highest origin to him who has it or who shares in it, and that he who loves the beautiful, partaking in this madness, is called a lover. For, as has been said, every soul of man has by the law of nature beheld the realities, otherwise it would not have entered into a human being, but it is not easy for all souls to gain from earthly things a recollection of those realities, either for those which had but a brief view of them at that earlier time, or for those which, after falling to earth, were so unfortunate as to be turned toward unrighteousness through some evil communications and to have forgotten the holy sights they once saw. Few then are left which retain an adequate recollection of them; but these when they see here any likeness of the things of that other world, are stricken with amazement and can no longer control themselves; but they do not understand their condition, because they do not clearly perceive. Now in the earthly copies of justice and temperance and the other ideas which are precious to souls there is no light, but only a few, approaching the images through the darkling organs of sense, behold in them the nature of that which they imitate, and these few do this with difficulty. But at that former time they saw beauty shining in brightness, when, with a blessed company—we following in the train of Zeus, and others in that of some other god—they saw the blessed sight and vision and were initiated into that which is rightly called the

most blessed of mysteries, which we celebrated in a state of perfection, when we were without experience of the evils which awaited us in the time to come, being permitted as initiates to the sight of perfect and simple and calm and happy apparitions, which we saw in the pure light, being ourselves pure and not entombed in this which we carry about with us and call the body, in which we are imprisoned like an oyster in its shell.

So much, then, in honor of memory, on account of which I have now spoken at some length, through yearning for the joys of that other time. But beauty, as I said before, shone in brilliance among those visions; and since we came to earth we have found it shining most clearly through the clearest of our senses; for sight is the sharpest of the physical senses, though wisdom is not seen by it, for wisdom would arouse terrible love, if such a clear image of it were granted as would come through sight, and the same is true of the other lovely realities; but beauty alone has this privilege, and therefore it is most clearly seen and loveliest. Now he who is not newly initiated, or has been corrupted, does not quickly rise from this world to that other world and to absolute beauty when he sees its namesake here, and so he does not revere it when he looks upon it, but gives himself up to pleasure and like a beast proceeds to lust and begetting; he makes license his companion and is not afraid or ashamed to pursue pleasure in violation of nature. But he who is newly initiated, who beheld many of those realities, when he sees a godlike face or form which is a good image of beauty, shudders at first, and something of the old awe comes over him, then, as he gazes, he reveres the beautiful one as a god, and if he did not fear to be thought stark mad, he would offer sacrifice to his beloved as to an idol or a god. And as he looks upon him, a reaction from his shuddering comes over him, with sweat and unwonted heat; for as the effluence of beauty enters him through the eyes, he is warmed; the effluence moistens the germ of the feathers, and as he grows warm, the parts from which the feathers grow, which were before hard and choked, and prevented the feathers from sprouting, become soft, and as the nourishment streams upon him, the quills of the feathers swell

and begin to grow from the roots over all the form of the soul; for it was once all feathered.

Now in this process the whole soul throbs and palpitates, and as in those who are cutting teeth there is an irritation and discomfort in the gums, when the teeth begin to grow, just so the soul suffers when the growth of the feathers begins; it is feverish and is uncomfortable and itches when they begin to grow. Then when it gazes upon the beauty of the boy and receives the particles which flow thence to it (for which reason they are called yearning),¹⁰ it is moistened and warmed, ceases from its pain and is filled with joy; but when it is alone and grows dry, the mouths of the passages in which the feathers begin to grow become dry and close up, shutting in the sprouting feathers, and the sprouts within, shut in with the yearning, throb like pulsing arteries, and each sprout pricks the passage in which it is, so that the whole soul, stung in every part, rages with pain; and then again, remembering the beautiful one, it rejoices. So, because of these two mingled sensations, it is greatly troubled by its strange condition; it is perplexed and maddened, and in its madness it cannot sleep at night or stay in any one place by day, but it is filled with longing and hastens wherever it hopes to see the beautiful one. And when it sees him and is bathed with the waters of yearning, the passages that were sealed are opened, the soul has respite from the stings and is eased of its pain, and this pleasure which it enjoys is the sweetest of pleasures at the time. Therefore the soul will not, if it can help it, be left alone by the beautiful one, but esteems him above all others, forgets for him mother and brothers and all friends, neglects property and cares not for its loss, and despising all the customs and proprieties in which it formerly took pride, it is ready to be a slave and to sleep wherever it is allowed, as near as possible to the beloved; for it not only reveres him who possesses beauty, but finds in him the only healer of its greatest woes. Now this condition, fair boy, about which I am speaking, is called Love by

¹⁰The play on the words μέρη and ἕμερος cannot be rendered accurately in English. Jowett approaches a rendering by the use of the words *motion* and *emotion*, but emotion is too weak a word for ἕμερος. [Tr.]

men, but when you hear what the gods call it, perhaps because of your youth you will laugh. But some of the Homeridae, I believe, repeat two verses on Love from the spurious poems of Homer, one of which is very outrageous and not perfectly metrical. They sing them as follows:

Mortals call him winged Love, but the immortals call him The Winged One, because he must needs grow wings.

You may believe this, or not; but the condition of lovers and the cause of it are just as I have said.

Now he who is a follower of Zeus, when seized by Love can bear a heavier burden of the winged god; but those who are servants of Ares and followed in his train, when they have been seized by Love and think they have been wronged in any way by the beloved, become murderous and are ready to sacrifice themselves and the beloved. And so it is with the follower of each of the other gods; he lives, so far as he is able, honoring and imitating that god, so long as he is uncorrupted, and is living his first life on earth, and in that way he behaves and conducts himself toward his beloved and toward all others. Now each one chooses his love from the ranks of the beautiful according to his character, and he fashions him and adorns him like a statue, as though he were his god, to honor and worship him. The followers of Zeus desire that the soul of him whom they love be like Zeus; so they seek for one of philosophical and lordly nature, and when they find him and love him, they do all they can to give him such a character. If they have not previously had experience, they learn then from all who can teach them anything; they seek after information themselves, and when they search eagerly within themselves to find the nature of their god, they are successful, because they have been compelled to keep their eyes fixed upon the god, and as they reach and grasp him by memory they are inspired and receive from him character and habits, so far as it is possible for a man to have part in God. Now they consider the beloved the cause of all this, so they love him more than before, and if they draw the waters of their inspiration from Zeus, like the bacchantes, they pour it out upon the beloved and make him, so far as possible, like their god. And those who followed

after Hera seek a kingly nature, and when they have found such an one, they act in a corresponding manner toward him in all respects; and likewise the followers of Apollo, and of each of the gods, go out and seek for their beloved a youth whose nature accords with that of the god, and when they have gained his affection, by imitating the god themselves and by persuasion and education they lead the beloved to the conduct and nature of the god, so far as each of them can do so; they exhibit no jealousy or meanness toward the loved one, but endeavor by every means in their power to lead him to the likeness of the god whom they honor. Thus the desire of the true lovers, and the initiation into the mysteries of love, which they teach, if they accomplish what they desire in the way I describe, is beautiful and brings happiness from the inspired lover to the loved one, if he be captured; and the fair one who is captured is caught in the following manner:

In the beginning of this tale I divided each soul into three parts, two of which had the form of horses, the third that of a charioteer. Let us retain this division. Now of the horses we say one is good and the other bad; but we did not define what the goodness of the one and the badness of the other was. That we must now do. The horse that stands at the right hand is upright and has clean limbs; he carries his neck high, has an aquiline nose, is white in color, and has dark eyes; he is a friend of honor joined with temperance and modesty, and a follower of true glory; he needs no whip, but is guided only by the word of command and by reason. The other, however, is crooked, heavy, ill put together, his neck is short and thick, his nose flat, his color dark, his eyes grey and bloodshot; he is the friend of insolence and pride, is shaggy-eared and deaf, hardly obedient to whip and spurs. Now when the charioteer beholds the love-inspiring vision, and his whole soul is warmed by the sight, and is full of the tickling and prickings of yearning, the horse that is obedient to the charioteer, constrained then as always by modesty, controls himself and does not leap upon the beloved; but the other no longer heeds the pricks or the whip of the charioteer, but springs wildly forward, causing all possible trouble to his mate and to the charioteer, and forcing them to approach the beloved and

propose the joys of love. And they at first pull back indignantly and will not be forced to do terrible and unlawful deeds; but finally, as the trouble has no end, they go forward with him, yielding and agreeing to do his bidding. And they come to the beloved and behold his radiant face.

And as the charioteer looks upon him, his memory is borne back to the true nature of beauty, and he sees it standing with modesty upon a pedestal of chastity, and when he sees this he is afraid and falls backward in reverence, and in falling he is forced to pull the reins so violently backward as to bring both horses upon their haunches, the one quite willing, since he does not oppose him, but the unruly beast very unwilling. And as they go away, one horse in his shame and wonder wets all the soul with sweat, but the other, as soon as he is recovered from the pain of the bit and the fall, before he has fairly taken breath, breaks forth into angry reproaches, bitterly reviling his mate and the charioteer for their cowardice and lack of manhood in deserting their post and breaking their agreement; and again, in spite of their unwillingness, he urges them forward and hardly yields to their prayer that he postpone the matter to another time. Then when the time comes which they have agreed upon, they pretend that they have forgotten it, but he reminds them; struggling, and neighing, and pulling he forces them again with the same purpose to approach the beloved one, and when they are near him, he lowers his head, raises his tail, takes the bit in his teeth, and pulls shamelessly. The effect upon the charioteer is the same as before, but more pronounced; he falls back like a racer from the starting-rope, pulls the bit backward even more violently than before from the teeth of the unruly horse, covers his scurrilous tongue and jaws with blood, and forces his legs and haunches to the ground, causing him much pain. Now when the bad horse has gone through the same experience many times and has ceased from his unruliness, he is humbled and follows henceforth the wisdom of the charioteer, and when he sees the beautiful one, he is overwhelmed with fear; and so from that time on the soul of the lover follows the beloved in reverence and awe.

Now the beloved, since he receives all service

from his lover, as if he were a god, and since the lover is not feigning, but is really in love, and since the beloved himself is by nature friendly to him who serves him, although he may at some earlier time have been prejudiced by his school-fellows or others, who said that it was a disgrace to yield to a lover, and may for that reason have repulsed his lover, yet, as time goes on, his youth and destiny cause him to admit him to his society. For it is the law of fate that evil can never be a friend to evil and that good must always be friend to good. And when the lover is thus admitted, and the privilege of conversation and intimacy has been granted him, his good will, as it shows itself in close intimacy, astonishes the beloved, who discovers that the friendship of all his other friends and relatives is as nothing when compared with that of his inspired lover. And as this intimacy continues and the lover comes near and touches the beloved in the gymnasium and in their general intercourse, then the fountain of that stream which Zeus, when he was in love with Ganymede, called "desire" flows copiously upon the lover, and some of it flows into him, and some, when he is filled, overflows outside; and just as the wind or an echo rebounds from smooth, hard surfaces and returns whence it came, so the stream of beauty passes back into the beautiful one through the eyes, the natural inlet to the soul, where it reanimates the passages of the feathers, waters them and makes the feathers begin to grow, filling the soul of the loved one with love. So he is in love, but he knows not with whom; he does not understand his own condition and cannot explain it; like one who has caught a disease of the eyes from another, he can give no reason for it; he sees himself in his lover as in a mirror, but is not conscious of the fact. And in the lover's presence, like him he ceases from his pain, and in his absence, like him he is filled with yearning such as he inspires, and love's image, requited love, dwells within him; but he calls it, and believes it to be, not love, but friendship. Like the lover, though less strongly, he desires to see his friend, to touch him, kiss him, and lie down by him; and naturally these things are soon brought about. Now as they lie together, the unruly horse of the lover has something to say to the charioteer, and demands a little enjoyment in return for his many troubles; and

the unruly horse of the beloved says nothing, but teeming with passion and confused emotions he embraces and kisses his lover, caressing him as his best friend; and when they lie together, he would not refuse his lover any favor, if he asked it; but the other horse and the charioteer oppose all this with modesty and reason.

If now the better elements of the mind, which lead to a well ordered life and to philosophy, prevail, they live a life of happiness and harmony here on earth, self controlled and orderly, holding in subjection that which causes evil in the soul and giving freedom to that which makes for virtue; and when this life is ended they are light and winged, for they have conquered in one of the three truly Olympic contests. Neither human wisdom nor divine inspiration can confer upon man any greater blessing than this. If however they live a life less noble and without philosophy, but yet ruled by the love of honor, probably, when they have been drinking, or in some other moment of carelessness, the two unruly horses, taking the souls off their guard, will bring them together and seize upon and accomplish that which is by the many accounted blissful; and when this has once been done, they continue the practice, but infrequently, since what they are doing is not approved by the whole mind. So these two pass through life as friends, though not such friends as the others, both at the time of their love and afterwards, believing that they have exchanged the most binding pledges of love, and that they can never break them and fall into enmity. And at last, when they depart from the body, they are not winged, to be sure, but their wings have begun to grow, so that the madness of love brings them to small reward; for it is the law that those who have once begun their upward progress shall never again pass into darkness and the journey under the earth, but shall live a happy life in the light as they journey together, and because of their love shall be alike in their plumage when they receive their wings.

These blessings, so great and so divine, the friendship of a lover will confer upon you, dear boy; but the affection of the nonlover, which is alloyed with mortal prudence and follows mortal and parsimonious rules of conduct, will beget in the beloved soul the narrowness which the common folk praise as virtue; it will cause the soul to

be a wanderer upon the earth for nine thousand years and a fool below the earth at last. There, dear Love, thou hast my recantation, which I have offered and paid as beautifully and as well as I could, especially in the poetical expressions which I was forced to employ on account of Phaedrus. Pardon, I pray, my former words and accept these words with favor; be kind and gracious to me; do not in anger take from me the art of love which thou didst give me, and deprive me not of sight, but grant unto me to be even more than now esteemed by the beautiful. And if in our former discourse Phaedrus and I said anything harsh against thee, blame Lysias, the father of that discourse, make him to cease from such speeches, and turn him, as his brother Polemarchus is turned, toward philosophy, that his lover Phaedrus may no longer hesitate, as he does now, between two ways, but may direct his life with all singleness of purpose toward love and philosophical discourses.

PHAEDRUS: I join in your prayer, Socrates, and pray that this may come to pass, if this is best for us. But all along I have been wondering at your discourse, you made it so much more beautiful than the first; so that I am afraid Lysias will make a poor showing, if he consents to compete with it. Indeed, lately one of the politicians was abusing him for this very thing, and through all his abusive speech kept calling him a speech-writer; so perhaps out of pride he may refrain from writing.

SOCRATES: That is an absurd idea, young man, and you are greatly mistaken in your friend if you think he is so much afraid of noise. Perhaps, too, you think the man who abused him believed what he was saying.

PHAEDRUS: He seemed to believe, Socrates; and you know yourself that the most influential and important men in our cities are ashamed to write speeches and leave writings behind them, through fear of being called sophists by posterity.

SOCRATES: You seem to be unacquainted with the "sweet elbow,"¹¹ Phaedrus, and besides the elbow, you seem not to know that the proudest of the statesmen are most fond of writing and of

¹¹This is a proverbial expression, similar in meaning to our "sour grapes." The explanation given in the MSS., that the sweet elbow gets its name from the long bend, or elbow, in the Nile may be an addition by some commentator; at any rate, it hardly fits our passage. [Tr.]

leaving writings behind them, since they care so much for praise that when they write a speech they add at the beginning the names of those who praise them in each instance.

PHAEDRUS: What do you mean? I don't understand.

SOCRATES: You don't understand that the name of the approver is written first in the writings of statesmen.

PHAEDRUS: How so?

SOCRATES: The writer says, "It was voted by the senate (or the people, or both), and so-and-so-moved," mentioning his own name with great dignity and praise, then after that he goes on, displaying his own wisdom to his approvers, and sometimes making a very long document. Does it seem to you that a thing of that sort is anything else than a written speech?

PHAEDRUS: No, certainly not.

SOCRATES: Then if this speech is approved, the writer leaves the theatre in great delight; but if it is not recorded and he is not granted the privilege of speech-writing and is not considered worthy to be an author, he is grieved, and his friends with him.

PHAEDRUS: Decidedly.

SOCRATES: Evidently not because they despise the profession, but because they admire it.

PHAEDRUS: To be sure.

SOCRATES: Well then, when an orator or a king is able to rival the greatness of Lysurgus or Solon or Darius and attain immortality as a writer in the state, does he not while living think himself equal to the gods, and has not posterity the same opinion of him, when they see his writings?

PHAEDRUS: Very true.

SOCRATES: Do you think, then, that any of the statesmen, no matter how ill-disposed toward Lysias, reproaches him for being a writer?

PHAEDRUS: It is not likely, according to what you say; for he would be casting reproach upon that which he himself desires to be.

SOCRATES: Then that is clear to all, that writing speeches is not in itself a disgrace.

PHAEDRUS: How can it be?

SOCRATES: But the disgrace, I fancy, consists in speaking or writing not well, but disgracefully and badly.

PHAEDRUS: Evidently.

SOCRATES: What, then, is the method of writ-

ing well or badly? Do we want to question Lysias about this, and anyone else who ever has written or will write anything, whether a public or private document, in verse or in prose, be he poet or ordinary man?

PHAEDRUS: You ask if we want to question them? What else should one live for, so to speak, but for such pleasures? Certainly not for those which cannot be enjoyed without previous pain, which is the case with nearly all bodily pleasures and causes them to be justly called slavish.

SOCRATES: We have plenty of time, apparently; and besides, the locusts seem to be looking down upon us as they sing and talk with each other in the heat. Now if they should see us not conversing at midday, but, like most people, dozing, lulled to sleep by their song because of our mental indolence, they would quite justly laugh at us, thinking that some slaves had come to their resort and were slumbering about the fountain at noon like sheep. But if they see us conversing and sailing past them unmoved by the charm of their Siren voices, perhaps they will be pleased and give us the gift which the gods bestowed on them to give to men.

PHAEDRUS: What is this gift? I don't seem to have heard of it.

SOCRATES: It is quite improper for a lover of the Muses never to have heard of such things. The story goes that these locusts were once men, before the birth of the Muses, and when the Muses were born and song appeared, some of the men were so overcome with delight that they sang and sang, forgetting food and drink, until at last unconsciously they died. From them the locust tribe afterwards arose, and they have this gift from the Muses, that from the time of their birth they need no sustenance, but sing continually, without food or drink, until they die, when they go to the Muses and report who honors each of them on earth. They tell Terpsichore of those who have honored her in dances, and make them dearer to her; they gain the favor of Erato for the poets of love, and that of the other Muses for their votaries, according to their various ways of honoring them; and to Calliope, the eldest of the Muses, and to Urania who is next to her, they make report of those who pass their lives in philosophy and who worship these Muses who are

most concerned with heaven and with thought divine and human and whose music is the sweetest. So for many reasons we ought to talk and not sleep in the noontime.

PHAEDRUS: Yes, we ought to talk.

SOCRATES: We should, then, as we were proposing just now, discuss the theory of good (or bad) speaking and writing.

PHAEDRUS: Clearly.

SOCRATES: If a speech is to be good, must not the mind of the speaker know the truth about the matters of which he is to speak?

PHAEDRUS: On that point, Socrates, I have heard that one who is to be an orator does not need to know what is really just, but what would seem just to the multitude who are to pass judgment, and not what is really good or noble, but what will seem to be so; for they say that persuasion comes from what seems to be true, not from the truth.

SOCRATES: "The word," Phaedrus, which the wise "speak must not be rejected,"¹² but we must see if they are right; so we must not pass by this which you just said.

PHAEDRUS: You are right.

SOCRATES: Let us then examine it in this way.

PHAEDRUS: How?

SOCRATES: If I should urge you to buy a horse and fight against the invaders, and neither of us knew what a horse was, but I merely knew this about you, that Phaedrus thinks a horse is the one of the tame animals which has the longest ears—

PHAEDRUS: It would be ridiculous, Socrates.

SOCRATES: No, not yet; but if I tried to persuade you in all seriousness, composing a speech in praise of the ass, which I called a horse, and saying that the beast was a most valuable possession at home and in war, that you could use him as a mount in battle, and that he was able to carry baggage and was useful for many other purposes—

PHAEDRUS: Then it would be supremely ridiculous.

SOCRATES: But is it not better to be ridiculous than to be clever and an enemy?

PHAEDRUS: To be sure.

SOCRATES: Then when the orator who does not

¹²Homer, *Iliad* ii. 361. [Tr.]

know what good and evil are undertakes to persuade a state which is equally ignorant, not by praising the “shadow of an ass”¹³ under the name of a horse, but by praising evil under the name of good, and having studied the opinions of the multitude persuades them to do evil instead of good, what harvest do you suppose his oratory will reap thereafter from the seed he has sown?

PHAEDRUS: No very good harvest.

SOCRATES: Well, do you think we have reproached the art of speaking too harshly? Perhaps she might say: “Why do you talk such nonsense, you strange men? I do not compel anyone to learn to speak without knowing the truth, but if my advice is of any value, he learns that first and then acquires me. So what I claim is this, that without my help the knowledge of the truth does not give the art of persuasion.”

PHAEDRUS: And will she be right in saying this?

SOCRATES: Yes, if the arguments that are coming against her testify that she is an art. For I seem, as it were, to hear some arguments approaching and protesting that she is lying and is not an art, but a craft devoid of art. A real art of speaking, says the Laconian, which does not seize hold of truth, does not exist and never will.

PHAEDRUS: We have need of these arguments, Socrates. Bring them here and examine their words and their meaning.

SOCRATES: Come here, then, noble creatures, and persuade the fair young Phaedrus that unless he pay proper attention to philosophy he will never be able to speak properly about anything. And let Phaedrus answer.

PHAEDRUS: Ask your questions.

SOCRATES: Is not rhetoric in its entire nature an art which leads the soul by means of words, not only in law courts and the various other public assemblages, but in private companies as well? And is it not the same when concerned with small things as with great, and, properly speaking, no more to be esteemed in important than in trifling matters? Is this what you have heard?

PHAEDRUS: No, by Zeus, not that exactly; but the art of speaking and writing is exercised

chiefly in lawsuits, and that of speaking also in public assemblies; and I never heard of any further uses.

SOCRATES: Then you have heard only of the treatises on rhetoric by Nestor and Odysseus, which they wrote when they had nothing to do at Troy, and you have not heard of that by Palamedes?

PHAEDRUS: Nor of Nestor’s either, unless you are disguising Gorgias under the name of Nestor and Thrasymachus or Theodorus under that of Odysseus.¹⁴

SOCRATES: Perhaps I am. However, never mind them; but tell me, what do the parties in a lawsuit do in court? Do they not contend in speech, or what shall we say they do?

PHAEDRUS: Exactly that.

SOCRATES: About the just and the unjust?

PHAEDRUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: Then he whose speaking is an art will make the same thing appear to the same persons at one time just and at another, if he wishes, unjust?

PHAEDRUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: And in political speaking he will make the same things seem to the State at one time good and at another the opposite?

PHAEDRUS: Just so.

SOCRATES: Do we not know that the Eleatic Palamedes (Zeno) has such an art of speaking that the same things appear to his hearers to be alike and unlike, one and many, stationary and in motion?

PHAEDRUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: Then the art of contention in speech is not confined to courts and political gatherings, but apparently, if it is an art at all, it would be one and the same in all kinds of speaking, the art by which a man will be able to produce a resemblance between all things between which it can be produced, and to bring to the light the resemblances produced and disguised by anyone else.

PHAEDRUS: What do you mean by that?

¹⁴Nestor and Odysseus are depicted by Homer as the most skillful speakers among the Greeks at Troy. Palamedes is another name for the philosopher Zeno. Thrasymachus and Theodorus, like Gorgias, were Sophists. [Ed.]

¹³A proverbial expression. [Tr.]

SOCRATES: I think it will be plain if we examine the matter in this way. Is deception easier when there is much difference between things or when there is little?

PHAEDRUS: When there is little.

SOCRATES: And if you make a transition by small steps from anything to its opposite you will be more likely to escape detection than if you proceed by leaps and bounds.

PHAEDRUS: Of course.

SOCRATES: Then he who is to deceive another, and is not to be deceived himself, must know accurately the similarity and dissimilarity of things.

PHAEDRUS: Yes, he must.

SOCRATES: Now will he be able, not knowing the truth about a given thing, to recognize in other things the great or small degree of likeness to that which he does not know?

PHAEDRUS: It is impossible.

SOCRATES: In the case, then, of those whose opinions are at variance with facts and who are deceived, this error evidently slips in through some resemblances.

PHAEDRUS: It does happen in that way.

SOCRATES: Then he who does not understand the real nature of things will not possess the art of making his hearers pass from one thing to its opposite by leading them through the intervening resemblances, or of avoiding such deception himself?

PHAEDRUS: Never in the world.

SOCRATES: Then, my friend, he who knows not the truth, but pursues opinions, will, it seems, attain an art of speech which is ridiculous, and not an art at all.

PHAEDRUS: Probably.

SOCRATES: Shall we look in the speech of Lysias, which you have with you, and in what I said, for something which we think shows art and the lack of art?

PHAEDRUS: By all means, for now our talk is too abstract, since we lack sufficient examples.

SOCRATES: And by some special good fortune, as it seems, the two discourses contain an example of the way in which one who knows the truth may lead his hearers on with sportive words; and I, Phaedrus, think the divinities of the place are the cause thereof; and perhaps, too, the prophets of the Muses, who are singing above our

heads, may have granted this boon to us by inspiration; at any rate, I possess no art of speaking.

PHAEDRUS: So be it; only make your meaning clear.

SOCRATES: Read me the beginning of Lysias' discourse.

PHAEDRUS: You know what my condition is, and you have heard how I think it is to our advantage to arrange these matters. And I claim that I ought not to be refused what I ask because I am not your lover. For lovers repent of—

SOCRATES: Stop. Now we must tell what there is in this that is faulty and lacks art, must we not?

PHAEDRUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: It is clear to everyone that we are in accord about some matters of this kind and at variance about others, is it not?

PHAEDRUS: I think I understand your meaning, but express it still more clearly.

SOCRATES: When one says "iron" or "silver," we all understand the same thing, do we not?

PHAEDRUS: Surely.

SOCRATES: What if he says "justice" or "goodness"? Do we not part company, and disagree with each other and with ourselves?

PHAEDRUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: Then in some things we agree and in others we do not.

PHAEDRUS: True.

SOCRATES: Then in which of the two are we more easy to deceive, and in which has rhetoric the greater power?

PHAEDRUS: Evidently in the class of doubtful things.

SOCRATES: Then he who is to develop an art of rhetoric must first make a methodical division and acquire a clear impression of each class, that in which people must be in doubt and that in which they are not.

PHAEDRUS: He who has acquired that would have conceived an excellent principle.

SOCRATES: Then I think when he has to do with a particular case, he will not be ignorant, but will know clearly to which of the two classes the thing belongs about which he is to speak.

PHAEDRUS: Of course.

SOCRATES: Well then, to which does Love belong? To the doubtful things or the others?

PHAEDRUS: To the doubtful, surely; if he did

not, do you think he would have let you say what you said just now about him, that he is an injury to the beloved and to the lover, and again that he is the greatest of blessings?

SOCRATES: Excellent. But tell me this—for I was in such an ecstasy that I have quite forgotten—whether I defined love in the beginning of my discourse.

PHAEDRUS: Yes, by Zeus, and wonderfully well.

SOCRATES: Oh, how much more versed the nymphs, daughters of Achelous, and Pan, son of Hermes, are in the art of speech than Lysias, son of Cephalus! Or am I wrong, and did Lysias also, in the beginning of his discourse on Love, compel us to suppose Love to be some one thing which he chose to consider it, and did he then compose and finish his discourse with that in view? Shall we read the beginning of it again?

PHAEDRUS: If you like; but what you seek is not in it.

SOCRATES: Read, that I may hear Lysias himself.

PHAEDRUS: You know what my condition is, and you have heard how I think it is to our advantage to arrange these matters. And I claim that I ought not to be refused what I ask because I am not your lover. For lovers repent of the kindnesses they have done when their passion ceases.

SOCRATES: He certainly does not at all seem to do what we demand, for he does not even begin at the beginning, but undertakes to swim on his back up the current of his discourse from its end, and begins with what the lover would say at the end to his beloved. Am I not right, Phaedrus my dear?

PHAEDRUS: Certainly that of which he speaks is an ending.

SOCRATES: And how about the rest? Don't you think the parts of the discourse are thrown out helter-skelter? Or does it seem to you that the second topic had to be put second for any cogent reason, or that any of the other things he says are so placed? It seemed to me, who am wholly ignorant, that the writer uttered boldly whatever occurred to him. Do you know any rhetorical reason why he arranged his topics in this order?

PHAEDRUS: You flatter me in thinking that I can discern his motives so accurately.

SOCRATES: But I do think you will agree to this, that every discourse must be organized, like a living being, with a body of its own, as it were, so as not to be headless or footless, but to have a middle and members, composed in fitting relation to each other and to the whole.

PHAEDRUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: See then whether this is the case with your friend's discourse, or not. You will find that it is very like the inscription that some say is inscribed on the tomb of Midas the Phrygian.

PHAEDRUS: What sort of inscription is that, and what is the matter with it?

SOCRATES: This is it:

A bronze maiden am I; and I am placed upon the tomb of Midas.

So long as water runs and tall trees put forth leaves,
Remaining in this very spot upon a much lamented tomb,

I shall declare to passers by that Midas is buried here;

and you perceive, I fancy, that it makes no difference whether any line of it is put first or last.

PHAEDRUS: You are making fun of our discourse, Socrates.

SOCRATES: Then, to spare your feelings, let us say no more of this discourse—and yet I think there were many things in it which would be useful examples to consider, though not exactly to imitate—and let us turn to the other discourses; for there was in them, I think, something which those who wish to investigate rhetoric might well examine.

PHAEDRUS: What do you mean?

SOCRATES: The two discourses were opposites; for one maintained that the lover, and the other that the nonlover, should be favored.

PHAEDRUS: And they did it right manfully.

SOCRATES: I thought you were going to speak the truth and say “madly”; however, that is just what I had in mind. We said that love was a kind of madness, did we not?

PHAEDRUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: And that there are two kinds of madness, one arising from human diseases, and the other from a divine release from the customary habits.

PHAEDRUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: And we made four divisions of the divine madness, ascribing them to four gods, saying that prophecy was inspired by Apollo, the mystic madness of Dionysus, the poetic by the Muses, and the madness of love, inspired by Aphrodite and Eros, we said was the best. We described the passion of love in some sort of figurative manner, expressing some truth, perhaps, and perhaps being led away in another direction, and after composing a somewhat plausible discourse, we chanted a sportive and mythic hymn in need and pious strain to the honor of your lord and mine, Phaedrus, Love, the guardian of beautiful boys.

PHAEDRUS: Yes, and I found it very pleasant to hear.

SOCRATES: Here let us take up this point and see how the discourse succeeded in passing from blame to praise.

PHAEDRUS: What do you mean?

SOCRATES: It seems to me that the discourse was, as a whole, really sportive jest; but in these chance utterances were involved two principles, the essence of which it would be gratifying to learn, if art could teach it.

PHAEDRUS: What principles?

SOCRATES: That of perceiving and bringing together in one idea the scattered particulars, that one may make clear by definition the particular thing which he wishes to explain; just as now, in speaking of Love, we said what he is and defined it, whether well or ill. Certainly by this means the discourse acquired clearness and consistency.

PHAEDRUS: And what is the other principle, Socrates?

SOCRATES: That of dividing things again by classes, where the natural joints are, and not trying to break any part, after the manner of a bad carver. As our two discourses just now assumed one common principle, unreason, and then, just as the body, which is one, is naturally divisible into two, right and left, with parts called by the same names, so our two discourses conceived of madness as naturally one principle within us, and one discourse, cutting off the left-hand part, continued to divide this until it found among its parts a sort of left-handed love, which is very justly reviled, but the other discourse, leading us to the

right-hand part of madness, found a love having the same name as the first, but divine, which it held up to view and praised as the author of our greatest blessings.

PHAEDRUS: Very true.

SOCRATES: Now I myself, Phaedrus, am a lover of these processes of division and bringing together, as aids to speech and thought; and if I think any other man is able to see things that can naturally be collected into one and divided into many, him I follow after and "walk in his footsteps as if he were a god."¹⁵ And whether the name I give to those who can do this is right or wrong, God knows, but I have called them hitherto dialecticians. But tell me now what name to give to those who are taught by you and Lysias, or is this that art of speech by means of which Thrasymachus and the rest have become able speakers themselves, and make others so, if they are willing to pay them royal tribute?

PHAEDRUS: They are royal men, but not trained in the matters about which you ask. I think you give this method the right name when you call it dialectic; but it seems to me that rhetoric still escapes us.

SOCRATES: What do you mean? Can there be anything of importance, which is not included in these processes and yet comes under the head of art? Certainly you and I must not neglect it, but must say what it is that remains of rhetoric.

PHAEDRUS: A great many things remain, Socrates, the things that are written in the books on rhetoric.

SOCRATES: Thank you for reminding me. You mean that there must be an introduction first, at the beginning of the discourse; these are the things you mean, are they not?—the niceties of the art.

PHAEDRUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: And the narrative must come second with the testimony after it, and third the proofs, and fourth the probabilities; and confirmation and further confirmation are mentioned, I believe, by the man from Byzantium, that most excellent artist in words.

PHAEDRUS: You mean the worthy Theodorus?

¹⁵Homer, *Odyssey* v, 193. ὁ δ' ἔπειτα μετ' ἵχθυα βαῖνε θεοῦ (and he walked in the footsteps of the god). [Tr.]

SOCRATES: Of course. And he tells how refutation and further refutation must be accomplished, both in accusation and in defense. Shall we not bring the illustrious Parian, Evenus, into our discussion, who invented covert allusion and indirect praises? And some say that he also wrote indirect censures, composing them in verse as an aid to memory; for he is a clever man. And shall we leave Gorgias and Tisias undisturbed, who saw that probabilities are more to be esteemed than truths, who make small things seem great and great things small by the power of their words, and new things old and old things the reverse, and who invented conciseness of speech and measureless length on all subjects? And once when Prodicus heard these inventions, he laughed, and said that he alone had discovered the art of proper speech, that discourses should be neither long nor short, but of reasonable length.

PHAEDRUS: O Prodicus! How clever!

SOCRATES: And shall we not mention Hippias, our friend from Elis? I think he would agree with him.

PHAEDRUS: Oh yes.

SOCRATES: And what shall we say of Polus and his shrines of learned speech, such as duplication and sententiousness and figurativeness, and what of the names with which Licymnius presented him to effect beautiful diction?

PHAEDRUS: Were there not some similar inventions of Protagoras, Socrates?

SOCRATES: Yes, my boy, correctness of diction, and many other fine things. For tearful speeches, to arouse pity for old age and poverty, I think the precepts of the mighty Chalcedonian hold the palm,¹⁶ and he is also a genius, as he said, at rousing large companies to wrath, and soothing them again by his charms when they are angry, and most powerful in devising and abolishing calumnies on any grounds whatsoever. But all seem to be in agreement concerning the conclusion of discourses, which some call recapitulation, while others give it some other name.

¹⁶Evenus, Prodicus, Hippias, Licymnius, Protagoras, Tisias (one of the first rhetoricians), Polus (probably not the Polus of the *Gorgias*), and “the mighty Chalcedonian” (Thrasymachus), like Gorgias, were all Sophists, and some appear as interlocutors in other Platonic dialogues. [Ed.]

PHAEDRUS: You mean making a summary of the points of the speech at the end of it, so as to remind the hearers of what has been said?

SOCRATES: These are the things I mean, these and anything else you can mention concerned with the art of rhetoric.

PHAEDRUS: There are only little things, not worth mentioning.

SOCRATES: Never mind the little things; let us bring these other things more under the light and see what force of art they have and when.

PHAEDRUS: They have a very powerful force, at least in large assemblies.

SOCRATES: They have; but my friend, see if you agree with me in thinking that their warp has gaps in it.

PHAEDRUS: Go on and show them.

SOCRATES: Tell me; if anyone should go to your friend Eryximachus or to his father Acumenus and should say “I know how to apply various drugs to people, so as to make them warm, or, if I wish, cold, and I can make them vomit, if I like, or can make their bowels move, and all that sort of thing; and because of this knowledge I claim that I am a physician and can make any other man a physician, to whom I impart the knowledge of these things”; what do you think they would say?

PHAEDRUS: They would ask him of course, whether he knew also whom he ought to cause to do these things, and when, and how much.

SOCRATES: If then he should say: “No, not at all; but I think that he who has learned these things from me will be able to do by himself the things you ask about”?

PHAEDRUS: They would say, I fancy, that the man was crazy and, because he had read something in a book or had stumbled upon some medicines, imagined that he was a physician when he really had no knowledge of the art.

SOCRATES: And what if someone should go to Sophocles or Euripides and should say that he knew how to make very long speeches about a small matter, and very short ones about a great affair, and pitiful utterances, if he wished, and again terrible and threatening ones, and all that sort of thing, and that he thought by imparting those things he could teach the art of writing tragedies?

PHAEDRUS: They also, I fancy, Socrates, would laugh at him, if he imagined that tragedy was anything else than the proper combination of these details in such a way that they harmonize with each other and with the whole composition.

SOCRATES: But they would not, I suppose, rebuke him harshly, but they would behave as a musician would, if he met a man who thought he understood harmony because he could strike the highest and lowest notes. He would not say roughly, "You wretch, you are mad," but being a musician, he would say in gentler tones, "My friend, he who is to be a harmonist must know these things you mention, but nothing prevents one who is at your stage of knowledge from being quite ignorant of harmony. You know the necessary preliminaries of harmony, but not harmony itself."

PHAEDRUS: Quite correct.

SOCRATES: So Sophocles would say that the man exhibited the preliminaries of tragedy, not tragedy itself, and Acumenus that he knew the preliminaries of medicine, not medicine itself.

PHAEDRUS: Exactly so.

SOCRATES: Well then, if the mellifluous Adrastus¹⁷ or Pericles¹⁸ heard of the excellent accomplishments which we just enumerated, brachylogies and figurative speech and all the other things we said we must bring to the light and examine, do we suppose they would, like you and me, be so illbred as to speak discourteously of those who have written and taught these things as the art of rhetoric? Would they not, since they are wiser than we, censure us also and say, "Phaedrus and Socrates, we ought not to be angry, but lenient, if certain persons who are ignorant of dialectics have been unable to define the nature of rhetoric and on this account have thought, when they possessed the knowledge that is a necessary preliminary to rhetoric, that they had discovered rhetoric, and believe that by

¹⁷Tyrtaeus, ed. Bergk, first ed. frg. 9, 7, οὐδ' εἴ Τανχά'. δεῶ Πέλοπος βασιλεύτερος εἶη γλώσσαν δ' Ἀδρήστου μελιχόγηρον ἔχοι, "not even if he were more kingly than Pelops and had the mellifluous tongue of Adrastus." Perhaps the orator Antiphon is referred to under the name of Adrastus, cf. chapter xliii above. [Tr.]

¹⁸Pericles and Adrastus are cited here as examples of men who put oratory to beneficial public use. [Ed.]

teaching these preliminaries to others they have taught them rhetoric completely, and that the persuasive use of these details and the composition of the whole discourse is a small matter which their pupils must supply of themselves in their writings or speeches."

PHAEDRUS: Well, Socrates, it does seem as if that which those men teach and write about as the art of rhetoric were such as you describe. I think you are right. But how and from whom is the truly rhetorical and persuasive art to be acquired?

SOCRATES: Whether one can acquire it, so as to become a perfect orator, Phaedrus, is probably, and perhaps must be, dependent on conditions, like everything else. If you are naturally rhetorical, you will become a notable orator, when to your natural endowments you have added knowledge and practice; at whatever point you are deficient in these, you will be incomplete. But so far as the art is concerned, I do not think the quest of it lies along the path of Lysias and Thrasymachus.

PHAEDRUS: Where then?

SOCRATES: I suppose, my friend, Pericles is the most perfect orator in existence.

PHAEDRUS: Well?

SOCRATES: All great arts demand discussion and high speculation about nature; for this loftiness of mind and effectiveness in all directions seem somehow to come from such pursuits. This was in Pericles added to his great natural abilities; for it was, I think, his falling in with Anaxagoras, who was just such a man, that filled him with high thoughts and taught him the nature of mind and of lack of mind, subjects about which Anaxagoras used chiefly to discourse, and from these speculations he drew and applied to the art of speaking what is of use to it.

PHAEDRUS: What do you mean by that?

SOCRATES: The method of the art of healing is much the same as that of rhetoric.

PHAEDRUS: How so?

SOCRATES: In both cases you must analyze a nature, in one that of the body and in the other that of the soul, if you are to proceed in a scientific manner, not merely by practice and routine, to impart health and strength to the body by prescribing medicine and diet, or by proper dis-

courses and training to give to the soul the desired belief and virtue.

PHAEDRUS: That, Socrates, is probably true.

SOCRATES: Now do you think one can acquire any appreciable knowledge of the nature of the soul without knowing the nature of the whole man?

PHAEDRUS: If Hippocrates the Asclepiad is to be trusted, one cannot know the nature of the body, either, except in that way.

SOCRATES: He is right, my friend; however, we ought not to be content with the authority of Hippocrates, but to see also if our reason agrees with him on examination.

PHAEDRUS: I assent.

SOCRATES: Then see what Hippocrates and true reason say about nature. In considering the nature of anything, must we not consider first, whether that in respect to which we wish to be learned ourselves and to make others learned is simple or multiform, and then, if it is simple, enquire what power of acting it possesses, or of being acted upon, and by what, and if it has many forms, number them, and then see in the case of each form, as we did in the case of the simple nature, what its action is and how it is acted upon and by what?

PHAEDRUS: Very likely, Socrates.

SOCRATES: At any rate, any other mode of procedure would be like the progress of a blind man. Yet surely he who pursues any study scientifically ought not to be comparable to a blind or a deaf man, but evidently the man whose rhetorical teaching is a real art will explain accurately the nature of that to which his words are to be addressed, and that is the soul, is it not?

PHAEDRUS: Of course.

SOCRATES: Then this is the goal of all his effort; he tries to produce conviction in the soul. Is not that so?

PHAEDRUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: So it is clear that Thrasymachus, or anyone else who seriously teaches the art of rhetoric, will first describe the soul with perfect accuracy and make us see whether it is one and all alike, or, like the body, of multiform aspect; for this is what we call explaining its nature.

PHAEDRUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: And secondly he will say what its

action is and toward what it is directed, or how it is acted upon and by what.

PHAEDRUS: To be sure.

SOCRATES: Thirdly, he will classify the speeches and the souls and will adapt each to the other, showing the causes of the effects produced and why one kind of soul is necessarily persuaded by certain classes of speeches, and another is not.

PHAEDRUS: That would, I think, be excellent.

SOCRATES: By no other method of exposition or speech will this, or anything else, ever be written or spoken with real art. But those whom you have heard, who write treatises on the art of speech nowadays, are deceivers and conceal the nature of the soul, though they know it very well. Until they write and speak by this method we cannot believe that they write by the rules of art.

PHAEDRUS: What is this method?

SOCRATES: It is not easy to tell the exact expressions to be used; but I will tell how one must write, if one is to do it, so far as possible, in a truly artistic way.

PHAEDRUS: Speak then.

SOCRATES: Since it is the function of speech to lead souls by persuasion, he who is to be a rhetorician must know the various forms of soul. Now they are so and so many and of such and such kinds, wherefore men also are of different kinds: these we must classify. Then there are also various classes of speeches, to one of which every speech belongs. So men of a certain sort are easily persuaded by speeches of a certain sort for a certain reason to actions or beliefs of a certain sort, and men of another sort cannot be so persuaded. The student of rhetoric must, accordingly, acquire a proper knowledge of these classes and then be able to follow them accurately with his senses when he sees them in the practical affairs of life; otherwise he can never have any profit from the lectures he may have heard. But when he has learned to tell what sort of man is influenced by what sort of speech, and is able, if he comes upon such a man, to recognize him and to convince himself that this is the man and this now actually before him is the nature spoken of in a certain lecture, to which he must now make a practical application of a certain kind of speech in a certain way to persuade

his hearer to a certain action or belief—when he has acquired all this, and has added thereto a knowledge of the times for speaking and for keeping silence, and has also distinguished the favorable occasions for brief speech or pitiful speech or intensity and all the classes of speech which he has learned, then, and not till then, will his art be fully and completely finished; and if anyone who omits any of these points in his speaking or writing claims to speak by the rules of art, the one who disbelieves him is the better man. “Now then,” perhaps the writer of our treatise will say, “Phaedrus and Socrates, do you agree to all this? Or must the art of speech be described in some other way?”

PHAEDRUS: No other way is possible, Socrates. But it seems a great task to attain to it.

SOCRATES: Very true. Therefore you must examine all that has been said from every point of view, to see if no shorter and easier road to the art appears, that one may not take a long and rough road, when there is a short and smooth one. If you have heard from Lysias or anyone else anything that can help us, try to remember it and tell it.

PHAEDRUS: If it depended on trying, I might, but just now I have nothing to say.

SOCRATES: Then shall I tell something that I have heard some of those say who make these matters their business?

PHAEDRUS: Pray do.

SOCRATES: Even the wolf, you know, Phaedrus, has a right to an advocate, as they say.

PHAEDRUS: Do you be his advocate.

SOCRATES: Very well. They say that there is no need of treating these matters with such gravity and carrying them back so far to first principles with many words; for, as we said in the beginning of this discussion, he who is to be a competent rhetorician need have nothing at all to do, they say, with truth in considering things which are just or good, or men who are so, whether by nature or by education. For in the courts, they say, nobody cares for truth about these matters, but for that which is convincing; and that is probability, so that he who is to be an artist in speech must fix his attention upon probability. For sometimes one must not even tell what was actually done, if it was not likely to be done, but what was

probable, whether in accusation or defense; and in brief, a speaker must always aim at probability, paying no attention to truth; for this method, if pursued throughout the whole speech, provides us with the entire art.

PHAEDRUS: You have stated just what those say who pretend to possess the art of speech, Socrates. I remember that we touched upon this matter briefly before,¹⁹ but the professional rhetoricians think it is of great importance.

SOCRATES: Well, there is Tisias whom you have studied carefully; now let Tisias himself tell us if he does not say that probability is that which most people think.

PHAEDRUS: That is just what he says.

SOCRATES: Apparently after he had invented this clever scientific definition, he wrote that if a feeble and brave man assaulted a strong coward, robbed him of his cloak or something, and was brought to trial for it, neither party ought to speak the truth; the coward should say that he had not been assaulted by the brave man alone, whereas the other should prove that only they two were present and should use the well-known argument, “How could a little man like me assault such a man as he is?” The coward will not acknowledge his cowardice, but will perhaps try to invent some other lie, and thus give his opponent a chance to confute him. And in other cases there are other similar rules of art. Is that not so, Phaedrus?

PHAEDRUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: Oh, a wonderfully hidden art it seems to be which Tisias has brought to light, or some other, whoever he may be and whatever country he is proud to call his own! But, my friend, shall we say in reply to this, or shall we not—

PHAEDRUS: What?

SOCRATES: “Tisias, some time ago, before you came along, we were saying that this probability of yours was accepted by the people because of its likeness to truth; and we just stated that he who knows the truth is always best able to discover likenesses. And so, if you have anything else to say about the art of speech, we will listen to you; but if not, we will put our trust in what

¹⁹See 259 E. [Tr.]

we said just now, that unless a man take account of the characters of his hearers and is able to divide things by classes and to comprehend particulars under a general idea, he will never attain the highest human perfection in the art of speech. But this ability he will not gain without much diligent toil, which a wise man ought not to undergo for the sake of speaking and acting before men, but that he may be able to speak and to do everything, so far as possible, in a manner pleasing to the gods. For those who are wiser than we, Tisias, say that a man of sense should surely practice to please not his fellow slaves, except as a secondary consideration, but his good and noble masters. Therefore, if the path is long, be not astonished; for it must be trodden for great ends, not for those you have in mind. Yet your ends also, as our argument says, will be best gained in this way, if one so desires."

PHAEDRUS: I think what you have said is admirable, if one could only do it.

SOCRATES: But it is noble to strive after noble objects, no matter what happens to us.

PHAEDRUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: We have, then, said enough about the art of speaking and that which is no art.

PHAEDRUS: Assuredly.

SOCRATES: But we have still to speak of propriety and impropriety in writing, how it should be done and how it is improper, have we not?

PHAEDRUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: Do you know how you can act or speak about rhetoric so as to please God best?

PHAEDRUS: Not at all; do you?

SOCRATES: I can tell something I have heard of the ancients; but whether it is true, they only know. But if we ourselves should find it out, should we care any longer for human opinions?

PHAEDRUS: A ridiculous question! But tell me what you say you have heard.

SOCRATES: I heard, then, that at Naucratis, in Egypt, was one of the ancient gods of that country, the one whose sacred bird is called the ibis, and the name of the god himself was Theuth. He it was who invented numbers and arithmetic and geometry and astronomy, also draughts and dice, and, most important of all, letters. Now the king of all Egypt at that time was the god Thamus, who lived in the great city of the upper region,

which the Greeks call the Egyptian Thebes, and they call the god himself Ammon. To him came Theuth to show his inventions, saying that they ought to be imparted to the other Egyptians. But Thamus asked what use there was in each, and as Theuth enumerated their uses, expressed praise or blame, according as he approved or disapproved. The story goes that Thamus said many things to Theuth in praise or blame of the various arts, which it would take too long to repeat; but when they came to the letters, "This invention, O king," said Theuth, "will make the Egyptians wiser and will improve their memories; for it is an elixir of memory and wisdom that I have discovered." But Thamus replied, "Most ingenious Theuth, one man has the ability to beget arts, but the ability to judge of their usefulness or harmfulness to their users belongs to another; and now you, who are the father of letters, have been led by your affection to ascribe to them a power the opposite of that which they really possess. For this invention will produce forgetfulness in the minds of those who learn to use it, because they will not practice their memory. Their trust in writing, produced by external characters which are no part of themselves, will discourage the use of their own memory within them. You have invented an elixir not of memory, but of reminding; and you offer your pupils the appearance of wisdom, not true wisdom, for they will read many things without instruction and will therefore seem to know many things, when they are for the most part ignorant and hard to get along with, since they are not wise, but only appear wise."

PHAEDRUS: Socrates, you easily make up stories of Egypt or any country you please.

SOCRATES: They used to say, my friend, that the words of the oak in the holy place of Zeus at Dodona were the first prophetic utterances. The people of that time, not being so wise as you young folks, were content in their simplicity to hear an oak or a rock, provided only it spoke the truth; but to you, perhaps, it makes a difference who the speaker is and where he comes from, for you do not consider only whether his words are true or not.

PHAEDRUS: Your rebuke is just; and I think the Theban is right in what he says about letters.

SOCRATES: He who thinks, then, that he has

left behind him any art in writing, and he who receives it in the belief that anything in writing will be clear and certain, would be an utterly simple person, and in truth ignorant of the prophecy of Ammon²⁰ if he thinks written words are of any use except to remind him who knows the matter about which they are written.

PHAEDRUS: Very true.

SOCRATES: Writing, Phaedrus, has this strange quality, and is very like painting; for the creatures of painting stand like living beings, but if one asks them a question, they preserve a solemn silence. And so it is with written words; you might think they spoke as if they had intelligence, but if you question them, wishing to know about their sayings, they always say only one and the same thing. And every word, when once it was written, is bandied about, alike among those who understand and those who have no interest in it, and it knows not to whom to speak or not to speak; when ill-treated or unjustly reviled it always needs its father to help it; for it has no power to protect or help itself.

PHAEDRUS: You are quite right about that, too.

SOCRATES: Now tell me; is there not another kind of speech, or word, which shows itself to be the legitimate brother of this bastard one, both in the manner of its begetting and in its better and more powerful nature?

PHAEDRUS: What is this word and how is it begotten, as you say?

SOCRATES: The word is written with intelligence in the mind of the learner, which is able to defend itself and knows to whom it should speak, and before whom to be silent.

PHAEDRUS: You mean the living and breathing word of him who knows, of which the written word may justly be called the image.

SOCRATES: Exactly. Now tell me this. Would a sensible husbandman, who has seeds which he cares for and which he wishes to bear fruit, plant them with serious purpose in the heat of summer in some garden of Adonis, and delight in seeing them appear in beauty in eight days, or would he do that sort of thing, when he did it at all, only in play and for amusement? Would he not, when he

was in earnest, follow the rules of husbandry, plant his seeds in fitting ground, and be pleased when those which he had sowed reached their perfection in the eighth month?

PHAEDRUS: Yes, Socrates, he would, as you say, act in that way when in earnest and in the other way only for amusement.

SOCRATES: And shall we suppose that he who has knowledge of the just and the good and beautiful has less sense about his seeds than the husbandman?

PHAEDRUS: By no means.

SOCRATES: Then he will not, when in earnest, write them in ink, sowing them through a pen with words which cannot defend themselves by argument and cannot teach the truth effectually.

PHAEDRUS: No, at least, probably not.

SOCRATES: No. The gardens of letters he will, it seems, plant for amusement, and will write, when he writes, to treasure up reminders for himself, when he comes to the forgetfulness of old age, and for others who follow the same path, and he will be pleased when he sees them putting forth tender leaves. When others engage in other amusements, refreshing themselves with banquets and kindred entertainments, he will pass the time in such pleasures as I have suggested.

PHAEDRUS: A noble pastime, Socrates, and a contrast to those base pleasures, the pastime of the man who can find amusement in discourse, telling stories about justice, and the other subjects of which you speak.

SOCRATES: Yes, Phaedrus, so it is; but, in my opinion, serious discourse about them is far nobler, when one employs the dialectic method and plants and sows in a fitting soul intelligent words which are able to help themselves and him who planted them, which are not fruitless, but yield seed from which there spring up in other minds other words capable of continuing the process for ever, and which make their possessor happy, to the farthest possible limit of human happiness.

PHAEDRUS: Yes, that is far nobler.

SOCRATES: And now, Phaedrus, since we have agreed about these matters, we can decide the others.

PHAEDRUS: What others?

SOCRATES: Those which brought us to this point through our desire to investigate them, for

²⁰Ammon, or Zeus, delivered his prophecies only orally, as through the murmuring leaves of the Dodona oak. [Ed.]

we wished to examine into the reproach against Lysias as a speech-writer,²¹ and also to discuss the speeches themselves and see which were the products of art and which were not. I think we have shown pretty clearly what is and what is not a work of art.

PHAEDRUS: Yes, I thought so, too; but please recall to my mind what was said.

SOCRATES: A man must know the truth about all the particular things of which he speaks or writes, and must be able to define everything separately; then when he has defined them, he must know how to divide them by classes until further division is impossible; and in the same way he must understand that nature of the soul, must find out the class of speech adapted to each nature, and must arrange and adorn his discourse accordingly, offering to the complex soul elaborate and harmonious discourses, and simple talks to the simple soul. Until he has attained to all this, he will not be able to speak by the method of art, so far as speech can be controlled by method, either for purposes of instruction or of persuasion. This has been taught by our whole preceding discussion.

PHAEDRUS: Yes, certainly, that is just about our result.

SOCRATES: How about the question whether it is a fine or a disgraceful thing to be a speaker or writer and under what circumstances the profession might properly be called a disgrace or not? Was that made clear a little while ago when we said—

PHAEDRUS: What?

SOCRATES: That if Lysias or anyone else ever wrote or ever shall write, in private, or in public as lawgiver, a political document, and in writing it believes that it possesses great certainty and clearness, then it is a disgrace to the writer, whether anyone says so, or not. For whether one be awake or asleep; ignorance of right and wrong and good and bad is in truth inevitably a disgrace, even if the whole mob applaud it.

PHAEDRUS: That is true.

SOCRATES: But the man who thinks that in the written word there is necessarily much that is playful, and that no written discourse, whether in

meter or in prose, deserves to be treated very seriously (and this applies also to the recitations of the rhapsodes, delivered to sway people's minds, without opportunity for questioning and teaching), but that the best of them really serve only to remind us of what we know; and who thinks that only in words about justice and beauty and goodness spoken by teachers for the sake of instruction and really written in a soul is clearness and perfection and serious value, that such words should be considered the speaker's own legitimate offspring, first the word within himself, if it be found there, and secondly its descendants or brothers which may have sprung up in worthy manner in the souls of others, and who pays no attention to the other words—that man, Phaedrus, is likely to be such as you and I might pray that we ourselves may become.

PHAEDRUS: By all means that is what I wish and pray for.

SOCRATES: We have amused ourselves with talk about words long enough. Go and tell Lysias that you and I came down to the fountain and sacred place of the nymphs, and heard words which they told us to repeat to Lysias and anyone else who composed speeches, and to Homer or any other who has composed poetry with or without musical accompaniment, and third to Solon and whoever has written political compositions which he calls laws:—If he has composed his writings with knowledge of the truth, and is able to support them by discussion of that which he has written, and has the power to show by his own speech that the written words are of little worth, such a man ought not to derive his title from such writings, but from the serious pursuit which underlies them.

PHAEDRUS: What titles do you grant them then?

SOCRATES: I think, Phaedrus, that the epithet “wise” is too great and befits God alone; but the name “philosopher,” that is, “lover of wisdom,” or something of the sort would be more fitting and modest for such a man.

PHAEDRUS: And quite appropriate.

SOCRATES: On the other hand, he who has nothing more valuable than the things he has composed or written, turning his words up and down at his leisure, adding this phrase and taking

²¹See 257 c. [Tr.]

that away, will you not properly address him as poet or writer of speeches or of laws?

PHAEDRUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: Tell this then to your friend.

PHAEDRUS: But what will you do? For your friend ought not to be passed by.

SOCRATES: What friend?

PHAEDRUS: The fair Isocrates.²² What message will you give him? What shall we say that he is?

SOCRATES: Isocrates is young yet, Phaedrus; however, I am willing to say what I prophesy for him.

PHAEDRUS: What is it?

SOCRATES: I think he has a nature above the speeches of Lysias and possesses a nobler character; so that I should not be surprised if, as he grows older, he should so excel in his present

²²Isocrates, one of the Ten Attic Orators and a well-known educator (p. 67), was roughly contemporary with Plato, although he studied with Gorgias while Plato followed Socrates. Scholars debate about whether the retroactive praise of Isocrates here (he was actually an old man at the time the dialogue was written) is sincere. But Plato's follower Aristotle explicitly condemned Isocrates' teaching on rhetoric. [Ed.]

studies that all who have ever treated of rhetoric shall seem less than children; and I suspect that these studies will not satisfy him, but a more divine impulse will lead him to greater things; for my friend, something of philosophy is inborn in his mind. This is the message that I carry from these deities to my favorite Isocrates, and do you carry the other to Lysias, your favorite.

PHAEDRUS: It shall be done; but now let us go, since the heat has grown gentler.

SOCRATES: Is it not well to pray to the deities here before we go?

PHAEDRUS: Of course.

SOCRATES: O beloved Pan and all ye other gods of this place, grant to me that I be made beautiful in my soul within, and that all external possessions be in harmony with my inner man. May I consider the wise man rich; and may I have such wealth as only the self-restrained man can bear or endure.—Do we need anything more, Phaedrus? For me that prayer is enough.

PHAEDRUS: Let me also share in this prayer; for friends have all things in common.

SOCRATES: Let us go.

Aristotle

384–322 B.C.E.

Aristotle was born to Greek parents in the Macedonian town of Stagira, at about the time that Plato was opening the Academy in Athens. Aristotle's father was court physician to the Macedonian royal family and trained his son in medicine. When Aristotle was seventeen years old, in 367 B.C.E., he went to Athens and entered the Academy. He stayed on as a teacher, leaving twenty years later on Plato's death in 347. According to one story, Plato gave him the nickname "The Reader." An ancient biographical source suggests that Aristotle had a speech impediment; at any rate, so far as is known, he never wrote speeches for public delivery, whether by himself or by others. His oral rhetorical skills were used entirely in teaching.

Aristotle was apparently the first to teach rhetoric at the Academy, as a co-curricular subject offered in the afternoons. His *Rhetoric*, never published in his lifetime, began as notes for these classes. Scholars have suggested that Aristotle taught rhetoric to compete with Isocrates. Aristotle seemed to disapprove of Isocrates' approach to rhetoric as much as Plato did. At about the same time that he started teaching rhetoric (ca. 358), Aristotle wrote a Platonic-style dialogue, the *Gryllus*, now lost, in which he is said to have mounted criticisms of Sophistic rhetoric similar to those in Plato's *Gorgias*. (Aristotle also wrote another work, likewise lost, on rhetoric: the *Theoedectea*, which summarized the views on rhetoric of the playwright and orator Theodectes.) Isocrates' defense of his life work, the *Antidosis* (353 B.C.E.; p. 75), was published not long after Aristotle began to teach rhetoric and may be regarded in part as a riposte. Also at about this time, Aristotle compiled a survey of the rhetoric handbooks up to his day, the *Synagoge Tekhnon*, now lost.

Coming to Athens from the royal court of Macedon, Aristotle was associated in the public mind with Philip of Macedon and his son, Alexander. Hence his fortunes rose and fell in Athens as anti-Macedonian feeling waxed and waned. After 347 B.C.E., Aristotle left Athens not only because, as a foreigner, or metic, he could not assume leadership of Plato's Academy, but also because he needed to avoid the anti-Macedonian feeling aroused there by Philip's military victories. In 342, Philip appointed Aristotle as one of the tutors for the teenaged Alexander; Aristotle served for about two years and then returned to Stagira. The *Rhetorica ad Alexandrum*, the earliest complete Greek manual of rhetoric now extant, was once thought to have been composed by Aristotle for his famous pupil. It is now believed to be the work of Anaximenes.

When Philip died in 336 B.C.E., hostility toward Macedonians abated sufficiently for Aristotle to return to Athens and open his own school, which convened in the covered walk (*peripatos*) adjoining the lyceum, a public gymnasium. Aristotle wrote and taught at the Peripatetic School until 323, when the death of his former student, now Alexander the Great, again aroused anti-Macedonian feeling in Athens. Aristotle left the school to his pupil Theophrastus and died abroad a year later.

Like Plato, Aristotle studied a staggering array of subjects. He taught biology, ethics, politics, rhetoric, and zoology as well as philosophy, and produced many works on these subjects, some now lost. For Aristotle, only scientific demonstration and the analysis of formal logic can arrive at absolute truth. Here he agrees with Plato—both would call this kind of truth the only true knowledge—but Plato emphasized its transcendent origins, whereas Aristotle emphasized the empirical means by which it was obtained. In addition to demonstration and logic, dialectic and rhetoric constitute the other two major methods in Aristotle’s view of human inquiry, but these deal with subjects on which true knowledge is not available. Dialectic arrives at probable knowledge (what Plato called belief) in disciplined academic inquiry that allows for rigorous questioning of premises and testing of conclusions. Rhetoric functions in situations in which such rigorous analysis is not possible (because the audience is not qualified) or desirable (due to the exigency of the questions at hand). Instead of examining everything, rhetorical argument builds, whenever possible, on assumptions the audience already holds. Rhetoric may convey the results of scientific demonstration or dialectic to nonexperts by summarizing the reasoning used to arrive at these results. It may also be used to explore possible solutions to practical problems, such as are likely to confront governmental deliberative bodies or courts of law; it may arrive at probable answers that are more provisional, because less rigorously tested, than the results of dialectic but still trustworthy enough—if the rhetorical process has been conducted properly—for people to use the conclusions to manage their affairs. Thus even though he aligned himself philosophically with Plato, Aristotle reflected some of Isocrates’ concern that rhetoric make itself useful to society.

THE THEORY OF RHETORIC

Aristotle begins the *Rhetoric* (excerpted here) by differentiating himself from those “sophists” whose reprehensible moral purpose is to tell how to pervert the judgments of those addressed (such rhetoricians as are condemned in Plato’s *Gorgias*.) But Aristotle goes on to respond to the more complex views on rhetoric expressed in Plato’s *Phaedrus*. In the *Phaedrus*, rhetoric is ennobled because it persuades others to true knowledge. In the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle attempts to dignify its use in making decisions about matters on which true knowledge is not available. The *Phaedrus* suggests that the proper province for rhetoric is the study of souls and the occasions for moving them. In the *Rhetoric* these elements are analyzed and classified exhaustively.

Yet the *Rhetoric* was probably never intended for publication as a literary work, systematic treatise, or even handbook. It apparently comprises Aristotle’s lecture notes on the subject, gradually assembled during his two stays in Athens (367–347 and 335–323 B.C.E.), when he did most of his rhetoric teaching. Possibly he stopped working on this collection of notes just before returning to Athens for the second time. He never really finished this work, in the sense that a manuscript prepared for publication (like many of his other works) would be finished. Although many readers have felt that he did not always remove ambiguous or contradictory material or

provide cues to a larger structure, classicist W. M. A. Grimaldi, S.J., makes a persuasive argument for the book's coherence. The book divisions are probably Aristotle's; chapter divisions are more likely the work of later editors. Many scholars believe that Books I and II were originally intended as a unit and Book III was added later. Much of the text we have may be the work of his students, redacting their own notes of his lectures.

Dating the *Rhetoric*, therefore, is difficult. The earliest material is probably Book I, Chapters 1–3, which defines a philosophical rhetoric, and Book II, Chapters 23–26, on common topics or lines of argument. Chapters 4–15 in Book I and Chapters 1–17 in Book II were probably inserted later, to link argumentative premises to the occasion of the speech in Book I and to add a discussion of *ethos* and *pathos* to Book II. Book II, Chapters 18–22, a more detailed treatment of enthymeme and example, may have come next. Book III on style and arrangement is probably the last addition (although some material collected there may be among Aristotle's earliest lessons on rhetoric) and the most likely to have come from a student's hand.

Our knowledge of this difficult text is complicated, too, by the fact that after Aristotle's death, his library, including the unpublished manuscript of the *Rhetoric*, passed through various hands and did not reach a scholarly editor until 83 B.C.E., when the collection was sent to Rome. Shortly thereafter, the *Rhetoric* was "published" (hand-copied) for the first time by Andronicus of Rhodes, who was assisted by the grammarian Tyrannio. The first printed edition of the *Rhetoric* was George of Trebizond's Latin translation, published in 1475 C.E. Interestingly, given the relevance of Aristotelian rhetoric to civic life, the first English translation (actually a paraphrase) was prepared by political philosopher Thomas Hobbes and was published in 1637.

Aristotle's rhetorical theory is constructed hierarchically. To understand it, therefore, one must be able to classify his complex terms in relation to each other. Scholars agree that the starting point is Aristotle's division of rhetoric into two major categories: "artistic" proofs, for which the rhetorician constructs the material (e.g., "My client is too good to have committed this crime"), and "inartistic" proofs, for which the rhetorician interprets existing evidence (e.g., "These three witnesses place my client elsewhere at the time the crime was committed"). Traditionally, Aristotle has been read as dividing artistic proofs into appeals to *logos*, *pathos*, and *ethos*. Logical or rational appeals stress the reasonableness of the rhetorician's argument. Pathetic appeals raise emotions favorable to the rhetorician's position. Ethical appeals raise emotions favorable to the rhetorician's moral character.

According to this traditional view, Aristotle next divides rational appeals into "enthymeme," "maxim," and "example." The enthymeme is a form of deductive argument also called the rhetorical syllogism. Scholars disagree about what distinguishes the enthymeme from other syllogisms. A common view is that in the enthymeme the first premise is based on probable, not certain, knowledge, and the entire train of reasoning may be truncated. For example, a syllogism might be: All men are mortal; Socrates is a man; therefore, Socrates is mortal. An enthymeme might be: Socrates is virtuous, for he is wise. The premise that all wise men are virtuous is merely probable, not certain like the premise that all men are mortal; and

the premise is not stated in the enthymeme on the assumption that the audience already knows it. However, these two distinguishing features, although they may be typical of the enthymeme, are not necessary conditions to define it; that is, Aristotle does not forbid the rhetor to employ a train of reasoning that begins from certain knowledge or to state every step in the argument. George Kennedy, a historian of rhetoric and translator of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, suggests that, in general, the enthymeme is the kind of reasoning an audience of nonexperts can easily understand.¹

A rational appeal to a "maxim" may refer to it as if citing an authority or may provide a kind of premise for enthymemes, as shown at some places in the *Rhetoric*. An example of such usage might be: Let's not rush into this decision, for haste makes waste. (The implied argument is: Haste makes waste [a well-known maxim]; we are hastening into a decision; the decision will turn out badly for us.)

The rational appeal to "example" is inductive argument. Aristotle notes that it is often used most effectively with enthymematic argument. For instance, the rhetor might begin with the following enthymeme: This leader has accepted invitations to lavish entertainments at the homes of the wealthy and therefore we must beware of him, for he is planning to pervert justice in their favor (suppressed here is the premise that those who accept expensive attentions are planning favoritism). The rhetor might then follow this point with several historical examples of leaders who favored the rich after accepting invitations and presents from them.

To explore rational appeals further, Aristotle next must specify the kinds of speeches in which they could be employed. He identifies three: forensic speeches, typical of the law courts, which examine past actions; deliberative speeches, typical of governing bodies, which consider future actions; and epideictic or ceremonial speeches, such as might be given at an awards ceremony or a funeral, which attempt to establish the moral qualities of someone or something in the present. Aristotle suggests that arguments for each of these kinds of speeches can be found by considering *topoi* special to each, as well as *topoi* that are common to all speeches.

A persistent source of difficulty in Aristotle's treatment of rational appeals is his description of *topoi*—topics or "places"—where arguments may be found. The visual imagery of "places" is consistent with other classical rhetorical practices, such as memorizing a speech by visualizing a building and associating each part of the speech with a room and its contents. As George Kennedy points out, it is also especially characteristic of Aristotle's thought.² In the *Rhetoric*, in Books I and II, Aristotle talks about not only "common topics" that can generate arguments for any kind of speech, but also "special topics" that are useful only for a particular kind of speech or subject matter. Because the discussion is dispersed, it is sometimes hard to determine what each kind of topic is. How topics were generally supposed to work can be described, however.

Imagine, for example, that one must compose a eulogy. The eulogist at a loss for words can consult Aristotle's ethical special topics for deliberative and ceremonial speeches in Book I, Chapters 5, 6, and 9, which suggest praising the deceased for

¹George Kennedy, *Aristotle on Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 42.

²Kennedy, p. 45.

his or her ancestry, education, wealth, personal appearance, virtuous children, and so on, as well as for his or her virtuous deeds. These “topics” are useful only in this type of speech. In contrast, imagine the uses for one of the common topics suggested in Book II, Chapter 23, namely, to argue that the purpose for which something might have been done is in fact the purpose for which it was done. The accuser in a legal case, looking for some way to drive home the defendant’s guilt, might argue that the defendant had no reason to go to a secluded spot that the victim was known to frequent except to waylay the victim: Since this might have been the defendant’s purpose in going there, the accuser can argue that it was indeed his or her purpose. Similarly, a diplomat engaged in debate over an untrustworthy ally’s motives might argue that this ally sent an ambassador to a rival state to make a treacherous treaty with it: Since that might have been the ambassador’s purpose in going there, the diplomat can argue that this was probably the purpose. Even the eulogist could use this common topic: Since the deceased might have given money to charity purely from a desire to help the needy (and not, for instance, from a desire to bask in the resulting public praise), the eulogist can assert that the selfless motive was in fact the sole purpose of the benefaction. The special and common topics are intended to help the rhetor invent material for any kind of discourse.

In the traditional reading of Aristotle’s system, classifying enthymeme, example, and maxim under rational appeals has tended to privilege rational appeals and devalue pathetic and ethical appeals. The category of rational appeals thus contains the major argumentative structures, and pathetic and ethical appeals appear to be dispensable. Aristotle seems to encourage this interpretation in the opening chapters of Book I, where he deplores the use of appeals to emotion by other rhetoricians. This view of Aristotle has caused his work on rhetoric to be traditionally associated with arguments that essentially downgrade rhetoric, seeking to minimize its influence and to make its practice as much like dialectic, if not scientific inquiry, as possible.

The very fact that Aristotle taught rhetoric, however, and compiled his ideas into the text we now have suggests that he saw it as a worthy subject of study. Debate over perceived inconsistencies in the text has made some modern scholars dissatisfied with the traditional reading of Aristotle’s system. For example, scholars have noted that after initially condemning pathetic and ethical appeals, Aristotle later gives much advice on how to make good ones. Moreover, the pure rationality of his rational appeals can be questioned on grounds that all three kinds are culture-bound: The maxim is by definition a piece of received wisdom; the example must be drawn from history or mythology known to the audience; and the enthymeme is usually developed from premises that accord with the audience’s view of the world, what is taken to be common sense.

Hence an influential alternative to the traditional reading is the work of Grimaldi, which suggests the hierarchical arrangement depicted in Figure 1.³ Instead of treating rational, ethical, and pathetic appeals as the three major subdivisions of artistic

³William M. A. Grimaldi, S.J., *Studies in the Philosophy of Aristotle’s Rhetoric* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1972). Figure 1 is by the editors of the present volume.

RHETORIC

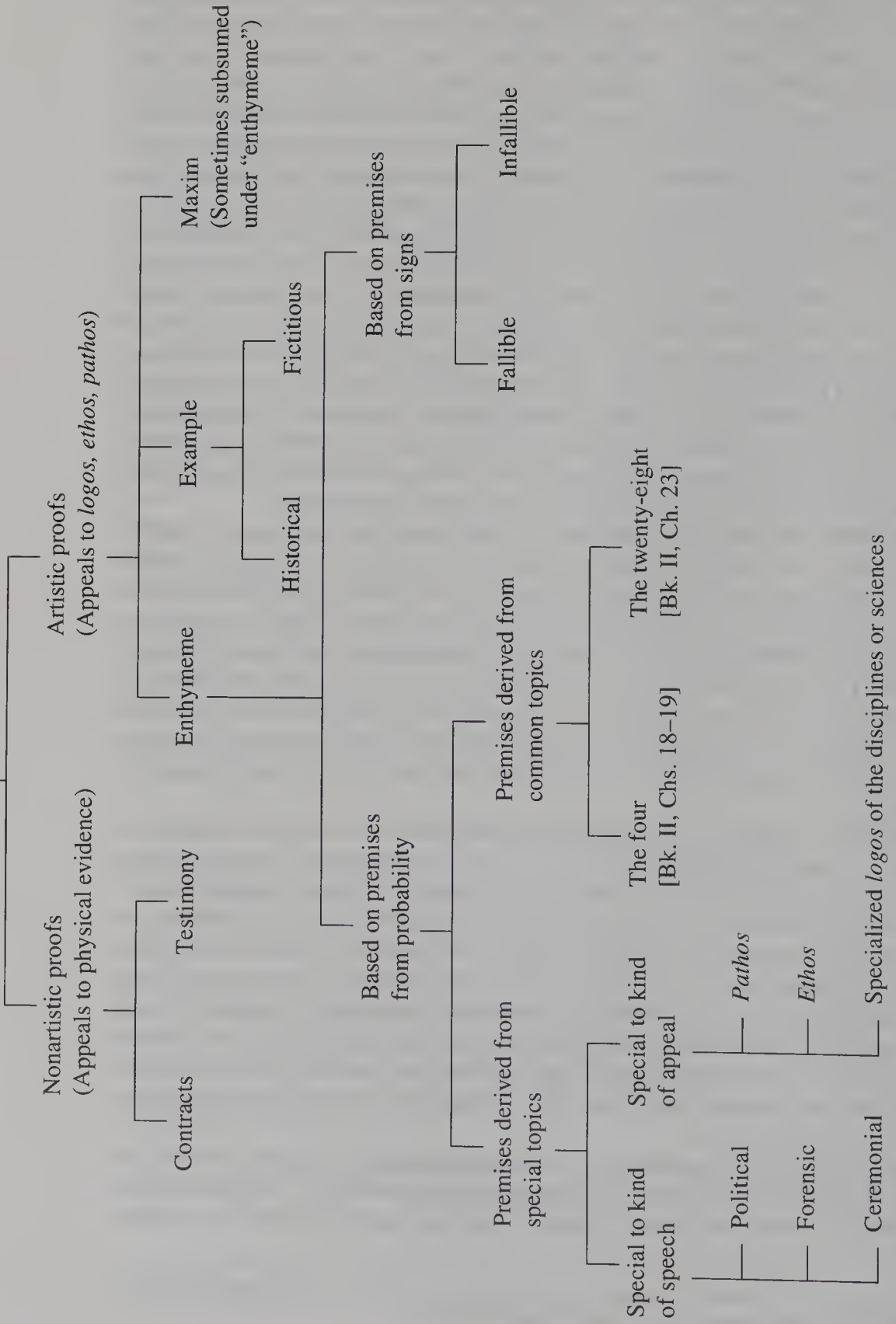


Figure 1

proof, he reads Aristotle as dividing artistic proof into two major categories, enthymeme and example. Rational, ethical, and pathetic appeals then become subdivisions under both enthymeme and example. Grimaldi's reorganization of the traditional reading of Aristotle's system gives all artistic proofs a basically reasonable structure, either deductive (enthymeme)—the one that Grimaldi believes is most important in Aristotle's view—or inductive (example). Rational, ethical, and pathetic appeals are typically present in all reasonable arguments.

This understanding of artistic proofs implies that Aristotle treats rhetoric as legitimately appealing to the whole person, not just to the "rational being." Thus this view undercuts the customary use of Aristotle to defend a purely logical or scientific use of language, free from all circumstantial influences, to convey information.

Aristotle is often cited as the source of the five "canons" or stages in the composing process known to later rhetoricians: invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery. Nowhere in the *Rhetoric* does Aristotle outline such a five-stage process. But Books I and II clearly are devoted to what we would now call "invention," developing ideas to be used in a text. Book III touches on delivery only briefly and ignores memory (techniques for memorizing a speech to be delivered orally), and discusses how to arrange the parts of an argument and how to use metaphor and other stylistic devices. Hence most of the five canons can indeed be extrapolated from the *Rhetoric*, as they were by later rhetoricians.

SYNOPSIS OF *RHETORIC*

Included are Book I (all), Book II, Chapters 1–3, 12–13, and 18–25, and Book III, Chapters 1–2, 13, from Aristotle's *Rhetoric*. What follows is a synopsis of the whole work, putting these excerpts in context.

In Book I, Chapters 1–3, Aristotle defines rhetoric as the counterpart ("antistrophē") of dialectic and lays out other key terms. Book I, Chapters 4–8, considers how to make arguments concerning the utility of a future action. This is the kind of question most often addressed in the deliberative speech, which is one of three kinds of speech Aristotle classifies in Book I, Chapter 3. Among other things, political speakers must understand different forms of government so that they can suit their proposals to the interests of the rulers they wish to persuade. "All men are persuaded by considerations of their interest" (Bk. I, Ch. 8). Aristotle classifies governments into four kinds based on who holds power: democracy (the citizens), oligarchy (those with property), aristocracy (those with education in the dominant culture), and monarchy (either a king limited by prescribed conditions, or a tyrant limited by none).

In Book I, Chapter 9, Aristotle considers the arguments special to the second of his three speech categories, the ceremonial: how to make a person seem noble and virtuous or base and vicious. Aristotle notes that these same arguments can be used to develop ethical appeals. In Book I, Chapters 10–14, Aristotle treats arguments special to forensic speeches, the last of the three categories. In suggesting that criminals are motivated by a search for pleasure, Aristotle presents pleasure as a potentially destructive goal, inferior to happiness, much as Plato does in the *Gorgias*.

Also reminiscent of the *Gorgias* is Aristotle's suggestion that criminals prey on those less powerful than they.

Inserted here is a discussion of the relationship of law and justice. In discussing justice Aristotle distinguishes between "particular law," "that which each community lays down and applies to its own members" through written laws and unwritten customs, and "universal law," "the law of nature" that "every one to some extent divines" and that is binding even between people who are not united politically (Bk. I, Ch. 13). Some legal cruxes call for an appeal to universal law, the "equity" that "goes beyond the written law" and repairs its "defects" (Bk. I, Ch. 13). Equity serves the spirit rather than the letter of the law, and Aristotle seems to regard it as a higher good. "Equity bids us be merciful to the weakness of human nature" (Bk. I, Ch. 13). Aristotle concludes Book I with a brief discussion of how to handle nonartistic proofs. The discussion is probably placed here because nonartistic proofs are most often used as forensic evidence.

Book II, Chapters 1–17, considers ethical and pathetic appeals together, perhaps because both appeal to the emotions, whether felt toward the speaker or the speaker's position. Aristotle analyzes the emotions scientifically in terms of their essential nature (the "state of mind" of people experiencing a particular emotion) and their causes (toward whom and on what grounds people generally experience a particular emotion). In these psychological analyses, the emotions are grouped in pairs and often defined antithetically. Aristotle then examines the particular circumstances that constrain an individual's response to emotional appeals, such as age and wealth.

Aristotle now turns to enthymeme and example (Bk. II, Chs. 18–26; the abrupt transition may be due to the hand of a later editor). First Aristotle lays out four lines of argument or common topics that can be used to organize material in enthymemes in any kind of speech. Then he suggests guidelines for finding examples and arguing from maxims again in any kind of speech. Next, having given advice on generating enthymemes, Aristotle argues that the best enthymemes will be based on knowledge specific to one's subject, such as politics or physics. He then describes twenty-eight more lines of argument. Scholars disagree about whether these twenty-eight should be regarded as special topics—that is, sources of material for the "best" kind of enthymeme, which Aristotle has just been discussing—or additional common topics to organize material for enthymemes in any kind of speech. Grimaldi's view is perhaps the prevailing one: that the group of twenty-eight is intended to generate material for specific types of speeches, which can then be organized according to argumentative structures suggested by the group of four. Many readers have felt that the four and the twenty-eight topics are awkwardly juxtaposed here and have used this as evidence of the text's piecemeal construction. Aristotle concludes Book II by briefly discussing how to refute enthymemes and detect spurious ones.

Book III covers how to present the persuasive arguments devised with the aid of the first two books. Aristotle briefly mentions the importance of delivery. While reflecting on the degrading prospect of the rhetorician studying an actor's skills, Aristotle extends his chagrin to all that may influence persuasion "beyond the bare

facts”: “we ought in fairness to fight our case with no help beyond the bare facts: nothing, therefore, should matter except the proof of those facts” (Bk. III, Ch. 1). He admits that “the way in which a thing is said does affect its intelligibility,” but only “owing to the defects of the hearers” (Bk. III, Ch. 1). Charm is unnecessary, however, when the argument is self-evident: “Nobody uses fine language when teaching geometry” (Bk. III, Ch. 1).

Aristotle announces that he will discuss only prose style. He rebukes Gorgias for leading people to expect poetic language in rhetoric, and indeed, he generally separates rhetoric and poetic much more rigorously than most other ancient thinkers. The ensuing discussion (Bk. III, Chs. 2–12) characterizes good style as “clear” and “appropriate.” The “foundation” of good style is “correctness” (Bk. III, Ch. 5). Although it is permissible to increase the impressiveness of style, highly emotional language should be used only “ironically, after the manner of Gorgias and of the passages in [Plato’s] *Phaedrus*” (Bk. III, Ch. 7). “Prose writers must, however, pay specially careful attention to metaphor,” because it “gives style clearness, charm, and distinction as nothing else can” (Bk. III, Ch. 2). Metaphor may also have meaning-making power: “Metaphors must be drawn, as has been said already, from things that are related to the original thing, and yet not obviously so related—just as in philosophy also an acute mind will perceive resemblances even in things far apart” (Bk. III, Ch. 11). Each of the three kinds of speeches has its appropriate style. (From this hint, Aristotle’s pupil Theophrastus developed the influential categories of plain, middle, and grand style.)

Book III, Chapters 13–19, most resemble the rhetoric handbooks of Aristotle’s day. Concerning arrangement, or the parts of a speech, Aristotle contends that a speech really needs only a statement of the case and an argument or proof (Bk. III, Ch. 13). An introduction and an epilogue may be added, however, as well as other parts useful in specific sorts of speech, such as narration in the forensic (Bk. III, Ch. 13).

Aristotle then discusses each part in turn. He notes when a part of a speech requires special handling to fit a particular kind of speech. For example, a certain kind of argument or proof is most appropriate to forensic speeches. He advises forensic orators to argue that the alleged act was not committed, that it did no harm, that the harm was less than alleged, or that the harm was justified by circumstances. These lines of argument would be developed by later rhetoricians into stasis theory (see the introduction to Part One, p. 32), which comprises a set of special topics for forensic speeches, somewhat out of place here in Book III.

Finally, for the epilogue, Aristotle recommends emulating the terseness of Lysias: “I have done. You have heard me. The facts are before you. I ask for your judgment.” These are the last words of Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*.

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From *Rhetoric*

BOOK I

1354^a I. Rhetoric is the counterpart of Dialectic.¹ Both alike are concerned with such things as come, more or less, within the general ken of all men and belong to no definite science. Accordingly all men make use, more or less, of both; for to a certain extent all men attempt to discuss statements and to maintain them, to defend themselves and to attack others. Ordinary people do this either at random or through practice and from acquired habit. Both ways being possible, the subject can plainly be handled systematically, for it is possible to inquire the reason why some speakers succeed through practice and others spontaneously; and every one will at once agree that such an inquiry is the function of an art.²

Now, the framers of the current treatises on rhetoric have constructed but a small portion of that art. The modes of persuasion³ are the only true constituents of the art: everything else is merely accessory. These writers, however, say nothing about enthymemes,⁴ which are the substance of rhetorical persuasion, but deal mainly with non-essentials. The arousing of prejudice, pity, anger, and similar emotions has nothing to do with the essential facts, but is merely a personal appeal to the

Translated by W. Rhys Roberts. Edited by Friedrich Solmsen.

¹“Rhetoric” and “Dialectic” may be roughly Englished as “the art of public speaking” and “the art of logical discussion.” Aristotle’s philosophical definition of “Rhetoric” is given at the beginning of c. 2. [Tr.]

²Here and in later passages the term “art” stands for methodical treatment of a subject. [F.S.]

³Aristotle here means by [“modes of persuasion”] those attempts at *logical argument* on which he would himself like to see Rhetoric rely. In the next chapter, 1355^b35–1356^a4, he gives to the term the wide range it had in current rhetorical usage, and concludes with a reference to the argumentative side. . . . A uniform rendering of the word is hardly possible, but at the outset it is important to stress Aristotle’s fundamental view . . . that, from the nature of its materials, Rhetoric is, in general, *persuasive* rather than fully *demonstrative*. When in later portions of the treatise a single-word rendering is given, “arguments” will be preferred to “proofs.” . . . [Tr.]

⁴Rhetorical arguments. [Tr.]

man who is judging the case. Consequently if the rules for trials which are now laid down in some states — especially in well-governed states — were applied everywhere, such people would have nothing to say. All men, no doubt, *think* that the laws should prescribe such rules, but some, as in the court of Areopagus,⁵ give practical effect to their thoughts and forbid talk about non-essentials. This is sound law and custom. It is not right to pervert the judge⁶ by moving him to anger or envy or pity — one might as well warp a carpenter’s rule before using it. Again, a litigant has clearly nothing to do but to show that the alleged fact is so or is not so, that it has or has not happened. As to whether a thing is important or unimportant, just or unjust, the judge must surely refuse to take his instructions from the litigants: he must decide for himself all such points as the law-giver has not already defined for him.

Now, it is of great moment that well-drawn laws should themselves define all the points they possibly can and leave as few as may be to the decision of the judges; and this for several reasons. First, to find one man, or a few men, who are sensible persons and capable of legislating and administering justice is easier than to find a large number. Next, laws are made after long consideration, whereas decisions in the courts are given at short notice, which makes it hard for those who try the case to satisfy the claims of justice and expediency. The weightiest reason of all is that the decision of the lawgiver is not particular but prospective and general, whereas members of the assembly and the jury find it *their* duty to decide on definite cases brought before them. They will often have allowed themselves to be so much influenced by feelings of friendship or hatred or self-interest that they lose any clear vision of the truth and have their judgement obscured by considerations of personal

1354^b

⁵Highest criminal court of Athens. [F.S.]

⁶Here, and in what follows, the . . . reader should understand “judge” in a broad sense, including “jurymen” and others who “judge.” [Tr.]

pleasure or pain. In general, then, the judge should, we say, be allowed to decide as few things as possible. But questions as to whether something has happened or has not happened, will be or will not be, is or is not, must of necessity be left to the judge, since the lawgiver cannot foresee them. If this is so, it is evident that any one who lays down rules about other matters, such as what must be the contents of the "introduction" or the "narration" or any of the other divisions of a speech, is theorizing about non-essentials as if they belonged to the art. The only question with which these writers here deal is how to put the judge into a given frame of mind. About the orator's proper modes of persuasion they have nothing to tell us; nothing, that is, about how to gain skill in enthymemes.

Hence it comes that, although the same systematic principles apply to political as to forensic oratory, and although the former is a nobler business, and fitter for a citizen, than that which concerns the relations of private individuals, these authors say nothing about political oratory, but try, one and all, to write treatises on the way to plead in court. The reason for this is that in political oratory there is less inducement to talk about non-essentials. Political oratory is less given to unscrupulous practices than forensic, because it treats of wider issues. In a political debate the man who is forming a judgment is making a decision about his own vital interests. There is no need, therefore, to prove anything except that the facts are what the supporter of a measure maintains they are. In forensic oratory this is not enough; to conciliate the listener is what pays here. It is other people's affairs that are to be decided, so that the judges, intent on their own satisfaction and listening with partiality, surrender themselves to the disputants instead of judging between them. Hence in many places, as we have said already,⁷ irrelevant speaking is forbidden in the law-courts: in the public assembly those who have to form a judgement are themselves well able to guard against that.

It is clear, then, that rhetorical study, in its strict sense, is concerned with the modes of per-

suasion. Persuasion is clearly a sort of demonstration, since we are most fully persuaded when we consider a thing to have been demonstrated. The orator's demonstration is an enthymeme, and this is, in general, the most effective of the modes of persuasion. The enthymeme is a sort of syllogism, and the consideration of syllogisms of all kinds, without distinction, is the business of dialectic, either of dialectic as a whole or of one of its branches. It follows plainly, therefore, that he who is best able to see how and from what elements a syllogism is produced will also be best skilled in the enthymeme, when he has further learnt what its subject-matter is and in what respects it differs from the syllogism of strict logic. The true and the approximately true are apprehended by the same faculty; it may also be noted that men have a sufficient natural instinct for what is true, and usually do arrive at the truth. Hence the man who makes a good guess at truth is likely to make a good guess at probabilities.

It has now been shown that the ordinary writers on rhetoric treat of non-essentials; it has also been shown why they have inclined more towards the forensic branch of oratory.

Rhetoric is useful (1) because things that are true and things that are just have a natural tendency to prevail over their opposites, so that if the decisions of judges are not what they ought to be, the defeat must be due to the speakers themselves, and they must be blamed accordingly. Moreover, (2) before some audiences not even the possession of the exactest knowledge will make it easy for what we say to produce conviction. For argument based on knowledge implies instruction, and there are people whom one cannot instruct. Here, then, we must use, as our modes of persuasion and argument, notions possessed by everybody, as we observed in the *Topics*⁸ when dealing with the way to handle a popular audience. Further, (3) we must be able to employ persuasion, just as strict reasoning can be employed, on opposite sides of a question, not in order that we may in practice employ it in both ways (for we must not make people believe what

⁷1354^a22. [Tr.]

⁸*Topics*, i. 2, 101^a30-4. [Tr.]

is wrong), but in order that we may see clearly what the facts are, and that, if another man argues unfairly, we on our part may be able to confute him. No other of the arts draws opposite conclusions: dialectic and rhetoric alone do this. Both these arts draw opposite conclusions impartially. Nevertheless, the underlying facts do not lend themselves equally well to the contrary views. No; things that are true and things that are better are, by their nature, practically always easier to prove and easier to believe in. Again, (4) it is absurd to hold that a man ought to be ashamed of being unable to defend himself with his limbs, but not of being unable to defend himself with speech and reason,⁹ when the use of rational speech is more distinctive of a human being than the use of his limbs. And if it be objected that one who uses such power of speech unjustly might do great harm, *that* is a charge which may be made in common against all good things except virtue, and above all against the things that are most useful, as strength, health, wealth, generalship. A man can confer the greatest of benefits by a right use of these, and inflict the greatest of injuries by using them wrongly.

It is clear, then, that rhetoric is not bound up with a single definite class of subjects, but is as universal as dialectic; it is clear, also, that it is useful. It is clear, further, that its function is not simply to succeed in persuading, but rather to discover the means of coming as near such success as the circumstances of each particular case allow. In this it resembles all other arts. For example, it is not the function of medicine simply to make a man quite healthy, but to put him as far as may be on the road to health; it is possible to give excellent treatment even to those who can never enjoy sound health. Furthermore, it is plain that it is the function of one and the same art to discern the real and the apparent means of persuasion, just as it is the function of dialectic to discern the real and the apparent syllogism. What

makes a man a “sophist” is not his faculty, but his moral purpose. In rhetoric, however, the term “rhetorician” may describe either the speaker’s knowledge of the art, or his moral purpose.¹⁰ In dialectic it is different: a man is a “sophist” because he has a certain kind of moral purpose, a “dialectician” in respect, not of his moral purpose, but of his faculty.

Let us now try to give some account of the systematic principles of Rhetoric itself—of the right method and means of succeeding in the object we set before us. We must make as it were a fresh start, and before going further define what rhetoric is.

II. Rhetoric may be defined as the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion. This is not a function of any other art. Every other art can instruct or persuade about its own particular subject-matter; for instance, medicine about what is healthy and unhealthy, geometry about the properties of magnitudes, arithmetic about numbers, and the same is true of the other arts and sciences. But rhetoric we look upon as the power of observing the means of persuasion on almost any subject presented to us; and that is why we say that, in its technical character, it is not concerned with any special or definite class of subjects.

Of the modes of persuasion some belong strictly to the art of rhetoric and some do not. By the latter I mean such things as are not supplied by the speaker but are there at the outset—witnesses, evidence given under torture, written contracts, and so on. By the former I mean such as we can ourselves construct by means of the principles of rhetoric. The one kind has merely to be used, the other has to be invented.

Of the modes of persuasion furnished by the spoken word there are three kinds. The first kind depends on the personal character of the speaker; the second on putting the audience into a certain frame of mind; the third on the proof, or apparent proof, provided by the words of the speech itself.

⁹By “speech” and “reason” the translator here has done justice to the twofold meaning of the Greek word “logos.” [F.S.]

¹⁰ . . . [“Rhetorician,”] in fact, can mean either a *trained speaker* or a *tricky speaker*. [Tr.]

Persuasion is achieved by the speaker's personal character when the speech is so spoken as to make us think him credible. We believe good men more fully and more readily than others: this is true generally whatever the question is, and absolutely true where exact certainty is impossible and opinions are divided. This kind of persuasion, like the others, should be achieved by what the speaker says, not by what people think of this character before he begins to speak. It is not true, as some writers assume in their treatises on rhetoric, that the personal goodness revealed by the speaker contributes nothing to his power of persuasion; on the contrary, his character may almost be called the most effective means of persuasion he possesses. Secondly, persuasion may come through the hearers, when the speech stirs their emotions. Our judgements when we are pleased and friendly are not the same as when we are pained and hostile. It is towards producing these effects, as we maintain, that present-day writers on rhetoric direct the whole of their efforts. This subject shall be treated in detail when we come to speak of the emotions.¹¹ Thirdly, persuasion is effected through the speech itself when we have proved a truth or an apparent truth by means of the persuasive arguments suitable to the case in question.

There are, then, these three means of effecting persuasion. The man who is to be in command of them must, it is clear, be able (1) to reason logically, (2) to understand human character and goodness in their various forms, and (3) to understand the emotions—that is, to name them and describe them, to know their causes and the way in which they are excited. It thus appears that rhetoric is an offshoot of dialectic and also of ethical studies. Ethical studies may fairly be called political; and for this reason rhetoric masquerades as political science, and the professors of it as political experts—sometimes from want of education, sometimes from ostentation, sometimes owing to other human failings. As a matter of fact, it is a branch of dialectic and similar to it,

¹¹ii, cc. 2–11. [Tr.]

as we said at the outset.¹² Neither rhetoric nor dialectic is the scientific study of any one separate subject: both are faculties for providing arguments. This is perhaps a sufficient account of their scope and of how they are related to each other.

With regard to the persuasion achieved by proof or apparent proof: just as in dialectic there is induction on the one hand and syllogism or apparent syllogism on the other, so it is in rhetoric. The example is an induction, the enthymeme is a syllogism, and the apparent enthymeme is an apparent syllogism. I call the enthymeme a rhetorical syllogism, and the example a rhetorical induction. Every one who effects persuasion through proof does in fact use either enthymemes or examples: there is no other way. And since every one who proves anything at all is bound to use either syllogisms or inductions (and this is clear to us from the *Analytics*¹³), it must follow that enthymemes are syllogisms and examples are inductions. The difference between example and enthymeme is made plain by the passages in the *Topics*¹⁴ where induction and syllogism have already been discussed. When we base the proof of a proposition on a number of similar cases, this is induction in dialectic, example in rhetoric; when it is shown that, certain propositions being true, a further and quite distinct proposition must also be true in consequence, whether invariably or usually, this is called syllogism in dialectic, enthymeme in rhetoric. It is plain also that each of these types of oratory has its advantages. Types of oratory, I say: for what has been said in the *Methodics*¹⁵ applies equally well here; in some oratorical styles examples prevail, in others enthymemes; and in like manner, some orators are better at the former and some at the latter. Speeches that rely on examples are as persuasive as the other kind, but those which rely on enthymemes excite the louder applause. The sources of examples and

¹²i. 1. 1354^a1. [Tr.]

¹³*Anal. Pr.* ii. 23, 24; *Anal. Post.* i. 1. Cp. 68^b13. [Tr.]

¹⁴*Top.* i. 1 and 12. [Tr.]

¹⁵Lost logical treatise of Aristotle. . . . [Tr.]

enthymemes,¹⁶ and their proper uses, we will discuss later.¹⁷ Our next step is to define the processes themselves more clearly.

A statement is persuasive and credible either because it is directly self-evident or because it appears to be proved from other statements that are so. In either case it is persuasive because there is somebody whom it persuades. But none of the arts theorize about individual cases. Medicine, for instance, does not theorize about what will help to cure Socrates or Callias, but only about what will help to cure any or all of a given class of patients: this alone is its business: individual cases are so infinitely various that no systematic knowledge of them is possible. In the same way the theory of rhetoric is concerned not with what seems probable to a given individual like Socrates or Hippias, but with what seems probable to men of a given type; and this is true of dialectic also. Dialectic does not construct its syllogisms out of any haphazard materials, such as the fancies of crazy people, but out of materials that call for discussion; and rhetoric, too, draws upon the regular subjects of debate. The duty of rhetoric is to deal with such matters as we deliberate upon without arts or systems to guide us, in the hearing of persons who cannot take in at a glance a complicated argument, or follow a long chain of reasoning. The subjects of our deliberation are such as seem to present us with alternative possibilities: about things that could not have been, and cannot now or in the future be, other than they are, nobody who takes them to be of this nature wastes his time in deliberation.

It is possible to form syllogisms and draw conclusions from the results of previous syllogisms; or, on the other hand, from premisses which have not been thus proved, and at the same time are so little accepted that they call for proof. Reasonings of the former kind will necessarily be hard to follow owing to their length, for we assume an audience of untrained thinkers; those of the latter kind will fail to win assent, because

they are based on premisses that are not generally admitted or believed.

The enthymeme and the example must, then, deal with what is in the main contingent, the example being an induction, and the enthymeme a syllogism, about such matters. The enthymeme must consist of few propositions, fewer often than those which make up the normal syllogism. For if any of these propositions is a familiar fact, there is no need even to mention it; the hearer adds it himself. Thus, to show that Dorieus has been victor in a contest for which the prize is a crown, it is enough to say "For he has been victor in the Olympic games," without adding "And in the Olympic games the prize is a crown," a fact which everybody knows.

There are few facts of the "necessary" type that can form the basis of rhetorical syllogisms.¹⁸ Most of the things about which we make decisions, and into which therefore we inquire, present us with alternative possibilities. For it is about our actions that we deliberate and inquire, and all our actions have a contingent character; hardly any of them are determined by necessity. Again, conclusions that state what is merely usual or possible must be drawn from premisses that do the same, just as "necessary" conclusions must be drawn from "necessary" premisses; this too is clear to us from the *Analytics*.¹⁹ It is evident, therefore, that the propositions forming the basis of enthymemes, though some of them may be "necessary," will most of them be only usually true. Now the materials of enthymemes are Probabilities and Signs, which we can see must correspond respectively with the propositions that are generally and those that are necessarily true. A Probability is a thing that usually happens; not, however, as some definitions would suggest, anything whatever that usually happens, but only if it belongs to the class of the "contingent" or "variable." It bears the same relation to that in respect of which it is probable²⁰ as the

¹⁸"Material sources" or even "premisses." [F.S.]

¹⁹*An. Pr.* i. 8, 12–14, 27.

²⁰I.e. bears the same relation to the conclusion to be reached: "to that to which its general probability is directed"—to the particular probable case which has to be proved. [Tr.]

¹⁶An alternate and perhaps better reading would be "the reason of this." [F.S.]

¹⁷ii, cc. 20–4. [Tr.]

universal bears to the particular. Of Signs, one kind bears the same relation to the statement it supports as the particular bears to the universal, the other the same as the universal bears to the particular. The infallible kind is a "complete proof" (τεκμήριον); the fallible kind has no specific name. By infallible signs I mean those on which syllogisms proper may be based: and this shows us why this kind of Sign is called "complete proof": when people think that what they have said cannot be refuted, they then think that they are bringing forward a "complete proof," meaning that the matter has now been demonstrated and completed (πεπερασμένον); for the word πέρας has the same meaning (of "end" or "boundary") as the word τέκμαρ in the ancient tongue. Now the one kind of Sign (that which bears to the proposition it supports the relation of particular to universal) may be illustrated thus. Suppose it were said, "The fact that Socrates was wise and just is a sign that the wise are just." Here we certainly have a Sign; but even though the proposition be true, the argument is refutable, since it does not form a syllogism. Suppose, on the other hand, it were said, "The fact that he has a fever is a sign that he is ill," or, "The fact that she is giving milk is a sign that she has lately borne a child." Here we have the infallible kind of Sign, the only kind that constitutes a complete proof, since it is the only kind that, if the particular statement is true, is irrefutable. The other kind of Sign, that which bears to the proposition it supports the relation of universal to particular, might be illustrated by saying, "The fact that he breathes fast is a sign that he has a fever." This argument also is refutable, even if the statement about the fast breathing be true, since a man may breathe hard without having a fever.

It has, then, been stated above what is the nature of a Probability, of a Sign, and of a complete proof, and what are the differences between them. In the *Analytics*²¹ a more explicit description has been given of these points; it is there shown why some of these reasonings can be put into syllogisms and some cannot.

The "example" has already been described as

²¹*An. Pr.* ii. 27. [Tr.]

one kind of induction; and the special nature of the subject-matter that distinguishes it from the other kinds has also been stated above. Its relation to the proposition it supports is not that of part to whole, nor whole to part, nor whole to whole, but of part to part, or like to like. When two statements are of the same order, but one is more familiar than the other, the former is an "example." The argument may, for instance, be that Dionysius,²² in asking as he does for a bodyguard, is scheming to make himself a despot. For in the past Peisistratus²³ kept asking for a bodyguard in order to carry out such a scheme, and did make himself a despot as soon as he got it; and so did Theagenes²⁴ at Megara; and in the same way all other instances known to the speaker are made into examples, in order to show what is not yet known, that Dionysius has the same purpose in making the same request: all these being instances of the one general principle, that a man who asks for a bodyguard is scheming to make himself a despot. We have now described the sources of those means of persuasion which are popularly supposed to be demonstrative. 1358^a

There is an important distinction between two sorts of enthymemes that has been wholly overlooked by almost everybody—one that also subsists between the syllogisms treated of in dialectic. One sort of enthymeme really belongs to rhetoric, as one sort of syllogism really belongs to dialectic; but the other sort really belongs to other arts and faculties, whether to those we already exercise or to those we have not yet acquired. Missing this distinction, people fail to notice that the more correctly they handle their particular subject the further they are getting away from pure rhetoric or dialectic. This statement will be clearer if expressed more fully. I mean that the proper subjects of dialectical and rhetorical syllogisms are the things with which we say the regular or universal Lines of Argument²⁵ are concerned, that is to say those lines of argument that apply equally to questions of right conduct, natural science, politics, and many other

²²Tyrant of Syracuse. [F.S.]

²³Tyrant of Athens. [F.S.]

²⁴Tyrant of Megara. [F.S.]

²⁵Or Topics, Commonplaces. [Tr.]

things that have nothing to do with one another. Take, for instance, the line of argument concerned with “the more or less.”²⁶ On this line of argument it is equally easy to base a syllogism or enthymeme about any of what nevertheless are essentially disconnected subjects—right conduct, natural science, or anything else whatever. But there are also those special Lines of Argument which are based on such propositions as apply only to particular groups or classes of things. Thus there are propositions about natural science on which it is impossible to base any enthymeme or syllogisms about ethics, and other propositions about ethics on which nothing can be based about natural science. The same principle applies throughout. The general Lines of Argument have no special subject-matter, and therefore will not increase our understanding of any particular class of things. On the other hand, the better the selection one makes of propositions suitable for special Lines of Argument, the nearer one comes, unconsciously, to setting up a science that is distinct from dialectic and rhetoric. One may succeed in stating the required principles, but one’s science will be no longer dialectic or rhetoric, but the science to which the principles thus discovered belong. Most enthymemes are in fact based upon these particular or special Lines of Argument; comparatively few on the common or general kind. As in the *Topics*,²⁷ therefore, so in this work, we must distinguish, in dealing with enthymemes, the special and the general Lines of Argument on which they are to be founded. By special Lines of Argument I mean the propositions peculiar to each several class of things, by general those common to all classes alike. We may begin with the special Lines of Argument. But first of all, let us classify rhetoric into its varieties. Having distinguished these we may deal with them one by one, and try to discover the elements of which each is composed, and the propositions each must employ.

III. Rhetoric falls into three divisions, determined by the three classes of listeners to speeches. For of the three elements in speech-making—

²⁶I.e. the topic of *degree*. [Cp. 1397^b12 ff.] [Tr.]

²⁷Cp. *Top.* i. 10, 14; iii. 5; *Soph. El.* 9. [Tr.]

speaker, subject, and person addressed—it is the last one, the hearer, that determines the speech’s end and object. The hearer must be either a judge, with a decision to make about things past or future, or an observer.²⁸ A member of the assembly decides about future events, a jurymen about past events: while those who merely decide on the orator’s skill are observers. From this it follows that there are three divisions of oratory—(1) political, (2) forensic, and (3) the ceremonial oratory of display.²⁹

Political speaking urges us either to do or not to do something: one of these two courses is always taken by private counsellors, as well as by men who address public assemblies. Forensic speaking either attacks or defends somebody: one or other of these two things must always be done by the parties in a case. The ceremonial oratory of display either praises or censures somebody. These three kinds of rhetoric refer to three different kinds of time. The political orator is concerned with the future: it is about things to be done hereafter that he advises, for or against. The party in a case at law is concerned with the past; one man accuses the other, and the other defends himself, with reference to things already done. The ceremonial orator is, properly speaking, concerned with the present, since all men praise or blame in view of the state of things existing at the time, though they often find it useful also to recall the past and to make guesses at the future.

Rhetoric has three distinct ends in view, one for each of its three kinds. The political orator aims at establishing the expediency or the harmfulness of a proposed course of action; if he urges its acceptance, he does so on the ground that it will do good; if he urges its rejection, he does so on the ground that it will do harm; and all other

²⁸θεωρῶς: a mere onlooker, present at a show, where he decides no grave political or legal issue (cp. 1391^b16–20) and plays no higher role than that of speech taster or oratorical connoisseur.—*Political* has been preferred to *deliberative*, as being clearer to the English reader. The oratory of the “(parliamentary) counsellor” is meant. [Tr.]

²⁹Or: deliberative (advisory), legal, and epideictic—the oratory respectively of parliamentary assemblies, of law-courts, and of ceremonial occasions when there is an element of “display,” “show,” “declamation,” and the result is a “set speech” or “harangue.” [Tr.]

points, such as whether the proposal is just or unjust, honourable or dishonourable, he brings in as subsidiary and relative to this main consideration. Parties in a law-case aim at establishing the justice or injustice of some action, and they too bring in all other points as subsidiary and relative to this one. Those who praise or attack a man aim at proving him worthy of honour or the reverse, and they too treat all other considerations with reference to this one.

That the three kinds of rhetoric do aim respectively at the three ends we have mentioned is shown by the fact that speakers will sometimes not try to establish anything else. Thus, the litigant will sometimes not deny that a thing has happened or that he has done harm. But that he is guilty of injustice he will never admit; otherwise there would be no need of a trial. So too, political orators often make any concession short of admitting that they are recommending their hearers to take an inexpedient course or not to take an expedient one. The question whether it is not *unjust* for a city to enslave its innocent neighbours often does not trouble them at all. In like manner those who praise or censure a man do not consider whether his acts have been expedient or not, but often make it a ground of actual praise that he has neglected his own interest to do what was honourable. Thus, they praise Achilles because he championed his fallen friend Patroclus, though he knew that this meant death, and that otherwise he need not die: yet while to die thus was the nobler thing for him to do, the expedient thing was to live on.³⁰

It is evident from what has been said that it is these three subjects, more than any others, about which the orator must be able to have propositions at his command. Now the propositions of Rhetoric are Complete Proofs, Probabilities, and Signs. Every kind of syllogism is composed of propositions, and the enthymeme is a particular kind of syllogism composed of the aforesaid propositions.³¹

Since only possible actions, and not impos-

³⁰Homer. *Iliad*, xviii. 97 ff. [Tr.]

³¹I.e. of Complete Proofs, Probabilities, and Signs relating to the three subjects of the expedient, the just, and the noble. [Tr.]

sible ones, can ever have been done in the past or the present, and since things which have not occurred, or will not occur, also cannot have been done or be going to be done, it is necessary for the political, the forensic, and the ceremonial speaker alike to be able to have at their command propositions about the possible and the impossible, and about whether a thing has or has not occurred, will or will not occur. Further, all men, in giving praise or blame, in urging us to accept or reject proposals for action, in accusing others or defending themselves, attempt not only to prove the points mentioned but also to show that the good or the harm, the honour or disgrace, the justice or injustice, is great or small, either absolutely or relatively; and therefore it is plain that we must also have at our command propositions about greatness or smallness and the greater or the lesser—propositions both universal and particular. Thus, we must be able to say which is the greater or lesser good, the greater or lesser act of justice or injustice; and so on.

Such, then, are the subjects regarding which we are inevitably bound to master the propositions relevant to them. We must now discuss each particular class of these subjects in turn, namely those dealt with in political, in ceremonial, and lastly in legal, oratory.

IV. First, then, we must ascertain what are the kinds of things, good or bad, about which the political orator offers counsel. For he does not deal with all things, but only with such as may or may not take place. Concerning things which exist or will exist inevitably, or which cannot possibly exist or take place, no counsel can be given. Nor, again, can counsel be given about the whole class of things which may or may not take place; for this class includes some good things that occur naturally, and some that occur by accident; and about these it is useless to offer counsel. Clearly counsel can only be given on matters about which people deliberate; matters, namely, that ultimately depend on ourselves, and which we have it in our power to set going. For we turn a thing over in our mind until we have reached the point of seeing whether we can do it or not.

Now to enumerate and classify accurately the usual subjects of public business, and further to

frame, as far as possible, true definitions of them, is a task which we must not attempt on the present occasion. For it does not belong to the art of rhetoric, but to a more instructive art and a more real branch of knowledge;³² and as it is, rhetoric has been given a far wider subject-matter than strictly belongs to it. The truth is, as indeed we have said already, that rhetoric is a combination of the science of logic and of the ethical branch of politics;³³ and it is partly like dialectic, partly like sophistical reasoning. But the more we try to make either dialectic or rhetoric not, what they really are, practical faculties, but sciences, the more we shall inadvertently be destroying their true nature; for we shall be re-fashioning them and shall be passing into the region of sciences dealing with definite subjects rather than simply with words and forms of reasoning. Even here, however, we will mention those points which it is of practical importance to distinguish, their fuller treatment falling naturally to political science.

The main matters on which all men deliberate and on which political speakers make speeches are some five in number: ways and means, war and peace, national defence, imports and exports, and legislation.

As to Ways and Means, then, the intending speaker will need to know the number and extent of the country's sources of revenue, so that, if any is being overlooked, it may be added, and, if any is defective, it may be increased. Further, he should know all the expenditure of the country, in order that, if any part of it is superfluous, it may be abolished, or, if any is too large, it may be reduced. For men become richer not only by increasing their existing wealth but also by reducing their expenditure. A comprehensive view of these questions cannot be gained solely from experience in home affairs; in order to advise on such matters a man must be keenly interested in the methods worked out in other lands.

As to Peace and War, he must know the extent of the military strength of his country, both actual and potential, and also the nature of that actual and potential strength; and further, what wars his country has waged, and how it has

waged them. He must know these facts not only about his own country, but also about neighbouring countries; and also about countries with which war is likely, in order that peace may be maintained with those stronger than his own, and that his own may have power to make war or not against those that are weaker. He should know, too, whether the military power of another country is like or unlike that of his own; for this is a matter that may affect their relative strength. With the same end in view he must, besides, have studied the wars of other countries as well as those of his own, and the way they ended; similar causes are likely to have similar results.

With regard to National Defence: he ought to know all about the methods of defence in actual use, such as the strength and character of the defensive force and the positions of the forts—this last means that he must be well acquainted with the lie of the country—in order that a garrison may be increased if it is too small or removed if it is not wanted, and that the strategic points may be guarded with special care.

With regard to the Food Supply: he must know what outlay will meet the needs of his country; what kinds of food are produced at home and what imported; and what articles must be exported or imported. This last he must know in order that agreements and commercial treaties may be made with the countries concerned. There are, indeed, two sorts of state to which he must see that his countrymen give no cause for offence, states stronger than his own, and states with which it is advantageous to trade.

But while he must, for security's sake, be able to take all this into account, he must before all things understand the subject of legislation; for it is on a country's laws that its whole welfare depends. He must, therefore, know how many different forms of constitution there are; under what conditions each of these will prosper and by what internal developments or external attacks each of them tends to be destroyed. When I speak of destruction through internal developments I refer to the fact that all constitutions, except the best one of all, are destroyed both by not being pushed far enough and by being pushed too far. Thus, democracy loses its vigour, and finally passes into oligarchy, not only when it is not pushed far

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³²To political science. [F.S.]

³³I.e. of ethical theory. Cp. I. 2 1356^a25 ff. [F.S.]

enough, but also when it is pushed a great deal too far;³⁴ just as the aquiline and the snub nose not only turn into normal noses by not being aquiline or snub enough, but also by being too violently aquiline or snub arrive at a condition in which they no longer look like noses at all.

It is useful, in framing laws, not only to study the past history of one's own country, in order to understand which constitution is desirable for it now, but also to have a knowledge of the constitutions of other nations, and so to learn for what kinds of nation the various kinds of constitution are suited. From this we can see that books of travel are useful aids to legislation, since from these we may learn the laws and customs of different races. The political speaker will also find the researches of historians useful. But all this is the business of political science and not of rhetoric.

1360^b These, then, are the most important kinds of information which the political speaker must possess. Let us now go back and state the premisses from which he will have to argue in favour of adopting or rejecting measures regarding these and other matters.

V. It may be said that every individual man and all men in common aim at a certain end which determines what they choose and what they avoid. This end, to sum it up briefly, is happiness and its constituents. Let us, then, by way of illustration only, ascertain what is in general the nature of happiness, and what are the elements of its constituent parts. For all advice to do things or not to do them is concerned with happiness and with the things that make for or against it; whatever creates or increases happiness or some part of happiness, we ought to do; whatever destroys or hampers happiness, or gives rise to its opposite, we ought not to do.³⁵

We may define happiness as prosperity combined with virtue; or as independence of life; or as the secure enjoyment of the maximum of pleasure; or as a good condition of property and body, together with the power of guarding one's

³⁴Aristotle deals more fully with the causes by which constitutions are destroyed or changed into one another in Book V of his *Politics*. [F.S.]

³⁵For a more philosophic discussion of "happiness" see Book I of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. [F.S.]

property and body and making use of them. That happiness is one or more of these things, pretty well everybody agrees.

From this definition of happiness it follows that its constituent parts are:—good birth, plenty of friends, good friends, wealth, good children, plenty of children, a happy old age, also such bodily excellences as health, beauty, strength, large stature, athletic powers, together with fame, honour, good luck, and virtue. A man cannot fail to be completely independent if he possesses these internal and these external goods; for besides these there are no others to have. (Goods of the soul and of the body are internal. Good birth, friends, money, and honour are external.) Further, we think that he should possess resources and luck, in order to make his life really secure. As we have already ascertained what happiness in general is, so now let us try to ascertain what each of these parts of it is.

Now good birth in a race or a state means that its members are indigenous or ancient;³⁶ that its earliest leaders were distinguished men, and that from them have sprung many who were distinguished for qualities that we admire.

The good birth of an individual, which may come either from the male or the female side, implies that both parents are free citizens, and that, as in the case of the state, the founders of the line have been notable for virtue or wealth or something else which is highly prized, and that many distinguished persons belong to the family, men and women, young and old.

The phrases "possession of good children" and "of many children" bear a quite clear meaning. Applied to a community, they mean that its young men are numerous and of good quality: good in regard to bodily excellences, such as stature, beauty, strength, athletic powers; and also in regard to the excellences of the soul, which in a young man are temperance and courage. Applied to an individual, they mean that his own children are numerous and have the good qualities we have described. Both male and female are here included; the excellences of the latter are, in body, beauty and stature; in soul, self-

³⁶A matter of great pride especially for the Athenians. [F.S.]

command and an industry that is not sordid. Communities as well as individuals should lack none of these perfections, in their women as well as in their men. Where, as among the Lacedaemonians, the state of women is bad, almost half of human life is spoilt.

The constituents of wealth are: plenty of coined money and territory; the ownership of numerous, large, and beautiful estates; also the ownership of numerous and beautiful implements, live stock, and slaves. All these kinds of property are our own, are secure, gentlemanly, and useful. The useful kinds are those that are productive, the gentlemanly kinds are those that provide enjoyment. By “productive” I mean those from which we get our income; by “enjoyable,” those from which we get nothing worth mentioning except the use of them. The criterion of “security” is the ownership of property in such places and under such conditions that the use of it is in our power; and it is “our own” if it is in our own power to dispose of it or keep it. By “disposing of it” I mean giving it away or selling it. Wealth as a whole consists in using things rather than in owning them; it is really the activity—that is, the use—of property that constitutes wealth.

Fame means being respected by everybody, or having some quality that is desired by all men, or by most, or by the good, or by the wise.

Honour is the token of a man’s being famous for doing good. It is chiefly and most properly paid to those who have already done good; but also to the man who can do good in future. Doing good refers either to the preservation of life and the means of life, or to wealth, or to some other of the good things which it is hard to get either always or at that particular place or time—for many gain honour for things which seem small, but the place and the occasion account for it. The constituents of honour are: sacrifices; commemoration, in verse or prose; privileges; grants of land; front seats at civic celebrations; state burial;³⁷ statues; public maintenance;³⁸ among foreigners, obeisances and giving place; and such presents as are among various bodies of men re-

garded as marks of honour. For a present is not only the bestowal of a piece of property, but also a token of honour; which explains why honour-loving as well as money-loving persons desire it. The present brings to both what they want; it is a piece of property, which is what the lovers of money desire; and it brings honour, which is what the lovers of honour desire. 1361^b

The excellence of the body is health; that is, a condition which allows us, while keeping free from disease, to have the use of our bodies; for many people are “healthy” as we are told Herodicus³⁹ was; and these no one can congratulate on their “health,” for they have to abstain from everything or nearly everything that men do.—Beauty varies with the time of life. In a young man beauty is the possession of a body fit to endure the exertion of running and of contests of strength; which means that he is pleasant to look at; and therefore all-round athletes are the most beautiful, being naturally adapted both for contests of strength and for speed also. For a man in his prime, beauty is fitness for the exertion of warfare, together with a pleasant but at the same time formidable appearance. For an old man, it is to be strong enough for such exertion as is necessary, and to be free from all those deformities of old age which cause pain to others.⁴⁰ Strength is the power of moving some one else at will; to do this, you must either pull, push, lift, pin, or grip him; thus you must be strong in all of those ways or at least in some. Excellence in size is to surpass ordinary people in height, thickness, and breadth by just as much as will not make one’s movements slower in consequence. Athletic excellence of the body consists in size, strength, and swiftness; swiftness implying strength. He who can fling forward his legs in a certain way, and move them fast and far, is good at running; he who can grip and hold down is good at wrestling; he who can drive an adversary from his ground with the right blow is a good boxer: he who can do both the last is a good pancratiast, while he who can do all is an “all-round” athlete.

³⁷Or, (splendid) tombs; sepulchres. [Tr.]

³⁸“Pensions.” [Tr.]

³⁹A physician. His strange health regime is described in Plato, *Republic*, iii 406^aff. [F.S.]

⁴⁰Text and meaning uncertain. [F.S.]

Happiness in old age is the coming of old age slowly and painlessly; for a man has not this happiness if he grows old either quickly, or tardily but painfully. It arises both from the excellences of the body and from good luck. If a man is not free from disease, or if he is not strong, he will not be free from suffering; nor can he continue to live a long and painless life unless he has good luck. There is, indeed, a capacity for long life that is quite independent of health or strength; for many people live long who lack the excellences of the body; but for our present purpose there is no use in going into the details of this.

The terms "possession of many friends" and "possession of good friends" need no explanation; for we define a "friend" as one who will always try, for your sake, to do what he takes to be good for you. The man towards whom many feel thus has many friends; if these are worthy men, he has good friends.

1362^a "Good luck" means the acquisition or possession of all or most, or the most important, of those good things which are due to luck. Some of the things that are due to luck may also be due to artificial contrivance; but many are independent of art, as for example those which are due to nature—though, to be sure, things due to luck may actually be contrary to nature. Thus health may be due to artificial contrivance, but beauty and stature are due to nature. All such good things as excite envy are, as a class, the outcome of good luck. Luck is also the cause of good things that happen contrary to reasonable expectation: as when, for instance, all your brothers are ugly, but you are handsome yourself; or when you find a treasure that everybody else has overlooked; or when a missile hits the next man and misses you; or when you are the only man not to go to a place you have gone to regularly, while the others go there for the first time and are killed. All such things are reckoned pieces of good luck.

As to virtue, it is most closely connected with the subject of Eulogy, and therefore we will wait to define it until we come to discuss that subject.⁴¹

VI. It is now plain what our aims, future or actual, should be in urging, and what in deprecating,

⁴¹i. c. 9. [Tr.]

ing, a proposal; the latter being the opposite of the former. Now the political or deliberative orator's aim is utility: deliberation seeks to determine not ends but the means to ends, i.e. what it is most useful to do. Further, utility is a good thing. We ought therefore to assure ourselves of the main facts about Goodness and Utility in general.

We may define a good thing as that which ought to be chosen for its own sake; or as that for the sake of which we choose something else; or as that which is sought after by all things, or by all things that have sensation or reason, or which will be sought after by any things that acquire reason; or as that which must be prescribed for a given individual by reason generally, or is prescribed for him by his individual reason, this being his individual good; or as that whose presence brings anything into a satisfactory and self-sufficing condition; or as self-sufficiency; or as what produces, maintains, or entails characteristics of this kind, while preventing and destroying their opposites. One thing may entail another in either of two ways—(1) simultaneously, (2) subsequently. Thus learning entails knowledge subsequently, health entails life simultaneously. Things are productive of other things in three senses: first, as being healthy produces health; secondly, as food produces health; and thirdly, as exercise does—i.e. it does so usually. All this being settled, we now see that both the acquisition of good things and the removal of bad things must be good; the latter entails freedom from the evil things simultaneously, while the former entails possession of the good things subsequently. The acquisition of a greater in place of a lesser good, or of a lesser in place of a greater evil, is also good, for in proportion as the greater exceeds the lesser there is acquisition of good or removal of evil.⁴² The virtues, too, must be something good; for it is by possessing these that we are in a good condition, and they tend to produce good works and good actions. They must be severally named and described

1362^b
⁴² . . . Other readings are (1) . . . "for the difference between the greater and the lesser constitutes acquisition of good in the one case and removal of evil in the other"; and (2) . . . "for the acquisition and the removal of the difference between the greater and the lesser amount to the acquisition of good and the removal of evil respectively." [Tr.]

elsewhere.⁴³ Pleasure, again, must be a good thing, since it is the nature of all animals to aim at it. Consequently both pleasant and beautiful things must be good things, since the former are productive of pleasure, while of the beautiful things some are pleasant and some desirable in and for themselves.

The following is a more detailed list of things that must be good. Happiness, as being desirable in itself and sufficient by itself, and as being that for whose sake we choose many other things. Also justice, courage, temperance, magnanimity,⁴⁴ magnificence, and all such qualities, as being excellences of the soul.⁴⁵ Further, health, beauty, and the like, as being bodily excellences and productive of many other good things: for instance, health is productive both of pleasure and of life, and therefore is thought the greatest of goods, since these two things which it causes, pleasure and life, are two of the things most highly prized by ordinary people. Wealth, again: for it is the excellence of possession, and also productive of many other good things. Friends and friendship: for a friend is desirable in himself and also productive of many other good things. So, too, honour and reputation, as being pleasant, and productive of many other good things, and usually accompanied by the presence of the good things that cause them to be bestowed. The faculty of speech and action; since all such qualities are productive of what is good. Further—good parts, strong memory, receptiveness, quickness of intuition, and the like, for all such faculties are productive of what is good. Similarly, all the sciences and arts. And life: since, even if no other good were the result of life, it is desirable in itself. And justice, as the cause of good to the community.

The above are pretty well all the things admittedly good. In dealing with things whose goodness is disputed, we may argue in the following ways:—That is good of which the contrary is bad. That is good the contrary of which is to the advantage of our enemies; for example, if it is to

⁴³ . . . “separately”; in c. 9. [Tr.]

⁴⁴ I.e. loftiness of mind, greatness of spirit. [Tr.]

⁴⁵ As such they are treated in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. [Tr.]

the particular advantage of our enemies that we should be cowards, clearly courage is of particular value to our countrymen. And generally, the contrary of that which our enemies desire, or of that at which they rejoice, is evidently valuable. Hence the passage beginning:

Surely would Priam exult.⁴⁶

This principle usually holds good, but not always, since it may well be that our interest is sometimes the same as that of our enemies. Hence it is said that “evils draw men together”; that is, when the same thing is hurtful to them both. 1363^a

Further: that which is not in excess is good,⁴⁷ and that which is greater than it should be is bad. That also is good on which much labour or money has been spent; the mere fact of this makes it seem good, and such a good is assumed to be an end—an end reached through a long chain of means; and any end is a good. Hence the lines beginning:

And for Priam (and Troy-town’s folk) should they leave behind them a boast;⁴⁸

and

Oh, it were shame

To have tarried so long and return empty-handed as erst we came;⁴⁹

and there is also the proverb about “breaking the pitcher at the door.”

That which most people seek after, and which is obviously an object of contention, is also a good; for, as has been shown,⁵⁰ that is good which is sought after by everybody, and “most people” is taken to be equivalent to “everybody.” That which is praised is good, since no one praises what is not good. So, again, that which is praised by our enemies [or by the worthless]; for when even those who have a grievance think a

⁴⁶ Sc., if he learned of the Greeks’ quarrels amongst themselves. [F.S.] *Iliad*, i. 255.—The verse-translations throughout are by Dr. A. S. Way, with occasional adaptations.—Aristotle, like other Greek writers, often indicates, as here, a whole passage by a few words taken from it. [Tr.]

⁴⁷ . . . The “mean” is meant. [Tr.]

⁴⁸ *Iliad*, ii. 160. [Tr.]

⁴⁹ *Iliad*, ii. 298. [Tr.]

⁵⁰ 1362^a23. [Tr.]

thing good, it is at once felt that every one must agree with them; our enemies can admit the fact only because it is evident, just as those must be worthless whom their friends censure and their enemies do not. (For this reason the Corinthians conceived themselves to be insulted by Simonides when he wrote:

Against the Corinthians hath Ilium no complaint.⁵¹)

Again, that is good which has been distinguished by the favour of a discerning or virtuous man or woman, as Odysseus was distinguished by Athena, Helen by Theseus, Paris by the goddesses, and Achilles by Homer. And, generally speaking, all things are good which men deliberately choose to do; this will include the things already mentioned, and also whatever may be bad for their enemies or good for their friends, and at the same time practicable. Things are "practicable" in two senses: (1) it is possible to do them, (2) it is easy to do them. Things are done "easily" when they are done either without pain or quickly: the "difficulty" of an act lies either in its painfulness or in the long time it takes. Again, a thing is good⁵² if it is as men wish; and they wish to have either no evil at all or at least a balance of good over evil. This last will happen where the penalty is either imperceptible or slight. Good, too, are things that are a man's very own, possessed by no one else, exceptional; for this increases the credit of having them.⁵³ So are things which befit the possessors, such as whatever is appropriate to their birth or capacity, and whatever they feel they ought to have but lack—such things may indeed be trifling, but none the less men deliberately make them the goal of their action. And things easily effected; for these are practicable (in the sense of being easy); such things are those in which every one, or most people, or one's equals, or one's inferiors have succeeded. Good also are the things by which we shall gratify our friends or annoy our enemies; and the things chosen by those whom we admire:

⁵¹Fragm. of Simonides of Keos, famous poet of choral lyrics (556–468 B.C.) [F.S.]

⁵²Or perhaps better, "Men deliberately choose a thing if it is. . . ." [Tr.]

⁵³Or, "the value put upon them" (sc. by their possessor). [Tr.]

and the things for which we are fitted by nature or experience, since we think we shall succeed more easily in these: and those in which no worthless man can succeed, for such things bring greater praise: and those which we do in fact desire, for what we desire is taken to be not only pleasant but also better. Further, a man of a given disposition makes chiefly for the corresponding things: lovers of victory make for victory, lovers of honour for honour, money-loving men for money, and so with the rest. These, then, are the sources from which we must derive our means of persuasion about Good and Utility. 1363^b

VII. Since however, it often happens that people agree that two things are both useful but do not agree about which is the more so, the next step will be to treat of relative goodness and relative utility.

A thing which surpasses another may be regarded as being that other thing plus something more, and that other thing which is surpassed as being what is contained in the first thing. Now to call a thing "greater" or "more" always implies a comparison of it with one that is "smaller" or "less," while "great" and "small," "much" and "little," are terms used in comparison with normal magnitude. The "great" is that which surpasses the normal, the "small" is that which is surpassed by the normal; and so with "many" and "few."

Now we are applying the term "good" to what is desirable for its own sake and not for the sake of something else;⁵⁴ to that at which all things aim; to what they would choose if they could acquire understanding and practical wisdom; and to that which tends to produce or preserve such goods, or is always accompanied by them. Moreover, that for the sake of which things are done is the end (an end being that for the sake of which all else is done), and for each individual that thing is a good which fulfils these conditions in regard to himself. It follows, then, that a greater number of goods is a greater good than one or than a smaller number, if that one or that smaller number is included in the count; for then the larger number surpasses the smaller, and the smaller quantity is surpassed as being contained in the larger.

⁵⁴Cp. 1362^a24. [Tr.]

Again, if the largest member of one class surpasses the largest member of another, then the one class surpasses the other; and if one class surpasses another, then the largest member of the one surpasses the largest member of the other. Thus, if the tallest man is taller than the tallest woman, then men in general are taller than women. Conversely, if men in general are taller than women, then the tallest man is taller than the tallest woman. For the superiority of class over class is proportionate to the superiority possessed by their largest specimens. Again, where one good is always accompanied by another, but does not always accompany it, it is greater than the other, for the use of the second thing is implied in the use of the first. A thing may be accompanied by another in three ways, either simultaneously, subsequently, or potentially. Life accompanies health simultaneously (but not health life), knowledge accompanies the act of learning subsequently, cheating accompanies sacrilege potentially, since a man who has committed sacrilege is always capable of cheating. Again, when two things each surpass a third, that which does so by the greater amount is the greater of the two; for it must surpass the greater as well as the less of the other two. A thing productive of a greater good than another is productive of itself a greater good than that other. For this conception of “productive of a greater” has been implied in our argument.⁵⁵ Likewise, that which is produced by a greater good is itself a greater good; thus, if what is wholesome is more desirable and a greater good than what gives pleasure, health too must be a greater good than pleasure. Again, a thing which is desirable in itself is a greater good than a thing which is not desirable in itself, as for example bodily strength than what is wholesome, since the latter is not pursued for its own sake, whereas the former is; and this was our definition of the good.⁵⁶ Again, if one of two things is an end, and the other is not, the former is the greater good, as being chosen for its own sake and not for the sake of something else; as, for example,

exercise is chosen for the sake of physical well-being. And of two things that which stands less in need of the other, or of other things, is the greater good, since it is more self-sufficing. (That which stands “less” in need of others is that which needs either *fewer* or *easier* things.) So when one thing does not exist or cannot come into existence without a second, while the second can exist without the first, the second is the better. That which does not need something else is more self-sufficing than that which does, and presents itself as a greater good for that reason. Again, that which is a beginning of other things is a greater good than that which is not, and that which is a cause is a greater good than that which is not; the reason being the same in each case, namely that without a cause and a beginning nothing can exist or come into existence. Again, where there are two sets of consequences arising from two different beginnings or causes, the consequences of the more important beginning or cause are themselves the more important; and conversely, that beginning or cause is itself the more important which has the more important consequences. Now it is plain, from all that has been said, that one thing may be shown to be more important than another from two opposite points of view: it may appear the more important (1) because it is a beginning and the other thing is not, and also (2) because it is not a beginning and the other thing is — on the ground that the end is more important and is not a beginning.⁵⁷ So Leodamas, when accusing Callistratus, said that the man who prompted the deed was more guilty than the doer, since it would not have been done if he had not planned it.⁵⁸ On the other hand, when accusing Chabrias he said that the doer was worse than the prompter, since there would have been no deed without some one to do it; men, said he, plot a thing only in order to carry it out.

⁵⁷We might perhaps expect “on the ground that it is the end, not the beginning, that matters” . . . [Tr.]

⁵⁸Leodamas of Acharnae, a famous orator of the 4th century; Callistratus of Aphidna, also a distinguished Athenian orator and politician. His accusation by Leodamas here mentioned seems to have been directed against his conduct in the affairs of Oropus in 366 B.C. in which he was associated with Chabrias, an Athenian general, and with him was brought to trial. [F.S.]

⁵⁵I.e. we have already (1363^b15) said that what is productive of good is good; it follows, then, from our way of looking at “productivity” and “degree,” that what is productive of a greater good is a greater good. [Tr.]

⁵⁶1362^a22. [Tr.]

Further, what is rare is a greater good than what is plentiful. Thus, gold is a better thing than iron, though less useful: it is harder to get, and therefore better worth getting. Reversely, it may be argued that the plentiful is a better thing than the rare, because we can make more use of it. For what is often useful surpasses what is seldom useful, whence the saying

The best of things is water.⁵⁹

More generally: the hard thing is better than the easy, because it is rarer: and reversely, the easy thing is better than the hard, for it is as we wish it to be. That is the greater good whose contrary is the greater evil, and whose loss affects us more. Positive goodness and badness are more important than the mere *absence* of goodness and badness: for positive goodness and badness are ends, which the mere absence of them cannot be. Further, in proportion as the functions of things are noble or base, the things themselves are good or bad: conversely, in proportion as the things themselves are good or bad, their functions also are good or bad; for the nature of results corresponds with that of their causes and beginnings, and conversely the nature of causes and beginnings corresponds with that of their results. Moreover, those things are greater goods, superiority in which is more desirable or more honourable. Thus, keenness of sight is more desirable than
1364^b keenness of smell, sight generally being more desirable than smell generally; and similarly, unusually great love of friends being more honourable than unusually great love of money, ordinary love of friends is more honourable than ordinary love of money. Conversely, if one of two normal things is better or nobler than the other, an unusual degree of that thing is better or nobler than an unusual degree of the other. Again, one thing is more honourable or better than another if it is more honourable or better to desire it; the importance of the object of a given instinct corresponds to the importance of the instinct itself; and for the same reason, if one thing is more honourable or better than another, it is more honourable and better to desire it. Again, if one science is more honourable and valuable

than another, the activity with which it deals is also more honourable and valuable; as is the science, so is the reality that is its object, each science being authoritative in its own sphere. So, also, the more valuable and honourable the object of a science, the more valuable and honourable the science itself is in consequence. Again, that which would be judged, or which has been judged, a good thing, or a better thing than something else, by all or most people of understanding, or by the majority of men, or by the ablest, must be so; either without qualification, or in so far as they use their understanding to form their judgement. This is indeed a general principle, applicable to all other judgements also; not only the goodness of things, but their essence, magnitude, and general nature are in fact just what knowledge and understanding will declare them to be. Here the principle is applied to judgements of goodness, since one definition of "good" was "what beings that acquire understanding will choose in any given case":⁶⁰ from which it clearly follows that that thing is *better* which understanding declares to be so. That, again, is a better thing which attaches to better men, either absolutely, or in virtue of their being better; as courage is better than strength. And that is a greater good which would be chosen by a better man, either absolutely, or in virtue of his being better: for instance, to suffer wrong rather than to do wrong, for that would be the choice of the juster man. Again, the pleasanter of two things is the better, since *all* things pursue pleasure, and things instinctively desire pleasurable sensation *for its own sake*; and these are two of the characteristics by which the "good" and the "end" have been defined. One pleasure is greater than another if it is more unmixed with pain, or more lasting. Again, the nobler thing is better than the less noble, since the noble is either what is pleasant or what is desirable in itself. And those things also are greater goods which men desire more earnestly to bring about for themselves or for their friends, whereas those things which they least desire to bring about are greater evils. And those things which are more lasting are better than those which are more fleeting, and the more

⁵⁹Pindar. *Olympians*, i, 1. [Tr.]

⁶⁰Cp. 1363^b14 [and 1362^a24]. [Tr.]

secure than the less; the enjoyment of the lasting has the advantage of being longer, and that of the secure has the advantage of suiting our wishes, being there for us whenever we like. Further, in accordance with the rule of co-ordinate terms and inflexions of the same stem, what is true of one such related word is true of all. Thus if the action qualified by the term “brave” is more noble and desirable than the action qualified by the term “temperate,” then “bravery” is more desirable than “temperance” and “being brave” than “being temperate.” That, again, which is chosen by all is a greater good than that which is not, and that chosen by the majority than that chosen by the minority. For that which *all* desire is good, as we have said;⁶¹ and so, the more a thing is desired, the better it is. Further, that is the better thing which is considered so by competitors or enemies, or again, by authorized judges or those whom they select to represent them. In the first two cases the decision is virtually that of every one, in the last two that of authorities and experts. And sometimes it may be argued that what all share is the better thing, since it is a dishonour not to share in it; at other times, that what none or few share is better, since it is rarer. The more praiseworthy things are, the nobler and therefore the better they are. So with the things that earn greater honours than others—honour is, as it were, a measure of value; and the things whose absence involves comparatively heavy penalties; and the things that are better than others admitted or believed to be good. Moreover, things look better merely by being divided into their parts, since they then seem to surpass a greater number of things than before. Hence Homer says that Meleager was roused to battle by the thought of

All horrors that light on a folk whose city is ta'en
of their foes,
When they slaughter the men, when the burg is
wasted with ravening flame,
When strangers are haling young children to thral-
dom, (fair women to shame).⁶²

⁶¹1363^b14. [Tr.]

⁶²*Iliad*, ix. 592–4 (Aristotle seems to quote from memory, here and elsewhere). [Tr.]

The same effect is produced by piling up facts in a climax after the manner of Epicharmus.⁶³ The reason is partly the same as in the case of division (for combination too makes the impression of great superiority), and partly that the original thing appears to be the cause and origin of important results. And since a thing is better when it is harder or rarer than other things, its superiority may be due to seasons, ages, places, times, or one's natural powers. When a man accomplishes something beyond his natural power, or beyond his years, or beyond the measure of people like him, or in a special way, or at a special place or time, his deed will have a high degree of nobleness, goodness, and justice, or of their opposites. Hence the epigram on the victor at the Olympic games:

In time past, bearing a yoke on my shoulders, of
wood unshaven,
I carried my loads of fish from Argos to Tegea
town.⁶⁴

So Iphicrates⁶⁵ used to extol himself by describing the low estate from which he had risen. Again, what is natural is better than what is acquired, since it is harder to come by. Hence the words of Homer:

I have learnt from none but myself.⁶⁶

And the best part of a good thing is particularly good; as when Pericles in his funeral oration said that the country's loss of its young men in battle was “as if the spring were taken out of the year.”⁶⁷ So with those things which are of service when the need is pressing; for example, in old age and times of sickness. And of two things that which leads more directly to the end in view is the better. So too is that which is better for people generally as well as for a particular individual. Again, what *can* be got is better than what

⁶³Sicilian writer of comedies. [F.S.]

⁶⁴Fragm. of Simonides. [F.S.]

⁶⁵The son of a shoemaker, he became an honored Athenian general, contemporary of Aristotle. He is cited many times in the *Rhetoric*, and must have been a colorful person. [F.S.]

⁶⁶*Odyssey*, xxii. 347. [Tr.]

⁶⁷Cp. iii, c. 10, 1411^a4. . . . [Tr.] The funeral oration alluded to is not the one made famous by Thucydides but the one on those fallen in the Samian War, 440 B.C. [F.S.]

cannot, for it is good in a given case and the other thing is not. And what is at the end of life is better than what is not, since those things are ends in a greater degree which are nearer the end. What aims at reality is better than what aims at appearance. We may define what aims at appearance as what a man will not choose if nobody is to know of his having it. This would seem to show that to receive benefits is more desirable than to confer them, since a man will choose the former even if nobody is to know of it, but it is not the general view that he will choose the latter if nobody knows of it. What a man wants to *be* is better than what a man wants to *seem*, for in aiming at that he is aiming more at reality. Hence men say that justice is of small value, since it is more desirable to seem just than to be just, whereas with health it is not so. That is better than other things which is more useful than they are for a number of different purposes; for example, that which promotes life, good life, pleasure, and noble conduct. For this reason wealth and health are commonly thought to be of the highest value, as possessing all these advantages. Again, that is better than other things which is accompanied both with less pain and with actual pleasure; for here there is more than one advantage; and so here we have the good of feeling pleasure and also the good of not feeling pain. And of two good things that is the better whose addition to a third thing makes a better whole than the addition of the other to the same thing will make. Again, those things which we are seen to possess are better than those which we are not seen to possess, since the former have the air of reality. Hence wealth may be regarded as a greater good if its existence is known to others. That which is dearly prized is better than what is not—the sort of thing that some people have only one of, though others have more like it. Accordingly, blinding a one-eyed man inflicts worse injury than half-blinding a man with two eyes; for the one-eyed man has been robbed of what he dearly prized.

The grounds on which we must base our arguments, when we are speaking for or against a proposal, have now been set forth more or less completely.

VIII. The most important and effective qualification for success in persuading audiences and

speaking well on public affairs is to understand all the forms of government and to discriminate their respective customs, institutions, and interests. For all men are persuaded by considerations of their interest, and their interest lies in the maintenance of the established order. Further, it rests with the supreme authority to give authoritative decisions, and this varies with each form of government; there are as many different supreme authorities as there are different forms of government. The forms of government are four—democracy, oligarchy, aristocracy, monarchy. The supreme right to judge and decide always rests, therefore, with either a part or the whole of one or other of these governing powers.

A Democracy is a form of government under which the citizens distribute the offices of state among themselves by lot, whereas under oligarchy there is a property qualification, under aristocracy one of education.⁶⁸ By education I mean that education which is laid down by the law; for it is those who have been loyal to the national institutions that hold office under an aristocracy. These are bound to be looked upon as “the best men,” and it is from this fact that this form of government has derived its name (“the rule of the best”). Monarchy, as the word implies, is the constitution in which one man has authority over all. There are two forms of monarchy: kingship, which is limited by prescribed conditions, and “tyranny,”⁶⁹ which is not limited by anything.

We must also notice the ends which the various forms of government pursue, since people choose in practice such actions as will lead to the realization of their ends. The end of democracy is freedom; of oligarchy, wealth; of aristocracy, the maintenance of education and national institutions; of tyranny, the protection of the tyrant. It is clear, then, that we must distinguish those particular customs, institutions, and interests which tend to realize the ideal of each constitution, since men choose their means with reference to their ends. But rhetorical persuasion is effected not only by demonstrative but by ethical argument; it helps a speaker to convince us, if we be-

⁶⁸Perhaps “discipline”: with special reference to Sparta. [Tr.]

⁶⁹Despotism, autocracy. [Tr.]

lieve that he has certain qualities himself, namely, goodness, or goodwill towards us, or both together. Similarly, we should know the moral qualities characteristic of each form of government, for the special moral character of each is bound to provide us with our most effective means of persuasion in dealing with it. We shall learn the qualities of governments in the same way as we learn the qualities of individuals, since they are revealed in their deliberate acts of choice; and these are determined by the end that inspires them.

We have now considered the objects, immediate or distant, at which we are to aim when urging any proposal, and the grounds on which we are to base our arguments in favour of its utility. We have also briefly considered the means and methods by which we shall gain a good knowledge of the moral qualities and institutions peculiar to the various forms of government—only, however, to the extent demanded by the present occasion; a detailed account of the subject has been given in the *Politics*.⁷⁰

IX. We have now to consider Virtue and Vice, the Noble and the Base,⁷¹ since these are the objects of praise and blame. In doing so, we shall at the same time be finding out how to make our hearers take the required view of our own characters—our second method of persuasion.⁷² The ways in which to make them trust the goodness of other people are also the ways in which to make them trust our own. Praise, again, may be serious or frivolous; nor is it always of a human or divine being but often of inanimate things, or of the humblest of the lower animals. Here too we must know on what grounds to argue, and must, therefore, now discuss the subject, though by way of illustration only.

The Noble is that which is both desirable for its own sake and also worthy of praise; or that which is both good and also pleasant because good. If this is a true definition of the Noble, it follows that virtue must be noble, since it is both

⁷⁰*Politics*, iii and iv. [Tr.]

⁷¹Or (here and elsewhere), “Goodness and Badness, the Fine and the Mean.” [Tr.]

⁷²I 356^a2 and 5. [Tr.]

a good thing and also praiseworthy. Virtue is, according to the usual view, a faculty of providing and preserving good things; or a faculty of conferring many great benefits, and benefits of all kinds on all occasions. The forms of Virtue are justice, courage, temperance, magnificence, magnanimity, liberality, gentleness, prudence, wisdom. If virtue is a faculty of beneficence, the highest kinds of it must be those which are most useful to others, and for this reason men honour most the just and the courageous, since courage is useful to others in war, justice both in war and in peace. Next comes liberality; liberal people let their money go instead of fighting for it, whereas other people care more for money than for anything else. Justice is the virtue through which everybody enjoys his own possessions in accordance with the law; its opposite is injustice, through which men enjoy the possessions of others in defiance of the law. Courage is the virtue that disposes men to do noble deeds in situations of danger, in accordance with the law and in obedience to its commands; cowardice is the opposite. Temperance is the virtue that disposes us to obey the law where physical pleasures are concerned; incontinence is the opposite. Liberality disposes us to spend money for others' good; illiberality is the opposite. Magnanimity is the virtue that disposes us to do good to others on a large scale: [its opposite is meanness of spirit]. Magnificence is a virtue productive of greatness in matters involving the spending of money. The opposites of these two are smallness of spirit and meanness respectively. Prudence is that virtue of the understanding which enables men to come to wise decisions about the relation to happiness of the goods and evils that have been previously mentioned.⁷³

The above is a sufficient account, for our present purpose, of virtue and vice in general, and of their various forms. As to further aspects of the subject, it is not difficult to discern the facts; it is evident that things productive of virtue are noble, as tending towards virtue; and also the effects of virtue, that is, the signs of its presence and the acts to which it leads. And since the signs of

⁷³Cp. I 362^b10–28. [Tr.] References to the “virtues” in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. [F.S.]

virtue, and such acts as it is the mark of a virtuous man to do or have done to him, are noble, it follows that all deeds or signs of courage, and everything done courageously, must be noble things; and so with what is just and actions done justly. (Not, however, actions justly done to us; here justice is unlike the other virtues; “justly” does not always mean “nobly”; when a man is punished, it is more shameful that this should be justly than unjustly done to him). The same is true of the other virtues. Again, those actions are noble for which the reward is simply honour, or honour more than money. So are those in which a man aims at something desirable for some one else’s sake; actions good absolutely, such as those a man does for his country without thinking of himself; actions good in their own nature; actions that are not good simply for the individual, since individual interests are selfish. Noble also
1367^a are those actions whose advantage may be enjoyed after death, as opposed to those whose advantage is enjoyed during one’s lifetime: for the latter are more likely to be for one’s own sake only. Also, all actions done for the sake of others, since these less than other actions are done for one’s own sake; and all successes which benefit others and not oneself; and services done to one’s benefactors, for this is just; and good deeds generally, since they are not directed to one’s own profit. And the opposites of those things of which men feel ashamed, for men are ashamed of saying, doing, or intending to do shameful things. So when Alcaeus said

Something I fain would say to thee,
Only shame restraineth me,⁷⁴

Sappho wrote

If for things good and noble thou wert yearning,
If to speak baseness were thy tongue not burning,
No load of shame would on thine eyelids weigh;
What thou with honour wishes thou wouldst say.⁷⁵

Those things, also, are noble for which men strive anxiously, without feeling fear; for they feel thus about the good things which lead to fair fame. Again, one quality or action is nobler than

⁷⁴Fragm. of Alcaeus. [F.S.]

⁷⁵Fragm. of Sappho. [F.S.]

another if it is that of a naturally finer being: thus a man’s will be nobler than a woman’s. And those qualities are noble which give more pleasure to other people than to their possessors; hence the nobleness of justice and just actions. It is noble to avenge oneself on one’s enemies and not to come to terms with them; for requital is just, and the just is noble; and not to surrender is a sign of courage, Victory, too, and honour belong to the class of noble things, since they are desirable even when they yield no fruits, and they prove our superiority in good qualities. Things that deserve to be remembered are noble, and the more they deserve this, the nobler they are. So are the things that continue even after death: those which are always attended by honour; those which are exceptional; and those which are possessed by one person alone—these last are more readily remembered than others. So again are possessions that bring no profit, since they are more fitting than others for a gentleman. So are the distinctive qualities of a particular people, and the symbols of what it specially admires, like long hair in Sparta, where this is a mark of a free man, as it is not easy to perform any menial task when one’s hair is long. Again, it is noble not to practise any sordid craft, since it is the mark of a free man not to live at another’s beck and call. We are also to assume, when we wish either to praise a man or blame him, that qualities closely allied to those which he actually has are identical with them; for instance, that the cautious man is cold-blooded and treacherous, and that the stupid man is an honest fellow or the thick-skinned man a good-tempered one. We can always idealize any given man by drawing on the virtues akin to his actual qualities; thus we may say that the passionate and excitable man is “outspoken”; or that the arrogant man is “superb” or “impressive.” Those who run to extremes will be said to possess the corresponding good qualities; rashness will be called courage, and extravagance generosity. That will be what most people think; and at the same time this method enables an advocate to draw a misleading inference from the motive, arguing that if a man runs into danger needlessly, much more will he do so in a noble cause; and if a man is open-handed to any one and every one, he will be so to his friends also,

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since it is the extreme form of goodness to be good to everybody.

We must also take into account the nature of our particular audience when making a speech of praise; for, as Socrates used to say, it is not difficult to praise the Athenians to an Athenian audience.⁷⁶ If the audience esteems a given quality, we must say that our hero has that quality, no matter whether we are addressing Scythians or Spartans or philosophers. Everything, in fact, that is esteemed we are to represent as noble. After all, people regard the two things as much the same.

All actions are noble that are appropriate to the man who does them: if, for instance, they are worthy of his ancestors or of his own past career. For it makes for happiness, and is a noble thing, that he should add to the honour he already has. Even inappropriate actions are noble if they are better and nobler than the appropriate ones would be; for instance, if one who was just an average person when all went well becomes a hero in adversity, or if he becomes better and easier to get on with the higher he rises. Compare the saying of Iphicrates, "Think what I was and what I am"; and the epigram on the victor at the Olympic games,

In time past, bearing a yoke on my shoulders, of wood unshaven⁷⁷;

and the encomium of Simonides,

A woman whose father, whose husband, whose brethren were princes all.⁷⁸

Since we praise a man for what he has actually done, and fine actions are distinguished from others by being intentionally⁷⁹ good, we must try to prove that our hero's noble acts are intentional.⁷⁹ This is all the easier if we can make out that he has often acted so before, and therefore we must assert coincidences and accidents to have been intended.⁷⁹ Produce a number of good actions, all of the same kind, and people will think that they must have been intended,⁷⁹ and

⁷⁶Cp. Plato, *Menexenus*, 235 D. [Tr.]

⁷⁷Cp. i. 7, 1365^a24–8, for this and the previous quotation. [Tr.]

⁷⁸Fragm. of Simonides. [F.S.]

⁷⁹Deliberate intention, based on moral choice, is meant in all these cases. [Tr.]

that they prove the good qualities of the man who did them.

Praise is the expression in words of the eminence of a man's good qualities, and therefore we must display his actions as the product of such qualities. Encomium refers to what he has actually done; the mention of accessories, such as good birth and education, merely helps to make our story credible—good fathers are likely to have good sons, and good training is likely to produce good character. Hence it is only when a man has already done something that we bestow *encomiums* upon him. Yet the actual deeds are evidence of the doer's character: even if a man has not actually done a given good thing, we shall bestow *praise* on him, if we are sure that he is the sort of man who *would* do it. To call any one blest is, it may be added, the same thing as to call him happy; but these are not the same thing as to bestow praise and encomium upon him; the two latter are a part of "calling happy," just as goodness is a part of happiness.

To praise a man is in one respect akin to urging a course of action. The suggestions which would be made in the latter case become encomiums when differently expressed. When we know what action or character is required, then, in order to express these facts as suggestions for action, we have to change and reverse our form of words. Thus the statement "A man should be proud not of what he owes to fortune but of what he owes to himself," if put like this, amounts to a suggestion; to make it into praise we must put it thus, "Since he is proud not of what he owes to fortune but of what he owes to himself." Consequently, whenever you want to praise any one, think what you would urge people to do; and when you want to urge the doing of anything, think what you would praise a man for having done. Since suggestion may or may not forbid an action, the praise into which we convert it must have one or other of two opposite forms of expression accordingly.

There are, also, many useful ways of heightening the effect of praise. We must, for instance, point out that a man is the only one, or the first, or almost the only one who has done something, or that he has done it better than any one else; all these distinctions are honourable. And we must,

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further, make much of the particular season and occasion of an action, arguing that we could hardly have looked for it just then. If a man has often achieved the same success, we must mention this; that is a strong point; he himself, and not luck, will then be given the credit. So, too, if it is on his account that observances have been devised and instituted to encourage or honour such achievements as his own: thus we may praise Hippolochus⁸⁰ because the first encomium ever made was for him, or Harmodius and Aristogeiton⁸¹ because their statues were the first to be put up in the market-place. And we may censure bad men for the opposite reason.

Again, if you cannot find enough to say of a man himself, you may pit him against others, which is what Isocrates used to do owing to his want of familiarity with forensic pleading.⁸² The comparison should be with famous men; that will strengthen your case; it is a noble thing to surpass men who are themselves great. It is only natural that methods of "heightening the effect"⁸³ should be attached particularly to speeches of praise; they aim at proving superiority over others, and any such superiority is a form of nobleness. Hence if you cannot compare your hero with famous men, you should at least compare him with other people generally, since any superiority is held to reveal excellence. And, in general, of the lines of argument which are common to all speeches, this "heightening of effect" is most suitable for declamations, where we take our hero's actions as admitted facts, and our business is simply to invest these with dignity and nobility. "Examples" are most suitable to deliberative speeches; for we judge of future events by divination from past events. Enthymemes are most suitable to forensic speeches; it is our doubts about past events that most admit of arguments showing why a thing must have happened or proving that it did happen.

⁸⁰Of Hippolochus nothing is known. [F.S.]

⁸¹Harmodius and Aristogeiton were famous tyrannicides. Their attempt to kill the sons of Peisistratus in 514 B.C. only partly succeeded. Cp. Aristotle, *Politics*, viii 10. [F.S.]

⁸²Some manuscripts have what is perhaps the better reading, "owing to his familiarity." [F.S.]

⁸³... Rhetorical efforts to magnify, extol, amplify. Cp. 1368^b10 and ii. c. 26. [Tr.]

The above are the general lines on which all, or nearly all, speeches of praise or blame are constructed. We have seen the sort of thing we must bear in mind in making such speeches, and the materials out of which encomiums and censures are made. No special treatment of censure and vituperation is needed. Knowing the above facts, we know their contraries; and it is out of these that speeches of censure are made.

X. We have next to treat of Accusation and Defence,⁸⁴ and to enumerate and describe the ingredients of the syllogisms used therein. There are three things we must ascertain—first, the nature and number of the incentives to wrongdoing; second, the state of mind of wrongdoers; third, the kind of persons who are wronged, and their condition. We will deal with these questions in order. But before that let us define the act of "wrong-doing."

We may describe "wrong-doing" as injury voluntarily inflicted contrary to law, "Law" is either special or general. By special law I mean that written law which regulates the life of a particular community; by general law, all those unwritten principles which are supposed to be acknowledged everywhere. We do things "voluntarily" when we do them consciously and without constraint. (Not all voluntary⁸⁵ acts are deliberate, but all deliberate acts are conscious⁸⁶—no one is ignorant of what he deliberately intends.) The causes of our deliberately intending harmful and wicked acts contrary to law are (1) vice, (2) lack of self-control. For the wrongs a man does to others will correspond to the bad quality or qualities that he himself possesses. Thus it is the mean man who will wrong others about money, the profligate in matters of physical pleasure, the effeminate in matters of comfort, and the coward where danger is concerned—his terror makes him abandon those who are involved in the same danger. The ambitious man⁸⁷ does wrong for the sake of honour, the quick-tempered from anger, the lover of victory for the sake of victory, the

⁸⁴It is of two forms of forensic speech. [F.S.]

⁸⁵I.e. and therefore conscious. [Tr.]

⁸⁶I.e. and therefore voluntary. [Tr.]

⁸⁷Greek, "the honour-loving man." [Tr.]

embittered man for the sake of revenge, the stupid man because he has misguided notions of right and wrong, the shameless man because he does not mind what people think of him; and so with the rest—any wrong that any one does to others corresponds to his particular faults of character.⁸⁸

However, this subject has already been cleared up in part in our discussion of the virtues⁸⁹ and will be further explained later when we treat of the emotions.⁹⁰ We have now to consider the motives and states of mind of wrongdoers, and to whom they do wrong.

Let us first decide what sort of things people are trying to get or avoid when they set about doing wrong to others. For it is plain that the prosecutor must consider, out of all the aims that can ever induce us to do wrong to our neighbours, how many, and which, affect his adversary; while the defendant must consider how many, and which, do *not* affect him. Now every action of every person either is or is not due to that person himself. Of those not due to himself some are due to chance, the others to necessity; of these latter, again, some are due to compulsion, the others to nature. Consequently all actions that are not due to a man himself are due either to chance or to nature or to compulsion. All actions that *are* due to a man himself and caused by himself are due either to habit or to rational or irrational craving. Rational craving is a craving for good, i.e. a *wish*—nobody wishes for anything unless he thinks it good. Irrational craving is two fold, viz. anger and appetite.⁹¹

Thus every action must be due to one or other of seven causes: chance, nature, compulsion, habit, reasoning, anger, or appetite. It is superfluous further to distinguish actions according to the doers' ages, moral states, or the like; it is of course true that, for instance, young men do have hot tempers and strong appetites; still, it is not

⁸⁸Lit., "and similarly each of the other people (who do wrong to others does it) with reference to his particular part of the subject matter (of bad character)." Cp. . . . 1359^b15. [Tr.]

⁸⁹i, c. 9. [Tr.]

⁹⁰ii, cc. 1–11. [Tr.]

⁹¹ . . . In translating ἐπιθυμία, "desire" has sometimes been used, as well as "appetite." [Tr.]

through youth that they act accordingly, but through anger or appetite. Nor, again, is action due to wealth or poverty; if it is of course true that poor men, being short of money, do have an appetite for it, and that rich men, being able to command needless pleasures, do have an appetite for such pleasures: but here, again, their actions will be *due* not to wealth or poverty but to appetite. Similarly, with just men, and unjust men, and all others who are said to act in accordance with their moral qualities, their actions will really be due to one of the causes mentioned—either reasoning or emotion: due, indeed, sometimes to good dispositions and good emotions, and sometimes to bad; but that good qualities should be followed by good emotions, and bad by bad, is merely an accessory fact—it is no doubt true that the temperate man, for instance, because he is temperate, *is* always and at once attended by healthy opinions and appetites in regard to pleasant things, and the intemperate man by unhealthy ones. So we must ignore such distinctions. Still we must consider what kinds of actions and of people usually go together; for while there are no definite kinds of action associated with the fact that a man is fair or dark, tall or short, it does make a difference if he is young or old, just or unjust. And, generally speaking, all those accessory qualities that cause distinctions of human character are important: e.g. the sense of wealth or poverty, of being lucky or unlucky. This shall be dealt with later⁹²—let us now deal first with the rest of the subject before us.

The things that happen by chance are all those whose cause cannot be determined, that have no purpose, and that happen neither always nor usually nor in any fixed way. The definition of chance shows just what they are. Those things happen by nature which have a fixed and internal cause; they take place uniformly, either always or usually. There is no need to discuss in exact detail the things that happen contrary to nature, nor to ask whether they happen in some sense naturally or from some other cause; it would seem that chance is at least partly the cause of such events. Those things happen through compulsion which take place contrary to the desire or reason

⁹²ii, cc. 12–17. [Tr.]

of the doer, yet through his own agency. Acts are done from habit which men do because they have often done them before. Actions are due to reasoning when, in view of any of the goods already mentioned,⁹³ they appear useful either as ends or as means to an end, and are performed for that reason: "for that reason," since even licentious persons perform a certain number of useful actions, but because they are pleasant and not because they are useful. To passion and anger are due all acts of revenge. Revenge and punishment are different things. Punishment is inflicted for the sake of the person punished; revenge for that of the punisher, to satisfy his feelings. (What anger is will be made clear when we come to discuss the emotions.⁹⁴) Appetite is the cause of all actions that appear pleasant. Habit, whether acquired by mere familiarity or by effort, belongs to the class of pleasant things, for there are many actions not naturally pleasant which men perform with pleasure, once they have become used to them. To sum up then, all actions due to ourselves either are or seem to be either good or pleasant. Moreover, as all actions due to ourselves are done voluntarily and actions not due to ourselves are done involuntarily, it follows that all voluntary actions must either be or seem to be either good or pleasant; for I reckon among goods escape from evils or apparent evils and the exchange of a greater evil for a less (since these things are in a sense positively desirable), and likewise I count among pleasures escape from painful or apparently painful things and the exchange of a greater pain for a less. We must ascertain, then, the number and nature of the things that are useful and pleasant. The useful has been previously examined in connexion with political oratory;⁹⁵ let us now proceed to examine the pleasant. Our various definitions must be regarded as adequate, even if they are not exact, provided they are clear.

XI. We may lay it down that Pleasure is a movement, a movement by which the soul as a whole is consciously brought into its normal state

⁹³i, c. 6. [Tr.]

⁹⁴ii, c. 2. [Tr.]

⁹⁵i, c. 6. [Tr.]

of being; and that Pain is the opposite.⁹⁶ If this is what pleasure is, it is clear that the pleasant is what tends to produce this condition, while that which tends to destroy it, or to cause the soul to be brought into the opposite state, is painful. It must therefore be pleasant as a rule to move towards a natural state of being, particularly when a natural process has achieved the complete recovery of that natural state. Habits also are pleasant; for as soon as a thing has become habitual, it is virtually natural; habit is a thing not unlike nature; what happens often is akin to what happens always, natural events happening always, habitual events often. Again, that is pleasant which is not forced on us; for force is unnatural, and that is why what is compulsory is painful, and it has been rightly said

All that is done on compulsion is bitterness unto the soul.⁹⁷

So all acts of concentration, strong effort, and strain are necessarily painful; they all involve compulsion and force, unless we are accustomed to them, in which case it is custom that makes them pleasant. The opposites to these are pleasant; and hence ease, freedom from toil, relaxation, amusement, rest, and sleep belong to the class of pleasant things; for these are all free from any element of compulsion. Everything, too, is pleasant for which we have the desire within us, since desire is the craving for pleasure. Of the desires some are irrational, some associated with reason.⁹⁸ By irrational I mean those which do not arise from any opinion held by the mind. Of this kind are those known as "natural"; for instance, those originating in the body, such as the desire for nourishment, namely hunger and thirst, and a separate kind of desire answering to each kind of nourishment; and the desires connected with taste and sex and sensations of touch in general; and those of smell, hearing, and vi-

⁹⁶The relation here established between pleasure and the soul points to a Platonic background. The second part of the definition may have originated in medical circles; it is closely paralleled in Plato, *Timaeus*, 64c-65b. [F.S.]

⁹⁷Fragm. of Euenus of Paros, elegiac poet and sophist, contemporary of Socrates. [F.S.]

⁹⁸"are accompanied, or not accompanied, by a rational principle." [Tr.]

sion. Rational desires are those which we are induced to have; there are many things we desire to see or get because we have been told of them and induced to believe them good. Further, pleasure is the consciousness through the senses of a certain kind of emotion; but imagination⁹⁹ is a feeble sort of sensation, and there will always be in the mind of a man who remembers or expects something an image or picture of what he remembers or expects. If this is so, it is clear that memory and expectation also, being accompanied by sensation, may be accompanied by pleasure. It follows that anything pleasant is either present and perceived, past and remembered, or future and expected, since we perceive present pleasures, remember past ones, and expect future ones. Now the things that are pleasant to remember are not only those that, when actually perceived as present, *were* pleasant, but also some things that were not, provided that their results have subsequently proved noble and good. Hence the words

Sweet 'tis when rescued to remember pain,¹⁰⁰

and

Even his griefs are a joy long after to one that remembers

All that he wrought and endured.¹⁰¹

The reason of this is that it is pleasant even to be merely free from evil. The things it is pleasant to expect are those that when present are felt to afford us either great delight or great but not painful benefit. And in general, all the things that delight us when they are present also do so, as a rule, when we merely remember or expect them. Hence even being angry is pleasant—Homer said of wrath that

Sweeter it is by far than the honeycomb dripping with sweetness¹⁰²—

for no one grows angry with a person on whom there is no prospect of taking vengeance, and we feel comparatively little anger, or none at all, with those who are much our superiors in power.

⁹⁹ . . . “mental picturing,” “fancy,” “impression.” [Tr.]

¹⁰⁰ Euripides, *Andromeda*, fragm. [Tr.]

¹⁰¹ Cp. *Odyssey*, xv. 400, 401. [Tr.]

¹⁰² *Iliad*, xviii. 109. [Tr.]

Some pleasant feeling is associated with most of our appetites; we are enjoying either the memory of a past pleasure or the expectation of a future one, just as persons down with fever, during their attacks of thirst, enjoy remembering the drinks they have had and looking forward to having more. So also a lover enjoys talking or writing about his loved one, or doing any little thing connected with him; all these things recall him to memory and make him actually present to the eye of imagination. Indeed, it is always the first sign of love, that besides enjoying some one's presence, we remember him when he is gone, and feel pain as well as pleasure, because he is there no longer. Similarly there is an element of pleasure even in mourning and lamentation for the departed. There is grief, indeed, at his loss, but pleasure in remembering him and as it were seeing him before us in his deeds and in his life. We can well believe the poet when he says

He spake, and in each man's heart he awakened the love of lament.¹⁰³

Revenge, too, is pleasant; it is pleasant to get anything that it is painful to fail to get, and angry people suffer extreme pain when they fail to get their revenge; but they enjoy the prospect of getting it. Victory also is pleasant, and not merely to “bad losers,” but to every one; the winner sees himself in the light of a champion, and everybody has a more or less keen appetite for being that. The pleasantness of victory implies of course that combative sports and intellectual contests are pleasant (since in these it often happens that some one wins) and also games like knucklebones, ball, dice, and draughts. And similarly with the serious sports; some of these become pleasant when one is accustomed to them; while others are pleasant from the first, like hunting with hounds, or indeed any kind of hunting. For where there is competition, there is victory. That is why forensic pleading and debating contests are pleasant to those who are accustomed to them and have the capacity for them. Honour and good repute are among the most pleasant things of all; they make a man see himself in the character of a fine fellow, especially when he is credited with it

¹⁰³ *Iliad*, xxiii. 108; *Odyssey*, iv. 183. [Tr.]

by people whom he thinks good judges. His neighbours are better judges than people at a distance; his associates and fellow-countrymen better than strangers; his contemporaries better than posterity; sensible persons better than foolish ones; a large number of people better than a small number: those of the former class, in each case, are the more likely to be good judges of him. Honour and credit bestowed by those whom you think much inferior to yourself—e.g. children or animals—you do not value: not for its own sake, anyhow: if you do value it, it is for some other reason. Friends belong to the class of pleasant things; it is pleasant to love—if you love wine, you certainly find it delightful: and it is pleasant to be loved, for this too makes a man see himself as the possessor of goodness, a thing that every being that has a feeling for it desires to possess: to be loved means to be valued for one's own personal qualities. To be admired is also pleasant, simply because of the honour implied. Flattery and flatterers are pleasant: the flatterer is a man who, you believe, admires and likes you. To do the same thing often is pleasant, since, as we saw, anything habitual is pleasant.¹⁰⁴ And to change is also pleasant: change means an approach to nature, whereas invariable repetition of anything causes the excessive prolongation of a settled condition: therefore, says the poet,

Change is in all things sweet.¹⁰⁵

That is why what comes to us only at long intervals is pleasant, whether it be a person or a thing; for it is a change from what we had before, and, besides, what comes only at long intervals has the value of rarity. Learning things and wondering at things are also pleasant as a rule; wondering implies the desire of learning,¹⁰⁶ so that the object of wonder is an object of desire; while in learning one is brought into one's natural condition. Conferring and receiving benefits belong to the class of pleasant things; to receive a benefit is to get what one desires; to confer a benefit implies both possession and superiority, both of which are things we try to attain. It is because

¹⁰⁴i, c. 10, 1369^b16. [Tr.]

¹⁰⁵Euripides, *Orestes*, 234. [Tr.]

¹⁰⁶Text uncertain. [F.S.]

beneficent acts are pleasant that people find it pleasant to put their neighbours straight again and to supply what they lack. Again, since learning and wondering are pleasant, it follows that such things as acts of imitation must be pleasant—for instance, painting, sculpture, poetry—and every product of skilful imitation; this latter, even if the object imitated is not itself pleasant; for it is not the object itself which here gives delight; the spectator draws inferences (“That is a so-and-so”) and thus learns something fresh.¹⁰⁷ Dramatic turns of fortune and hairbreadth escapes from perils are pleasant, because we feel all such things are wonderful.

And since what is natural is pleasant, and things akin to each other seem natural to each other, therefore all kindred and similar things are usually pleasant to each other; for instance, one man, horse, or young person is pleasant to another man, horse, or young person. Hence the proverbs “mate delights mate,” “like to like,”¹⁰⁸ “beast knows beast,” “jackdaw to jackdaw,” and the rest of them. But since everything like and akin to oneself is pleasant, and since every man is himself more like and akin to himself than any one else is, it follows that all of us must be more or less fond of ourselves. For all this resemblance and kinship is present particularly in the relation of an individual to himself. And because we are all fond of ourselves, it follows that what is our own is pleasant to all of us, as for instance our own deeds and words. That is why we are usually fond of our flatterers, [our lovers,] and honour; also of our children, for our children are our own work. It is also pleasant to complete what is defective, for the whole thing thereupon becomes our own work. And since power over others is very pleasant, it is pleasant to be thought wise, for practical wisdom secures us power over others. (Scientific wisdom is also pleasant, because it is the knowledge of many wonderful things.) Again, since most of us are ambitious, it must be pleasant to disparage our neighbours as well as to have power over them. It is pleasant for a man to spend his time over what he feels he can do best; just as the poet says,

¹⁰⁷Cp. *Poetics*, c. 4. 1448^b5–19. [Tr.]

¹⁰⁸*Odyssey*, xvii. 218. [Tr.]

To that he bends himself,
To that each day allots most time, wherein
He is indeed the best part of himself.¹⁰⁹

372^a Similarly, since amusement and every kind of relaxation and laughter too belong to the class of pleasant things, it follows that ludicrous things are pleasant, whether men, words, or deeds. We have discussed the ludicrous separately in the treatise on the *Art of Poetry*.¹¹⁰

So much for the subject of pleasant things: by considering their opposites we can easily see what things are unpleasant.

XII. The above are the motives that make men do wrong to others; we are next to consider the states of mind in which they do it, and the persons to whom they do it.

They must themselves suppose that the thing can be done, and done by them: either that they can do it without being found out, or that if they are found out they can escape being punished, or that if they are punished the disadvantage will be less than the gain for themselves or those they care for. The general subject of apparent possibility and impossibility will be handled later on,¹¹¹ since it is relevant not only to forensic but to all kinds of speaking. But it may here be said that people think that they can themselves most easily do wrong to others without being punished for it if they possess eloquence, or practical ability, or much legal experience, or a large body of friends, or a great deal of money. Their confidence is greatest if they personally possess the advantages mentioned: but even without them they are satisfied if they have friends or supporters or partners who do possess them: they can thus both commit their crimes and escape being found out and punished for committing them. They are also safe, they think, if they are on good terms with their victims or with the judges who try them. Their victims will in that case not be on their guard against being wronged, and will make some arrangement with them instead of prosecuting; while their judges will favour them because they like them, either letting them off altogether or im-

posing light sentences. They are not likely to be found out if their appearance contradicts the charges that might be brought against them: for instance, a weakling is unlikely to be charged with violent assault, or a poor and ugly man with adultery. Public and open injuries are the easiest to do, because nobody could at all suppose them possible, and therefore no precautions are taken. The same is true of crimes so great and terrible that no man living could be suspected of them: here too no precautions are taken. For all men guard against ordinary offences, just as they guard against ordinary diseases; but no one takes precautions against a disease that nobody has ever had. You feel safe, too, if you have either no enemies or a great many; if you have none, you expect not to be watched and therefore not to be detected; if you have a great many, you will be watched, and therefore people¹¹² will think you can never risk an attempt on them, and you can defend your innocence by pointing out that you could never have taken such a risk. You may also trust to hide your crime by the way you do it or the place you do it in, or by some convenient means of disposal.

You may feel that even if you are found out you can stave off a trial, or have it postponed, or corrupt your judges: or that even if you are sentenced you can avoid paying damages, or can at least postpone doing so for a long time: or that you are so badly off that you will have nothing to lose. You may feel that the gain to be got by wrong-doing is great or certain or immediate, and that the penalty is small or uncertain or distant. It may be that the advantage to be gained is greater than any possible retribution: as in the case of despotic power, according to the popular view. You may consider your crimes as bringing you solid profit, while their punishment is nothing more than being called bad names. Or the opposite argument may appeal to you: your crimes may bring you some credit (thus you may, incidentally, be avenging your father or mother, like Zeno),¹¹³ whereas the punishment may amount to a fine, or banishment, or something of that sort. People may be led on to wrong others by either of these motives or feelings; but no man by

¹⁰⁹Euripides, *Antiope*, fragm. [F.S.]

¹¹⁰Not found in the *Poetics*, as it exists today. Aristotle probably analysed the causes and conditions of laughter, when treating of Comedy in his lost Second Book. [Tr.]

¹¹¹ii, c. 19. [Tr.]

¹¹²I.e. the victims of the injustice. [Tr.]

¹¹³Nothing is known of the man or the case. [F.S.]

both—they will affect people of quite opposite characters. You may be encouraged by having often escaped detection or punishment already; or by having often tried and failed; for in crime, as in war, there are men who will always refuse to give up the struggle. You may get your pleasure on the spot and the pain later, or the gain on the spot and the loss later. That is what appeals to weak-willed persons—and weakness of will may be shown with regard to all the objects of desire. It may on the contrary appeal to you—as it does appeal to self-controlled and sensible people—that the pain and loss are immediate, while the pleasure and profit come later and last longer. You may feel able to make it appear that your crime was due to chance, or to necessity, or to natural causes, or to habit: in fact, to put it generally, as if you had failed to do right rather than actually done wrong. You may be able to trust other people to judge you equitably. You may be stimulated by being in want: which may mean that you want necessities, as poor people do, or that you want luxuries, as rich people do. You may be encouraged by having a particularly good reputation, because that will save you from being suspected: or by having a particularly bad one, because nothing you are likely to do will make it worse.

The above, then, are the various states of mind in which a man sets about doing wrong to others. The kind of people to whom he does wrong, and the ways in which he does it, must be considered next. The people to whom he does it are those who have what he wants himself, whether this means necessities or luxuries and materials for enjoyment. His victims may be far off or near at hand. If they are near, he gets his profit quickly; if they are far off, vengeance is show, as those think who plunder the Carthaginians. They may be those who are trustful instead of being cautious and watchful, since all such people are easy to elude. Or those who are too easy-going to have enough energy to prosecute an offender. Or sensitive people, who are not apt to show fight over questions of money. Or those who have been wronged already by many people, and yet have not prosecuted; such men must surely be the proverbial “Mysian prey,”¹¹⁴ Or those who have

¹¹⁴I.e. an easy prey. [Tr.]

either never or often been wronged before; in neither case will they take precautions; if they have never been wronged they think they never will, and if they have often been wronged they feel that surely it cannot happen again. Or those whose character has been attacked in the past, or is exposed to attack in the future: they will be too much frightened of the judges to make up their minds to prosecute, nor can they win their case if they do: this is true of those who are hated or unpopular. Another likely class of victim is those who their injurer can pretend have, themselves or through their ancestors or friends, treated badly, or intended to treat badly, the man himself, or his ancestors, or those he cares for; as the proverb says, “wickedness needs but a pretext.” A man may wrong his enemies, because that is pleasant: he may equally wrong his friends, because that is easy. Then there are those who have no friends, and those who lack eloquence and practical capacity; these will either not attempt to prosecute, or they will come to terms, or failing that they will lose their case. There are those whom it does not pay to waste time in waiting for trial or damages, such as foreigners and small farmers; they will settle for a trifle, and always be ready to leave off. Also those who have themselves wronged others, either often, or in the same way as they are now being wronged themselves—for it is felt that next to no wrong is done to people when it is the same wrong as they have often themselves done to others: if, for instance, you assault a man who has been accustomed to behave with violence to others. So too with those who have done wrong to others, or have meant to, or mean to, or are likely to do so; there is something fine and pleasant in wronging such persons, it seems as though almost no wrong were done. Also those by doing wrong to whom we shall be gratifying our friends, or those we admire or love, or our masters, or in general the people by reference to whom we mould our lives. Also those whom we may wrong and yet be sure of equitable treatment. Also those against whom we have had any grievance, or any previous differences with them, as Callippus had when he behaved as he did to Dion:¹¹⁵ here too it seems as if

¹¹⁵Dion, a friend of Plato, freed Sicily of the tyranny of

almost no wrong were being done. Also those who are on the point of being wronged by others if we fail to wrong them ourselves, since here we feel we have no time left for thinking the matter over. So Aenesidemus¹¹⁶ is said to have sent the “cottabus”¹¹⁷ prize to Gelon,¹¹⁸ who had just reduced a town to slavery, because Gelon had got there first and forestalled his own attempt. Also those by wronging whom we shall be able to do many righteous acts; for we feel that we can then easily cure the harm done. Thus Jason the Thesalian¹¹⁹ said that it is a duty to do some unjust acts in order to be able to do many just ones.

Among the kinds of wrong done to others are those that are done universally, or at least commonly: one expects to be forgiven for doing these. Also those that can easily be kept dark, as where things that can rapidly be consumed like eatables are concerned, or things that can easily be changed in shape, colour, or combination, or things that can easily be stowed away almost anywhere—portable objects that you can stow away in small corners, or things so like others of which you have plenty already that nobody can tell the difference. There are also wrongs of a kind that shame prevents the victim speaking about, such as outrages done to the women in his household or to himself or to his sons. Also those for which you would be thought very litigious to prosecute any one—trifling wrongs, or wrongs for which people are usually excused.

The above is a fairly complete account of the circumstances under which men do wrong to others, of the sort of wrongs they do, of the sort of persons to whom they do them, and of their reasons for doing them.

373^b XIII. It will now be well to make a complete classification of just and unjust actions. We may begin by observing that they have been defined

the older Dionysius and with Plato’s assistance attempted to set up an ideal state. In 354 B.C. he was murdered by his former friend and associate Callippus. [F.S.]

¹¹⁶Tyrant of Leontin. [F.S.]

¹¹⁷A Sicilian game; the prize was a gift of eggs, cakes, and sweetmeats. [F.S.]

¹¹⁸Tyrant of Syracuse. [F.S.]

¹¹⁹Jason of Pherae, ruler of Thessaly in the 4th cent. [F.S.]

relatively to two kinds of law, and also relatively to two classes of persons. By the two kinds of law I mean particular law and universal law.¹²⁰ Particular law is that which each community lays down and applies to its own members: this is partly written and partly unwritten. Universal law is the law of nature. For there really is, as every one to some extent divines, a natural justice and injustice that is binding on all men, even on those who have no association or covenant with each other. It is this that Sophocles’ *Antigone* clearly means when she says that the burial of Polyneices was a just act in spite of the prohibition: she means that it was just by nature.

Not of to-day or yesterday it is,
But lives eternal: none can date its birth.¹²¹

And so Empedocles, when he bids us kill no living creature, says that doing this is not just for some people while unjust for others,

Nay, but, an all-embracing law, through the realms
of the sky
Unbroken it stretcheth, and over the earth’s immensity.¹²²

And as Alcidas¹²³ says in his *Messeniac Oration*. . . .

The actions that we ought to do or not to do have also been divided into two classes as affecting either the whole community or some one of its members. From this point of view we can perform just or unjust acts in either of two ways—towards one definite person, or towards the community. The man who is guilty of adultery or assault is doing wrong to some definite person; the man who avoids service in the army is doing wrong to the community.

Thus the whole class of unjust actions may be divided into two classes, those affecting the community, and those affecting one or more other persons. We will next, before going further,

¹²⁰Cp. 1368^a8 ff. [F.S.]

¹²¹Sophocles, *Antigone*, 456–7. [Tr.]

¹²²Fragm. of Empedocles, a physical philosopher of the 5th cent. [F.S.]

¹²³According to the scholast, the words of Alcidas [a 5th cent. sophist and orator] were, “God has left all men free; Nature has made no man a slave.” . . . [Tr.]

remind ourselves of what "being wronged" means. Since it has already¹²⁴ been settled that "doing a wrong" must be intentional, "being wronged" must consist in having an injury done to you by some one who *intends* to do it. In order to be wronged, a man must (1) suffer actual harm, (2) suffer it against his will. The various possible forms of harm are clearly explained by our previous¹²⁵ separate discussion of goods and evils. We have also seen that a voluntary action is one where the doer knows what he is doing.¹²⁶ We now see that every accusation must be of an action affecting either the community or some individual. The doer of the action must either understand and intend the action, or not understand and intend it. In the former case, he must be acting either from deliberate choice or from passion. (Anger will be discussed when we speak of the passions¹²⁷; the motives for crime and the state of mind of the criminal have already¹²⁸ been discussed.) Now it often happens that a man will admit an act, but will not admit the prosecutor's label¹²⁹ for the act nor the facts which that label implies. He will admit that he took a thing but not that he "stole" it; that he struck some one first, but not that he committed "outrage"; that he had intercourse with a woman, but not that he committed "adultery"; that he is guilty of theft, but not that he is guilty of "sacrilege," the object stolen not being consecrated; that he has encroached, but not that he has "encroached on State lands"; that he has been in communication with the enemy, but not that he has been guilty of "treason." Here therefore we must be able to distinguish what is theft, outrage, or adultery, from what is not, if we are to be able to make the justice of our case clear, no matter whether our aim is to establish a man's guilt or to establish his innocence. Wherever such charges are brought against a man, the question is whether he is or is not guilty of a criminal offence. It is deliberate purpose that constitutes wickedness and criminal

guilt, and such names as "outrage" or "theft" imply deliberate purpose as well as the mere action. A blow does not always amount to "outrage," but only if it is struck with some such purpose as to insult the man struck or gratify the striker himself. Nor does taking a thing without the owner's knowledge always amount to "theft," but only if it is taken with the intention of keeping it and injuring the owner. And as with these charges, so with all the others.

We saw that there are two kinds of right and wrong conduct towards others, one provided for by written ordinances, the other by unwritten. We have now discussed the kind about which the laws have something to say. The other kind has itself two varieties. First, there is the conduct that springs from exceptional goodness or badness, and is visited accordingly with censure and loss of honour, or with praise and increase of honour and decorations: for instance, gratitude to, or requital of, our benefactors, readiness to help our friends, and the like. The second kind makes up for the defects of a community's written code of law. This is what we call equity; people regard it as just; it is, in fact, the sort of justice which goes beyond the written law. Its existence partly is and partly is not intended by legislators; not intended, where they have noticed no defect in the law; intended, where they find themselves unable to define things exactly, and are obliged to legislate as if that held good always which in fact only holds good usually; or where it is not easy to be complete owing to the endless possible cases presented, such as the kinds and sizes of weapons that may be used to inflict wounds—a lifetime would be too short to make out a complete list of these. If, then, a precise statement is impossible and yet legislation is necessary, the law must be expressed in wide terms; and so, if a man has no more than a finger-ring on his hand when he lifts it to strike or actually strikes another man, he is guilty of a criminal act according to the written words of the law; but he is innocent really, and it is equity that declares him to be so. From this definition of equity it is plain what sort of actions, and what sort of persons, are equitable or the reverse. Equity must be applied to forgivable actions; and it must make us distinguish between criminal acts on the one hand, and errors of

1374^a

1374^b

¹²⁴i, c. 10. [Tr.]

¹²⁵i, c. 6. [Tr.]

¹²⁶i, c. 10. [Tr.]

¹²⁷ii, c. 2. [Tr.]

¹²⁸i, cc. 11 and 12. [Tr.]

¹²⁹ . . . a specification or description of the alleged offence, with a claim for a corresponding penalty. [Tr.]

judgement, or misfortunes, on the other. (A “misfortune” is an act, not due to moral badness, that has unexpected results: an “error of judgement” is an act, also not due to moral badness, that has results that might have been expected: a “criminal act” has results that might have been expected, but *is* due to moral badness, for that is the source of all actions inspired by our appetites.) Equity bids us be merciful to the weakness of human nature; to think less about the laws than about the man who framed them, and less about what he said than about what he meant; not to consider the actions of the accused so much as his intentions; nor this or that detail so much as the whole story; to ask not what a man is now but what he has always or usually been. It bids us remember benefits rather than injuries, and benefits received rather than benefits conferred; to be patient when we are wronged; to settle a dispute by negotiation and not by force; to prefer arbitration to litigation—for an arbitrator goes by the equity of a case, a judge by the strict law, and arbitration was invented with the express purpose of securing full power for equity.

The above may be taken as a sufficient account of the nature of equity.

XIV. The worse of two acts of wrong done to others is that which is prompted by the worse disposition. Hence the most trifling acts may be the worst ones; as when Callistratus¹³⁰ charged Melanopus with having cheated the temple-builders of three consecrated half-obols. The converse is true of just acts. This is because the greater is here potentially contained in the less: there is no crime that a man who has stolen three consecrated half-obols would shrink from committing. Sometimes, however, the worse act is reckoned not in this way but by the greater harm that it does. Or it may be because no punishment for it is severe enough to be adequate; or the harm done may be incurable—a difficult and even hopeless crime to defend;¹³¹ or the sufferer may not be able to get his injurer legally pun-

¹³⁰For Callistratus cp. note to 1364^a21. Melanopus was a political rival; the exact nature of the offence here alluded to is unknown. [F.S.]

¹³¹Or, “due punishment then being difficult or impossible.” [Tr.]

ished, a fact that makes the harm incurable, since legal punishment and chastisement are the proper cure. Or again, the man who has suffered wrong may have inflicted some fearful punishment on himself; then the doer of the wrong ought in justice to receive a still more fearful punishment. Thus Sophocles,¹³² when pleading for retribution to Euctemon, who had cut his own throat because of the outrage done to him, said he would not fix a penalty less than the victim had fixed for himself. Again, a man’s crime is worse if he has been the first man, or the only man, or almost the only man, to commit it; or if it is by no means the first time he has gone seriously wrong in the same way; or if his crime has led to the thinking-out and invention of measures to prevent and punish similar crimes—thus in Argos a penalty is inflicted on a man on whose account a law is passed, and also on those on whose account the prison was built: or if a crime is specially brutal, or specially deliberate: or if the report of it awakes more terror than pity. There are also such rhetorically effective ways of putting it as the following: That the accused has disregarded and broken not one but many solemn obligations like oaths, promises, pledges, or rights of intermarriage between states—here the crime is worse because it consists of many crimes; and that the crime was committed in the very place where criminals are punished, as for example perjurers do—it is argued that a man who will commit a crime in a law-court would commit it anywhere. Further, the worse deed is that which involves the doer in special shame; that whereby a man wrongs his benefactors—for he does more than one wrong, by not merely doing them harm but failing to do them good; that which breaks the unwritten laws of justice—the better sort of man will be just without being forced to be so, and the written laws depend on force while the unwritten ones do not. It may however be argued otherwise, that the crime is worse which breaks the written laws: for the man who commits crimes for which terrible penalties are provided will not hesitate over crimes for which no penalty is

¹³²Not the tragedian but a statesman and orator advanced in years at the end of the Peloponnesian war. The case mentioned here is unknown. [F.S.]

provided at all.—So much, then, for the comparative badness of criminal actions.

XV. There are also the so-called “non-technical”¹³³ means of persuasion; and we must now take a cursory view of these, since they are specially characteristic of forensic oratory. They are five in number: laws, witnesses, contracts, tortures, oaths.

First, then, let us take laws and see how they are to be used in persuasion and dissuasion, in accusation and defence. If the written law tells against our case, clearly we¹³⁴ must appeal to the universal law, and insist on its greater equity and justice. We must argue that the juror’s oath “I will give my verdict according to my honest opinion” means that one will not simply follow the letter of the written law. We must urge that the principles of equity are permanent and changeless, and that the universal law does not change either, for it is the law of nature, whereas written laws often do change. This is the bearing of the lines in Sophocles’ *Antigone*, where Antigone pleads that in burying her brother she had broken Creon’s law, but not the unwritten law:

1375^b Not of to-day or yesterday they are,
But live eternal: (none can date their birth.)
Not I would fear the wrath of any man,
(And brave Gods’ vengeance) for defying these.¹³⁵

We shall argue that justice indeed is true and profitable, but that sham justice is not, and that consequently the written law is not, because it does not fulfil the true purpose of law. Or that justice is like silver, and must be assayed by the judges, if the genuine is to be distinguished from the counterfeit. Or that the better a man is, the more he will follow and abide by the unwritten law in preference to the written. Or perhaps that the law in question contradicts some other highly-esteemed law, or even contradicts itself. Thus it may be that one law will enact that all

¹³³Cp. c. 2, *supra*. [Tr.]

¹³⁴Here, and in what follows, “we” must be taken in a general sense. More literally, “tells against his case, clearly the litigant must. . . . He must argue, &c.” So with “you” elsewhere: e.g. 1372^{a,b}. [Tr.]

¹³⁵Sophocles, *Antigone*, 456. . . . [Tr.]

contracts must be held binding, while another forbids us ever to make illegal contracts. Or if a law is ambiguous, we shall turn it about and consider which construction best fits the interests of justice or utility, and then follow that way of looking at it. Or if, though the law still exists, the situation to meet which it was passed exists no longer, we must do our best to prove this and to combat the law thereby. If however the written law supports our case, we must urge that the oath “to give my verdict according to my honest opinion” is not meant to make the judges give a verdict that is contrary to the law, but to save them from the guilt of perjury if they misunderstand what the law really means. Or that no one chooses what is absolutely good, but every one what is good for himself.¹³⁶ Or that not to use the laws is as bad as to have no laws at all. Or that, as in the other arts, it does not pay to try to be cleverer than the doctor: for less harm comes from the doctor’s mistakes than from the growing habit of disobeying authority. Or that trying to be cleverer than the laws is just what is forbidden by those codes of law that are accounted best.—So far as the laws are concerned, the above discussion is probably sufficient.

As to witnesses, they are of two kinds, the ancient and the recent; and these latter, again, either do or do not share in the risks of the trial. By “ancient” witnesses I mean the poets and all other notable persons whose judgements are known to all. Thus the Athenians appealed to Homer¹³⁷ as a witness about Salamis; and the men of Tenedos not long ago appealed to Periander¹³⁸ of Corinth in their dispute with the people of Sigeum; and Cleophon¹³⁹ supported his accusation of Critias by quoting the elegiac verse of Solon, maintaining that discipline had long been slack in the family of Critias, or Solon would never have written,

¹³⁶Sc., and our written laws, which were made for us, may not reach the abstract ideal of perfection, but they probably suit us better than if they did. [Tr.]

¹³⁷Claiming against Megara their ancient right to the possession of Salamis. The *Iliad* verses B 557–58 have often in antiquity been called an Athenian interpolation. [F.S.]

¹³⁸Famous tyrant of Corinth in the 7th cent. B.C. The incident referred to is unknown. [F.S.]

¹³⁹Cleophon and Ciritas, leaders of opposite parties at the end of the Peloponnesian war. [F.S.]

Pray thee, bid the red-haired Critias do what his father commands him.¹⁴⁰

These witnesses are concerned with past events. As to future events we shall also appeal to soothsayers: thus Themistocles¹⁴¹ quoted the oracle about “the wooden wall” as a reason for engaging the enemy’s fleet. Further, proverbs are, as has been said,¹⁴² one form of evidence. Thus if you are urging somebody not to make a friend of an old man, you will appeal to the proverb,

Never show an old man kindness.

Or if you are urging that he who has made away with fathers should also make away with their sons, quote,

Fool, who slayeth the father and leaveth his sons to avenge him.¹⁴³

“Recent” witnesses are well-known people who have expressed their opinions about some disputed matter: such opinions will be useful support for subsequent disputants on the same points: thus Eubulus¹⁴⁴ used in the law-courts against Chares the reply Plato¹⁴⁵ had made to Archibius,¹⁴⁶ “It has become the regular custom in this country to admit that one is a scoundrel.” There are also those witnesses who share the risk of punishment if their evidence is pronounced false. These are valid witnesses to the fact that an action was or was not done, that something is or is not the case; they are not valid witnesses to the quality of an action, to its being just or unjust, useful or harmful. On such questions of *quality* the opinion of detached persons is highly trust-

worthy. Most trustworthy of all are the “ancient” witnesses, since they cannot be corrupted.

In dealing with the evidence of witnesses, the following are useful arguments. If you have no witnesses on your side, you will argue that the judges must decide from what is probable; that this is meant by “giving a verdict in accordance with one’s honest opinion”; that probabilities cannot be bribed to mislead the court; and that probabilities are never convicted of perjury. If you *have* witnesses, and the other man has not, you will argue that probabilities cannot be put on their trial, and that we could do without the evidence of witnesses altogether if we need do no more than balance the pleas advanced on either side.

The evidence of witnesses may refer either to ourselves or to our opponent; and either to questions of fact or to questions of personal character: so, clearly, we need never be at a loss for useful evidence. For if we have no evidence of fact supporting our own case or telling against that of our opponent, at least we can always find evidence to prove our own worth or our opponent’s worthlessness. Other arguments about a witness—that he is a friend or an enemy or neutral, or has a good, bad, or indifferent reputation, and any other such distinctions—we must construct upon the same general lines as we use for the regular rhetorical proofs.¹⁴⁷

Concerning contracts argument can be so far employed as to increase or diminish their importance and their credibility; we shall try to increase both if they tell in our favour, and to diminish both if they tell in favour of our opponent. Now for confirming or upsetting the credibility of contracts the procedure is just the same as for dealing with witnesses, for the credit to be attached to contracts depends upon the character of those who have signed them or have the custody of them. The contract being once admitted genuine, we must insist on its importance, if it supports our case. We may argue that a contract is a law, though of a special and limited kind; and that, while contracts do not of course make the law binding, the law does make any lawful contract binding, and that the law itself as a whole is a sort of contract, so that any one who disregards or repudiates any contract is repudiating the law

¹⁴⁰Fragm. of Solon, Athenian statesman and elegiac poet of 6th cent. [F.S.]

¹⁴¹Herodotus, vii. 141, 143. [Tr.] The engagement was the battle of Salamis where Themistocles commanded the Greek fleet. [F.S.]

¹⁴²A general statement, apparently. Or possibly (cp. *Poetics* 1454^a25) “proverbs are evidence in the sense indicated,” i.e. evidence of the future. But the Greek expression usually has the meaning which it bears in (e.g.) 1395^b5. [Tr.]

¹⁴³Fragm. of the *Cypria* of Stasinus, an early epos. [F.S.]

¹⁴⁴Popular Athenian statesman of 4th cent. Of the case mentioned here nothing is known. [F.S.]

¹⁴⁵May have been the philosopher or the comic poet, contemporary of Aristophanes. [F.S.]

¹⁴⁶Unknown. [F.S.]

¹⁴⁷“Enthymemes”: cp. ii, c. 23. [Tr.]

itself. Further, most business relations—those, namely, that are voluntary—are regulated by contracts, and if these lose their binding force, human intercourse ceases to exist. We need not go very deep to discover the other appropriate arguments of this kind. If, however, the contract tells against us and for our opponents, in the first place those arguments are suitable which we can use to fight a law that tells against us. We do not regard ourselves as bound to observe a bad law which it was a mistake ever to pass: and it is ridiculous to suppose that we are bound to observe a bad and mistaken contract. Again, we may argue that the duty of the judge as umpire is to decide what is just, and therefore he must ask where justice lies, and not what this or that document means. And that it is impossible to pervert justice by fraud or by force, since it is founded on nature, but a party to a contract may be the victim of either fraud or force. Moreover, we must see if the contract contravenes either universal law or any written law of our own or another country; and also if it contradicts any other previous or subsequent contract; arguing that the subsequent is the binding contract, or else that the previous one was right and the subsequent one fraudulent—whichever way suits us. Further, we must consider the question of utility, noting whether the contract is against the interest of the judges or not; and so on—these arguments are as obvious as the others.

1377^a Examination by torture is one form of evidence, to which great weight is often attached because it is in a sense compulsory. Here again it is not hard to point out the available grounds for magnifying its value, if it happens to tell in our favour, and arguing that it is the only form of evidence that is infallible; or, on the other hand, for refuting it if it tells against us and for our opponent, when we may say what is true of torture of every kind alike, that people under its compulsion tell lies quite as often as they tell the truth, sometimes persistently refusing to tell the truth, sometimes recklessly making a false charge in order to be let off sooner. We ought to be able to quote cases, familiar to the judges, in which this sort of thing has actually happened. [We must say that evidence under torture is not trustworthy, the fact being that many men whether thick-witted, tough-skinned, or stout of heart endure their

ordeal nobly, while cowards and timid men are full of boldness till they see the ordeal of these others: so that no trust can be placed in evidence under torture.]

In regard to oaths, a fourfold division can be made. A man may either both offer and accept an oath,¹⁴⁸ or neither, or one without the other—that is, he may offer an oath but not accept one, or accept an oath but not offer one. There is also the situation that arises when an oath has already been sworn either by himself or by his opponent.

If you refuse to offer an oath, you may argue that men do not hesitate to perjure themselves; and that if your opponent does swear, you lose your money, whereas, if he does not, you think the judges will decide against him; and that the risk of an unfavourable verdict is preferable, since you trust the judges and do not trust him.

If you refuse to accept an oath, you may argue that an oath is always paid for; that you would of course have taken it if you had been a rascal, since if you *are* a rascal you had better make something by it, and you would in that case have to swear in order to succeed. Thus your refusal, you argue, must be due to high principle, not to fear of perjury: and you may aptly quote the saying of Xenophanes,

'Tis not fair that he who fears not God should challenge him who doth.¹⁴⁹

It is as if a strong man were to challenge a weakling to strike, or be struck by, him.

If you agree to accept an oath, you may argue that you trust yourself but not your opponent; and that (to invert the remark of Xenophanes) the fair thing is for the impious man to offer the oath and for the pious man to accept it; and that it would be monstrous if you yourself were unwilling to accept an oath in a case where you demand that the judges should do so before giving their verdict. If you wish to offer an oath, you may argue that piety disposes you to commit the issue to the gods; and that your opponent ought not to want other judges than himself, since you leave the de-

¹⁴⁸I.e. both demand an oath from his adversary (call upon him to swear to the truth of his statements) and take an oath himself. [Tr.]

¹⁴⁹Fragm. of Xenophanes of Colophon, traditionally associated with the Eleatic school of philosophy. [F.S.]

cision with him; and that it is outrageous for your opponents to refuse to swear about this question, when they insist that others should do so.

Now that we see how we are to argue in each case separately, we see also how we are to argue when they occur in pairs, namely, when you are willing to accept the oath but not to offer it; to offer it but not to accept it; both to accept and to offer it; or to do neither. These are of course combinations of the cases already mentioned, and so your arguments also must be combinations of the arguments already mentioned.

If you have already sworn an oath that contradicts your present one, you must argue that it is not perjury, since perjury is a crime, and a crime must be a voluntary action, whereas actions due to the force of fraud of others are involuntary. You must further reason from this that perjury depends on the intention and not on the spoken words. But if it is your opponent who has already sworn an oath that contradicts his present one, you must say that if he does not abide by his oaths he is the enemy of society, and that this is the reason why men take an oath before administering the laws. "My opponents insist that you, the judges, must abide by the oath you have sworn, and yet they are not abiding by their own oaths." And there are other arguments which may be used to magnify the importance of the oath—[So much, then, for the "non-technical" modes of persuasion.]

BOOK II

I. We have now considered the materials to be used in supporting or opposing a political measure, in pronouncing eulogies or censures, and for prosecution and defence in the law courts. We have considered the received opinions on which we may best base our arguments so as to convince our hearers—those opinions with which our enthymemes deal, and out of which they are built, in each of the three kinds of oratory, according to what may be called the special needs of each.

But since rhetoric exists to affect the giving of decisions—the hearers decide between one political speaker and another, and a legal verdict is a decision—the orator must not only try to make the argument of his speech demonstrative and

worthy of belief; he must also make his own character look right and put his hearers, who are to decide, into the right frame of mind. Particularly in political oratory, but also in lawsuits, it adds much to an orator's influence that his own character should look right and that he should be thought to entertain the right feelings towards his hearers; and also that his hearers themselves should be in just the right frame of mind. That the orator's own character should look right is particularly important in political speaking: that the audience should be in the right frame of mind, in lawsuits. When people are feeling friendly and placable, they think one sort of thing; when they are feeling angry or hostile, they think either something totally different or the same thing with a different intensity: when they feel friendly to the man who comes before them for judgement, they regard him as having done little wrong, if any; when they feel hostile, they take the opposite view. Again, if they are eager for, and have good hopes of, a thing that will be pleasant if it happens, they think that it certainly will happen and be good for them: whereas if they are indifferent or annoyed, they do not think so.

There are three things which inspire confidence in the orator's own character—the three, namely, that induce us to believe a thing apart from any proof of it: good sense, good moral character, and goodwill. False statements and bad advice are due to one or more of the following three causes. Men either form a false opinion through want of good sense; or they form a true opinion, but because of their moral badness do not say what they really think; or finally, they are both sensible and upright, but not well disposed to their hearers, and may fail in consequence to recommend what they know to be the best course. These are the only possible cases. It follows that any one who is thought to have all three of these good qualities will inspire trust in his audience. The way to make ourselves thought to be sensible and morally good must be gathered from the analysis of goodness already given:¹⁵⁰ the way to establish your own goodness is the same as the way to establish that of others. Good will

¹⁵⁰i, c. 9. [Tr.]

and friendliness of disposition will form part of our discussion of the emotions,¹⁵¹ to which we must now turn.

The Emotions are all those feelings that so change men as to affect their judgements, and that are also attended by pain or pleasure. Such are anger, pity, fear and the like, with their opposites. We must arrange what we have to say about each of them under three heads. Take, for instance, the emotion of anger: here we must discover (1) what the state of mind of angry people is, (2) who the people are with whom they usually get angry, and (3) on what grounds they get angry with them. It is not enough to know one or even two of these points; unless we know all three, we shall be unable to arouse anger in any one. The same is true of the other emotions. So just as earlier in this work we drew up a list of useful propositions for the orator, let us now proceed in the same way to analyse the subject before us.

1378^b II. Anger may be defined as an impulse, accompanied by pain, to a conspicuous revenge for a conspicuous slight directed without justification towards what concerns oneself or towards what concerns one's friends. If this is a proper definition of anger, it must always be felt towards some particular individual, e.g. Cleon, and not "man" in general. It must be felt because the other has done or intended to do something to him or one of his friends. It must always be attended by a certain pleasure—that which arises from the expectation of revenge. For since nobody aims at what he thinks he cannot attain, the angry man is aiming at what he can attain, and the belief that you will attain your aim is pleasant. Hence it has been well said about wrath,

Sweeter it is by far than the honeycomb dripping with sweetness,

And spreads through the hearts of men.¹⁵²

It is also attended by a certain pleasure because the thoughts dwell upon the act of vengeance, and the images then called up cause pleasure, like the images called up in dreams.

¹⁵¹ii, c. 4. [Tr.]

¹⁵²*Iliad*, xviii, 109 (cp. i, c. 11, 1370^b12 *supra*). [Tr.]

Now slighting is the actively entertained opinion of something as obviously of no importance. We think bad things, as well as good ones, have serious importance; and we think the same of anything that tends to produce such things, while those which have little or no such tendency we consider unimportant. There are three kinds of slighting—contempt, spite, and insolence. (1) Contempt is one kind of slighting: you feel contempt for what you consider unimportant, and it is just such things that you slight. (2) Spite is another kind;¹⁵³ it is a thwarting another man's wishes, not to get something yourself but to prevent his getting it. The slight arises just from the fact that you do not aim at something for yourself: clearly you do not think that he can do you harm, for then you would be afraid of him instead of slighting him, nor yet that he can do you any good worth mentioning, for then you would be anxious to make friends with him. (3) Insolence is also a form of slighting, since it consists in doing and saying things that cause shame to the victim, not in order that anything may happen to yourself, or because anything has happened to yourself, but simply for the pleasure involved. (Retaliation is not "insolence," but vengeance.) The cause of the pleasure thus enjoyed by the insolent man is that he thinks himself greatly superior to others when ill-treating them. That is why youths and rich men are insolent; they think themselves superior when they show insolence. One sort of insolence is to rob people of the honour due to them; you certainly slight them thus; for it is the unimportant, for good or evil, that has no honour paid to it. So Achilles says in anger:

He hath taken my prize for himself and hath done me dishonour,

and

Like an alien honoured by none,¹⁵⁴

meaning that this is why he is angry. A man expects to be specially respected by his inferiors in birth, in capacity, in goodness, and generally in anything in which he¹⁵⁵ is much their superior: as

¹⁵³Or, "spite seems to show contempt." . . . [Tr.]

¹⁵⁴*Iliad*, i. 356; *Ib.* ix. 648. [Tr.]

¹⁵⁵ . . . Or "in anything common to them and him in which he," &c. [Tr.]

where money is concerned a wealthy man looks for respect from a poor man; where speaking is concerned, the man with a turn for oratory looks for respect from one who cannot speak; the ruler demands the respect of the ruled, and the man who thinks he ought to be a ruler demands the respect of the man whom he thinks he ought to be ruling. Hence it has been said

Great is the wrath of kings, whose father is Zeus almighty,

and

Yea, but his rancour abideth long afterward also,¹⁵⁶

their great resentment being due to their great superiority. Then again a man looks for respect from those who he thinks owe him good treatment, and these are the people whom he has treated or is treating well, or means or has meant to treat well, either himself, or through his friends, or through others at his request.

It will be plain by now, from what has been said, (1) in what frame of mind, (2) with what persons, and (3) on what grounds people grow angry. (1) The frame of mind is that in which any pain is being felt. In that condition, a man is always aiming at something. Whether, then, another man opposes him either directly in any way, as by preventing him from drinking when he is thirsty, or indirectly, the act appears to him just the same; whether some one works against him, or fails to work with him, or otherwise vexes him while he is in this mood, he is equally angry in all these cases. Hence people who are afflicted by sickness or poverty or love or thirst or any other unsatisfied desires are prone to anger and easily roused: especially against those who slight their present distress. Thus a sick man is angered by disregard of his illness, a poor man by disregard of his poverty, a man waging war by disregard of the war he is waging, a lover by disregard of his love, and so throughout, any other sort of slight being enough if special slights are wanting. Each man is predisposed, by the emotion now controlling him, to his own particular anger. Further, we are angered if we happen to be expecting a contrary result: for a quite unex-

pected evil is specially painful, just as the quite unexpected fulfilment of our wishes is specially pleasant. Hence it is plain what seasons, times, conditions, and periods of life tend to stir men easily to anger, and where and when this will happen; and it is plain that the more we are under these conditions the more easily we are stirred.

These, then, are the frames of mind in which men are easily stirred to anger. The persons with whom we get angry are those who laugh, mock, or jeer at us, for such conduct is insolent. Also those who inflict injuries upon us that are marks of insolence. These injuries must be such as are neither retaliatory nor profitable to the doers: for only then will they be felt to be due to insolence. Also those who speak ill of us, and show contempt for us, in connexion with the things we ourselves most care about: thus those who are eager to win fame as philosophers get angry with those who show contempt for their philosophy; those who pride themselves upon their appearance get angry with those who show contempt for their appearance; and so on in other cases. We feel particularly angry on this account if we suspect that we are in fact, or that people think we are, lacking completely or to an effective extent in the qualities in question. For when we are convinced that we excel in the qualities for which we are jeered at, we can ignore the jeering. Again, we are angrier with our friends than with other people, since we feel that our friends ought to treat us well and not badly. We are angry with those who have usually treated us with honour or regard, if a change comes and they behave to us otherwise: for we think that they feel contempt for us, or they would still be behaving as they did before. And with those who do not return our kindnesses or fail to return them adequately, and with those who oppose us though they are our inferiors: for all such persons seem to feel contempt for us; those who oppose us seem to think us inferior to themselves, and those who do not return our kindnesses seem to think that those kindnesses were conferred by inferiors. And we feel particularly angry with men of no account at all, if they slight us. For, by our hypothesis, the anger caused by the slight is felt towards people who are not justified in slighting us, and our inferiors are not thus justified. Again, we feel angry

1379^b

¹⁵⁶*Iliad*, ii. 196; *Ib.* i. 82. [Tr.]

with friends if they do not speak well of us or treat us well; and still more, if they do the contrary; or if they do not perceive our needs, which is why Plexippus is angry with Meleager in Antiphon's play;¹⁵⁷ for this want of perception shows that they are slighting us—we do not fail to perceive the needs of those for whom we care. Again, we are angry with those who rejoice at our misfortunes or simply keep cheerful in the midst of our misfortunes, since this shows that they either hate us or are slighting us. Also with those who are indifferent to the pain they give us: this is why we get angry with bringers of bad news. And with those who listen to stories about us or keep on looking at our weaknesses; this seems like either slighting us or hating us; for those who love us share in all our distresses and it must distress any one to keep on looking at his own weaknesses. Further, with those who slight us before five classes of people: namely, (1) our rivals, (2) those whom we admire, (3) those whom we wish to admire us, (4) those for whom we feel reverence, (5) those who feel reverence for us: if any one slights us before such persons, we feel particularly angry. Again, we feel angry with those who slight us in connexion with what we are as honourable men bound to champion—our parents, children, wives, or subjects. And with those who do not return a favour, since such a slight is unjustifiable. Also with those who “reply with humorous levity when we are speaking seriously, for such behaviour indicates contempt. And with those who treat us less well than they treat everybody else; it is another mark of contempt that they should think we do not deserve what every one else deserves. Forgetfulness, too, causes anger, as when our own names are forgotten, trifling as this may be; since forgetfulness is felt to be another sign that we are being slighted; it is due to negligence, and to neglect us is to slight us.

1380^a The persons with whom we feel anger, the frame of mind in which we feel it, and the reasons why we feel it, have now all been set forth. Clearly the orator will have to speak so as to bring his hearers into a frame of mind that will

¹⁵⁷Fragm. of the *Meleager* of Antiphon, a tragedian of the 4th cent. B.C. [F.S.]

dispose them to anger, and to represent his adversaries as open to such charges and possessed of such qualities as do make people angry.

III. Since growing calm is the opposite of growing angry, and calmness¹⁵⁸ the opposite of anger, we must ascertain in what frames of mind men are calm, towards whom they feel calm, and by what means they are made so. Growing calm may be defined as a settling down or quieting of anger. Now we get angry with those who slight us; and since slighting is a voluntary act, it is plain that we feel calm towards those who do nothing of the kind, or who do or seem to do it involuntarily. Also towards those who intended to do the opposite of what they did do. Also towards those who treat themselves as they have treated us: since no one can be supposed to slight himself. Also towards those who admit their fault and are sorry: since we accept their grief at what they have done as satisfaction, and cease to be angry. The punishment of servants shows this: those who contradict us and deny their offence we punish all the more, but we cease to be incensed against those who agree that they deserved their punishment. The reason is that it is shameless to deny what is obvious, and those who are shameless towards us slight us and show contempt for us: anyhow, we do not feel shame before those of whom we are thoroughly contemptuous. Also we feel calm towards those who humble themselves before us and do not gainsay us; we feel that they thus admit themselves our inferiors, and inferiors feel fear, and nobody can slight any one so long as he feels afraid of him. That our anger ceases towards those who humble themselves before us is shown even by dogs, who do not bite people when they sit down. We also feel calm towards those who are serious when we are serious, because then we feel that we are treated seriously and not contemptuously. Also towards those who have done us more kindnesses than we have done them. Also towards those who pray to us and beg for mercy, since they humble themselves by doing so. Also towards those who do not insult or mock at or

¹⁵⁸Or: gentleness, mildness, placability, patience. . . . [Tr.]

slight any one at all, or not any worthy person or any one like ourselves. In general, the things that make us calm may be inferred by seeing what the opposites are of those that make us angry. We are not angry with people we fear or respect, as long as we fear or respect them; you cannot be afraid of a person and also at the same time angry with him. Again, we feel no anger, or comparatively little, with those who have done what they did through anger; we do not feel that they have done it from a wish to slight us, for no one slights people when angry with them, since slighting is painless, and anger is painful. Nor do we grow angry with those who reverence us.

As to the frame of mind that makes people calm, it is plainly the opposite to that which makes them angry, as when they are amusing themselves or laughing or feasting; when they are feeling prosperous or successful or satisfied; when, in fine, they are enjoying freedom from pain, or inoffensive pleasure, or justifiable hope. Also when time has passed and their anger is no longer fresh, for time puts an end to anger. And vengeance previously taken on one person puts an end to even greater anger felt against another person. Hence Philocrates,¹⁵⁹ being asked by some one, at a time when the public was angry with him, "Why don't you defend yourself?" did right to reply, "The time is not yet." "Why, when is the time?" "When I see some one else calumniated." For men become calm when they have spent their anger on somebody else. This happened in the case of Ergophilus:¹⁶⁰ though the people were more irritated against him than against Callisthenes,¹⁶⁰ they acquitted him because they had condemned Callisthenes to death the day before. Again, men become calm if they have convicted¹⁶¹ the offender; or if he has already suffered worse things than they in their anger would have themselves inflicted upon him; for they feel as if they were already avenged. Or if they feel that they themselves are in the wrong and are suffering justly (for anger is not excited by what is just), since men no longer think then

that they are suffering without justification; and anger, as we have seen, means this. Hence we ought always to inflict a preliminary punishment in words: if that is done, even slaves are less aggrieved by the actual punishment. We also feel calm if we think that the offender will not see that he is punished on our account and because of the way he has treated us. For anger has to do with individuals. This is plain from the definition. Hence the poet has well written:

Say that it was Odysseus, sacker of cities,¹⁶²

implying that Odysseus would not have considered himself avenged unless the Cyclops perceived both by whom and for what he had been blinded. Consequently we do not get angry with any one who cannot be aware of our anger, and in particular we cease to be angry with people once they are dead, for we feel that the worst has been done to them, and that they will neither feel pain nor anything else that we in our anger aim at making them feel. And therefore the poet has well made Apollo say, in order to put a stop to the anger of Achilles against the dead Hector,

For behold in his fury he doeth despite to the senseless clay.¹⁶³

It is now plain that when you wish to calm others you must draw upon these lines of argument; you must put your hearers into the corresponding frame of mind, and represent those with whom they are angry as formidable, or as worthy of reverence, or as benefactors, or as involuntary agents, or as much distressed at what they have done. . . .

XII. Let us now consider the various types of human character, in relation to the emotions and moral qualities, showing how they correspond to our various ages and fortunes. By emotions I mean anger, desire, and the like; these we have discussed already.¹⁶⁴ By moral qualities I mean virtues and vices; these also have been discussed already,¹⁶⁵ as well as the various things that

¹⁵⁹A contemporary political figure. [F.S.]

¹⁶⁰Two Athenian generals of the 4th cent., both commanded in the Chersonese 362 B.C. [F.S.]

¹⁶¹. . . Or, "if they pity." [Tr.]

¹⁶²*Odyssey*, ix. 504. [Tr.]

¹⁶³*Iliad*, xxiv. 54. [Tr.]

¹⁶⁴ii, cc. i ff. [Tr.]

¹⁶⁵i, c. 9. [Tr.]

various types of men tend to will and to do.¹⁶⁶ By ages I mean youth, the prime of life, and old age. By fortune I mean birth, wealth, power, and their opposites—in fact, good fortune and ill fortune.

To begin with the Youthful type of character. Young men have strong passions, and tend to gratify them indiscriminately. Of the bodily desires, it is the sexual by which they are most swayed and in which they show absence of self-control. They are changeable and fickle in their desires, which are violent while they last, but quickly over: their impulses are keen but not deep-rooted, and are like sick people's attacks of hunger and thirst. They are hot-tempered and quick-tempered, and apt to give way to their anger; bad temper often gets the better of them, for owing to their love of honour they cannot bear being slighted, and are indignant if they imagine themselves unfairly treated. While they love honour, they love victory still more; for youth is eager for superiority over others, and victory is one form of this. They love both more than they love money, which indeed they love very little, not having yet learnt what it means to be without it—this is the point of Pittacus' remark about Amphiaraus.¹⁶⁷ They look at the good side rather than the bad, not having yet witnessed many instances of wickedness. They trust others readily, because they have not yet often been cheated. They are sanguine; nature warms their blood as though with excess of wine; and besides that, they have as yet met with few disappointments. Their lives are mainly spent not in memory but in expectation; for expectation refers to the future, memory to the past, and youth has a long future before it and a short past behind it: on the first day of one's life one has nothing at all to remember, and can only look forward. They are easily cheated, owing to the sanguine disposition just mentioned. Their hot tempers and hopeful dispositions make them more courageous than older men are; the hot temper prevents fear, and the hopeful disposition creates confidence; we

cannot feel fear so long as we are feeling angry, and any expectation of good makes us confident. They are shy, accepting the rules of society in which they have been trained, and not yet believing in any other standard of honour. They have exalted notions, because they have not yet been humbled by life or learnt its necessary limitations; moreover, their hopeful disposition makes them think themselves equal to great things—and that means having exalted notions. They would always rather do noble deeds than useful ones: their lives are regulated more by moral feeling than by reasoning; and whereas reasoning leads us to choose what is useful, moral goodness leads us to choose what is noble. They are fonder of their friends, intimates, and companions than older men are, because they like spending their days in the company of others, and have not yet come to value either their friends or anything else by their usefulness to themselves. All their mistakes are in the direction of doing things excessively and vehemently. They disobey Chilon's¹⁶⁸ precept¹⁶⁹ by overdoing everything; they love too much and hate too much, and the same with everything else. They think they know everything, and are always quite sure about it; this, in fact, is why they overdo everything. If they do wrong to others, it is because they mean to insult them, not to do them actual harm. They are ready to pity others, because they think every one an honest man, or anyhow better than he is: they judge their neighbour by their own harmless natures, and so cannot think he deserves to be treated in that way. They are fond of fun and therefore witty, wit being well-bred insolence.

XIII. Such, then, is the character of the Young. The character of Elderly Men—men who are past their prime—may be said to be formed for the most part of elements that are the contrary of all these. They have lived many years: they have often been taken in, and often made mistakes; and life on the whole is a bad business. The result is that they are sure about nothing and *under-do*

¹⁶⁶May be tentatively identified with i. 10, 11, 12. [F.S.]

¹⁶⁷The remark is unknown. [Tr.] Pittacus of Mytilene was one of the Seven Sages. Amphiaraus may be one of the Seven Against Thebes. [F.S.]

¹⁶⁸Chilon of Lacedaemon, another of the Seven Sages. [F.S.]

¹⁶⁹...“(do) nothing in excess.” “don't overdo anything.” [Tr.]

everything. They “think,” but they never “know”; and because of their hesitation they always add a “possibly” or a “perhaps,” putting everything this way and nothing positively. They are cynical;¹⁷⁰ that is, they tend to put the worse construction on everything. Further, their experience makes them distrustful and therefore suspicious of evil. Consequently they neither love warmly nor hate bitterly, but following the hint of Bias¹⁷¹ they love as though they will some day hate and hate as though they will some day love.¹⁷² They are small-minded, because they have been humbled by life: their desires are set upon nothing more exalted or unusual than what will help them to keep alive. They are not generous, because money is one of the things they must have, and at the same time their experience has taught them how hard it is to get and how easy to lose. They are cowardly, and are always anticipating danger; unlike that of the young, who are warm-blooded, their temperature is chilly; old age has paved the way for cowardice; fear is, in fact, a form of chill. They love life; and all the more when their last day has come, because the object of all desire is something we have not got, and also because we desire most strongly that which we need most urgently. They are too fond of themselves; this is one form that small-mindedness takes. Because of this, they guide their lives too much by considerations of what is useful and too little by what is noble—for the useful is what is good for oneself, and the noble what is good absolutely. They are not shy, but shameless rather; caring less for what is noble than for what is useful, they feel contempt for what people may think of them. They lack confidence in the future; partly through experience—for most things go wrong, or anyhow turn out worse than one expects; and partly because of their cowardice. They live by memory rather than by hope; for what is left to them of life is but little as compared with the long past; and hope is of the future, memory of the past. This, again, is the cause of their lo-

¹⁷⁰Taking up 1389^a17, which may be translated “they are not cynical but charitable.” [Tr.]

¹⁷¹Bias of Priene, the last of the Seven Sages. [F.S.]

¹⁷²Or, “they treat their friends as probable future enemies and their enemies as probable future friends”; cp. note on 1380^b34. [Tr.]

quacity; they are continually talking of the past, because they enjoy remembering it. Their fits of anger are sudden but feeble. Their sensual passions have either altogether gone or have lost their vigour: consequently they do not feel their passions much, and their actions are inspired less by what they do feel than by the love of gain. Hence men at this time of life are often supposed to have a self-controlled character; the fact is that their passions have slackened, and they are slaves to the love of gain. They guide their lives by reasoning more than by moral feeling; reasoning being directed to utility and moral feeling to moral goodness. If they wrong others, they mean to injure them, not to insult them. Old men may feel pity, as well as young men, but not for the same reason. Young men feel it out of kindness; old men out of weakness, imagining that anything that befalls any one else might easily happen to them, which, as we saw,¹⁷³ is a thought that excites pity. Hence they are querulous, and not disposed to jesting or laughter—the love of laughter being the very opposite of querulousness.

Such are the characters of Young Men and Elderly Men. People always think well of speeches adapted to, and reflecting, their own character: and we can now see how to compose our speeches so as to adapt both them and ourselves to our audiences. . . .

XVIII. The use of persuasive speech is to lead to decisions. (When we know a thing, and have decided about it, there is no further use in speaking about it.) This is so even if one is addressing a single person and urging him to do or not to do something, as when we scold a man for his conduct or try to change his views: the single person is as much your “judge” as if he were one of many; we may say, without qualification, that any one is your judge whom you have to persuade. Nor does it matter whether we are arguing against an actual opponent or against a mere proposition; in the latter case we still have to use speech and overthrow the opposing arguments, and we attack these as we should attack an actual opponent. Our principle holds good of ceremo-

¹⁷³ii, c. 8, 1386^a24 and 20. [Tr.]

nial speeches also; the “onlookers” for whom such a speech is put together are treated as the judges of it. Broadly speaking, however, the only sort of person who can strictly be called a judge is the man who decides the issue in some matter of public controversy; that is, in law suits and in political debates, in both of which there are issues to be decided. In the section on political oratory an account has already been given of the types of character that mark the different constitutions.¹⁷⁴

The manner and means of investing speeches with moral character may now be regarded as fully set forth.

Each of the main divisions of oratory has, we have seen,¹⁷⁵ its own distinct purpose. With regard to each division, we have noted the accepted views and propositions upon which we may base our arguments—for political,¹⁷⁶ for ceremonial,¹⁷⁷ and for forensic speaking.¹⁷⁸ We have further determined completely by what means speeches may be invested with the required moral character.¹⁷⁹ We are now to proceed to discuss the arguments common to *all* oratory. All orators, beside their special lines of argument, are bound to use, for instance, the topic of the Possible and Impossible; and to try to show that a thing has happened, or will happen in future. Again, the topic of Size is common to all oratory; all of us have to argue that things are bigger or smaller than they seem, whether we are making political speeches, speeches of eulogy or attack, or prosecuting or defending in the law-courts. Having analysed these subjects, we will try to say what we can about the general principles of arguing by “enthymeme” and “example,” by the addition of which we may hope to complete the project with which we set out. Of the above-mentioned general lines of argument, that concerned with Amplification is—as has been already said¹⁸⁰—most appropriate to ceremonial speeches; that concerned with the Past, to foren-

sic speeches, where the required decision is always about the past; that concerned with Possibility and the Future, to political speeches.

XIX. Let us first speak of the Possible and Impossible. It may plausibly be argued: That if it is possible for one of a pair of contraries to be or happen, then it is possible for the other: e.g. if a man can be cured, he can also fall ill; for any two contraries are equally possible, in so far as they are contraries. That if of two similar things one is possible, so is the other. That if the harder of two things is possible, so is the easier. That if a thing can come into existence in a good and beautiful form, then it can come into existence generally; thus a house can exist more easily than a beautiful house. That if the beginning of a thing can occur, so can the end; for nothing impossible occurs or begins to occur; thus the commensurability of the diagonal of a square with its side neither occurs nor can begin to occur. That if the end is possible, so is the beginning; for all things that occur have a beginning. That if that which is posterior in essence or in order of generation can come into being, so can that which is prior: thus if a man can come into being, so can a boy, since the boy comes first in order of generation; and if a boy can, so can a man, for the man also is first.¹⁸¹ That those things are possible of which the love or desire is natural; for no one, as a rule, loves or desires impossibilities. That things which are the object of any kind of science or art are possible and exist or come into existence. That anything is possible the first step in whose production depends on men or things which we can compel or persuade to produce it, by our greater strength, our control of them, or our friendship with them. That where the parts are possible, the whole is possible; and where the whole is possible, the parts are usually possible. For if the slit in front, the toepiece, and the upper leather can be made, then shoes can be made; and if shoes, then also the front slit and toepiece. That if a whole genus is a thing that can occur, so can the species; and if the species can occur, so can the genus: thus, if a sailing vessel can be made, so also can a trireme; and if a trireme, then a sail-

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¹⁷⁴i, c. 8. [Tr.]

¹⁷⁵i, c. 3. [Tr.]

¹⁷⁶i, cc. 4–8. [Tr.]

¹⁷⁷i, c. 9. [Tr.]

¹⁷⁸i, cc. 10–14. [Tr.]

¹⁷⁹ii, cc. 1–18. [F.S.]

¹⁸⁰i, c. 9. [Tr.] 1368^a10 ff. [F.S.]

¹⁸¹Viz. in essence. . . . [Tr.]

ing vessel also. That if one of two things whose existence depends on each other is possible, so is the other; for instance, if “double,” then “half,” and if “half,” then “double.” That if a thing can be produced without art or preparation, it can be produced still more certainly by the careful application of art to it. Hence Agathon has said:

To some things we by art must needs attain,
Others by destiny or luck we gain.¹⁸²

That if anything is possible to inferior, weaker, and stupider people, it is more so for their opposites; thus Isocrates said that it would be a strange thing if he could not discover a thing that Euthynus had found out.¹⁸³ As for Impossibility, we can clearly get what we want by taking the contraries of the arguments stated above.

Questions of Past Fact may be looked at in the following ways: First, that if the less likely of two things has occurred, the more likely must have occurred also. That if one thing that usually follows another has happened, then that other thing has happened; that, for instance, if a man has forgotten a thing, he has also once learnt it. That if a man had the power and the wish to do a thing, he has done it; for every one does whatever he intends to do whenever he can do it, there being nothing to stop him. That, further, he has done the thing in question either if he intended it and nothing external prevented him; or if he had the power to do it and was angry at the time; or if he had the power to do it and his heart was set upon it—for people as a rule do what they long to do, if they can; bad people through lack of self-control; good people, because their hearts are set upon good things. Again, that if a thing was “going to happen,” it has happened; if a man was “going to do something,” he has done it, for it is likely that the intention was carried out. That if one thing has happened which naturally happens before another or with a view to it, the other has happened; for instance, if it has lightened, it has also thundered; and if an action has been attempted, it has been done. That if one thing has happened which naturally happens after another, or with a view to which that other

happens, then that other (that which happens first, or happens with a view to this thing) has also happened; thus, if it has thundered it has also lightened, and if an action has been done it has been attempted. Of all these sequences some are inevitable and some merely usual. The arguments for the *non*-occurrence of anything can obviously be founded by considering the opposites of those that have been mentioned.

How questions of Future Fact should be argued is clear from the same considerations. That a thing will be done if there is both the power and the wish to do it; or if along with the power to do it there is a craving for the result, or anger, or calculation, prompting it. That the thing will be done, in these cases, if the man is actually setting about it, or even if he means to do it later—for usually what we mean to do happens rather than what we do not mean to do. That a thing will happen if another thing which naturally happens before it has already happened; thus, if it is clouding over, it is likely to rain. That if the means to an end have occurred, then the end is likely to occur; thus, if there is a foundation, there will be a house.

For arguments about the Greatness and Smallness of things, the greater and the lesser, and generally great things and small, what we have already said will show the line to take. In discussing deliberative oratory we have spoken about the relative greatness of various goods, and about the greater and lesser in general.¹⁸⁴ Since therefore in each type of oratory the object under discussion is some kind of good—whether it is utility, nobleness, or justice—it is clear that every orator must obtain the materials of amplification through these channels. To go further than this, and try to establish abstract laws of greatness and superiority, is to argue without an object; in practical life particular facts count more than generalizations.

Enough has now been said about these questions of possibility and the reverse, of past or future fact, and of the relative greatness or smallness of things.

XX. The special forms of oratorical argument having now been discussed, we have next to treat

¹⁸²Fragm. of Agathon, the tragedian. [F.S.]

¹⁸³Cp. Isocr. xviii. 15. [Tr.]

¹⁸⁴i, c. 7. [Tr.]

of those which are common to all kinds of oratory. These are of two main kinds, "Example" and "Enthymeme"; for the "Maxim" is part of an enthymeme.¹⁸⁵

We will first treat of argument by Example, for it has the nature of induction, which is the foundation of reasoning. This form of argument has two varieties; one consisting in the mention of actual past facts, the other in the invention of facts by the speaker. Of the latter, again, there are two varieties, the illustrative parallel and the fable (e.g. the fables of Aesop, or those from Libya). As an instance of the mention of actual facts, take the following. The speaker may argue thus: "We must prepare for war against the king of Persia and not let him subdue Egypt. For Darius of old did not cross the Aegean until he had seized Egypt; but once he had seized it, he did cross. And Xerxes, again, did not attack us until he had seized Egypt; but once he had seized it, he did cross. If therefore the present king seizes Egypt, he also will cross, and therefore we must not let him."¹³⁹³

The illustrative parallel is the sort of argument Socrates used: e.g. "Public officials ought not to be selected by lot. That is like using the lot to select athletes, instead of choosing those who are fit for the contest; or using the lot to select a steersman from among a ship's crew, as if we ought to take the man on whom the lot falls, and not the man who knows most about it."

Instances of the fable are that of Stesichorus¹⁸⁶ about Phalaris,¹⁸⁷ and that of Aesop in defence of the popular leader. When the people of Himera had made Phalaris military dictator, and were going to give him a bodyguard, Stesichorus wound up a long talk by telling them the fable of the horse who had a field all to himself. Presently there came a stag and began to spoil his pasturage. The horse, wishing to revenge himself on the stag, asked a man if he could help him to do so. The man said, "Yes, if you will let me bridle you and get on to your back with javelins in my

hand." The horse agreed, and the man mounted; but instead of getting his revenge on the stag, the horse found himself the slave of the man. "You too," said Stesichorus, "take care lest, in your desire for revenge on your enemies, you meet the same fate as the horse. By making Phalaris military dictator, you have already let yourselves be bridled. If you let him get on to your backs by giving him a bodyguard, from that moment you will be his slaves."

Aesop, defending before the assembly at Samos a popular leader who was being tried for his life, told this story: A fox, in crossing a river, was swept into a hole in the rocks; and, not being able to get out, suffered miseries for a long time through the swarms of fleas that fastened on her. A hedgehog, while roaming around, noticed the fox; and feeling sorry for her asked if he might remove the fleas. But the fox declined the offer; and when the hedgehog asked why, she replied, "These fleas are by this time full of me and not sucking much blood; if you take them way, others will come with fresh appetites and drink up all the blood I have left." "So, men of Samos," said Aesop, "my client will do you no further harm; he is wealthy already. But if you put him to death, others will come along who are not rich, and their peculations will empty your treasury completely."¹³⁹⁴

Fables are suitable for addresses to popular assemblies; and they have one advantage—they are comparatively easy to invent, whereas it is hard to find parallels among actual past events. You will in fact frame them just as you frame illustrative parallels: all you require is the power of thinking out your analogy, a power developed by intellectual training. But while it is easier to supply parallels by inventing fables, it is more valuable for the political speaker to supply them by quoting what has actually happened, since in most respects the future will be like what the past has been.

Where we are unable to argue by Enthymeme, we must try to demonstrate our point by this method of Example, and to convince our hearers thereby. If we *can* argue by Enthymeme, we should use our Examples as subsequent supplementary evidence. They should not precede the

¹⁸⁵I.e. not (as some think) a third main kind. Cp. 1394^a27-9. [Tr.]

¹⁸⁶An early poet of choral lyrics, circ. 640-555 B.C. [F.S.]

¹⁸⁷6th cent. tyrant of Acragas, famous for his cruelty. [F.S.]

Enthymemes: that will give the argument an inductive air, which only rarely suits the conditions of speech-making.¹⁸⁸ If they follow the enthymemes, they have the effect of witnesses giving evidence, and this always tells. For the same reason, if you put your examples first you must give a large number of them; if you put them last, a single one is sufficient; even a single witness will serve if he is a good one. It has now been stated how many varieties of argument by Example there are, and how and when they are to be employed.

XXI. We now turn to the use of Maxims, in order to see upon what subjects and occasions, and for what kind of speaker, they will appropriately form part of a speech. This will appear most clearly when we have defined a maxim. It is a statement; not about a particular fact, such as the character of Iphicrates,¹⁸⁹ but of a general kind; nor is it about any and every subject—e.g. “straight is the contrary of curved” is not a maxim—but only about questions of practical conduct, courses of conduct to be chosen or avoided. Now an Enthymeme is a syllogism dealing with such practical subjects. It is therefore roughly true that the premisses or conclusions of Enthymemes, considered apart from the rest of the argument, are Maxims: e.g.

Never should any man whose wits are sound
Have his sons taught more wisdom than their fellows.¹⁹⁰

Here we have a Maxim; add the reason or explanation, and the whole thing is an Enthymeme; thus—

It makes them idle; and therewith they earn
Ill-will and jealousy throughout the city.¹⁹¹

394^b Again,

There is no man in all things prosperous,¹⁹²

¹⁸⁸Perhaps, “which does not suit skilled orators except before a small audience.” [Tr.]

¹⁸⁹Cp. 1365^a28. [F.S.]

¹⁹⁰Euripides, *Medea*, 295. [Tr.]

¹⁹¹Ib. 297. [Tr.]

¹⁹²Euripides, fragm. 661, N.² [Tr.]

and

There is no man among us all is free,
are maxims; but the latter, taken with what follows it, is an Enthymeme—

For all are slaves of money or of chance.¹⁹³

From this definition of a maxim it follows that there are four kinds of maxims. In the first place, the maxim may or may not have a supplement. Proof is needed where the statement is paradoxical¹⁹⁴ or disputable; no supplement is wanted where the statement contains nothing paradoxical,¹⁹⁴ either because the view expressed is already a known truth, e.g.

Chiefest of blessings is health for a man, as it seemeth to me,¹⁹⁵

this being the general opinion: or because, as soon as the view is stated, it is clear at a glance, e.g.

No love is true save that which loves for ever.¹⁹⁶

Of the Maxims that do have a supplement attached, some are part of an Enthymeme, e.g.

Never should any man whose wits are sound,
&c.¹⁹⁷

Others have the essential character of Enthymemes, but are not stated as parts of Enthymemes; these latter are reckoned the best; they are those in which the reason for the view expressed is simply implied, e.g.

O mortal man, nurse not immortal wrath.¹⁹⁸

To say “it is not right to nurse immortal wrath” is a maxim; the added words “O mortal man” give the reason. Similarly, with the words

Mortal creatures ought to cherish mortal, not immortal thoughts.¹⁹⁹

What has been said has shown us how many kinds of Maxim there are, and to what subjects

¹⁹³Euripides, *Hecuba*, 864 f. [Tr.]

¹⁹⁴Surprising, startling, heretical, unorthodox. [Tr.]

¹⁹⁵Possibly a fragment of Epicharmus. . . . [Tr.]

¹⁹⁶Euripides, *Troades*, 1051. [Tr.]

¹⁹⁷Euripides, *Medea*, 295. [Tr.]

¹⁹⁸From an unidentified tragedy. [F.S.]

¹⁹⁹Epicharmus?

the various kinds are appropriate. They must not be given without supplement if they express disputed or paradoxical views: we must, in that case, either put the supplement first and make a maxim of the conclusion, e.g., you might say, "For my part, since both unpopularity and idleness, are undesirable, I hold that it is better not to be educated"; or you may say this first, and then add the previous clause. Where a statement, without being paradoxical, is not obviously true, the reason should be added as concisely as possible. In such cases both laconic and enigmatic sayings

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are suitable: thus one might say what Stesichorus said to the Locrians, "Insolence is better avoided, lest the cicalas chirp on the ground."²⁰⁰

The use of Maxims is appropriate only to elderly men, and in handling subjects in which the speaker is experienced. For a young man to use them is—like telling stories—unbecoming; to use them in handling things in which one has no experience is silly and ill-bred: a fact sufficiently proved by the special fondness of country fellows for striking out maxims, and their readiness to air them.

To declare a thing to be universally true when it is not is most appropriate when working up feelings of horror and indignation in our hearers; especially by way of preface, or after the facts have been proved. Even hackneyed and commonplace maxims are to be used, if they suit one's purpose: just because they are commonplace, every one seems to agree with them, and therefore they are taken for truth. Thus, any one who is calling on his men to risk an engagement without obtaining favourable omens may quote

One omen of all is best, that we fight for our fatherland.²⁰¹

Or, if he is calling on them to attack a stronger force—

The War-God showeth no favour.²⁰²

Or, if he is urging people to destroy the innocent children of their enemies—

²⁰⁰Cp. 1393^b9. [F.S.] . . . The cicalas would have to chirp on the ground if an enemy cut down the trees. [Tr.]

²⁰¹*Iliad*, xii. 243. [Tr.]

²⁰²*Ib.* xviii. 309. [Tr.]

Fool, who slayeth the father and leaveth his sons to avenge him.²⁰³

Some proverbs are also maxims, e.g., the proverb "An Attic neighbour."²⁰⁴ You are not to avoid uttering maxims that contradict such sayings as have become public property (I mean such sayings as "know thyself" and "nothing in excess"), if doing so will raise your hearers' opinion of your character, or convey an effect of strong emotion—e.g., an angry speaker might well say, "It is not true that we ought to know ourselves: anyhow, if this man had known himself, he would never have thought himself fit for an army command." It will raise people's opinion of our character to say, for instance, "We ought not to follow the saying that bids us treat our friends as future enemies: much better to treat our enemies as future friends."²⁰⁵ The moral purpose should be implied partly by the very wording of our maxim. Failing this, we should add our reason: e.g. having said "We should treat our friends, not as the saying advises, but as if they were going to be our friends always," we should add "for the other behaviour is that of a traitor: or we might put it, "I disapprove of that saying. A true friend will treat his friend as if he were going to be his friend for ever"; and again, "Nor do I approve of the saying 'nothing in excess': we are bound to hate bad men excessively."

One great advantage of Maxims to a speaker is due to the want of intelligence in his hearers, who love to hear him succeed in expressing as a universal truth the opinions which they hold themselves about particular cases. I will explain what I mean by this, indicating at the same time how we are to hunt down the maxims required. The maxim, as has been already said, is a general statement, and people love to hear stated in general terms what they already believe in some particular connexion: e.g. if a man happens to have bad neighbours or bad children, he will agree with any one who tells him "Nothing is more annoying than having neighbours," or, "Nothing is more foolish than to be the parent of children." The orator has therefore to guess the subjects on

²⁰³Cp. i, c. 15, 1376^a7. [Tr.]

²⁰⁴"An Attic neighbour" is a restless neighbor. [F.S.]

²⁰⁵Cp. ii, c. 13, 1389^b23-5. [Tr.]

which his hearers really hold views already, and what those views are, and then must express, as general truths, these same views on these same subjects. This is one advantage of using maxims. There is another which is more important—it invests a speech with moral character. There is moral character in every speech in which the moral purpose is conspicuous: and maxims always produce this effect, because the utterance of them amounts to a general declaration of moral principles: so that, if the maxims are sound, they display the speaker as a man of sound moral character. So much for the Maxim—its nature, varieties, proper use, and advantages.

XXII. We now come to the Enthymemes, and will begin the subject with some general consideration of the proper way of looking for them, and then proceed to what is a distinct question, the lines of argument to be embodied in them. It has already²⁰⁶ been pointed out that the Enthymeme is a syllogism, and in what sense it is so. We have also noted the differences between it and the syllogism of dialectic. Thus we must not carry its reasoning too far back, or the length of our argument will cause obscurity: nor must we put in all the steps that lead to our conclusion, or we shall waste words in saying what is manifest. It is this simplicity that makes the uneducated more effective than the educated when addressing popular audiences—makes them, as the poets²⁰⁷ tell us, “charm the crowd’s ears more finely.” Educated men lay down broad general principles; uneducated men argue from common knowledge and draw obvious conclusions. We must not, therefore, start from any and every accepted opinion, but only from those we have defined—those accepted by our judges or by those whose authority they recognize: and there must, moreover, be no doubt in the minds of most, if not all, of our judges that the opinions put forward really are of this sort. We should also base our arguments upon probabilities as well as upon certainties.

The first thing we have to remember is this. Whether our argument concerns public affairs or

some other subject, we must know some, if not all, of the facts about the subject on which we are to speak and argue. Otherwise we can have no materials out of which to construct arguments. I mean, for instance, how could we advise the Athenians whether they should go to war or not, if we did not know their strength, whether it was naval or military or both, and how great it is; what their revenues amount to; who their friends and enemies are; what wars, too, they have waged, and with what success; and so on? Or how could we eulogize them if we knew nothing about the sea-fight at Salamis, or the battle of Marathon, or what they did for the Heracleidae,²⁰⁸ or any other facts like that? All eulogy is based upon the noble deeds—real or imaginary—that stand to the credit of those eulogized. On the same principle, invectives are based on facts of the opposite kind: the orator looks to see what base deeds—real or imaginary—stand to the discredit of those he is attacking, such as treachery to the cause of Hellenic freedom, or the enslavement of their gallant allies against the barbarians (Aegina,²⁰⁹ Potidaea,²¹⁰ &c.), or any other misdeeds of this kind that are recorded against them. So, too, in a court of law: whether we are prosecuting or defending, we must pay attention to the existing facts of the case. It makes no difference whether the subject is the Lacedaemonians or the Athenians, a man or a god; we must do the same thing. Suppose it to be Achilles whom we are to advise, to praise or blame, to accuse or defend; here too we must take the facts, real or imaginary; these must be our material, whether we are to praise or blame him for the noble or base deeds he has done, to accuse or defend him for his just or unjust treatment of others, or to advise him about what is or is not to his interest. The same thing applies to any subject whatever. Thus, in handling the question whether justice is or is not a good, we must start with the real facts about justice and goodness. We see, then, that this is the only way in which any one

²⁰⁸These are some of the historical and mythical merits claimed by the Athenians mentioned in all praises of their city and their ancestors. [F.S.]

²⁰⁹Cp. Thucyd. ii. 27; iv. 57. [Tr.]

²¹⁰Cp. Thucyd. ii. 70. [Tr.]

²⁰⁶i, c. 2, 1356^b3, 1357^a16. [Tr.]

²⁰⁷Cp. Euripides, *Hippolytus*, 989. [Tr.]

1396^b ever proves anything, whether his arguments are strictly cogent or not: not all facts can form his basis, but only those that bear on the matter in hand: nor, plainly, can proof be effected otherwise by means of the speech. Consequently, as appears in the *Topics*,²¹¹ we must first of all have by us a selection of arguments about questions that may arise and are suitable for us to handle; and then we must try to think out arguments of the same type for special needs as they emerge; not vaguely and indefinitely, but by keeping our eyes on the actual facts of the subject we have to speak on, and gathering in as many of them as we can that bear closely upon it: for the more actual facts we have at our command, the more easily we prove our case; and the more closely they bear on the subject, the more they will seem to belong to that speech only instead of being commonplaces. By “commonplaces” I mean, for example, eulogy of Achilles because he is a human being or a demigod, or because he joined the expedition against Troy: these things are true of many others, so that this kind of eulogy applies no better to Achilles than to Diomedes. The special facts here needed are those that are true of Achilles alone; such facts as that he slew Hector, the bravest of the Trojans, and Cycnus the invulnerable, who prevented all the Greeks from landing, and again that he was the youngest man who joined the expedition, and was not bound by oath to join it, and so on.

Here, then, we have our first principle of selection of Enthymemes — that which refers to the lines of argument selected. We will now consider the various elementary classes of enthymemes. (By an “elementary class” of enthymeme I mean the same thing as a “line of argument.”) We will begin, as we must begin, by observing that there are two kinds of enthymemes. One kind proves some affirmative or negative proposition; the other kind disproves one. The difference between the two kinds is the same as that between syllogistic proof and disproof in dialectic. The demonstrative enthymeme is formed by the conjunction of compatible propositions; the refutative, by the conjunction of incompatible propositions.

We may now be said to have in our hands the lines of argument for the various *special* subjects

²¹¹Cp. *Top.* i, c. 14. [Tr.]

that it is useful or necessary to handle, having selected the propositions suitable in various cases. We have, in fact, already ascertained the lines of argument applicable to enthymemes about good and evil, the noble and the base, justice and injustice, and also to those about types of character, emotions, and moral qualities.²¹² Let us now lay hold of certain facts about the whole subject, 1399 considered from a different and more general point of view. In the course of our discussion we will take note of the distinction between lines of proof and lines of disproof:²¹³ and also of those lines of argument used in what seem to be enthymemes, but are not, since they do not represent valid syllogisms.²¹⁴ Having made all this clear, we will proceed to classify Objections and Refutations, showing how they can be brought to bear upon enthymemes.²¹⁵

XXIII. I. One line of positive proof is based upon consideration of the opposite of the thing in question. Observe whether that opposite has the opposite quality. If it has not, you refute the original proposition; if it has, you establish it. E.g., “Temperance is beneficial; for licentiousness is hurtful.” Or, as in the Messenian speech,²¹⁶ “If war is the cause of our present troubles, peace is what we need to put things right again.” Or —

For if not even evil-doers should
Anger us if they meant not what they did,
Then can we owe no gratitude to such
As were constrained to do the good they did us.²¹⁷

Or —

Since in this world liars may win belief,
Be sure of the opposite likewise — that this world
Hears many a true word and believes it not.²¹⁸

2. Another line of proof is got by considering some modification of the key-word, and arguing that what can or cannot be said of the one, can or cannot be said of the other: e.g. “just” does not

²¹²i, cc. 4–14; ii, cc. 1–18. [Tr.]

²¹³ii, c. 23. [Tr.]

²¹⁴ii, c. 24. [Tr.]

²¹⁵ii, c. 25. [Tr.]

²¹⁶Cp. 1373^b18. [Tr.] A speech attributed to Alcidas, a fifth century sophist and orator. [F.S.]

²¹⁷From an unidentified tragedy. [F.S.]

²¹⁸Fragm. of Euripides, *Thyestes*. [Tr.]

always mean “beneficial,” or “justly” would always mean “beneficially,” whereas it is *not* desirable to be justly put to death.²¹⁹

3. Another line of proof is based upon correlative ideas. If it is true that one man *gave* noble or just treatment to another, you argue that the other must have *received* noble or just treatment; or that where it is right to command obedience, it must have been right to obey the command. Thus Diomedon, the tax-farmer, said of the taxes: “If it is no disgrace for you to sell them,²²⁰ it is no disgrace for us to buy them.” Further, if “well” or “justly” is true of the person to whom a thing is done, you argue that it is true of the doer. But it is possible to draw a false conclusion here. It may be just that A should be treated in a certain way, and yet *not* just that he should be so treated by B. Hence you must ask yourself two distinct questions: (1) Is it right that A should be thus treated? (2) Is it right that B should thus treat him? and apply your results properly, according as your answers are Yes or No. Sometimes in such a case the two answers differ: you may quite easily have a position like that in the *Alcmaeon* of Theodectes:

And was there none to loathe thy mother’s crime?²²¹ to which question Alcmaeon in reply says,

Why, there are two things to examine here.

And when Alpheisiboea asks what he means, he rejoins:

They judged *her* fit to die, not *me* to slay her.

Again there is the lawsuit about Demosthenes²²² and the men who killed Nicanor; as they were judged to have killed him justly, it was thought that he was killed justly. And in the case of the man who was killed at Thebes,²²³ the judges were requested to decide whether it was unjust that he should be killed, since if it was not, it was argued that it could not have been unjust to kill him.

²¹⁹Cp. i, c. 9, 1366^b33. [Tr.]

²²⁰I.e. the right of collecting them. [Tr.]

²²¹I.e. was there nobody who thought the slaying a just act? [Tr.] Fragm. of the *Alcmaeon* of Theodectes. The tragedian and orator was a personal friend of Aristotle. [F.S.]

²²²Probably not the famous orator. Nicanor is unknown. [F.S.]

²²³Xenophon, *Hellen*. viii. 3. [F.S.]

4. Another line of proof is the *a fortiori*. Thus it may be argued that if even the gods are not omniscient, certainly human beings are not. The principle here is that, if a quality does not in fact exist where it is *more* likely to exist, it clearly does not exist where it is *less* likely. Again, the argument that a man who strikes his father also strikes his neighbours follows from the principle that, if the less likely thing is true, the more likely thing is true also; for a man is less likely to strike his father than to strike his neighbours. The argument, then, may run thus. Or it may be urged that, if a thing is not true where it is more likely, it is not true where it is less likely; or that, if it is true where it is less likely, it is true where it is more likely: according as we have to show that a thing *is* or is *not* true.²²⁴ This argument might also be used in a case of parity, as in the lines:

Thou hast pity for *thy* sire, who has lost his sons:

Hast none for Oeneus, whose brave son is dead?²²⁵

And, again, “if Theseus did no wrong, neither did Paris”; or “if the sons of Tyndareus did no wrong, neither did Paris”; or “if Hector did well to slay Patroclus, Paris did well to slay Achilles.”²²⁶ And “if other followers of an art are not bad men, neither are philosophers.” And “if generals are not bad men because it often happens that they are condemned to death, neither are sophists.” And the remark that “if each individual among you ought to think of his own city’s reputation, you ought all to think of the reputation of Greece as a whole.”

5. Another line of argument is based on considerations of time. Thus Iphicrates, in the case against Harmodius, said, “if before doing the deed I had bargained that, if I did it, I should have a statue, you would have given me one. Will you not give me one now that I *have* done the deed? You must not make promises when you are expecting a thing to be done for you, and

²²⁴The reasoning in the text shows confusion, and the text is uncertain. We might rather have expected the following connexion of thought: “The argument, then, may run thus—that if the less likely is true the more likely is true; or as before—that if the more likely is not true, the less likely is not true: according as we have to show, &c.” [Tr.]

²²⁵Fragm. probably from a play about Meleager. [F.S.]

²²⁶From a speech of the rhetorician Polycrates. [F.S.]

refuse to fulfill them when the thing has been done.”²²⁷ And, again, to induce the Thebans to let Philip pass through their territory into Attica, it was argued²²⁸ that “if he had insisted on this before he helped them against the Phocians, they would have promised to do it. It is monstrous, therefore, that just because he threw away his advantage then, and trusted their honour, they should not let him pass through now.”

6. Another line is to apply to the other speaker what he has said against yourself. It is an excellent turn to give to a debate, as may be seen in the *Teucer*.²²⁹ It was employed by Iphicrates in his reply to Aristophon. “Would you,” he asked, “take a bribe to betray the fleet?” “No,” said Aristophon; and Iphicrates replied, “Very good: if you, who are Aristophon, would not betray the fleet, would I, who am Iphicrates?”²³⁰ Only, it must be recognized beforehand that the other man is more likely than you are to commit the crime in question. Otherwise you will make yourself ridiculous; if it is Aristeides²³¹ who is prosecuting, you cannot say that sort of thing to him. The purpose is to discredit the prosecutor, who as a rule would have it appear that his character is better than that of the defendant, a pretension which it is desirable to upset. But the use of such an argument is in all cases ridiculous if you are attacking others for what you do or would do yourself, or are urging others to do what you neither do nor would do yourself.

7. Another line of proof is secured by defining your terms. Thus, “What is the supernatural? Surely it is either a god or the work of a god. Well, any one who believes that the work of a god exists, cannot help also believing that gods

exist.”²³² Or take the argument of Iphicrates, “Goodness is true nobility; neither Harmodius nor Aristogeiton had any nobility before they did a noble deed.” He also argued that he himself was more akin to Harmodius and Aristogeiton than his opponent was. “At any rate, my deeds are more akin to those of Harmodius and Aristogeiton than yours are.”²³³ Another example may be found in the *Alexander*.²³⁴ “Every one will agree that by incontinent people we mean those who are not satisfied with the enjoyment of one love.” A further example is to be found in the reason given by Socrates for not going to the court of Archelaus. He said that “one is *insulted* by being unable to requite benefits, as well as by being unable to requite injuries.”²³⁵ All the persons mentioned define their term and get at its essential meaning, and then use the result when reasoning on the point at issue.

8. Another line of argument is founded upon the various senses of a word. Such a word is “rightly,” as has been explained in the *Topics*.²³⁶

9. Another line is based upon logical division. Thus, “All men do wrong from one of three motives, *A*, *B*, or *C*: in my case *A* and *B* are out of the question, and even the accusers do not allege *C*.”

10. Another line is based upon induction. Thus from the case of the woman of Peparethus it might be argued that women everywhere can settle correctly the facts about their children. Another example of this occurred at Athens in the case between the orator Mantias²³⁷ and his son, when the boy’s mother revealed the true facts: and yet another at Thebes, in the case between Ismenias and Stilbon, when Dodonis proved that it

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²²⁷Iphicrates, the general, was granted a statue for his defeat of the Lacedaemonians in 392 B.C. He claimed his statue only after his retirement in 371 B.C. Harmodius, a political opponent, opposed the honor. [F.S.]

²²⁸In 339 B.C. Philip of Macedonia sent an embassy to the Thebans requesting passage through their territory into Attica. An Athenian counter-embassy persuaded the Thebans to refuse the request. The words here quoted are words of the Macedonian ambassadors, not of Philip. [F.S.]

²²⁹Of Sophocles; cp. iii, c. 15, 1416^b1. [Tr.]

²³⁰Aristophon, a celebrated orator of the century, prosecuted Iphicrates in 355 B.C. for a failure in a recent war. [F.S.]

²³¹An Athenian political leader of the 5th cent., famous for his justice and integrity. [F.S.]

²³²Cp. Plato, *Apol.* 27 c–e. [Tr.]

²³³Another example taken from Iphicrates’ speech against Harmodius (cp. 1397^b28 ff.) who claimed descent from Harmodius, the tyrannicide. The argument seems to have been: personal merit, not family relationship, conveys true nobility. On account of my merit I am closer to the tyrannicides than you, their descendant. [F.S.]

²³⁴From some rhetorical essay on Alexander (viz. Paris), possibly by Polycrates. [Cp. 1393^b23.] . . . [Tr.]

²³⁵Cp. Xenophon, *Apol. Socr.* 17; Diog. Laert., *Vit. Socr.* ii, 5, 25. [Tr.]

²³⁶. . . [Or.] “in the *Topics* the right use of words has been discussed.” Cp. *Topics*, i, c. 15 and ii, c. 3. [Tr.]

²³⁷Possibly the person mentioned in Demosth. *Or.* xviii, 7, 10. [F.S.]

was Ismenias who was the father of her son Thetalscus, and he was in consequence always regarded as being so.²³⁸ A further instance of induction may be taken from the *Law of Theodectes*:²³⁹ “If we do not hand over our horses to the care of men who have mishandled other people’s horses, nor ships to those who have wrecked other people’s ships, and if this is true of everything else alike, then men who have failed to secure other people’s safety are not to be employed to secure our own.” Another instance is the argument of Alcidas.²⁴⁰ “Every one honours the wise. Thus the Parians have honoured Archilochus, in spite of his bitter tongue; the Chians Homer, though he was not their countryman; the Mytilenaeans Sappho, though she was a woman; the Lacedaemonians actually made Chilon a member of their senate, though they are the least literary of men; the Italian Greeks honoured Pythagoras; the inhabitants of Lampsacus gave public burial to Anaxagoras, though he was an alien, and honour him even to this day. (It may be argued that peoples for whom philosophers legislate are always prosperous) on the ground that the Athenians became prosperous under Solon’s laws and the Lacedaemonians under those of Lycurgus, while at Thebes no sooner did the leading men become philosophers than the country began to prosper.

II. Another line of argument is founded upon some decision already pronounced, whether on the same subject or on one like it or contrary to it. Such a proof is most effective if every one has always decided thus; but if not every one, then at any rate most people; or if all, or most, wise or good men have thus decided, or the actual judges of the present question, or those whose authority they accept, or any one whose decision they cannot gainsay because he has complete control over them, or those whom it is not seemly to gainsay, as the gods, or one’s father, or one’s teachers. Thus Autocles²⁴¹ said, when attacking Mixidemides, that it was a strange thing that the Dread

²³⁸Nothing known of the case and the people. [F.S.]

²³⁹The tragedian, rhetor, and friend of Aristotle. [F.S.]

²⁴⁰The sophist and orator. [F.S.]

²⁴¹Autocles, an Athenian political figure and versatile orator, contemporary of Aristotle. Of the case and Mixidemides nothing is known. The reference is to the Erinyes as seen in

Goddesses could without loss of dignity submit to the judgement of the Areopagus, and yet Mixidemides could not. Or as Sappho said, “Death is an evil thing; the gods have so judged it, or they would die.”²⁴² Or again as Aristippus²⁴³ said in reply to Plato when he spoke somewhat too dogmatically, as Aristippus thought: “Well, anyhow, our *friend*,” meaning Socrates, “never spoke like that.” And Hegesippus, having previously consulted Zeus at Olympia, asked Apollo at Delphi “whether his opinion was the same as his father’s,” implying that it would be shameful for him to contradict his father. Thus too Isocrates argued that Helen must have been a good woman, because Theseus decided that she was; and Paris a good man, because the goddesses chose him before all others; and Evagoras also, says Isocrates, was good, since when Conon met with his misfortune he betook himself to Evagoras without trying any one else on the way.²⁴⁴

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12. Another line of argument consists in taking separately the parts of a subject. Such is that given in the *Topics*:²⁴⁵ “What *sort* of motion is the soul? for it must be this or that.” The *Socrates* of Theodectes provides an example: “What temple has he profaned? What gods recognized by the state has he not honoured?”²⁴⁶

13. Since it happens that any given thing usually has both good and bad consequences, another line of argument consists in using those consequences as a reason for urging that a thing should or should not be done, for prosecuting or defending any one, for eulogy or censure. E.g. education leads both to unpopularity, which is bad, and to wisdom, which is good. Hence, you either argue, “It is therefore not well to be educated, since it is not well to be unpopular”: or you answer, “No, it is well to be educated, since it is well to be wise.” The *Art of Rhetoric* of

Aeschylus’ play “*The Eumenides*” where they submit to the judgement of Areopagus. [F.S.]

²⁴²Fragm. of Sappho. [F.S.]

²⁴³Aristippus of Cyrene, pupil of Socrates, founder of the Cyrenaic school of philosophy and as such a rival of Plato. [F.S.]

²⁴⁴Isocrates, *Helen*, 18–38; *Ibid.*, 41–8 . . . ; Isocrates, *Evagoras*, 51 ff. [Tr.]

²⁴⁵Cp. *Top* ii. 4; iv. 1. [Tr.]

²⁴⁶Fragm. of *Defense of Socrates* by Theodectes. [F.S.]

Callippus²⁴⁷ is made up of this line of argument, with the addition of those of Possibility and the others of that kind already described.²⁴⁸

14. Another line of argument is used when we have to urge or discourage a course of action that may be done in either of two opposite ways, and have to apply the method just mentioned to both. The difference between this one and the last is that, whereas in the last any two things are contrasted, here the things contrasted are opposites. For instance, the priestess enjoined upon her son not to take to public speaking: "For," she said, "if you say what is right, men will hate you; if you say what is wrong, the gods will hate you." The reply might be, "On the contrary, you *ought* to take to public speaking: for if you say what is right, the gods will love you; if you say what is wrong, men will love you." This amounts to the proverbial "buying the marsh with the salt." It is just this situation, viz. when each of two opposites has both a good and a bad consequence opposite respectively to each other, that has been termed *divarication*.

15. Another line of argument is this: The things people approve of openly are not those which they approve of secretly: openly, their chief praise is given to justice and nobleness; but in their hearts they prefer their own advantage. Try, in face of this, to establish the point of view which your opponent has not adopted. This is the most effective of the forms of argument that contradict common opinion.

16. Another line is that of rational correspondence. E.g. Iphicrates, when they were trying to compel his son, a youth under the prescribed age, to perform one of the state duties because he was tall, said "If you count tall boys men, you will next
1399^b be voting short men boys."²⁴⁹ And Theodectes in his *Law*²⁵⁰ said, "You make citizens of such mercenaries²⁵¹ as Strabax and Charidemus, as a re-

ward of their merits; will you not make exiles of such citizens as those who have done irreparable harm among the mercenaries?"

17. Another line is the argument that if two results are the same their antecedents are also the same. For instance, it was a saying of Xenophanes that to assert that the gods had birth is as impious as to say that they die; the consequence of both statements is that there is a time when the gods do not exist.²⁵² This line of proof assumes generally that the result of any given thing is always the same: e.g. "you are going to decide not about Isocrates, but about the value of the whole profession of philosophy."²⁵³ Or, "to give earth and water" means slavery; or, "to share in the Common Peace" means obeying orders. We are to make either such assumptions or their opposite, as suits us best.

18. Another line of argument is based on the fact that men do not always make the same choice on a later as on an earlier occasion, but reverse their previous choice. E.g. the following enthymeme: "When we were exiles, we fought in order to return; now we have returned, it would be strange to choose exile in order not to have to fight."²⁵⁴ On one occasion, that is, they chose to be true to their homes at the cost of fighting, and on the other to avoid fighting at the cost of deserting their homes.

19. Another line of argument is the assertion that some *possible* motive for an event or state of things is the *real* one: e.g. that a gift was given in order to cause pain by its withdrawal. This notion underlies the lines:

God gives to many great prosperity,
Not of good will towards them, but to make
The ruin of them more conspicuous.²⁵⁵

Or take the passage from the *Meleager* of Antiphon:

was rewarded by being made a citizen. Strabax is less well known but also was made an Athenian citizen. [F.S.]

²⁵²Fragm. of Xenophanes the Eleatic philosopher. Cp. 1377^a20. [F.S.]

²⁵³The manuscripts read "Socrates" but the passage has been identified in the *Antidosis* speech (173) of Isocrates. [F.S.]

²⁵⁴From a speech of Lysias. [F.S.]

²⁵⁵From an unidentified tragedy. [F.S.]

²⁴⁷Calippus is quoted again in 1400^a4. Nothing is known of him or his work. He may have been an early pupil of Isocrates. [F.S.]

²⁴⁸ii, c. 19. [Tr.]

²⁴⁹For Iphicrates cp. 1397^b28 and 1398^a19. [F.S.]

²⁵⁰Cp. 1398^b6. [Tr.]

²⁵¹The mercenaries were a problem for the Greek cities from the beginning of the 4th cent. Charidemus, their celebrated leader in the middle of the century, served Athens and

To slay no boar, but to be witnesses
Of Meleager's prowess unto Greece.²⁵⁶

Or the argument in the *Ajax* of Theodectes, that Diomedes chose out Odysseus²⁵⁷ not to do him honour, but in order that his companion might be a lesser man than himself—such a motive for doing so is quite possible.

20. Another line of argument is common to forensic and deliberative oratory, namely, to consider inducements and deterrents, and the motives people have for doing or avoiding the actions in question. These are the conditions which make us bound to act if they are for us, and to refrain from action if they are against us: that is, we are bound to act if the action is possible, easy, and useful to ourselves or our friends or hurtful to our enemies; this is true even if the action entails loss, provided the loss is outweighed by the solid advantage. A speaker will urge action by pointing to such conditions, and discourage it by pointing to the opposite. These same arguments also form the materials for accusation or defence—the deterrents being pointed out by the defence, and the inducements by the prosecution. As for the defence, . . . This topic forms the whole *Art of Rhetoric* both of Pamphilus and of Callippus.²⁵⁸

21. Another line of argument refers to things which are supposed to happen and yet seem incredible. We may argue that people could not have believed them, if they had not been true or nearly true: even that they are the more likely to be true because they are incredible. For the things which men believe are either facts or probabilities: if, therefore, a thing that *is* believed is improbable and even incredible, it must be true, since it is certainly not believed because it is at all probable or credible. An example is what Androcles of the deme Pitthus said in his well-known arraignment of the law. The audience tried to shout him down when he observed that the laws required a law to set them right. "Why," he went on, "fish need salt, improbable and incredible as this might seem for creatures reared

in salt water; and olive-cakes need oil, incredible as it is that what produces oil should need it."

22. Another line of argument is to refute our opponent's case by noting any contrasts or contradictions of dates, acts, or words that it anywhere displays; and this in any of the three following connexions. (1) Referring to our opponent's conduct, e.g. "He says he is devoted to you, yet he conspired with the Thirty." (2) Referring to our own conduct, e.g. "He says I am litigious, and yet he cannot prove that I have been engaged in a single lawsuit." (3) Referring to both of us together, e.g. "*He* has never even *lent* any one a penny, but *I* have *ransomed* quite a number of you."

23. Another line that is useful for men and causes that have been really or seemingly slandered, is to show why the facts are not as supposed; pointing out that there is a reason for the false impression given. Thus a woman, who had palmed off her son on another woman, was thought to be the lad's mistress because she embraced him; but when her action was explained the charge was shown to be groundless. Another example is from the *Ajax* of Theodectes, where Odysseus tells Ajax the reason why, though he is really braver than Ajax, he is not thought so.

24. Another line of argument is to show that if the *cause* is present, the *effect* is present, and if absent, absent. For by proving the cause you at once prove the effect, and conversely nothing can exist without its cause. Thus Thrasybulus accused Leodamas of having had his name recorded as a criminal on the slab in the Acropolis, and of erasing the record in the time of the Thirty Tyrants: to which Leodamas replied, "Impossible: for the Thirty would have trusted me all the more if my quarrel with the commons had been inscribed on the slab."²⁵⁹

25. Another line is to consider whether the accused person can take or could have taken a better²⁶⁰ course than that which he is recommending or taking, or has taken. If he has *not* taken this better course, it is clear that he is not guilty, since

²⁵⁶Fragm. from the *Meleager* of Antiphon. [F.S.]

²⁵⁷Cp. *Iliad*, x. 218–54. [Tr.]

²⁵⁸Both rhetoricians of the 5th cent. of whom nothing is known. [F.S.]

²⁵⁹Thrasybulus freed Athens in 403 B.C. from the rule of the Thirty Tyrants. Leodamas is probably the famous orator. [F.S.]

²⁶⁰I.e. better suited to effect the evil purpose with which he is charged. [Tr.]

no one deliberately and consciously chooses what is bad. This argument is, however, fallacious, for it often becomes clear after the event how the action could have been done better, though before the event this was far from clear.

26. Another line is, when a contemplated action is inconsistent with any past action, to examine them both together. Thus, when the people of Elea asked Xenophanes²⁶¹ if they should or should not sacrifice to Leucothea and mourn for her, he advised them not to mourn for her if they thought her a goddess, and not to sacrifice to her if they thought her a mortal woman.

27. Another line is to make previous mistakes the grounds of accusation or defence. Thus, in the *Medea* of Carcinus²⁶² the accusers allege that Medea has slain her children; "at all events," they say, "they are not to be seen" — Medea having made the mistake of sending her children away. In defence she argues that it is not her children, but Jason, whom she would have slain; for it would have been a mistake on her part not to do this if she *had* done the other. This special line of argument for enthymeme forms the whole of the *Art of Rhetoric* in use before Theodorus.²⁶³

28. Another line is to draw meanings from names. Sophocles, for instance, says,

O steel in heart as thou art steel in name.²⁶⁴

This line of argument is common in praises of the gods. Thus too, Conon²⁶⁵ called Thrasybulus²⁶⁶ *rash in counsel*. And Herodicus²⁶⁷ said of Thrasymachus,²⁶⁸ "You are always *bold in battle*"; of Polus,²⁶⁸ "you are always *a colt*"; and of the legislator Draco²⁶⁹ that his laws were those not of a human being but of a *dragon*, so savage were they. And, in Euripides, Hecuba says of Aphrodite,

²⁶¹Cp. 1399^{b6}. [F.S.]

²⁶²A tragedian, contemporary of Aristotle. [F.S.]

²⁶³Theodorus of Byzantium, outstanding teacher of rhetoric of 5th cent. [F.S.]

²⁶⁴Fragm. from the *Tyro* of Sophocles. [F.S.]

²⁶⁵The victor of Cnidus (394 B.C.). [F.S.]

²⁶⁶The liberator of Athens in 403 B.C. [F.S.]

²⁶⁷The physician (cp. 1361^{b5}). [F.S.]

²⁶⁸Thrasymachus and Polus, sophists and rhetoricians, are introduced by Plato in *Republic* I and in the *Gorgias*. [F.S.]

²⁶⁹The almost mythical Athenian lawgiver of the 7th cent. [F.S.]

Her name and Folly's (ἀφροσύνης) rightly begin alike,²⁷⁰

and Chaeremon writes

Pentheus—a name foreshadowing grief (πένθος) to come.²⁷¹

The Refutative Enthymeme has a greater reputation than the Demonstrative, because within a small space it works out two opposing arguments, and arguments put side by side are clearer to the audience. But of all syllogisms, whether refutative or demonstrative, those are most applauded of which we foresee the conclusions from the beginning, so long as they are not obvious at first sight—for part of the pleasure we feel is at our own intelligent anticipation; or those which we follow well enough to see the point of them as soon as the last word has been uttered.

XXIV. Besides genuine syllogisms, there may be syllogisms that look genuine but are not; and since an enthymeme is merely a syllogism of a particular kind, it follows that, besides genuine enthymemes, there may be those that look genuine but are not.

I. Among the lines of argument that form the Spurious Enthymeme the first is that which arises from the particular words employed.

a. One variety of this is when—as in dialectic, without having gone through any reasoning process, we make a final statement as if it were the conclusion of such a process, "Therefore so-and-so is not true," "Therefore also so-and-so must be true"—so too in rhetoric a compact and antithetical utterance passes for an enthymeme, such language being the proper province of enthymeme, so that it is seemingly the form of wording here that causes the illusion mentioned. In order to produce the effect of genuine reasoning by our form of wording it is useful to summarize the results of a number of previous reasonings:

²⁷⁰Euripides, *Troades*, 990. [Tr.]

²⁷¹Fragm. of Chaeremon, a tragedian of the 4th cent. [F.S.]

as “some he saved—others he avenged—the Greeks he freed.”²⁷² Each of these statements has been previously proved from other facts; but the mere collocation of them gives the impression of establishing some fresh conclusion.

- b. Another variety is based on the use of similar words for different things; e.g. the argument that the mouse must be a noble creature, since it gives its name to the most august of all religious rites—for such the Mysteries are.²⁷³ Or one may introduce, into a eulogy of the dog, the dog-star; or Pan, because Pindar said:

O thou blessed one!
Thou whom they of Olympus call
The hound of manifold shape
That follows the Mother of Heaven:²⁷⁴

or we may argue that, because there is much disgrace in there *not* being a dog about, there is honour in *being* a dog.²⁷⁵ Or that Hermes is readier than any other god to go shares, since we never say “shares all round” except of him.²⁷⁶ Or that speech is a very excellent thing, since good men are not said to be worth money but to be worthy of esteem²⁷⁷—the phrase “worthy of esteem” also having the meaning of “worth speech.”

2. Another line is to assert of the whole what is true of the parts, or of the parts what is true of the whole. A whole and its parts are supposed to be identical, though often they are not. You have therefore to adopt whichever of these two lines better suits your purpose. That is how Euthydemus argues:²⁷⁸ e.g. that any one knows that there is a trireme in the Peiracus, since he knows the separate details that make up this statement. There is

²⁷²Isocrates, *Evagoras*, 65–9. [Tr.]

²⁷³A pun on the similarity of the Greek words *mys* and *mysterion*. [F.S.]

²⁷⁴Fragm. of Pindar. [F.S.]

²⁷⁵Viz. a dog-philosopher, a Cynic. [Tr.]

²⁷⁶Alluding to a proverb. [F.S.]

²⁷⁷The same Greek word (λόγος) is here used for “speech” and “esteem”: hence what follows. [Tr.]

²⁷⁸A sophist known for his captious arguments. Cp. Plato’s dialogue *Euthydemus*. The argument of Euthydemus was some kind of fallacy. [F.S.]

also the argument that one who knows the letters knows the whole word, since the word is the same thing as the letters which compose it; or that, if a double portion of a certain thing is harmful to health, then a single portion must not be called wholesome, since it is absurd that two good things should make one bad thing. Put thus, the enthymeme is refutative; put as follows, demonstrative: “For one good thing cannot be made up of two bad things.” The whole line of argument is fallacious. Again, there is Polycrates’ saying that Thrasybulus put down thirty tyrants, where the speaker adds them up one by one. Or the argument in the *Orestes* of Theodectes, where the argument is from part to whole:

’Tis right that she who slays her lord should die.

“It is right, too, that the son should avenge his father. Very good: these two things are what Orestes has done.” Still, perhaps the two things, once they are put together, do not form a right act. The fallacy might also be said to be due to omission, since the speaker fails to say by whose hand a husband-slayer should die. 1401^b

3. Another line is the use of indignant language, whether to support your own case or to overthrow your opponent’s. We do this when we paint a highly-coloured picture of the situation without having proved the facts of it: if the defendant does so, he produces an impression of his innocence; and if the prosecutor goes into a passion, he produces an impression of the defendant’s guilt. Here there is no genuine enthymeme: the hearer infers guilt or innocence, but no proof is given, and the inference is fallacious accordingly.

4. Another line is to use a “Sign,” or single instance, as certain evidence; which, again, yields no valid proof. Thus, it might be said that lovers are useful to their countries, since the love of Harmodius and Aristogeiton caused the downfall of the tyrant Hipparchus.²⁷⁹ Or, again, that Dionysius is a thief, since he is a vicious man—there is, of course, no valid proof here; not every vicious man is a thief, though every thief is a vicious man.

²⁷⁹Cp. Plato, *Symposium*, 182 B, C. [Tr.]

5. Another line represents the accidental as essential. An instance is what Polycrates says of the mice, that they “came to the rescue” because they gnawed through the bowstrings.²⁸⁰ Or it might be maintained that an invitation to dinner is a great honour for it was because he was *not* invited that Achilles was angered with the Greeks at Tenedos.²⁸¹ As a fact, what angered him was the *insult* involved; it was a mere accident that this was the particular form that the insult took.

6. Another is the argument from consequence. In the *Alexander*,²⁸² for instance, it is argued that Paris must have had a lofty disposition, since he despised society and lived by himself on Mount Ida: because lofty people do this kind of thing, therefore Paris too, we are to suppose, had a lofty soul. Or, if a man dresses fashionably and roams around at night, he is a rake, since that is the way rakes behave. Another similar argument points out that beggars sing and dance in temples, and that exiles can live wherever they please, and that such privileges are at the disposal of those we account happy; and therefore every one might be regarded as happy if only he has those privileges. What matters, however, is the *circumstances* under which the privileges are enjoyed. Hence this line too falls under the head of fallacies by omission.

7. Another line consists in representing as causes things which are not causes, on the ground that they happened along with or before the event in question. They assume that, because B happens *after* A, it happens *because* of A. Politicians are especially fond of taking this line. Thus Demades said that the policy of Demosthenes was the cause of all the mischief, “for after it the war occurred.”²⁸³

²⁸⁰From Polycrates’, the sophist’s, encomium on mice. [F.S.]

²⁸¹Incident in a lost play of Sophocles. [F.S.]

²⁸²A speech probably by the sophist Polycrates. Cp. 1397^a21, 1398^a22, 1399^a3, 1401^b34. [F.S.]

²⁸³Demades, the orator, arranged the peace between Philip of Macedonia and Athens after the Athenian defeat at Chaironea and thereafter was the representative of the Macedonian party in Athens and an adversary of Demosthenes, the great orator. [F.S.]

8. Another line consists in leaving out any mention of time and circumstances. E.g. the argument that Paris was justified in taking Helen, since her father left her free to choose: here the freedom was presumably not perpetual; it could only refer to her first choice, beyond which her father’s authority could not go.²⁸⁴ Or again, one might say that to strike a free man is an act of wanton outrage; but it is not so in every case—only when it is unprovoked.

9. Again, a spurious syllogism may, as in “eristical” discussions, be based on the confusion of the absolute with that which is not absolute but particular. As, in dialectic, for instance, it may be argued that what-is-not *is*, on the ground that what-is-not *is* what-is-not; or that the unknown can be known, on the ground that it can be known to *be* unknown: so also in rhetoric a spurious enthymeme may be based on the confusion of some particular probability with absolute probability. Now no particular probability is universally probable: as Agathon says,

One might perchance say this was probable—
That things improbable oft will hap to men.²⁸⁵

For what is improbable does happen, and therefore it is probable that improbable things *will* happen. Granted this, one might argue that “what is improbable is probable.” But this is not true absolutely. As, in eristic, the imposture comes from not adding any clause specifying relationship or reference or manner; so here it arises because the probability in question is not general but specific. It is of this line of argument that Corax’s²⁸⁶ *Art of Rhetoric* is composed. If the accused is not open to the charge—for instance, if a weakling be tried for violent assault—the defence is that he was not likely to do such a thing. But if he *is* open to the charge—i.e., if he is a *strong* man—the defence is still that he was not likely to do such a thing, since he could be sure that people would think he

²⁸⁴Probably again from the *Alexander* of Polycrates. Cp. 1401^b20. [F.S.]

²⁸⁵Fragm. from a tragedy by Agathon. [F.S.]

²⁸⁶One of the earliest Sicilian teachers of rhetoric. [F.S.]

was likely to do it. And so with any other charge: the accused must be either open or not open to it: there is in either case an appearance of probable innocence, but whereas in the latter case the probability is genuine, in the former it can only be asserted in the special sense mentioned.²⁸⁷ This sort of argument illustrates what is meant by making the worse argument seem the better. Hence people were right in objecting to the training Protagoras²⁸⁸ undertook to give them. It was a fraud; the probability it handled was not genuine but spurious, and has a place in no art except Rhetoric²⁸⁹ and Eristic.

XXV. Enthymemes, genuine and apparent, have now been described; the next subject is their Refutation.

An argument may be refuted either by a counter-syllogism or by bringing an objection. It is clear that counter-syllogisms can be built up from the same lines of arguments as the original syllogisms: for the materials of syllogisms are the ordinary opinions of men, and such opinions often contradict each other. Objections, as appears in the *Topics*,²⁹⁰ may be raised in four ways — either by directly attacking your opponent's own statement, or by putting forward another statement like it, or by putting forward a statement contrary to it, or by quoting previous decisions.

1. By "attacking your opponent's own statement" I mean, for instance, this: if his enthymeme should assert that love is always good, the objection can be brought in two ways, either by making the general statement that "all want is an evil," or by making the particular one that there would be no talk of "Caonian love"²⁹¹ if there were not evil loves as well as good ones.

2. An objection "from a contrary statement" is

²⁸⁷Or "in the former not simply so!" [F.S.]

²⁸⁸The famous sophist. Cp. Plato's dialogue *Protagoras*. [F.S.]

²⁸⁹This remark entails no approval on the part of Aristotle. [F.S.]

²⁹⁰Cp. *Topics*, viii. 10. . . . [Tr.]

²⁹¹The incestuous love of Byblis for her brother Caunus. [Tr.]

raised when, for instance, the opponent's enthymeme having concluded that a good man does good to all his friends, you object, "That proves nothing, for a bad man does not do evil to all his friends."

3. An example of an objection "from a like statement" is, the enthymeme having shown that ill-used men always hate their ill-users, to reply, "That proves nothing, for well-used men do not always love those who used them well."

4. The "decisions" mentioned are those proceeding from well-known men; for instance, if the enthymeme employed has concluded that "Some allowance ought to be made for drunken offenders, since they did not know what they were doing," the objection will be, "Pittacus,²⁹² then, deserves no approval, or he would not have prescribed specially severe penalties for offences due to drunkenness."

Enthymemes are based upon one or other of four kinds of alleged fact: (1) Probabilities, (2) Examples, (3) Infallible Signs, (4) Ordinary Signs.²⁹³ (1) Enthymemes based upon Probabilities are those which argue from what is, or is supposed to be, usually true. (2) Enthymemes based upon Example are those which proceed by induction from one or more similar cases, arrive at a general proposition, and then argue deductively to a particular inference. (3) Enthymemes based upon Infallible Signs are those which argue from the inevitable and invariable. (4) Enthymemes based upon ordinary Signs are those which argue from some universal or particular proposition, true or false.

Now (1) as a Probability is that which happens usually but not always. Enthymemes founded upon Probabilities can, it is clear, always be refuted by raising some objection. The refutation is not always genuine: it may be spurious: for it consists in showing not that your opponent's premiss is not probable, but only in showing that it is not inevitably true. Hence it is always in defence rather than in accusation that it is possible to gain an advantage by using this fallacy. For

²⁹²One of the Seven Sages. [F.S.]

²⁹³Fallible signs. [Tr.]

the accuser uses probabilities to prove his case: and to refute a conclusion as improbable is not the same thing as to refute it as not inevitable. Any argument based upon what usually happens is always open to objection: otherwise it would not be a probability but an invariable and necessary truth. But the judges think, if the refutation takes this form, either that the accuser's case is not probable or that they must not decide it; which, as we said, is a false piece of reasoning. For they ought to decide by considering not merely what *must* be true but also what is *likely* to be true: this is, indeed, the meaning of "giving a verdict in accordance with one's honest opinion." Therefore it is not enough for the defendant to refute the accusation by proving that the charge is not *bound* to be true: he must do so by showing that it is not *likely* to be true. For this purpose his objection must state what is more usually true than the statement attacked. It may do so in either of two ways: either in respect of frequency or in respect of exactness. It will be most convincing if it does so in both respects; for

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if the thing in question *both* happens *oftener* as we represent it *and* happens more *as* we represent it, the probability is particularly great.

(2) Fallible Signs, and Enthymemes based upon them, can be refuted even if the facts are correct, as was said at the outset.²⁹⁴ For we have shown in the *Analytics*²⁹⁵ that no Fallible Sign can form part of a valid logical proof.

(3) Enthymemes depending on examples may be refuted in the same way as probabilities. If we have a negative instance, the argument is refuted, in so far as it is proved not inevitable, even though the positive examples are more similar and more frequent. And if the positive examples *are* more numerous and more frequent, we must contend that the present case is dissimilar, or that its conditions are dissimilar, or that it is different in some way or other.

(4) It will be impossible to refute Infallible Signs, and Enthymemes resting on them, by showing in any way that they do not form a valid logical proof: this, too, we see from the *Ana-*

lytics.²⁹⁶ All we can do is to show that the fact alleged does not exist. If there is no doubt that it does, and that it is an Infallible Sign, refutation now becomes impossible: for this is equivalent to a demonstration which is clear in every respect. . . .

BOOK III

I. In making a speech one must study three points: first, the means of producing persuasion; second, the style, or language, to be used; third, the proper arrangement of the various parts of the speech. We have already specified the sources of persuasion. We have shown that these are three in number;²⁹⁷ what they are; and why there are only these three: for we have shown that persuasion must in every case be effected either (1) by working on the emotions of the judges themselves, (2) by giving them the right impression of the speakers' character, or (3) by proving the truth of the statements made.

Enthymemes also have been described, and the sources from which they should be derived; there being both special and general lines of argument for enthymemes.

Our next subject will be the style of expression. For it is not enough to know *what* we ought to say; we must also say it *as* we ought; much help is thus afforded towards producing the right impression of a speech. The first question to receive attention was naturally the one that comes first naturally — how persuasion can be produced from the facts themselves. The second is how to set these facts out in language. A third would be the proper method of delivery; this is a thing that affects the success of a speech greatly; but hitherto the subject has been neglected. Indeed, it was long before it found a way into the arts of tragic drama and epic recitation: at first poets acted²⁹⁸ their tragedies themselves. It is plain that delivery has just as much to do with oratory as with poetry. (In connexion with poetry, it has been studied by Glaucon of

²⁹⁴i, c. 2, 1357^b13,14. [Tr.]

²⁹⁵*Anal. Pr.*, ii, 27. [Tr.]

²⁹⁶*Anal. Pr.*, ii, 27. [Tr.]

²⁹⁷i, c. 2. [Tr.]

²⁹⁸Or, "delivered." [Tr.]

Teos²⁹⁹ among others.) It is, essentially, a matter of the right management of the voice to express the various emotions—of speaking loudly, softly, or between the two; of high, low, or intermediate pitch; of the various rhythms that suit various subjects. These are the three things—volume of sound, modulation of pitch, and rhythm—that a speaker bears in mind. It is those who *do* bear them in mind who usually win prizes in the dramatic contests; and just as in drama the actors now count for more than the poets, so it is in the contests of public life, owing to the defects of our political institutions. No systematic treatise upon the rules of delivery has yet been composed;³⁰⁰ indeed, even the study of language made no progress till late in the day. Besides, delivery is—very properly—not regarded as an elevated subject of inquiry.³⁰¹ Still, the whole business of rhetoric being concerned with appearances, we must pay attention to the subject of delivery, unworthy though it is, because we cannot do without it. The right thing in speaking really is that we should be satisfied not to annoy our hearers, without trying to delight them: we ought in fairness to fight our case with no help beyond the bare facts: nothing, therefore, should matter except the proof of those facts. Still, as has been already said, other things affect the result considerably, owing to the defects of our hearers. The arts of language cannot help having a small but real importance, whatever it is we have to expound to others: the way in which a thing is said does affect its intelligibility. Not, however, so much importance as people think. All such arts are fanciful and meant to charm the hearer. Nobody uses fine language when teaching geometry.

When the principles of delivery have been worked out, they will produce the same effect as on the stage.³⁰² But only very slight attempts to

²⁹⁹Probably the rhapsode mentioned in Plato's dialogue *Ion*, 530 D. [F.S.]

³⁰⁰Aristotle's pupil Theophrastus was the first to provide a theory of delivery. [F.S.]

³⁰¹Or, "is thought to be vulgar, when viewed from a lofty standpoint," "on any noble view." [Tr.]

³⁰²A rendering now favored is "when the principles of style have been worked out they will produce the same effect as delivery." [F.S.]

deal with them have been made and by a few people, as by Thrasymachus in his "Appeals to Pity."³⁰³ Dramatic ability is a natural gift, and can hardly be systematically taught. The principles of good diction can be so taught, and therefore we have men of ability in this direction too, who win prizes in their turn, as well as those speakers who excel in delivery—speeches of the written or literary kind owe more of their effect to their diction than to their thought.

It was naturally the poets who first set the movement going; for words represent things, and they had also the human voice at their disposal, which of all our organs can best represent other things. Thus the arts of recitation and acting were formed, and others as well. Now it was because poets seemed to win fame through their fine language when their thoughts were simple enough, that the language of oratorical prose at first took a poetical colour, e.g. that of Gorgias.³⁰⁴ Even now most uneducated people think that poetical language makes the finest discourses. That is not true: the language of prose is distinct from that of poetry. This is shown by the state of things today, when even the language of tragedy has altered its character. Just as iambics were adopted, instead of tetrameters, because they are the most prose-like of all metres, so tragedy has given up all those words, not used in ordinary talk, which decorated the early drama and are still used by the writers of hexameter poems. It is therefore ridiculous to imitate a poetical manner which the poets themselves have dropped; and it is now plain that we have not to treat in detail the whole question of style, but may confine ourselves to that part of it which concerns our present subject, rhetoric. The other—the poetical—part of it has been discussed in the treatise on the *Art of Poetry*.³⁰⁵

II. We may, then, start from the observations there made, including the definition of style. 1404^b

³⁰³Thrasymachus of Chalcedon, sophist and teacher of rhetoric, sharply criticized by Plato. [F.S.]

³⁰⁴Another leading teacher of rhetoric of the 5th cent. [F.S.]

³⁰⁵*Poetics*, cc. 20–2. [Tr.]

Style to be good must be clear, as is proved by the fact that speech which fails to convey a plain meaning will fail to do just what speech has to do. It must also be appropriate, avoiding both meanness and undue elevation; poetical language is certainly free from meanness, but it is not appropriate to prose.³⁰⁶ Clearness is secured by using the words (nouns and verbs alike) that are current and ordinary. Freedom from meanness, and positive adornment too, are secured by using the other words mentioned in the *Art of Poetry*.³⁰⁷ Such variation from what is usual makes the language appear more stately. People do not feel towards strangers as they do towards their own countrymen, and the same thing is true of their feeling for language. It is therefore well to give to everyday speech an unfamiliar air: people like what strikes them, and are struck by what is out of the way. In verse such effects are common, and there they are fitting: the persons and things there spoken of are comparatively remote from ordinary life. In prose passages they are far less often fitting because the subject-matter is less exalted. Even in poetry, it is not quite appropriate that fine language should be used by a slave or a very young man, or about very trivial subjects: even in poetry the style, to be appropriate, must sometimes be toned down, though at other times heightened. We can now see that a writer must disguise his art and give the impression of speaking naturally and not artificially. Naturalness is persuasive, artificially is the contrary: for our hearers are prejudiced and think we have some design against them, as if we were mixing their wines for them. It is like the difference between the quality of Theodorus'³⁰⁸ voice and the voices of all other actors: his really seems to be that of the character who is speaking, theirs do not. We can hide our purpose successfully by taking the single words of our composition from the speech of ordinary life. This is done in poetry by Euripides, who was the first to show the way to his successors.

Language is composed of nouns and verbs. Nouns are of the various kinds considered in the

³⁰⁶Cp. beginning of *Poetics* 22. [F.S.]

³⁰⁷*Poetics*, cc. 21, 22. [Tr.]

³⁰⁸A celebrated actor of the time. [F.S.]

treatise on Poetry.³⁰⁹ Strange words, compound words, and invented words must be used sparingly and on few occasions: on *what* occasions we shall state later.³¹⁰ The reason for this restriction has been already indicated: they depart from what is suitable, in the direction of excess. In the language of prose, besides the regular and proper terms for things, metaphorical terms only can be used with advantage. This we gather from the fact that these two classes of terms, the proper or regular and the metaphorical—these and no others—are used by everybody in conversation. We can now see that a good writer can produce a style that is distinguished without being obtrusive, and is at the same time clear, thus satisfying our definition of good oratorical prose. Words of ambiguous meaning are chiefly useful to enable the sophist to mislead his hearers. Synonyms are useful to the poet, by which I mean words whose ordinary meaning is the same, e.g. πορεύεσθαι (advancing) and βαδίξειν (proceeding); these two are ordinary words and have the same meaning.

In the *Art of Poetry*,³¹¹ as we have already said, will be found definitions of these kinds of words; a classification of Metaphors; and mention of the fact that metaphor is of great value both in poetry and in prose. Prose-writers must, however, pay specially careful attention to metaphor, because their other resources are scantier than those of poets. Metaphor, moreover, gives style clearness, charm, and distinction as nothing else can: and it is not a thing whose use can be taught by one man to another. Metaphors, like epithets, must be fitting, which means that they must fairly correspond to the thing signified: failing this, their inappropriateness will be conspicuous: the want of harmony between two things is emphasized by their being placed side by side. It is like having to ask ourselves what dress will suit an old man; certainly not the crimson cloak that suits a young man. And if you wish to pay a compliment, you must take your metaphor from something better in the same line; if to disparage, from something worse. To illus-

³⁰⁹*Poetics*, c. 21. [Tr.]

³¹⁰iii, cc. 3, 7. [Tr.]

³¹¹Cp. *Poetics*, cc. 21, 22 [Tr.]

trate my meaning: since opposites are in the same class, you do what I have suggested if you say that a man who begs “prays,” and a man who prays “begs”; for praying and begging are both varieties of asking. So Iphicrates³¹² called Callias a “mendicant priest” instead of a “torch-bearer,” and Callias replied that Iphicrates must be uninitiated or he would have called him not a “mendicant priest” but a “torch-bearer.” Both are religious titles, but one is honourable and the other is not. Again, somebody calls actors “hangers-on of Dionysus,” but they call themselves “artists”: each of these terms is a metaphor, the one intended to throw dirt at the actor, the other to dignify him. And pirates now call themselves “purveyors.” We can thus call a crime a mistake, or a mistake a crime. We can say that a thief “took” a thing, or that he “plundered” his victim. An expression like that of Euripides’ Telephus,³¹³

King of the oar, on Mysia’s coast he landed,

is inappropriate; the word “king” goes beyond the dignity of the subject, and so the art is *not* concealed. A metaphor may be amiss because the very syllables of the words conveying it fail to indicate sweetness of vocal utterance. Thus Dionysius the Brazen³¹⁴ in his elegies calls poetry “Calliope’s screech.” Poetry and screeching are both, to be sure, vocal utterances. But the metaphor is bad, because the sounds of “screeching,” unlike those of poetry, are discordant and unmeaning. Further, in using metaphors to give names to nameless things, we must draw them not from remote but from kindred and similar things, so that the kinship is clearly perceived as soon as the words are said. Thus in the celebrated riddle

105^b I marked how a man glued bronze with fire to another man’s body,

the process is nameless; but both it and gluing are a kind of application, and that is why the applica-

³¹²Iphicrates, the Athenian general (cp. 1365^a28). Callias, a vain, foolish Athenian aristocrat in whose family the office of “torchbearer” was hereditary. The “torchbearer” led the procession from Athens to Eleusis on the fifth day of the Great Eleusinian. [F.S.]

³¹³A lost play. [F.S.]

³¹⁴Poet and rhetorician of the 5th cent. [F.S.]

tion of the cupping-glass is here called “gluing.” Good riddles do, in general, provide us with satisfactory metaphors: for metaphors imply riddles, and therefore a good riddle can furnish a good metaphor. Further, the materials of metaphors must be beautiful; and the beauty, like the ugliness, of all words may, as Licymnius says, lie in their sound or in their meaning.³¹⁵ Further, there is a third consideration—one that upsets the fallacious argument of the sophist Bryson, that there is no such thing as foul language, because in whatever words you put a given thing your meaning is the same. This is untrue. One term may describe a thing more truly than another, may be more like it, and set it more intimately before our eyes. Besides, two different words will represent a thing in two different lights; so on this ground also one term must be held fairer or fouler than another. For both of two terms will indicate what *is* fair, or what *is* foul, but not simply their fairness or their foulness, or if so, at any rate not in an equal degree. The materials of metaphor must be beautiful to the ear, to the understanding, to the eye or some other physical sense. It is better, for instance, to say “rosy-fingered morn,” than “crimson-fingered” or, worse still, “red-fingered morn.” The epithets that we apply, too, may have a bad and ugly aspect, as when Orestes is called a “mother-slayer”; or a better one, as when he is called his “father’s avenger.” Simonides,³¹⁶ when the victor in the mule-race offered him a small fee, refused to write him an ode, because, he said, it was so unpleasant to write odes to half-asses: but on receiving an adequate fee, he wrote

Hail to you, daughters of storm-footed steeds,

though of course they were daughters of asses too. The same effect is attained by the use of diminutives, which make a bad thing less bad and a good thing less good. Take, for instance, the banter of Aristophanes in the *Babylonians*³¹⁷ where he uses “goldlet” for “gold,” “cloaklet” for “cloak,” “scofflet” for “scoff,” and “plaguelet.”

³¹⁵A teacher of rhetoric and a dithyrambic poet. [F.S.]

³¹⁶The lyric poet. [F.S.]

³¹⁷A lost play. [F.S.]

But alike in using epithets and in using diminutives we must be wary and must observe the mean. . . .

XIII. A speech has two parts. You must state your case, and you must prove it. You cannot either state your case and omit to prove it, or prove it without having first stated it; since any proof must be a proof of something, and the only use of a preliminary statement is the proof that follows it. Of these two parts the first is³¹⁸ called the Statement of the case, the second part the Argument, just as we distinguish³¹⁹ between Enunciation and Demonstration. The current division is absurd. For "narration" surely is part of a forensic speech only: how in a political speech or a speech of display can there be "narration" in the technical sense? or a reply to a forensic opponent? or an epilogue³²⁰ in closely-reasoned speeches? Again, introduction, comparison of conflicting arguments, and recapitulation are only found in political speeches when there is a struggle between two policies. They *may* occur then; so may even accusation and defence, often enough; but they form no essential part of a political speech. Even forensic speeches do not always need epilogues;

³¹⁸Sc. in rhetoric. [Tr.]

³¹⁹Sc. in dialectic. [Tr.]

³²⁰Or "peroration," except that the ἐπίλογος, or conclusion of a speech, is usually a longer affair than what we now understand by "peroration." [Tr.]

not, for instance, a short speech, nor one in which the facts are easy to remember, the effect of an epilogue being always a reduction in the apparent length. It follows, then, that the only necessary parts of a speech are the Statement and the Argument. These are the essential features of a speech; and it cannot in any case have more than Introduction, Statement, Argument, and Epilogue.³²¹ "Refutation of the Opponent" is part of the arguments: so is "Comparison" of the opponent's case with your own, for that process is a magnifying of your own case and therefore a part of the arguments, since one who does this *proves* something. The Introduction does nothing like this; nor does the Epilogue—it merely reminds us of what has been said already. If we make such distinctions we shall end, like Theodorus and his followers, by distinguishing "narration" proper from "post-narration" and "pre-narration," and "refutation" from "final refutation."³²² But we ought only to bring in a new name if it indicates a real species with distinct specific qualities; otherwise the practice is pointless and silly, like the way Licymnius³²³ invented names in his *Art of Rhetoric*—"Secundation," "Divagation," "Ramification."³²⁴

³²¹For "statement" we should probably read "narration." Aristotle here corrects what he said in 1414^a30. [F.S.]

³²²For a similar criticism of the excesses of earlier theories of rhetoric cp. Plato *Phaedrus*, 266, 267. [F.S.]

³²³A teacher of rhetoric and dithyrambic poet. [F.S.]

³²⁴A technical term of uncertain meaning. [F.S.]

Anonymous

fl. ca. 84 B.C.E.

The *Rhetorica ad Herennium* is the oldest surviving complete rhetoric manual in Latin. Its author is unknown. The title is drawn from the manuscript's address to a man named C. Herennius, about whom nothing else is known. It was probably written around 84 B.C.E., at about the time that Cicero wrote *De Inventione*. Its treatment of forensic invention is similar to Cicero's—word for word in some places—and in spite of other differences, the similarities persuaded readers from medieval times to the early Renaissance that the work was Cicero's. It was even called *Rhetorica Secunda* to identify it as the second of his early treatises; this one covered all five canons of rhetoric, whereas *De Inventione* concentrates only on invention. The work gained prestige and influence from its association with Cicero and also from its comprehensive treatment of the five canons.

Renaissance Latinists dropped the work from the Ciceronian canon and put forward a professional rhetorician named Cornificius as the likely author. Scholarly opinion now inclines against him, too, seeing the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* as the work of an unknown young man who must have been much like Cicero when he wrote *De Inventione*: well-to-do, energetic, and preparing for public life through the study of rhetoric, philosophy, and law. Like *De Inventione*, the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* may have been worked up from lecture notes. It is highly unlikely that the author knew Cicero's text, but he many well have worked with the same rhetoric teacher.

The *Rhetorica ad Herennium* is composed of four books: I and II, on invention, principally stasis theory as applied to forensic oratory; III, on invention in deliberative and ceremonial oratory and on arrangement, delivery, and memory; and IV (included here), the longest book by far, on style. The work is not noted for any original contributions to rhetorical theory but rather for presenting a detailed picture of Roman rhetoric of the period and its Greek foundations. The discussion of style has been particularly influential. The author follows or adapts Aristotle's pupil Theophrastus in dividing the kinds of style into grand, middle, and plain, and the "virtues" or qualities of style into elegance, composition, and dignity. He also reflects the period's increased interest in figures, which are sorted into figures of diction and figures of thought. Book IV of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* became an increasingly influential pattern for rhetoric manuals from its own day up through the Renaissance.

The main influences upon this work are the Greek thinkers Aristotle, Theophrastus, and Hermagoras. Nevertheless, the author never cites them and in fact frequently inveighs against Greek rhetoric. For example, at the beginning of Book IV, he attacks as "Greek" the practice of borrowing examples to illustrate rhetorical principles. Rather, he argues, the rhetorician should create the examples, because they will ratify his skill and suit the lesson more aptly than anything borrowed. Yet in this very passage the author himself appears to borrow from a Greek source. Indeed,

throughout his work he uses translated borrowings from Greek poets and orators, who are not cited, although he does cite the Roman sources from whom he also borrows.

There has been scholarly controversy over this author's treatment of Greek sources, especially in Book IV. Current opinion regards him not as a plagiarist but rather as one who believed that free translation was a creative act. His disparagement of the Greek sources can be understood as Roman defensiveness about the older and certainly very influential culture. Note in this connection that Antonius, one of the practiced speakers in Cicero's *De Oratore*, remarks that he has concealed his own knowledge of Greek literature in order to retain his political popularity. Even the choice to write the treatise in Latin, suggests classicist A. D. Leeman, had political implications. Rhetoric instruction had often been conducted in Greek, so choosing Latin made a strong statement about the viability of Roman culture. Later Roman writers, less defensive, often reverted to Greek rhetorical terms, such as names for the figures, in their treatises. Rhetoric scholar Patrick Sinclair has argued that the author of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* shows throughout a pragmatic desire to serve the values of the aristocratic Romans who were the orator's most important audience. In this way as in others, the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* gives a detailed portrait of Hellenized Roman rhetoric instruction in the period that produced some of the greatest Latin orators.

Selected Bibliography

The standard translation is *Ad C. Herennium de Ratione Dicendi (Rhetorica ad Herennium)*, translated by Harry Caplan (Loeb Classical Library, 1954). Caplan's excellent introduction summarizes theoretical and textual issues.

Most histories of rhetoric discuss the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, usually in conjunction with Cicero's *De Inventione*, but little scholarship has focused on it exclusively. For the text's cultural background, see Richard Leo Enos, *Roman Rhetoric: Revolution and the Greek Influence* (1995). A.D. Leeman locates the work in the history of Roman rhetoric and analyzes Book IV extensively in *Orationis Ratio: The Stylistic Theories and Practice of the Roman Orators, Historians, and Philosophers* (1963). On the text's attention to the values of its upper-class audience, see Patrick Sinclair, "The *Sententia* in *Rhetorica ad Herennium*: A Study in the Sociology of Rhetoric" (*American Journal of Philology* 114 [1993]: 561–80).

Rhetorica ad Herennium

Book IV

I. Inasmuch as in the present Book, Herennius, I have written about Style, and wherever there was need of examples, I have used those of my own making, and in so doing have departed from the practice of the Greek writers¹ on the subject, I must in a few words justify my method. And that I make this explanation from necessity, and not from choice, is sufficiently indicated by the fact that in the preceding Books I have said nothing by way either of preface² or of digression. Now, after a few indispensable observations, I shall, as I undertook to do, discharge my task of explaining to you the rest of the art. But you will more readily understand my method when you have learned what the Greeks say.³

On several grounds they think that, after they have given their own precepts on how to embellish style, they must for each kind of embellishment offer an example drawn from a reputable orator or poet.⁴ And their first ground is that in doing so they are prompted by modesty, because it seems a kind of ostentation not to be content to teach the art, but to appear desirous themselves of creating examples artificially.

Translated by Harry Caplan.

¹See note on 4. v. 7 below. [Tr.]

²Cf. the long prefaces to the books of Cicero, *De Inv.* [Tr.]

³The character of this Introduction to Book 4 (only the final argument and some of the illustrations are Roman) suggests a Greek origin. It reflects the debates between Greeks and Greeks—on Atticism as against Asianism, or the old rhetoric, based on the imitation of the ancients (μίμησις τῶν ἀρχαίων), as against the modern (νεωτερισμός). Hermagoras, to whose reliance on the ancients Cicero, *De Inv.* 1. vi. 8, refers, and whom Cicero in his Introduction to that work attacks, was doubtless also in the author's mind. See Paul Wendland, *Quaestiones Rhetoricae*, Göttingen, 1914. As our notes show, in spite of the argument in this Introduction, Book 4 contains numerous examples taken (though often with considerable changes) from a variety of sources, both Roman and Greek. [Tr.]

⁴Rhetoric and poetry meet expressly also in 4. i. 2, ii. 3, iii. 5, iv. 7, v. 7, v. 8, xxxii. 43, xxxii. 44, and 2. xxii. 34. The Peripatetic school encouraged the close relationship between the two. [Tr.]

That, they say, would be showing themselves off, not showing what the art is. Hence it is in the first place a sense of shame which keeps us from following this practice, for we should appear to be approving of ourselves alone, to be prizing ourselves, scorning and scoffing at others. For when we can take an example from Ennius, or offer one from Gracchus,⁵ it seems presumptuous to neglect these and to have recourse to our own examples.

In the second place, examples, they say, serve the purpose of testimony; for, like the testimony of a witness, the example enforces what the precept has suggested and only to a slight degree effected.⁶ Would not a man be ridiculous, then, if in a trial⁷ or in a domestic procedure⁸ he should contest the issue on the basis of his own personal testimony? For an example is used just like testimony to prove a point; it should properly therefore be taken only from a writer of highest reputation, lest what ought to serve as proof of something else should itself require proof. In fact, inventors of examples must either prefer themselves to all others and esteem their own products most of all, or else deny that the best examples are those taken from the orators or poets of highest reputation. If they should set themselves above all others, they are unbearably conceited; if they should grant to any others a superiority over themselves and yet not believe that the examples of these others excel their own, they cannot explain why they concede this superiority.

II. And furthermore, does not the very prestige of the ancients not only lend greater authority to their doctrine but also sharpen in men the desire to imitate them? Yes, it excites the ambitions and whets the zeal of all men when the hope is

⁵Ennius and Gracchus served as models for Crassus in his youth; cf. Cicero, *De Oratore* 1. 34. 154. [Tr.]

⁶See note on 4. iii. 5 below. [Tr.]

⁷Whether civil or criminal. [Tr.]

⁸In which the *paterfamilias* exercises his jurisdiction. See Mommsen, pp. 16 ff.; Wenger, *Institutes of the Roman Law of Civil Procedure*, pp. 9 f. [Tr.]

implanted in them of being able by imitation⁹ to attain to the skill of a Gracchus or a Crassus.

Finally, they say, the highest art resides in this: in your selecting a great diversity of passages widely scattered and interspersed among so many poems and speeches, and doing this with such painstaking care that you can list examples, each according to its kind, under the respective topics of the art. If this could be accomplished by industry alone, we should yet deserve praise for not having avoided such a task; but actually, without the highest art it cannot be done. For who, unless he has a consummate grasp of the art of rhetoric, could in so vast and diffuse a literature mark and distinguish the demands of the art? Laymen, reading good orations and poems, approve the orators and poets, but without comprehending what has called forth their approval, because they cannot know where that which especially delights them resides,¹⁰ or what it is, or how it was produced. But he who understands all this, and selects examples that are most appropriate, and reduces to individual principles of instruction everything that especially merits inclusion in his treatise, must needs be a master artist in this field. This, then, is the height of technical skill—in one's own treatise to succeed also in using borrowed examples!

When the Greeks make such assertions, they influence us more by their prestige than by the truth of their argument. For what I really fear is that some one may consider the view contrary to mine adequately recommended because its supporters are the very men who invented this art and are now by reason of their antiquity quite universally esteemed. If, however, leaving the prestige of the ancients out of consideration, they are willing to compare all the arguments, point for point, they will understand that we need not yield to antiquity in everything.

III. First, then, let us beware lest the Greeks offer us too childish an argument in their talk about modesty. For if modesty consists in saying

⁹Cf. the place of Imitation in our author's theory, as set forth in I. ii. 3 above, with the position taken in this Preface (see esp. 4. iv. 7 and 4. vi. 9 below) against borrowing examples which should serve as models for imitation. [Tr.]

¹⁰The like point, with respect to rhythm, is made by Cicero, *Orator* 51. 173. [Tr.]

nothing or writing nothing, why do they write or speak at all? But if they do write something of their own, then why does modesty keep them from composing, themselves, everything they write? It is as if some one should come to the Olympic games to run, and having taken a position for the start, should accuse of impudence those who have begun the race—should himself stand within the barrier and recount to others how Ladas¹¹ used to run, or Boiscus¹² in the Isthmian games. These Greek rhetoricians do likewise. When they have descended into the race-course of our art, they accuse of immodesty those who put in practice the essence of the art; they praise some ancient orator, poet, or literary work, but without themselves daring to come forth into the stadium of rhetoric.¹³ I should not venture to say so, yet I fear that in their very pursuit of praise for modesty they are impudent. Some one may say to them: "Now what do you mean? You are writing a treatise of your own; you are creating new precepts for us; you cannot confirm these yourself; so you borrow examples from others. Beware of acting impudently in seeking to extract from the labor of others praise for your own name." Indeed, if the ancient orators and poets should take the books of these rhetoricians and each remove therefrom what belongs to himself, the rhetoricians would have nothing left to claim as their own.¹⁴

¹¹Of Sparta, a celebrated long-distance runner (c. 450 B.C.), winner in the Olympic games, whose speed is often referred to by Roman authors; see P.-W. 12. 380-1. [Tr.]

¹²Text corrupt. The runner "Boiscus" (if that reading is correct) is elsewhere unknown. The name (of a Thessalian boxer) occurs in Xenophon, *Anab.* 5. 8, and (of a Samian) in W. Dittenberger, *Syll. Inscript. Graec.*, 3rd ed., Leipzig, 1915, No. 420. [Tr.]

¹³Cf. *Corpus Fabularum Aesopicarum*, ed. Hausrath, *Fab.* 33 (1), about the man who, boasting when away from Rhodes that he had "beaten the Olympic record" in a jump he had made at Rhodes, and promising to produce witnesses of his exploit if his hearers would come to Rhodes, was challenged to repeat the leap where he was. [Tr.]

¹⁴In Horace, *Epist.* 1. 3. 15 ff., Celsus is advised to be self-reliant, and not to draw upon writers whose works he has used in the library of the temple of Apollo—"lest, if by chance some day the flock of birds come to reclaim their feathers, the wretched crow stripped of his stolen colors excite laughter." Cf. the jackdaw in Phaedrus, *Fab. Aesop.* 1. 3. and Babrius, *Mythiamb. Aesop.* 72. Philodemus, *Rhet.*, ed. Sudhaus, 2. 67-8, says that in drawing certain technical prin-

“But,” they say, “since examples correspond to testimony, it is proper that, like testimony, they should be taken from men of the highest reputation.”¹⁵ First and foremost, examples are set forth, not to confirm¹⁶ or to bear witness, but to clarify.¹⁷ When I say there is a figure of speech which, for instance, consists of like-ending words, and take this example from Crassus: *quibus possumus et debemus*,¹⁸ I am setting up, not testimony, but an example. The difference between testimony and example is this: by example we clarify the nature of our statement, while by testimony we establish its truth. Furthermore, the testimony must accord with the proposition, for otherwise it cannot confirm the proposition. But the rhetoricians’ performance does not accord with what they propose. How so? In that they promise to write a treatise of the

principles from other arts, such as dialectic, the rhetoricians have “decked themselves out with borrowed plumage.” Cf. also in Lucian, *Pseudolog.* 5. the sophist’s speech, “like Aesop’s jackdaw patched together with borrowed plumes of many colors.” [Tr.]

¹⁵Cf. the rule in Theon 8 (Spengel 2. 110. 25) that in epideictic the judgment must be taken from reputable men. [Tr.]

¹⁶But cf., just above, *eas confirmare*, and 4. xlv. 57, end, *exemplo conprobatum*. [Tr.]

¹⁷Cf. Aristotle, *Problem.* 18.3 (916 b): “We more readily believe in facts to which many bear witness, and examples and tales are like witnesses; furthermore belief through witnesses is easy;” *Rhet.* 2. 20 (1934 a): “If we lack enthymemes, we must use examples as logical proofs . . . If we have enthymemes, we must use examples as witnesses, subsequent and supplementary to the enthymemes. . . . When they follow the enthymemes examples function like witnesses.” Cf. also the definition and functions of the figure *exemplum*, 4. xlix. 62 below, and note. On Example as rhetorical induction see Aristotle, *Rhet.* 1. 2 (1356 b, 1357 b), and cf. *Anal. Pr.* 2. 24 (68 b ff.); for its place in Cicero’s theory of argumentation, *De Inv.* 1. xxix. 44 ff., esp. 49, and *De Oratore* 2.40.169. See further Quintilian, 5.11.1 ff., and on the *exemplum* in deliberative speaking 3. v. 9 above. [Tr.]

¹⁸From the celebrated speech delivered before an Assembly of the people in B.C. 106 by L. Licinius Crassus in support of the law by which Q. Servilius Caepio sought, on behalf of the Senate, to wrest the judicial powers from the equites. In Cicero, *De Oratore* 1. 52. 225, the passage is fuller: “Deliver us from our miseries, deliver us from the jaws of those whose cruelty cannot have enough of our blood; suffer us not to be slaves to any but yourselves as a whole, *whom we both can and ought to serve*.” See also Cicero, *Paradoxa Stoic.* 5. 41. The figure of speech is Homoeoteleuton; see 4. xx. 28 below. [Tr.]

art, and then mostly bring forward examples from authors who were ignorant of the art. Now who can give authority to his writings on the art unless he writes something in conformity with the art?¹⁹ Their performance is at variance with what they seem to promise; for when they undertake to write the rules of their art, they appear to say that they have themselves invented what they are teaching to others, but when they actually write, they show us what others have invented.

IV. “But,” say they, “this very choice from among many is difficult.” What do you mean by difficult? That it requires labor? Or that it requires art? The laborious is not necessarily the excellent. There are many things requiring labor which you would not necessarily boast of having done—unless, to be sure, you thought it a glorious feat to have transcribed by your own hand whole dramas²⁰ or speeches! Or do you say that that kind of thing requires exceptional art? Then beware of appearing inexperienced in greater matters, if you are going to find the same delight in a petty thing as in a great. Doubtless no one quite uncultivated can select in this way; yet many who lack the highest art can. For any one at all who has heard more than a little about the art, especially in the field of style, will be able to discern all the passages composed in accordance with the rules; but the ability to compose them only the trained man will possess. It is as if you should wish to choose maxims from the tragedies of Ennius,²¹ or messengers’ reports from the tragedies of Pacuvius; if, however, just because no one who is quite illiterate can do this, you should suppose that having done it, you are most highly cultivated, you would be foolish, because any person moderately well-read could do it easily. In the same fashion if, having chosen from orations or poems examples marked by definite tokens of art, you should suppose that your per-

¹⁹Cf. Cicero, *De Inv.* 1. vi. 8: “But for a speaker it is a very unimportant thing to speak concerning his art—that Hermagoras has done; by far the most important thing is to speak in conformity with his art—and this, as we all see, Hermagoras was altogether incapable of doing.” [Tr.]

²⁰The task of copying was usually entrusted to slaves. [Tr.]

²¹Cf. Isocrates, *Ad Nicocl.* 44, on the selection of maxims from the outstanding poets. [Tr.]

formance gives proof of superlative art on the ground that no ignoramus is capable of it, you would be in error, because by this token that you offer we see only that you have some knowledge, but we shall need still other tokens to convince us that you know a great deal. Now if to discern what is written artistically proves your mastery of the art, then a far better proof of this mastery is to write artistically yourself. For though the artistic writer will find it easy to discern what has been skillfully written by others, the facile chooser of examples will not necessarily write with skill himself. And even if it is an especial mark of artistic skill, let them employ this faculty at another time, and not when they themselves should be conceiving, creating, and bringing forth.²² In short, let them devote their artistic power to this purpose—to win esteem as worthy themselves to be chosen as models by others, rather than as good choosers of others who should serve as models for them.

Against the contentions of those who maintain that we should use borrowed examples I have said enough. Now let us see what can be said from my own particular point of view.²³

V. Accordingly I say that they are not only at fault in borrowing examples, but make an even greater mistake in borrowing examples from a great number of sources.²⁴ And let us first look at my second point. Were I granting that we should borrow examples, I should establish that we ought to select from one author alone. In the first place, my opponents would then have no ground²⁵ for opposing this procedure, for they might choose and approve whom they would,

²²Cf. the Preface to the *Rhet. ad Alex.* (1421 a): "For the so-called Parian sophists, because they did not themselves give birth to what they teach, have no love for it, in their tasteless indifference, and peddle it about for money." [Tr.]

²³After the Greek writers have had their say, and have been refuted, our author takes up his own "constructive" case; see 4. i. 1. [Tr.]

²⁴The theory and practice of presenting examples from a variety of sources were doubtless Peripatetic; the rhetoricians criticized belong perhaps to the second century B.C. The use of one's own examples, on the other hand, goes back to Corax (see Paul Wendland, *Anaximenes von Iampsakos*, Berlin, 1905, pp. 31 ff.) and was characteristic of the sophists and of the author of the *Rhet. ad Alex.* Note that neither point of view can be regarded as characteristically Greek. [Tr.]

²⁵Their theory is set forth in 4. i. 1–ii. 3 above. [Tr.]

poet or orator, to supply them with examples for all cases, one on whose authority they could rely.²⁶ Secondly, it is a matter of great concern to the student whether he should believe that every one can attain the sum total of qualities, or that no one can, or that one individual can attain one quality and another individual another quality. For if the student believes that all qualities can exist in one man, he himself will strive for a mastery of them all. But if he despairs of this achievement, he will occupy himself in acquiring a few qualities, and with these be content. Nor is this surprising, since the teacher of the art himself has been unable to find all the qualities in one author. Thus, when examples have been drawn from Cato, the Gracchi, Laelius, Scipio, Galba, Porcina, Crassus, Antonius, and the rest, and some as well from the poets and historians, the learner will necessarily believe that the totality could have been taken only from them all, and that barely a few examples could have been taken from only one. He will therefore be content with emulating some one author²⁷ and distrust his own single power to possess the sum total of qualities possessed by all the authors. Now it is disadvantageous for the student to believe that one person cannot possess all qualities; and so I say, no one would fall into this opinion if the rhetoricians had drawn examples from one author alone. Actually, the fact that the writers on rhetoric have presented neither their own examples nor those of some single author, or even two, but have borrowed from all the orators and poets, is a sign that they themselves have not believed that any one individual can be brilliant in all the branches of style. Moreover, should any one wish to show that the art of rhetoric is of no benefit for speaking, he might well in support employ the argument that no one man has been able to master all the branches of rhetoric. Is it not ridiculous for a rhetorician himself to approve by his own judgment what thus supports

²⁶In Cicero, *De Oratore* 2. 22. 90–3, Antonius discusses the imitation of some one good model; Quintilian, in 10. 5. 19, urges the student to follow this "custom of our ancestors," but in 10. 2. 23 advises him not to devote himself entirely to imitating one particular style. Seneca, *Contr.* 1, *Praef.* 6, takes a stand against the adoption of a single model, however eminent. [Tr.]

²⁷Who exemplifies only a few virtues. [Tr.]

the theory of those who utterly condemn the art of rhetoric?²⁸

I have, then, shown that if examples were always to be borrowed, the borrowing should have been from one author. VI. Now we shall learn from the following that they should not have been borrowed at all.

Above all, an example which is cited by a writer on an art should be proof of his own skill in that art. It is as if a merchant selling purple or some other commodity should say: "Buy of me, but I shall borrow from some one else a sample of this to show you." So do these very people who offer merchandise for sale go in search of a sample of it elsewhere; they say: "We have piles of wheat," but have not a handful of grain to show as a sample.²⁹ If Triptolemus, when dispensing seed to mankind, had himself borrowed it from other men, or if Prometheus, wishing to distribute fire amongst mortals, had himself gone about with an urn begging a few coals of his neighbors, he would have appeared ridiculous. Do not these schoolmasters, teachers of public speaking to all the world, see that they are acting absurdly when they seek to borrow the very thing they offer to bestow? If any one should say that he has discovered the richest of deeply hidden springs, and tell of the discovery while suffering extreme thirst and lacking the wherewithal to slake his thirst, would he not be a laughingstock? When these writers declare that they are not only the masters of the springs, but are themselves the wellsprings³⁰ of eloquence, and when it is their duty to water the talents of all, do

²⁸Here is reflected the quarrel, in the second century, between philosophers and rhetoricians concerning education; see Hans von Arnim, *Leben und Werke des Dio von Prusa*, Berlin, 1898, ch. 1, Hubbell, *The Rhetorica of Philodemus*, pp. 364–82, Kroll in P.-W., "Rhetorik," coll. 1080–90. For example, the three Greek philosophers who came as ambassadors from Athens to Rome in 155 B.C. (and wielded considerable influence there) were all opposed to rhetoric—the Academic Carneades, the Peripatetic Critolaüs, and the Stoic Diogenes the Babylonian. [Tr.]

²⁹Cf. Plutarch, *Desmosth.* 23: "Further, [when Alexander demanded the surrender of the Athenian leaders,] Demosthenes said: 'Just as we see merchants selling their stock of wheat by means of a few grains which they carry about with them in a bowl as a sample, so by giving us up, you, without knowing it, give yourselves up too, all of you.'" [Tr.]

³⁰Cf. Longinus, *De Sublim.* 13. 3: "Plato, who from that great Homeric spring drew to himself countless side streams;" Quintilian, 10. 1. 46, and Dionysius Halic., *De Compos.*

they not think it will be laughable if, whilst making the offer to do so, they are themselves parched with drought? Not thus did Chares learn from Lysippus how to make statues.³¹ Lysippus did not show him a head by Myron,³² arms by Praxiteles, a chest by Polycleitus. Rather with his own eyes would Chares see the master fashioning all the parts; the works of the other sculptors he could if he wished study on his own initiative. These writers believe that students of this subject can be better taught by another method.

VII. Furthermore, borrowed examples simply cannot be so well adapted to the rules of the art because in speaking each single topic is in general touched lightly, so that the art may not be obvious. In instructing, on the other hand, one must cite examples that are drafted expressly to conform to the pattern of the art. It is afterwards, in speaking, that the orator's skill conceals his art,³³ so that it may not obtrude and be apparent to all. Thus also to the end that the art may be

Verb. 24, on Homer, as source of inspiration, representing his own conception of Ocean (*Il.* 21. 196–7). [Tr.]

³¹In the eyes of Rhodians, Chares, who produced the Colossus in 280 B.C., would belong in this list of celebrated sculptors of Greece. Lysippus, his teacher, was a contemporary of Alexander the Great; Myron *fl.* 460 B.C.; Praxiteles was born c. 390 B.C.; Polycleitus *fl.* 450–20 B.C. Rhetoricians liked to use the graphic arts for comparison in their theory, *Cf.*, for example, Cicero, *De Inv.* 2. i. 1 ff., *Brutus* 18. 70, *Orator* 2. 8 ff.; Horace, *Ars Poet.*, *init.* (poem and paintings, as in 4. xxviii. 39 below); Quintilian, 12. 10. 1 ff.; Dionysius Halic., *De Imit.* 6 (ed. Usener-Radermacher, 2[1]. 203, and for the method contrary to that in our author's analogy, *fragm.* 6a, p. 214); Theon 1, in Spengel 2. 62. 1 ff. *Cf.* also 4. xi. 16 below: "set the style in relief, as with colors"; Cousin, *Études sur Quintilien*, 1. 658 ff.; Friedrich Blass, *Die griechische Beredsamkeit in dem Zeitraum von Alexander bis auf Augustus*, Berlin, 1865, pp. 222 ff.; E. Bertrand, *De pictura et sculptura apud veteres rhetores*, Paris, 1881; Julius Brzoska, *De canone decem oratorum Atticorum quaestiones*, Breslau, 1883, pp. 69 ff., 81 ff.; Lessing, Laokoon. [Tr.]

³²Cicero, *Brutus* 19. 75, likens the pleasurable effect of Naevius' *Bellum Punicum* to that yielded by a work of Myron; *cf.* also Dionysius Halic., *De Thuc.* 4. [Tr.]

³³*Cf.* 1. x. 17, 2. xxx. 47, and 4. xxiii. 32. The idea is widespread in ancient rhetoric; *cf.* Aristotle, *Rhet.* 3. 2 (1404 b): "Hence may be inferred the need to disguise the art we employ, so that we give the impression of speaking naturally, not artificially. Naturalness is persuasive, artifice is the contrary. People take offense at a speaker who employs artifice, and think he has designs on them—as if he were mixing drinks for them;" also 3. 7 (1408 b). See further Philodemus, *Rhet.*, ed. Sudhaus, 1. 200; Dionysius Halic., *De Lys.* 8;

better understood is it preferable to use examples of one's own creation.

Finally, I have been led to this method by another consideration also—the remoteness from our own usage of the technical terms³⁴ I have translated from the Greek. For concepts nonexistent among us could not have familiar appellations. The translated terms, therefore, must seem rather harsh at first—that will be a fault of the subject, not mine. The rest of my treatise will be devoted to examples. If, however, these which I have here set down had been borrowed from other sources, the result would have been that anything apt in this book would not be mine, but whatever is a little rough or strange would be assigned to me as my own particular contribution. So I have escaped this disadvantage also.

On these grounds, although esteeming the Greeks as the inventors of the art, I have not followed their theory of examples. Now it is time to turn to the principles of Style.

I shall divide the teaching of Style into two parts. First I shall state the kinds to which oratorical style should always confine itself,³⁵ then I shall show what qualities style should always have.

VIII. There are, then, three kinds of style, called types,³⁶ to which discourse, if faultless,

confines itself: the first we call the Grand; the second, the Middle; the third, the Simple.³⁷ The Grand type consists of a smooth and ornate arrangement of impressive words.³⁸ The Middle type consists of words of a lower, yet not of the lowest and most colloquial, class of words. The Simple type is brought down even to the most current idiom of standard speech.

A discourse will be composed in the Grand style if to each idea are applied the most ornate words that can be found for it, whether literal or figurative; if impressive thoughts are chosen, such as are used in Amplification and Appeal to Pity; and if we employ figures of thought and figures of diction which have grandeur—these I shall discuss later.³⁹ The following will be an example of this type of style:

“Who of you, pray, men of the jury, could de-

³⁷ἀδρόν (μεγαλοπεπές, περιττόν), μέσον (μιχτόν), ισχνόν (λιτόν), and for other terms see W. Schmid, *Rhein. Mus.* 49 (1894). 136 ff. Here is the first extant division of the styles into three. Cf. especially Cicero, *De Oratore* 3. 45. 177, 52. 199, 55. 212, *Orator* 5. 20 ff., 23. 75 ff.; Dionys. Halic., *De Demosth.* 1 ff., and for the doctrine as transferred to Composition (ἀνυθεσις), *De Composit. Verb.*, chaps. 21 ff.; Quintilian, 12. 10. 58 ff.; also Varro in Gellius 6. 14. To Cicero (*Orator* 21. 69 ff.), following a Hellenistic (and doubtless Peripatetic) concept, each of the styles represents a function of the orator, the plain (*subtile*) serving for proof (*probare*), the middle (*modicum*) for delight (*delectare*), and the vigorous (*vehemens*) for swaying the hearers (*flectere*). Scholars are not in agreement on the ultimate origin of the fixed categories; some assign the doctrine to Theophrastus (see A. Körte, *Hermes* 64 [1929]. 80, and Wilhelm Kroll, *Rhein. Mus.* 62 [1907]. 86 ff., *Introd.* to ed. of Cicero, *Orator* [Berlin, 1913], p. 4, note 1, and “Rhetorik,” coll. 1074 f.), while others deny this attribution (see G. L. Hendrickson, *Amer. Journ. Philol.* 25 [1904]. 125–46 and 26 [1905]. 249–90, and Stroux, *De Theophrasti virt. dic.*, Leipzig, 1912, chaps. 1, 7, and 8). On varying views of the part played by the Peripatetic ethical idea of the mean (μεσότης) in the development of the doctrine see especially the articles by Hendrickson and Kroll, and S. F. Bonner in *Class. Philol.* 33 (1938). 257–66. Cf. the four types of style in Demetrius, *De Elocut.* 36, the twofold division in Cicero, *Brutus* 55. 201; and see Fritz Wehrli, “Der erhabene und der schlichte Stil in der poetisch-rhetorischen Theorie der Antike,” *Phyllobolia für Peter von der Mühl*, Basel, 1946, p. 29. Quintilian, 12. 10. 66 ff., considers the limitation to three styles arbitrary. [Tr.]

³⁸Echoed below in connection with Epanaphora (xiii. 19), Antithesis (xv. 21), Interrogation (xv. 22), Paronomasia (xxiii. 32), Surrender (xxix. 39—provoking pity), and Asyndeton (xxx. 41—animation). [Tr.]

³⁹4. xiii. 19 ff. [Tr.]

Dionysius, *Ars Rhet.* 8. 16 (ed. Usener-Radermacher, 2 [1]. 322); Longinus, *De Sublim.* 22. 1; “For art is perfect when it seems to be nature, and nature is effective when she contains art hidden within her,” 17, 1–2, 38. 3; Anon. Seg. 94, in Spengel-Hammer 1 (2). 369; Hermogenes, *De Meth. Gravit.* 17 (ed. Rabe, p. 433); Philostratus, *Vita Apollon.* 8. 6; Longinus, in Spengel-Hammer 1 (2). 195. 4; Cicero, *De Inv.* 1. xviii. 25, 1. lii. 98, *Brutus* 37. 139, *De Oratore* 2. 37. 156, 2. 41. 177, *Orator* 12. 38, *Part. Orat.* 6. 19; Ovid, *Metam.* 10. 252; Quintilian, 1. 11. 3, 2. 5. 7, 4. 1. 8–9, 4. 1. 54, 4. 1. 56–58, 4. 2. 59, 4. 2. 126–7, 9. 4. 144, 11. 2. 47. [Tr.]

³⁴ὀνόματα τεχνικά. Cf. Varro in Cicero, *Academ.* 1. 6. 24: “Since we are treating unusual subjects you will no doubt allow me on occasion to use words unheard of before, as the Greeks themselves do, and they have now been treating these subjects for a long time”; Cicero, *Orator* 57. 211. [Tr.]

³⁵The three kinds do not occur in every correct discourse, but the kinds of correct discourse are limited to these three. [Tr.]

³⁶χαρακτήρες, ἡλίσματα. Notice the word *figura*. Our author's term corresponding to English “figure of speech” is *exornatio* (σχῆμα), as in 4. xiii. 18 below (Cicero's term, *lumen*, is used only in 4. xxiii. 32 below); *figura* as “figure of speech” appears first in Quintilian. [Tr.]

wise a punishment drastic enough for him who has plotted to betray the fatherland to our enemies? What offense can compare with this crime, what punishment can be found commensurate with this offense?⁴⁰ Upon those who had done violence to a freeborn youth, outraged the mother of a family, wounded,⁴¹ or—basest crime of all—slain a man, our ancestors exhausted the catalogue of extreme punishments; while for this most savage and impious villainy they bequeathed no specific penalty.⁴² In other wrongs, indeed, injury arising from another's crime extends to one individual, or only to a few; but the participants in this crime are plotting, with one stroke, the most horrible catastrophes for the whole body of citizens. O such men of savage hearts! O such cruel designs! O such human beings bereft of human feeling! What have they dared to do, what can they now be planning? They are planning how our enemies, after uprooting our fathers' graves, and throwing down our walls, shall with triumphant cry rush into the city; how when they have despoiled the temples of the gods, slaughtered the Conservatives and dragged all others off into slavery, and when they have subjected matrons and freeborn youths to a foeman's lust, the city, put to the torch, shall collapse in the most violent of conflagrations! They do not think, these scoundrels, that they have fulfilled their desires to the utmost, unless they have gazed upon the piteous ashes of our most holy fatherland. Men of the jury, I cannot in words do justice to the shameful of their act; yet that disquiets me but little, for you have no need of me. Indeed your own hearts, overflowing with patriotism, readily tell you to drive this man, who would have betrayed the fortunes of all, headlong from this commonwealth,⁴³ which he would have

⁴⁰Cf. Cicero, *Verr.* 2. 2. 16. 40: "How shall one deal with this man? What punishment can be found commensurate with his lawlessness?" [Tr.]

⁴¹On the criminal law in respect to wounding with intent to kill, see Mommsen, p. 627. [Tr.]

⁴²Cf. the ninth commonplace in 2. xxx. 49 above, the comparison of crimes. [Tr.]

⁴³This passage (see also 4. xxxvi. 48 and 4. xxxix. 51 below, and 2. xxviii. 45 above) is not to be taken (with Mommsen, p. 972, note 1) as evidence that interdiction was the legal punishment for treason exacted of a citizen. Note "bequeathed no specific penalty" above in this example, and

buried under the impious domination of the foulest of enemies."⁴⁴

IX. Our discourse will belong to the Middle type if, as I have said above,⁴⁵ we have somewhat relaxed our style, and yet have not descended to the most ordinary prose, as follows:

"Men of the jury, you see against whom we are waging war—against allies who have been wont to fight in our defense, and together with us to preserve our empire by their valor and zeal. Not only must they have known themselves, their resources, and their manpower, but their nearness to us and their alliance with us in all affairs enabled them no less to learn and appraise the

see Ernst Levy, *Die röm. Kapitalstrafe*, Sitzungsber. Heidelberg. Akad. (philos.-hist. Klasse) 21, 5 (1930-31). 20 ff. [Tr.]

⁴⁴The example is of an *amplificatio criminis*, belonging to the Conclusion of a speech. For an analysis of this passage, see Jules Marouzeau, *Rev. de Philol.* 45 (1921). 155-6, and *Traité de stylistique appliqué au Latin*, Paris, 1935, p. 181: The diction is grandiloquent, but not artificial as in the passage below illustrating the swollen style. Note the elegant and learned abstract in *-tus (dominatu)* for *-tio*, the archaic genitive *deum*, the far-fetched *hostilem libidinem* (adj. serving for genitive of noun), the artificial disjunctions (e.g., *idoneam . . . poenam*), the periods, the tripartite interjections, the chiasmus in *violassent ingenuum, matremfamilias constuprassent*, The play on words (*hominem humanitate, excogitare cogitarit*), the accumulation of epithets and of superlatives, the contrasts as in *uno consilio, universis civibus*, the variety in the echoes (*quo pacto, quo modo*), the periphrasis in *huius sceleris qui sunt adfines*, the expressive verbs (*excogitare, constuprassent, machinantur, conflagrata, trucidatis*), and the poetic words (e.f., *moenibus*). Figures of speech are Paronomasia (see 4. xxi. 29 below) in *excogitare . . . cogitarit*, Isocolon (see 4. xx. 27 below) in *Quod maleficium . . . comparari, quod huic . . . inveniri*, Apostrophe (see 4. xv. 22 below) in *O feros animos . . . humanitate*, Reasoning by Question and Answer (see 4. xvi. 23 below) in *Quaid agere, etc.*, and Surrender (see 4. xxix. 39 below) in the last two sentences of the passage. The passage contains no periods ending with monosyllables; the example of the middle style below contains a few. It contains sixteen dichorees (- - -) in the clausulae; the example of the middle style contains eight, and that of the simple style only one. See Friedrich Blass, *Die Rhythmen der asianischen und römischen Kunstprosa*, Leipzig, 1905, pp. 107-9; Konrad Burdach, *Schleisch-böhmische Briefmuster aus der Wende des vierzehnten Jahr-hunderts* (Vom Mittelalter zur Reformation 5), Berlin, 1926, pp. 106 ff.; and the notes on 4. xix. 26 and 4. xxxii. 44 below. Dionysius Halic., *De Demosth.*, ch. 1, chooses Gorgias and Thucydides as representatives of the grand style. [Tr.]

⁴⁵4. viii. 11. [Tr.]

power of the Roman people in every sphere. When they had resolved to fight against us, on what, I ask you, did they rely in presuming to undertake the war, since they understood that much the greater part of our allies remained faithful to duty, and since they saw that they had at hand no great supply of soldiers, no competent commanders, and no public money—in short, none of the things needful for carrying on the war? Even if they were waging war with neighbors on a question of boundaries, even if in their opinion one battle would decide the contest, they would yet come to the task in every way better prepared and equipped than they are now. It is still less credible that with such meager forces they would attempt to usurp that sovereignty over the whole world which all the civilized peoples, kings, and barbarous nations have accepted, in part compelled by force, in part of their own will, when conquered either by the arms of Rome or by her generosity. Some one will ask: “What of the Fregellans? Did they not make the attempt on their own initiative?” Yes, but these allies would be less ready to make the attempt precisely because they saw how the Fregellans fared.⁴⁶ For inexperienced peoples, unable to find in history a precedent for every circumstance, are through imprudence easily led into error; whilst those who know what has befallen others can easily from the fortunes of these others draw profit for their own policies.⁴⁷ Have they, then, in taking up arms, been impelled by no motive? Have they relied on no hope? Who will believe that any one has been so mad as to dare, with no forces to depend on, to challenge the sovereignty of the Roman people? They must, therefore, have had some motive, and what else can this be but what I say?⁴⁸

⁴⁶By destroying Fregellae when, after a long history of loyalty, she rebelled in 125 B.C., Rome kept her Italian confederacy intact. See. 4. xv. 22 and 4. xxvii. 37 below. The figure here is Hypophora; see 4. xxiii. 33 below. [Tr.]

⁴⁷For the maxim (see 4. xvii. 24 below) cf. Terence, *Heaut. Tim.* 221; Publilius Syrus 177 (ed. J. Wight Duff and A. M. Duff): “From another’s fault a wise man corrects his own,” 60: “In another’s misfortune it is good to descry what to avoid,” and 133; Livy, 22. 39. 10; Tacitus, *Annals* 4. 33. [Tr.]

⁴⁸Whether the example is an excerpt from a speech actually delivered, or our author’s own creation, is uncertain. The

X. Of the Simple type of style, which is brought down to the most ordinary speech of every day, the following will serve as an example:

“Now our friend happened to enter the baths, and, after washing, was beginning to be rubbed down. Then, just as he decided to go down into the pool, suddenly this fellow turned up. “Say, young chap,” said he, “your slaveboys have just beat me; you must make it good.” The young man grew red, for at his age he was not used to being hailed by a stranger. This creature started to shout the same words, and more, in a louder voice. With difficulty the youth replied: “Well, but let me look into the matter.” Right then the fellow cries out in the tone of his that might well force blushes from any one; this is how aggressive and harsh it is—a tone certainly not practiced in the neighborhood of the Sundial, I would say, but backstage, and in places of that kind.⁴⁹ The young man was embarrassed. And no wonder, for his ears still rang with the scoldings of his tutor, and he was not used to abusive language of this kind. For where would he have seen a buffoon, with not a blush left, who thought of himself as having no good name to lose, so that he could do anything he liked without damage to his reputation?”

Thus the examples themselves are enough to make clear the types of style. For one arrangement of words is of the simple type, another again belongs to the grand, and another belongs to the middle.

But in striving to attain these styles, we must

sentiments are such as Q. Varius Hybrida might have uttered in support of his law (90 B.C.) prosecuting those who by malicious fraud compelled the allies to war against Rome; confederates at Rome are referred to in the example of the slack style, 4. xi. 16 below. The present example belongs to the *ratiōnis confirmatio* of an argument (see 2. xviii. 28 above), and is not so impassioned as the example of the grand style above. Dionysius Halic., *De Demosth.*, ch. 3 ff., chooses Thrasymachus, Isocrates, and Plato as representatives of the middle style. [Tr.]

⁴⁹The Sundial, in the Forum, was a much frequented meeting-place for gossip; cf. Cicero, *Pro Quinctio* 18. 59. The Roman citizen ordinarily looked down upon actors as beneath his dignity; they were usually freedmen or slaves. For the connection between the stage and vice see, e.g., Cicero, *In Cat.* 2. 5. 9. [Tr.]

avoid falling into faulty styles closely akin to them.⁵⁰ For instance, bordering on the Grand style, which is in itself praiseworthy, there is a style to be avoided. To call this the Swollen⁵¹ style will prove correct. For just as a swelling often resembles a healthy condition of the body, so, to those who are inexperienced, turgid and inflated language often seems majestic—when a thought is expressed either in new or in archaic words, or in clumsy metaphors, or in diction more impressive than the theme demands,⁵² as follows: “For he who by high treason betrays his native land, will not have paid a condign penalty albeit hurtl’d into gulfs Neptunian. So punish ye this man, who hath builded mounts of war, destroyed the plains of peace.”⁵³ Most of those who fall into this type, straying from the type they began with, are misled by the appearance of grandeur and cannot perceive the tumidity of the style.

XI. Those setting out to attain the Middle style, if unsuccessful, stray from the course and

⁵⁰παρραχέιμενα ἀμαρτήματα. Cf. Longinus, *De Sublim.*, ch. 3, and Horace, *Ars Poet.* 24–8. These deviations (παρεχβάσεις) are Peripatetic in concept; excess in style is judged in relation to the mean. The faulty styles were known to Marcus Varro (Gellius 6. 14); cf. also Demetrius, *De Elocut.* 114, 186, 236, 302. [Tr.]

⁵¹οιδούν, ἐπηρμένον, ὑπεροβάλλον, φυσῶδες. Cf. Longinus, *De Sublim.* 3. 4: “Evil are the swellings (ὄγκου), both in the body and in diction, which are inflated and unreal, and threaten us with the reverse of our aim” (tr. W. Rhys Roberts); Horace, *Ars Poet.* 27. [Tr.]

⁵²Thus violating propriety (τὸ πρόπον). See notes on 3. xv. 26, 4. xi. 16, 4. xii. 17, and 4. xv. 22, and Introduction, p. xx. For a study of the history of this principle, see Max Pohlenz, *Nachrichten von der Gesellsch. der Wissensch. zu Göttingen (Philol.-histor. Klasse)*, 1933, pp. 53–92. [Tr.]

⁵³Marouzeau, *art. cit.*, pp. 157–8, and *Traité*, p. 181, analyzes the learned affectations in spelling, forms, and construction, all embraced by a *tour de force* in four lines. Note the archaic forms *subplici*, *poenite*, and the Lucretian *montis*; the curious *depultus*, representing the primitive form of the participle; the ancient deponent *fabricari*; the emphatic *venditare*; *perduellionibus*, rare example of an abstract in the plural (the author elsewhere uses *maiestas*; for the difference between the two crimes see H. F. Jolowicz, *Historical Intro. to the Study of Roman Law*, 2nd ed., Cambridge, 1952, p. 327); the highly poetic *lacunas*; the disjunction of *Neptunias* and *lacunas*; the adjective *Neptunias* for the genitive of the noun; the learned double metaphor in *montis* and *campos*. These passages illustrating the faulty styles were doubtless made up by our author, with the examples of the faultless styles in view. [Tr.]

arrive at an adjacent type, which we call the Slack⁵⁴ because it is without sinews⁵⁵ and joints; accordingly I may call it the Drifting, since it drifts to and fro, and cannot get under way with resolution and virility. The following is an example: “Our allies, when they wished to wage war with us, certainly would have deliberated again and again on what they could do, if they were really acting of their own accord and did not have many confederates from here, evil men and bold.⁵⁶ For they are used to reflecting long, all who wish to enter upon great enterprises.”⁵⁷ Speech of this kind cannot hold the hearer’s attention, for it is altogether loose, and does not lay hold of a thought and encompass it in a well-rounded period.

Those who cannot skillfully employ that elegant simplicity of diction discussed above, arrive at a dry and bloodless kind of style which may aptly be called the Meager. The following is an example: “Now this fellow came up to this lad in the baths. After that he says: ‘Your slaveboy here has beat me.’ After that the lad says to him: ‘I’ll think about it.’ Afterwards this fellow called the lad names and shouted louder and louder, while a lot of people were there.” This language, to be sure, is mean and trifling, having missed the goal of the Simple type, which is speech composed of correct and well-chosen words.

Each type of style, the grand, the middle, and the simple, gains distinction from rhetorical figures, which I shall discuss later.⁵⁸ Distributed sparingly, these figures set the style in relief, as with colors; if packed in close succession, they set the style awry.⁵⁹ But in speaking we should

⁵⁴εχλευμένον, διαλευμένον. Cf. Cicero, *Orator* 68. 228. [Tr.]

⁵⁵For the analogy cf. Fortunatianus 3. 9 (Halm, p. 126): “What style is the reverse of the middle style? The lukewarm, slack, and, as I may call it, sinewless style”; and Horace, *Ars Poet.* 26–7. [Tr.]

⁵⁶The phrase *malos et audaces* is used by Sisenna, fragm. 110, *Hist. Rom. Reliquiae*, ed. Hermann Peter, Leipzig, 1914, 1. 291. “Here” refers to Rome. [Tr.]

⁵⁷Cf. Sophocles, *Electra* 320: “Yes, a man entering upon a great enterprise likes to pause.” [Tr.]

⁵⁸4. xiii. 18 below. [Tr.]

⁵⁹Thus violating propriety; see note on 4. x. 15 above. If *oblitam* be the correct reading, then “they produce an overloaded, or overdaubed, style.” [Tr.]

vary the type of style, so that the middle succeeds the grand and the simple the middle, and then again interchange them, and yet again. Thus, by means of the variations,⁶⁰ satiety is easily avoided.

XII. Since I have discussed the types to which style should confine itself, let us now see what qualities should characterize an appropriate and finished style. To be in fullest measure suitable to the speaker's purpose such a style should have three qualities: Taste, Artistic Composition,⁶¹ and Distinction.⁶²

Taste makes each and every topic seem to be expressed with purity and perspicuity. The sub-heads under Taste are Correct Latinity and Clarity.

It is Correct Latinity⁶³ which keeps the language pure, and free of any fault. The faults in language which can mar its Latinity are two: the Solecism and the Barbarism. A solecism occurs if the concord between a word and one before it in a group of words is faulty. A barbarism occurs if the verbal expression is incorrect. How to

avoid these faults I shall clearly explain in my tract on Grammar.⁶⁴

Clarity renders language plain and intelligible. It is achieved by two means, the use of current terms and of proper terms. Current terms are such as are habitually used in everyday speech. Proper terms are such as are, or can be, the designations specially characteristic of the subject of our discourse.⁶⁵

Artistic Composition consists in an arrangement of words which gives uniform finish to the discourse in every part. To ensure this virtue we shall avoid the frequent collision of vowels,⁶⁶ which makes the style harsh and gaping, as the following: "Bacae aeneae amoenissime inpendebant."⁶⁷ We shall also avoid the excessive recurrence of the same letter,⁶⁸ and this blemish the following verse will illustrate—for at this juncture, in considering faults, nothing forbids me to use examples from others:

O Tite, tute, Tati, tibi tanta, tyranne, tulisti.⁶⁹

And this verse of the same poet:

⁶⁰*Tractatio*; see note to 2. xviii. 27 above. Dionysius Halic., *De Demosth.*, chaps. 8 ff., thinks that Demosthenes best blended all three types of style. [Tr.]

⁶¹σύνθεσις ὀνομάτων, ἁρμονία. The scanty treatment of Artistic Composition in 4. xii. 18 below is confined to the avoidance of faults rather than to constructive theory. [Tr.]

⁶²The qualities were chiefly treated by the Peripatetics and Stoics. The Theophrastan scheme is here modified. The four qualities in Theophrastus' system were Purity (Ἐλληνισμός), Clarity (σαφήνεια), Appropriateness (τὸ πρέπον), and Ornamentation (χατασκευή), this last embracing Correct Choice of Words (ἐχλογὴ ὀνομάτων), Artistic Composition (ἁρμονία), and the Figures (σχήματα). Thus for our author, *elegantia* comprises two primary qualities of Theophrastus' scheme; Appropriateness (see note on 4. x. 15 above) is here missing; the ornamentation residing in the choice of words is left unconsidered (except for what he says under *explanatio*, and his treatment of Metaphor among the figures; see 4. xxxiv. 45 below); Artistic Composition is a primary quality, and is not treated as a branch of Ornamentation; finally, Ornamentation, represented by *dignitas*, is limited to the Figures. See Stroux, *De Theophrasti virt. dic.*, pp. 22–3, 64–7. [Tr.]

⁶³Corresponds to Ἐλληνισμός among the Greek rhetoricians. Solecism and barbarism were studied chiefly by the Stoics. Cf. Quintilian, I. 5. 5 ff., I. 5. 34 ff.; C. N. Smiley, *Latinitas and ΕΛΛΗΝΙΣΜΟΣ*, Madison, 1906; Hubbell, *The Rhetorica of Philodemus*, p. 295, note 4; Volkmann, p. 396, note 1; Alexander Numenii, *De Schemat.*, in Spengel 3. 9. 25: "Barbarism involves correction of a word, solecism of the syntax." [Tr.]

⁶⁴At this juncture in the discussion of Style rhetoricians would refer to grammatical studies; cf. Quintilian, 8. I. 2; Martianus Capella, 5. 508. Whether our author ever wrote a tract on Grammar we do not know; see notes on 3. ii. 3 and 3. xvi. 28 above. This is the earliest mention in extant literature of a specific Latin *ars grammatica*. The close connection between grammatical and rhetorical studies is characteristic of Rhodian education. [Tr.]

⁶⁵The regular designations of things, literal as against metaphorical, the designations "which were so to speak born with the things themselves" (Cicero, *De Oratore* 3. 37. 149). [Tr.]

⁶⁶Hiatus, σύγχρουσις φωνηέντων. On this subject cf. Dionysius Halic., *De Composit. Verb.*, ch. 23, and especially Demetrius, *De Elocut.* 2. 68 ff., 5. 299, who, while warning against a jerky style, yet points to the force, music, and harmony of speech that hiatus can bring. Isocrates and his followers, and Demosthenes, avoided hiatus, Thucydides and Plato [in his earlier dialogues] did not; see Cicero, *Orator* 44. 150 ff. Philodemus, *Rhet.*, ed. Sudhaus, I. 163, thinks hiatus rather frigid, but sometimes convenient. [Tr.]

⁶⁷"The copper-colored berries hung most invitingly"; Asian in style.

⁶⁸Alliteration; most often Paramoeon to the grammarians; Homoeoprophoron to Martianus Capella (5. 514). Alliteration (as it has been called since early modern times) played a larger rôle in Latin than in Greek style; see Schmalz-Hofmann, pp. 801–3, Marouzeau, *Traité*, pp. 42–7, and Eduard Wölfflin, "Zur Allitteration," *Mélanges Boissier*, Paris, 1903, pp. 461–4. [Tr.]

⁶⁹Thyself to thyself, Titus Tatius the tyrant, thou tookest those terrible troubles" (fragm. 108, tr. Warmington); from

quoiquam quicquam quemquam, quemque quisque
conveniat, neget.⁷⁰

And again, we shall avoid the excessive repetition of the same word,⁷¹ as follows:

Nam cuius rationis ratio non extet, ei
rationi ratio non est fidem habere admodum;⁷²

Again, we shall not use a continuous series of words with like case endings,⁷³ as follows:

Flentes, plorantes, lacrimantes, obtestantes.⁷⁴

Again, we shall avoid the dislocation of words,⁷⁵ unless it is neatly effected—and this I shall discuss later. Coelius persists in this fault, as the following illustrates: “In priore libro has res ad te scriptas, Luci, misimus, Aeli.”⁷⁶ One should likewise avoid a long period, which does violence both to the ear of the listener and to the breathing of the speaker.

These vices of composition avoided, we must devote the rest of our efforts to conferring Distinction upon the style. XIII. To confer dis-

Ennius' *Annals*, Bk. I. See Vahlen p. 18. Cf. Charisius, ed. Barwick, p. 370, and Donatus, in Keil, *Gramm. Lat.* 4. 398. 20. [Tr.]

⁷⁰Marx suggests that in the original play this verse might have been preceded by something like *cum debere carnufex*. “[Since the rascal] denies that anyone [owes] anything to anyone, whoever sues whomever.” We do not know from which play (comedy) of Ennius the verse comes. [Tr.]

⁷¹Transplacement. See 4. xiv. 20 below. [Tr.]

⁷²“For when the reasonableness of a reason is not evident, in that reason it is not reasonable to put any faith at all.” These iambic senarii are by Marx, *Proleg.*, p. 118, thought to be in the style of Ennius. [Tr.]

⁷³Homoeoptoton. See 4. xx. 28 below. [Tr.]

⁷⁴“Bewailing, imploring, weeping, protesting,” Spondaic hexameter, assigned without certitude to Ennius; see Vahlen, p. 16, Warmington 1. 462. Cf. Charisius, ed. Barwick, p. 371; Diomedes, in Keil, *Gramm. Lat.* 1. 447. 16; and Donatus, in Keil 4. 398. 23. [Tr.]

⁷⁵Hyperbaton, see 4. xxxii. 44 below. [Tr.]

⁷⁶L. Coelius Antipater, after 121 B.C., dedicated his *Punic War* (in seven books) to L. Aelius Stilo. In the Preface to Book I he promised that he would use Hyperbaton only when necessary (Cicero, *Orator* 69. 230), but he violated this principle, as here in the Preface to Book II: “In the previous Book, Lucius Aelius, I dedicated to you the account of these events.” Following a normal word order the sentence would read: *In priore libro, Luci Aeli, has res scriptas ad te misimus*. Note also that beginning with the fourth word we have a complete dactylic hexameter—an example of epic influence. [Tr.]

inction upon style is to render it ornate,⁷⁷ embellishing it by variety. The divisions under Distinction are Figures of Diction and the Figures of Thought.⁷⁸ It is a figure of diction if the adornment is comprised in the fine polish of the language itself. A figure of thought derives a certain distinction from the idea, not from the words.

Epanaphora⁷⁹ occurs when one and the same word forms successive beginnings for phrases expressing like and different ideas, as follows: “To you must go the credit for this, to you are thanks due, to you will this act of yours bring glory.” Again: “Scipio razed Numantia, Scipio destroyed Carthage, Scipio brought peace, Scipio saved the state.” Again: “You venture to enter the Forum? You venture to face the light? You venture to come into the sight of these men? Dare you say a word? Dare you make a request of them? Dare you beg off punishment?”⁸⁰ What can

⁷⁷χατασχευή (sometimes χόσμος), which includes also *gravitas* (μεγαλοπρέπεια) and *suavitas* (τὸ ἡδύ), as is made clear in 4. lvi. 69 below; see also Cicero, *De Inv.* 2. xv. 49. Ornamentation, worked out exclusively by Figures, dominates our author's theory of Style. The Atticists opposed this kind of domination; see Cicero, *Orator* 23. 78–24. 79. [Tr.]

⁷⁸σχήματα (see note on 4. viii. 11 above) λέξεως and σχήματα διανοίας. The distinction, here met for the first time, is best discussed by Quintilian, 9. 1. 10 ff. Fortunatianus, 3. 10 (Halm, pp. 126–7), divides figures of diction into the grammatical (λέξεως) and the rhetorical (λόγου), probably following a Stoic author. The ancients regarded Gorgias of Leontini (fifth century B.C.) as the inventor of σχήματα. Our author's treatment is the oldest extant formal one, yet represents a period preceding that of complete systematization (that of Quintilian and Phoebammon). Tropes are considered at 4. xxxi. 42 below; the figures of thought begin at 4. xxxv. 47. The ancient rhetoricians differ sometimes greatly, sometimes slightly, in their definitions of figures, which became excessively numerous as refinements were made in distinguishing them. The line of demarcation between tropes and figures, and that between figures of thought and figures of diction were often vague. See Quintilian, Bks. 8 and 9, especially 9. 1. ff.; Julius Rufinianus, *De Schem. Dian.* 1. in Halm, pp. 59–60; Willy Barczat, *De figurarum disciplina atque auctoribus*, diss. Göttingen, 1904; Hermann Schrader in *Hermes* 39 (1904). 563–603; Kroll, “Rhetorik,” coll. 1108–12; Volkman, pp. 415 ff., 456 ff.; Cousin, *Études sur Quintilien*, 1. 437–517, and vol. 2. [Tr.]

⁷⁹ἐπιαναφορά. ἐπιβολή in Rutilius Lupus, 1. 7 (Halm, p. 6), is the same figure but also allows the use of synonyms instead of repeating the precise word. [Tr.]

⁸⁰Cf. the epanaphora of *tu* in the passage from the speech (Cicero, *De Oratore* 2. 55. 226) delivered by L. Licinius Crassus *pro Plancio* against M. Junius Brutus c. 91 B.C.:

you say in your defense? What do you dare to demand? What do you think should be granted to you? Have you not violated your oath? Have you not betrayed your friends? Have you not raised your hand against your father? Have you not, I ask, wallowed in every shame?" This figure has not only much charm, but also impressiveness and vigor in highest degree; I therefore believe that it ought to be used for both the embellishment and the amplification of style.

In Antistrophe⁸¹ we repeat, not the first word in successive phrases, as in Epanaphora, but the last, as follows: "It was by the justice of the Roman people that the Carthaginians were conquered, by its force of arms that they were conquered, by its generosity that they were conquered." Again: "Since the time when from our state concord disappeared, liberty disappeared, good faith disappeared, friendship disappeared, the common weal disappeared." Again: "Gaius Laelius was a self-made man, a talented man, a learned man, to good men and good endeavor a friendly man; and so in the state he was the first man." Again: "Is it acquittal by these men that you are demanding? Then it is their perjury that you are demanding, it is their neglect of their reputation that you are demanding, it is the surrender of the laws of the Roman people to your caprice that you are demanding."⁸²

XIV. Interlacement⁸³ is the union of both figures, the combined use of Antistrophe and

"You dare behold the light of day? You dare look these people in the face? You dare present yourself in the forum, within the City, in the plain view of the citizens? You do not tremble in fear of that corpse, you do not tremble in fear of the very images [of your ancestors]?" [Tr.]

⁸¹ἀντιστροφή. ἐπιφορά in Rutilius Lupus 1. 8 (Halm, pp. 6–7). Cf. Disjunction, 4. xxvii. 37 below. [Tr.]

⁸²A free paraphrase of Aeschines, *Adv. Ctes.* 198: "Whoever, then, on the question of the penalty asks for your vote, is asking for the remission of your anger; but whoever in the first speech asks for your vote, is asking for the surrender of your oath, is asking for the surrender of the law, is asking for the surrender of the democratic constitution." The Greek original likewise illustrates Antistrophe. [Tr.]

⁸³συμπλοχή. Cf. Aeschines, *Adv. Ctes.* 202: "Against yourself you are calling him, against the laws you are calling him, against the democratic constitution you are calling him." Cf. also the *complexio* (Résumé of an argument) of 2. xviii. 28 above. [Tr.]

Epanaphora, which are explained above; we repeat both the first word and the last in a succession of phrases, as follows: "Who are they who have often broken treaties? The Carthaginians. Who are they who have waged war with severest cruelty? The Carthaginians. Who are they who have marred the face of Italy? The Carthaginians. Who are they who now ask for pardon? The Carthaginians."⁸⁴ See then how appropriate it is for them to gain their request." Again: "One whom the Senate has condemned, one whom the Roman people have condemned, one whom universal public opinion has condemned, would you by your votes acquit such a one?"

Transplacement makes it possible for the same word to be frequently reintroduced, not only without offense to good taste, but even so as to render the style more elegant, as follows: "One who has nothing in life more desirable than life cannot cultivate a virtuous life."⁸⁵ Again: "You call him a man, who, had he been a man, would never so cruelly have sought another man's life."⁸⁶ But he was his enemy. Did he therefore wish thus to avenge himself upon his enemy, only to prove himself his own enemy?" Again: "Leave riches to the rich man, but as for you, to riches prefer virtue, for if you will but compare riches with virtue, riches will in your eyes prove scarcely worthy to be the lackeys of virtue."

To the same type of figure belongs that which occurs when the same word is used first in one function, and then in another, as follows: "Why do you so zealously concern yourself with this matter, which will cause you much concern?" Again: "To be dear to you would bring me joy—

⁸⁴Quintilian, 9. 3. 31, also cites the example, but without naming the figure. The passage might have come from a debate of the sort engaged in by Cato the Elder and Publius Scipio Nasica; see note on 3. ii. 2 above. [Tr.]

⁸⁵Cf. Alexander Numenii (first half of second Christian century), *De Schemat.*, in Spengel 3. 37: "It is noble to live if one but learns how one ought to live." [Tr.]

⁸⁶This passage may belong to the *controversia* concerning the murder of Sulpicius, 1. xv. 25 above. Cf. Euripides, *Androm.* 590–1: "You a man, most cowardly even of cowards? Where have you any claim to consideration as a man?"; Philemon, fragm. 119, in Kock, *Com. Att. Fragm.* 2. 515: "Tell me, have you any right to speak? You go prattling among men, as though you were a man?" [Tr.]

if only I take care it shall not in anguish cost me dear.”⁸⁷ Again: “I would leave this place, should the Senate give me leave.”⁸⁸

In the four kinds of figures which I have thus far set forth,⁸⁹ the frequent recourse to the same word is not dictated by verbal poverty; rather there inheres in the repetition an elegance which the ear can distinguish more easily than words can explain.

XV. Antithesis⁹⁰ occurs when the style is built upon contraries, as follows: “Flattery had pleasant beginnings, but also brings on bitterest endings.”⁹¹ Again: “To enemies you show yourself conciliatory, to friends inexorable.” Again: “When all is calm, you are confused; when all is in confusion, you are calm. In a situation requiring all your coolness, you are on fire; in one requiring all your ardor, you are cool.”⁹² When there is need for you to be silent, you are uproarious; when you should speak, you grow mute. Present, you wish to be absent; absent, you are

⁸⁷Lit., “To be loved would be pleasant, if only we should take care that there is no bitterness in that love.” Quintilian, 9. 3. 69–70, considers this a flat pun even when used in jest, and quotes the example as something to be avoided, not imitated. Cf. Lucretius 4. 1133 ff. [Tr.]

⁸⁸Lit., “I would come to you if the Senate should grant me permission.” Cf. The Pompeian distich, *Corp. Inscr. Lat.* 4. 4971:

Sei quid Amor valeat nostei, sei te hominem scis,
Commiseresce mei, da veniam ut veniam.

“If you have learned the power of Love, if you know that you are human, pity me; give me leave to come.” [Tr.]

⁸⁹4. xiii. 19–xiv. 21. [Tr.]

⁹⁰ἀντίθεσις, ἀντίθετον, *contrapositum* (Quintilian, 9. 3. 81). In Cicero, *Part. Orat.* 6. 21, a feature of the agreeable (*suave*) style. See 4. xlv. 58 below, and cf. *contrarium*, 4. xviii, 25 below. [Tr.]

⁹¹Cf. the saying assigned to Critias (leading spirit of the Thirty Tyrants) in Stobaeus, 3. 14. 2: “He who so bears himself towards his friends that he does everything to oblige them, renders hateful for the future that which is a pleasure for the nonce”; also Alexis, fragm. 295, in Kock, *Com. Att. Fragm.* 2. 402: “Avoid a pleasure which brings harm in its wake.” [Tr.]

⁹²Cf. Sophocles, *Antig.* 88: “You have a hot spirit for cold business”; Horace, *Arts Poet.* 465: “Empedocles . . . coolly leapt into burning Aetna”; Alexander Numenii, *De Schemat.*, in Spengel 3.36–7: “They bathe the chilled men in hot springs.” Cf. with our author’s last example of Antithesis *Anth. Pal.* 11. 305: “Among grammarians you are a Platonist; but if asked about the doctrines of Plato, you are again a grammarian.” [Tr.]

eager to return.⁹³ In peace, you keep demanding war; in war, you yearn for peace. In the Assembly, you talk of valor; in battle, you cannot for cowardice endure the trumpet’s sound.” Embellishing our style by means of this figure we shall be able to give it impressiveness and distinction.

Apostrophe⁹⁴ is the figure which expresses grief or indignation by means of an address to some man or city or place or object, as follows: “It is you I now address, Africanus, whose name even in death means splendor and glory to the state! It is your famous grandsons⁹⁵ who by their own blood have fed the cruelty of their enemies.” Again: “Perfidious Fregellae, how quickly, because of your crime, you have wasted away!⁹⁶ As a result, of the city whose brilliance but yesterday irradiated Italy, scarce the debris of the foundations now remains.” Again: “Plotters against good citizens,⁹⁷ villains, you have sought the life of every decent man! Have you assumed such power for your slanders thanks to the perversions of justice?” If we use Apostrophe in its proper place, sparingly, and when the importance of the subject seems to demand it,⁹⁸ we shall instill in the hearer as much indignation as we desire.

Not all Interrogation⁹⁹ is impressive or elegant, but that Interrogation is, which when the points against the adversaries’ cause have been

⁹³Cf. Horace, *Serm.* 2. 7. 28: “At home you long for the country; in the country, fickle man, you extol to heaven the distant city.” [Tr.]

⁹⁴ἀποστροφή, ἐχθρότης. Quintilian, 9. 2. 27, considers as a figure only that kind of *exclamatio* which is simulated and artfully composed, and in 9. 3. 97 assigns *exclamatio* to the figures of thought; cf. also 9. 2. 38, 9. 3. 24–6, and 4. 1. 63. [Tr.]

⁹⁵Cornelia, daughter of the elder Scipio Africanus, was the mother of the Gracchi. [Tr.]

⁹⁶Cf. the passage, often used by rhetoricians, in Aeschines, *Adv. Ctes.* 133: “But Thebes, Thebes our neighbor-state, has in one day been swept from the midst of Hellas.” After M. Fulvius Flaccus’ bill granting Roman franchise to the Italian allies failed to pass, Fregellae revolted and was destroyed in 125 B.C. See 4. ix. 13 and 4. xxvii. 37. [Tr.]

⁹⁷Probably addressed to the public informers (*quadruplicatores*). [Tr.]

⁹⁸A consideration of propriety, τὸ πρέπον. See note on 4. x. 15 above. [Tr.]

⁹⁹ἔρωτήματα. *Rogatio* in Cicero, *De Oratore* 3. 53. 203. Assigned by Quintilian, 9. 3. 98, to the figures of thought; see also 9. 2. 7 on the “rhetorical question.” [Tr.]

summed up, reinforces the argument that has just been delivered, as follows: “So when you were doing and saying and managing all this, were you, or were you not, alienating and estranging from the republic the sentiments of our allies? And was it, or was it not, needful to employ some one to thwart these designs of yours and prevent their fulfillment?”¹⁰⁰

XVI. Through the figure, Reasoning by Question and Answer,¹⁰¹ we ask ourselves the reason for every statement we make, and seek the meaning of each successive affirmation, as follows: “When our ancestors condemned a woman for one crime, they considered that by this single judgment she was convicted of many transgressions. How so? Judged unchaste, she was also deemed guilty of poisoning. Why? Because, having sold her body to the basest passions, she had to live in fear of many persons. Who are these? Her husband, her parents, and the others involved, as she sees, in the infamy of her dishonor. And what then? Those whom she fears so much she would inevitably wish to destroy. Why inevitably? Because no honorable motive can restrain a woman who is terrified by the enormity of her crime, emboldened by her lawlessness, and made heedless by the nature of her sex. Well now, what did they think of a woman found guilty of poisoning? That she was necessarily also unchaste. Why? Because no motive could more easily have led her to this crime than base love and unbridled lust. Furthermore, if a woman’s soul had been corrupted, they did not consider her body chaste. Now then, did they observe this same principle with respect to men?

¹⁰⁰Cf. Demosthenes, *De Corona* 71, on Philip: “By these acts was he, or was he not, committing wrong, breaking treaty, and violating the terms of peace? And was it, or was it not, right that some man of the Hellenes should come forth to stop these incursions?” This passage was a favorite of the rhetoricians. It may well be that our author has in mind Q. Varius Hybrida, speaking on behalf of his law *de maiestate* (90 B.C.); see 4. ix. 13 above, and note. [Tr.]

¹⁰¹ἀιτιολογία, ἐξετασμός. Assigned by Quintilian, 9. 3. 98, to the figures of thought. Cf. *sibi ipsi responsio* in Cicero, *De Oratore* 3. 54. 207 and Quintilian, 9. 3. 90, and 4. xxiv. 34 below, with note; also ἀπόφασις in Julius Rufinianus 8 (Halm, p. 40; cf. ἀπόφασις [*infinitio*] in 1. xvii. 27 above). To be distinguished from *ratiocinatio*, the Type of Issue (Reasoning from Analogy), 1. xi. 19 above. [Tr.]

Not at all. And why? Because men are driven to each separate crime by a different passion, whereas a woman is led into all crimes by one sole passion.”¹⁰² Again: “It is a good principle which our ancestors established, of not putting to death any king captured by force of arms.”¹⁰³ Why is this so? Because it were unfair to use the advantage vouchsafed to us by fortune to punish those whom the same fortune had but recently placed in the highest station. But what of the fact that he has led an army against us? I refuse to recall it. Why? Because it is characteristic of a brave man to regard rivals for victory as enemies, but when they have been vanquished to consider them as fellow men, in order that his bravery may avail to put an end to war, and his humanity to advance peace. But had that king prevailed, he would not, would he, have done the same? No, no doubt he would have been less wise. Why, then, do you spare him? Because it is my habit to scorn, not emulate, such folly.” This figure is exceedingly well adapted to a conversational style, and both by its stylistic grace and the anticipation of the reasons, holds the hearer’s attention.

XVII. A Maxim¹⁰⁴ is a saying drawn from life, which shows concisely either what happens or ought to happen in life, for example: “Every beginning is difficult.” Again: “Least in the habit of giving reverence to the virtues is he who has always enjoyed the favors of fortune.” Again: “A free man is that man to be judged who is a slave to no base habit.”¹⁰⁵ Again: “As poor as the man who has not enough is the man who cannot have enough,”¹⁰⁶ Again: “Choose the noblest way of living; habit will make it enjoyable.” Simple

¹⁰²Cf. Quintilian, 5. 11. 39: “Would not an adulteress on trial for poisoning be regarded as condemned by the judgment of Marcus Cato, who said that every adulteress was the same as a poisoner?” [Tr.]

¹⁰³This was true, e.g., of Perseus and Syphax, but not strictly of Jugurtha. [Tr.]

¹⁰⁴γνώμη. Aristotle, *Rhet.* 2. 21 (1394 a–1395 b), offers the classic treatment of maxims. On the virtue of brevity in maxims, see Demetrius, *De Elocut.* 9. *Sententia* is excluded from the figure by Quintilian (9. 3. 98). [Tr.]

¹⁰⁵Cf. Cicero, *Paradoxa Stoic.* 5. 35: “All wicked men are therefore slaves—slaves, I say!”; Diogenes Laertius 7. 21; Philo, *Quod Omnis Probus Liber Sit.* [Tr.]

¹⁰⁶A saying of Epicurus: “Nothing is ‘enough’ to him who deems ‘enough’ to be ‘too little.’” (C. Wotke in *Wiener Studien* 10 [1888]. 197, No. 68). [Tr.]

maxims of this sort are not to be rejected, because, if no reason is needed, the brevity of the statement has great charm. But we must also favor that kind of maxim which is supported by an accompanying reason, as follows: "All the rules for noble living should be based on virtue, because virtue alone is within her own control, whereas all else is subject to the sway of fortune."¹⁰⁷ Again: "Those who have cultivated a man's friendship for his wealth one and all fly from him as soon as his wealth has slipped away. For when the motive of their intercourse has disappeared, there is nothing left which can maintain that friendship."

There are also maxims which are presented in double form. Without a reason, as follows: "They who in prosperity think to have escaped all the onslaughts of fortune are mistaken; they who in favorable times fear a reversal are wise in their forethought." With a reason, as follows: "They who think that the sins of youth deserve indulgence are deceived, because that time of life does not constitute a hindrance to sound studious activities. But they act wisely who chastise the young with especial severity in order to inculcate at the age most opportune for it the desire to attain those virtues by which they can order their whole lives." We should insert maxims only rarely, that we may be looked upon as pleading the case, not preaching morals. When so interspersed, they will add much distinction. Furthermore, the hearer, when he perceives that an indisputable principle drawn from practical life is being applied to a cause, must give it his tacit approval.¹⁰⁸

XVIII. Reasoning by Contraries¹⁰⁹ is the figure which, of two opposite statements, uses one

¹⁰⁷Cf. the Stoic principle assigned to Pythagoras in Stobaeus, 3. 1. 29: "This is God's law: Virtue is the strong and stable thing; all else is nonsense." Cf. also 4. xix. 27 below. [Tr.]

¹⁰⁸Cf. Aristotle, *Rhet.* 2. 21 (1395 b): "Hearers are delighted when a speaker succeeds in expressing as a universal truth the opinions they hold about particular cases." [Tr.]

¹⁰⁹ἐνθύμημα, σχήμα ἐχ τοῦ ἐναντίου. See Quintilian, 5. 10. 2: "There are some who call a conclusion from consequents an epicheireme, while you would find that a majority are of opinion that an enthymeme is a conclusion from incompatibles. And that is why Cornificius calls it Reasoning by Contraries;" 9. 3. 99: "I shall pass by those authors who have set

so as neatly and directly to prove the other, as follows: "Now how should you expect one who has ever been hostile to his own interests to be friendly to another's?"¹¹⁰ Again: "Now why should you think that one who is, as you have learned, a faithless friend, can be an honorable enemy? Or how should you expect a person whose arrogance has been insufferable in private life, to be agreeable and not forget himself when in power, and one who in ordinary conversation and among friends has never spoken the truth, to refrain from lies before public assemblies?" Again: "Do we fear to fight them on the level plain when we have hurled them down from the hills? When they outnumbered us, they were no match for us; now that we outnumber them, do we fear that they will conquer us?" This figure ought to be brief, and completed in an unbroken period. Furthermore, it is not only agreeable to the ear on account of its brief and complete rounding-off, but by means of the contrary statement it also forcibly proves what the speaker needs to prove; and from a statement which is not open to question it draws a thought which is in question, in such a way that the inference cannot be refuted, or can be refuted only with much the greatest difficulty.

XIX. Colon or Clause¹¹¹ is the name given to a sentence member, brief and complete, which does not express the entire thought, but is in turn supplemented by another colon, as follows: "On the one hand you were helping your enemy." That is one so-called colon; it ought then to be

almost no limit to the invention of technical terms, and have even assigned to figures what really belongs under arguments." Cf. the *topos a fortiori* in Aristotle, *Rhet.* 2. 23 (1397 b); *Contentio* (ἀντίθετον) in 4. xv. 21 above and 4. xlv. 58 below. [Tr.]

¹¹⁰Cf. Isocrates, *Ad Callim.* 56: "One who is so base where the interests of others are concerned—what would he not dare where his own are concerned?" [Tr.]

¹¹¹χῶλον. The concept originated in comparison with the human body; it came into rhetoric from the art of music. The doctrine of Colon, Comma, and Period is Peripatetic; cf. Aristotle, *Rhet.* 3. 9 (1409 a ff.). Quintilian, 9. 3. 98, excludes Colon and Comma from the list of figures. See A. du Mesnil, *Begriff der drei Kunstformen der Rede: Komma, Kolon, Periode, nach der Lehre der Alten*, in *Zum zweihundertjährigen Jubiläum des königl. Friedrichs-Gymnas.*, Frankfurt on O., 1894, pp. 32–121. [Tr.]

supplemented by a second: "And on the other you were hurting your friend." This figure can consist of two cola, but it is neatest and most complete when composed of three, as follows: "You were helping your enemy, you were hurting your friend, and you were not consulting your own best interests." Again: "You have not consulted the welfare of the republic, nor have you helped your friends, nor have you resisted your enemies."

It is called a Comma or Phrase when single words are set apart by pauses in staccato speech, as follows: "By your vigor, voice, looks you have terrified your adversaries." Again: "You have destroyed your enemies by jealousy, injuries, influence, perfidy." There is this difference in onset between the last figure and the one preceding: the former moves upon its object more slowly and less often, the latter strikes more quickly and frequently. Accordingly in the first figure it seems that the arm draws back and the hand whirls about to bring the sword to the adversary's body, while in the second his body is as it were pierced with quick and repeated thrusts.

A Period¹¹² is a close-packed and uninterrupted group of words embracing a complete thought. We shall best use it in three places: in a Maxim, in a Contrast,¹¹³ and in a Conclusion. In a Maxim as follows: "Fortune cannot much harm him who has built his support more firmly upon virtue than upon chance." In a Contrast, as follows: "For if a person has not placed much hope in chance, what great harm can chance do him?" In a Conclusion, as follows: "But if Fortune has her greatest power over those who have committed all their plans to chance, we should not entrust our all with her, lest she gain too great a domination over us."¹¹⁴ In these three types a compact style is so necessary for the force of the

¹¹²περίοδος. For other Latin equivalents of this term see Cicero, *Orator* 61. 204, *De Oratore* 3. 48. 186; Quintilian, 9. 4. 22. [Tr.]

¹¹³ἐνθύμημα. See 4. xviii. 25 above. [Tr.]

¹¹⁴For the theme cf. 4. xvii. 24 above. Our author, unlike other post-Aristotelian rhetoricians, does not say that the Period is comprised of *membra*, yet this example seems to contain four—the upper limit usually allowed; see, e.g., Cicero, *Orator* 66. 222, and Demetrius, *De Elocut.* 1. 16, but also Quintilian, 9. 4. 125. On the theory of the Period see esp. Aristotle, *Rhet.* 3. 9 (1409 a ff.); Demetrius, *op. cit.*, 1. 10 ff.,

period that the orator's power seems inadequate if he fails to present the Maxim, Contrast, or Conclusion in a press of words. But in other cases as well it is often proper, although not imperative, to express certain thoughts by means of periods of this sort.

XX. We call Isocolon¹¹⁵ the figure comprised of cola (discussed above)¹¹⁶ which consist of a virtually equal number of syllables. To effect the isocolon we shall not count the syllables—for that is surely childish—but experience and practice will bring such a facility that by a sort of instinct we can produce again a colon of equal length to the one before it, as follows: "The father was meeting death in battle; the son was planning marriage at his home. These omens wrought grievous disasters." Again: "Another man's prosperity is the gift of fortune, but this man's good character has been won by hard work." In this figure it may often happen that the number of syllables seems equal without being precisely so—as when one colon is shorter than the other by one or even two syllables, or when one colon contains more syllables, and the other contains one or more longer or fuller-sounding syllables, so that the length or fullness of sound of these matches and counterbalances the greater number of syllables in the other.

The figure called Homoeoptoton¹¹⁷ occurs when in the same period two or more words appear in the same case, and with like terminations, as follows: "Hominem laudem egentem virtutis, abundantem felicitatis?"¹¹⁸ Again: "Huic omnis in pecunia spes est, a sapientia est animus remo-

5. 244, 303; Cicero, *Orator* 62. 211 ff.; and Josef Zehetmeier, "Die Periodenlehre des Aristoteles;" *Philologus* 85 (1930). 192–208, 255–84, 414–36. Aristotle recognized only periods of either one or two cola, and in fact the division into cola was not of primary importance in his theory. [Tr.]

¹¹⁵ἰσόχωλον. Sometimes classed as a variety of *πάρισον*, *παρίσωσις*, parallelism in structure. The next three figures (cf. also Alliteration, 4. xii. 18 above) represent *παρόμοιον*, *παρομοίωσις*, parallelism in sound. Together with Antithesis (4. xv. 21 above) this and the next three figures comprise the so-called Gorgianic figures. Isocrates exemplifies the extensive and effective use of Isocolon. [Tr.]

¹¹⁶4. xix. 26. [Tr.]

¹¹⁷ὁμοίωσις. Cf. 4. xii. 18 above. [Tr.]

¹¹⁸"Am I to praise a man abounding in good luck, but lacking in virtue?" [Tr.]

tus; diligentia comparat divitias, negligentia corrumpt animum, et tamen, cum ita vivit, neminem prae se ducit hominem.”¹¹⁹

Homoeoteleuton occurs when the word endings are similar, although the words are indeclinable, as follows: “You dare to act dishonorably, you strive to talk despicably; you live hatefully, you sin zealously, you speak offensively.” Again: “Blusteringly you threaten; cringingly you appease.”

These two figures, of which one depends on like word endings and the other on like case endings, are very much of a piece. And that is why those who use them well generally set them together in the same passage of a discourse. One should effect this in the following way: “Perditissima ratio est amorem petere, pudorem fugere, diligere formam, neglegere famam.”¹²⁰ Here the declinable words close with like case endings, and those lacking cases close with like terminations.

XXI. Paronomasia¹²¹ is the figure in which, by means of a modification of sound, or change of letters, a close resemblance to a given verb or noun¹²² is produced, so that similar words express dissimilar things. This is accomplished by many different methods: (1) by thinning or contracting¹²³ the same letter, as follows: “Hic qui se magnifice iactat atque ostentat, venit antequam Romam venit;”¹²⁴ (2) and by the reverse: “Hic

¹¹⁹“This man places all his hope in money; from wisdom is his soul withdrawn. Through diligence he acquires riches, but through negligence he corrupts his soul. And yet, living so, he counts no one any one before himself.” Cf. *neglegentiam . . . diligentiam* in Terence, *Andria* 20 f. [Tr.]

¹²⁰“A most depraved principle it is—to seek love and to shun self-respect, to esteem beauty and to slight one’s own good name.” [Tr.]

¹²¹παρονομασία. Cicero, *Orator* 25. 84, warns the speaker of the Attic plain style against the kind of Paronomasia which is produced by the change of a letter; yet cf. *De Oratore* 2. 63. 256 on Paronomasia in verbal witticisms. See Eduard Wölfflin, “Das Wortspiel im Lateinischen,” *Sitzungsb. Bayer. Akad. der Wiss. (philos.-philol. und histor. Classe)*, 1887 (2), pp. 187–208. [Tr.]

¹²²Our author knows four parts of speech: proper name, or noun (*nomen*, ὄνομα), verb (*verbum*, ῥήμα), common noun, or appellative (*vocabulum*, προσήγοριον), conjunction (*coniunctio*, σύνδεσμος); “noun” would include “adjective,” as in No. 7 below. [Tr.]

¹²³συντολή. Cf. the figure *complexio*, 4. 14. 20 above. [Tr.]

¹²⁴“That man who carries himself with a lofty bearing and makes a display of himself was sold as a slave before coming

quos homines alea vincit, eos ferro statim vincit;”¹²⁵ (3) by lengthening the same letter, as follows: “Hinc avium dulcedo ducit ad avium;”¹²⁶ (4) by shortening the same letter: “Hic, tametsi videtur esse honoris cupidus, tantum tamen curiam diligit quantum Curiam?”¹²⁷ (5) by adding letters, as follows: “Hic sibi posset temperare, nisi amori mallet obtemperare;”¹²⁸ (6) and now by omitting letters, as follows: “Si lenones vitas set tamquam leones, vitae tradidisset se;”¹²⁹ (7) by transposing letters, as follows: “Videte, iudices, utrum homini navo an vano credere malitis;”¹³⁰ (8) by changing letters, as follows: “Deligere oportet quem velis diligere.”¹³¹

to Rome;” *venit* is a contraction of *veniit*, and precedes the *tenuē* (*venit*). [Tr.]

¹²⁵“Those men from whom he wins in dice he straightway binds in chains;” *tenuē* precedes *pleniū* (*vincit* = *vinciit*). [Tr.]

¹²⁶“The sweet song of the birds draws us from here into pathless places.” Quintilian, 9. 3. 69–71, quotes this pun, and the play upon *amari* in 4. xiv. 21 above, as examples to be avoided, not imitated, being flat even when used in jest; he marvels that this artifice is included in the textbooks. Virgil, *Georg.* 2. 328, puns on the same words. Note in connection with the problem of authorship of our treatise that the example here used for *adnominatio* is, according to Quintilian, called an example of *traductio* by Cornificius; cf. 4. xiv. 20 above. [Tr.]

¹²⁷“Does this man, although he seems desirous of public honor, yet love the Curia [the Senate-house] as much as he loves Curia?” The M group of MSS. reads *Curian meretricem*. On this and the next three types of Paronomasia cf. in Phoebammon (Spengel 3. 45 ff.) the four principles governing the formation of all figures: lack, superabundance, transposition, interchange (ἔνδοξα, πλεονασμός, μετάθεσις, ἐναλλαγῆ); in Quintilian, 1. 5. 6 and 1. 5. 38 ff., the four ways of committing barbarisms and solecisms, and, in 6. 3. 53, the poor jests formed by punning in these ways; in Philo, *De aetern. mundi* 22. 113, the four ways (Peripatetic doctrine) in which corruption occurs: addition (πρόσθεσις), subtraction (ἀφαίρεσις), transposition (μετάθεσις), and transmutation (ἀλλοίωσις); and H. Usener, *Sitzungsb. Bayer. Akad. der Wiss. (philos.-philol.-hist. Cl.)*, 1892, pp. 628–31. Cf. also Cicero, *Part. Orat.* 6. 19, on the causes of obscurity in words and periods. [Tr.]

¹²⁸“This man could rule himself, if only he did not prefer to submit to love.” [Tr.]

¹²⁹“If he had avoided panders as though they were lions, he would have devoted himself to life;” the text is corrupt. Tertullian, *Apol.* 50. 12, puns on the same words. [Tr.]

¹³⁰“See, men of the jury, whether you prefer to trust an industrious man or a vainglorious one.” [Tr.]

¹³¹“You ought to choose such a one as you would wish to love.” A form of the saying attributed to Theophrastus, that

These are word-plays which depend on a slight change or lengthening or transposition of letters, and the like. XXII. There are others also in which the words lack so close a resemblance, and yet are not dissimilar. Here is an example of one kind of such word-plays: "Quid veniam, qui sim, quem insimulem, cui prosim, quae postulem, brevi cognoscetis."¹³² For in this example there is a sort of resemblance among certain words, not so complete, to be sure, as in the instances above, yet sometimes serviceable. An example of another kind: "Demus operam, Quirites, ne omnino patres conscripti circumscripti putentur."¹³³ In this paronomasia the resemblance is closer than in the preceding, yet is not so close as in those above, because some letters are added and some at the same time removed.

There is a third form of paronomasia, depending on a change of case in one or more proper nouns.¹³⁴ In one noun, as follows: "Alexander of Macedon with consummate toil from boyhood trained his mind to virtue. Alexander's virtues have been broadcast with fame and glory throughout the world. All men greatly feared Alexander, yet deeply loved him. Had longer life been granted Alexander, the Macedonian lances would have flown across the ocean." Here a single noun has

one must not first love and then judge, but first judge and then love (οὐ φιλοῦντα δεῖ χρίνειν ἀλλὰ χρίναντα φιλεῖν); see Plutarch, *De fraterno amore* 8 (482 B); Rutilius Lupus 1. 6 (Halm, p. 6); Seneca, *Epist.* 3. 2, *De Moribus* 48; Cicero, *De Amic.* 22. 85; Publilius Syrus 134 (ed. J. Wight Duff and A. M. Duff); Stobaeus, 4. 27. 14; Sidonius Apollinaris, *Epist.* 5. 11. 1. In modern form: "If you suspect a man, do not employ him; if you employ a man, do not suspect him." [Tr.]

¹³²"Why I come, who I am, whom I accuse, whom I am helping, what I ask for you will soon know." Cf. Plautus, *Poen.* 992:

adei atque appella quid velit, quid venerit,
qui sit, quoiatis, unde sit.

"Go up to him and ask him what he wants, why he has come, who he is, of what country, and whence he comes." [Tr.]

¹³³"Let us see to it, fellow-citizens, that the Conscript Fathers be not thought to have been utterly duped." Quintilian, 9. 3. 72, considers this kind of paronomasia as producing the very worst of trivial effects. Seneca, *Suas.* 7. 11. reproves for bad taste a speaker who punned on *scripsit* and *proscripsit*. It has been conjectured (see Kroehnert, p. 31) that Crassus may have uttered these words when speaking on behalf of the Servilian law; see note on 4. iii. 5. [Tr.]

¹³⁴Polyptoton (πολύπτωτον). [Tr.]

been inflected, undergoing changes of case. Several different nouns, with change of case, will produce a paronomasia, as follows: "An undeserved death by violence prevented Tiberius Gracchus, while guiding the republic, from abiding longer therein. There befell Gaius Gracchus a like fate, which of a sudden tore from the bosom of the state a hero and staunch patriot. Saturninus, victim of his faith in wicked men, a treacherous crime deprived of life. O Drusus, your blood bespattered the walls of your home, and your mother's face.¹³⁵ They were only now granting to Sulpicius every concession,¹³⁶ yet soon they suffered him not to live, nor even to be buried."¹³⁷

These last three figures—the first based on like case inflections, the second on like word endings, and the third on paronomasia—are to be used very sparingly when we speak in an actual cause, because their invention seems impossible without labor and pains. XXIII. Such endeavors, indeed, seem more suitable for a speech of entertainment than for use in an actual cause.¹³⁸ Hence the speaker's credibility, impres-

¹³⁵Irmentraud Haug, *Würzburger Jahrb. für die Altertumswissenschaft* 2 (1947). 113, argues that the reference is to the bust of Drusus' father. [Tr.]

¹³⁶When in 88 B.C. the quarrel between *populares* and *optimates* grew serious, Sulla suspended the *iusstium*, and fled to his army. Then Sulpicius, in control, put through his measures granting the new Italian citizens a fuller share in political power, and transferring the command in the East to Marius. [Tr.]

¹³⁷The sentiments are those of the Marian party. Ti. Sempronius Gracchus was clubbed to death by Scipio Nasica and his followers in 133 B.C. (see 4. iv. 68 below); C. Sempronius Gracchus was killed in flight after the consul Opimius and his band had stormed the Aventine, in 121 B.C.; L. Appuleius Saturninus was stoned and torn to pieces by a mob in the State-house, in 100 B.C.; M. Livius Drusus was, according to Velleius Paterculus, 2. 14, stabbed by an assassin in the area before his house, in 91 B.C.; on the death, in 88 B.C., of P. Sulpicius Rufus see note on 1. xv. 25 above. Cicero, *De Harusp. Resp.* 19. 41 and 20. 43, in which all the above except Drusus are used as *exempla*, and Seneca, *Octavia* 882–9, in which the fates of the Gracchi and Drusus are joined, may have used the same source as did our author; cf. also Seneca, *Ad Marc. de Cons.* 16. 3 f. [Tr.]

¹³⁸These figures serve epideictic better than judicial or deliberative oratory. Cicero warns the speaker of the Attic plain style against the use of these three figures (and of Isocolon, *Orator* 25. 84), but allows them in epideictic discourse (*Orator* 12. 38, *Part. Orat.* 21. 72); Quintilian, 8. 3. 12, also justifies the full use of ornamentation in epideictic. [Tr.]

siveness, and seriousness are lessened by crowding these figures together. Furthermore, apart from destroying the speaker's authority, such a style gives offense because these figures have grace and elegance, but not impressiveness and beauty. Thus the grand and beautiful can give pleasure for a long time, but the neat and graceful quickly sate the hearing, the most fastidious of the senses.¹³⁹ If, then, we crowd these figures together, we shall seem to be taking delight in a childish style; but if we insert them infrequently and scatter them with variations throughout the whole discourse, we shall brighten our style agreeably with striking ornaments.

Hypophora¹⁴⁰ occurs when we enquire of our adversaries, or ask ourselves, what the adversaries can say in their favor, or what can be said against us; then we subjoin what ought or ought not to be said—that which will be favorable to us or, by the same token, be prejudicial to the opposition, as follows: “I ask, therefore, from what source has the defendant become so wealthy? Has an ample patrimony been left to him? But his father's goods were sold. Has some bequest come to him? That cannot be urged; on the contrary he has even been disinherited by all his kin. Has he received some award from a civil action, whether in the older or the more recent form of procedure? Not only is that not the case, but recently he himself lost a huge sum on a wager at law.¹⁴¹ Therefore, if, as you all see, he has not grown rich by these means, either he has a gold mine in his home, or he has acquired monies from an illicit source.”

XXIV. Another example: “Time and time again, men of the jury, have I observed that numerous defendants look for support in some honorable deed which not even their enemies can impeach. My adversary can do no such thing. Will

¹³⁹Cf. Cicero, *Orator* 44. 150, and *De Oratore* 3. 25. 97 ff.; also Longinus, *De Sublim.*, ch. 7, and Plutarch, *De recta ratione audiendi* 7 (41 E). [Tr.]

¹⁴⁰ὑποφορά, ἀνθυποθορά. Assigned by Quintilian, 9. 3. 98, to the figures of thought. The figure *subiectio* is to be distinguished from the *subiectio* of 2. xviii. 28 and 4. xvii. 24. [Tr.]

¹⁴¹The *sponsio* in a civil suit was an agreement by the litigants that the loser of the case would pay a certain sum of money. [Tr.]

he take refuge in his father's virtue? On the contrary, you have taken your oath and condemned him to death. Or will he turn to his own life? What life, and wherein lived honorably? Why, the life that his man has lived before your eyes is known to all of you. Or will he enumerate his kinsmen, by whom you should be moved? But he has not any. He will produce friends? But there is no one who does not consider it disgraceful to be called that fellow's friend.” Again: “Your enemy, whom you consider to be guilty, you doubtless summoned him to trial? No, for you slew him while he was yet unconvicted. Did you respect the laws which forbid this act? On the contrary, you decided that they did not even exist in the books. When he reminded you of your old friendship, were you moved? No, you killed him nevertheless, and with even greater eagerness. And then when his children grovelled at your feet, were you moved to pity? No, in your extreme cruelty you even prevented their father's burial.”¹⁴² There is much vigor and impressiveness in this figure because, after having posed the question, “What ought to have been done?”, we subjoin that that was not done.¹⁴³ Thus it becomes very easy to amplify the baseness of the act.

In another form of the same figure we refer the hypophora to our own person,¹⁴⁴ as follows: “Now what should I have done when I was surrounded by so great a force of Gauls? Fight? But then our advance would have been with a small band. Furthermore, we held a most unfavorable position. Remain in camp? But we neither had reinforcements to look for, nor the wherewithal to keep alive. Abandon the camp? But we were blocked. Sacrifice the lives of the soldiers? But I thought I had accepted them on the stipulation that so far as possible I should preserve them unharmed for their fatherland and their parents. Reject the enemy's terms? But the safety of the

¹⁴²This passage may perhaps belong to the *controversia* on the murder of Sulpicius in 1. xv. 25 above. [Tr.]

¹⁴³Cf., in Quintilian, 9. 2. 106, προέχθεσις, “which means telling what ought to have been done and then what has been done”; also προέχθεσις (*divisio*), 1. x. 17 above. [Tr.]

¹⁴⁴Cf. *sibi ipsi responsio* in Quintilian, 9. 3. 90, there adjudged a figure of thought rather than of diction; *ratiocinatio*, 4. xvi. 23 above. [Tr.]

soldiers has priority over that of the baggage.”¹⁴⁵ The result of an accumulation of this kind of hypophora is to make it seem obvious that of all the possibilities nothing preferable to the thing done could have been done.

XXV. Climax¹⁴⁶ is the figure in which the speaker passes to the following word only after advancing by steps to the preceding one, as follows: “Now what remnant of the hope of liberty survives, if those men *may* do what they *please*, if they *can* do what they *may*, if they *dare* do what they *can*, if they *do* what they *dare*, and if you *approve* what they *do*?” Again: “I did not conceive this without counseling it; I did not counsel it without myself at once undertaking it; I did not undertake it without completing it; nor did I complete it without winning approval of it.”¹⁴⁷ Again: “The industry of Africanus brought him excellence, his excellence glory, his glory rivals.”¹⁴⁸ Again: “The empire of Greece belonged to the Athenians; the Athenians were overpowered by the Spartans; the Spartans were overcome by the Thebans; the Thebans were conquered by the Macedonians; and the Macedonians in a short time subdued Asia in war and joined her to the empire of Greece.” The constant repetition of the preceding word, characteristic of this figure, carries a certain charm.

Definition¹⁴⁹ in brief and clear-cut fashion

¹⁴⁵Popilius is speaking; see 1. xv. 25 above. [Tr.]

¹⁴⁶χλιμαξί. Also ἐπιπλοχή, *ascensus*, and *catena*. This figure joins with Epanaphora, Antistrophe, Interlacement, Transplacement, and Antanaklasis (4. xiii. 19–xiv. 21 above) to form a complete theory of Repetition. [Tr.]

¹⁴⁷Quintilian, 9. 3. 55, and others cite, and our author in this example imitates, Demosthenes, *De Corona* 179; “I did not say this and then fail to make the motion; I did not make the motion and then fail to act as an ambassador; I did not act as an ambassador and then fail to persuade the Thebans.” Cf. *Rom.* 10. 14; Rosalind in Shakespeare, *As You Like It* 5. 2: “For your brother and my sister no sooner met but they looked; no sooner looked but they loved; no sooner loved but they sighed; no sooner sighed but they asked one another the reason; no sooner knew the reason but they sought the remedy; and in these degrees have they made a pair of stairs to marriage”; St. Augustine, *Confessions* 7. 10: *O aeterna veritas et vera caritas et cara aeternitas!*; also Lane Cooper, *Sevane Rev.* 32 (1924). 32–43. [Tr.]

¹⁴⁸Quintilian, 9. 3. 56, uses the same example, representing it as from a Latin author. [Tr.]

¹⁴⁹ὁρισμός. Cf. Definition, the subtype of Legal Issue, 1. xi. 19, 1. xii. 21, and 2. xii. 17 above. Quintilian, 9. 3. 91, un-

grasps the characteristic qualities of a thing, as follows: “The sovereign majesty of the republic is that which comprises the dignity and grandeur of the state.” Again: “By an injury is meant doing violence to some one, to his person by assault, or to his sensibilities by insulting language, or to his reputation by some scandal.” Again: “That is not economy on your part, but greed, because economy is careful conservation of one’s own goods, and greed is wrongful covetousness of the goods of others.” Again: “That act of yours is not bravery, but recklessness, because to be brave is to disdain toil and peril, for a useful purpose and after weighing the advantages, while to be reckless is to undertake perils like a gladiator, suffering pain without taking thought.”¹⁵⁰ Definition is accounted useful for this reason: it sets forth the full meaning and character of a thing so lucidly and briefly that to express it in more words seems superfluous, and to express it in fewer is considered impossible.

XXVI. Transition¹⁵¹ is the name given to the figure which briefly recalls what has been said, and likewise briefly sets forth what is to follow next, thus: “You know how he has just been conducting himself towards his fatherland; now consider what kind of son he has been to his parents.” Again: “My benefactions to this defendant you know; now learn how he has requited me.” This figure is not without value for two ends: it reminds the hearer of what the speaker has said, and also prepares him for what is to come.

like “Cornificius and Rutilius,” excludes *finitio* from the figures of diction. The figure goes back to Prodicus’ Correct Use of Terms (ὀρθότης ὀνομάτων); see Radermacher, *Artium Scriptores*, pp. 67 ff. [Tr.]

¹⁵⁰The last two examples may also illustrate *distinctio* (παρδιαστολή); see Quintilian, 9. 3. 65; “But this depends wholly on definition, and so I doubt whether it is a figure,” and 9. 3. 82. [Tr.]

¹⁵¹A figure combining the functions of the *enumeratio* of 2. xxx. 47 above (ἀνάμνησις, ἀνακεφαλαίωσις, παλλογία) and *propositio* (προέχθεσις = *propositio quid sis dicturus* in Cicero, *De Oratore* 3. 53. 203 and *Orator* 40. 137; cf. the *expositio* [έχθεσις] of 1. x. 17 above). Cf. in Anon. Seg. 12 (Spengel-Hammer 1 [2]. 354) ἀνάνεωσις, a means used in the Proem to induce receptiveness—“we recall the points previously made, and mark out those we intend to discuss,” and the second type of the figure μετὰβασις in Rutilius Lupus 2. 1 (Halm, pp. 12 f.). Quintilian, 9. 3. 98, without defining *transitio*, classes it as a figure of thought; *transitus* in 9. 2. 61 is rejected as a figure. [Tr.]

Correction retracts what has been said and replaces it with what seems more suitable, as follows: "But if the defendant had asked his hosts, or rather had only hinted, this could easily have been accomplished." Again: "After the men in question had conquered, or rather had been conquered—for how shall I call that a conquest which has brought more disaster than benefit to the conquerors?" Again: "O Virtue's companion, Envy, who art wont to pursue good men, yes, even to persecute them." This figure makes an impression upon the hearer, for the idea when expressed by an ordinary word seems rather feebly stated, but after the speaker's own amendment it is made more striking by means of the more appropriate expression. "Then would it not be preferable," some one will say, "especially in writing, to resort to the best and choicest word at the beginning?" Sometimes this is not preferable, when, as the changes of word will serve to show, the thought is such that in rendering it by an ordinary word you seem to have expressed it rather feebly, but having come to a choicer word you make the thought more striking. But if you had at once arrived at this word, the grace neither of the thought nor of the word would have been noticed.

XXVII. Paralipsis¹⁵² occurs when we say that we are passing by, or do not know, or refuse to say that which precisely now we are saying, as follows: "Your boyhood, indeed, which you dedicated to intemperance of all kinds, I would discuss, if I thought this the right time. But at present I advisedly leave that aside. This too I pass by, that the tribunes have reported you as irregular in military service. Also that you have given satisfaction to Lucius Labeo for injuries done him I regard as irrelevant to the present matter. Of these things I say nothing, but return to the issue in this trial."¹⁵³ Again: "I do not mention that you have taken monies from our allies; I do

¹⁵²παράλειψις, ἀντίφρασις, *praeteritio*, and sometimes παρα-σιώπησις, which Quintilian, 9. 3. 99, excludes from the figures. *Occultatio* is assigned by Quintilian in 9. 3. 98 to the figures of thought. Cf. *praecisio*, 4. xxx. 41 below, and Cicero's *reticentia* (*De Oratore* 3. 53. 205, and *Orator* 40. 138). [Tr.]

¹⁵³Speaker, opponent, and Labeo all are unknown. The date may perhaps be assigned to the time of the Marsic war, about 90 B.C.; see Friedrich Muenzer, P.-W. 12. 245. [Tr.]

not concern myself with your having despoiled the cities, kingdoms, and homes of them all. I pass by your thieveries and robberies, all of them." This figure is useful if employed in a matter which it is not pertinent to call specifically to the attention of others, because there is advantage in making only an indirect reference to it, or because the direct reference would be tedious or undignified, or cannot be made clear, or can easily be refuted. As a result, it is of greater advantage to create a suspicion by Paralipsis than to insist directly on a statement that is refutable.¹⁵⁴

Disjunction¹⁵⁵ is used when each of two or more clauses ends with a special verb, as follows: "By the Roman people Numantia was destroyed, Carthage razed, Corinth demolished, Fregellae overthrown. Of no aid to the Numantines was bodily strength; of no assistance to the Carthaginians was military science; of no help to the Corinthians was polished cleverness; of no avail to the Fregellans was fellowship with us in customs and in language."¹⁵⁶ Again: "With disease physical beauty fades, with age it dies."¹⁵⁷ In this example we see both clauses, and in the preceding each several clause ending with a special verb.

Conjunction occurs when both the previous and the succeeding phrases are held together by placing the verb between them, as follows: "Either with disease physical beauty fades, or with age."

It is Adjunction when the verb holding the sentence together is placed not in the middle, but at the beginning or the end. At the beginning, as follows: "Fades physical beauty with disease or age." At the end, as follows: "Either with disease or age physical beauty fades."

Disjunction is suited to elegant display, and so we shall use it moderately, that it may not cloy;

¹⁵⁴Cf. Quintilian, 9. 2. 75. [Tr.]

¹⁵⁵διεζευγμένον. Quintilian, 9. 3. 64, says that devices like this and the two following are so common that they cannot lay claim to the art which figures involve. [Tr.]

¹⁵⁶Only the first sentence of this translation preserves the Disjunction, which cannot be rendered throughout without violating normal English word order. [Tr.]

¹⁵⁷Cf. Isocrates, *Ad Demonicum* 6: "For beauty is spent by time or wasted by disease." The saying was popular among Greek Patristic writers; see Engelbert Drerup, *Isocratis Opera Omnia*, Leipzig, 1906, 1. 95. [Tr.]

Conjunction is suited to brevity, and hence is to be used more frequently. These three figures spring from a single type.

XXVIII. Reduplication¹⁵⁸ is the repetition of one or more words for the purpose of Amplification or Appeal to Pity, as follows: "You are promoting riots, Gaius Gracchus, yes, civil and internal riots." Again: "You were not moved when his mother embraced your knees? You were not moved?"¹⁵⁹ Again: "You now even dare to come into the sight of these citizens, traitor to the fatherland? Traitor, I say, to the fatherland, you dare come into the sight of these citizens?" The reiteration of the same word makes a deep impression upon the hearer and inflicts a major wound upon the opposition—as if a weapon should repeatedly pierce the same part of the body.

Synonymy or Interpretation¹⁶⁰ is the figure which does not duplicate the same word by repeating it, but replaces the word that has been used by another of the same meaning, as follows: "You have overturned the republic from its roots; you have demolished the state from its foundations." Again: "You have impiously beaten your father; you have criminally laid hands upon your parent." The hearer cannot but be impressed when the force of the first expression is renewed by the explanatory synonym.

Reciprocal Change occurs when two discrepant thoughts are so expressed by transposition that the latter follows from the former although contradictory to it, as follows: "You must eat to live, not live to eat."¹⁶¹ Again: "I do not write poems, because I cannot write the sort I

¹⁵⁸ἀναδίπλωσις. In Quintilian, 9. 3. 28, *adiectio*. For the first example cf. Demosthenes, *De Corona* 143, a favorite passage with the rhetoricians: "War is that you are bringing into Attica, Aeschines, an Amphictyonic war." [Tr.]

¹⁵⁹This passage may perhaps belong to the *controversia* on the murder of Sulpicius in 1. xv. 25 above. [Tr.]

¹⁶⁰συνωνυμία. Quintilian, 9. 3. 98, denies that this is a figure. [Tr.]

¹⁶¹Ascribed to Socrates. See the Stoic C. Musonius Rufus (first Christian century) in Stobaeus, 3. 18. 37; Plutarch, *Quomodo adulesc. poet. aud. deb.* 4 (21 E); Gellius 19. 2; Athenaeus 4. 158 F.; Diogenes Laertius 2. 34; Stobaeus, 3. 17. 21 ("Socrates, when asked in what respect he differed from the rest of men, replied: 'Whereas they live in order to eat, I eat in order to live.'"); Macrobius, *Sat.* 2. 8. 16. Cf. also Quintilian, 9. 3. 85; Clement of Alexandria, *Paed.* 2. 1, and *Strom.* 7. 14; Isidore, *Etyim.* 2. 21. 11. [Tr.]

wish, and I do not wish to write the sort I can."¹⁶² Again: "What can be told of that man is not being told; what is being told of him cannot be told." Again: "A poem ought to be a painting that speaks; a painting ought to be a silent poem."¹⁶³ Again: "If you are a fool, for that reason you should be silent; and yet although you should be silent, you are not for that reason a fool." One cannot deny that the effect is neat when in juxtaposing contrasted ideas the words also are transposed. In order to make this figure, which is hard to invent, quite clear, I have subjoined several examples—so that, well understood, it may be easier for the speaker to invent.

XXIX. Surrender is used when we indicate in speaking that we yield and submit the whole matter to another's will, as follows: "Since only soul and body remain to me, now that I am deprived of everything else, even these, which alone of many goods are left me, I deliver up to you and to your power. You may use and even abuse me in your own way as you think best; with impunity make your decision upon me, whatever it may be; speak and give a sign—I shall obey." Although this figure is often to be used also in other circumstances, it is especially suited to provoking pity.

Indecision occurs when the speaker seems to ask which of two or more words he had better use, as follows: "At that time the republic suffered exceedingly from—ought I to say—the folly of the consuls, or their wickedness, or both."¹⁶⁴ Again: "You have dared to say that,

¹⁶²Porphyrio on Horace, *Epist.* 2. 1. 257, attributes this saying to Aristarchus of Samothrace (first half, second century B.C.), the editor and critic of Homer. Cf. *Anth. Pal.* 6. 1: "For I [Lais] do not wish to see myself as I am, and cannot see myself as I used to be." [Tr.]

¹⁶³The saying is ascribed to Simonides (sixth century B.C.) in Plutarch, *De glor. Athen.* 3(346 F); see also *Quaest. Conviv.* 9. 15 (748 A), *Quomodo adulesc. poet. aud. deb.* 3 (17 F), *Quomodo adulat. ab amic. internosc.* 15 (58 B), *De vita et poes. Hom.* 216 (ed. Bernardakis, 7, 460). Cf. Cicero, *De Leg.* 3. 1. 2: "It can truly be said that the magistrate is a speaking law, the law on the other hand a silent magistrate"; Horace, *Ars Poet.* 361: "A poem is like a painting"; *Anth. Pal.* 11. 145; and Lessing, *Laokoon*, Preface. [Tr.]

¹⁶⁴ἀπορία, διαπόρησις. Quintilian, 9. 3. 88, uses virtually the same example, after making the point that Indecision can belong to either the figures of thought or the figures of diction. Cf. Demosthenes, *De Corona* 20: "Now what helped

you of all men the—by what name worthy of your character shall I call you?”

Elimination¹⁶⁵ occurs when we have enumerated the several ways by which something could have been brought about, and all are then discarded except the one on which we are insisting, as follows: “Since it is established that the estate you claim as yours was mine, you must show that you took possession of it as vacant land, or made it your property by right of prescription, or bought it, or that it came to you by inheritance. Since I was on the premises, you could not have taken possession of it as vacant land. Even by now you cannot have made it your property by right of prescription. No sale is disclosed. Since I am alive, my property could not have come to you by inheritance. It remains, then, that you have expelled me by force from my estate.” This figure will furnish the strongest support to conjectural arguments, but unlike most other figures, it is not one which we can use at will, for in general we can use it only when the very nature of the business gives us the opportunity.

XXX. Asyndeton¹⁶⁶ is a presentation in separate parts, conjunctions being suppressed, as follows: “Indulge your father, obey your relatives, gratify your friends, submit to the laws.” Again: “Enter into a complete defense, make no objection, give your slaves to be examined, be eager to find the truth.” This figure has animation and great force,¹⁶⁷ and is suited to concision.

Aposiopesis occurs when something is said and then the rest of what the speaker had begun to say

him . . . ? The cowardice, ought I to say, or the stupidity, or both, of the other Greek states.” [Tr.]

¹⁶⁵Now called the Method of Residues when used in Refutation. Quintilian, 5. 10. 66 ff. and 7. 1. 31 ff., considers this *argumentorum genus ex remotione* under Proof and Refutation, not under the Figures; see also Cicero, *De Inv.* 1. xxix. 45 (*enumeratio*), and Quintilian, 9. 3. 99, in note on 4. xviii. 25 above. Cf. in Aristotle, *Rhet.* 2. 23 (1398 a), the *topos* from logical division (*ἐχ διαίρεσεως*). [Tr.]

¹⁶⁶ἀσύνδετον. Various also διάλυσις, *solutum*, *dissolutio*. Aristotle, *Rhet.* 3. 12(1413 b): “Asyndeta . . . are rightly condemned in the literary style, but in the controversial style speakers do indeed use them because of their dramatic effect.” Cf. *dissolutum*, the slack style (4. xi. 16 above). [Tr.]

¹⁶⁷The quality of σφοδρότης. Plutarch, *De vita et poes.* *Hom.* 40 (ed. Bernardakis, 7. 355), assigns to Asyndeton the qualities of rapidity and emotional emphasis. [Tr.]

is left unfinished, as follows: “The contest between you and me is unequal because, so far as concerns me, the Roman people—I am unwilling to say it, lest by chance some one think me proud. But you the Roman people has often considered worthy of disgrace.” Again: “You dare to say that, who recently at another’s home—I shouldn’t dare tell, lest in saying things becoming to you, I should seem to say something unbecoming to me.” Here a suspicion, unexpressed, becomes more telling than a detailed explanation would have been.

Conclusion¹⁶⁸ by means of a brief argument, deduces the necessary consequences of what has been said or done before, as follows: “But if the oracle had predicted to the Danaans that Troy could not be taken without the arrows of Philoctetes, and these arrows moreover served only to smite Alexander, then certainly killing Alexander was the same as taking Troy.”¹⁶⁹

XXXI. There remain also ten Figures of Diction, which I have intentionally not scattered at random, but have separated from those above, because they all belong in one class. They indeed all have this in common, that the language departs from the ordinary meaning of the words¹⁷⁰ and is, with a certain grace, applied in another sense.

Of these figures the first is Onomatopoeia¹⁷¹ which suggests to us that we should ourselves

¹⁶⁸Like συμπερασμα in logic. Quintilian 9. 3. 98, denies that *conclusio* is a figure. Cf. the *conclusio* of 1. iii. 4 and the *duplex conclusio* of 2. xxiv. 38 above. [Tr.]

¹⁶⁹Philoctetes killed Paris with the bow and arrows of Heracles, and thus fulfilled the oracle revealed by the Trojan seer Helenus that only by means of those weapons could Troy be taken. [Tr.]

¹⁷⁰These ten figures of diction are *tropi* (τροποι, tropes), a term our author does not use; cf. Quintilian, 8. 6. 1: “A trope is an artistic change of a word or phrase from its proper signification to another.” Tropes were at first, as here, not separated from figures of thought and diction (σχηματα). Cicero, *Brutus* 18. 69, tells us that the division was of Greek origin. Even in the time of Quintilian (see 9. 1. 1–9) the line of demarcation was not always clear. [Tr.]

¹⁷¹ὀνοματοποιία. Cf. Julius Caesar in Gellius, 1. 10. 4: “Avoid as you would a rock, an unheard-of and unfamiliar word.” Cicero admits unusual (old-fashioned), new, and metaphorical words, although recognizing that these are allowed more freely in poetry than in oratory; see *De Orator* 3. 38. 152 ff., *Orator* 20. 68 and 24. 81, and also the advice which Horace, *Ars Poet.* 46 ff. and *Epist.* 2. 2. 119–21, gives to poets to use neologisms, but with restraint. Quintilian likewise tolerates neologisms despite the danger in their use, but

designate with a suitable word, whether for the sake of imitation or of expressiveness, a thing which either lacks a name¹⁷² or has an inappropriate name. For the sake of imitation, as follows: our ancestors, for example, said “roar,” “bellow,” “murmur,” “hiss;” for the sake of expressiveness, as follows: “After this creature attacked the republic, there was a hullabaloo among the first men of the state.” This figure is to be used rarely, lest the frequent recurrence of the neologism breed aversion; but if it is used appropriately and sparingly, then the novelty, far from offending, even gives distinction to the style.

Antonomasia or Pronomination designates by a kind of adventitious epithet a thing that cannot be called by its proper name; for example, if some one speaking of the Gracchi should say: “Surely the grandsons of Africanus did not behave like this!”; or again, if some one speaking of his adversary should say: “See now, men of the jury, how your Sir Swashbuckler there has treated me.” In this way we shall be able, not without elegance, in praise and in censure, concerning physical attributes, qualities of character, or external circumstances,¹⁷³ to express ourselves by using a kind of epithet in place of the precise name.¹⁷⁴

XXXII. Metonymy is the figure which draws from an object closely akin or associated an expression suggesting the object meant, but not called by its own name. This is accomplished by substituting the name of the greater thing for that of the lesser, as if one speaking of the Tarpeian Rock should term it “the Capitoline”; . . . ; or by substituting the name of the thing invented for that of the inventor, as if one should say “wine” for “Liber,” “wheat” for “Ceres”;¹⁷⁵ “. . . ;” or

does not allow Roman speakers the imitative type of Onomatopoeia, although this was “held as one of the highest virtues by the Greeks;” see 1. 5. 71 f., 8. 6. 31 f., 8. 3. 35–37. Cf. also Gellius, 11. 7. 1: “But as for me I think it more objectionable and censurable to use words that are new, unknown, and unheard-of than to use those that are hackneyed and mean.” [Tr.]

¹⁷²See note on Metaphor, 4. xxxiv. 45 below. [Tr.]

¹⁷³Cf. 3. vi. 10 above. [Tr.]

¹⁷⁴*Pro nomine*, hence the name for the figure, *Pronominatio*. [Tr.]

¹⁷⁵Liber and Ceres are common metonyms; see Cicero, *De Oratore* 3. 42. 167, advising the frequent use of this kind

the instrument for the possessor, as if one should refer to the Macedonians as follows: “Not so quickly did the Lances get possession of Greece,” and likewise, meaning the Gauls: “nor was the Transalpine Pike so easily driven from Italy”; the cause for the effect, as if a speaker, wishing to show that some one has done something in war, should say: “Mars forced you to do that”; or effect for cause, as when we call an art idle because it produces idleness in people, or speak of numb cold because cold produces numbness. Content will be designated by means of container as follows: “Italy cannot be vanquished in warfare nor Greece in studies”; for here instead of Greeks and Italians the lands that comprise them are designated. Container will be designated by means of content:¹⁷⁶ as if one wishing to give a name to wealth should call it gold or silver or ivory. It is harder to distinguish all these metonymies in teaching the principle than to find them when searching for them, for the use of metonymies of this kind is abundant not only amongst the poets and orators but also in everyday speech.

Periphrasis is a manner of speech used to express a simple idea by means of a circumlocution, as follows: “The foresight of Scipio crushed the power of Carthage.” For here, if the speaker had not designed to embellish the style, he might simply have said “Scipio” and “Carthage.”

Hyperbaton¹⁷⁷ upsets the word order by means either of Anastrophe¹⁷⁸ or Transposition. By Anastrophe, as follows: “Hoc vobis deos immortales arbitror dedisse virtute pro vestra.”¹⁷⁹ By Transposition, as follows: “Instabilis in istum

of figure, and *De Natura Deorum* 2. 23. 60, citing Terence, *Eunuch.* 732; Quintilian, 8. 6. 24: “It would be too bold for the severe style of the forum to tolerate our saying ‘Liber’ for ‘wine’ and ‘Ceres’ for ‘bread.’” [Tr.]

¹⁷⁶Quintilian, 8. 6. 24–5, approves the substitution of container for content, but allows the converse only to poetic practice. [Tr.]

¹⁷⁷ὑπερβατόν. See 4. xii. 18 above. [Tr.]

¹⁷⁸ἀναστροφή. Reversal of order. Quintilian, 8. 6. 65, defines ἀναστροφή, as a transposition confined to two words. [Tr.]

¹⁷⁹“This I deem the immortal gods have vouchsafed to you in reward for your virtue.” The strictly correct order would have been *pro vestra virtute*; *virtūtē prō vēstrā* gives the most favored clausula. [Tr.]

plurimum fortuna valuit. Omnes invidiose eripuit bene vivendi casus facultates.”¹⁸⁰ A transposition of this kind, that does not render the thought obscure, will be very useful for periods, which I have discussed above;¹⁸¹ in these periods we ought to arrange the words in such a way as to approximate a poetic rhythm,¹⁸² so that the periods can achieve perfect fullness and the highest finish.

XXXIII. Hyperbole¹⁸³ is a manner of speech exaggerating the truth, whether for the sake of magnifying or minifying something. This is used independently, or with comparison. Independently, as follows: “But if we maintain concord in the state, we shall measure the empire’s vastness by the rising and the setting of the sun.” Hy-

¹⁸⁰“Unstable Fortune has exercised her greatest power on this creature. All the means of living well Chance has jealously taken from him.” Here the adjectives are separated from the nouns they modify; *fortūnā vālūt* and especially *cusūs fācūltātēs* were favored clausulae (see not next above). Our author employs the dichoree (- - -) most. See the study of the cadences in A. W. de Groot, *Der antike Prosarhythmus*, Groningen and The Hague, 1921, pp. 106–7; in Henri Bornecque, *Les Clausules Métriques Latines*, Lille, 1907, pp. 542 ff., 579 f.; and in Burdach, *Schlesisch-böhmische Briefmuster*, pp. 110ff.; also the notes on 4. viii. 12 and 4. xix. 26, and the next note here below. [Tr.]

¹⁸¹4. xix. 27. The doctrines of rhythm were not taught as part of the regular curriculum by the Atticizing rhetoricians (Cicero, *De Oratore* 3. 49. 188); our author does not mention Rhythm under Composition in 4. xii. 18 above, save indirectly in his reference to concinnity in Hyperbaton. Here, however, he is under Asian influence. Cf. Cicero, *Orator* 69. 229: “We must not transpose words in an obvious manner for the sake of achieving a better cadence or a more flowing rhythm”; Dionysius Halic., *De Composit. Verb.*, ch. 4; and Blass, *Die Rhythmen der asian. und röm. Kunstprosa*, pp. 33 ff. Our author in his rhythms represents the transition between Asian rules and those followed by Cicero; see Bornecque, *op. cit.*, p. 546. On our author’s generally ambivalent position with respect to Asianism, see Burdach, *op. cit.*, pp. 96 ff. [Tr.]

¹⁸²Cicero, *Orator* 56. 187 f.: “It is, then, quite clear that prose should be tightened up by rhythm, but be free of meter . . . There are, to be sure, no rhythms other than those used in poetry”; Crassus in *De Oratore* 1. 33. 151: “Good collocation and good arrangement of words are perfected in writing by means of a certain rhythm and measure not poetical, but oratorical.” Thrasymachus of Chalcedon (fifth century B.C.) was the inventor of prose rhythm, and Isocrates excelled in its use (Cicero, *Orator* 52. 175). [Tr.]

¹⁸³ὑπερβολή. Aristotle, *Rhet.* 3. 11 (1413 a), says that the use of Hyperbole is a juvenile characteristic, betraying vehemence. Cf. Quintilian, 8. 6. 67 ff. [Tr.]

perbole with comparison is formed from either equivalence or superiority. From equivalence, as follows: “His body was as white as snow, his face burned like fire.” From superiority, as follows: “From his mouth flowed speech sweeter than honey.” Of the same type is the following: “So great was his splendor in arms that the sun’s brilliance seemed dim by comparison.”

Synecdoche occurs when the whole is known from a small part or a part from the whole. The whole is understood from a part in the following: “Were not those nuptial flutes reminding you of his marriage?” Here the entire marriage ceremony is suggested by one sign, the flutes. A part from the whole, as if one should say to a person who displays himself in luxurious garb or adornment: “You display your riches to me and vaunt your ample treasures.” The plural will be understood from the singular, as follows: “To the Carthaginian came aid from the Spaniard, and from that fierce Transalpine. In Italy, too, many a wearer of the toga shared the same sentiment.” In the following the singular will be understood from the plural: “Dread disaster smote his breasts with grief; so, panting, from out his lungs’ very depth he sobbed for anguish.” In the first example more than one Spaniard, Gaul, and Roman citizen are understood, and in this last only one breast and one lung.¹⁸⁴ In the former the quantity is minified for the sake of elegance, in the latter exaggerated for the sake of impressiveness.

Catachresis is the inexact use of a like and kindred word in place of the precise and proper one, as follows: “The power of man is short,” or “small height,” or “the long wisdom in the man,” or “a mighty speech,” or “to engage in a slight conversation.” Here it is easy to understand that words of kindred, but not identical, meaning have been transferred on the principle of inexact use.

XXXIV. Metaphor¹⁸⁵ occurs when a word

¹⁸⁴In ancient physiology the lungs were considered to be the right and left halves of a single organ, with the windpipe as the common outlet; cf., for example, Aristotle, *De Part. Animal.* 3. 6–7 (668 b ff.), *Hist. Animal.* 2. 17 (507 a 19). [Tr.]

¹⁸⁵μεταφορά. Cf. Aristotle, *Rhet.* 3. 2 (1405 a) ff., *Poet.*, ch 21; Demetrius, *De Elocut.* 2. 78 ff.; Quintilian, 8. 6. 4 ff. According to Cicero, *Orator* 27. 92, metaphor is used for the sake of charm (*suavitas*) or because of the lack (*inopia*) of a

applying to one thing is transferred to another, because the similarity seems to justify this transference. Metaphor is used for the sake of creating a vivid mental picture, as follows: "This insurrection awoke Italy with sudden terror"; for the sake of brevity¹⁸⁶ as follows: "The recent arrival of an army suddenly blotted out the state"; for the sake of avoiding obscenity, as follows: "Whose mother delights in daily marriages"; for the sake of magnifying, as follows: "No one's grief or disaster could have appeased this creature's enmities and glutted his horrible cruelty";¹⁸⁷ for the sake of minifying, as follows: "He boasts that he was a great help because, when we were in difficulties, he lightly breathed a favoring breath";¹⁸⁸ for the sake of embellishment, as follows: "Some day the prosperity of the republic, which by the malice of wicked men has withered away, will bloom again by the virtue of the Conservatives." They say that a metaphor ought to be restrained,¹⁸⁹ so as to be a transition with good reason to a kindred thing, and not seem an indiscriminate, reckless, and precipitate leap to an unlike thing.

Allegory is a manner of speech denoting one thing by the letter of the words, but another by their meaning. It assumes three aspects: comparison, argument, and contrast. It operates through a comparison when a number of metaphors originating in a similarity in the mode of expression are set together, as follows: "For when dogs act

proper word; cf. also *De Oratore* 3. 38. 155. Quintilian, 8. 6. 6, says that we use metaphor from necessity or because it achieves greater expressiveness or beauty. Cf. *translatio criminis*, 2. xv. 22 above and *translatio*, the subtype of Legal Issue, 1. xii. 22. [Tr.]

¹⁸⁶Quintilian, 8. 6. 8, terms Metaphor a shorter Simile. [Tr.]

¹⁸⁷This may perhaps belong to the *controversia* concerning the murder of Sulpicius, 1. xv. 25 above. [Tr.]

¹⁸⁸Cf. Cicero, *Leg. Agr.* 2. 5. 13, on the unintelligible speech of the once truculent Rullus: "The keener-witted persons standing in the Assembly suspected that he had meant to say something or other about an agrarian law"; Quintilian, 8. 4. 28, quotes this sentence of Cicero in illustration of *ratio minuendi*. [Tr.]

¹⁸⁹Cicero, *De Oratore* 3. 41. 165, makes the same point; cf. also Aristotle, *Rhet.* 3. 2 (1405 a), Cicero, *Epist. ad Fam.* 16. 17 (Theophrastus' *verecunda tralatio*), Longinus, *De Sublim.* 32. 3, Quintilian, 8. 3. 37. [Tr.]

the part of wolves, to what guardian, pray, are we going to entrust our herds of cattle?" An Allegory is presented in the form of argument when a similitude is drawn from a person or place or object in order to magnify or minify, as if one should call Drusus a "faded reflection of the Gracchi." An Allegory is drawn from a contrast¹⁹⁰ if, for example, one should mockingly call a spendthrift and voluptuary frugal and thrifty. Both in this last type, based on a contrast, and in the first above, drawn from a comparison, we can through the metaphor make use of argument. In an Allegory operating through a comparison, as follows: "What says this king—our Agamemnon, or rather, such is his cruelty, our Atreus?" In an Allegory drawn from a contrast: for example, if we should call some undutiful man who has beaten his father "Aeneas,"¹⁹¹ or an intemperate and adulterous man "Hippolytus."¹⁹²

This is substantially all I have thought it necessary to say on the Figures of Diction. Now the subject itself directs me to turn next to the Figures of Thought.

XXXV. Distribution occurs when certain specified rôles are assigned among a number of things or persons,¹⁹³ as follows: "Whoever of you, men of the jury, loves the good name of the Senate, must hate this man, for his attacks upon that body have always been most insolent. Whoever of you wishes the equestrian order¹⁹⁴ to be most resplendent in the state, must want this person to have paid the severest penalty, so that he may not be, through his personal shame, a stain and disgrace to a most honorable order. You who have parents, must prove by your punishment of this creature that undutiful men do not find favor with you. You who have children, must set forth an example to show how great are the punish-

¹⁹⁰Cf. Quintilian, 8. 6. 54 ff. (*ironia, illusio*); *Rhet. ad Alex.* ch. 21, 1434 a (*ειρωνεία*); Anon., *De Trop.*, in Walz 8. 722 (*ἀντίφρασις*). [Tr.]

¹⁹¹Called *pious* for his devotion to Anchises, his father. [Tr.]

¹⁹²Rejected the advances of his stepmother Phaedra. [Tr.]

¹⁹³Of *πράγματα* or of *πρόσωπα*. Cf. the distinction in the third kind of *narratio*, 1. viii. 13 above. [Tr.]

¹⁹⁴In accordance with the *Lex Plautia Iudiciaria* of 90/89 B.C. both senators and knights (and also some of the *plebs*) served as *iudices* in the criminal courts. Sulla restored the senatorial monopoly in 82/81 B.C. [Tr.]

ments that have been provided in our state for men of that stamp." Again, "The Senate's function is to assist the state with counsel; the magistracy's is to execute, by diligent activity, the Senate's will; the people's to choose and support by its votes the best measures and the most suitable men." Again, "The duty of the prosecutor is to bring the charges; that of the counsel for the defense to explain them away and rebut them; that of the witness to say what he knows or has heard; that of the presiding justice to hold each of these to his duty. Therefore, Lucius Cassius, if you allow a witness to argue and to attack by means of conjecture, passing beyond what he knows or has heard, you will be confusing the rights of a prosecutor with those of a witness, you will be encouraging the partiality of a dishonest witness, and you will be ordaining for the defendant that he defend himself twice."¹⁹⁵ This figure has richness, for it embraces much in little and, by assigning to each his duty, severally distinguishes a number of entities.

XXXVI. It is Frankness of Speech¹⁹⁶ when, talking before those to whom we owe reverence or fear, we yet exercise our right to speak out, because we seem justified in reprehending them, or persons dear to them, for some fault. For example: "You wonder, fellow citizens, that every one abandons your interests? That no one undertakes your cause? That no one declares himself your defender? Blame this upon yourselves; cease to wonder. Why indeed should not every one avoid and shun this situation of your making? Bethink yourselves of those whom you have had for defenders; set their devotion before your eyes, and next consider what has become of them

¹⁹⁵From the celebrated speech delivered in 113 B.C. (or at the end of 114) by L. Licinius Crassus in defense of Licinia, accused with other Vestals of unchastity and condemned. L. Cassius Longinus Ravilla (whose rule was to insist on the question of the motive: *Cui bono?*—"for whose advantage was the crime?") was the examining magistrate. [Tr.]

¹⁹⁶παρηγοσία, *oratio libera*. Quintilian, 9. 2. 27 and 9. 3. 99, denies that this is a figure. Cf. Isocrates, *De Pace* 72 f.: "While hating those who revile you to your hurt as bearing malice to the state, you ought to praise those who admonish you for your benefit, and think them the best of your fellow-citizens, and think that best of all is the man who can demonstrate most vividly the defects of your practices and the misfortunes that arise from them." [Tr.]

all. Then remember that thanks to your—to speak aright—indifference, or cowardice rather, all these men have been murdered before your eyes, and thanks to your own votes their enemies have reached the highest estate."¹⁹⁷ Again: "Now what was your motive, men of the jury, in hesitating to pass sentence on this abominable man, or in allowing him a new trial?"¹⁹⁸ Were not the facts charged plain as day? Were they not all proved by witnesses? Was not the answer, on the other hand, feeble and trifling? Did you at this point fear that in condemning him at the first hearing you would be considered cruel? While avoiding a reproach for cruelty, which you would have been far from incurring, you have incurred another reproach—you are considered timid and cowardly. You have met with very great losses, private and public, and now when even greater losses seem to impend, you sit and yawn. During the day you wait for night, at night you wait for day. Every day some troublesome and unpleasant news is announced—yet even now will you temporize longer with the author of these our ills, and nourish him for the destruction of the republic; will you keep him in the commonwealth as long as you can?"

XXXVII. If Frank Speech of this sort seems too pungent, there will be many means of palliation, for one may immediately thereafter add something of this sort: "I here appeal to your virtue, I call on your wisdom, I bespeak your old habit," so that praise may quiet the feelings aroused by the frankness. As a result, the praise frees the hearer from wrath and annoyance, and the frankness deters him from error. This precaution in speaking, as in friendship, if taken at the right place, is especially effective in keeping the hearers from error and in presenting us, the speakers, as friendly both to the hearers and to the truth.

¹⁹⁷Whether this passage derives from a speech actually delivered we do not know. The sentiments are appropriate to a tribune of the time of Marius. [Tr.]

¹⁹⁸The renewal (*ampliatio*) of a case followed the verdict *non liquet* by the jury, and the president's pronouncement *amplius* (*cognoscedum*). Renewals had to be repeated until the verdict of *fecisse videtur* or *non fecisse videtur* was rendered. The *Lex Acilia Repetundarum* (123/2 B.C.) provided against the abuses of this power by juries; it permitted the jury no more than one renewal in a single case at penalty of a fine. [Tr.]

There is also a certain kind of frankness in speaking which is achieved by a craftier device, when we remonstrate with the hearers as they wish us to remonstrate with them, or when we say “we fear how the audience may take” something which we know they all will hear with acceptance, “yet the truth moves us to say it none the less.”¹⁹⁹ I shall add examples of both these kinds. Of the former, as follows: “Fellow citizens, you are of too simple and gentle a character; you have too much confidence in every one. You think that every one strives to perform what he has promised you. You are mistaken, and now for a long time you have been kept back by false and groundless hope, in your fatuity choosing to seek from others what lay in your power, rather than take it yourselves.”²⁰⁰ Of the latter kind of Frank Speech the following will be an example: “I enjoyed a friendship with this person, men of the jury, yet of that friendship—although I fear how you are going to receive what I shall say, I will yet say it—you have deprived me. Why? Because, in order to win your approval, I have preferred to consider your assailant as an enemy rather than as a friend.”

Thus this figure called Frankness of Speech will, as I have shown, be handled in two ways: with pungency, which, if too severe, will be mitigated by praise; and with pretense, discussed

¹⁹⁹Cf. Plato, *Phaedo* 91B: “And I would enjoin upon you to be giving only little thought to Socrates, but much more to the truth”; and the saying attributed to Aristotle by Cervantes: *Amicus Plato, sed magis amica veritas*. (See James Condamin, *Répertoire Alphabétique des Citations*, Lyons and Paris, 1926, pp. 26 ff.) [Tr.]

²⁰⁰It has been suspected (see Friedrich Ellendt in Meyer-Dübner, *Orator. Rom. Fragm.*, 2nd ed., p. 235, and Kroehnert, p. 30) that this may be a fragment from the speech *De legibus promulgatis* delivered (in 122 B.C.) by Gaius Gracchus, the words here being directed against M. Livius Drusus; but there is no real evidence to substantiate the conjecture. Rutilius Lupus, 2. 18 (Halm, pp. 20–21), uses as an example of this figure the following passage from Demosthenes (*Fragm. Orat. Att.*, Ed. Baiter-Sauppe, fragm. 54, p. 257): “But shall I refrain from speaking the truth frankly before you? No, I say. I shall not be silent, because the common welfare demands speech. It is by your own doing, men of Athens, that the state is in such great peril. For you have failed to defend yourselves, by recklessly believing every one and by esteeming as most useful the opinions of those whose counsels are most cowardly.” [Tr.]

above, which does not require mitigation, because it assumes the guise of Frank Speech and is of itself agreeable to the hearer’s frame of mind.

XXXVIII. Understatement occurs when we say that by nature, fortune, or diligence, we or our clients possess some exceptional advantage, and, in order to avoid the impression of arrogant display, we moderate and soften the statement of it, as follows: “This, men of the jury, I have the right to say—that by labor and diligence I have contrived to be no laggard in the mastery of military science.” If the speaker had here said “be the best” he might have spoken the truth, but would have seemed arrogant. He has now said quite enough both to avoid envy and to secure praise. Again: “Was it then because of avarice or of need that he entered upon the crime? Avarice? But he was most generous to his friends, and that is a sign of generosity, a virtue opposed to avarice. Need? But his father left him a patrimony that was—I do not wish to exaggerate—not the smallest.”²⁰¹ Here again, calling the patrimony “large” or “very large” was avoided. This, then, is the precaution we shall take in setting forth the exceptional advantages which we or our clients enjoy. For things of this sort, if you handle them indiscreetly, in life provoke jealousy and in a speech antipathy. Therefore just as by circumspection we escape jealousy in life, so by prudence we avoid antipathy in speaking.

XXXIX. Vivid Description²⁰² is the name for the figure which contains a clear, lucid, and impressive exposition of the consequences of an act, as follows: “But, men of the jury, if by your votes you free this defendant, immediately, like a lion released from his cage, or some foul beast

²⁰¹It has been conjectured (see Ellendt in Meyer-Dübner, *Orator. Rom. Fragm.*, 2nd ed., p. 256, and Kroehnert, p. 31) that this passage may have its source in the speech delivered by Marcus Antonius, in 98 B.C. in defense of Manius Aquilius, accused of extortion; cf. Cicero, *Pro Flacco* 98: “Aquilius, who had been convicted of extortion on many charges and by many witnesses.” But there is no real evidence for the ascription. [Tr.]

²⁰²διὰ τὸ πῶς. Cf. *demonstratio* (Ocular Demonstration), 4. lv. 68 below, and *consequentium frequentatio* in Cicero, *Part. Orat.* 16. 55. The figure is useful for exciting emotions; cf. the tenth commonplace of Amplification in 2. xxx. 49 above. [Tr.]

loosed from his chains,²⁰³ he will slink and prow about in the forum,²⁰⁴ sharpening his teeth to attack every one's property, assaulting every man, friend and enemy, known to him or unknown, now despoiling a good name, now attacking a life, now bringing ruin upon a house and its entire household, shaking the republic from its foundations. Therefore, men of the jury, cast him out from the state, free every one from fear, and finally, think of yourselves. For if you release this creature without punishment, believe me, gentlemen, it is against yourselves that you will have let loose a wild and savage beast."

Again: "For if you inflict a heavy penalty upon the defendant, men of the jury, you will at once by a single judgment have taken many lives. His aged father, who has set the entire hope of his last years on this young man, will have no reason for wishing to stay alive. His small children, deprived of their father's aid, will be exposed as objects of scorn and contempt to their father's enemies. His entire household will collapse under this undeserved calamity. But his enemies, when once they have won the bloody palm by this most cruel of victories, will exult over the miseries of these unfortunates, and will be found insolent on the score of deeds as well as of words."

Again: "For none of you, fellow citizens, fails to see what miseries usually follow upon the capture of a city. Those who have borne arms against the victors are forthwith slain with extreme cruelty. Of the rest, those who by reason of youth and strength can endure hard labor are carried off into slavery, and those who cannot are deprived of life. In short, at one and the same time a house blazes up by the enemy's torch, and they whom nature of free choices has joined in the bonds of kinship or of sympathy are dragged apart. Of the children, some are torn from their parents' arms, others murdered on their parents' bosom, still others violated at their parents' feet.

²⁰³Cf. the example of Comparison in Aristotle, *Rhet.* 3. 3 (1406 b): "Androtion said of Idrieus that he was 'like a cur let loose from his chain, that flies at you and bites'; so Idrieus, let loose from his chains, was vicious." [Tr.]

²⁰⁴Cf. the second example of Simile, 4. xlix. 62 below, and the passage of Demosthenes cited in note. [Tr.]

No one, men of the jury, can, by words, do justice to the deed, nor reproduce in language the magnitude of the disaster."²⁰⁵

With this kind of figure either indignation or pity can be aroused, when the consequences of an act, taken together as a whole, are concisely set forth in a clear style.

XL. Division²⁰⁶ separates the alternatives of a question and resolves each by means of a reason subjoined, as follows: "Why should I now reproach you in any way? If you are an upright man, you have not deserved reproach; if a wicked man, you will be unmoved." Again: "Why should I now boast of my deserts? If you remember them, I shall weary you; if you have forgotten them, I have been ineffective in action, and therefore what could I effect by words?" Again: "There are two things which can urge men to illicit gain: poverty and greed. That you were greedy in the division with your brother we know, that you are poor and destitute we now see. How, therefore, can you show that you had no motive for the crime?" There is the following difference between the present kind of Division and that other which forms the third part of a discourse, and which I treated in Book I, next after Statement of Facts: the former Division operates

²⁰⁵The example is Greek in origin; see the similar example (illustrating διάνοις) in Herodian (Walz 8. 603). Notice that the speaker addresses the hearers as *Quirites* at first, and as *iudices* at the end. For content and diction cf. the example of the grand style, 4. viii. 12 above. Cf. also in Homer, *Il.* 9. 591 ff., Cleopatra's description of the woes that come to men whose city is captured: "The warriors are slain, the city is wasted by fire, and strangers lead captive the children and deep-girdled women"; the example of Metathesis from an unknown author in Isidore, *Rhet.* 21. 34 (Halm, p. 521): "Recall your minds to the spectacle of an unhappy city that has been stormed, and imagine that you see all the burning, the killing, the plundering, the pillaging, the bodily injury done the children, the taking captive of the matrons, the slaying of the old men"; Dio Chrysostom 32. 89; and Caesar in Sallust, *Cat.* 51. 9. [Tr.]

²⁰⁶προσάποδοσις, Distributive Reply. In *distributis supposita ratio* in *De Oratore* 3. 54. 207; Quintilian, 9. 3. 93, doubts whether *distributis subiecta ratio* is a figure. The figure is related to Dilemma (*duplex conclusio*), used in argumentation; see 2. xxiv. 38 above. Cf. *distributio* (4. xxxv. 47) and *ratiocinatio* (4. xvi. 23). Cf. also Trimalchio on Agamemnon's *controversia* in Petronius 48: "If the business took place, there is no argument; if it did not, it is all nonsense." [Tr.]

through the Enumeration or Exposition of the topics to be discussed throughout the whole discourse; whereas here the Division at once unfolds itself, and by briefly adding the reasons for the two or more parts, embellishes the style.

Accumulation²⁰⁷ occurs when the points scattered throughout the whole cause are collected in one place so as to make the speech more impressive or sharp or accusatory, as follows: "From what vice, I ask, is this defendant free? What ground have you for wishing to acquit him of the suit? He is the betrayer of his own self-respect, and the waylayer of the self-respect of others; covetous, intemperate, irascible, arrogant; disloyal to his parents, ungrateful to his friends, troublesome to his kin; insulting to his betters, disdainful of his equals and mates, cruel to his inferiors; in short he is intolerable to every one."

Of the same kind is that other Accumulation, which is very useful in conjectural causes, when the implications, which were petty and weak because expressed separately, are collected in one place and so seem to make the subject evident and not dubious, as follows:²⁰⁸ "Do not, therefore, men of the jury, do not consider singly the things I have said, but join them all together and combine them into one.

XLI. "If the defendant profited from the victim's death; if also his life is full of dishonor, his heart most avaricious, and his family fortune very meager; and if that crime benefited no one but him;²⁰⁹ and if no one else could have done the deed with equal skill, or he himself could not have done it by methods more apt; if he neglected nothing that was necessary for the crime, and did nothing that was not necessary; and if he not only sought the most suitable place, but also a favorable occasion for entering upon the crime, and the most opportune moment for undertaking it; if he spent the longest period of time in exe-

²⁰⁷συναθροισμός. Cf. *enumeratio* in 2. xxx. 47 above, and *consummatio* in Quintilian, 9. 2. 103. [Tr.]

²⁰⁸The example that follows is a summary of a conjectural case (with its dependence on the topics of circumstantial evidence) according to the principles set forth above in 2. ii. 3 ff. [Tr.]

²⁰⁹Cf., in 2. iv. 6 above, the prosecutor's use of Comparison, and for this whole passage Quintilian, 7. 2. 42-44, on Intention (*consilium*). [Tr.]

cuting it, and not without the greatest hope of concealing and completing it; and besides, if, before the victim was murdered, the defendant was seen alone, in the place in which the murder was committed; if soon afterward, during the very commission of the crime, the voice of the victim was heard; if it is established that then, after the murder, the defendant returned home, at dead of night; that on the next day he spoke of the man's murder haltingly and inconsistently—if all these indications are proved, partly by witnesses, and partly by the confessions upon torture which have been adduced in confirmation, and by public opinion, which, born of evidence, must necessarily be true; then, gentlemen, it is your duty to gather all these indications into one, and arrive at definite knowledge, not suspicion, of the crime. To be sure, some one or two of these things can by chance have happened in such a way as to throw suspicion upon this defendant; but for everything to coincide from first to last, he must have been a participant in the crime. This cannot be the result of chance." This figure has force, and in a conjectural issue is almost always essential; in the other types of causes and indeed in all discourse it is to be used occasionally.

XLII. Refining²¹⁰ consists in dwelling on the same topic and yet seeming to say something ever new. It is accomplished in two ways: by merely repeating the same idea, or by descanting upon it. We shall not repeat the same thing precisely—for that, to be sure, would weary the hearer and not refine the idea—but with changes. Our changes will be of three kinds: in the words, in the delivery, and in the treatment.

Our changes will be verbal when, having expressed the idea once, we repeat it once again or oftener in other, equivalent terms, as follows: "No peril is so great that a wise man would think it ought to be avoided when the safety of the fatherland is at stake. When the lasting security of the state is in question, the man endowed with good principles will undoubtedly believe that in defense of the fortunes of the republic he ought to shun no crisis of life, and he will ever persist in

²¹⁰A *χρεία*, a thought (usually ethical) developed in detail in accordance with definite rules; a favorite type of *progymnasma*. [Tr.]

the determination eagerly to enter, for the fatherland, any combat, however great the peril to life.”

Our changes will reside in the delivery if now in the tone of conversation, now in an energetic tone, and now in variation after variation of voice and gesture, repeating the same ideas in different words, we also change the delivery quite strikingly. This cannot be described with complete effectiveness, and yet it is clear enough. Hence there is no need of illustration.

The third kind of change, accomplished in the treatment, will take place if we transfer the thought into the form of Dialogue or into the form of Arousal.

XLIII. Dialogue—which I shall soon more fully discuss in its place²¹¹ and shall now touch upon briefly, as far as may be sufficient for the present purpose—consists in putting in the mouth of some person language in keeping with his character, as follows (for the sake of greater clarity, to continue the same theme as above): “The wise man will think that for the common weal he ought undergo every peril.²¹² Often he will say to himself: ‘Not for self alone was I born, but also, and much more, for the fatherland. Above all, let me spend my life, which I owe to fate, for the salvation of my country. She has nourished me. She has in safety and honor reared me even to this time of life. She has protected my interests by good laws, the best of customs, and a most honorable training. How can I adequately repay her from whom I have received these blessings?’ According as the wise man often says this to himself, when the republic is in danger, he on his part will shun no danger.”

Again, the idea is changed in the treatment by means of a transfer to the form of Arousal, when not only we ourselves seem to speak under emotion, but we also stir the hearer, thus: “Who is possessed of reasoning power so feeble, whose soul is bound in such straits of envy, that he would not heap eager praise upon this man and judge him most wise, a man who for the salvation of the fatherland, the security of the state, and the prosperity of the republic eagerly under-

takes and gladly undergoes any danger, no matter how great or terrible? For my part, my desire to praise this man adequately is greater than my power to do so, and I am sure that this feeling of inadequacy is shared by all of you.”

The theme, then, will be varied in speaking in these three ways: in the words, in the delivery, in the treatment. In the treatment we shall vary the theme by two means: by Dialogue and by Arousal.

But when we descant upon the same theme, we shall use a great many variations. Indeed, after having expressed the theme simply, we can subjoin the Reason, and then express the theme in another form, with or without the Reasons;²¹³ next we can present the Contrary²¹⁴ (all this I have discussed under Figures of Diction); then a Comparison and an Example (about these I shall say more in their place);²¹⁵ XLIV. and finally the Conclusion (The essential details of which were discussed in Book II, when I showed how one should bring arguments to a close; in this Book²¹⁶ I have explained the nature of that figure of diction which is called Conclusion). A Refinement of this sort, which will consist of numerous figures of diction and of thought, can therefore be exceedingly ornate.

The following, then, will illustrate a treatment in seven parts—to continue the use of the same theme for my example, in order that you may know how easily, by the precepts of rhetoric, a simple idea is developed in a multiple manner.²¹⁷

“The wise man will, in the republic’s behalf, shun no peril,²¹⁸ because it may often happen that if a man has been loath to perish for his country it will be necessary for him to perish with her. Further, since it is from our country that we receive all our advantages, no disadvantage incurred on her behalf is to be regarded as severe.²¹⁹

²¹³Cf. 4. xvii. 24. [Tr.]

²¹⁴Cf. 4. xviii. 25. [Tr.]

²¹⁵4. xlv. 59–xlix. 62. [Tr.]

²¹⁶4. xxx. 41. [Tr.]

²¹⁷The *tractatio* (ἐξεργασία) of the *chria* is freer than that of the *epicheireme* in 2. xix. 28 ff. This is our oldest extant illustration of a *chria*. Cf. the *tractatio* in Hermogenes, *Pro-gymn.* 3 (ed. Rabe, pp. 6–8). [Tr.]

²¹⁸The Theme expressed simply (χρησία). [Tr.]

²¹⁹The Reasons (αἰτίαι). [Tr.]

²¹¹4. lii. 65 below. [Tr.]

²¹²A *quaestio infinita* (θέσις); see Quintilian, 3. 5. 5 ff. [Tr.]

“I say, then, that they who flee from the peril to be undergone on behalf of the republic act foolishly,²²⁰ for they cannot avoid the disadvantages, and are found guilty of ingratitude towards the state.²²¹

“But on the other hand they who, with peril to themselves, confront the perils of the fatherland, are to be considered wise, since they render to their country the homage due her, and prefer to die for many of their fellow citizens instead of with them. For it is extremely unjust to give back to nature, when she compels, the life you have received from nature, and not to give to your country, when she calls for it, the life you have preserved thanks to your country; and when you can die for fatherland with the greatest manliness and honor, to prefer to live in disgrace and cowardice; and when you are willing to face danger for friends and parents and your other kin, to refuse to run the risk for the republic, which embraces all these and that most holy name of fatherland as well.²²²

“He who in a voyage prefers his own to his vessel’s security, deserves contempt. No less blameworthy is he who in a crisis of the republic consults his own in preference to the common safety. For from the wreck of a ship many of those on board escape unharmed, but from the wreck of the fatherland no one can swim to safety.²²³

“It is this that, in my opinion, Decius²²⁴ well understood, who is said to have devoted himself to death, and, in order to save his legions, to have plunged into the midst of the enemy. He gave up his life, but did not throw it away; for at the cost of a very cheap good he redeemed a sure good, of a small good the greatest good. He gave his life, and received his country in exchange. He lost his life, and gained glory, which, transmitted with

²²⁰Expression of the theme in a new form. [Tr.]

²²¹The Reasons. [Tr.]

²²²The argument from the Contrary (ἐχ τοῦ ἐναντίου). [Tr.]

²²³The argument by Comparison (ἐχ παραβολῆς). [Tr.]

²²⁴The national hero P. Decius Mus, in 295 B.C. at Sentinum in the war against the Samnites, flung himself upon the weapons of the enemy, and by this act of devotion brought victory to the Romans. The like act was attributed to his father (who bore the same name) in a battle against the Latins in 340 B.C. This story was a favorite historical example (see Exemplification, 4 xlix. 62 below) of patriotism. [Tr.]

highest praise, shines more and more every day as time goes on.²²⁵

“But if reason has shown and illustration confirmed that it is fitting to confront danger in defense of the republic, they are to be esteemed wise who do not shrink from any peril when the security of the fatherland is at stake.”²²⁶

It is of these types, then, that Refining consists. I have been led to discuss it at rather great length because it not only gives force and distinction to the speech when we plead a cause, but it is by far our most important means of training for skill in style. It will be advantageous therefore to practice the principles of Refining in exercises divorced from a real cause, and in actual pleading to put them to use in the Embellishment of an argument, which I discussed in Book II.

XLV. Dwelling on the Point occurs when one remains rather long upon, and often returns to, the strongest topic on which the whole cause rests. Its use is particularly advantageous, and is especially characteristic of the good orator, for no opportunity is given the hearer to remove his attention from this strongest topic. I have been unable to subjoin a quite appropriate example²²⁷ of the figure, because this topic is not isolated from the whole cause like some limb, but like blood²²⁸ is spread through the whole body of the discourse.

Through Antithesis contraries will meet. As I have explained above, it belongs either among

²²⁵The argument from Example (ἐχ παραδειγμάτων), and the testimony of antiquity (μαρτύρια τῶν παλαιῶν). [Tr.]

²²⁶Conclusion (ἐπίλογος). [Tr.]

²²⁷Anon. *Schemata Dianoias*, in Halm, p. 72. 7, cites in illustration of this figure the famous beginning of Cicero’s first oration against Catiline: “How long, in heaven’s name, Catiline, will you abuse our patience? How much longer yet will that madness of yours make mock of us? To what limit will your unbridled audacity vaunt itself?” [Tr.]

²²⁸The basis is the common comparison of a discourse with the human body. Cf. ἄδρον (4. viii. 11 above), ἰσχνόν (4. x. 14 above), and esp. *sufflata* (4. x. 15 above), and *dissolutum* (*sine nervis et articulis*) and *exile* (4. xi. 16 above); Cicero, *Brutus* 9. 36 and 16. 64, and *Orator* 23. 76; Horace, *Serm.* 2. 1. 2; in Plato, *Phaedrus* 264 C. Socrates’ principle that every discourse is constructed like a living creature, with a body of its own and a head and feet, and Aristotle, *Poet.*, ch. 7 (1450 b). See also La Rue Van Hook, *The Metaphorical Terminology of Greek Rhetoric and Literary Criticism*, Chicago diss., 1905, pp. 18 ff. [Tr.]

the figures of diction²²⁹ as in the following example: “You show yourself conciliatory to your enemies, inexorable to your friends”; or among the figures of thought, as in the following example: “While you deplore the troubles besetting him, this knave rejoices in the ruin of the state. While you despair of your fortunes, this knave alone grows all the more confident in his own.” Between these two kinds of Antithesis there is this difference: the first consists in a rapid opposition of words; in the other opposing thoughts ought to meet in a comparison.

Comparison²³⁰ is a manner of speech that carries over an element of likeness from one thing to a different thing. This is used to embellish or prove or clarify or vivify. Furthermore, corresponding to these four aims, it has four forms of presentation: Contrast, Negation, Detailed Parallel, Abridged Comparison. To each single aim in the use of Comparison we shall adapt the corresponding form of presentation.

XLVI. In the form of a contrast, in order to embellish, Comparison is used as follows: “Unlike what happens in the palaestra, where he who receives the flaming torch is swifter in the relay race than he who hands it on, the new general who receives command of an army is not superior to the general who retires from its command. For in the one case it is an exhausted runner who hands the torch to a fresh athlete, whereas in this it is an experienced commander who hands over the army to an inexperienced.” This could have been expressed quite simply, clearly, and plausibly without the Comparison, as follows: “They say that usually it is inferior generals who take over the command of armies from superior.” But the Comparison is used for embellishment, so as to secure a certain distinction for the style. It is moreover presented in the form of a contrast. For

²²⁹4. xv. 21. The ancient rhetoricians differed widely, some regarding Antithesis as a figure of diction, others as a figure of thought, and still others as belonging to both classes; see Cousin, *Études sur Quintilien*, 2. 46–8. [Tr.]

²³⁰παραβολή. This figure and the next two form a common triad in post-Aristotelian rhetoric. In Cicero, *De Inv.* 1. xxx. 49, they are divisions of *comparabile* (Ἐδμοίωσις). Cf. Metaphor and Allegory, 4. xxxiv. 45, 46 above, among the figures of diction. Comparisons are invented, but drawn from real life; see note on Exemplification, 4. xlix. 62 below. [Tr.]

a Comparison in the form of a contrast is used when we deny that something else is like the thing we are asserting to be true.

In the form of a negation and for the purpose of proof, Comparison will be used as follows: “Neither can an untrained horse, however well-built by nature, be fit for the services desired of a horse, nor can an uncultivated man, however well-endowed by nature, attain to virtue.”²³¹ This idea has been rendered more plausible, for it becomes easier to believe that virtue cannot be secured without culture, when we see that not even a horse can be serviceable if untrained. Thus the Comparison is used for the purpose of proof, and moreover is presented in the form of a negation, as is clear from the first word of the Comparison.

XLVII. Comparison will be used also for greater clarity—the presentation being in abridged form—as follows: “In maintaining a friendship, as in a footrace, you must train yourself not only so that you succeed in running as far as is required, but so that, extending yourself by will and sinew, you easily run beyond that point.” Indeed this Comparison serves to make more obvious the poor reasoning evinced by the detractors of those who, for example, are protectors of a friend’s children after his death; for a runner ought to have enough speed to carry him beyond the goal, and a friend so much goodwill that in the devotion of friendship he may reach even beyond what his friend is capable of perceiving. The Comparison is moreover presented in abridged form, for one term is not detached from the other as in the other forms, but the two are conjoined and intermingled in the presentation.

A Comparison will be used for vividness, and be set forth in the form of a detailed parallel,²³² as follows: “Let us imagine a player on the

²³¹Cf. Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 4. 1. 3: “Such as believed themselves good by nature and looked down upon learning, Socrates would teach that the greater the natural endowments, the greater is the need of education, pointing out that spirited and impetuous thoroughbreds, if they are tamed when young, become useful and excellent horses, but if not broken in, become intractable and worthless;” also Quintilian, 5. 11. 24 f. [Tr.]

²³²See note on Exemplification, 4. xlix. 62 below. [Tr.]

lyre²³³ who has presented himself on the stage, magnificently garbed, clothed in a gold-embroidered robe, with purple mantle interlaced in various colors, wearing a golden crown illumined with large gleaming jewels, and holding a lyre covered with golden ornaments and set off with ivory. Further, he has a personal beauty, presence, and stature that impose dignity. If, when by these means he has roused a great expectation in the public, he should in the silence he has created suddenly give utterance to a rasping voice, and this should be accompanied by a repulsive gesture, he is the more forcibly thrust off in derision and scorn, the richer his adornment and the higher the hopes he has raised. In the same way, a man of high station, endowed with great and opulent resources, and abounding in all the gifts of fortune and the emoluments of nature, if he yet lacks virtue and the arts that teach virtue, will so much the more forcibly in derision and scorn be cast from all association with good men, the richer he is in the other advantages, the greater his distinction, and the higher the hopes he has raised." This Comparison, by embellishing both terms, bringing into relation by a method of parallel description the one man's ineptitude and the other's lack of cultivation, has set the subject vividly before the eyes of all. Moreover the Comparison is presented in the form of a detailed parallel because, once the similitude has been set up, all like elements are related.

XLVIII. In Comparisons we must carefully see to it that when we present the corresponding idea for the sake of which we have introduced the figure we use words suited to the likeness. The following is an example: "Just as the swallows are with us in summer time, and when driven by the frost retire, . . ." Keeping the same comparison, and using Metaphor, we now say: "so false friends are with us in a peaceful season of our life, and as soon as they have seen the winter of our fortune, they fly away, one and all." But the invention of Comparisons will be easy if one can frequently set before one's eyes everything ani-

²³³The story of Evangelus of Tarentum at the Pythian games; see Lucian, *Adv. Indoctum* 8–10. Cf. also Socrates in Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 1. 7. 2, on the bad flute-player considered in connection with imposture and the life of virtue. [Tr.]

mate and inanimate, mute and articulate, wild and tame, of the earth, sky, and sea, wrought by art, chance, or nature, ordinary or unusual, and can amongst these hunt out some likeness which is capable of embellishing or proving or clarifying or vivifying. The resemblance between the two things need not apply throughout, but must hold on the precise point of comparison.

XLIX. Exemplification²³⁴ is the citing of something done or said in the past, along with the definite naming of the doer or author. It is used with the same motives as a Comparison. It renders a thought more brilliant when used for no other purpose than beauty; clearer, when throwing more light upon what was somewhat obscure; more plausible, when giving the thought greater verisimilitude; more vivid, when expressing everything so lucidly that the matter can, I may almost say, be touched by the hand. I would have added individual specimens of each type had I not under Refining demonstrated the nature of Exemplification,²³⁵ and, under Comparison, made clear the motives for its use.²³⁶ Therefore I have been unwilling to make my discussion of it either too brief for it to be understood, or too long once it is understood.

²³⁴παράδειγμα. Examples are drawn from history. Aristotle, *Rhet.* 2. 20 (1393) a ff., divides Examples into this type and also that which is invented (but drawn from real life), and the latter again into the Comparison (see 4. xlv. 59 above) and the Fable. Cf. *Rhet. ad Alex.*, ch. 8 (1429 a–1430 a), and Quintilian, 5. 11. 1 ff. and 8. 3. 72 ff. Examples are recommended especially in deliberative speaking, 3. v. 9 above; cf. Isocrates, *Ad Demonicum* 34, Aristotle, *Rhet.* 1. 9 (1368 a) and 3. 17 (1418 a). Both embellishment (cf. 2. xxix. 46 above) and proof (cf. 3. iii. 4 above) are here included among the functions of Example by our author. In 4. iii. 5 above the function is declared to be *demonstratio*, not *confirmatio* or *testificatio*; see note. For *facti et dicti* in the definition cf. Quintilian's recommendation in 12. 2. 29 that the speaker know and ponder the noblest things "said and done" in the past, and the title of Valerius Maximus' work, *Factorum et Dictorum Memorabilium Libri IX*; also Thucydides' division of his material into λόγοι and ἔργα. See Karl Alewell, *Über das rhetorische παράδειγμα*, Kiel diss., Leipzig, 1913, especially pp. 18 ff. Marius Plotius (Keil, *Gramm. Lat.* 6. 469) and Apsines, *Ars Rhet.* 8 (Spengel-Hammer 1 [2]. 281. 10 ff.) treat four methods of drawing examples: from the like, the contrary, the greater, the less; cf. 4. xlv. 59 above. [Tr.]

²³⁵4. xlv. 57 above. [Tr.]

²³⁶4. xlv. 59 above. [Tr.]

Simile²³⁷ is the comparison of one figure with another, implying a certain resemblance between them. This is used either for praise or censure. For praise, as follows: "He entered the combat in body like the strongest bull, in impetuosity like the fiercest lion."²³⁸ For censure, so as to excite hatred, as follows: "That wretch who daily glides through the middle of the Forum like a crested serpent, with curved fangs, poisonous glance,²³⁹ and fierce panting, looking about him on this side and that for some one to blast with venom from his throat—to smear it with his lips, to drive it in with his teeth, to spatter it with his tongue." To excite envy, as follows: "That creature who flaunts his riches, loaded and weighed down with gold, shouts and raves like a Phrygian eunuch-priest of Cybele²⁴⁰ or like a soothsayer." To excite contempt, as follows: "That creature, who like a snail silently hides and keeps himself in his shell, is carried off, he and his house, to be swallowed whole."

Portrayal²⁴¹ consists in representing and depicting in words clearly enough for recognition the bodily form of some person, as follows: "I mean him, men of the jury, the ruddy, short, bent

²³⁷εἰχών. Puttenham's "Resemblance by Imagerie or Pourtrait." Cf. Aristotle, *Rhet.* 3. 4 (1406) b ff. In post-Aristotelian rhetoric this appears as a special figure, separate from *similitudo* (Comparison), 4. xlv. 59 above, to which it is yet closely akin; Minucianus, *De Epich.* 2 (Spengel-Hammer 1 [2]. 342) attributes greater vividness to εἰχών. Quintilian, 5. 11. 24, advises that this kind of comparison should be used less often than the kind which helps to prove our point. Cf. Cicero, *De Inv.* 1. xxx. 49. Polybius Sard. (Spengel 3. 108) gives nine figures related to εἰχών. [Tr.]

²³⁸Cf. Aristotle, *Rhet.* 3. 4 (1406) b: "When Homer [cf. *Il.* 20. 164] says of Achilles, 'Like a lion he rushed to meet his foe,' that is εἰχών." [Tr.]

²³⁹βασχανος ὀφθαλμός. For the example cf. Demosthenes, *Adv. Aristogeit.* 1. 52: "But he moves through the marketplace like a snake or a scorpion with sting raised, darting here and there, looking about for someone upon whom to bring down misfortune or calumny or evil of some kind." [Tr.]

²⁴⁰The Galli derived their name from a river Gallus in Phrygia; who drank of it went mad (Ovid, *Fasti* 4. 366). The worship of the Phrygian Mother Goddess was characterized by extreme wildness. [Tr.]

²⁴¹χαραχτηρίσμός, favored in comedy; e.g., Terence, *Hecyra* 439–41: "Well, I'll describe him so that you will recognize him—he is tall, ruddy, curly-headed, heavy-set, bleary-eyed, and has a face like a corpse." Quintilian, 9. 3. 99, excludes this from the figures. [Tr.]

man, with white and rather curly hair, blue-grey eyes, and a huge scar on his chin, if perhaps you can recall him to memory." This figure is not only serviceable, if you should wish to designate some person, but also graceful, if fashioned with brevity and clarity.

L. Character Delineation²⁴² consists in describing a person's character by the definite signs which, like distinctive marks, are attributes of that character; for example, if you should wish to describe a man who is not actually rich but parades as a moneyed man, you would say: "That person there, men of the jury, who thinks it admirable that he is called rich, see now first with what an air he surveys us. Does he not seem to you to be saying: 'I'd gladly give you clients' doles, if you didn't try my patience!' Yes, once he has propped his chin on his left hand²⁴³ he thinks that he dazzles the eyes of all with the gleam of his jewelry and the glitter of his gold. When he turns to his slave boy here, his only one—I know him, and you do not, I think—he calls him now by one name, now by another, and now by a third: 'Ho there, you, Sannio,' says he, 'come here, see that these barbarians²⁴⁴ don't turn things upside down,' so that unknowing hearers may think he is selecting one slave from among many. Whispering in the boy's ear he tells him either to arrange the dining-couches at home, or to ask his uncle for an Ethiop²⁴⁵ to attend him to the baths, or to station the Asturian thoroughbred before his front door, or to make ready some other flimsy stage property which should set off his vainglory.

²⁴²ἠθοποιία. *Morum ac vitae imitatio* in Cicero, *De Oratore* 3. 53. 204. Cf. Theophrastus, *Characters*, especially xxiii, "Pretentiousness." Theophrastus developed the type; Roman comedy favored it (cf. the narratives in Terence, and, for the theme, the *Miles Gloriosus* of Plautus). Of the orators Lysias employs Ethopoeia with special skill. ἠθοποιία may be connected with the simple style (see 4. x. 14 above), although the example of the figure shows an artificial elegance which *sermo* rarely had. Quintilian, 9. 3. 99, excludes ἠθοποιία from the figures. [Tr.]

²⁴³This gesture, used by Palaestrio in Plautus, *Miles Gloriosus* 209, is interpreted as indicating thought. Cf. the statue of Polyhymnia, No. 195 in A. Baumeister, *Bilder aus dem griech. und röm. Altertum*, Munich, 1889. [Tr.]

²⁴⁴Unlike Sannio, who was doubtless home-born. [Tr.]

²⁴⁵In Theophrastus, *Characters* 21. 4, the Man of Petty Ambition "sees to it that his attendant shall be an Ethiop." [Tr.]

Then he shouts, that all may hear: 'See to it that the money is carefully counted before nightfall,²⁴⁶ if possible.' The boy, by this time well knowing his master's character, says: 'You had better send more slaves over there if you want the counting done today.' 'Go then,' he answers, 'take with you Libanus and Sosia.' 'Very good, sir.'

"Then by chance come guests, whom the rascal had invited while traveling abroad in splendor. By this event the man is, you may be sure, quite embarrassed, but he still does not desist from his natural fault. 'You do well,' says he, 'to come, but you would have done better to go straight to me at my house.' 'That we would have done,' say they, 'had we known your house.' 'But surely it was easy to find that out from anyone. Still, come with me.'

"They follow. In the meanwhile all his conversation is spent in boasting. He asks: 'How are the crops in the fields?' He says that because his villas have been burnt, he cannot go to them, and does not yet dare rebuild them, 'although on my Tusculan estate, to be sure, I have commenced an insane undertaking—to build on the same foundations.'

LI. "While saying this he comes to a certain house in which a banqueting club was to meet on that very day. As if in fact he knew the owner, the rascal now enters the house with his guests. 'Here,' says he, 'is where I live.' He scrutinizes the silver which had been laid out, inspects the dining-couch which had been spread, and indicates his approval. A little slave boy comes up. He says aloud to the man that the master is about to arrive; would he wish to leave? 'Indeed?' says the man. 'Let us be off, my friends. My brother has arrived from the Falernian country. I shall go to meet him. Do come here at four o'clock.'²⁴⁷ The guests depart. The rascal rushes posthaste to his own home. They, as he had bidden, come at four o'clock. They ask for him, discover whose house it is, and, hoodwinked, betake themselves to an inn.

²⁴⁶Cf. Calpurnius Siculus 3. 63 f.; "Let him only vie in feeding kids in number equal to my bulls as these are counted at nightfall." [Tr.]

²⁴⁷The dinner hour; cf. Martial, *Epigr.* 4. 8. 7, 7. 51. 11. [Tr.]

"They see the man the next day, tell him their story, make their complaint and their accusation. He assures them that they had been deceived by the similarity of the place and had missed their way by a whole street; he had, to the prejudice of his health, waited for them late into the night. To his boy Sannio he had given the job of borrowing vessels, coverings, and servants, and the little slave, not wanting in cleverness, had quite energetically and artfully procured all these. The rascal leads his guests to his home. He says he has accommodated one of his friends with the loan of his largest mansion for a wedding. The boy reports that the silver is being recalled; for the lender had misgivings. 'Off with you,' says our man, 'I have obliged him with a mansion, I have given him my household of slaves. Does he want the silver, too? And yet, although I have guests, let him use it; we shall be content with Samian.'²⁴⁸

"Why should I tell what he next brings to pass? Such is the character of the man that what he effects by empty boasting and showing-off in one day I could hardly recount if I talked a whole year."

Character Delineations of this kind which describe the qualities proper to each man's nature carry very great charm, for they set before our eyes a person's whole character, of the boastful man, as I undertook to illustrate, or the envious or pompous man, or the miser, the climber, the lover, the voluptuary, the thief, the public informer—in short, by such delineation any one's ruling passion can be brought into the open.

LII. Dialogue²⁴⁹ consists in assigning to some person language which as set forth conforms with his character, for example: "When the city overflowed with soldiers, and all the citizens, oppressed by fear, kept themselves at home, this fellow appeared in military cloak, armed with a sword, in his hand a javelin. Three young men, equipped like him, follow behind. Suddenly he

²⁴⁸In this ware metal shapes were imitated. By no means the humblest ware, Samian yet represents the inferiority of earthen vessels as against those of metal. See F. O. Waagé, *Antiquity* II (1937). 46–55. [Tr.]

²⁴⁹διήλογοι. Quintilian, 9. 2. 29 ff., joins this figure and Personification (next below) as one. Cf. 4. xliii. above. [Tr.]

bursts into the house, and in a loud voice shouts: 'Where is he, the wealthy owner of this house? Why has he not appeared before me? Why are you silent?' At this all are struck dumb with terror. The wife of the unhappy man, bursting into tears, throws herself at this creature's feet, and says: 'By all that is dearest to you in life, I pray you, pity us.²⁵⁰ Destroy not anew them that are destroyed.²⁵¹ Use your good fortune kindly. Remember that you are human.' 'Why do you not surrender him to me and cease wailing into my ears? He shall not escape.'

"Meanwhile word of this person's arrival and of his clamorous threats of death is brought to the master of the house. Immediately upon receipt of these tidings, 'Hark, Gorgias,' he says to the attendant of his children, 'hide them, defend them, see that you bring them up safe to young manhood.' Hardly, had he uttered these words when, behold, this person appears, and says: 'You are still here, rash fool? Has not my voice frightened you to death? Appease my enmity and sate my wrath with your blood.' The master, with proud spirit, replies: 'I feared I might really be conquered. Now I see: You do not wish to contend with me in a trial at law, where failure brings shame, and success glory. You wish to kill me. True, I shall be killed, but I will die unconquered.' 'Sententious even at the point of death! You do not wish to beg your life of me when you see I have you in my power?' Then the woman: 'Nay, truly he begs and implores you. I plead with you, be moved to pity. And do you, in heaven's name, clasp his knees. He has you in his power. He has prevailed over you, and do you now prevail over your spirit.' 'Why do you not cease, my wife,' says he, 'to utter words unworthy of me? Be silent, and attend to your tasks. And you, why do you not, once for all, rob me of life, and yourself, by my death, of every hope of

enjoying life?' The intruder thrust the weeping woman from him, and as the master began to say something or other, worthy, I am sure, of his manliness, buried the sword in his side."²⁵²

I think that in this example the language assigned to each person was appropriate to his character—a precaution necessary to maintain in Dialogue.

There are likewise Hypothetical Dialogues, as follows: "Indeed what do we think those people will say if you have passed this judgment? Will not every one say as follows:——?" And then one must add what they will say.

LIII. Personification²⁵³ consists in representing an absent person as present, or in making a mute thing or one lacking form articulate, and attributing to it a definite form and a language or a certain behavior appropriate to its character, as follows: "But if this invincible city should now give utterance to her voice, would she not speak as follows? 'I, city of renown, who have been adorned with numerous trophies, enriched with unconditional triumphs, and made opulent by famous victories, am now vexed, O citizens, by your dissensions. Her whom Carthage with her wicked guile, Numantia with her tested strength, and Corinth with her polished culture, could not shake, do you now suffer to be trod upon and trampled underfoot by worthless weaklings?'" Again: "But if that great Lucius Brutus should now come to life again and appear here before you, would he not use this language? 'I banished

²⁵²Whereas the example of Character Delineation next above is in the spirit of comedy, this example is tragic in nature. As the notes indicate, it is probably of Greek origin, despite certain of its distinctively Roman features. Marx, *Proleg.*, p. 108, thinks that it may perhaps be referred to the *controversia* concerning the murder of Sulpicius, i. xv. 25 above. [Tr.]

²⁵³πρὸς ὄψιν ποιοῦν. Representing an absent person as present would not today be regarded as strictly within the meaning of Personification. Cf. Cicero, *De Oratore* 3. 53. 205 (*personarum ficta inductio*); Quintilian, 9. 2. 29–37. See Georg Reichel, *Quaestiones Progymnasm.*, diss. Leipzig, 1909, pp. 75–88, on this figure as a *progymnasma*. Making the dead speak was sometimes called εἰδωλοποιία. Cf. Cicero, *Orator* 25. 85: "[The unaffected Attic speaker] will not represent the commonwealth as speaking, or call the dead from the lower world." Volkman, p. 490, excludes Personification from the figures of thought; see also pp. 280 and 312 on its uses. [Tr.]

²⁵⁰The style is Greek. Cf., for example, Euripides, *Androm.* 892–3: πρὸς σε τῶνδε γονάτων ὄχτειρον ἡμᾶς ("I implore you by these knees, take pity on me"), and *Medea* 324; Sophocles, *Oed. Col.* 250, and *Philoct.* 468. [Tr.]

²⁵¹Cf. Euripides, *Alc.* 1065: "Take me not captive who am already captive"; Sophocles, *Antig.* 1030: "What feat is it to slay the slain anew?"; Ovid, *Epist. ex Ponto* 4. 16. 51: "What pleasure do you find, Malice, in driving the steel into limbs already dead?" [Tr.]

kings; you bring in tyrants. I created liberty, which did not exist; what I created you do not wish to preserve. I, at peril of my life, freed the fatherland; you, even without peril, do not care to be free.”²⁵⁴ Personification may be applied to a variety of things, mute and inanimate. It is most useful in the divisions under Amplification and in Appeal to Pity.

Emphasis²⁵⁵ is the figure which leaves more to be suspected than has been actually asserted. It is produced through Hyperbole, Ambiguity, Logical Consequence, Aposiopesis, and Analogy.

The emphasis is produced through Hyperbole²⁵⁶ when more is said than the truth warrants, so as to give greater force to the suspicion, as follows: “Out of so great a patrimony, in so short a time, this man has not laid by even an earthen pitcher wherewith to seek a fire for himself.”²⁵⁷

The emphasis is produced through Ambiguity²⁵⁸ when a word can be taken in two or more senses, but yet is taken in that sense which the speaker intends; for example, if you should say concerning a man who has come into many legacies: “Just look out, you, who look out for yourself so profitable.”²⁵⁹ LIV. Even as we must avoid those ambiguities which render the style obscure, so must we seek those which produce an emphasis of this sort. It will be easy to find them if we know and pay heed to the double and multiple meanings of words.

²⁵⁴Such sentiments as are expressed in these two passages might have been uttered by tribunes of the plebs in the time of Marius; see Kroehnert, p. 32. L. Junius Brutus liberated Rome from the Tarquins and founded the Roman consulate. [Tr.]

²⁵⁵ἔμφασις. Meaning conveyed by implication. Really more a trope than a figure. Cf. Quintilian, 8. 3. 83: “There are two kinds of Emphasis; one means more than it says, the other often means something it does not say.” [Tr.]

²⁵⁶See 4. xxxiii. 44 above (*superlatio*). [Tr.]

²⁵⁷This passage is in the spirit of the excerpts, in Cicero, *De Oratore* 2. 55. 223–6, from the speech delivered in probably 91. B.C. by L. Licinius Crassus on behalf of Cn. Planc(i)us against M. Junius Brutus, who had squandered his patrimony. Kroehnert, p. 31, thinks it may come from this speech, but there is no real evidence for the ascription. [Tr.]

²⁵⁸Quintilian, 6. 3. 47 ff., considers the play on double meanings only rarely telling, unless helped out by the facts.

²⁵⁹The play is upon the double meaning of *cernere*: to “discern” and, in judicial language, “to enter upon an inheritance;” this: “you who know exceedingly well how to enter upon bequests.” [Tr.]

Emphasis by Logical Consequence is produced when one mentions the things that follow from a given circumstance, thus leaving the whole matter in distrust; for example, if you should say to the son of a fishmonger: “Quiet, you, whose father used to wipe his nose with his forearm.”

The emphasis is produced through Aposiopesis²⁶⁰ if we begin to say something and then stop short, and what we have already said leaves enough to arouse suspicion, as follows: “He who so handsome and so young, recently at a stranger’s house—I am unwilling to say more.”

The emphasis is produced through Analogy, when we cite some analogue and do not amplify it, but by its means intimate what we are thinking, as follows: “Do not, Saturninus, rely too much on the popular mob—unavenged lie the Gracchi.”²⁶¹

This figure sometimes possesses liveliness and distinction in the highest degree; indeed it permits the hearer himself to guess what the speaker has not mentioned.

Conciseness²⁶² is the expressing of an idea by the very minimum of essential words, as follows: “On his way he took Lemnus, then left a garrison at Thasus, after that destroyed the Bithynian city, Cius; next, returning to the Hellespont, he forthwith occupies Abydus.”²⁶³ Again: “Just recently

²⁶⁰See 4. xxx. 41 above (*praecisio*). [Tr.]

²⁶¹L. Appuleius Saturninus, of praetorian descent, after being removed from the quaestorship by the Senate, joined the *populares*, and thereafter by demagoguery and violence fought the Senate until he was, in 100 B.C., declared a public enemy by that body and slain, the mob participating; see note on 4. xxii. 31 above. Saturninus was influenced by the political ideas of C. Gracchus. On his grain-bill see 1. xii. 21 above. [Tr.]

²⁶²βραχυλογία. Also, from another point of view, *επιτροχασμός*. Cf. *distincte concisa brevitatis* and *percursorio* in Cicero, *De Oratore* 3. 53. 202. Quintilian in 9. 3. 99 denies that βραχυλογία is a figure, yet in 9. 3. 50 treats it as a form of Asyndeton. [Tr.]

²⁶³Text and reference are uncertain. Friedrich Muenzer (*Philologus* 89 [1934]. 215–25) believes that the expedition made in 202–200 B.C. by Philip V of Macedon (Rome declared war in 200) is indicated. Cius was the city on the Propontis in Bithynia. The Rhodians were active against Philip; this passage may come from an actual oration, perhaps delivered, Muenzer thinks, by Apollonius Molo or Apollonius ὁ μαλαχός. W. Warde Fowler, *Class Rev.* 29 (1915). 136–7, and *Roman Essays and Interpretations*, Oxford, 1920, pp.

consul, next he was first man of the state; then he sets out for Asia; next he is declared a public enemy and exiled; after that he is made general-in-chief and finally consul for the seventh time.”²⁶⁴ Conciseness expresses a multitude of things within the limits of but a few words, and is therefore to be used often, either when the facts do not require a long discourse or when time will not permit dwelling upon them.

LV. It is Ocular Demonstration when an event is so described in words that the business seems to be enacted and the subject to pass vividly before our eyes. This we can effect by including what has preceded, followed, and accompanied the event itself, or by keeping steadily to its consequences or the attendant circumstances, as follows: “As soon as Gracchus saw that the people were wavering, in their fear that he might, by the Senate’s decree, be moved to change his mind, he ordered a convocation of the Assembly. In the meanwhile, this fellow, filled with wicked and criminal designs, bounds out of the temple of Jupiter. In a sweat, with

eyes blazing,²⁶⁵ hair bristling, toga awry, he begins to quicken his pace, several other men joining him. While the herald is asking attention for Gracchus, this fellow, beside himself, plants his heel on a bench, breaks off a leg of it with his right hand, and orders the others to do likewise. When Gracchus begins a prayer to the gods, these creatures in a rush attack him, coming together from all quarters, and a man in the crowd shouts: ‘Fly, Tiberius, fly! Don’t you see? Look behind you, I say!’ Then the fickle mob, stricken with sudden fear, take to flight. But this fellow, frothing crime from his mouth, breathing forth cruelty from the depth of his lungs, swings his arm, and, while Gracchus wonders what it means, but still does not move from the place where he stood, strikes him on the temple. Gracchus does not impair his inborn manliness by a single cry, but falls without uttering a sound. The assassin, bespattered with the pitiable blood of the bravest of heroes, looks about him as if he had done a most admirable deed, gaily extends his murderous hand to his followers as they congratulate him, and betakes himself to the temple of Jupiter.”²⁶⁶ Through this kind of narrative Ocular Demonstration is very useful in amplifying a matter and basing on it an appeal to pity, for it sets forth the whole incident and virtually brings it before our eyes.

LVI. I have here carefully collected all the principles of embellishing style. If, Herennius, you exercise yourself diligently in these, your speaking will possess impressiveness, distinction, and charm. As a result you will speak like a true orator, and the product of your invention will not be bare and inelegant, nor will it be expressed in commonplace language.

Now let us again and again jointly insist (for the matter will concern us both) upon our seeking, constantly and unremittingly, by study and exercise, to master the theory of the art. Others

95–99, thinks the reference is to Lucullus and his fleet in 84 (85) B.C., when he was clearing the Hellespont and Aegean of the forces of Mithridates for Sulla. Marx (*Viminacium*), *Rhein. Mus.* 47 (1892). 157–9, doubts the possibility of establishing the reference. For other conjectures, see A. von Domaszewski, *Jahreshefte der oesterr. archaeol. Inst. in Wien* 5 (1902). 147–9 (Lysimachia, in the Thracian Chersonese, and Lucullus), and H. Jordan, *Hermes* 8 (1874). 75–7 (Lysimachia, and Antiochus III after his defeat in 191 B.C. by the Romans at Thermopylae).

Alexander Numenii, *De Schemat.* (Spengel 3. 22), cites in illustration of ἐπιτροχασμός Demosthenes, *Phil.* 3. 27: “He has gone to the Hellespont; formerly he marched against Ambracia; Elis—that important city in the Peloponnese—he holds; against the Megarians he plotted lately.” If our author’s example does not come from a speech actually delivered, it may be an imitation of this passage. [Tr.]

²⁶⁴The reference is to Marius; see W. Warde Fowler, *Journ. of Philol.* 10 (1882). 197–205, and *Roman Essays and Interpretations*, pp. 91–95. Marius was consul for the first time in 107 B.C., and for the fifth in 101; in 100, during his sixth consulship, spent at Rome, he was in complete control of the state; he departed for Asia in voluntary exile in 99; when, after the contest with Sulla in 88, he was declared a public enemy by the Senate and exiled, he fled to Africa; he returned to Italy in the middle of 87, and soon thereafter received from Cinna the proconsular *imperium* and the *fasces*; he held the consulship for the seventh time in January 86 for a few days until his death. The career of Marius was a common theme in the rhetorical schools; cf. Seneca, *Contr.* 1. 1. 5, Valerius Maximus, 6. 9. 14. [Tr.]

²⁶⁵Cf. Cicero, *Verr.* 2. 5. 62. 161: “He [Verres] came into the Forum burning with criminal fury; his eyes blazed, and cruelty stood out on every feature of his face;” cited by Quintilian, 9. 2. 40, and by Gellius, 10. 3. 9. [Tr.]

²⁶⁶This is a partisan narrative, probably from a *controversia*, of the murder of Ti. Gracchus in 133 B.C. by P. Cornelius Scipio Nasica Serapio and his followers. On the accounts that we have in the ancient historians see Friedrich Muenzer, *P.-W.* 4. 1503. [Tr.]

find this difficult for three main reasons: they have no one with whom it is a pleasure to practice, or they lack self-confidence, or they do not know the right path to follow. For us none of these difficulties exists. We practice together gladly because of our friendship, which, originating in blood relationship, has in addition been strengthened by the study of philosophy. We are not without self-confidence, both because we have made no little progress, and because there are other and better studies which we pursue in life more intently, so that even if, in public speaking, we have not reached our goal, we shall miss but a little of the wholly perfect life.²⁶⁷ And

²⁶⁷Philodemus, *Rhet.*, ed. Sudhaus, I. 250, says that the art of rhetoric does not conduce to a life of happiness. [Tr.]

finally, we know the path to follow, because from these books no principle of rhetoric has been omitted.

Indeed I have shown how in every type of cause one ought to find ideas. I have told how it is proper to arrange these. I have disclosed the method of delivery. I have taught how we can have a good memory. I have explained the means by which to secure a finished style. If we follow these principles, our Invention will be keen and prompt, our Arrangement clear and orderly, our Delivery impressive and graceful, our Memory sure and lasting, our Style brilliant and charming. In the art of rhetoric, then, there is no more. All these faculties we shall attain if we supplement the precepts of theory with diligent practice.

Cicero

106–43 B.C.E.

Marcus Tullius Cicero was born near the rural town of Arpinum, Italy, to a family of the equestrian order (upper middle class). Cicero's family had upper-class connections, however, and they were able to obtain for him and his brother Quintus, to whom Cicero's major work of rhetorical theory, *De Oratore* (*Of Oratory*), is addressed, the kind of education usually reserved for members of the patrician order, those destined for high public office. The young men were sent to Rome to study rhetoric in Greek with Greek teachers, and they stayed in the home of the aristocratic politician Crassus (Cicero's spokesman in *De Oratore*). Cicero was also apprenticed to the noted lawyer Quintus Scaevola (who appears in *De Oratore*), and Cicero and his ambitious young friends flocked to hear eloquent politicians such as Sulpicius Rufus (also a character in *De Oratore*).

CICERO'S PLACE IN RHETORIC

Legal oratory was an important pathway to advancement in ancient Rome. Typically, although litigants might speak for themselves, they also enlisted one or more "patrons" who would plead their cases. Juries were large, trials were public and lengthy, and eloquent orators quickly attracted a following. The establishment of good character, both for the speaker and his client, was often crucial to winning a case. Excellence in forensic oratory could lead to political influence, since Roman law was considered to be the foundation of the state, and legal cases often had political implications. Conversely, high birth and political influence, as well as rhetorical skill, could make a man a powerful advocate. But even a nonpatrician might rise high through oratory, as Cicero's career illustrated. For most of his life, Rome was a republic governed by a senate. Prominence achieved through courtroom oratory could lead to political office and the chance to use one's rhetorical powers in directing the state.

Cicero launched his public career as a lawyer in his early twenties, in 81 B.C.E., not long after he wrote *De Inventione* (ca. 86 B.C.E.). This early treatise shows signs of having been amassed from Cicero's student notebooks. Although Cicero may have intended it to discuss all five canons of rhetoric, either he never completed it or the complete work did not survive. The text we have concentrates only on invention and, more specifically, on the use of stasis theory to define arguments in forensic speeches and on the proper formation of the parts of a forensic speech. Cicero later (in *De Oratore*) downplayed the work. Nevertheless, *De Inventione* and the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (p. 243), which was also long thought to be Cicero's work, became the most widely read treatises on classical rhetoric after the classical period. For later rhetoricians, these works, both heavily influenced by Greek rhetoric, became the standard sources for the three categories of speech (deliberative, forensic, ceremonial) and also for the five canons of the rhetorical composing process (invention, arrangement, style, memory, delivery).

Cicero quickly became known as one of the most eloquent speakers in Rome. Around 79 B.C.E. he traveled to Greece and Asia Minor, a tour that wealthy young men often undertook to further their education but which, in his case, may already have been motivated in part by a need to absent himself for political reasons. He had just successfully defended a man accused of parricide by a protégé of Rome's then most powerful leader, Sulla. Cicero studied philosophy at the Academy in Athens, and from that point on he began to explore more deeply the Platonic and Aristotelian ideas to which his Greek teachers had introduced him in Rome. He regarded his knowledge of philosophy as crucial to his development as a rhetorician, evidently viewing it more as an aid to practical affairs than as a search for absolute truth.

Upon his return, Cicero became ever more active in the volatile political life of Rome. With his eloquence he overcame the social class barrier and won election to a series of offices, culminating in the highest, that of consul (analogous to the U.S. presidency), in 63 B.C.E. During this period representative government and the rule of law were gradually losing power (shortly after Cicero's death, the Republic would be replaced by the Empire). Cicero at first identified himself with liberal political factions, but he later turned to the Roman Senate in hope of finding a stronger defense against tyrants who would impose their rule by military force.

For personal safety, Cicero withdrew from Rome several times, and he was exiled for a year in 58. He used this enforced leisure to pursue scholarly and literary activities, including the composition of a number of treatises on rhetoric: *De Oratore* (excerpted here), 55 B.C.E.; *Brutus, Orator*, and *De Optimo Genere Oratorum*, 46; *De Partitione Oratoriae*, 45; and *Topica*, 44. Cicero discusses rhetorical theory, particularly the relationship between rhetoric and philosophy, in *De Oratore*, *De Partitione Oratoriae* (a summary prepared for his son Marcus), and *Topica* (an adaptation of Aristotle's philosophical topics for rhetorical invention; for more on the topics, see the headnote for Aristotle, p. 169). The conflict between "Atticist" and "Asiatic" standards of style is addressed in *Brutus* (a critical catalog of over two hundred Roman orators), *Orator* (excerpted here; a defense of Cicero's own range of styles), and *De Optimo Genere Oratorum* (a brief introduction to Cicero's edition—now lost—of Demosthenes's famous speech "On the Crown," in which Cicero depicts Demosthenes as the consummate rhetorical stylist).

The debate over Atticist and Asiatic styles had political overtones, in that such important leaders as Brutus and Julius Caesar espoused Atticism. The Atticists, actually neo-Atticists, distrusted the influence of later Greek rhetoric on Roman culture. They argued for the purity of diction and simplicity of syntax that they found in the early Greek eloquence of the Ten Attic Orators, especially Lysias. Atticists wished to establish a standard of "Latinity" for Roman oratory that would enforce similar purity and simplicity. They would resolve questions of grammar and usage by referring to the earliest Latin authors. Asiatic stylists, in contrast, sought epigrammatic terseness or florid emotionalism, after the manner of the Greek Sophistic Movement as it had prospered and evolved in Asia Minor.

Cicero's own style is characterized by amplification—naming the same thing two or three different ways in succession, adding elaborating or qualifying clauses,

and otherwise developing the periodic sentence pioneered by Isocrates. Cicero aims to evoke heightened emotions and at the same time to explore every facet of an idea—in Cicero's view, stylistic ornateness contributes to the development of content. Such ornateness earned him the label of Asiatic, which was to some extent deserved. Cicero was an avid admirer of Greek rhetoric, a subject he had studied in Athens and Rhodes. But Cicero vehemently denied affiliation with the Asiatics because he saw them as ignorant of philosophy. Yet he also condemned the Atticists for limiting the rhetorician's resources. Let the usage of contemporary, educated men and women—not ancient models—set the standard, he argued. Then the good orator can master the variety of styles needed for success on different occasions (he describes three such styles in *Orator*). If the rhetorician wishes to serve his country, he should cultivate such practical skills, not antiquarian literary interests.

Both as rhetorician and as politician, Cicero increasingly found himself defending isolated positions. He had no followers among the younger orators of his day. He also saw his republican ideals go down to defeat. The fifties and forties were times of great political upheaval in Rome. Orators were frequently constrained from speaking freely, and when they did speak, were often unable to influence the course of events. Street violence and governmental instability created conditions that were ripe for the emergence of a single strong leader who could restore order. One of the first of these was Julius Caesar. After Caesar's assassination in 44 B.C.E., Cicero attacked Mark Antony because he seemed the next most likely candidate for tyrant. Cicero supported Caesar Octavian in hopes that the mild young man would leave governing to the senate. But Cicero had lost his audience—or, more accurately, the prevailing political violence had destroyed any audience for rhetoric. When Antony and Octavian allied, temporarily as it turned out, Octavian agreed to Antony's demand that Cicero be killed. In 43 B.C.E. the old man was stabbed in his litter as he was fleeing the country, so the story goes, and his hands and head—which had written and spoken so powerfully—were nailed to the rostrum, the main public speakers' platform, in Rome (which was usually decorated with trophies of war). Octavian later defeated Antony and became the first Roman emperor, taking the title of Augustus. Ironically, Cicero had made Mark Antony's grandfather Antonius a principal character in *De Oratore*, the one who contests the views of Cicero as expressed through Crassus.

Scholars have seen the death of Cicero as a symbol not only of the power that orator commanded in Republican Rome, power that made him a real political threat, but also of the powerlessness imposed on rhetoric under the emperors, when no one dared to speak on political issues. Although he may have had no stylistic imitators in his own day, Cicero exerted great influence in the later classical period and dominated the study and practice of rhetoric up to the Renaissance, remaining strongly influential thereafter. His style in Latin stands as a model of excellence, and his political career has become synonymous with high-minded patriotism. Cicero, in his rhetorical theory, collected most of what was known about Isocrates, Plato, and Aristotle, gave it his own political stamp, and transmitted it both through Quintilian (p. 359) and through his own works, which along with the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* were by far the most widely read of any classical rhetorical treatises up to the

Renaissance. Much of our knowledge of rhetorical theory and practice from the time of Theophrastus, Aristotle's pupil, through Cicero's own day comes from Cicero's treatises on rhetoric.

De Oratore is generally regarded as Cicero's most complete, mature statement of his views on rhetoric. Its format imitates the Platonic dialogue, though Cicero's work is considerably longer. Cicero says that it imitates Aristotle as well—perhaps the format of his lost dialogue on rhetoric, the *Gryllus*. Also, Aristotle's *Rhetoric* had been brought to Rome shortly before Cicero began *De Oratore*, which is the first work to show its influence since the time of Theophrastus. The participants in the dialogue are all historical figures known to Cicero in his youth. The patrician Crassus, who had been consul and who had instructed young Cicero in rhetoric, promotes excellence in oratory by uniting broad learning and the study of both rhetoric and philosophy. The other principal discussant, Antonius, argues that natural eloquence, the most important qualification for excellence, can profit from instruction only in a more narrowly conceived, formulaic rhetoric. Crassus is generally viewed as the main spokesman for Cicero, but Cicero also does not entirely disagree with everything Antonius says—as in the Platonic dialogues, in which it can be erroneous to identify Plato's views exactly with those of Socrates. Although there are more long speeches here and fewer dialectical exchanges than in most Platonic dialogues, Cicero does show the speakers developing and modifying their positions during the debate. Hence it is difficult to point to any one passage as a concise statement of Cicero's rhetorical theory.

SYNOPSIS OF *DE ORATORE*

The excerpts here include selections from all three books of *De Oratore*. What follows is a synopsis of the entire work.

De Oratore begins with Cicero's nostalgic address to his brother Quintus, which recalls their student days. He then offers to expound his view of rhetoric by relaying a conversation that supposedly occurred at the country villa of Crassus. There the company discussed rhetoric in a pleasant outdoor setting in explicit emulation of Plato's *Phaedrus*.

Crassus begins much as Isocrates does in the *Antidosis*, by emphasizing oratory's crucial function in distinguishing human beings from animals and making civil order possible. He rejects the strictures brought against rhetoric in Plato's *Gorgias*. The rhetorician must master the branch of philosophy devoted to "human life and conduct" (Bk. I, Ch. 15).

Antonius objects that such knowledge is unnecessary because eloquence proceeds primarily from natural ability. Crassus, like Isocrates, agrees that natural ability is paramount. But Crassus then summarizes the usual Greco-Roman rhetoric curriculum as a valuable support to natural ability. Next he explains, with many examples, why the orator must know Roman law.

Antonius now takes the floor and announces (falsely) that he has no formal training in rhetoric. Like Socrates in the *Gorgias*, Antonius says one must begin by defining the scope of rhetoric: It is simply learning how to "use language agreeable

to the ear, and arguments suited to convince” in forensic and political debates (Bk. I, Ch. 49). Demosthenes exemplifies someone who needed no instruction other than practical experience to master this art.

Book I concludes with Crassus complaining that Antonius’s rhetorician is too much the “mechanic”; Crassus suspects Antonius of taking this view merely to oppose him, that is, to argue from antitheses like the Sophists they both deplore.

Book II begins with the resumption of the dialogue the following morning. Quintus Catulus and Gaius Julius Caesar have joined the company. Antonius opens the discussion by returning to the initial task he set for himself (Bk. I, Ch. 48), to define the scope of rhetoric. Again sounding like Socrates in the *Gorgias*, Antonius asserts that oratory is no art, for it deals in opinion, not knowledge. Hence it is “a subject which is founded upon falsehood, which seldom attains to demonstration, which sets its snares to entrap the fancies and often the delusions of mankind” (Bk. II, Ch. 7). Nevertheless, one can undertake the Aristotelian project of finding out “the reason why some speak better than others,” which makes oratory, if no art, at least wear “the likeness of an art” (Bk. II, Ch. 8).

Style and arrangement are the special province of rhetoric. Antonius would develop a young man’s rhetorical ability by asking him to imitate good models in both speech and writing. Next the student should practice arguing actual lawsuits, employing stasis theory. Common topics are useful only if intimately grounded in social custom and the circumstances of the particular case. Antonius claims to be following Aristotle in these views.

Turning from the use of rational appeals to the winning of the audience’s “favor,” Antonius suggests a mild, modest style for ethical appeals and a more fiery style for pathetic appeals. The orator should feel the emotions he wishes to evoke. Wit is also crucial to ethical and pathetic appeals, but it cannot be taught systematically. Antonius invites Caesar to discuss wit, which he does with many examples. Antonius then concludes Book II with brief discussions of rational appeals, panegyrics (ceremonial speeches), and memory.

Book III begins in an elegiac mood, with Cicero deploring the deaths of so many of the participants depicted in his dialogue, and reminding Quintus of the violence that often attends political careers. His consolation is to compose this dialogue, memorializing Crassus as Plato did Socrates.

Crassus now resumes the dialogue by resisting Antonius’s suggestion that he discuss style or “embellishment.” Words and matter cannot be separated in this way. Nevertheless, Crassus is willing to say that good style is always “correct, lucid, ornate and suitably appropriate to the particular matter under consideration” (Bk. III, Ch. 10). One learns correctness and lucidity in childhood, especially from one’s mother. Ornateness and appropriateness come not from rules but from broad learning.

Crassus indicts Socrates and Plato for separating philosophy and rhetoric. By so doing they “robbed” Isocrates, Gorgias, and others who deserved the name of philosopher. Crassus admires the wide-ranging interests of Gorgias and the other Sophists as well as their application of philosophy to political science. The Athenian leader Pericles, Plato’s student Dio (Dionysius), and Isocrates’ student Timotheus

are examples of the active philosopher Crassus admires. Crassus values the orator who possesses learning, for such an orator has the wisdom of the Platonic philosophers, but they do not have his power.

Returning to a more technical discussion of style, Crassus says that one should mold everyday language in a “dignified” style or a plain one, or chart a middle course between the two, depending upon the occasion. This is not hard to do if one simply strives to match thoughts and words. Then even the unlearned audience will respond. Next Crassus briefly discusses delivery.

The dialogue concludes with Catulus praising Crassus’s learning in these terms: He could “instruct the Greeks themselves” (Bk. III, Ch. 60).

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From *De Oratore*

In Three Books Addressed to His Brother Quintus

BOOK I

Introduction. The author's circumstances.

I. When as often happens, brother Quintus, I think over and recall the days of old, those men always seem to me to have been singularly happy who, with the State at her best, and while enjoying high distinctions and the fame of their achievements, were able to maintain such a course of life that they could either engage in activity that involved no risk or enjoy a dignified repose. And time was when I used to imagine that I too should become entitled, with wellnigh universal approval, to some opportunity of leisure and of again directing my mind to the sublime pursuits beloved of us both, when once, the career of office complete and life too taking the turn towards its close,¹ the endless toil of public speaking and the business of canvassing should have come to a standstill. The hopes so born of my thoughts and plans have been cheated, alike by the disastrous times of public peril and by my manifold personal misfortunes. For the time of life which promised to be fullest of quiet and peace proved to be that during which the greatest volume of vexations and the most turbulent tempests arose. And notwithstanding

Books I and II translated by E. W. Sutton and H. Rackham; Book III translated by H. Rackham.

¹The metaphors are borrowed from the Circus. *Decursu honorum = decursis honoribus*: Cicero had been successively augur, quaestor, aedile, praetor, consul, and proconsul. [Tr.]

my desire, and indeed my profound longing, no enjoyment of leisure was granted me, for the cultivation and renewed pursuit, in your company, of those arts to which from boyhood you and I have been devoted. For in my early years² I came just upon the days when the old order was overthrown; then by my consulship I was drawn into the midst of a universal struggle and crisis, and my whole time ever since that consulship I have spent in stemming those billows which, stayed by my efforts from ruining the nation, rolled in a flood upon myself. But none the less, though events are thus harassing and my time so restricted, I will hearken to the call of our studies, and every moment of leisure allowed me by the perfidy of my enemies, the advocacy of my friends and my political duties, I will dedicate first and foremost to writing. And when you, brother, exhort and request me, I will not fail you, for no man's authority or wish can have greater weight with me than yours.

Education of the orator.

II. And now I must bring back to mind the recollection of an old story, not, I admit, as clear in detail as it might be, but, to my thinking, suited to what you ask; so that you may learn what men renowned above all others for eloquence have thought about the whole subject of oratory. For it is your wish, as you have often told me, that—since the unfinished and crude essays,³ which slipped out of the notebooks of my boy-

²Cicero was about eighteen years old at the outbreak of the civil strife between Marius and Sulla. [Tr.]

³The reference is to the juvenile *De Inventione* of Cicero, in two books. [Tr.]

hood, or rather of my youth, are hardly worthy of my present time of life and of my experience gained from the numerous and grave causes in which I have been engaged—I should publish something more polished and complete on these same topics; and generally you disagree with me, in our occasional discussions of this subject, because I hold that eloquence is dependent upon the trained skill of highly educated men, while you consider that it must be separated from the refinements of learning and made to depend on a sort of natural talent and on practice.

Great orators—why rare.

And for my own part, when, as has often happened, I have been contemplating men of the highest eminence and endowed with the highest abilities, it has seemed to me to be a matter for inquiry, why it was that more of them should have gained outstanding renown in all other pursuits, than have done so in oratory. For in whatever direction you turn your mind and thoughts, you will find very many excelling in every kind, not merely of ordinary arts, but of such as are almost the greatest. Who, for instance, in seeking to measure the understanding possessed by illustrious men, whether by the usefulness or the grandeur of their achievements, would not place the general above the orator? Yet who could doubt that, from this country alone, we could cite almost innumerable examples of leaders in war of the greatest distinction, but of men excelling in oratory a mere handful? Nay further, among the men who by their counsel and wisdom could control and direct the helm of state, many have stood out in our own day, and still more in the history of our fathers and even of our remoter ancestors, and yet through lengthy ages no good orator is to be found, and in each successive generation hardly a single tolerable one. And that no one may think that other pursuits, which have to do with abstruse branches of study, and what I may call the varied field of learning, should be compared with this art of oratory, rather than the merits of a commander or the wisdom of a statesman-like senator, let him turn his attention to these very kinds of art, and look around to see who, and how many, have been distinguished

therein; in this way he will most readily judge how scarce orators are now, and ever have been.

Eminence in all fields rare.

III. For indeed you cannot fail to remember that the most learned men hold what the Greeks call “philosophy” to be the creator and mother, as it were, of all the reputable arts, and yet in this field of philosophy it is difficult to count how many men there have been, eminent for their learning and for the variety and extent of their studies, men whose efforts were devoted, not to one separate branch of study, but who have mastered everything they could whether by scientific investigation or by the methods of dialectic. Who does not know, as regards the so-called mathematicians, what very obscure subjects, and how abstruse, manifold, and exact an art they are engaged in? Yet in this pursuit so many men have displayed outstanding excellence, that hardly one seems to have worked in real earnest at this branch of knowledge without attaining the object of his desire. Who has devoted himself wholly to the cult of the Muses, or to this study of literature, which is professed by those who are known as men of letters, without bringing within the compass of his knowledge and observation the almost boundless range and subject matter of those arts?

I think I shall be right in affirming this, that out of all those who have been engaged in the infinitely copious studies and learning pertaining to these arts, the smallest number of distinguished men is found among poets and orators; and even in this small number—within which a man of excellence very rarely emerges—if you will make a careful comparison of our own national supply and that of Greece, far fewer good orators will be found even than good poets. And this should seem even more marvellous because the subjects of the other arts are derived as a rule from hidden and remote sources, while the whole art of oratory lies open to the view, and is concerned in some measure with the common practice, custom, and speech of mankind, so that, whereas in all other arts that is most excellent which is farthest removed from the understanding and mental capacity of the untrained, in ora-

tory the very cardinal sin is to depart from the language of everyday life, and the usage approved by the sense of the community.

Oratory an attractive but difficult study.

IV. And yet it cannot truly be said either that more men devote themselves to the other arts, or that those who do so are stimulated to close study by greater pleasure, higher hopes, or more splendid rewards. In fact, to say nothing of Greece, which has ever claimed the leading part in eloquence, and of Athens, that discoverer of all learning, where the supreme power of oratory was both invented and perfected, in this city of our own assuredly no studies have ever had a more vigorous life than those having to do with the art of speaking.

For as soon as our world-empire had been established, and an enduring peace had assured us leisure, there was hardly a youth, athirst for fame, who did not deem it his duty to strive with might and main after eloquence. At first indeed, in their complete ignorance of method, since they thought there was no definite course of training or any rules of art, they used to attain what skill they could by means of their natural ability and of reflection. But later, having heard the Greek orators, gained acquaintance with their literature and called in Greek teachers, our people were fired with a really incredible enthusiasm for eloquence. The importance, variety, and frequency of current suits of all sorts aroused them so effectually, that, to the learning which each man had acquired by his own efforts, plenty of practice was added, as being better than the maxims of all the masters. In those days too, as at present, the prizes open to this study were supreme, in the way of popularity, wealth, and reputation alike. As for ability again—there are many things to show it—our fellow-countrymen have far excelled the men of every other race. And considering all this, who would not rightly marvel that, in all the long record of ages, times, and states, so small a number of orators is to be found?

But the truth is that this oratory is a greater thing, and has its sources in more arts and branches of study, than people suppose.

Its wide demands on the student;

V. For, where the number of students is very great, the supply of masters of the very best, the quality of natural ability outstanding, the variety of issues unlimited, the prizes open to eloquence exceedingly splendid, what else could anyone think to be the cause, unless it be the really incredible vastness and difficulty of the subject? To begin with, a knowledge of very many matters must be grasped, without which oratory is but an empty and ridiculous swirl of verbiage; and the distinctive style has to be formed, not only by the choice of words, but also by the arrangement of the same; and all the mental emotions, with which nature has endowed the human race, are to be intimately understood, because it is in calming or kindling the feelings of the audience that the full power and science of oratory are to be brought into play. To this there should be added a certain humor, flashes of wit, the culture befitting a gentleman, and readiness and terseness alike in repelling and in delivering the attack, the whole being combined with a delicate charm and urbanity. Further, the complete history of the past and a store of precedents must be retained in the memory, nor may a knowledge of statute law and our national law in general be omitted. And why should I go on to describe the speaker's delivery? That needs to be controlled by bodily carriage, gesture, play of features and changing intonation of voice; and how important that is wholly by itself, the actor's trivial art and the stage proclaim; for there, although all are laboring to regulate the expression, the voice, and the movements of the body, everyone knows how few actors there are, or ever have been, whom we could bear to watch! What need to speak of that universal treasure-house the memory? Unless this faculty be placed in charge of the ideas and phrases which have been thought out and well weighed, even though as conceived by the orator they were of the highest excellence, we know that they will all be wasted.

Let us therefore cease to wonder what may be the cause of the rarity of orators, since oratory is the result of a whole number of things, in any one of which to succeed is a great achievement, and let us rather exhort our children, and the others

whose fame and repute are dear to us, to form a true understanding of the greatness of their task, and not to believe that they can gain their coveted object by reliance on the rules or teachers or methods of practice employed by everybody, but to rest assured that they can do this by the help of certain other means.

even if only pursued for practical purposes, as at Rome.

VI. And indeed in my opinion, no man can be an orator complete in all points of merit, who has not attained a knowledge of all important subjects and arts. For it is from knowledge that oratory must derive its beauty and fullness, and unless there is such knowledge, well-grasped and comprehended by the speaker, there must be something empty and almost childish in the utterance. Not that I am going to lay so heavy a burden upon orators—least of all upon our own, amid all the distractions of life in Rome—as to hold that there is nothing of which it is permissible for them to be ignorant, although the significance of the term “orator,” and the mere act of professing eloquence, seem to undertake and to promise that every subject whatsoever, proposed to an orator, will be treated by him with both distinction and knowledge. But being assured that to most men this appears a vast and indeed limitless enterprise, and perceiving that the Greeks, men not only abounding in genius and learning, but also amply endowed with leisure and the love of study, have already made a sort of division of the arts—nor did every student of theirs work over the whole field by himself, but they separated from other uses of speech that portion of oratory which is concerned with the public discussions of the law courts and of debate, and left that branch only to the orator—I shall not include in this work more than has been assigned to this type of oratory by the all but unanimous judgment of the most eminent men, after investigation and long argument of the matter;

Dialogue form appropriate for the present subject.

nor shall I recall, from the cradle of our boyish learning of days gone by, a long string of precepts, but I shall repeat the things I heard of as

once handled in a discussion between men who were the most eloquent of our nation, and of the highest rank in distinction of every kind. Not that I despise what the Greek craftsmen and teachers of oratory have left us; but that is open to the view and ready to the hand of every man, nor could it be more happily set forth or more clearly expounded by any interpretations of my own, so that you will forgive me, brother mine, I do believe, if I prefer to Greek instruction the authoritative judgment of those to whom the highest honors in eloquence have been awarded by our own fellow-countrymen.

Date, scene, and persons.

VII. I remember then being told how, at the time when Philippus, though consul, was furiously assailing the policy of the leading men, and the tribuneship of Drusus, undertaken in support of the power of the Senate, had begun to show symptoms of shock and weakness, Lucius Crassus, on the plea of recruiting his energies, betook himself during the days of the Roman Games to his seat at Tusculum, whither (as the story went) there came Quintus Mucius, once his father-in-law, and Marcus Antonius, a partner in the political designs of Crassus, and a man united with him in the closest intimacy. There had also gone out of town, in the company of Crassus, two young men who were very great friends of Drusus, and in whom the older generation at that time reposed high hopes of their maintaining the traditions of their order: they were Gaius Cotta, just then seeking the tribuneship of the commons, and Publius Sulpicius, who was thought likely to become a candidate for that magistracy in succession to him.⁴ This party, on the first day and up to a very late hour, held long debate together, concerning the crisis and the state of politics generally, which in fact had been the occasion of their meeting. And Cotta recounted many things which were spoken of in that discussion with

⁴All the participants in this dialogue are historical figures Cicero had known in his youth. He had been apprenticed to Quintus Scaevola, a noted lawyer, and may also have studied rhetoric with Lucius Crassus, the most celebrated political orator of the day. Marcus Antonius was the grandfather of the man who had Cicero killed, Mark Antony. [Ed.]

deep regret by the three speakers of consular rank, in such inspired fashion that (in his words) no evil had since befallen the community which those men, so long before, had not seen to be hanging over it; but (he would add) when the colloquy was completely finished, so exquisite was the urbanity displayed by Crassus, that, as soon as they had bathed and settled down to table, the melancholy turn taken by the earlier discussion was wholly banished, and such was the man's pleasantness and so great the charm of his humor that it seemed as though a day in the Senate-house was closing with supper at Tusculum.

Then Cotta went on to say how on the morrow, when those older men had rested sufficiently and everyone had come into the garden-walk, Scaevola, after taking two or three turns, observed, "Crassus, why do we not imitate Socrates as he appears in the *Phaedrus* of Plato? For your plane-tree has suggested this comparison to my mind, casting as it does, with its spreading branches, as deep a shade over this spot, as that one cast whose shelter Socrates sought⁵—which to me seems to owe its eminence less to 'the little rivulet' described by Plato than to the language of his dialogue—and what Socrates did, whose feet were thoroughly hardened, when he threw himself down on the grass and so began the talk which philosophers say was divine—such ease surely may more reasonably be conceded to my own feet." "Nay," answered Crassus, "but we will make things more comfortable still," whereupon, according to Cotta, he called for cushions, and they all sat down together on the benches that were under the plane-tree.

Thesis: the importance of oratory to society and the state.

VIII. In that place, as Cotta was fond of relating, Crassus introduced a conversation on the pursuit of oratory, with a view to relieving all minds from the discourse of the day before. He began by saying that Sulpicius and Cotta seemed not to need exhortation from him but rather commendation, seeing that thus early they had acquired

such skill as not merely to be ranked above their equals in age, but to be comparable with their elders. "Moreover," he continued, "there is to my mind no more excellent thing than the power, by means of oratory, to get a hold on assemblies of men, win their good will, direct their inclinations wherever the speaker wishes, or divert them from whatever he wishes. In every free nation, and most of all in communities which have attained the enjoyment of peace and tranquillity, this one art has always flourished above the rest and ever reigned supreme. For what is so marvelous as that, out of the innumerable company of mankind, a single being should arise, who either alone or with a few others can make effective a faculty bestowed by nature upon every man? Or what so pleasing to the understanding and the ear as a speech adorned and polished with wise reflections and dignified language? Or what achievement so mighty and glorious as that the impulses of the crowd, the consciences of the judges, the austerity of the Senate, should suffer transformation through the eloquence of one man? What function again is so kingly, so worthy of the free, so generous, as to bring help to the suppliant, to raise up those that are cast down, to bestow security, to set free from peril, to maintain men in their civil rights? What too is so indispensable as to have always in your grasp weapons wherewith you can defend yourself, or challenge the wicked man, or when provoked take your revenge?

"Nay more (not to have you for ever contemplating public affairs, the bench, the platform, and the Senate-house), what in hours of ease can be a pleasanter thing or one more characteristic of culture, than discourse that is graceful and nowhere uninstructed? For the one point in which we have our very greatest advantage over the brute creation is that we hold converse one with another, and can reproduce our thought in word. Who therefore would not rightly admire this faculty, and deem it his duty to exert himself to the utmost in this field, that by so doing he may surpass men themselves in that particular respect wherein chiefly men are superior to animals? To come, however, at length to the highest achievements of eloquence, what other power could have been strong enough either to gather

⁵*Phaedrus* 229 A, 230 B. [Tr.]

scattered humanity into one place, or to lead it out of its brutish existence in the wilderness up to our present condition of civilization as men and as citizens, or, after the establishment of social communities, to give shape to laws, tribunals, and civic rights? And not to pursue any further instances—wellnigh countless as they are—I will conclude the whole matter in a few words, for my assertion is this: that the wise control of the complete orator is that which chiefly upholds not only his own dignity, but the safety of countless individuals and of the entire State. Go forward therefore, my young friends, in your present course, and bend your energies to that study which engages you, that so it may be in your power to become a glory to yourselves, a source of service to your friends, and profitable members of the Republic.”

Thesis challenged: (1) the achievement of oratory questioned;

IX. Thereupon Scaevola observed, in his courteous way, “On his other points I am in agreement with Crassus (that I may not disparage the art or the renown of my father-in-law Gaius Laelius, or of my son-in-law here), but the two following, Crassus, I am afraid I cannot grant you: first your statement that the orators were they who in the beginning established social communities, and who not seldom have preserved the same intact, secondly your pronouncement that, even if we take no account of the forum, of popular assemblies, of the courts of justice, or of the Senate-house, the orator is still complete over the whole range of speech and culture. For who is going to grant you, that in shutting themselves up in walled cities, human beings, who had been scattered originally over mountain and forest, were not so much convinced by the reasoning of the wise as snared by the speeches of the eloquent, or again that the other beneficial arrangements involved in the establishment or the preservation of States were not shaped by the wise and valiant but by men of eloquence and fine diction? Or do you perhaps think that it was by eloquence, and not rather by good counsel and singular wisdom, that the great Romulus gathered together his shepherds and refugees, or brought about mar-

riages with the Sabines, or curbed the might of the neighboring tribes? Is there a trace of eloquence to be discerned in Numa Pompilius? Is there a trace in Servius Tullius? Or in the other kings who have contributed so much that is excellent to the building-up of the State? Then even after the kings had been driven forth (and we note that such expulsion had itself been accomplished by the mind of Lucius Brutus and not by his tongue), we do not see how all that followed was full of planning and empty of talking? For my part, indeed, should I care to use examples from our own and other communities, I could cite more instances of damage done, than of aid given to the cause of the State by men of first-rate eloquence, but putting all else aside, of all men to whom I have listened except to you two, Crassus, it seems to me that the most eloquent were Tiberius and Gaius Sempronius, whose father, a man of discretion and character, but no speaker whatever, was many a time and most particularly when Censor the salvation of the commonwealth. Yet it was not any studied flow of speech, but a nod and a word of his that transferred the freedmen into the city tribes;⁶ and had he not done so, we should long ago have lost the constitution which, as it is, we preserve only with difficulty. His sons, on the other hand, who were accomplished speakers and equipped for oratory with every advantage of nature or training, after they had taken over a State that was flourishing exceedingly because of their father’s counsels and their ancestors’ military achievements, wrecked the commonwealth by the use of this eloquence to which, according to you, civil communities still look for their chief guidance.

(2) other factors of civilization more important;

X. “What of our ancient ordinances and the customs of our forefathers? What of augury, over which you and I, Crassus, preside, greatly to the welfare of the Republic? What of our religious rites and ceremonies? What of those rules of private law, which have long made their home in

⁶Ti. Sempronius Gracchus, censor 169 B.C., enforced an existing rule. Freedmen not owning land worth at least 30,000 HS. were limited to the four city tribes. The restriction was removed, probably in 304, but was restored in 220. [Tr.]

our family, though we have no reputation for eloquence? Were these things contrived or investigated or in any way taken in hand by the tribe of orators? Indeed I remember that Servius Galba, a man who spoke as a god, and Marcus Aemilius Porcina and Gaius Carbo himself, whom you crushed in your early manhood, were all of them ignorant of the statutes, all at a complete loss among the institutions of our ancestors, all uninstructed in the law of the Romans; and except yourself, Crassus, who rather from your own love of study, than because to do so was any peculiar duty of the eloquent, have learned the Roman system from our family, this generation of ours is unversed in law to a degree that sometimes makes one blush.

(3) the only field of oratory the law courts and parliament.

“But as for the claim you made at the close of your speech, and made as though in your own right—that whatever the topic under discussion, the orator could deal with it in complete fullness—this, had we not been here in your own domain, I would not have borne with, and I should be at the head of a multitude who would either fight you by injunction, or summon you to make joint seizure by rule of court, for so wantonly making forcible entry upon other people’s possessions.

“For, to begin with, all the disciples of Pythagoras and Democritus would bring statutory process against you, and the rest of the physicists would assert their claims in court, elegant and impressive speakers with whom you could not strive and save your stake. Besides this, schools of philosophers, back to great Socrates their fountain-head, would beset you: they would demonstrate that you have learned nothing concerning the good in life, or of the evil, nothing as to the emotions of the mind or of human conduct, nothing of the true theory of living, that you have made no research at all and are wholly without understanding respecting these things; and after this general assault upon you each sect would launch its particular action against you in detail. The Academy would be at your heels, compelling you to deny in terms your own allegation,

whatever it might have been. Then our own friends the Stoics would hold you entangled in the toils of their wranglings and questionings. The Peripatetics again would prove that it is to them that men should resort for even those very aids and trappings of eloquence which you deem to be the special aids of orators, and would show you that on these subjects of yours Aristotle and Theophrastus wrote not only better but also much more than all the teachers of rhetoric put together. I say nothing of the mathematicians, men of letters or devotees of the Muses, with whose arts this rhetorical faculty of yours is not in the remotest degree allied. And so, Crassus, I do not think you should make professions so extensive and so numerous. What you are able to guarantee is a thing great enough, namely, that in the courts whatever case you present should appear to be the better and more plausible, that in assemblies and in the Senate your oratory should have most weight in carrying the vote, and lastly, that to the intelligent you should seem to speak eloquently and to the ignorant truthfully as well. If you can achieve anything more than this, therein you will seem to me not an orator but a Crassus, who is making use of some talent that is peculiarly his own and not common to orators in general.”

Reply to challenge: function of oratory wider—it requires science, and science requires style.

XI. Then Crassus replied, “I know very well, Scaevola, that these views of yours are often put forward and discussed among the Greeks. For I listened to their most eminent men, on my arrival in Athens as a quaestor from Macedonia, at a time when the Academy was at its best, as was then asserted, with Charmadas, Clitomachus and Aeschines to uphold it. There was also Metrodorus, who, together with the others, had been a really diligent disciple of the illustrious Carneades himself, a speaker who, for spirited and copious oratory, surpassed, it was said, all other men. Mnesarchus too was in his prime, a pupil of your great Panaetius, and Diodorus, who studied under Critolaus the Peripatetic. There were many others besides, of distinguished fame as philosophers, by all of whom, with one voice as it were, I perceived that the orator was driven

from the helm of State, shut out from all learning and knowledge of more important things, and thrust down and locked up exclusively in law-courts and petty little assemblies, as if in a pounding-mill. But I was neither in agreement with these men, nor with the author and originator of such discussions, who spoke with far more weight and eloquence than all of them—I mean Plato—whose *Gorgias* I read with close attention under Charmadas during those days at Athens, and what impressed me most deeply about Plato in that book was, that it was when making fun of orators that he himself seemed to me to be the consummate orator. In fact controversy about a word has long tormented those Greeklings, fonder as they are of argument than of truth. For, if anyone lays it down that an orator is a man whose sole power is that of speaking copiously before the Praetor or at a trial, or in the public assembly or the Senate-house, none the less even to an orator thus limited such critic must grant and allow a number of attributes, inasmuch as without extensive handling of all public business, without a mastery of ordinances, customs and general law, without a knowledge of human nature and character, he cannot engage, with the requisite cleverness and skill, even in these restricted activities. But to a man who has learned these things, without which no one can properly ensure even those primary essentials of advocacy, can there be anything lacking that belongs to the knowledge of the highest matters? If, on the other hand, you would narrow the idea of oratory to nothing but the speaking in ordered fashion, gracefully and copiously, how, I ask, could your orator attain even so much, if he were to lack that knowledge whereof you people deny him the possession? For excellence in speaking cannot be made manifest unless the speaker fully comprehends the matter he speaks about. It follows that, if the famous natural philosopher Democritus spoke with elegance, as he is reported and appears to me to have spoken, those notable subjects of his discourse belonged to the natural philosopher, but his actual elegance of diction must be put down to the orator. And if Plato spoke with the voice of a god of things very far away from political debate, as I allow that he did, if again Aristotle and Theophrastus and

Carneades, on the themes which they treated, were eloquent and displayed charm of style and literary form, then, granting that the topics of their discourse may be found in certain other fields of research, yet their actual style is the peculiar product of this pursuit which we are now discussing and investigating, and of no other. For we see that sundry authorities dealt with these same subjects in spiritless and feeble fashion, Chrysippus for instance, reputed as he is to have been the most acute of disputants, and not to have failed to meet the requirements of philosophy just because he had not acquired this gift of eloquence from an alien art.

XII. "What then is the difference, or by what means will you discriminate between the rich and copious diction of those speakers whom I have mentioned, and the feebleness of such as do not adopt this variety and elegance of language? The sole distinction will surely be that the good speakers bring, as their peculiar possession, a style that is harmonious, graceful, and marked by a certain artistry and polish. Yet this style, if the underlying subject matter be not comprehended and mastered by the speaker, must inevitably be of no account or even become the sport of universal derision. For what so effectually proclaims the madman as the hollow thundering of words—be they never so choice and resplendent—which have no thought or knowledge behind them? Therefore whatever the theme, from whatever art or whatever branch of knowledge it be taken, the orator, just as if he had got up the case for a client, will state it better and more gracefully than the actual discoverer and the specialist. For if anyone is going to affirm that there are certain ideas and subjects which specially belong to orators, and certain matters whereof the knowledge is railed-off behind the barriers of the Courts, while I will admit that these oratorical activities of ours are exercised within this area with less intermission than elsewhere, nevertheless among these very topics there are points in abundance which even the so-called professors of rhetoric neither teach nor understand. Who indeed does not know that the orator's virtue is pre-eminently manifested either in rousing men's hearts to anger, hatred, or indignation, or in recalling them from these same passions to

mildness and mercy? Wherefore the speaker will not be able to achieve what he wants by his words, unless he has gained profound insight into the characters of men, and the whole range of human nature, and those motives whereby our souls are spurred on or turned back. And all this is considered to be the special province of philosophers, nor will the orator, if he take my advice, resist their claim; but when he has granted their knowledge of these things, since they have devoted all their labor to that alone, still he will assert his own claim to the oratorical treatment of them, which without that knowledge of theirs is nothing at all. For this is the essential concern of the orator, as I have often said before,—a style that is dignified and graceful and in conformity with the general modes of thought and judgment.

Rhetoric is a science.

XIII. “And while I acknowledge that Aristotle and Theophrastus have written about all these things, yet consider, Scaevola, whether it is not wholly in my favor, that, whereas I do not borrow from them the things that they share with the orator, they on their part grant that their discussions on these subjects are the orator’s own, and accordingly they entitle and designate all their other treatises by some name taken from their distinctive art, but these particular books as dealing with Rhetoric. And indeed when, while a man is speaking — as often happens — such commonplaces have cropped up as demand some mention of the immortal gods, of dutifulness, harmony, or friendship, of the rights shared by citizens, by men in general, and by nations, of fair-dealing, moderation or greatness of soul, or virtue of any and every kind, all the academies and schools of philosophy will, I do believe, raise the cry that all these matters are their exclusive province, and in no way whatever the concern of the orator. But when I have allowed that they may debate these subjects in their holes and corners, to pass an idle hour, it is to the orator none the less that I shall entrust and assign the task of developing with complete charm and cogency the same themes which they discuss in a sort of thin and bloodless style. These points I used to argue at Athens with the philosophers in person,

under pressure from our friend Marcus Marcellus, who is now Aedile of the Chair,⁷ and assuredly, if he were not at this moment producing the Games, would be taking part in our present colloquy; indeed even in those days of his early youth his devotion to these studies was marvelous.

Exposition demands both knowledge and style.

“But now as regards the institution of laws, as regards war and peace, allies and public dues, and the legal rights assigned to classes of citizens according to variations of rank and age, let the Greeks say, if they please, that Lycurgus and Solon (although I hold that they should be rated as eloquent) were better informed than Hyperides or Demosthenes, who were really accomplished and highly polished orators; or let our own folk prefer in this regard the Ten Commissioners—who wrote out the Twelve Tables and were necessarily men of practical wisdom—to Servius Galba and your father-in-law Gaius Laelius, whose outstanding renown for eloquence is established. For never will I say that there are not certain arts belonging exclusively to those who have employed all their energies in the mastery and exercise thereof, but my assertion will be that the complete and finished orator is he who on any matter whatever can speak with fullness and variety.

The orator must know the facts.

XIV. “Indeed in handling those causes which everybody acknowledges to be within the exclusive sphere of oratory, there is not seldom something to be brought forth and employed, not from practice in public speaking—the only thing you allow the orator—but from some more abstruse branch of knowledge. I ask, for instance, whether an advocate can either assail or defend a commander-in-chief without experience of the art of war, or sometimes too without knowledge of the various regions of land or sea? Whether he can

⁷The “curule” *aediles* were distinguished from the *aediles plebis* by their right to use the *sella curulis* and the *toga praetexta*. [Tr.]

address the popular assembly in favor of the passing or rejection of legislative proposals, or the Senate concerning any of the departments of State administration, if he lack consummate knowledge—practical as well as theoretical—of political science? Whether a speech can be directed to inflaming or even repressing feeling and passion—a faculty of the first importance to the orator—unless the speaker has made a most careful search into all those theories respecting the natural characters and the habits of conduct of mankind, which are unfolded by the philosophers?

Science and philosophy must come to oratory for style.

“And I rather think I shall come short of convincing you on my next point—at all events I will not hesitate to speak my mind: your natural science itself, your mathematics, and other studies which just now you reckoned as belonging peculiarly to the rest of the arts, do indeed pertain to the knowledge of their professors, yet if anyone should wish by speaking to put these same arts in their full light, it is to oratorical skill that he must run for help. If, again, it is established that Philo, that master-builder who constructed an arsenal for the Athenians, described the plan of his work very eloquently to the people, his eloquence must be ascribed not to his architectural, but rather to his oratorical ability. So too, if Marcus Antonius here had had to speak on behalf of Hermodorus upon the construction of dockyards, having got up his case from his client, he would then have discoursed gracefully and copiously of an art to which he was not a stranger. Asclepiades also, he with whom we have been familiar both as physician and as friend, at the time when he was surpassing the rest of his profession in eloquence, was exhibiting, in such graceful speaking, the skill of an orator, not that of a physician. In fact that favorite assertion of Socrates—that every man was eloquent enough upon a subject that he knew—has in it some plausibility but no truth: it is nearer the truth to say that neither can anyone be eloquent upon a subject that is unknown to him, nor, if he knows it perfectly and yet does not know how to shape and polish his style, can he speak fluently even upon that which he does know.

The orator can get up technicalities, but he must be versed in political and moral science.

XV. “Accordingly, should anyone wish to define in a comprehensive manner the complete and special meaning of the word, he will be an orator, in my opinion worthy of so dignified a title, who, whatever the topic that crops up to be unfolded in discourse, will speak thereon with knowledge, method, charm and retentive memory, combining with these qualifications a certain distinction of bearing. If however someone considers my expression ‘whatever the topic’ to be altogether too extensive, he may clip and prune it to his individual taste, but to this much I shall hold fast—though the orator be ignorant of what is to be found in all the other arts and branches of study, and know only what is dealt with in debate and the practice of public-speaking; none the less, if he should have to discourse even on these other subjects, then after learning the technicalities of each from those who know the same, the orator will speak about them far better than even the men who are masters of these arts. For example, should our friend Sulpicius here have to speak upon the art of war, he will inquire of our relative Gaius Marius, and when he has received his teachings, will deliver himself in such fashion as to seem even to Gaius Marius to be almost better informed on the subject than Gaius Marius himself; while if his topic is to be the law of private rights, he will consult yourself and, notwithstanding your consummate learning and skill in these very things which you have taught him, he will surpass you in the art of exposition. If again some matter should confront him wherein he must speak of human nature, human vices or the passions, of moderation or self-control, of sorrow or death, then perhaps if he thinks fit—although an orator must have knowledge of such things—he will have taken counsel with Sextus Pompeius, a man accomplished in moral science; so much he will assuredly achieve, that whatever his subject and whoever his instructor, on that subject he will express himself far more gracefully than his master himself. Nevertheless, if he will listen to me, since philosophy is divided into three branches, which respectively deal with the mysteries of nature, with the subtleties of dialectic

tic, and with human life and conduct, let us quit claim to the first two, by way of concession to our indolence, but unless we keep our hold on the third, which has ever been the orator's province, we shall leave the orator no sphere wherein to attain greatness. For which reason this division of philosophy, concerned with human life and manners, must all of it be mastered by the orator; as for the other matters, even though he has not studied them, he will still be able, whenever the necessity arises, to beautify them by his eloquence, if only they are brought to his notice and described to him.

The orator, like the poet, needs a wide education.

XVI. "Indeed if it is agreed in learned circles that a man who knew no astronomy—Aratus to wit—has sung of the heavenly spaces and the stars in verse of consummate finish and excellence, and that another who was a complete stranger to country life, Nicander of Colophon, has written with distinction on rural affairs, using something of a poet's skill and not that of a farmer, what reason is there why an orator should not discourse most eloquently concerning those subjects which he has conned for a specific argument and occasion? The truth is that the poet is a very near kinsman of the orator, rather more heavily fettered as regards rhythm, but with ampler freedom in his choice of words, while in the use of many sorts of ornament he is his ally and almost his counterpart; in one respect at all events something like identity exists, since he sets no boundaries or limits to his claims, such as would prevent him from ranging whither he will with the same freedom and license as the other. For with regard to your remark, Scaevola, that, had you not been in my domain, you would not have endured my assertion that the orator must be accomplished in every kind of discourse and in every department of culture, I should certainly never have made that assertion, did I consider myself to be the man I am endeavoring to portray. But, as was often said by Gaius Lucilius—who was not altogether pleased with you, and for that very reason less intimate with myself than he wished, but for all that an instructed critic and thorough gentleman of the city—my opinion is

this, that no one should be numbered with the orators who is not accomplished in all those arts that befit the well-bred; for though we do not actually parade these in our discourse, it is none the less made clear to demonstration whether we are strangers to them or have learned to know them. Just as ball-players do not in their game itself employ the characteristic dexterity of the gymnasium, and yet their very movements show whether they have had such training or know nothing of that art; and, just as, in the case of those who are portraying anything, even though at the moment they are making no use of the painter's art, there is nonetheless no difficulty in seeing whether or not they know how to paint; even so is it with these same speeches in the Courts, the popular assembly and the Senate-house—granting that the other arts may not be specially brought into play, still it is made easily discernible whether the speaker has merely floundered about in this declamatory business or whether, before approaching his task of oratory, he has been trained in all the liberal arts."

The position challenged;

XVII. At this point Scaevola smilingly declared: "Crassus, I will strive with you no longer. For, in this very speech you have made against me, you have by some trick so managed matters as both to grant me what I said did not belong to the orator, and then somehow or another to wrest away these things again and hand them over to the orator as his absolute property. And as regards these subjects, when on my arrival in Rhodes as praetor I discussed with Apollonius, that supreme master of this science of rhetoric, the things that I had learned from Panaetius, he as usual jeered at philosophy and expressed contempt for it and talked at large in a vein more graceful than serious; whereas your argument has been of such a kind that you not only refrained from despising any of the arts or sciences, but described them all as the attendants and handmaids of oratory. And for my own part, if ever any one man should have mastered all of them, and that same man should have united with them this added power of perfectly graceful expression, I cannot deny that he would be a remarkable kind of man and

worthy of admiration; but if such a one there should be, or indeed ever has been, or really ever could be, assuredly you would be that one man, who both in my opinion and in that of everyone else, have left all other orators—if they will pardon my saying so—almost without glory. But if you yourself, while lacking nothing of the knowledge that has to do with law-court speaking and politics, have nevertheless not mastered the further learning which you associate with the orator, let us see whether you may not be attributing to him more than the real facts of the case allow.”

but defended as an ideal.

Here Crassus interposed: “Remember that I have not been speaking of my own skill, but of that of an orator. For what have men like myself either learned or had any chance of knowing, who entered upon practice before ever we reached the study of theory, whom our professional activities in public speaking, in the pursuit of office, in politics, and about the affairs of our friends, wore out ere we could form any conception of the importance of these other matters? But if you find such excellence in me who, if perhaps—as you hold—I have not been completely wanting in ability, have assuredly been wanting in learning and leisure and (to tell the truth) in the requisite enthusiasm for instruction as well, what think you would be the quality and stature of an orator in whom all that I have not attained should be combined with ability such as my own or greater?”

This ideal again challenged as unpractical and unattainable.

XVIII. Thereupon Antonius observed: “Crassus, to my mind you establish your case, and I do not doubt that, if a man has grasped the principles and nature of every subject and of every art, he will in consequence be far better equipped as a speaker. But in the first place such knowledge is hard to win, especially in the life we lead, and amid the engagements that are ours, and then again there is the danger of our being led away from our traditional practice of speaking in a style acceptable to the commonalty and suited to

advocacy. For it seems to me that the eloquence of these men, to whom you referred just now, is of an entirely different kind, albeit they speak gracefully and cogently, either upon natural philosophy or upon the affairs of mankind: theirs is a polished and flowery sort of diction, redolent rather of the training-school and its suppling-oil than of our political hurly-burly and of the Bar. For—when I think of it—although it was late in life and only lightly that I came into touch with Greek literature, still, when on my journey to Cilicia as proconsul I reached Athens, I tarried there for several days by reason of the difficulty in putting to sea: at any rate, as I had about me daily the most learned men, pretty nearly the same as those whom you have lately mentioned, a rumor having somehow spread among them that I, just like yourself, was usually engaged in the more important causes, every one of them in his turn contributed what he could to a discussion on the function and method of an orator.

“Some of them were for maintaining, as did your authority Mnesarchus⁸ himself, that those whom we called orators were nothing but a sort of artisans with ready and practiced tongues, whereas no one was an orator save the wise man only, and that eloquence itself, being, as it was, the science of speaking well, was one type of virtue, and he who possessed a single virtue possessed all of them, and the virtues were of the same rank and equal one with another, from which it followed that the man of eloquence had every virtue and was a wise man. But this was a thorny and dry sort of language, and entirely out of harmony with anything we thought. Charmadas, however, would speak far more copiously upon the same topics, not that he intended thereby to reveal his own opinion—it being an accepted tradition of the Academy always and against all comers to be of the opposition in debate—just then, however, he was pointing out that those who were styled rhetoricians and propounded rules of eloquence, had no clear comprehension of anything, and that no man could

⁸Mnesarchus represents the Stoics, whose fundamental doctrine of the unity and coequality of all virtues implies that the philosopher alone can be an orator. [Tr.]

attain skill in speaking unless he had studied the discoveries of the philosophers.

Report of debate at Athens: is there a science of rhetoric, or does oratory depend on aptitude and practice?

XIX. “Certain Athenians, accomplished speakers and experienced in politics and at the Bar, argued on the other side, among them too being that Menedemus, who was lately in Rome as my guest; and when he asserted that there was a special sort of wisdom, which had to do with investigating the principles of founding and governing political communities, this roused up a man of quick temper⁹ and full to overflowing of learning of every kind and a really incredible diversity and multiplicity of facts. For he proceeded to inform us that every part of this same wisdom had to be sought from philosophy, nor were those institutions in a State which dealt with the immortal gods, the training of youth, justice, endurance, self-control, or moderation in all things, or the other principles without which States could not exist or at any rate be well-conditioned, to be met with anywhere in the paltry treatises of rhetoricians. Whereas, if those teachers of rhetoric embraced within their art so vast a multitude of the noblest themes, how was it, he inquired, that their books were stuffed full of maxims relating to prefaces, perorations and similar trumpery—for so did he describe them—while concerning the organization of States, or the drafting of laws, or on the topics of fair-dealing, justice, loyalty, or the subduing of the passions or the building of human character, not a syllable was to be found in their pages? But as for their actual rules he would scoff at them by showing that not only were their authors devoid of that wisdom which they arrogated to themselves, but they were ignorant even of the true principles and methods of eloquence. For he was of opinion that the main object of the orator was that he should both appear himself, to those before whom he was pleading, to be such a man as he would desire to seem (an end to be attained by a reputable mode

of life, as to which those teachers of rhetoric had left no hint among their instructions), and that the hearts of his hearers should be touched in such fashion as the orator would have them touched (another purpose only to be achieved by a speaker who had investigated all the ways wherein, and all the allurements and kind of diction whereby, the judgment of men might be inclined to this side or to that); but according to him such knowledge lay thrust away and buried deep in the very heart of philosophy, and those rhetoricians had not so much as tasted it with the tip of the tongue. These assertions Menedemus would strive to disprove by quoting instances rather than by arguments, for, while reciting from his ready recollection many magnificent passages from the speeches of Demosthenes, he would demonstrate how that orator, when by his eloquence he was compelling the passions of the judges or of the people to take any direction he chose, knew well enough by what means to attain results which Charmadas would say that no one could compass without the aid of philosophy.

XX. “To this Charmadas replied that he did not deny to Demosthenes the possession of consummate wisdom and the highest power of eloquence, but whether Demosthenes owed this ability to natural talent or, as was generally agreed, had been a devoted disciple of Plato, the present question was not what Demosthenes could do, but what those rhetoricians were teaching. More than once too he was carried so far away by his discourse as to argue that there was no such thing as an art of eloquence; and after showing this by arguments—because, as he said, we were born with an aptitude alike for coaxing and unctuously stealing into favor with those from whom a boon had to be sought, and for daunting our antagonists by threats, for setting forth how a deed was done, and establishing our own charges and disproving the allegations of the other side, and for making, in the closing words of a speech, some use of protest and lamentation (in which operations he declared that every resource of the orator was brought into play), and because habit and practice sharpened the edge of discernment and quickened the fluency of delivery, then he would also support his case by an

⁹Charmadas of the Academy. [Tr.]

abundance of instances. For in the first place (he would say) not a single writer on rhetoric—it looked as if of set purpose—had been even moderately eloquent, and he searched all the way back to the days of one Corax¹⁰ and a certain Tisias who, he stated, were acknowledged to have been the founders and first practitioners of this art, while on the other hand he would cite a countless host of very eloquent men who had never learned these rules or been at all anxious to make their acquaintance; and among these—whether in jest or because he thought so and had even so heard—he went on to mention me in the list, as one who had never studied those matters and yet (according to him) had some ability in oratory. To one of these points of his—that I had never learned anything—I readily agreed, but as to the other I considered that he was either making game of me or was even himself mistaken. He said, however, that there was no ‘art’ which did not consist in the knowledge and clear perception of facts, all tending to a single conclusion and incapable of misleading; but everything with which orators dealt was doubtful and uncertain, since all the talking was done by men who had no real grasp of their subject, and all the listening by hearers who were not to have knowledge conveyed to them, but some short-lived opinion that was either untrue or at least not clear. In a word, he then looked like persuading me that no craft of oratory existed, and that no one could speak with address or copiously unless he had mastered the philosophical teachings of the most learned men. And in these discussions Charmadas was wont to speak with warm admiration of your talents, Crassus, explaining that he found in me a very ready listener, in yourself a most doughty antagonist.

Real eloquence unknown.

XXI. “And so, won over by these same views, I actually wrote down in a little pamphlet—which slipped abroad without my knowledge or consent and got into the hands of the public—the statement that I had known sundry accomplished

¹⁰By using the words *nescio quo* Antonius affects ignorance of literary history. [Tr.]

speakers, but no one so far who was eloquent, inasmuch as I held anyone to be an accomplished speaker who could deliver his thought with the necessary point and clearness before an everyday audience, and in accord with what I might call the mental outlook of the average human being, whereas I allowed the possession of eloquence to that man only who was able, in a style more admirable and more splendid, to amplify and adorn any subject he chose, and whose mind and memory encompassed all the sources of everything that concerned oratory. If this is a hard matter for ourselves, because, before we have entered on the required study, we are overwhelmed by the hunt for office and the business of the Bar, none the less let it be accepted as attainable in fact and in the nature of things. For personally, so far as I can form a prediction, and judging from the vast supply of talent which I see existent among our fellow-citizens, I do not despair of its coming to pass that some day some one, keener in study than we are or ever have been, endowed with ampler leisure and earlier opportunity for learning, and exhibiting closer application and more intensive industry, who shall have given himself up to listening, reading and writing, will stand forth as an orator such as we are seeking, who may rightly be called not merely accomplished but actually eloquent; and after all, to my mind either Crassus is such a man already, or, should some one of equal natural ability have heard, read and written more than Crassus, he will only be able to improve to some slight extent upon him.”

Crassus reluctantly consents to give his views.

At this point, “We never looked for it,” exclaimed Sulpicius, “but it has fallen out, Crassus, just as both I and Cotta earnestly hoped, I mean that you two should slip into this particular conversation. For on our way hither we were thinking that it would be delightful enough if, while you and Antonius were talking about anything else, we might still manage to catch from your discourse something worth remembering; but that you should enter at large upon so real and well-nigh exhaustive a discussion of this whole matter—be it practice, art or natural talent—seemed to us a thing we could hardly hope for.

The fact is that I, who from my earliest manhood was aglow with enthusiasm for you both, and a positive devotion to Crassus—seeing that on no occasion did I leave his side—could never get a word out of him respecting the nature and theory of eloquence, although I pleaded in person, besides making frequent trial of him through the agency of Drusus, whereas on this subject you, Antonius,—and what I shall say is true—have never failed me at all in my probings or interrogatories, and have many a time explained to me what rules you were wont to observe in practical oratory. Now then that each of you has opened up a way of reaching these very objects of our quest, and since it was Crassus who led off in this discussion, grant us the favor of recounting with exactness of detail, your respective opinions upon every branch of oratory. If we do win this boon from you both, I shall be deeply grateful, Crassus, to this school in your Tusculan villa, and shall rank these semirural training-quarters of yours far above the illustrious Academy and the Lyceum.”

XXII. Thereupon the other rejoined, “Nay, Sulpicius, but let us rather ask Antonius, who both has the ability to do what you demand, and, as I understand you to say, has been in the habit of so doing. For as for me, you yourself have just told us how I have invariably run away from all discussions of this sort, and time and again have refused compliance with your desire and indeed your importunity. This I used to do, not from arrogance or churlishness, nor because I was unwilling to gratify your entirely legitimate and admirable keenness—the more so as I had recognized that you were above all other men eminently endowed by nature and adapted for oratory—but in solemn truth it was from want of familiarity with arguments of that kind, and awkwardness in handling those theories set forth in what claims to be an art.”

Cotta then observed, “Since we have secured what seemed most difficult—that you, Crassus, should say anything at all about these matters—as for what remains, it will now be our own fault if we let you go without explaining to us all that we have been inquiring about.” “Limiting the inquiry, I imagine,” answered Crassus, “to those subjects which, as the phrase goes in accepting

an inheritance, are within my knowledge and power.” “By all means,” returned Cotta, “for what is beyond your own power or knowledge, who among us is so shameless as to claim to be within his own?” “In that case,” replied Crassus, “provided that I may disclaim powers which I do not possess, and admit ignorance of what I do not know,—put what questions to me you please.”

Is there a science of rhetoric?

“Well then,” said Sulpicius, “what we ask you to tell us first is your opinion of the view Antonius advanced just now—whether you hold that there is any such thing as an ‘art’ of oratory?” “How now?” exclaimed Crassus, “Do you think I am some idle talkative Greekling,¹¹ who is also perhaps full of learning and erudition, that you propound me a petty question on which to talk as I will? For when was it, think you, that I troubled myself about these matters or reflected upon them, and did not rather always laugh to scorn the effrontery of those persons who, from their chairs in the schools, would call upon any man in the crowded assemblage to propound any question that he might have to put? It is related that Gorgias of Leontini was the author of this practice, who was thought to be undertaking and professing something very magnificent when he advertised himself as ready for any topic whatever on which anyone might have a fancy to hear him. Later, however, they began to do this everywhere, and are doing it to this day, with the result of there being no theme so vast, so unforeseen, or so novel, that they do not claim to be prepared to say about it all that there is to be said. But had I supposed that you, Cotta, or you, Sulpicius, wished to listen to anything of the kind, I would have brought some Greek or other here to amuse you with discussions of that sort; and even now this can easily be managed. For staying with Marcus Piso (a young man, but already given up to this pursuit, possessing talent of the highest order and deeply devoted to myself) there is Staseas the Peripatetic, a man whom I know well

¹¹For the use of the diminutive to indicate the contempt felt at Rome for the degenerate Greek of the day cf. §§47, 221, and Juvenal iii. 78 *Graeculus esuriens*. [Tr.]

enough, and who, as I understand to be agreed among experts, is quite supreme in that department of his.”

XXIII. “Staseas! what Staseas? what Peripatetic are you talking to me about?” said Mucius. “It is for you, Crassus, to comply with the wishes of young men, who do not want the everyday chatter of some unpracticed Greek, or old sing-songs out of the schools, but something from the wisest and most eloquent man in the world, and one who, not in the pages of pamphlets, but in the most momentous causes, and that too in this seat of imperial power and splendor, holds the first place for judgment and eloquence; they are anxious to learn the opinion of the man whose footsteps they long to follow. Moreover, just as I have always accounted you the ideal orator, even so I have never ascribed to you higher praise for eloquence than for kindness, which quality it becomes you on the present occasion to exercise to the very utmost, and not to run away from the discussion into which two young men of eminent ability are desirous of your entering.”

No, there is not a science in the strict sense, but experience can furnish a system of rules.

“For my part,” answered the other, “I am anxious to humor your friends, and I shall make no difficulty about saying, in my brief fashion, what I think upon each point. And to that first question—since I do not think it dutiful, Scaevola, for me to disregard your claims—I answer, ‘I think there is either no art of speaking at all or a very thin one,’ all the quarreling in learned circles being really based upon a dispute about a word. For if, as Antonius just now explained, an art is defined as consisting in things thoroughly examined and clearly apprehended, and which are also outside the control of mere opinion, and within the grasp of exact knowledge, then to me there seems to be no such thing as an art of oratory. For all the kinds of language we ourselves use in public speaking are changeable matter, and adapted to the general understanding of the crowd. If however the actual things noticed in the practice and conduct of speaking have been heeded and recorded by men of skill and experi-

ence, if they have been defined in terms, illuminated by classification, and distributed under subdivisions—and I see that it has been possible to do this—I do not understand why this should not be regarded as an art, perhaps not in that precise sense of the term, but at any rate according to the other and popular estimate. But whether this be an art, or only something like an art, assuredly it is not to be disdained; we must however understand that certain other qualifications are of greater consequence for the attainment of eloquence.”

Crassus gives results of his own experience.

XXIV. Thereupon Antonius observed that he heartily agreed with Crassus, in that he was neither wedded to Art with the devotion of those for whom the whole virtue of oratory resided in an art, nor on the other hand did he put her away altogether, as did most of the philosophers. “But I think, Crassus,” he continued, “that you will be doing these two a favor, if you will set forth those things which in your opinion may be more profitable to oratory than even Art herself.”

“I will certainly name them,” replied Crassus, “as I have once begun, beseeching you however not to publish abroad these trifles of mine; although I too will restrain myself, so as not to seem a sort of master and professional, volunteering some observations of my own, but just one of all the many Roman citizens, a man modestly qualified through experience of public affairs, and not altogether untrained, who has stumbled by chance upon your discussion. The truth is that, when in quest of an office, I used in canvassing to send Scaevola away from me, explaining to him that I proposed to be silly,¹² that is, to make myself winsome in my wooing, and this required some silliness if it was to be well done, whereas our friend here was of all men the one in whose presence I was least willing to appear silly. Yet he it is whom on the present occasion Fate has appointed to be an eye-witness and observer of

¹²*Ineptus*, generally equivalent to “unhappy” or “incongruous,” is here used loosely as meaning “silly.” Crassus felt that his talking about oratory was as silly a business as was shaking hands with everybody when canvassing. [Tr.]

my silliness. For what is sillier than to talk about talking, since talking in itself is ever a silly business, except when it is indispensable?"

"Proceed none the less, Crassus," said Mucius, "for I will take upon myself that reproach you are dreading."

The requirements of the orator: natural gifts are essential;

XXV. "This then is my opinion," resumed Crassus, "that in the first place natural talent is the chief contributor to the virtue of oratory; and indeed in those writers on the art, of whom Antonius spoke just now, it was not the principles and method of oratory that were wanting, but inborn capacity. For certain lively activities of the intelligence and the talents alike should be present, such as to be at once swift in invention, copious in exposition and embellishment, and steadfast and enduring in recollection; and if there be anyone disposed to think that these powers can be derived from art, a false belief—for it would be a glorious state of things if art could even kindle or waken them into life; engrafted and bestowed by art of a certainty they cannot be, for they are all the gifts of nature,—what will he say of those other attributes which undoubtedly are innate in the man himself: the ready tongue, the ringing tones, strong lungs, vigor, suitable build and shape of the face and body as a whole? And, in saying this, I do not mean that art cannot in some cases give polish,—for well I know that good abilities may through instruction become better, and that such as are not of the best can nevertheless be, in some measure, quickened and amended—, but there are some men either so tongue-tied, or so discordant in tone, or so wild and boorish in feature and gesture, that, even though sound in talent and in art, they yet cannot enter the ranks of the orators. While others there are, so apt in these same respects, so completely furnished with the bounty of nature, as to seem of more than human birth, and to have been shaped by some divinity.

"Great indeed are the burden and the task that he undertakes, who puts himself forward, when all are silent, as the one man to be heard concerning the weightiest matters, before a vast assembly

of his fellows. For there is hardly a soul present but will turn a keener and more penetrating eye upon defects in the speaker than upon his good points. Thus any blunder that may be committed eclipses even those other things that are praiseworthy. Not that I am pressing these considerations with the idea of frightening young men away altogether from the pursuit of oratory, should they possibly lack some natural endowment. For who does not observe that Gaius Coelius, a man of my own time and of new family, reached high renown as the result of that very modest degree of eloquence which—such as it was—he had succeeded in attaining? Who again does not know that Quintus Varius, your own contemporary, a man of wild and repellent aspect, has attained great popularity in public life, through whatever practical ability of that kind he has possessed?

though the ideal is hard to attain.

XXVI. "But since it is 'The Orator' we are seeking, we have to picture to ourselves in our discourse an orator from whom every blemish has been taken away, and one who moreover is rich in every merit. For even though the multiplicity of litigation, the diversity of issues, and the rabble of rusticity thronging our public places, give opportunity even to the most faulty speakers, we shall not for that reason lose sight of this our objective. In those arts then, in which we are looking, not for any necessary utility, but some method of freely bringing delight to the intellect, how critical—I had almost said how disdainful—are our judgments! For there are no lawsuits or contentions to compel mankind to sit through bad acting on the stage, as they would bear with indifferent oratory in Court. Therefore our orator must carefully see to it, that he not only contents those whom it is necessary to satisfy, but is wonderful as well in the eyes of such as have the right to judge freely. And now, if you would know it, among my most familiar friends I will publish in simple language what I think, on which I have hitherto always kept silence and deemed silence fitting. In my view, even the best orators, those who can speak with the utmost ease and elegance, unless they are diffident in approaching a discourse and diffident in beginning

it, seem to border on the shameless, although that can never come to pass. For the better the orator, the more profoundly is he frightened of the difficulty of speaking, and of the doubtful fate of a speech, and of the anticipations of an audience. On the other hand, the man who can do nothing in composition and delivery that is worthy of the occasion, worthy of the name of an orator, or of the ear of the listener, still seems to me to be without shame, but he never so agitated in his speaking; for it is not by feeling shame at what is unbecoming, but in not doing it, that we must escape the reproach of shamelessness. While as for him who is unashamed—as I see is the case with most speakers—I hold him deserving not merely of reprimand, but of punishment as well. Assuredly, just as I generally perceive it to happen to yourselves, so I very often prove it in my own experience, that I turn pale at the outset of a speech, and quake in every limb and in all my soul; in fact, as a very young man, I once so utterly lost heart in opening an indictment, that I had to thank Quintus Maximus for doing me the supreme service of promptly adjourning the hearing, the moment he saw that I was broken-down and unnerved by fear.”

At this point the whole company began to nod approval one to another, and to talk together. For there was a marvelous kind of modesty about Crassus, though this was so far from being any disadvantage to his oratory, as positively to help it, by bearing witness to his integrity.

Orators judged less leniently than actors.

XXVII. Presently Antonius observed: “I have often noticed, Crassus, that, as you say, both you and the other orators of the first rank—although in my opinion no one has ever been your peer—are deeply disturbed when you are beginning a speech. Now on investigating the reason of this—how it was that, the greater an orator’s capacity, the more profoundly nervous he was—I discovered this twofold explanation: first, that those who had learned from experience and knowledge of human nature understood that, even with the most eminent orators, the fate of a speech was sometimes not sufficiently in accordance with their wish; wherefore, as often as they spoke, they were justifiably fearful, lest what could possibly happen

some time should actually happen then. Secondly there is something of which I often have to complain, that, whenever tried and approved exponents of the other arts have done some work with less than their wonted success, their inability to perform what they knew how to perform is explained by their being out of the humor or hindered by indisposition (people say, ‘Roscius was not in the mood for acting today,’ or ‘He was a little out of sorts’); whereas, if it is an orator’s shortcoming that is being criticized the same is thought due to stupidity. But stupidity finds no apology, since no man’s stupidity is set down to his having been ‘out of sorts’ or ‘that way inclined.’ And so in oratory we confront a sterner judgment. For judgment is passing upon us as often as we speak; moreover one mistake in acting does not instantly convict a player of ignorance of acting, but an orator, censured on some point of speaking, is under an established suspicion of dullness once for all, or at any rate for many a day.

Variety of gifts expected in the orator.

XXVIII. “Now as for that remark of yours that there were very many qualifications which an orator must derive from nature, or he would not be greatly aided by tuition, I thoroughly agree with you; and in this respect I most particularly approved of that very eminent instructor Apollonius of Alabanda, who, though teaching for hire, would not for all that suffer such pupils as, in his judgment, could never turn out to be orators, to waste their labor with him, but would send them on their ways, and urge and exhort them to pursue those arts for which he thought them respectively fitted. It is enough, indeed, for acquiring all other crafts, just to be a man like other men, and able to apprehend mentally and to preserve in the memory what is taught, or even crammed into the learner, should he chance to be dull beyond the ordinary. No readiness of tongue is needed, no fluency of language, in short none of those things—natural state of looks, expression, and voice—which we cannot mold for ourselves. But in an orator we must demand the subtlety of the logician, the thoughts of the philosopher, a diction almost poetic, a lawyer’s memory, a tragedian’s voice, and the bearing al-

most of the consummate actor. Accordingly no rarer thing than a finished orator can be discovered among the sons of men. For attributes which are commended when acquired one apiece, and that in but modest degree, by other craftsmen in their respective vocations, cannot win approval when embodied in an orator, unless in him they are all assembled in perfection.”

Defects are noticed at once.

“And yet observe,” said Crassus at this point, “how much more care is exercised in an extremely mean and trivial craft than in this art, which is admittedly the greatest. For again and again do I hear Roscius declaring that so far he has never succeeded in finding a single pupil of whom he really approved; not that there were not some who were acceptable, but because, if there was any blemish whatever in them, he himself could not endure it. For nothing stands out so conspicuously, or remains so firmly fixed in the memory, as something in which you have blundered. And so, to take this comparison with this player as our standard of an orator’s merit, do you not see how he does nothing otherwise than perfectly, nothing without consummate charm, nothing save in the manner befitting the occasion, and so as to move and enchant everybody? Accordingly he has long ago brought it about that, in whatsoever craft a man excelled, the same was called a Roscius in his own line. For myself, in demanding in an orator this absolute perfection, from which I myself am far removed, I am behaving shamelessly, since I want forgiveness for myself, but I do not forgive the others. For the man who is without ability, who makes mistakes, whose claim—in a word—does him discredit, should in my judgment, as Apollonius directed, be thrust down to such work as he can perform.”

The natural gifts of Sulpicius and Cotta:

XXIX. “Would you then,” said Sulpicius, “direct Cotta here, or myself, to be studying the common law or the soldier’s art? For who can attain to that sublime and universal perfection which you demand?” And the other answered: “For my part, it is precisely because I recognized in you two a

really remarkable and indeed splendid genius for oratory, that I have set forth all these considerations, while to stimulate you men of ability no less than to discourage the inefficient is the object of my discourse; and although I have noted in both of you talent and industry of the highest order, still as regards these advantages which depend upon the outer man, concerning which I have perhaps said more than the Greeks are wont to do, as manifested in yourself, Sulpicius, they are divine. For never, I think, did I listen to a speaker better qualified in respect of gesture, and by his very bearing and presence, or to one with a voice more resonant and pleasing; while those on whom these gifts have been bestowed by nature in smaller measure, can none the less acquire the power to use what they have with propriety and discernment, and so as to show no lack of good taste. For lack of that is above all else to be avoided, and as to this particular failing it is especially difficult to lay down rules, difficult not only for me, who talk of these matters like papa laying down the law, but even for the great Roscius himself; whom I often hear affirming that the chief thing in art is to observe good taste, though how to do this is the one thing that cannot be taught by art. But, by your leave, let us shift our conversation to other subjects, and chat at last in our own fashion, and not as rhetoricians.”

“On no account whatever,” returned Cotta: “for since you keep us in this pursuit and do not send us away to some other art, we must now further beseech you to explain to us your own power in oratory, however much you make it out to be;—for we are not too greedy: we are quite content with what you call your ‘ordinary eloquence’—and (so as not to outstrip that small degree of skill you have attained as a speaker), since you tell us that the qualities to be sought from nature are not excessively deficient in ourselves, the thing we wish to know from you is what further requisite you consider should be acquired.”

their need of training.

XXX. Crassus smiled at this and replied: “What else do you suppose, Cotta, but enthusiasm and something like the passion of love? without

which no man will ever attain anything in life that is out of the common, least of all this success which you covet. Not that I look upon you two as needing incitement in that direction, perceiving as I do, from the trouble you are giving even to myself, that you are aflame with only too fervent a desire. Yet assuredly endeavors to reach any goal avail nothing unless you have learned what it is which leads you to the end at which you aim. And so, since the burden you lay upon me is a lighter one, and you are not examining me in the art of oratory, but as to this ability of my own, however insignificant it is, I will explain to you my habitual method, nothing particularly mysterious or exceedingly difficult, nothing grand or imposing, just the plan I used to follow in bygone times, when I was a young man, with liberty to busy myself in that pursuit of yours."

At these words Sulpicius exclaimed: "Cotta, behold our longed-for day! For the thing that by entreaties, or lying in wait, or spying, I could never secure—I mean a chance of observing what Crassus was doing for the purposes of training or rehearsal, I do not say at first-hand, but at least by getting some hint from Diphilus, his secretary and reader—this I hope you and I have gained, and we are now to learn from his own lips everything that we have long been desiring."

The school course in rhetoric.

XXXI. "And yet I think, Sulpicius," continued Crassus, "that after hearing them you will be less likely to wonder at my observations than to decide that, when you were longing to hear them, there was no ground for your longing. For I shall tell no mystery, nothing worthy of your waiting, nothing that you have not heard already, or that is new to anyone. For to begin with, in regard to what befits a free-born man of liberal education, I will not deny that I learned those commonplace and well-worn maxims of teachers in general: first, that the duty of an orator is to speak in a style fitted to convince; next, that every speech has to do either with the investigation of a general question, wherein no persons or occasions are indicated, or with a problem that is concerned with specific individuals and times; moreover that in both cases, whatever the subject for de-

bate, it is usual for inquiry to be made in respect thereof, either whether a deed was done or, if it was done, what is its character, or again by what name is it known or, as some add, whether it appears to have been done lawfully; further that contentions also arise out of the construction of a document, wherein there is some ambiguity or contradiction, or something is so expressed that the written word is at variance with the intention; and again that to all these kinds certain modes of proof are assigned as appropriate. Again I heard that, of such questions as are distinct from general issues, some have their place in courts of justice, others in deliberations; while there was yet a third kind, which had to do with the extolling or reviling of particular persons; and that there were prescribed commonplaces¹³ which we were to employ in the law courts where equity was our aim; others for use in deliberations, all of which were arranged for the benefit of those to whom we might be giving counsel; and others again in panegyric, wherein the sole consideration was the greatness of the individuals concerned. And, since all the activity and ability of an orator falls into five divisions, I learned that he must first hit upon what to say; then manage and marshal his discoveries, not merely in orderly fashion, but with a discriminating eye for the exact weight as it were of each argument; next go on to array them in the adornments of style; after that keep them guarded in his memory; and in the end deliver them with effect and charm: I had also been taught that, before speaking on the issue, we must first secure the goodwill of our audience; that next we must state our case; afterwards define the dispute; then establish our own allegations; subsequently disprove those of the other side; and in our peroration expand and reinforce all that was in our favor, while we weakened and demolished whatever went to support our opponents.

Rules of diction.

XXXII. "I had listened also to the traditional precepts for the embellishment of discourse itself: that we must speak, in the first place, pure and cor-

¹³These *loci communes* are the "stock" arguments and general reflections referred to in §56 *supra*. [Tr.]

rect Latin, secondly with simple lucidity, thirdly with elegance, lastly in a manner befitting the dignity of our topics and with a certain grace; and on these several points I had learned particular maxims. Moreover I had seen art called in to aid even those qualities which are peculiarly the endowment of nature; for example, concerning delivery and the memory, I had taken a taste of certain rules which, though concise, involved much practice.

Practice essential.

“For it is matters like these that employ nearly all the learning of your professors; and if I were to call this learning useless, I should be lying. For in fact it contains certain reminders, as it were, for the orator, as to the standard he must apply on each occasion, and must keep in mind, if he is not to wander from whatever course he has set himself. But to my thinking the virtue in all the rules is, not that orators by following them have won a reputation for eloquence, but that certain persons have noted and collected the doings of men who were naturally eloquent: thus eloquence is not the offspring of the art, but the art of eloquence: even so, as I said before, I do not reject art, for though perhaps hardly essential to right speaking, still it is no ignoble help towards right knowledge. There is also a certain practical training that you must undergo—though indeed you two are already in full career,—I mean it is for those who are at the start of their race, and can even thus early learn beforehand and practice, by a training like that for the games, what will have to be done in the fighting-line, so to speak, of the Courts.”

“This training,” said Sulpicius, “is the very thing we wish to understand: and none the less we are longing to hear you on those precepts of the art over which you have briefly run, although those too are not unknown to us. But of them presently; for the moment we want your opinion on the training itself.”

Rules for preparatory training.

XXXIII. “I certainly approve,” replied Crassus, “of what you yourselves are in the habit of doing, when you propound some case, closely

resembling such as are brought into Court, and argue it in a fashion adapted as nearly as possible to real life. Most students however, in so doing, merely exercise their voices (and that in the wrong way), and their physical strength, and whip up their rate of utterance, and revel in a flood of verbiage. This mistake is due to their having heard it said that it is by speaking that men as a rule become speakers. But that other adage is just as true—that by speaking badly men very easily succeed in becoming bad speakers. This is why, in those exercises of your own, though there is a value in plenty of extempore speaking, it is still more serviceable to take time for consideration, and to speak better prepared and more carefully. But the chief thing is what, to tell the truth, we do least (for it needs great pains which most of us shirk)—to write as much as possible. The pen is the best and most eminent author and teacher of eloquence, and rightly so. For if an extempore and casual speech is easily beaten by one prepared and thought out, this latter in turn will assuredly be surpassed by what has been written with care and diligence. The truth is that all the commonplaces, whether furnished by art or by individual talent and wisdom, at any rate such as appertain to the subject of our writing, appear and rush forward as we are searching out and surveying the matter with all our natural acuteness; and all the thoughts and expressions, which are the most brilliant in their several kinds, must needs flow up in succession to the point of our pen; then too the actual marshalling and arrangement of words is made perfect in the course of writing, in a rhythm and measure proper to oratory as distinct from poetry.

“These are the things which in good orators produce applause and admiration; and no man will attain these except by long and large practice in writing, however ardently he may have trained himself in those off-hand declamations; he too who approaches oratory by way of long practice in writing, brings this advantage to his task, that even if he is extemporizing, whatever he may say bears a likeness to the written word; and moreover if ever, during a speech, he has introduced a written note, the rest of his discourse, when he turns away from the writing, will proceed in unchanging style. Just as when a boat is moving at

high speed, if the crew rest upon their oars, the craft herself still keeps her way and her run, though the driving force of the oars has ceased, so in an unbroken discourse, when written notes are exhausted, the rest of the speech still maintains a like progress, under the impulse given by the similarity and energy of the written word.

XXXIV. "For my part, in the daily exercises of youth, I used chiefly to set myself that task which I knew Gaius Carbo, my old enemy, was wont to practice: this was to set myself some poetry, the most impressive to be found, or to read as much of some speech as I could keep in my memory, and then to declaim upon the actual subject matter of my reading, choosing as far as possible different words. But later I noticed this defect in my method, that those words which best befitted each subject, and were the most elegant and in fact the best, had been already seized upon by Ennius, if it was on his poetry that I was practicing, or by Gracchus,¹⁴ if I chanced to have set myself a speech of his. Thus I saw that to employ the same expressions profited me nothing, while to employ others was a positive hindrance, in that I was forming the habit of using the less appropriate. Afterwards I resolved—and this practice I followed when somewhat older,—to translate freely Greek speeches of the most eminent orators. The result of reading these was that, in rendering into Latin what I had read in Greek, I not only found myself using the best words—and yet quite familiar ones—but also coining by analogy certain words such as would be new to our people, provided only they were appropriate.

"To proceed, the control and training of voice, breathing, gestures and the tongue itself, call for exertion rather than art; and in these matters we must carefully consider whom we are to take as patterns, whom we should wish to be like. We have to study actors as well as orators, that bad practice may not lead us into some inelegant or ugly habit. The memory too must be trained by carefully learning by heart as many pieces as possible both from our Latin writers and the foreigner. Moreover in this work I do not altogether dislike the use as well, if you are accustomed to it, of that system of associating commonplaces

with symbols¹⁵ which is taught in the profession. Then at last must our Oratory be conducted out of this sheltered training-ground at home, right into action, into the dust and uproar, into the camp and the fighting-line of public debate; she must face putting everything to the proof and test the strength of her talent, and her secluded preparation must be brought forth into the daylight of reality. We must also read the poets, acquaint ourselves with histories, study and peruse the masters and authors in every excellent art, and by way of practice praise, expound, emend, criticize, and confute them; we must argue every question on both sides, and bring out on every topic whatever points can be deemed plausible; besides this we must become learned in the common law and familiar with the statutes, and must contemplate all the olden time, and investigate the ways of the senate, political philosophy, the rights of allies, the treaties and conventions, and the policy of empire; and lastly we have to cull, from all the forms of pleasantry, a certain charm of humor, with which to give a sprinkle of salt, as it were, to all of our discourse.

"Well, I have poured out for you all my ideas, and perhaps any chance patriarch, upon whom you had fastened at some party or other, would have given the same replies to your interrogatories."

Further detail requested.

XXXV. When Crassus had finished these observations, a general silence ensued. But though the company held that he had said enough on the topic propounded to him, yet they felt that he had ended far more speedily than they could have wished. Then Scaevola inquired, "Well, Cotta, why are you two silent? Does nothing come to mind on which you would like to question Crassus further?"

Views of Antonius, gained from his experience.

XLVIII. "For my part," answered Antonius, "I see and feel myself in evident straits, not only in being questioned as to things beyond my knowledge and experience, but also because this time

¹⁴The speeches of C. Gracchus were studied as models in the rhetorical schools of the Empire. [Tr.]

¹⁵Crassus is speaking of some system of mnemonics, such as Antonius discusses in Book II, lxxxvi–lxxxviii. [Tr.]

your friends do not let me shirk a situation from which in Court I always do my best to run away, I mean that of speaking next after yourself, Crassus. But I shall the more courageously approach this undertaking of your choice, in that I hope for the same fortune in this discussion which generally befalls my speeches; namely, that no elegance of diction will be expected of me. For I am not going to speak of an art which I never learned, but of my own practice; and those very commonplaces, which I have set down in my notebook, are no traditions taught to me by some one or other, but such as have been used in actual affairs and at the Bar: and if they do not commend themselves to men of your consummate accomplishment, pray blame your own unfairness in seeking to learn of me things I did not know; and extol my good nature in answering you with a good grace, won over by your enthusiasm, not my own discretion."

"Just go on, Antonius," returned Crassus. "For there is no danger of your delivering yourself without such practical wisdom that not a man of us will repent of having urged you on to this discussion."

"Yes, I will go on," said the other: "and I will do what I think should be the first thing done in every debate, which is that the subject for discussion should be clearly ascertained, so that a discourse may not have to ramble and lose itself, if perhaps the disputants do not understand the issue in one and the same sense."

The orator, like the soldier, the statesman and the philosopher, is a specialist.

"For, if the question chanced to be as to the nature of the general's art, I should think it proper to settle at the outset, who is a general: and, having defined him as a man in charge of the conduct of war, we should then add some particulars of troops, encampment, marching formation, close fighting, investment of towns, food-supply, laying and avoidance of ambushes, and all else pertaining to the management of warfare; and those men who are intellectually and theoretically masters of these subjects I should call generals, citing as examples men like Scipio and Fabius Maximus, and making mention of Epaminondas and Hannibal and persons of that type.

"But if we were inquiring who is he that has devoted his experience, knowledge, and enthusiasm to the guidance of the State, I should define him thus: 'Whoever knows and uses everything by which the advantage of a State is secured and developed, is the man to be deemed the helmsman of the State, and the originator of national policy,' and I should tell of Publius Lentulus that illustrious leader, of Tiberius Gracchus the elder, Quintus Metellus, Publius Africanus, Gaius Laelius, and countless others, some from our own community and some from abroad. If again the question were, who is rightly described as learned in the law, I should say it is the man who is an expert in the statutes, and in the customary law observed by individuals as members of the community, and who is qualified to advise, direct the course of a lawsuit, and safeguard a client, and in this class I should refer to Sextus Aelius, Manius Manilius, and Publius Mucius.

XLIX. "And, to come now to the pursuits of the more trivial arts, if the devotee of music, the philologist, or the poet should be under examination, I could explain in like fashion their several claims, and the most that ought to be required of each. Lastly, of the philosopher himself, who by virtue of his special faculty and wisdom stands alone in claiming something like omniscience, there is after all a kind of definition, to the effect that he who strives to know the significance, nature and causes of everything divine or human, and to master and follow out as a whole the theory of right living, is to be thus denominated. But the orator, since it is he whom we are studying, I myself do not picture as Crassus did, who I thought included, under the single vocation and title of orator, omniscience in every topic and every art: in fact I take him to be a man who can use language agreeable to the ear, and arguments suited to convince, in law court disputes and in debates of public business. Such a man I call an orator, and would have him endowed besides with intonation, delivery, and a certain charm.

Crassus's definition far too wide.

"Now our friend Crassus seemed to me to delimit the range of the orator, not by the bounds of the art concerned, but by the wellnigh infinite extent of his own talent. For by his verdict he even

handed over to the orator the helm of statesmanship; and I thought it passing strange, Scaevola, that you should grant him this point, when times without number the Senate has agreed with you on matters of extreme gravity, though your speech has been short and without ornament. Indeed if Marcus Scaurus, who I am told is at his country-house not far away, one of the highest authorities on statesmanship, had happened to hear that the influence natural to his own worth and wisdom was being claimed by yourself, Crassus, as the right of an orator, he would, I do believe, instantly proceed hither and thoroughly frighten us chatterers by the mere look on his face: for, though no mean speaker, he yet relies rather on his knowledge of higher politics than on the art of oratory. Then too, if a man is capable in both ways, such as the originator of national policy who is also a good senator, he is not just for that reason an orator; nor did the accomplished orator, who happens also to be outstanding in public administration, attain that special knowledge through his fluency in speaking. There is a vast difference between these gifts, and far apart are they sundered; nor was it by any uniform theory and method that Marcus Cato, Publius Africanus, Quintus Metellus and Gaius Laelius, orators all, gave brilliance to their own style and to the reputation of their community.

Wide culture not indispensable for the orator.

L. "For neither the nature of things, nor any statute or custom, requires any one man to refrain from learning more than one art. And so, although Pericles was the most eloquent man at Athens, and also for very many years the leader of national policy in that community, it is not therefore to be supposed that these two accomplishments pertain to one and the same man or art; nor, because Publius Crassus combined eloquence with legal learning, does it follow that knowledge of common law is implied in oratorical ability. For if everyone who, while outstanding in some art and capacity, has embraced another art as well, is thereby to create the belief that such subsidiary knowledge is a specific part of that wherein he excels, we may on the same principle assert that to play well at ball or

Twelve-Lines¹⁶ is a peculiarity of common lawyers, since Publius Mucius did both things to perfection; and by the same line of argument those also whom the Greeks call 'natural philosophers' may be pronounced to be poets into the bargain, seeing that Empedocles, a natural philosopher, has composed a notable poem. But in reality even the moral philosophers themselves, who would have all things for their own, in right of dominion and in fact of possession as well, do not venture to claim that either geometry or the pursuit of music belongs to the moral philosopher, merely because Plato is admitted on all hands to have been pre-eminent in those arts.

"And, if for once we decide to place all the arts in subjection to the orator, our case may more acceptably be stated in this way, that, since ability to speak ought not to starve and go naked, but to be besprinkled and adorned with a kind of charming variety in many details, it is the part of a good orator to have heard and seen much, and to have run over much in thought and reflection, as well as in his reading, not acquiring all this as his own possession, but tasting what belongs to others. For I agree that he ought to be a shrewd sort of man, and nowhere an untrained recruit, and no stranger or sojourner in his sphere of action.

To influence his audience he needs knowledge of the world;

LI. "Nor again, Crassus, am I greatly troubled by those histrionics of yours, the favorite medium of philosophers, setting forth that by the spoken word no man can kindle the feelings of his hearers, or quench them when kindled (though it is in this that the orator's virtue and range are chiefly discerned), unless he has gazed into the depths of the nature of everything, including human characters and motives: in which connection the orator must needs make philosophy his own; and in this pursuit we see that whole lives of most tal-

¹⁶In Cicero's time, and much later, *pila* was no definite game, but a series of gymnastic exercises for the promotion of bodily suppleness and health. *Duodecim scripta* involved dice-throwing, and the use of differently colored counters on a special board, divided into spaces by 12 slanting lines. [Tr.]

ented and leisured persons have been consumed. The copiousness of their learning and the wide range of their art I am so far from despising that in fact I ardently admire these: yet for ourselves, busied in the public life of this community, it is enough to know and give expression to such things concerning human characters as are not alien to human character.

“For what grand and impressive speaker, trying to make an arbitrator angry with his opponent, was ever at a loss merely through not knowing whether wrath is a vehement heat of the mind, or a strong desire to avenge pain?¹⁷ Who, in seeking by his word to confound and stir up the other feelings in the minds of a tribunal or popular assembly, has uttered the hackneyed sayings of the philosophers? Of whom some deny to the feelings any rightful place at all within the mind, regarding it as an infamous crime to awaken such in the hearts of a tribunal, while others, pretending to some tolerance and a closer approach to the facts of life, assert that the feelings should be exceedingly temperate, or rather of only trivial force.

“The orator however by his words greatly magnifies and exaggerates the grievousness of such things as in everyday life are thought evils and troubles to be shunned, while he enlarges upon and beautifies by his eloquence whatever is commonly deemed delectable and worthy to be desired: and he does not wish to appear so completely a sage among fools, as to have his hearers either regarding him as a clumsy Greekling, or for all their approval of the orator’s talent and astonishment at his wisdom, yet taking it ill that they themselves are foolish: but in such way does he range over men’s souls, and explore their feelings and thoughts, that he needs no philosophers’ definitions, and does not inquire in his discourse whether ‘the supreme good’ is subjective or objective, whether it is to be defined as virtue or pleasure, or whether these two can be wedded together, or, to be sure, whether, as some have thought, nothing can be known for certain, nothing clearly understood and apprehended. On these questions I admit that the teaching is abundant and manifold, and the theories numerous,

copious and varied; but we, Crassus, are looking for something different, and widely different. We require a man of sharpness, ingenious by nature and experience alike, who with keen scent will track down the thoughts, feelings, beliefs, and hopes of his fellow-citizens and of any men whom on any issue he would fain win over by his word.

he does not require philosophy.

LII. “He ought to feel the pulses of every class, time of life, and degree, and to taste the thoughts and feelings of those before whom he is pleading or intending to plead any cause; but his philosophical books he should keep back for a restful holiday, such as this one of ours at Tusculum, so as not to borrow from Plato, if ever he has to speak of justice and righteousness; for Plato, when he thought fit to put these things into writing, depicted in his pages an unknown sort of republic, so completely in contrast with everyday life and the customs of human communities were his considered statements concerning justice. But if his ideas were approved in real nations and States, who would have allowed you, Crassus, for all your high reputation, and all your splendor as a political leader, to express yourself as you did before a densely crowded assembly of your fellow-citizens? ‘Deliver us out of our woes, deliver us out of the jaws of those whose ferocity cannot get its fill of our blood; suffer us not to be in bondage to any, save to yourselves as a nation, whose slaves we can and ought to be.’ I pass over ‘woes,’ in which, according to the philosophers, the brave can never become involved; I pass over ‘jaws,’ out of which you desire to be delivered, for fear of your blood being sucked out of you by an unjust judgment, a thing which they say cannot befall the wise; but ‘slavery,’ did you dare to say that not yourself only, but the entire Senate, whose interests you were that day upholding, could be slaves?

“Can Virtue be a slave, Crassus, according to those authorities of yours, whose maxims you include within the range of the orator’s knowledge? She who for ever and alone is free, and who, though the body is made prisoner of war or bound with chains, ought still to hold fast to her own rights and unrestricted freedom in all things!

¹⁷Cf. Aristotle, *Rhet.* II. ii. 2. [Tr.]

And as for your further pronouncement, that the Senate not only 'can' but actually 'ought to' be the slaves of the nation, could any philosopher be so unmanly, spiritless and weak, so resolved to make physical pleasure and pain the standard of everything, as to approve of this suggestion that the Senate is in bondage to the nation, when it is to the Senate that the nation itself has committed the power of controlling and guiding it, as some driver might hand over his reins?

Indeed philosophy might disapprove of some effective lines of pleading.

LIII. "And so, although I personally thought these words of yours inspired, Publius Rutilius Rufus, a man of learning and devoted to philosophy, used to say they were not only wanting in discretion, but positively unseemly and disgraceful. He it was who used also to censure very severely Servius Galba, whom he claimed to remember well, for having worked upon the compassion of the assembly, when Lucius Scribonius was moving for his prosecution, after Marcus Cato, a troublesome and bitter foe to Galba, had harangued the Roman people in a rough and violent strain: this speech Cato himself has recorded in his *Early History*.

"As I was saying, Rutilius used to find fault with Galba, for having almost hoisted on to his shoulders, with his own hands, his ward Quintus, the son of his near relative Gaius Sulpicius Gallus, so that his appearance might set the assembly a-weeping, by recalling the memory of his most illustrious father; and for having committed two small sons of his own to the guardianship of the nation; and for having proclaimed, like a soldier making his will under arms, without scales or tablets, that he appointed the Roman people to be their guardians in their fatherless plight. The result, according to Rutilius, was that Galba, though at that time weighed down by popular ill-will and hatred, actually secured an acquittal by means of these histrionics, and I also find the incident recorded in Cato's book, with the comment that 'but for his employment of boys and blubbing, the accused would have got his deserts.' These methods Rutilius used roundly to condemn, affirming that banishment or death it-

self was better than such abjectness. Nor was this mere talk on his part, but he meant what he said, and acted upon it himself. For though, as you know, that great man was a pattern of righteousness, and there was no more honorable and blameless individual in the community, he declined not only to crave mercy of his judges, but also to be defended more eloquently or elaborately than the plain truth of the matter permitted. To Cotta here, though a highly accomplished young man and his sister's son, he allotted but a fragment of his case. Quintus Mucius too argued a part of it in his own way, with no trappings, his diction simple and crystal-clear.

"But had you spoken that day, Crassus—you who were saying just now that the orator must have recourse to the ordinary debates of the philosophers for the material of his speeches—and had you been allowed to plead for Publius Rutilius, in no philosophic style but in your own, then, even though those judges had been—as they were—accursed and pernicious men deserving of death, the power of your eloquence would none the less have rent away all savagery from the bottom of their hearts. As matters stand, a man of such quality has been lost, through his case being conducted as if the trial had been taking place in that ideal republic of Plato. None of his counsel groaned or shrieked, none was pained at anything, or made any complaint, or invoked the State, or humbled himself. In a word, not one of them stamped a foot during those proceedings, for fear, no doubt, of being reported to the Stoics.

The instance of Socrates.

LIV. "Thus did a Roman of consular rank follow the example of great Socrates of old who, as he was the wisest of all men, and had lived the most blameless of lives, defended himself in person, when indicted on a capital charge, in such fashion as to seem no submissive prisoner, but the teacher or domestic superior of his judges. Indeed on Lysias, a most accomplished orator, bringing him a written speech, to be committed to memory, if he thought proper, for use in his defense at his trial, he read it not unwillingly, and said it was aptly phrased: 'But,' quoth he, 'just as, if you had brought me a pair of Sicyonian

half-boots, were they never so easy and well-fitting, I should reject them as womanish, even so I think your speech is skillful oratory but not the utterance of a brave man.’ And so he too was condemned, not only at the first count, when the tribunal merely determined the issue of conviction or acquittal, but also on the further vote which they were bound by law to give. For at Athens, on a defendant being convicted of an offense carrying no fixed penalty, something like an appraisal of liability was made and, when the judges’ vote was being taken, the accused was asked what was the highest assessment, as it were, that he owned to having thoroughly merited. When this question was put to Socrates he replied that he had earned the distinction of the most splendid preferments and rewards, with provision for him, at the public expense, of daily sustenance in the Hall of the Presidents, this being rated among the Greeks as the highest of honors. His answer so incensed the tribunal that they condemned a perfectly blameless man to death. Had he indeed been acquitted, as I devoutly wish he had been—not that it is any business of ours—but for the sake of his vast genius, how could we ever endure your philosophers, who even as it is, with their Master condemned solely for the offense of inexperience in oratory, yet tell us that it is from themselves that the rules of eloquence ought to be sought? For my part I have no quarrel with them as to which of these faculties is the better or more real; I simply say that theirs and ours are two distinct things, and that consummate eloquence can exist quite apart from philosophy.

Nor does the orator need wide knowledge of law.

LV. “For I see now, Crassus, the purpose of your so ardent affection for the common law. Indeed I saw it as you were speaking. First you did service to Scaevola, whom we are all most justly bound to love for his exceeding great courtesy: seeing his Art to be portionless and unadorned, you have enriched and decorated her with the dower of diction. Secondly, having squandered upon her too much work and labor, since you had at home an encourager and instructor in that pursuit, you were afraid that, unless you glorified

that Art of yours by eloquence, you would have lost your labor.

“But I myself have no quarrel with this art of yours either. By all means let it be of such consequence as you would have it be. For indisputably it is a noble art, extending far and wide and touching the concerns of many, while it has ever been held in the highest repute, and even now the most illustrious citizens are the leaders in that field. But see to it, Crassus, that, in your desire to deck out the science of common law in new-fangled and foreign apparel, you do not at the same time despoil and strip her of what has been confirmed to her and made her own. For if you were to put it in this way, that the man learned in the law is an orator, and likewise the orator is one learned in the law, you would be setting up two glorious arts, on an equality with each other, and partners in one grandeur. But as it is you admit that a man may be learned in the law without possessing this eloquence which we are investigating, and that many such have appeared; while you deny the possibility of the existence of an orator who has not acquired that legal knowledge as well. So by your account the learned lawyer, in and by himself, is nothing but a circumspect and sharp kind of pettifogger, a crier of legal actions, a chanter of legal formulas, a trapper of syllables; but, because the orator in Court often employs the aid of the law, you have therefore associated your legal knowledge with Eloquence, as a little maid to follow at her heels.

Indeed often the law is uncertain,

LVI. “But as for your wondering at the shamelessness of those counsel who either made great professions, though ignorant of small details, or dared to handle in Court the highest topics of common law, though they knew nothing about them, and had never studied them, there is a simple and obvious excuse in each case. For there is nothing marvelous in a man, who is ignorant of the formalities of marriage by purchase, being none the less able to conduct the case of a woman married in that manner; nor, because the same kind of skill is exercised in steering a little craft as a large vessel, does it follow that he, who does not know the technical phrases required for

the division of an inheritance, cannot conduct a suit for the partition of an estate. Why! to take your own citations of most important proceedings before the Hundred Commissioners, which turned upon questions of law, which of those cases, pray, could not have been most handsomely argued by a man of eloquence unversed in law? Indeed in all those suits, as in that very one of Manius Curius, recently conducted by yourself, and in the dispute over Gaius Hostilius Mancinus, and again in the matter of the boy born of the second wife, before her predecessor had received notice of divorce, dissent as to the law was complete in the most learned circles.

and then it is eloquence that wins.

I ask then, of what service was legal knowledge to an advocate in those cases, when that learned lawyer was bound to come off victorious, who had been upheld, not by his own dexterity but by a stranger's, that is to say, not by legal knowledge but by eloquence?

"Often too have I heard how, when Publius Crassus was a candidate for the aedileship, and Servius Galba, his senior and a past consul, was in attendance upon him, having arranged a marriage between his son Gaius and the daughter of Crassus, a certain countryman approached Crassus to obtain his opinion: he took Crassus apart and laid the facts before him, but brought away from him advice that was more correct than conformable to his interest; whereupon Galba, noting his chagrin, accosted him by name, inquiring what the question was on which he had consulted Crassus. Having heard the client's tale and observing his agitation, 'I see,' said he, 'that Crassus was preoccupied and distracted when he advised you': he then seized Crassus himself by the hand and asked, 'How now, what ever entered your head to suggest such an opinion?' Upon this the other, with the assurance of profound knowledge, repeated that the position was as he had advised and the point unarguable. Galba however, sportively and with varied and manifold illustrations, brought forward a number of analogies, and urged many considerations in favor of equity as against rigid law, and it is related that Crassus, being no match for him in discussion—though

ranked among the accomplished, Crassus came nowhere near Galba—took refuge in authorities, and pointed out his own statement both in the works of his brother Publius Mucius, and in the textbook of Sextus Aelius, yet after all admitted that Galba's argument seemed to him persuasive, and very near the truth.

LVII. "And yet those cases which are such that the law involved in them is beyond dispute, do not as a rule come to a hearing at all. Does anyone claim an inheritance under a will made by the head of a household before the birth of a son of his? No one; since it is settled law that the will is revoked by such subsequent birth. Thus there are no judicial decisions on this branch of the law. And so the orator may safely disregard all this region of unquestionable law, being as it certainly is by far the larger portion of the science: while, as for the law which is unsettled in the most learned circles, it is easy enough for him to find some authority in favor of whichever side he is supporting, and having obtained a supply of thronged shafts¹⁸ from him, he himself will hurl these with all the might of an orator's arm. Unless indeed (let me say this by the kind indulgence of our excellent friend here Scaevola) it was by means of the works and maxims of your father-in-law that you argued the case for Manius Curius? Did you not rather snatch at the chance of protecting righteousness and upholding last wills and the intentions of dead men?

"And in my opinion, at any rate—for I often heard you and was at your elbow—it was by your wit and charm and highly refined pleasantries that you won the vast majority of your verdicts, while you were mocking at that over-subtlety of Scaevola's, and marveling at his cleverness in having thought out the proposition that a man must be born before he can die; and while, amusingly and with a sense of humor, as well as shrewdly, you were adducing numerous examples, gathered from statutes and senatorial ordinances, and also from everyday life and conversation, in which our pursuit of the letter instead of the spirit would lead to no result. And so the Court was filled with gaiety and delight:

¹⁸These were javelins with a slinging-strap to help the thrower. [Tr.]

but of what avail your practice in the common law was to you in these proceedings I cannot see; it was your surpassing power of eloquence, in union with consummate cheerfulness and grace, that proved of service.

“That very Mucius, upholder of his ancestral science, and champion, as it were, of his hereditary rights—what argument did he introduce in that case wherein he was opposed to you, which sounded like a borrowing from common law? What statute did he read over? What did he reveal in his speech that would have been too obscure for the uninitiated? Surely his entire address was concerned with the one contention that the written word ought to prevail to the uttermost. Yet it is in this kind of thing that all students are trained in the schools, when in mock trials of this kind they are taught to uphold in turn the written word and true equity.

“I presume too that, in *The Soldier’s Case*,¹⁹ if you had been counsel for the heir or for the soldier, you would have betaken yourself to *Precedents in Pleading*²⁰ by Hostilius, and not to the force of your own ability in oratory! On the contrary, if you had been propounding the will, you would have so managed matters that the entire security of every will would have seemed to be staked on the issue of those proceedings; and, if you had been appearing for the soldier, you would by your eloquence, in your usual way, have called up his father from the shades; you would have set him in sight of all; he would have embraced his son and tearfully committed him to the care of the Hundred Commissioners; I pledge my word he would have made every stone weep and wail, with the result that the whole section beginning ‘As the tongue hath proclaimed it’ would have seemed no part of the Twelve Tables, which you rate higher than all the libraries, but just a piece of moralizing doggerel by some professor.

Given a general knowledge of law, special points can be looked up.

LVIII. “For as to your indictment of the young for their laziness, in that they do not commit to

memory that art of yours, its exceeding simplicity being your first point, I leave the question of its simplicity to those who parade about in the haughty assurance imparted by this art, just as though it were extremely difficult, and do you yourself see to this, who describe an art as simple which by your own admission is not yet an art at all, but some day, should somebody have learned another art, and so be able to make an art of this one, will then become an art: secondly you urge its copious delights, in which respect they all resign in your favor this pleasure of yours, and are content themselves to go without it, nor is there a man among them who, if ever he had to learn some work by heart, would not choose for that purpose the *Teucer* of Pacuvius rather than Manilius’s *Conditions of Sale*. Taking next your opinion that love of country obliges us to get a knowledge of the devices of our ancestors, do you not observe that the ancient statutes have either sunk into the decrepitude of their old age, or been repealed by modern legislation? And as for your belief that men are made good by the common law, since by its rules prizes are offered to virtue and punishments appointed for vice, I certainly used to regard virtue as being taught to mankind (assuming it to be methodically teachable at all) by training and persuasion, not by threats, and force and even terror. For thus much, at any rate, we can learn even without legal study; namely, how lovely a thing it is to eschew evil.

“Now as to myself, to whom alone you allow the faculty of doing justice to my cases without any legal knowledge, I give you this answer, Crassus, that I never learned the common law, and yet never felt the want of that knowledge in the suits I was able to argue before the Praetor. For it is one thing to be a craftsman in a specific subject and art, and another to be no dullard or raw hand in social life and the general practices of mankind. Which of us may not survey his estate or go to see his rural concerns, whether in quest of profit or of amusement? Yet no one passes his days so bereft of sight and sense as to be wholly ignorant of the nature of sowing and reaping, or of the lopping of trees and pruning of vines, or of the times of year for doing these things, or of how they are done. If then some one

¹⁹See §175, *supra*. [Tr.]

²⁰A work otherwise unknown. [Tr.]

of us has occasion to look over his estate, or give some commission to his agent, or order to his bailiff, on details of husbandry, need he get by heart the volumes of Mago of Carthage? Or may we be satisfied with our own mother-wit? If so then, especially as we are worn out with legal and other business and with public affairs, why may we not likewise be well enough equipped in common law, to the extent at any rate of not seeming to be sojourners and strangers in our own country? And if some day an exceptionally doubtful case were submitted to us, it would be quite easy, I suppose, to take counsel with Scaevola here; although in fact the parties themselves, whose affair it is, furnish us with all the professional opinions and researches. If again the dispute relates to a question of fact, or to boundaries, without our having a view of the very spot, or to account-books and entries, we are obliged to get up complicated and often troublesome matters: if we have to master statutes, or the opinions of the learned in the law, are we afraid of not being able to do so, just because, from our youth upwards, our study of the common law has been inadequate?

LIX. "Is a knowledge of the common law, then, useless to an orator? I cannot assert that any knowledge is useless, least of all to one whose eloquence ought to be furnished with material in plenty; but the essential needs of an orator are many and weighty and hard to come by, so that I would not dissipate his energy over too wide a field of study.

Similarly delivery does not require special study.

"Who would deny that in his movements and carriage the orator must have the bearing and elegance of Roscius? Yet no one will urge young devotees of eloquence to toil like actors at the study of gesture. What is so essential to an orator as intonation? Yet no devotee of eloquence will become, by my advice, a slave to his voice, after the manner of the Greek tragedians, who both for many a year practice declamation from their chairs, and every day, before their performance on the stage, lie down and gradually raise the voice, and later, after playing their parts, take their seats, and bring it back again from the high-

est treble to the lowest bass, and in a way regain control of it. If we had a fancy to do this, the parties whose cases we had undertaken would lose their cases, before we had recited our hymn or chant the regulation number of times.

"But if we are not to work hard either at gesture, a great help to an orator, or at intonation, that singular and unrivaled recommendation and prop of eloquence; and if in each of these matters we can attain only such proficiency as corresponds to the leisure allowed us amid this array of daily duties; how much the less must we sink into becoming engrossed with getting by heart the common law, of which a general knowledge may be gained even without instruction, and which bears this unlikeness to those other things, that intonation and gesture cannot be acquired all at once and caught up from external sources, while anything in the law that is of use for a particular case, may be fetched, as hurriedly as you please, from experts or textbooks!

"This is why those most accomplished speakers,²¹ for all their own profound skill, have with them in Court assistants learned in the law, and these, as you said a little while ago, are called attorneys. In this respect our own folk have done infinitely better, by requiring the statutes and rules of law to be safeguarded by the influence of most illustrious men. But after all, had they thought it necessary, this idea of training the orator himself in the common law, instead of giving him an attorney to help him, would not have failed to occur to the Greeks.

Old age does not require knowledge of the law to give it occupation.

LX. "As for your theory that old age is redeemed from loneliness by a knowledge of the common law, possibly a large fortune will do as much. However we are not investigating our own advantage, but the essential needs of the orator. And yet, as we are taking from a single artist a number of details for our likeness of an orator, that same Roscius is fond of saying, that, the older he grows, the slower he will make the flute-player's rhythms and the lighter the music. Now if he, fettered as he

²¹The most eloquent Greek orators. [Tr.]

is by a definite system of measures and meters, is none the less thinking out some relief for his old age, how much more easily can we not merely slacken our methods, but change them altogether! For you cannot fail to see, Crassus, how many and diverse are the styles of oratory, a fact which I should almost think you have been the first to make plain, who for a long time have been speaking in a far lighter and calmer fashion than was your wont; though the present serenity of your very dignified discourse finds as ready acceptance as did your extreme energy and passion of old: and there have been many orators including, we are told, the famous Scipio and Laelius, who obtained all their results by discourse little more emphatic than the ordinary, and never strained their lungs or shouted, as Servius Galba did. But if some day you should be unable or unwilling to do even this, are you afraid that the house of such a man and citizen as yourself will be left desolate by the rest of the community, just because it may no longer be the shrine of the litigious? Truly I am so far from agreeing with that view of yours, that I not only do not think the prop of old age is to be found in the multitude of those who come to seek its counsel, but I look for that loneliness which you dread, as I might for a haven. For I hold that the finest prop of old age is its leisure.

General culture is sufficient.

“But the remaining acquirements—useful as they are—I am speaking of history, and a knowledge of public law, and the ways of the ancients, and a store of precedents—I shall borrow, if ever I need them, from my friend Congus, an excellent man who is thoroughly versed in these things. And I shall not object to these young men reading and listening to everything, and busying themselves with every fitting pursuit and with general culture—as you advised just now—: but, I vow, they do not seem to me to have so very much time to spare, provided that they hope to accomplish and follow out all your bidding, Crassus; for I thought that the conditions you imposed were rather too rigorous for their time of life, though possibly necessary for the attainment of the end of their desire. Indeed, the impromptu exercises on problems set, the elaborate and con-

sidered reflections, and your practice of written composition, which you justly called the finishing schoolmaster of eloquence, all demand much toil; and that comparison of the student’s own dissertation with the writings of others, and the unprepared estimate of another’s work, by way of praise or disparagement, approval or refutation, involve exceptional efforts of memory and of the imitative faculty as well.

LXI. “Then that further claim of yours was terrifying, and upon my word I am afraid that its effect will be to deter rather than encourage. For you would have every man of us be a kind of Roscius in his own line; and you said that the approbation accorded to the good points of a speech is short-lived in comparison with the enduring aversion inspired by its shortcomings, whereas I hold that the criticism of our oratory is less squeamish than that directed upon actors. This explains why I see that, even when hoarse, we are often listened to with rapt attention, since the very fact of our hoarseness and our case grip the audience: while Aesopus, should he be a little husky, is hissed off the stage. For, in those arts of which nothing is expected save the gratification of the ear, offense is given directly that gratification is at all weakened. But of oratory the fascinating features are many, and even if all are not there in perfection—still, most of them are highly developed—such as are actually present must needs be thought marvelous.

The important thing is practice.

“And so, to return to our starting-point, let us take the orator to be, as Crassus defined him, a man who can speak in a way calculated to convince. But let him be shut up within the sphere of the daily intercourse and public life of bodies politic; and forsaking all other pursuits, be they as noble and glorious as you please, let him press forward night and day (so to speak) in this single vocation, and do as the famous Athenian Demosthenes²² did, whose pre-eminence in oratory is

²²For the great orator’s ways of conquering his natural handicaps see Schaefer’s *Demosthenes*, vol. i. pp. 299–301; Cicero, *De Finibus* v. 2. 5; Plutarch’s *Life of Demosthenes* (c. 11); and Quintilian x. 3. 30. [Tr.]

unhesitatingly admitted, and whose zeal and exertions are said to have been such that at the very outset he surmounted natural drawbacks by diligent perseverance: and though at first stuttering so badly as to be unable to pronounce the initial *R.* of the name of the art of his devotion,²³ by practice he made himself accounted as distinct a speaker as anyone; later on, though his breath was rather short, he succeeded so far in making his breath hold during a speech, that a single oratorical period—as his writings prove—covered two risings and two fallings of tone; moreover—as the tale goes—it was his habit to slip pebbles into his mouth, and then declaim a number of verses at the top of his voice and without drawing breath, and this not only as he stood still, but while walking about, or going up a steep slope.

“By encouragements of this sort, Crassus, I thoroughly agree with you that the young should be spurred on to severe application: all else that you have brought together from various and dissimilar pursuits and arts, though you yourself have attained everything, I nevertheless regard as lying outside the strict business and function of an orator.”

Adjournment of the debate.

LXII. At the conclusion of these observations of Antonius, Sulpicius, and Cotta too, appeared to be in grave doubt as to which of the two speakers' discourses bore the closer resemblance to the truth. Presently Crassus replied: “Antonius, you are making our orator something of a mechanic; and I rather suspect you are really of a different opinion, and are gratifying that singular liking of yours for contradiction, in which no one has ever outdone you; the exercise of this power belongs peculiarly to orators, though nowadays it is in regular use among philosophers, and chiefly those who make a practice of arguing at extreme length either for or against any proposition whatever laid before them. Now I did not think it my duty, especially before my present audience, to delineate only the possible quality of such a speaker as would live in Court, and bring thither nothing more than the needs of his cases de-

²³Rhetorica. [Tr.]

manded; but I was envisaging a loftier ideal when I stated my view that the orator, especially in our own community, ought to lack nothing in the way of equipment. You on the other hand, having enclosed within certain narrow confines the whole function of an orator, will the more easily expound to us the result of your investigations into his duties and rules: but that, I think, must be another time. For our talk today has been long enough. Now too Scaevola, as he has arranged to go to his Tusculan villa, will rest awhile, until the heat has abated; and let us ourselves, considering the time of day, take care of our health.”

This suggestion pleased everybody. Then Scaevola observed: “I devoutly wish that I had not arranged with Laelius to arrive at my Tusculan villa today; I should like to hear Antonius.” And, as he got up, he added with a smile: “For I was not so much vexed by his tearing our common law to tatters, as delighted by his admission that he knew nothing about it.”

BOOK II

Rules for practice.

XXII. “Let this then be my first counsel, that we show the student whom to copy, and to copy in such a way as to strive with all possible care to attain the most excellent qualities of his model. Next let practice be added, whereby in copying he may reproduce the pattern of his choice and not portray him as time and again I have known many copyists do, who in copying hunt after such characteristics as are easily copied or even abnormal and possibly faulty. For nothing is easier than to imitate a man's style of dress, pose or gait. Moreover, if there is a fault, it is not much trouble to appropriate that and to copy it ostentatiously, just as that Fufius, who even now is raving in the political world, though his voice has gone, fails to attain the energy in speaking which Gaius Fimbria certainly possessed, though hitting off his uncouth mouthings and broad pronunciation. For all that, however, he did not know how to choose the model whom he would most willingly resemble, and it was positively the faults in his chosen pattern that he elected to copy. But he

who is to proceed aright must first be watchful in making his choice, and afterwards extremely careful in striving to attain the most excellent qualities of the model he has approved.

The various schools of oratory.

“Why now is it, do you suppose, that nearly every age has produced its own distinctive style of oratory? Of this truth we can judge less easily in the case of our own orators, since they have left but very few writings on which a judgment could be based, than as regards the Greeks, from whose works the method and tendency of the oratory of every generation may be understood. Quite the earliest, of whom we have any authentic remains, are Pericles and Alcibiades, with Thucydides of the same generation, all of them accurate, pointed, terse and wealthier in ideas than diction. These were followed by Critias, Themamenes and Lysias: we possess many writings of Lysias, of Critias a few; Theramenes is but a name to us. Their uniformity of style could never have come about, had they not kept before them some single model for imitation: they all still retained the peculiar vigor of Pericles, but their texture was a little more luxuriant. Then behold! there arose Isocrates, the Master of all rhetoricians, from whose school, as from the Horse of Troy, none but leaders emerged, but some of them sought glory in ceremonial, others in action.

XXIII. “And indeed the former sort, men like Theopompus, Ephorus, Philistus, Naucrates and many more, while differing in natural gifts, yet in spirit resemble one another and their Master too; and those who betook themselves to law-suits, as did Demosthenes, Hyperides, Lycurgus, Aeschines, Dinarchus, and several others, although of varying degrees of ability, were none the less all busy with the same type of imitation of real life, and as long as the imitation of these persisted, so long did their kind of oratory and course of training endure. Afterwards, when these men were dead and all remembrance of them gradually grew dim and then vanished away, certain other less spirited and lazier styles of speaking flourished. Then came Demochares, said to have been the son of Demosthenes’ sister,

and after him the distinguished Demetrius of Phalerum, the most elegant, to my thinking, of all that school, and others like them. And, if we please to trace this subject down to our own times, we shall find, that just as today all Asia is copying the great Menecles of Alabanda and his brother Hierocles, both of whom I have heard, so there has always been some speaker whom the majority would fain resemble. Let him then, who hopes by imitation to attain this likeness, carry out his purpose by frequent and large practice, and if possible, by written composition: if our friend Sulpicius here were to do so, his diction would be far more condensed; at present, as countrymen are wont to say of grass in times of extreme productiveness, it occasionally has a certain luxuriance about it, which should be grazed off by the pen.”

Here Sulpicius interposed, “Truly you give me good counsel and I thank you for it, but I fancy that even you, Antonius, have done but little scribbling.”

To which Antonius made answer, “As though I could not teach others what I lack myself; though certainly I am credited with not even keeping accounts!

But gifted individuals can dispense with models.

But what little I can do in this direction can be judged from my financial situation, and in the other from what I say. And indeed we see that there are many who copy no man, but gain their objects by natural aptitude, without resembling any model. And the truth of this may be observed in you two, Caesar and Cotta, for one of you has acquired a degree of humor and wit unusual in orators, at any rate in our own, and the other a thoroughly keen and subtle type of oratory. Curio too, your contemporary, whose father I consider quite the most eloquent of his day, seems to me to copy no one in particular, though in the dignity, refinement and copiousness of his language he has given expression to what may be called his own peculiar pattern and type of oratory, of which I could judge to perfection in that action which he conducted against me before the Hundred Commissioners, on behalf of the brothers Cossi; on that occasion he lacked no qualification

which an orator of insight, not of copiousness alone, should possess.

First master facts of case.

XXIV. “However, to introduce at last this man we are portraying to the business of trials and lawsuits, especially such cases as involve rather more trouble—someone will perhaps laugh at this axiom, for it is not so much shrewd as necessary, and comes from an adviser who is no fool, rather than from a learned Master—we shall first instruct him to get up carefully and thoroughly whatever cases he proposes to conduct. This is no canon of the schools, for the cases set to the boys are simple. ‘Statute forbids a foreigner to mount the wall; a foreigner mounts; he has driven off the enemy; he is prosecuted.’ It is no trouble to get up a case like that, and so they are right in giving no directions for mastering the case, for this is just about the type of wording in cases set in the schools. But in the law courts documents, evidence, informal agreements, formal contracts, relationship by blood or marriage, magisterial orders, opinions of counsel, and finally the life-history of the parties to the proceedings, must all be examined; and we see that it is generally through neglect of these matters that cases are lost, particularly such as concern private rights, for these are often of peculiar difficulty. Thus some practitioners, wishing their business to be thought large, and themselves to be seen flitting from lawsuit to lawsuit all round the courts, argue cases which they have not got up. Herein they incur very grave reproach, either of carelessness, if their services are volunteered, or of bad faith, if they are retained; but that reproach is deemed all the greater, in that no man can speak, without the direst disgrace, on a subject which he has not mastered. And so, while scorning the accusation of laziness, in reality the more serious, they encounter as well that of dullness, which they themselves more sedulously avoid.

“It is my own practice to take care that every client personally instructs me on his affairs, and that no one else shall be present, so that he may speak the more freely; and to argue his opponent’s case to him, so that he may argue his own and openly declare whatever he has thought of

his position. Then, when he has departed, in my own person and with perfect impartiality I play three characters, myself, my opponent and the arbitrator. Whatever consideration is likely to prove more helpful than embarrassing I decide to discuss; wherever I find more harm than good I entirely reject and discard the topic concerned. In this way I gain the advantage of reflecting first on what to say and saying it later, two things which most people, trusting in their talent, do simultaneously, though those same individuals would certainly speak rather more successfully, if they thought fit to take one occasion for reflection and another for speaking.

The issue then manifest, under one of three heads:

“When I have thoroughly mastered the circumstances of a case the issue in doubt comes instantly to my mind. For of all the issues disputed among men, whether the matter is criminal, as a charge of outrage, or a civil proceeding, as one relating to an inheritance, or a discussion of policy, as one touching a war, or of a personal kind, as a panegyric, or a philosophical debate, as on the way to live, there is not one of which the point is not either what has been done, or what is being done, or going to be done, or as to the nature of description of something.

(1) fact of alleged act,

XXV. “In almost all our cases, in prosecutions at any rate, the usual defense is a plea of not guilty. For, in trials for extortion, the most important class, nearly every allegation must be denied, and, on a charge of corrupt practices, lavish generosity can seldom be distinguished from profuse bribery; in cases of assassination, poisoning or misappropriation a denial is the inevitable plea. Thus in Court the first class of cases is that of disputed facts; debate generally proceeds from something still to come, seldom from anything present or past.

(2) its nature,

Often too the question is not whether something be the fact or not, but what is its nature; as, when

I heard Gaius Carbo, in his consulship, defending Lucius Opimius before the people, he denied no detail of the killing of Gaius Gracchus, but urged that it was justifiable and for the public safety; or as when Publius Africanus made answer to that very Carbo (by then a tribune of the commons with changed political views and putting a question as to Tiberius Gracchus), that 'his death appeared to be justifiable.'

(3) *its definition.*

Now all acts may be defended as justifiable which are such that the doing thereof was a duty, or permissible, or necessary, or which are shown to have been done inadvertently or by accident. Again the question is one of definition, when the terms in which an act should be described are in dispute, as in the main contention between myself and our friend Sulpicius at the trial of Norbanus.²⁴ For, while admitting most of our friend's indictment, I still maintained that the defendant was not guilty of 'treason,' since the whole case depended on the construction of this word, by virtue of the Statute of Appuleius.²⁵ And in such proceedings some lay down a rule that each side shall concisely define the debatable term, a proposition which I myself always think thoroughly childish. For definition of terms is another thing when controversy arises among specialists touching the intimate concerns of the arts, for instance when inquiry is made as to the essential nature of an art, a statute or a community, in which circumstances scientific method ordains that the significance of whatever you are defining shall be made plain, with no omission or redundancy. But in that case of ours Sulpicius did no such thing nor did I attempt it, since we both, to the utmost of our power, enlarged with all our fluency upon the meaning of 'act of treason.' For, in the first place, if the addition or subtraction of a word be seized on, a definition is often wrung from our grasp, and then too the very suggestion savors of the schools and a training little better than elementary, and lastly the definition cannot

reach the understanding and reason of the arbitrator, as it slips by him before he has taken it in.

These three issues explained.

XXVI. "But in that kind of cases, wherein the nature of something is in issue, a further contest often arises out of the construction of a document, when the only possible dispute comes from an equivocation. For the mere fact that letter and spirit are at variance involves something of an equivocation; and this is solved directly the missing words are supplied, and, when these are inserted, it is contended that the sense of the writing has become plain. And, if uncertainty arises from passages which contradict one another, there emerges no new sort of problem, but a double example of the former kind. And this will either prove insoluble, or will be so solved, that by the restoration of the words omitted, whichever version we are upholding will be completed. It follows that only one class is left of problems turning on the writer's language, these arising where something has been equivocally expressed.

"Now, although there are several kinds of equivocation (better understood, I think, by the so-called logicians, and unknown to these²⁶ friends of ours, who should understand them just as well), yet the most common, in the whole range of verbal or written intercourse, is the equivocation due to the omission of a word or words. And they are wrong again in distinguishing between this sort of cases, concerned with documentary construction, and those where the nature of something is in debate; for never is the precise character of anything so closely investigated as in the construction of a document, which has nothing in common with questions of fact.

"Then questions of three kinds in all may fall under debate and dispute—what is being done, or has been done or is going to be done, or what is the nature of something, or what is its right designation? For that further question, added by sundry Greeks, whether something was lawfully done, is completely covered by the question of its nature.

²⁴See §197 n. [Tr.]

²⁵In 100 B.C., appointing a commission to investigate treasons committed during the Cimbrian war, 113–101 B.C. [Tr.]

²⁶*I.e.*, the rhetoricians. [Tr.]

Three objects in view.

XXVII. “But to return at length to my own plan. As soon then as I have received my instructions and classed the case and taken the matter in hand, the very first thing I determine is that point to which I must devote all such part of my speech as belongs peculiarly to the issue and the verdict. Next I contemplate with the utmost care those other two essentials, the one involving the recommendation of myself or my clients, the other designed to sway the feelings of the tribunal in the desired direction. Thus for purposes of persuasion the art of speaking relies wholly upon three things: the proof of our allegations, the winning of our hearers’ favor, and the rousing of their feelings to whatever impulse our case may require.

Facts must be established by evidence or argument.

For purposes of proof, however, the material at the orator’s disposal is twofold, one kind made up of the things which are not thought out by himself, but depend upon the circumstances and are dealt with by rule, for example documents, oral evidence, informal agreements, examinations, statutes, decrees of the Senate, judicial precedents, magisterial orders, opinions of counsel, and whatever else is not produced by the orator, but is supplied to him by the case itself or by the parties: the other kind is founded entirely on the orator’s reasoned argument.

Methods of handling these acquired by study.

And so, with the former sort, he need only consider the handling of his proofs, but with the latter, the discovery of them as well. And indeed those professors, after distinguishing a larger number of types of cases, suggest proofs in plenty for each type. But, even if this plan is better fitted for training the young, to the end that, directly a case is propounded, they may have authorities from which they can forthwith borrow ready-made proofs, yet it is a symptom of congenital dullness to follow up the tiny rills, but fail to discern the sources of things: and by this time it is the privilege of men of our years and experi-

ence to call up what we want from the water’s head, and to discern the springs of every stream.

“And, to begin with, that class of things supplied to the orator we shall have to study constantly, with a view to the general use of similar instances; for in attacking or defending documents, witnesses or examinations by torture, and also in dealing with all other such subjects, it is our habit to discuss either the whole class in the abstract, or individual occasions, persons or circumstances in the concrete: these commonplaces (I am speaking to you, Cotta and Sulpicius) you ought, by dint of large study and practice, to have ready at hand. It would be a long story for me to unfold just now the right way to corroborate or weaken witnesses, documents, or examinations. All this demands no great talent but vast practice, and Art and her maxims only to this extent—that it be illuminated by good and effective diction. So too those subjects of the other class, produced entirely by the orator, are easy enough to think out, but call for clearer and highly finished exposition. Thus, while in our cases we have these two objectives, first what to say, and secondly how to say it, the former, which seems to be art pure and simple, cannot indeed dispense with art, though it needs but ordinary skill to discover what ought to be said; but it is in the latter that the orator’s godlike power and excellence are discerned, that is, his delivery of what he has to say in a style elegant, copious, and diversified.

Mode of stating arguments effectively left to Crassus.

XXVIII. “Accordingly, as you have once for all so resolved, I shall not object to working out completely (you will judge of the measure of my success) that former²⁷ portion, dealing with those commonplaces from which may be drawn a speech such as to attain those three things which alone can carry conviction; I mean the winning over, the instructing and the stirring of men’s minds. For these are the three. But how to embellish these arguments we have at hand him who could teach the world, the man who first made this accomplishment habitual among us, did most to improve it, and alone has mastered it. For I

²⁷*I.e., inventio*, or the discovery of what to say. [Tr.]

think, Catulus (and I shall say so without fear of being suspected of flattery), that I have listened often and attentively to every one of the rather more brilliant speakers of our day, Greek and Roman alike. And so, if there be anything in me (as I think I may hope there is, now that men of your talents take so much trouble to hear me), it is because no orator ever delivered a speech in my hearing which did not settle deep within my memory. And I, being what I am, and so far as I am competent to judge, after hearing all the orators, do unhesitatingly decree and pronounce as follows, that not one of them all possessed so many and excellent resources of diction as appear in Crassus. Therefore, if you share this estimate of mine, it will, I think, be no unfair division of labor if, having begotten, nurtured and made strong this orator, whom I am now molding as I planned, I hand him over to Crassus, to be clothed and fitted out.”

Crassus urges Antonius to explain his own method.

Here Crassus observed: “Nay, Antonius, you go on with your plan. For it ill becomes a good and generous father to refuse clothing and equipment to the child you have begotten and reared, especially as you cannot plead poverty. For what did that advocate lack, in the way of resource, passion, energy or greatness, who in closing his case did not hesitate to call forward the defendant²⁸ of consular rank, and tear open his tunic, and display to the tribunal the scars on the old general’s breast? Who again, in his defense of a factious and frenzied client, prosecuted by Sulpicius here, did not hesitate to glorify civil discord in itself, and to show, in most convincing terms, that many popular movements are justifiable, and no one by any possibility answerable for them; that moreover civil discord has often been aroused in the interest of the community, witness the expulsion of the kings and the establishment of the authority of tribunes; that the outbreak of Norbanus,²⁹ arising as it did from public mourning and indignation against Caepio, who had lost his army, could not have been restrained and was

justifiably kindled. Could this line of argument, so hazardous, startling, treacherous, and unfamiliar, be handled otherwise than by oratorical power and readiness truly marvelous? What shall I say of the lamentation over Gnaeus Mallius, or of that over Quintus Rex? What of countless other cases, wherein the really unequalled acuteness, universally recognized as yours, was not the most brilliant feature, but those very qualifications, which you would now delegate to me, were consistently displayed in outstanding excellence by yourself?”

Stoic doctrine useless for the orator.

XXXVIII. “But, to recall Oratory to the point at which this digression started, do you observe that, of those three most illustrious philosophers, who visited Rome as you told us, it was Diogenes who claimed to be teaching an art of speaking well, and of distinguishing truth from error, which art he called by the Greek name of dialectic? This art, if indeed it be an art, contains no directions for discovering truth, but only for testing it. For as to every proposition that we enunciate with an affirmation of its truth or falsity, if it be affirmed without qualification, the dialecticians undertake to decide whether it be true or false; and, if again it be stated hypothetically, with collateral propositions annexed, then they decide whether these others are properly annexed, and whether the conclusion drawn from each and every reasoning is correct: and in the end they prick themselves with their own barbs, and by wide investigation discover not only difficulties such as they themselves can no longer solve, but also others by which webs already attacked, or rather wellnigh unwound, are tangled up again. In this connection then that eminent Stoic is of no help to us, since he does not teach me how to discover what to say; and he actually hinders me, by finding many difficulties which he pronounces quite insoluble, and by introducing a kind of diction that is not lucid, copious and flowing, but meager, spiritless, cramped, and paltry; and, if any man commends this style, it will only be with the qualification that it is unsuitable to an orator. For this oratory of ours must be adapted to the ears of the multitude, for charming

²⁸M'. Aquilius, see §194 n. [Tr.]

²⁹See §197 n. [Tr.]

or urging their minds to approve of proposals, which are weighed in no goldsmith's balance, but in what I may call common scales.

Insight of Aristotle and ability in argument of Carneades.

“Let us therefore renounce entirely that art which has too little to say when proofs are being thought out, and too much when they are being assessed. That Critolaus, whose visit in company with Diogenes you recall, might have been more useful, I think, in this pursuit of ours. For he was a follower of your Aristotle, from whose doctrines you think my own differ but little. And between this Aristotle (I read also that book of his, setting forth the rhetorical theories of all his fore-runners, and those other works containing sundry observations of his own on the same art), and these true professors of this art, there seemed to me to be this difference—that he surveyed these concerns of the art of rhetoric, which he disdained, with that same keen insight, by which he had discerned the essential nature of all things; whereas those others, considering this the only thing worth cultivating, have dwelt upon the treatment of this single subject, without his sagacity, but, in this one instance, with larger practice and closer application. As for Carneades, however, the extraordinary power and diversity of his oratory would be extremely to our liking; since, in those debates of his he supported no contention without proving it, and attacked none which he did not overthrow. But this is rather more than should be asked of the authors and teachers of these maxims.

The doctrine of “topics,” which are derived either from the case itself or from without.

XXXIX. “For my part, if just now I were to want a complete novice trained up to oratory, I should rather entrust him to these untiring people, who hammer day and night on the same anvil at their one and only task, for them to put into his mouth none but the most delicate morsels—everything chewed exceedingly small—in the manner of wet nurses feeding baby-boys. But should he, whom I have had liberally educated in theory,

and who by this time has some tincture of practice, show also signs of sufficient natural acuteness, I will hurry him off to that source where no sequestered pool is landlocked, but from it bursts forth a general flood; to that teacher who will point out to him the very homes of all proofs, so to speak, illustrating these briefly and defining them in terms. For in what respect could a speaker be at a loss, who has contemplated everything to be employed in a speech, for purposes of either proof or disproof, or to be derived from the essential nature of the case, or adopted from without? Intrinsic arguments, when the problem concerns the character of the subject as a whole, or of part of it, or the name it is to bear, or anything whatever relating to the subject; extrinsic arguments, on the other hand, when topics are assembled from without and are not inherent in the nature of the case.

“If the problem concerns the whole subject, the general idea of it has to be made plain by definition; for example: ‘If sovereignty be the grandeur and glory of the State, it was violated by the man who delivered up to the enemy an army of the Roman People, not by him who delivered the man that did it into the power of the Roman People.’ But if only a part is being dealt with, its nature must be explained by distribution, as follows: ‘The right course, in a situation affecting the welfare of the State, was to obey the Senate, or to set up another advisory body, or to act on his own initiative: to set up another body would have been insolence, to follow his own counsel, arrogance; therefore he should have taken the advice of the Senate.’ If the argument turns on a word, remember Carbo’s ‘If a consul’s duty is to consult the interests of his native land, what else has Opimius done?’ If it turns on something correlated with the subject, the proofs come from several sources or commonplaces; for we shall investigate connected terms, and general heads with their subdivisions, and resemblances and differences, and opposites, and corresponding and concurrent circumstances, and so-called antecedents, and contradictories, and we shall track down the causes of things, and the effects proceeding from causes, and investigate things of relatively greater, equal, or lesser significance.

XL. “An instance of proof deduced from con-

nected terms is: 'If the highest praise is due to loyalty, you should be stirred at the sight of Quintus Metellus mourning so loyally.' One of deduction from a general term is: 'If the magistracies ought to be under the control of the Roman People, why impeach Norbanus, whose conduct as tribune was subservient to the will of the community?'

"As a deduction from a subdivision of a general head take: 'If we are bound to esteem all who make the interests of the State their care, surely our commanders-in-chief stand foremost, by whose strategy, valor and hazards we preserve both our own security and the grandeur of our sovereignty.' Then, as a deduction from resemblance, we have: 'If the wild beasts cherish their young, what tenderness ought we to bear to our children!' One from difference, on the other hand, is: 'If it be the mark of uncivilized folk to live but for the day, our own purposes should contemplate all time.' And, in cases involving both resemblance and difference, analogies are found in the deeds or the words or the fate of other people, and feigned tales must often be cited. Again, as a deduction from an opposite, take: 'If Gracchus did wickedly, Opimius did nobly.' And, as one from corresponding circumstances: 'If he was killed by a sword, and you, his enemy, were caught on the very spot with a bloody blade, and none other than yourself was seen there or had any motive, and you were ever a man of violence, what doubt could we feel as to the crime?' And, to illustrate deduction from concurrent circumstances, antecedents, and contradictories, we remember Crassus arguing in his youth: 'This tribunal, Carbo, is not going to deem you a patriotic citizen just because you defended Opimius: clearly you were only pretending, and had some other end in view, inasmuch as in your harangues you frequently lamented the death of Tiberius Gracchus, and you were a party to the murder of Publius Africanus,³⁰ and you brought in that statute³¹ during your tribuneship, and always disagreed with the patriotic.' And a deduc-

³⁰P. Cornelius Scipio Africanus Minor, who captured Carthage 146 B.C., died in 129, probably from a stroke, but the Gracchans were suspected of assassination. [Tr.]

³¹Apparently extending the use of the ballot. [Tr.]

tion from the causes of things is: 'If you would abolish covetousness, you must abolish its mother, profusion.' And one from the effects of causes is: 'If we are using the funds of the Treasury to aid war and beautify peace, let us become the slaves of taxation.' And, to show how we shall compare things of relatively greater, lesser and equal significance, a deduction from the greater is: 'If good repute is above riches, and money is so keenly desired, how far more keenly should fame be desired?' For one from the lesser take:

Just for a slender acquaintance!
So heartfelt his grief at her death!
What had he loved her? What sorrow
Will he show for his father — for me?

For one from the equal we have: 'It is one and the same man's part to snatch the State's money and lavish it to her detriment.'

"Finally, proofs adopted from outside are such as rest upon no intrinsic force of their own but upon external authority, instances being: 'This is true, for Quintus Lutatius said so': 'This evidence is false, for torture has been employed': 'This must inevitably follow, for I am reading from the documents.' Of all this kind of thing I spoke just now.

A brief treatment is enough, as attention and acumen will do more than theory.

XLI. "I have sketched these topics as shortly as possible. For if I wished to reveal to somebody gold that was hidden here and there in the earth, it should be enough for me to point out to him some marks and indications of its positions, with which knowledge he could do his own digging, and find what he wanted, with very little trouble and no chance of mistake: so I know these indications of proofs, which reveal to me their whereabouts when I am looking for them; all the rest is dug out by dint of careful consideration. But what type of proofs best befits each type of case needs not consummate art to dictate, but only ordinary talent to decide. For our immediate task is not to display any system of speaking, but to hand on to highly educated men certain

lessons, as I may call them, learned from our own practice. Accordingly, with these commonplaces firmly established in his mind and memory, and roused into activity with every topic proposed for discussion, nothing will be able to elude the orator, either in our own contentions at the Bar, or in any department whatever of speaking. If however he shall succeed in appearing, to those before whom he is to plead, to be such a man as he would desire to seem, and in touching their hearts in such fashion as to be able to lead or drag them whithersoever he pleases, he will assuredly be completely furnished for oratory.

Variety of treatment essential.

“Again, we see that the discovery of what to say is wholly insufficient, unless you can handle it when found. But the handling should be diversified, so that your hearer may neither perceive the art of it, nor be worn out by too much monotony. You ought to formulate your proposition, and give the reasons for its being what it is; and from those same commonplaces you should sometimes draw your conclusion, and sometimes abandon them to pass elsewhere; often it is better not to formulate expressly, but to make it plain, by affirming the underlying principle, what the formulation would have been; if you are putting a parallel case to something, you should first show how it is like, and then annex the matter in hand; as a rule you should conceal the intervals between successive proofs, to prevent them from being counted, so that, though separate in fact, they may seem blended in statement.

Favor of audience must be secured.

XLII. “I am running over these things in a hurry, and like a half-trained man who is facing experts, in order that we may come at last to those more essential matters. Now nothing in oratory, Catulus, is more important than to win for the orator the favor of his hearer, and to have the latter so affected as to be swayed by something resembling a mental impulse of emotion, rather than by judgment or deliberation. For men decide far more problems by hate, or love, or lust, or rage, or sorrow, or joy, or hope, or fear, or illusion, or

some other inward emotion, than by reality, or authority, or any legal standard, or judicial precedent, or statute. And so, unless you think differently, let us proceed to the things I spoke of.”

Arrangement to be discussed later.

“Even now,” returned Catulus, “there seems to be a little something missing, Antonius, from your exposition, which you should clear up, before setting out for that region whither you say you are bound.” “Pray what is that?” asked the other. “Your view as to the right arrangement and distribution of proofs,” said Catulus, “in which connection your practice always strikes me as ideal.”

“Observe, Catulus,” came the answer, “how far I am ideal in that kind of thing: upon my word, but for your suggestion, the notion would never have entered my head: so that you may look upon me as generally running into those ways, in which now and then I seem effective, just in the course of speaking, or rather by accident. And indeed that factor which, through failure to recognize it, I was passing by unnoticed, as I might a human stranger, is second to none in the making of oratorical success, but, for all that, I think you have been premature in asking me for my theory of the arrangement and distribution of topics. For had I based the orator’s essential power solely upon his proofs, and upon his establishing personally his actual case, it would not be the time to say a word as to the arrangement and marshalling of proofs. But since I have assumed three³² elements in discovery and discussed only one of them, it will be time to conclude by investigating the arrangement of a speech as a whole, when I have first discussed the two elements that remain.

Means of securing favor of audience.

XLIII. “A potent factor in success, is for the characters, principles, conduct, and course of life, both of those who are to plead cases and of their clients, to be approved, and conversely those of their opponents condemned; and for the

³²See the opening of Chapter xxxv, *supra*. [Tr.]

feelings of the tribunal to be won over, as far as possible, to goodwill towards the advocate and the advocate's client as well. Now feelings are won over by a man's merit, achievements or reputable life, qualifications easier to embellish, if only they are real, than to fabricate where non-existent. But attributes useful in an advocate are a mild tone, a countenance expressive of modesty, gentle language, and the faculty of seeming to be dealing reluctantly and under compulsion with something you are really anxious to prove. It is very helpful to display the tokens of good-nature, kindness, calmness, loyalty, and a disposition that is pleasing and not grasping or covetous, and all the qualities belonging to men who are upright, unassuming and not given to haste, stubbornness, strife or harshness, are powerful in winning goodwill, while the want of them estranges it from such as do not possess them; accordingly the very opposites of these qualities must be ascribed to our opponents. But all this kind of advocacy will be best in those cases wherein the arbitrator's feelings are not likely to be kindled by what I may call the ardent and impassioned onset. For vigorous language is not always wanted, but often such as is calm, gentle, mild: this is the kind that most commends the parties. By 'parties' I mean not only persons impeached, but all whose interests are being determined, for that was how people used the term in the old days. And so to paint their characters in words, as being upright, stainless, conscientious, modest, and long-suffering under injustice, has a really wonderful effect; and this topic, whether in opening, or in stating the case, or in winding-up, is so compelling, when agreeably and feelingly handled, as often to be worth more than the merits of the case. Moreover so much is done by good taste and style in speaking, that the speech seems to depict the speaker's character. For by means of particular types of thought and diction, and the employment besides of a delivery that is unruffled and eloquent of good-nature, the speakers are made to appear upright, well-bred and virtuous men.

Importance of inspiring suitable emotions in audience:

XLIV. "But closely associated with this is that dissimilar style of speaking which, in quite an-

other way, excites and urges the feelings of the tribunal towards hatred or love, ill-will or well-wishing, fear or hope, desire or aversion, joy or sorrow, compassion or the wish to punish, or by it they are prompted to whatever emotions are nearly allied and similar to these passions of the soul, and to such as these.

"Another desirable thing for the advocate is that the members of the tribunal, of their own accord, should carry within them to Court some mental emotion that is in harmony with what the advocate's interest will suggest. For, as the saying goes, it is easier to spur the willing horse than to start the lazy one. But if no such emotion be present, or recognizable, he will be like a careful physician who, before he attempts to administer a remedy to his patient, must investigate not only the malady of the man he wishes to cure, but also his habits when in health, and his physical constitution.

"This indeed is the reason why, when setting about a hazardous and important case, in order to explore the feelings of the tribunal, I engage wholeheartedly in a consideration so careful, that I scent out with all possible keenness their thoughts, judgments, anticipations, and wishes, and the direction in which they seem likely to be led away most easily by eloquence. If they surrender to me, and as I said before, of their own accord lean towards and are prone to take the course in which I am urging them on, I accept their bounty and set sail for that quarter which promises something of a breeze. If however an arbitrator is neutral and free from predisposition, my task is harder, since everything has to be called forth by my speech, with no help from the listener's character. But so potent is that Eloquence, rightly styled, by an excellent poet, 'soulbending sovereign of all things,' that she can not only support the sinking and bend the up-standing, but, like a good and brave commander, can even make prisoner a resisting antagonist.

success of Crassus in this.

XLV. "These are the details for which Crassus was playfully importuning me just now, when he said that I always handled them ideally, and he praised what he called the brilliant treatment of

them in the cases of Manius Aquilius, Gaius Norbanus, and sundry others. Now I give you my word, Crassus, that I always tremble when these things are handled by yourself in Court: such is the mental power, such the passion, so profound the indignation, ever manifest in your glance, features, gesture, even in that wagging finger of yours; so mighty is the flow of your most impressive and happy diction, so sound, true and original your sentiments, and so innocent of coloring-matter or paltry dye, that to me you seem to be not merely inflaming the arbitrator, but actually on fire yourself.

The speaker must himself feel the emotions he wishes to excite;

“Moreover it is impossible for the listener to feel indignation, hatred, or ill-will, to be terrified of anything, or reduced to tears of compassion, unless all those emotions, which the advocate would inspire in the arbitrator, are visibly stamped or rather branded on the advocate himself. Now if some feigned indignation had to be depicted, and that same kind of oratory afforded only what was counterfeit and produced by mimicry, some loftier art would perhaps be called for. As things stand, Crassus, I do not know how it may be with yourself or the rest, but in my own case there is no reason why I should lie to men of consummate experience, who are also my best friends: I give you my word that I never tried, by means of a speech, to arouse either indignation or compassion, either ill-will or hatred, in the minds of a tribunal, without being really stirred myself, as I worked upon their minds, by the very feelings to which I was seeking to prompt them. For it is not easy to succeed in making an arbitrator angry, with the right party, if you yourself seem to treat the affair with indifference; or in making him hate the right party, unless he first sees you on fire with hatred yourself; nor will he be prompted to compassion, unless you have shown him the tokens of your own grief by word, sentiment, tone of voice, look, and even by loud lamentation. For just as there is no substance so ready to take fire, as to be capable of generating flame without the application of a spark, so also there is no mind

so ready to absorb an orator’s influence, as to be inflammable when the assailing speaker is not himself aglow with passion.

as he naturally will, considering his themes: examples.

XLVI. “Again, lest haply it should seem a mighty miracle, for a man so often to be roused to wrath, indignation and every inward emotion—and that too about other people’s business—the power of those reflections and commonplaces, discussed and handled in a speech, is great enough to dispense with all make-believe and trickery: for the very quality of the diction, employed to stir the feelings of others, stirs the speaker himself even more deeply than any of his hearers. And, not to have us astonished at this happening in litigation, or before arbitrators, or in the impeachments of our friends, or among a crowd of people, or in political life, or public debate, when not only our talent is under criticism (no great matter, though even this should not be overlooked, when you have claimed a proficiency attained by few), but other and far more important attributes are on trial, I mean our loyalty, sense of duty, and carefulness, under whose influence, even when defending complete strangers, we still cannot regard them as strangers, if we would be accounted good men ourselves. However, as I said, not to have this seem a marvel among us, what can be so unreal as poetry, the theater or stage plays? And yet, in that sort of things, I myself have often been a spectator when the actor-man’s eyes seemed to me to be blazing behind his mask, as he spoke those solemn lines,

Darest thou part from thy brother, or Salamis enter
without him,
Dreading the mien of thy sire not at all?

Never did he utter that word ‘mien,’ without my beholding an infuriated Telamon maddened by grief for his son. Whenever too he lowered his voice to a plaintive tone, in the passage,

Aged and childless,
Didst tear and bereave and didst quench me, forgetting
the death of thy brother,
Forgetting his tiny son, though entrusted to thee as
a guardian?

I thought I heard sobs of mourning in his voice. Now if that player, though acting it daily, could never act that scene without emotion, do you really think that Pacuvius, when he wrote it, was in a calm and careless frame of mind? That could never be. For I have often heard that—as they say Democritus and Plato have left on record—no man can be a good poet who is not on fire with passion, and inspired by something very like frenzy.

Instance of Antonius himself, in cases of Aquilius and Norbanus.

XLVII. “Do not suppose then that I myself, though not concerned to portray and reproduce in language the bygone misfortunes and legendary griefs of heroes, and though presenting my own personality and not representing another’s, did without profound emotion the things I did when closing that famous case,³³ in which my task was to maintain Manius Aquilius in his civic rights. For here was a man whom I remembered as having been consul, commander-in-chief, honored by the Senate, and mounting in procession to the Capitol; on seeing him cast down, crippled, sorrowing and brought to the risk of all he held dear, I was myself overcome by compassion before I tried to excite it in others. Assuredly I felt that the Court was deeply affected when I called forward my unhappy old client, in his garb of woe, and when I did those things approved by yourself, Crassus—not by way of technique, as to which I know not what to say, but under stress of deep emotion and indignation—I mean my tearing open his tunic and exposing his scars. While Gaius Marius, from his seat in court, was strongly reinforcing, by his weeping, the pathos of my appeal, and I, repeatedly naming him, was committing his colleague³⁴ to his care, and calling upon him to speak himself in support of the common interests of commanders-in-chief, all this lamentation, as well as my invocation of every god and man, every citizen and ally, was

³³Aquilius was consul in 101 B.C. After suppressing the Servile War in Sicily, he was prosecuted in 98 B.C. for extortion, but successfully defended by Antonius (*cf.* §188). [Tr.]

³⁴Marius was consul for the fifth time in 101 B.C. [Tr.]

accompanied by tears and vast indignation on my own part; had my personal indignation been missing from all the talking I did on that occasion, my address, so far from inspiring compassion, would positively have deserved ridicule. And so I am telling you this, Sulpicius, as naturally such a kindly and accomplished teacher would do, in order to help you to be wrathful, indignant, and tearful in your speech-making.

“But why indeed should I teach this to you, who, in prosecuting my comrade and quaestor,³⁵ had kindled such a blaze, not by eloquence only but far more by vehemence, indignation, and fiery enthusiasm, that I hardly ventured to draw near and put it out? For all the advantages in that case had been yours: you were citing to the Court the violence, the flight, the stone-throwing and the tribunes’ ruthlessness that marked the disastrous and lamentable affair of Caepio; then too it was established that Marcus Aemilius, chief of Senate and chief of State, had been struck by a stone, while it was undeniable that Lucius Cotta and Titus Didius, on trying to veto a resolution, had been forcibly driven from sanctuary.

XLVIII. “In the result, while you, only a stripling, were thought to be conducting this public prosecution with consummate distinction, I, a past censor, was thought to be acting not quite honorably in bearing to defend a factious citizen, who moreover had been merciless to a past consul in distress. Citizens of the best repute formed the tribunal; men of respectability crowded the Court; so that I had difficulty in winning a grudging sort of acceptance of my plea that at any rate my client was my old quaestor. In these circumstances how can I say I used any particular technique? What I did I will relate, if you think fit, you will give my line of defense some place or other in your system.

³⁵I.e., Gaius Norbanus, who had been Antonius’s quaestor in 103 B.C. (*cf.* Book II, ~ ~ 89, 107, 124). Q. Servilius Caepio, as proconsul in Gaul, had been the main cause of the crushing defeat inflicted upon the Roman army by the Cimbri at Arausio. Being subsequently prosecuted and condemned for his treason and embezzlement in Gaul, he was exiled. Norbanus had been active in the proceedings against him, and this led to the prosecution of Norbanus himself by the aristocrats in 95 B.C., when Antonius conducted his defense, as here described. [Tr.]

"I classified all the types of civil discord, their weaknesses and dangers, and that part of my speech I derived from all the vicissitudes in the history of our own community, winding up with the assertion that civil discords, though always troublesome, had yet sometimes been justifiable and well-nigh unavoidable. Next I discussed the considerations lately recalled by Crassus; how that neither the expulsion of kings from this State, nor the establishment of tribunes of the commons, nor the frequent restriction of the consuls' power by decrees of the commons, nor the bestowal upon the Roman People of the right of appeal, that famous buttress of the State and defense of freedom, could any of them have been effected without aristocratic opposition; and that, if those particular civil discords had been beneficial to our community, the mere fact of a popular movement having been caused must not instantly be counted against Gaius Norbanus for heinous wickedness and indeed a capital offense. That if rightfulness had ever been conceded to an incitement of the Roman People to sedition—a concession which I was showing to have been frequent—there had never been a juster cause than this one. After that I altered my course and turned my entire speech into a denunciation of the running-away of Caepio and a lament for the destruction of his army: in this way, besides chafing anew by my words the sores of people mourning for their own folk, I was kindling the feelings of the Roman Knights, who constituted the Court I was addressing, into fresh hatred of Quintus Caepio, from whom they had been estranged already over the composition of the criminal Courts.³⁶

XLIX. "But when I felt I had a firm hold on the Court and on my line of defense, and I had won the goodwill of the public, whose claims I had upheld even when involved with civil discord, and I had turned all hearts on the tribunal in favor of my cause, by reason either of the national disaster, or of yearning grief for kindred, or of private hatred of Caepio, then I began to blend with this impetuous and violent type of or-

³⁶Caepio in 106 B.C. had proposed to deprive the *equites* of their monopoly of the jury functions, and to have the tribunals composed of senators and *equites* in equal proportions. [Tr.]

atory that other mild and gentle type, which I have already discussed, pleading that I was fighting for my comrade, who by ancestral tradition should stand in a filial relation to myself, and also (I might say) for my own fair fame and general welfare; no happening could more deeply disgrace my reputation, or cause me more bitter sorrow, than for it to be thought that I, so often the savior of complete strangers to myself, provided only they were my fellow-citizens, had been unable to aid my own comrade. I begged the Court, should they see me affected by justifiable and loyal grief, to excuse this in consideration of my years, official career and achievements, particularly if, in the course of other trials, they had observed that I always made my petitions on behalf of friends in jeopardy, never for myself. Thus all through that speech for the defense, and indeed the trial itself, it was in the fewest possible words that I glanced over and lightly touched the matters which seemed dependent upon scientific treatment, I mean my discussion of the Statute of Appuleius,³⁷ and my exposition of the nature of treason. By means of these two modes of speech, the one inflammatory, the other eulogistic, and neither of them much elaborated by rules of art, I so managed the whole of that case as to seem most passionate when reviving hatred of Caepio, and mildest when describing my conduct towards my own connections. So, Sulpicius, it was rather by working upon, than by informing, the minds of the tribunal, that I beat your prosecution on that occasion."

Sulpicius testifies to Antonius's success in the latter case.

L. Here Sulpicius observed, "Upon my word, Antonius, your account of those matters is true, for never did I see anything slip through the fingers in the way that verdict slipped that day through mine. For when (as you told us) I had left you with a conflagration rather than a case to dispose of—ye Gods!—what an opening you made! How nervous, how irresolute you seemed! How stammering and halting was your delivery! How you clung at the outset to the solitary excuse

³⁷See Book II, §107, n. b. [Tr.]

everyone was making for you—that you were defending your own familiar friend and quaestor! So, in the first place, did you prepare the way towards getting a hearing! Then, just as I was deciding that you had merely succeeded in making people think intimate relationship a possible excuse for your defending a wicked citizen—lo and behold!—so far unsuspected by other people, but already to my own serious alarm, you began to wriggle imperceptibly into your famous defense, of no factious Norbanus, but of an incensed Roman People, whose wrath, you urged, was not wrongful, but just and well-deserved. After that what point against Caepio did you miss? How you leavened every word with hatred, malice, and pathos! And all this not only in your speech for the defense, but also in your handling of Scaurus and the rest of my witnesses, whose evidence you rebutted by no disproof, but by fleeing for refuge to that same national outbreak. When just now you were reminding us of these things, I certainly felt no need for any maxims, for that actual reproduction, in your own words, of your methods of defense is to my mind the most instructive of teaching.”

Rules and cautions for emotional oratory.

“For all that,” answered Antonius, “we will, if you please, go on to set forth the principles we generally adopt in speaking, and the points we chiefly keep in view: for a long career and experience in the most weighty affairs have taught us, by this time, to hold fast to the ways of stirring the feelings of mankind.

LI. “My own practice is to begin by reflecting whether the case calls for such treatment; for these rhetorical fireworks should not be used in petty matters, or with men of such temper that our eloquence can achieve nothing in the way of influencing their minds, unless we would be deemed fit objects of ridicule, or even of disgust, as indulging in heroics over trifles, or setting out to uproot the immovable. Now, since the emotions which eloquence has to excite in the minds of the tribunal, or whatever other audience we may be addressing, are most commonly love, hate, wrath, jealousy, compassion, hope, joy, fear, or vexation, we observe that love is won if

you are thought to be upholding the interests of your audience, or to be working for good men, or at any rate for such as that audience deems good and useful. For this last impression more readily wins love, and the protection of the righteous esteem; and the holding-out of a hope of advantage to come is more effective than the recital of past benefit. You must struggle to reveal the presence, in the cause you are upholding, of some merit or usefulness, and to make it plain that the man, for whom you are to win this love, in no respect consulted his own interests and did nothing at all from personal motives. For men’s private gains breed jealousy, while their zeal for others’ service is applauded.

“And here we must be watchful, not to seem to extol unduly the merits and renown—jealousy’s favorite target—of those whom we would have beloved for their good works. Then too, from these same commonplaces, we shall learn as well to instigate hatred of others as to turn it away from ourselves and our clients: and these same general heads are to be employed in kindling and also in assuaging wrath. For, if you glorify the doing of something ruinous or unprofitable to your particular audience, hate is engendered: while, if it be something done against good men in general, or those to whom the particular doer should never have done it, or against the State, no such bitter hate is excited, but a disgust closely resembling ill-will or hate. Fear again is struck from either the perils of individuals or those shared by all: that of private origin goes deeper, but universal fear also is to be traced to a similar source.

Prevalence of jealousy.

LII. “The treatment of hope, joy, and vexation is similar to this, and identical in each case, but I rather think that the emotion of jealousy is by far the fiercest of all, and needs as much energy for its repression as for its stimulation. Now people are especially jealous of their equals, or of those once beneath them, when they feel themselves left behind and fret at the others’ upward flight; but jealousy of their betters also is often furious, and all the more so if these conduct themselves insufferably, and overstep their rightful claims on

the strength of pre-eminent rank or prosperity; if these advantages are to be made fuel for jealousy, it should before all be pointed out that they were not the fruit of merit; next that they even came by vice and wrongdoing, finally that the man's deserts, though creditable and impressive enough, are still exceeded by his arrogance and disdain. To quench jealousy, on the other hand, it is proper to emphasize the points that those advantages were the fruit of great exertion and great risks, and were not turned to his own profit but to that of other people; and that, as for any renown he himself may seem to have won, though no unfair recompense for his risk, he nevertheless finds no pleasure therein, but casts it aside and disclaims it altogether: and we must by all means make sure (since most people are jealous, and this failing is remarkably general and widespread, while jealousy is attracted by surpassingly brilliant prosperity) that the belief in such prosperity shall be weakened, and that what was supposed to be outstanding prosperity shall be seen to be thoroughly blended with labor and sorrow.

Appeals to compassion.

Lastly compassion is awakened if the hearer can be brought to apply to his own adversities, whether endured or only apprehended, the lamentations uttered over someone else, or if, in his contemplation of another's case, he many a time goes back to his own experience. Thus, while particular occasions of human distress are deeply felt, if described in moving terms, the dejection and ruin of the righteous are especially lamentable. And, just as that other kind of style, which by bearing witness to the speaker's integrity is to preserve the semblance of a man of worth, should be mild and gentle (as I have repeatedly said already), so this kind, assumed by the speaker in order to transform men's feelings or influence them in any desired way, should be spirited and emotional.

Conciliatory style and unhurried treatment of emotional passages.

LIII. "But these two styles, which we require to be respectively mild and emotional, have some-

thing in common, making them hard to keep apart. For from that mildness, which wins us the goodwill of our hearers, some inflow must reach this fiercest of passions, wherewith we inflame the same people, and again, out of this passion some little energy must often be kindled within that mildness: nor is any style better blended than that wherein the harshness of strife is tempered by the personal urbanity of the advocate, while his easygoing mildness is fortified by some admixture of serious strife.

"Now in both styles of speaking, the one demanding passion and strife, and the other adapted to recommendation of the speaker's life and manners, the opening of a speech is unhurried, and none the less its closing should also be lingering and long drawn-out. For you must not bound all of a sudden into that emotional style, since it is wholly alien to the merits of the case, and people long to hear first just what is peculiarly within their own cognizance, while, once you have assumed that style, you must not be in a hurry to change it. For you could not awaken compassion, jealousy or wrath at the very instant of your onset, in the way that a proof is seized upon as soon as propounded, and a second and third called for. This is because the hearer's mentality corroborates the proof, and no sooner is it uttered than it is sticking in his memory, whereas that passionate style searches out an arbitrator's emotional side rather than his understanding, and that side can only be reached by diction that is rich, diversified, and copious, with animated delivery to match. Thus concise or quiet speakers may inform an arbitrator, but cannot excite him, on which excitement everything depends.

Argument to be met by argument, appeal to emotion by exciting the contrary.

"By this time it is plain that the power to argue both sides of every question is abundantly furnished from the same commonplaces. But your opponents' proof must be countered, either by contradicting the arguments chosen to establish it, or by showing that their desired conclusion is not supported by their premises and does not follow therefrom; or, if you do not so rebut it, you must adduce on the opposite side some proof of

greater or equal cogency. Lastly appeals, whether mild or passionate, and whether for winning favor or stirring the feelings, must be swept aside by exciting the opposite impressions, so that goodwill may be done away with by hate, and compassion by jealousy.”

BOOK III

Relation of oratory to philosophy.

XV. “This method of attaining and of expressing thought, this faculty of speaking, was, I say, designated by the ancient Greeks’ wisdom; this was the source that produced men like Lycurgus and Pittacus and Solon of old, and after their likeness came the Coruncanii and Fabricii, the Catos and Scipios of Rome, not so much perhaps as the result of instruction but owing to a similarity of intention and of will. Others again with the same wisdom but a different principle as to life’s purposes pursued tranquillity and leisure—for instance Pythagoras, Democritus, and Anaxagoras—and these abandoned the sphere of government and gave themselves entirely to study; and owing to its tranquillity and to the intrinsic attractiveness of knowledge, which is the sweetest of human pleasures, this life of study laid its charm on a larger number of persons than was advantageous to the commonwealth. Consequently when men of outstanding intellectual ability devoted themselves to this pursuit, as a result of this unlimited command of unoccupied free time, persons of very great learning, being supplied with overabundant leisure and extreme fertility of intellect, formed the opinion that it was their duty to devote themselves to the pursuit of far more numerous lines of investigation than was really necessary. For in old days at all events the same system of instruction seems to have imparted education both in right conduct and in good speech; nor were the professors in two separate groups, but the same masters gave instruction both in ethics and in rhetoric, for instance the great Phoenix in Homer, who says that he was assigned to the young Achilles by his father Peleus to accompany him to the wars in order to make him “an orator and man of action too.” But just as persons usually engaged in constant daily employment, when de-

barred from work because of the weather, betake themselves to tennis or gambling or dicing or even devise for themselves some novel game to occupy their leisure, so when the persons in question have been debarred from their work of politics by the circumstances of the time or have chosen to take a vacation, some of them have devoted themselves entirely to poetry, others to mathematics and others to music, and others also have created for themselves a new interest and amusement as dialecticians, and have spent the whole of their time and their lives in the sciences that were invented for the purpose of molding the minds of the young on the lines of culture and of virtue.

XVI. “But as there have been certain persons and those a considerable number who either held a high position on account of their twofold wisdom, as men of action and as orators—two careers that are inseparable—for instance, Themistocles and Pericles and Theramenes, or other persons who were not themselves so much engaged in public life but were professional teachers of this same wisdom, for instance Gorgias, Thrasymachus, Isocrates, persons have been found who being themselves copiously furnished with learning and with talent, but yet shrinking on deliberate principle from politics and affairs, scouted and scorned this practice of oratory. The chief of these was Socrates, the person who on the evidence of all men of learning and the verdict of the whole of Greece, owing not only to his wisdom and penetration and charm and subtlety but also to his eloquence and variety and fertility easily came out top whatever side in a debate he took up; and whereas the persons engaged in handling and pursuing and teaching the subjects that we are now investigating were designated by a single title, the whole study and practice of the liberal sciences being entitled philosophy, Socrates robbed them of this general designation, and in his discussions separated the science of wise thinking from that of elegant speaking, though in reality they are closely linked together; and the genius and varied discourses of Socrates have been immortally enshrined in the compositions of Plato, Socrates himself not having left a single scrap of writing. This is the source from which has sprung the undoubtedly absurd and

unprofitable and reprehensible severance between the tongue and the brain, leading to our having one set of professors to teach us to think and another to teach us to speak. For because of the plurality of schools that virtually sprang from Socrates, owing to the fact that out of his various and diverse discussions, ranging in every direction, one pupil had picked up one doctrine and another another, there were engendered families at discord with one another and widely separated and unlike, although all philosophers claimed and sincerely claimed the title of followers of Socrates.

Views of the post-Aristotelians.

XVII. "And in the first place from Plato himself sprang Aristotle and Xenophon, on one of whom was bestowed the name of the Peripatetic School and on the other that of the Academy; and next from Antisthenes, who in the Socratic discourse had been captivated chiefly by the ideal of endurance and hardness, came first the Cynics and next the Stoics; and then from Aristippus, who had taken delight rather in the Socratic discussions on the subject of pleasure, was derived the Cyrenaic philosophy, which Aristippus and his successors maintained without modification, whereas the contemporary thinkers that make pleasure the sole standard of value, in doing so with greater modesty neither satisfy the claims of virtue, which they do not despise, nor successfully defend pleasure, which they wish to embrace. There have also been other groups of philosophers who almost all professed to be followers of Socrates, the Eretrians, the pupils of Erillus, the Megareans, the school of Pyrrho, but these have long ago been routed out of existence by the forceful arguments of the aforesaid schools. But from among the systems still surviving, the philosophy that has undertaken the championship of pleasure, although some may accept it as true, is nevertheless quite remote from the man whom we are seeking and whom we wish to be the political leader of the nation, guiding the government and pre-eminent for wisdom and eloquence in the Senate, in the assembly of the people and in public causes. And nevertheless no wrong will be done to that phil-

osophy by us, for we shall not be debarring it from a position that it aspires to occupy, but it will be reposing where it wishes to be, in its own charming gardens, where moreover as it reclines it gently and tactfully appeals to us to abandon the platform and the courts and parliament—perhaps a wise invitation, particularly in the present state of public affairs. However for my part my present inquiry is not which system of philosophy is the truest but which is the most fully akin to the orator. Consequently let us dismiss the masters in question, without any derogatory comment, as they are excellent fellows and happy in their belief in their own happiness, and only let us warn them to keep to themselves as a holy secret, though it may be extremely true, their doctrine that it is not the business of a wise man to take part in politics—for if they convince us and all our best men of the truth of this they themselves will not be able to live the life of leisure which is their ideal.

XVIII. "Moreover, the Stoics, of whom I by no means disapprove, I nevertheless dismiss—and I do not fear their anger, because anger is quite unknown to them, and I am grateful to them for being the only one of all the schools that has pronounced eloquence to be a virtue and a form of wisdom. But clearly there is something in them that is quite out of keeping with the orator whom we are depicting: in the first place their assertion that all those who are not wise are slaves, brigands, enemies, madmen, and that all the same nobody is wise—yet it would be the height of folly to place a public meeting or the Senate or any assembly of people under the direction of a person who holds the view that not one of those present is sane, or a citizen, or a free man. There is the further point that even the style of their discourse, though possibly subtle and undoubtedly penetrating, yet for an orator is bald, unfamiliar, jarring on the ear of the public, devoid of clarity, fullness, and spirit, while at the same time of a character that makes it quite impossible to employ it in public speaking; for the Stoics hold a different view of good and bad from all their fellow-citizens or rather from all other nations, and give a different meaning to "honor," "disgrace," "reward," "punishment"—whether correctly or otherwise does not concern us now, but

if we were to adopt their terminology, we should never be able to express our meaning intelligibly about anything.

“There remain the Peripatetics and the Academics, though the latter are really two schools of thought under one name. For Plato’s nephew Speusippus and his pupil Xenocrates and Xenocrates’ pupils Polemo and Crantor did not seriously disagree on any point of opinion from Aristotle, their fellow-pupil under Plato, although possibly they were not his equals in fullness and variety of style; whereas Polemo’s pupil Arcesilas, to begin with, selected for adoption from the various writings of Plato and the Socratic dialogues the dogma that nothing can be apprehended with certainty either by the senses or by the mind; and he is said to have employed a remarkably attractive style of discourse in rejecting mental and sensory judgment entirely and to have initiated the practice—an entirely Socratic one it is true—of not stating his own opinion but arguing against the opinions put forward by everyone else. From this source descended the more recent Academy of our day, in which the almost inspired intellectual acumen and rhetorical fluency of Carneades have made him the leading figure; and though at Athens I got to know a number of his pupils, I myself nevertheless can recommend as entirely reliable authorities my father-in-law Scaevola, who in his youth heard Carneades at Rome, and my friend the distinguished Quintus Metellus, son of Lucius, who used to say that as a young man he heard him on many occasions at Athens when he was already showing signs of age.

Eloquence needs more than rhetorical theory.

XIX. “However, the streams of learning flowing from the common watershed of wisdom, as rivers do from the Apennines, divided in two, the philosophers flowing down into the entirely Greek waters of the Eastern Mediterranean with its plentiful supply of harbors, while the orators glided into the rocky and inhospitable Western seas of our outlandish Tuscany, where even Ulysses himself lost his bearings. Consequently if we are contented with this degree of eloquence, and with the orator who knows that one

must either deny the charge brought against one, or if one cannot do that then prove that the action of the accused party was either a right action, or due to someone else’s fault or transgression, or legal, or not illegal, or inadvertent, or inevitable, or incorrectly designated in the charge, or that the proceedings being taken are irregular and illegal; and if you people think it sufficient to learn the instructions drawn up by your writers on the science of rhetoric, instructions nevertheless that have been expounded³⁸ by Antonius in a much more graceful and more copious form than they are enunciated by the authors in question—well, if you are content with these rules and also the ones you have desired me to state, you are making the orator abandon a vast, immeasurable plain and confine himself to quite a narrow circle. If on the other hand you chose to follow the famous Pericles of old, or even our friend Demosthenes with whom his many writings have made us better acquainted, and if you have grown to love that glorious and supreme ideal, that thing of beauty, the perfect orator, you are bound to accept either the modern dialectic of Carneades or the earlier method of Aristotle. For, as I said before, the older masters down to Socrates used to combine with their theory of rhetoric the whole of the study and the science of everything that concerns morals and conduct and ethics and politics; it was subsequently, as I have explained, that the two groups of students were separated from one another, by Socrates and then similarly by all the Socratic schools, and the philosophers looked down on eloquence and the orators on wisdom, and never touched anything from the side of the other study except what this group borrowed from that one, or that one from this; whereas they would have drawn from the common supply indifferently if they had been willing to remain in the partnership of early days. But just as the old pontiffs owing to the vast number of sacrifices decided to have a Banquet Committee of three members, though they had themselves been appointed by Numa for the purpose among others of holding the great Sacrificial Banquet of the Games, so the followers of Socrates cut connection with the practicing

³⁸Book II, §§104–13, 162–73. [Tr.]

lawyers and detached these from the common title of philosophy, although the old masters had intended there to be a marvelously close alliance between oratory and philosophy.

Value of oratory resumed: the orator needs wide culture.

XX. “This being so, I will enter a brief plea on my own behalf, and will beg you to believe that what I say is not said about myself personally but about the orator as such. For I myself am a person who, having been given by my father an extremely careful education in my youth, and having brought into public life an amount of talent of which I am myself conscious, although not the amount with which you perhaps credit me, cannot assert that I pursued the studies with which I am now dealing exactly in the manner in which I am going to say they ought to be pursued: inasmuch as I came forward as a public advocate at an extremely early age, and when only one and twenty conducted the impeachment of a very eloquent and very distinguished man³⁹—in fact public life was my education, and practical experience of the laws and institutions of the state and the custom of the country was my schoolmaster. Though thirsty for those accomplishments of yours of which I am speaking I had only a small taste of them, having during my quaestorship in Asia secured the services of a professor of rhetoric from the Academy, a person of about the same age as myself, the great Metrodorus whose memory Antonius recalled;⁴⁰ and also on my way home from Asia, at Athens, where I should have made a longer stay if I had not been so angry with the authorities there for refusing to repeat the celebration of the mysteries, for which I had arrived two days late; and consequently the fact that I include in my treatment this extensive and important field of learning is not only not in my favor but rather tells against me—for my subject is not what I myself can achieve but what the orator as such can—and against these exponents of the science of rhetoric, who are exceedingly foolish persons, as they only write about

the classification of cases and the elementary rules and the methods of stating the facts; whereas eloquence is so potent a force that it embraces the origin and operation and developments of all things, all the virtues and duties, all the natural principles governing the morals and minds and life of mankind, and also determines their customs and laws and rights, and controls the government of the state, and expresses everything that concerns whatever topic in a graceful and flowing style. In this field I for my part occupy myself to the best of my ability, and with such capacity as is supplied me by my natural talents, my limited studies, and my practical experience; though all the same I really do not yield much ground in debate to those who have pitched their camp for their lifetime solely in this province of philosophy.

XXI. “For what proof can our friend Gaius Velleius bring to show that pleasure is the chief good, which I on my side am not able with greater fertility either to maintain if I choose or to rebut, by drawing on the arguments set out by Antonius, thanks to this practice in oratory in which Velleius is a tiro but every one of us an expert? For what is there that can be said on the subject of virtue by Stoics such as Sextus Pompeius or the two Balbi or my friend Marcus Vigellius who lived with Panaetius, to make it necessary either for me or for any one of you to give ground to them in debate? For philosophy does not resemble the other sciences—for what good will a man be in geometry if he has not studied it? or in music? He will either have to hold his tongue or be set down as a positive lunatic; whereas the contents of philosophy are discovered by intellects of the keenest acumen in eliciting the probable answer to every problem, and the results are elaborated with practiced eloquence. In this situation our popular orator, though perhaps inadequately schooled, having nevertheless had experience in speaking, will anyway be enabled merely by that ordinary experience to give those persons a sound drubbing, and will not allow them to despise and look down on him; whereas if there has really ever been a person who was able in Aristotelian fashion to speak on both sides about every subject and by means of knowing Aristotle’s rules to reel

³⁹C. Carbo, see Book I, §40. [Tr.]

⁴⁰Book II, §360. [Tr.]

off two speeches on opposite sides on every case, or in the manner of Arcesilas and Carneades argue against every statement put forward, and who to that method adds the experience and practice in speaking indicated, he would be the one and only true and perfect orator. For an orator cannot have sufficient cogency and weight if he lacks the vigor that public speaking demands, and cannot be adequately polished and profound if he lacks width of culture. Consequently let us for our part allow your old Mr. Raven⁴¹ to hatch

⁴¹See Book I, §91. [Tr.] The name of Corax, one of the earliest rhetoricians, means *raven* or *crow*. Bombastic or overly formulaic rhetoric was often termed the “bad egg of a bad Crow,” and condemnations of it, as here, were lodged against “old Mr. Raven.” [Ed.]

out his own chicks in the nest, so that they may fly abroad as annoying and tiresome bawlers, and permit some Pamphilus⁴² or other to sketch out a subject of this importance on his tapes, like a nursery game, and let us for our part within the narrow limits of the debate of yesterday and today unfold the function of the orator in its entirety, provided it be granted that the subject is so extensive that it might be supposed to fill all the volumes of the philosophers, books which none of those gentlemen have ever had in their hands.”

⁴²Quintilian iii. 6. 34 mentions a rhetorician of this name. The exact nature of his *memoria technica* here alluded to it does not seem possible to discover. Reid thinks *deliciae* means “pets,” because Catullus uses the word of Lesbia’s sparrow. [Tr.]

From *Orator*

69 The man of eloquence whom we seek, following the suggestion of Antonius, will be one who is able to speak in court or in deliberative bodies so as to prove, to please and to sway or persuade. To prove is the first necessity, to please is charm, to sway is victory; for it is the one thing of all that avails most in winning verdicts. For these three functions of the orator there are three styles, the plain style for proof, the middle style for pleasure, the vigorous style for persuasion; and in this last is summed up the entire virtue of the orator. Now the man who controls and combines these three varied styles needs rare judgment and great endowment; for he will decide what is needed at any point, and will be able to speak in any way which the case requires. For after all the foundation of eloquence, as of everything else, is wisdom. In an oration, as in life, nothing is harder than to determine what is appropriate. The Greeks call it *πρέπον*; let us call it *decorum* or “propriety.” Much brilliant work has been done in laying down rules about this; the subject is in fact worth mastering. From ignorance of this mistakes are made not only in life

but very frequently in writing, both in poetry and in prose. . . .

It follows that we must seek the type and pattern of each kind—a great and arduous task, as we have often said; but we should have considered what to do when we were embarking; now we must certainly spread our sails to the wind, no matter where it may carry us. First, then, we must delineate the one whom some deem to be the only true “Attic” orator. He is restrained and plain, he follows the ordinary usage, really differing more than is supposed from those who are not eloquent at all. Consequently the audience, even if they are no speakers themselves, are sure they can speak in that fashion. For that plainness of style seems easy to imitate at first thought, but when attempted nothing is more difficult. For although it is not full-blooded, it should nevertheless have some of the sap of life, so that, though it lack great strength, it may still be, so to speak, in sound health. First, then, let us release him from, let us say, the bonds of rhythm. Yes, the orator uses certain rhythms, as you know, and these we shall discuss shortly; they have to be employed with a definite plan, but in a different

Translated by H. M. Hubbell.

style of speech; in this style they are to be wholly eschewed. It should be loose but not rambling; so that it may seem to move freely but not to wander without restraint. He should also avoid, so to speak, cementing¹ his words together too smoothly, for the hiatus and clash of vowels has something agreeable about it and shows a not unpleasant carelessness on the part of a man who is paying more attention to thought than to words.

78 But his very freedom from periodic structure and cementing his words together will make it necessary for him to look to the other requisites. For the short and concise must not be handled carelessly, but there is such a thing even as a careful negligence. Just as some women are said to be handsomer when unadorned—this very lack of ornament becomes them—so this plain style gives pleasure even when unembellished: there is something in both cases which lends greater charm, but without showing itself. Also all noticeable ornament, pearls as it were, will be excluded; not even curling-irons will be used; all cosmetics, artificial white and red, will be rejected; only elegance and neatness will remain. The language will be pure Latin, plain and clear; propriety will always be the chief aim. Only one quality will be lacking, which Theophrastus mentions fourth among the qualities of style—the charm and richness of figurative ornament. He will employ an abundance of apposite maxims dug out from every conceivable hiding place; this will be the dominant feature in this orator. He will be modest in his use of what may be called

79 the orator's stock-in-trade. For we do have after a fashion a stock-in-trade, in the stylistic embellishments, partly in thought and partly in words. The embellishment given by words is twofold, from single words and from words as they are connected together. In the case of "proper" and ordinary words, that individual word wins approval which has the best sound, or best expresses the idea; in the case of variations from the common idiom we approve the metaphor, or a borrowing from some source, or a new formation or the archaic and obsolete (yet even obsolete and archaic words are to be classed as

"proper" except that we rarely use them). Words 81 when connected together embellish a style if they produce a certain symmetry which disappears when the words are changed, though the thought remains the same; for the figures of thought which remain even if the words are changed are, to be sure, numerous, but relatively few are noticeable. Consequently the orator of the plain style, provided he is elegant and finished, will not be bold in coining words, and in metaphor will be modest, sparing in the use of archaisms, and somewhat subdued in using the other embellishments of language and of thought. Metaphor he may possibly employ more frequently because it is of the commonest occurrence in the language of townsman and rustic alike. The rustics, for example, say that the vines are "bejewelled,"² the fields "thirsty," the crops "happy," the grain "luxuriant." Any of these metaphors is bold 82 enough, but there is a similarity to the source from which the word is borrowed, or if a thing has no proper term the borrowing seems to be done in order to make the meaning clear, and not for entertainment. The restrained speaker may use this figure a little more freely than others, but not so boldly as if he were speaking in the grandest style. Consequently impropriety—the nature of which should be plain from what has been said about propriety—appears here too, when a metaphor is far-fetched, and one is used in the plain style which would be appropriate in another. This unaffected orator whom certain people call 83 "Attic," and rightly so, except that he is not the only "Attic"—this orator will also use the symmetry that enlivens a group of words with the embellishments that the Greeks call σχήματα, figures as it were, of speech. (They apply the same word also to figures of thought.) He will, however, be somewhat sparing in using these. For as in the appointments of a banquet he will avoid extravagant display, and desire to appear thrifty, but also in good taste, and will choose what he is going to use. There are, as a matter of 84 fact, a good many ornaments suited to the frugality of this very orator I am describing. For this shrewd orator must avoid all the figures that I described above, such as clauses of equal length,

¹For this figurative use of *coagmentare* cf. *Brutus* 68. [Tr.]

²The buds are compared with jewels. [Tr.]

with similar endings, or identical cadences, and the studied charm produced by the change of a letter,³ lest the elaborate symmetry and a certain grasping after a pleasant effect be too obvious.

85 Likewise if repetition of words requires some emphasis and a raising of the voice, it will be foreign to this plain style of oratory. Other figures of speech he will be able to use freely, provided only he breaks up and divides the periodic structure and uses the commonest words and the mildest of metaphors. He may also brighten his style with such figures of thought as will not be exceedingly glaring. He will not represent the State as speaking⁴ or call the dead from the lower world,⁵ nor will he crowd a long series of iterations into a single period. This requires stronger lungs, and is not to be expected of him whom we are describing or demanded from him. For he will be rather subdued in voice as in style. But

86 many of these figures of thought will be appropriate to this plain style, although he will use them somewhat harshly: such is the man we are portraying. His delivery is not that of tragedy nor of the stage; he will employ only slight movements of the body, but will trust a great deal to his expression. This must not be what people call pulling a wry face, but must reveal in a well-bred manner the feeling with which each thought is uttered.

87 A speech of this kind should also be sprinkled with the salt of pleasantry, which plays a rare great part in speaking. There are two kinds, humour and wit. He will use both; the former in a graceful and charming narrative, the latter in hurling the shafts of ridicule. Of this latter there are several kinds,⁶ but now we are discussing another subject. We here merely suggest that the orator should use ridicule with a care not to let it be too frequent lest it become buffoonery; nor

88 ridicule of a smutty nature, lest it be that of low face; nor pert, lest it be impudent; nor aimed at

³Cf. *De Oratore* 2. 256, quoting from Cato, *nobiliorem, mobiliorem*. [Tr.]

⁴e.g. *In Cat. 1* 18 (*patria*) tecum, Catilina, sic agit et quodam modo tacita loquitur. [Tr.]

⁵e.g. *Pro Caelio* 33: Cicero calls Appius Claudius Caccus from the dead to witness the shame of his descendants. [Tr.]

⁶Cicero had discussed this at length in *De Oratore* 2. 253–289. [Tr.]

misfortune, lest it be brutal, nor at crime, lest laughter take the place of loathing; nor should the wit be inappropriate to his own character, to that of the jury, or to the occasion; for all these points come under the head of impropriety. He will also avoid far-fetched jests, and those not made up at the moment but brought from home; for these are 89 generally frigid. He will spare friends and dignitaries, will avoid rankling insult; he will merely prod his opponents, nor will he do it constantly, nor to all of them nor in every manner. With these exceptions he will use wit and humour in a way in which none of these modern “Attics” do, so far as I know, though this is certainly an outstanding mark of Attic style. For my part, I judge 90 this to be the pattern of the plain orator—plain but great and truly Attic; since whatever is witty and wholesome in speech is peculiar to the Athenian orators. Not all of them, however, are humorous. Lysias is adequate and so is Hyperides; Demades is said to have excelled them all, Demosthenes is considered inferior. Yet it seems to me that none is cleverer than he; still he is not witty so much as humorous; the former requires a bolder talent, the latter a greater art.⁷

The second style is fuller and somewhat more 91 robust than the simple style just described, but plainer than the grandest style which we shall presently discuss. In this style there is perhaps a minimum of vigour, and a maximum of charm. For it is richer than the unadorned style, but plainer than the ornate and opulent style. All the 92 ornaments are appropriate to this type of oration, and it possesses charm to a high degree. There have been many conspicuous examples of this style in Greece, but in my judgement Demetrius of Phalerum led them all. His oratory not only proceeds in calm and peaceful flow, but is lighted up by what might be called the stars of “transferred” words (or metaphor) and borrowed words. By “transferred” I now mean, as often before, words transferred by resemblance from another thing in order to produce a pleasing effect, or because of lack of a “proper” word; by

⁷The discussion of the plain style is extended by Cicero out of all proportion to the space allotted to the middle and grand styles, because this was the chief point of debate between him and the Atticists. [Tr.]

“borrowed”⁸ I mean the cases in which there is substituted for a “proper” word another with the same meaning drawn from some other suitable sphere. It is, to be sure, a “transfer” when Ennius
93 says

I am bereft of citadel and town,⁹

but a “transfer” of quite a different kind than when he says

Dread Africa trembled with terrible tumult.¹⁰

The latter is called ὑπαλλαγή or “hypallage” by the rhetoricians, because as it were words are exchanged¹¹ for words; the grammarians call it μετωνυμία or “metonymy” because nouns¹² are transferred. Aristotle, however, classifies them all under metaphor and includes also the misuse of terms, which they call κατάχρησις or “catachresis,” for example, when we say a “minute” mind instead of “small”; and we misuse related words on occasion either because this gives pleasure or because it is appropriate. When there is a continuous stream of metaphors, a wholly different style of speech is produced; consequently the Greeks call it ἀλληγορία or “allegory.”¹³ They are right as to the name, but from the point of view of classification Aristotle does better in calling them all metaphors. The Phalerian uses these very frequently, and they are attractive to a degree; and although he has many metaphors, yet the cases of metonymy are more numerous than
94 in any other orator. To the same oratorical style—I am discussing the mean and tempered style—belong all figures of language, and many of thought. This speaker will likewise develop his arguments with breadth and erudition, and use commonplaces without undue emphasis. But why speak at length? It is commonly the philo-

⁸Literally “changed.” [Tr.]

⁹Ennius, *Andromache*, Frag. 88 V.². *Remains of Old Latin*, L.C.L., i. p. 250. [Tr.]

¹⁰Ennius, *Annales* Frag. 310 V.². Ennius wrote: “Africa terribili tremit horrida terra tumultu,” *Remains*, I. p. 114. Cf. Cic. *De Oratore* 3. 167. [Tr.]

¹¹Latin *summutantur* = Greek ὑπαλλάττονται. [Tr.]

¹²Aeolic ὄνυμα is the basis of μετωνυμία for the word metonymy. [Tr.]

¹³Cicero intends *alia oratio* to be a literal translation of ἀλληγορία. [Tr.]

sophic schools which produce such orators:¹⁴ and unless he be brought face to face with the more robust speaker, the orator whom I am describing will find approval on his own merits. It is, as a
96 matter of fact, a brilliant and florid, highly coloured and polished style in which all the charms of language and thought are intertwined. The sophists are the source from which all this has flowed into the forum, but scorned by the simple and rejected by the grand, it found a resting-place in this middle class of which I am speaking.

The orator of the third style is magnificent,⁹⁷ opulent, stately and ornate; he undoubtedly has the greatest power. This is the man whose brilliance and fluency have caused admiring nations to let eloquence attain the highest power in the state; I mean the kind of eloquence which rushes along with the roar of a mighty stream, which all look up to and admire, and which they despair of attaining. This eloquence has power to sway men’s minds and move them in every possible way. Now it storms the feelings, now it creeps in; it implants new ideas and uproots the old. But there is a great difference between this and the
98 other styles. One who has studied the plain and pointed style so as to be able to speak adroitly and neatly, and has not conceived of anything higher, if he has attained perfection in this style, is a great orator, if not the greatest. He is far from standing on slippery ground, and, when once he gets a foothold, he will never fall. The orator of the middle style, whom I call moderate and tempered, once he has drawn up his forces, will not dread the doubtful and uncertain pitfalls of speaking. Even if not completely successful, as often happens, he will not run a great risk; he has not far to fall. But this orator of ours whom we
99 consider the chief,—grand, impetuous and fiery, if he has natural ability for this alone, or trains himself solely in this, or devotes his energies to this only, and does not temper his abundance with the other two styles, he is much to be despised. For the plain orator is esteemed wise because he speaks clearly and adroitly; the one who employs the middle style is charming; but the co-

¹⁴Demetrius of Phalerum, whom Cicero regards as the outstanding orator in this style, was a Peripatetic. [Tr.]

pious speaker, if he has nothing else, seems to be scarcely sane. For a man who can say nothing calmly and mildly, who pays no attention to arrangement, precision, clarity or pleasantry—especially when some cases have to be handled entirely in this latter style, and others largely so,—if without first preparing the ears of his audience he begins trying to work them up to a fiery passion, he seems to be a raving madman among the sane, like a drunken reveller in the midst of sober men.

100 We have him now, Brutus, the man whom we are seeking, but in imagination, not in actual possession. If I had once laid my hands on him, not even he with his mighty eloquence would have persuaded me to let him go. But we have certainly discovered that eloquent orator whom Antonius never saw. Who is he, then? I will describe him briefly, and then expand the description at

greater length. He in fact is eloquent who can discuss commonplace matters simply, lofty subjects impressively, and topics ranging between in a tempered style. You will say, “There never was such a man.” I grant it; for I am arguing for my ideal, not what I have actually seen, and I return 101 to that Platonic Idea of which I had spoken; though we do not see it, still it is possible to grasp it with the mind. For it is not an eloquent *person* whom I seek, nor anything subject to death and decay, but that absolute quality, the possession of which makes a man eloquent. And this is nothing but abstract eloquence, which we can behold only with the mind’s eye. He, then, will be an eloquent speaker—to repeat my former definition—who can discuss trivial matters in a plain style, matters of moderate significance in the tempered style, and weighty affairs in the grand manner.

Longinus

fl. ca. 50 C.E.

“Longinus” is the name customarily given to the unknown author of *On the Sublime*. The text was long thought to have been written by Cassius Longinus, a noted literary critic and statesman of the third century C.E. But the text lacks any citations later than the first century C.E., and it treats Caecilius’s work *On Sublimity*, known to be a first century text, as contemporary; this, along with other items of internal evidence, has convinced scholars that it dates from the first century. The author is generally supposed to have been a Greek or Hellenized Jew who taught rhetoric to Roman clients such as the man to whom *On the Sublime* is addressed (also unidentified, but presumed to have been a real person).

Since *On the Sublime* is not mentioned in any classical sources, scholars believe that it may have been written for private circulation only, probably by a teacher for a pupil. It has survived only through medieval copies of a manuscript that was missing about one-third of its length (the lacunae are indicated in the text following). The earliest of these copies dates from the tenth century C.E. The text was little known until it was published in Basle by Francis Robertello in 1554, after which time it began to attract scholarly attention. The first English translation appeared in 1652, and a 1674 translation by the French literary critic Nicolas Boileau became widely known and launched the text on a career of far-ranging influence in European letters.

The influence of a rhetorician’s text on literary criticism may be explained in part by the fact that in classical times the study of literature was not divorced from the study of rhetoric. Although Aristotle distinguished sharply between rhetoric and poetic, most ancient students of literature did not follow his lead. They would have described themselves as rhetoricians, not as literary critics, and they went to literature to find material that could help their students—specifically, that could help them learn how to affect an audience as they desired. The rhetoricians studied history, philosophy, and oratory as well as poetry and drama because they considered any text that had deliberate designs on its audience as suitable for critical evaluation. Texts were evaluated not only on how well they accomplished their purpose technically, but also on whether their purpose was morally worthy—that is, whether their content was sound.

Many treatises of ancient criticism comprise mainly lists of tropes and figures illustrated by examples from literature and accompanied by vague, generalized moral judgments. *On the Sublime* follows this same basic pattern, but also departs from it in ways that have led scholars to praise it as the best written and most thoughtful of any ancient critical treatise. “Longinus” is able to link technical proficiency and a noble personal character in the study of the sublime because, he says, only a person who possesses both can produce great writing. Moreover, the audience’s character is almost as important as the artist’s. A text’s sublimity is not determined solely by the features of that text; it depends, too, on the effect on the audience, foremost among whom “Longinus” locates himself. His text is unusual for the moving and

convincing way in which it presents his own reactions to literature. His taste is evident in his willingness to forgo the usual exhaustive catalog of tropes and figures; he selects only those that bear on the topic of sublimity, and his choice of literary illustrations is particularly felicitous, focusing on the Greek authors Homer, Herodotus, Plato, and Demosthenes but also, surprisingly, bringing in Cicero and the Hebrew Bible. “Longinus” also avoids dryness by refusing to claim that the topic he is studying can be reduced to rules entirely. Although literary method can help the artist to produce the sublime, and the audience to appreciate it, the sensitivity born of long experience is the best guide for all.

The author of *On the Sublime*, then, closely resembles the ideal orator as described by Quintilian (the author’s possible contemporary), the Roman lawyer and rhetoric teacher in whom the classical rhetorical tradition culminates (see p. 359). This ideal orator is acutely alive to the subtleties of verbal effects, but sees these effects as dependent on the moral qualities of the artist and audience as much as on their taste in stylistic embellishments. It is as if “Longinus” is saying that the sublime can be produced only by the “good man speaking well” whom Quintilian seeks to mold: This person is not an unattainable ideal for “Longinus,” as he sometimes seems for Quintilian, but rather the necessary source of existing texts that do give their audiences the experience of the sublime. This superlative rhetorician answers the objections of Plato against rhetoric: His inherent morality, without which he would be unable to produce such fine effects, also prevents him from using these effects to evil purposes.

There remains the problem of how to define the “sublime.” “Longinus” sees it as a quality that has a powerful emotional impact on its audience or, more specifically, an impact that awakens the audience members to their “higher natures.” At the same time, this impact cannot be securely tied to any stylistic features. Classical rhetoric by the Roman period typically divided style into three types: grand, middle, and plain, according to the elaboration and formality of their language. The grand style, the most elaborate and formal, was generally associated with the most serious and elevated subjects—literary tragedy, impassioned forensic oratory, important political decisions, and the like. One might suppose the grand style to have the most powerful emotional impact on its audience and therefore to be the most likely vehicle of sublimity. So “Longinus” indeed presents it—most of his examples display the grand style—but he is at pains to show that sublimity may also be conveyed by less elaborate and formal styles in contexts where simplicity is more appropriate, so long as the thoughts expressed elevated the audience. Scholars have debated a more precise definition of sublimity in “Longinus” without arriving at a consensus; some prefer to define his topic as “great writing,” feeling that this phrase includes more of his true scope.

On the Sublime achieved its greatest influence in the eighteenth century, since it satisfied both the neoclassical interest in stylistic analysis and the proto-romantic desire for more personal and emotional elements in the creation and appreciation of literature. Literary critic and biographer W. Jackson Bate has said that “Longinus,” more than any other critic ancient or modern, “served as a source of authoritative encouragement in the great shift in critical approach and

values that was to culminate in European romanticism.”¹ His influence waned in the nineteenth century, perhaps because this shift had been accomplished and European countries were now producing their own critics who reflected “Longinian” sensibilities—such as Matthew Arnold, with whom “Longinus’s” translator W. Rhys Roberts compares him.² Interest revived again and has held steady in the twentieth century because of *On the Sublime*’s important place in the history of literary criticism. The text is also an important example of the fusion of stylistic and moral concerns that rhetoric has striven for in response to the criticisms of Plato.

Selected Bibliography

Our text is the translation of D. A. Russell, *Longinus on Sublimity*, published separately in 1964 and in the collection *Ancient Literary Criticism: The Principal Texts*, ed. D. A. Russell and M. Winterbottom (1972). The translation by W. Rhys Roberts, *Longinus on the Sublime* (1899, 1907), provides an extensive introductory survey of the issues involved in assigning an author and date to this text, as well as helpful notes. G. M. A. Grube’s translation, *On Great Writing (On the Sublime)* (1957), includes an introduction that is especially readable for beginning students.

A longer version of Grube’s introductory essay on “Longinus” appears as a chapter in his *Greek and Roman Critics* (1965). Russell frequently refers to “Longinus” and places him in his classical context in *Criticism in Antiquity* (1981). W. Jackson Bate discusses “Longinus” in *Criticism: The Major Texts* (1952, enlarged ed. 1970). For the influence of “Longinus” on European literature, see T. R. Henn, *Longinus and English Criticism* (1934); S. H. Monk, *The Sublime: A Study of Critical Theories in Eighteenth-Century England* (1935); Jules Brody, *Boileau and Longinus* (1958); and Paul H. Fry, *The Reach of Criticism: Method and Perception in Literary Theory* (1983).

¹W. Jackson Bate, “Longinus,” in *Criticism: The Major Texts* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1952; enlarged ed. 1970), p. 62.

²W. Rhys Roberts, *Longinus on the Sublime* (Cambridge, Great Britain: Cambridge University Press, 1899, 1907), p. viii.

From *On the Sublime*

1.1 My dear Postumius Terentianus,
You will recall that when we were reading together Caecilius’ monograph *On Sublimity*, we felt that it was inadequate to its high subject, and failed to touch the essential points. Nor indeed did it appear to offer the reader much practical help, though this ought to be a writer’s

Translated by D. A. Russell.

principal object. Two things are required of any textbook: first, that it should explain what its subject is; second, and more important, that it should explain how and by what methods we can achieve it. Caecilius tries at immense length to explain to us what sort of thing “the sublime” is, as though we did not know; but he has somehow passed over as unnecessary the question how we can develop our nature to some degree of great-

ness. However, we ought perhaps not so much to blame our author for what he has left out as to commend him for his originality and enthusiasm.

You have urged me to set down a few notes on sublimity for your own use. Let us then consider whether there is anything in my observations which may be thought useful to public men. You must help me, my friend, by giving your honest opinion in detail, as both your natural candour and your friendship with me require. It was well said that what man has in common with the gods is “doing good and telling the truth.”

3 Your education dispenses me from any long preliminary definition. Sublimity is a kind of eminence or excellence of discourse. It is the source of the distinction of the very greatest poets and
4 prose writers and the means by which they have given eternal life to their own fame. For grandeur produces ecstasy rather than persuasion in the hearer; and the combination of wonder and astonishment always proves superior to the merely persuasive and pleasant. This is because persuasion is on the whole something we can control, whereas amazement and wonder exert invincible power and force and get the better of every hearer. Experience in invention and ability to order and arrange material cannot be detected in single passages; we begin to appreciate them only when we see the whole context. Sublimity, on the other hand, produced at the right moment, tears everything up like a whirlwind, and exhibits the orator’s whole power at a single blow.

2. 1 Your own experience will lead you to these and similar considerations. The question from which I must begin is whether there is in fact an art of sublimity or profundity.¹ Some people think it is a complete mistake to reduce things like this to technical rules. Greatness, the argument runs, is a natural product, and does not come by teaching. The only art is to be born like that. They believe moreover that natural products are very much weakened by being reduced to the bare bones of a textbook.

¹This is to translate *bathous*. The simple, eighteenth-century emendation *pathous* means “emotion.” Boileau omits the word. The English word “bathos” seems to have acquired its meaning from a misunderstanding of this passage; see Pope’s *Peri Bathous or on the Art of Sinking* (1728). [Tr.]

In my view, these arguments can be refuted by 2 considering three points:

- (i) Though nature is on the whole a law unto herself in matters of emotion and elevation, she is not a random force and does not work altogether without method.
- (ii) She is herself in every instance a first and primary element of creation, but it is method that is competent to provide and contribute quantities and appropriate occasions for everything, as well as perfect correctness in training and application.
- (iii) Grandeur is particularly dangerous when left on its own, unaccompanied by knowledge, unsteadied, unballasted, abandoned to mere impulse and ignorant temerity. It often needs the curb as well as the spur.

What Demosthenes² said of life in general is 3 true also of literature: good fortune is the greatest of blessings, but good counsel comes next, and the lack of it destroys the other also. In literature, nature occupies the place of good fortune, and art that of good counsel. Most important of all, the very fact that some things in literature depend on nature alone can itself be learned only from art.

If the critic of students of this subject will bear these points in mind, he will, I believe, come to realize that the examination of the question before us is by no means useless or superfluous.

[Lacuna equivalent to about two of these printed pages]

Faults incident to the effort to achieve sublimity: turgidity, puerility, false emotion, frigidity.

... restrain the oven’s mighty glow.
For if I see but one beside his hearth,
I’ll thrust in just one tentacle of storm,
and fire his roof and turn it all to cinders.
I’ve not yet sung my proper song.³

3. 1

²*Oration* 23. 113. [Tr.]

³Aeschylus, fr. 281 Nauck. The speaker is Boreas, the North Wind, who is enraged with King Erechtheus of Athens because he will not give him his daughter Orithyia. As the passage is incomplete, the point of the critical comment is lost. [Tr.]

This is not tragedy; it is a parody of the tragic manner—tentacles, vomiting to heaven, making Boreas a flute-player, and so on. The result is not impressiveness but turbid diction and confused imagery. If you examine the details closely, they gradually sink from the terrifying to the contemptible.

Now if untimely turgidity is unpardonable in tragedy, a genre which is naturally magniloquent and tolerant of bombast, it will scarcely be appropriate in writing which has to do with real life. Hence the ridicule attaching to Gorgias of Leontini's "Xerxes, the Persians' Zeus" and "their living tombs, the vultures," or to various things in Callisthenes, where he has not so much risen to heights as been carried off his feet. Clitarchus is an even more striking example; he is an inflated writer, and, as Sophocles has it,

blows at his tiny flute, the mouth-band off.⁴

Amphicrates, Hegesias, Matris—they are all the same. They often fancy themselves possessed when they are merely playing the fool.

Turgidity is a particularly hard fault to avoid, for it is one to which all who aim at greatness naturally incline, because they seek to escape the charge of weakness and aridity. They act on the principle that "to slip from a great prize is yet a noble fault." In literature as in the body, puffy and false tumours are bad, and may well bring us to the opposite result from that which we expected. As the saying goes, there is nothing so dry as a man with dropsy.

While turgidity is an endeavour to go above the sublime, puerility⁵ is the sheer opposite of greatness; it is a thoroughly low, mean, and ignoble vice. What do I mean by "puerility"? A pedantic thought, so over-worked that it ends in frigidity. Writers slip into it through aiming at originality, artifice, and (above all) charm, and then coming to grief on the rocks of tawdriness and affectation.

A third kind of fault—what Theodorus called "the pseudo-bacchanalian"—corresponds to these in the field of emotion. It consists of untimely or

⁴Fr. 701 Nauck. [Tr.]

⁵The context shows what is meant: the shallow pedantry of the immature. [Tr.]

meaningless emotion where none is in place, or immoderate emotion where moderate is in place. Some people often get carried away, like drunkards, into emotions unconnected with the subject, which are simply their own pedantic invention. The audience feels nothing, so that they inevitably make an exhibition of themselves, parading their ecstasies before an audience which does not share them.

But I reserve the subject of emotion for another place,⁶ returning meanwhile to the second fault of those I mentioned: frigidity. This is a constant feature in Timaeus, who is in many ways a competent writer, not without the capacity for greatness on occasion, learned and original, but as unconscious of his own faults as he is censorious of others', and often falling into the grossest childishness through his passion for always starting exotic ideas. I will give one or two examples; Caecilius has already cited most of those available.

(i) In praise of Alexander the Great, Timaeus writes: "He conquered all Asia in fewer years than it took Isocrates to write the *Panegyricus* to advocate the Persian war." What a splendid comparison this is—the Macedonian king and the sophist! On the same principle, the Lacedaemonians were very much less brave than Isocrates: it took them thirty years to capture Messene,⁷ whereas he took only ten to write the *Panegyricus*!

(ii) Listen also to Timaeus' comment on the Athenians captured in Sicily. "They were punished for their impiety to Hermes and mutilation of his statues, and the main agent of their punishment was one who had a family connection with their victim, Hermocrates the son of Hermon."⁸ I cannot help wondering, my dear Terentianus, why he does not also write about the Tyrant

⁶Presumably in the lost passage. [Tr.]

⁷In the eighth century B.C. Our other sources make this war last twenty years; we do not know the source of the variant (assuming the text to be correct). [Tr.]

⁸The disastrous Athenian expedition against Syracuse (415–413 B.C.) had been preceded by a mysterious incident at Athens, in which the "Hermae" in the city were mutilated one night. [Tr.]

Dionysius, “because he was impious towards Zeus and Heracles, Dion and Heracles robbed him of his throne.”⁹

4 But why speak of Timaeus, when those heroes of letters, Xenophon and Plato, for all that they were trained in Socrates’ school, forget themselves sometimes for the sake of similar petty pleasures? Thus Xenophon writes in *The Constitution of the Lacedaemonians*: “You could hear their voice less than the voice of stone statues, you could distract their eyes less than the eye of bronze images; you would think them more bashful than the very maidens in the eyes.”¹⁰ It would have been more in keeping with Amphicrates’ manner than Xenophon’s to speak of the pupils of our eyes as bashful maidens. And what an absurd misconception to think of everybody’s pupils as bashful! The shamelessness of a person, we are told, appears nowhere so plainly as in the eyes. Remember the words Achilles uses to revile Agamemnon’s violent temper: “Drunken sot, with a dog’s eyes!”¹¹ Timaeus, unable to keep his hands off stolen property, as it were, has not left the monopoly of this frigid conceit to Xenophon. He uses it in connection with Agathocles, who eloped with his cousin from the unveiling ceremony of her marriage to another: “Who would have done this, if he had not had harlots in his eyes for pupils (*koras*)?”¹²

6 And what of Plato, the otherwise divine Plato? He wants to express the idea of writing-tablets. “They shall write,” he says, “and deposit in the temples of memorials of cypress.”¹³ Again: “As for walls, Meguilles, I should concur with Sparta in letting walls sleep in the earth and not get up.”¹⁴ Herodotus’ description¹⁵ of beautiful

⁹Dionysius II, expelled in 356. The name Dion is etymologically connected with Zeus (accusative *Dia*, genitive *Dios*). [Tr.]

¹⁰The word *korē* means both “girl” and “pupil”; Xenophon replaces it by *parthenos*, which means unambiguously “maiden.” [Tr.]

¹¹*Iliad* 1. 225. — The text of this sentence . . . is uncertain, but the general sense beyond doubt. [Tr.]

¹²Agathocles was ruler of Syracuse from 317 to 287. The “unveiling ceremony” was normally held on the third day after the marriage. [Tr.]

¹³*Laws* 741 c. [Tr.]

¹⁴*Laws* 778.d. [Tr.]

¹⁵Herodotus 5. 18. [Tr.]

women as “pains on the eyes” is the same sort of thing, though it is to some extent excused by the fact that the speakers are barbarians and drunk — not that it is a good thing to make an exhibition of the triviality of one’s mind to posterity, even through the mouths of characters like these.

All such lapses from dignity arise in literature through a single cause: that desire for novelty of thought which is all the rage today. Evils often come from the same source as blessings; and so, since beauty of style, sublimity, and charm all conduce to successful writing, they are also causes and principles not only of success but of failure. Variation, hyperbole, and the use of plural for singular are like this too; I shall explain below the dangers which they involve.¹⁶

Some marks of true sublimity.

At this stage, the question we must put to ourselves for discussion is how to avoid the faults which are so much tied up with sublimity. The answer, my friend, is: by first of all achieving a genuine understanding and appreciation of true sublimity. This is difficult; literary judgement comes only as the final product of long experience. However, for the purposes of instruction, I think we can say that an understanding of all this can be acquired. I approach the problem in this way:

In ordinary life, nothing is truly great which it is great to despise; wealth, honour, reputation, absolute power — anything in short which has a lot of external trappings — can never seem supremely good to the wise man because it is no small good to despise them. People who could have these advantages if they chose but disdain them out of magnanimity are admired much more than those who actually possess them.¹⁷ It is much the same with elevation in poetry and literature generally. We have to ask ourselves whether any particular example does not give a show of grandeur which, for all its accidental trappings, will, when dissected, prove vain and hollow, the kind of thing which it does a man

¹⁶See chaps. 23 and 38. [Tr.]

¹⁷Compare Aristotle’s “magnanimous man”: *Nicomachean Ethics* 4. 3. [Tr.]

2 more honour to despise than to admire. It is our nature to be elevated and exalted by true sublimity. Filled with joy and pride, we come to believe we have created what we have only heard. When a man of sense and literary experience hears something many times over, and it fails to dispose his mind to greatness or to leave him with more to reflect upon than was contained in the mere words, but comes instead to seem valueless on repeated inspection, this is not true sublimity; it endures only for the moment of hearing. Real sublimity contains much food for reflection, is difficult or rather impossible to resist, and makes a strong and ineffaceable impression on the memory. In a word, reckon those things which please everybody all the time as genuinely and finely sublime. When people of different trainings, ways of life, tastes, ages, and manners all agree about something, the judgement and assent of so many distinct voices lends strength and irrefutability to the conviction that their admiration is rightly directed.

The five sources of sublimity; the plan of the book.

- 8.1 There are, one may say, five most productive sources of sublimity. (Competence in speaking is assumed as a common foundation for all five; nothing is possible without it.)
- (i) The first and most important is the power to conceive great thoughts; I defined this in my work on Xenophon.
 - (ii) The second is strong and inspired emotion. (These two sources are for the most part natural; the remaining three involve art.)
 - (iii) Certain kinds of figures. (These may be divided into figures of thought and figures of speech.)
 - (iv) Noble diction. This has as subdivisions choice of words and the use of metaphorical and artificial language.¹⁸
 - (v) Finally, to round off the whole list, dignified and elevated word-arrangement.

2 Let us now examine the points which come under each of these heads.

I must first observe, however, that Caecilius

¹⁸Or "and coined words." [Tr.]

has omitted some of the five—emotion, for example. Now if he thought that sublimity and emotion were one and the same thing and always existed and developed together, he was wrong. Some emotions, such as pity, grief, and fear, are found divorced from sublimity and with a low effect. Conversely, sublimity often occurs apart from emotion. Of the innumerable examples of this I select Homer's bold account of the Aloadae:

Ossa upon Olympus they sought to heap; and on
Ossa
Pelion with its shaking forest, to make a path to
heaven—

and the even more impressive sequel—

and they would have finished their work . . . ¹⁹

In orators, encomia and ceremonial or exhibition pieces always involve grandeur and sublimity, though they are generally devoid of emotion. Hence those orators who are best at conveying emotion are least good at encomia, and conversely the experts at encomia are not conveyers of emotion. On the other hand, if Caecilius thought that emotion had no contribution to make to sublimity and therefore thought it not worth mentioning, he was again completely wrong. I should myself have no hesitation in saying that there is nothing so productive of grandeur as noble emotion in the right place. It inspires and possesses our words with a kind of madness and divine spirit.

(i) Greatness of thought.

The first source, natural greatness, is the most important. Even if it is a matter of endowment rather than acquisition, we must, so far as is possible, develop our minds in the direction of greatness and make them always pregnant with noble thoughts. You ask how this can be done. I wrote elsewhere something like this: "Sublimity is the echo of a noble mind." This is why a mere idea, without verbal expression, is sometimes admired for its nobility—just as Ajax's silence in the Vision of the Dead is grand and indeed more sub-

¹⁹*Odyssey* II. 315–17. [Tr.]

lime than any words could have been.²⁰ First
3 then we must state where sublimity comes from:
the orator must not have low or ignoble thoughts.
Those whose thoughts and habits are trivial and
servile all their lives cannot possibly produce
anything admirable or worthy of eternity. Words
will be great if thoughts are weighty. This is why
splendid remarks come naturally to the proud;
4 the man who, when Parmenio said, "I should
have been content" . . .²¹

[Lacuna equivalent to about six pages.]

*Successful and unsuccessful ways of representing
supernatural beings and of exciting awe.*

5 . . . the interval between earth and heaven. One
might say that this is the measure not so much of
Strife as of Homer.²²

Contrast the line about Darkness in Hesiod—
if the *Shield* is by Hesiod:

Mucus dripped from her nostrils.²³

This gives a repulsive picture, not one to excite
awe. But how does Homer magnify this divine
power?

As far as a man can peer through the mist,
sitting on watch, looking over the wine-dark sea,
so long is the stride of the gods' thundering horses.²⁴

He uses a cosmic distance to measure their speed.
This enormously impressive image would make
anybody say, and with reason, that, if the horses
of the gods took two strides like that, they would
find there was not enough room in the world.

6 The imaginative pictures in the *Battle of the
Gods* are also very remarkable:

²⁰*Odyssey* 11. 563. Note that this is not an example, but a
simile illustrating the point that ideas in themselves can be
grand. [Tr.]

²¹Parmenio said to Alexander that if he were Alexander
he would be content, and would not go on fighting. "So would
I, if I were Parmenio," replied Alexander. [Tr.]

²²The reference is to *Iliad* 4. 440 ff., where Strife is de-
scribed as having her head in the sky and walking on the
earth. "Longinus" means that Homer too is a colossus of cos-
mic dimensions. [Tr.]

²³*Shield of Heracles* 267. [Tr.]

²⁴*Iliad* 5. 770-2. [Tr.]

And the great heavens and Olympus trumpeted
around them.
Aidoneus, lord of the dead, was frightened in his
depths;
and in fright he jumped from his throne, and shouted,
for fear the earth-shaker Poseidon might break
through the ground,
and gods and men might see
the foul and terrible halls, which even the gods de-
test.²⁵

Do you see how the earth is torn from its founda-
tions, Tartarus laid bare, and the whole universe
overthrown and broken up, so that all things—
Heaven and Hell, things mortal and things im-
mortal—share the warfare and the perils of that
ancient battle? But, terrifying as all this is, it is
blasphemous and indecent unless it is interpreted
allegorically; in relating the gods' wounds, quar-
rels, revenges, tears, imprisonments, and mani-
fold misfortunes, Homer, or so it seems to me,
has done his best to make the men of the Trojan
war gods, and the gods men. If men are unhappy,
there is always death as a harbour in trouble;
what he has done for his gods is to make them
immortal indeed, but immortally miserable.

Much better than the *Battle of the Gods* are
8 the passages which represent divinity as genu-
inely unsoiled and great and pure. The lines
about Poseidon, much discussed by my predeces-
sors, exemplify this:

The high hills and the forest trembled,
and the peaks and the city of Troy and the Achaean
ships
under the immortal feet of Poseidon as he went his
way.
He drove over the waves, and the sea-monsters
gambolled around him,
coming up everywhere out of the deep; they recog-
nized their king.
The sea parted in joy; and the horses flew onward.²⁶

Similarly, the lawgiver of the Jews,²⁷ no ordi-
9 nary man—for he understood and expressed

²⁵See *Iliad* 21. 388 and 20. 61 ff. [Tr.]

²⁶See *Iliad* 13. 18 ff., and 20. 60. [Tr.]

²⁷"The lawgiver of the Jews": This is Moses, traditionally
supposed to be the author of the first five books of the Bible,
which comprise the Torah of Jewish law. "Longinus's" refer-

God's power in accordance with its worth— writes at the beginning of his *Laws*: "God said"—now what?—"Let there be light,' and there was light; 'Let there be earth,' and there was earth."²⁸

10 Perhaps it will not be out of place, my friend, if I add a further Homeric example—from the human sphere this time—so that we can see how the poet is accustomed to enter into the greatness of his heroes. Darkness falls suddenly. Thickest night blinds the Greek army. Ajax is bewildered. "O Father Zeus!" he cries,

"Deliver the sons of the Achaeans out of the mist, make the sky clear, and let us see; in the light—kill us."²⁹

The feeling here is genuinely Ajax's. He does not pray for life—that would be a request unworthy of a hero—but having no good use for his courage in the disabling darkness, and so angered at his inactivity in the battle, he prays for light, and quickly: he will at all costs find a shroud worthy of his valour, though Zeus be arrayed against him.

Comparison between the Iliad and the Odyssey.

11 In this passage, the gale of battle blows hard in Homer; he

Rages like Ares, spear-brandishing, or the deadly fire
raging in the mountains, in the thickets of the deep wood.
Foam shows at his mouth.³⁰

ence to Jewish scripture is unique among non-Christian classical writers, a fact that has given rise to much scholarly speculation, summarized in Roberts. Although some scholars believe that the reference is a later Christian interpolation, the accepted opinion is that "Longinus" was a Hellenized Jew (Jewish by religion, Greek by culture), or that he lifted the reference from Caecilius, known to be Jewish, or that, as an exceptionally well-educated man, he was familiar with the Jewish texts entering the larger Roman world in the first century. [Ed.]

²⁸Controversy about the genuineness of this reference to Genesis I has raged since the eighteenth century. For the influence of the reference on literary taste, see S. H. Monk, *The Sublime*, 33. [Tr.]

²⁹*Iliad* 17. 645 ff. [Tr.]

³⁰From *Iliad* 15. 605 ff. [Tr.]

In the *Odyssey*, on the other hand—and there are many reasons for adding this to our inquiry—he demonstrates that when a great mind begins to decline, a love of story-telling characterizes its old age. We can tell that the *Odyssey* was his second work from various considerations, in particular from his insertion of the residue of the Trojan troubles in the poem in the form of episodes, and from the way in which he pays tribute of lamentation and pity to the heroes, treating them as persons long known. The *Odyssey* is simply an epilogue to the *Iliad*:

There lies warlike Ajax, there Achilles,
there Patroclus, the gods' peer as a counsellor,
and there my own dear son.³¹

For the same reason, I maintain, he made the whole body of the *Iliad*, which was written at the height of his powers, dramatic and exciting, whereas most of the *Odyssey* consists of narrative, which is a characteristic of old age. Homer in the *Odyssey* may be compared to the setting sun: the size remains without the force. He no longer sustains the tension as it was in the tale of Troy, nor that consistent level of elevation which never admitted any falling off. The outpouring of passions crowding one on another has gone; so has the versatility, the realism, the abundance of imagery taken from the life. We see greatness on the ebb. It is as though the Ocean were withdrawing into itself and flowing quietly in its own bed. Homer is lost in the realm of the fabulous and incredible. In saying this, I have not forgotten the storms in the *Odyssey*, the story of Cyclops, and a few other episodes; I am speaking of old age—but it is the old age of a Homer. The point about all these stories is that the mythical element in them predominates over the realistic.

I digressed into this topic, as I said, to illustrate how easy it is for great genius to be perverted in decline into nonsense. I mean things like the story of the wineskin, the tale of the men kept as pigs in Circe's palace ("howling piglets," Zoilus called them), the feeding of Zeus by the doves (as though he were a chick in the nest), the ten days on the raft without food, and the im-

³¹Spoken by Nestor, *Odyssey* 3. 109 ff. [Tr.]

probabilities of the murder of the suitors.³² What can we say of all this but that it really is “the dreaming of a Zeus”?³³

15 There is also a second reason for discussing the *Odyssey*. I want you to understand that the decline of emotional power in great writers and poets turns to a capacity for depicting manners. The realistic description of Odysseus’ household forms a kind of comedy of manners.

Selection and organization of material.

0. 1 Now have we any other means of making our writing sublime? Every topic naturally includes certain elements which are inherent in its raw material. It follows that sublimity will be achieved if we consistently select the most important of these inherent features and learn to organize them as a unity by combining one with another. The first of these procedures attracts the reader by the selection of details, the second by the density of those selected.

Consider Sappho’s treatment of the feelings involved in the madness of being in love. She uses the attendant circumstances and draws on real life at every point. And in what does she show her quality? In her skill in selecting the outstanding details and making a unity of them:

2 To me he seems a peer of the gods, the man who sits facing you and hears your sweet voice and lovely laughter; it flutters my heart in my breast. When I see you only for a moment, I cannot speak; my tongue is broken, a subtle fire runs under my skin; my eyes cannot see, my ears hum; cold sweat pours off me; shivering grips me all over; I am paler than grass; I seem near to dying; but all must be endured . . .³⁴

3 Do you not admire the way in which she brings everything together—mind and body, hearing

³²For these various stories, see *Odyssey* 10. 17 ff., 10. 237 ff., 12. 447 ff., 22. 79 ff. [Tr.]

³³Sense uncertain. Possibly the text is corrupt. “A sick man’s dream” has been suggested: cf. Horace, *The Art of Poetry*, above, p. 279. [Tr.]

³⁴See D. L. Page, *Sappho and Alcaeus*, Oxford, 1955, chap. 2, for this poem (= Sappho, fragment 31). Eighteenth-century translation by Ambrose Phillips, *Spectator* 229, with criticism by Addison; Romantic translation by W. Headlam, *Oxford Book of Greek Verse in Translation*, no. 141; recent version by Richmond Lattimore, *Greek Lyrics*, 2nd edn., Chicago, 1960, p. 39. [Tr.]

and tongue, eyes and skin? She seems to have lost them all, and to be looking for them as though they were external to her. She is cold and hot, mad and sane, frightened and near death, all by turns. The result is that we see in her not a single emotion, but a complex of emotions. Lovers experience all this; Sappho’s excellence, as I have said, lies in her adoption and combination of the most striking details.

A similar point can be made about the descriptions of storms in Homer, who always picks out the most terrifying aspects. The author of the *Arimaspea* on the other hand expects these lines to excite terror:

This too is a great wonder to us in our hearts:
there are men living on water, far from land, on the deep sea:
miserable they are, for hard is their lot;
they give their eyes to the stars, their lives to the sea;
often they raise their hands in prayer to the gods,
as their bowels heave in pain.³⁵

Anyone can see that this is more polished than awe-inspiring. Now compare it with Homer (I select one example out of many):

He fell upon them as upon a swift ship falls a wave, huge, wind-reared by the clouds. The ship is curtained in foam, a hideous blast of wind roars in the sail. The sailors shudder in terror: they are carried away from under death, but only just.³⁶

Aratus³⁷ tried to transfer the same thought:

A little plank wards off Hades.

But this is smooth and unimpressive, not frightening. Moreover, by saying “a plank wards off Hades,” he has got rid of the danger. The plank *does* keep death away. Homer, on the other hand, does not banish the cause of fear at a stroke; he gives a vivid picture of men, one might almost say, facing death many times with every wave

³⁵From a lost poem attributed to Aristeas of Proconnesus, a prophet of Apollo said to have travelled in Siberia in the seventh century B.C. The lines perhaps express the surprised comment of innocent continentals, deep in Asia, on the tales they have heard about ships and seagoing. [Tr.]

³⁶*Ibid.* 15. 624 ff. [Tr.]

³⁷*Phaenomena* 299. [Tr.]

that comes. Notice also the forced combination of naturally uncompoundable prepositions: *hupek*, “from under.” Homer has tortured the words to correspond with the emotion of the moment, and expressed the emotion magnificently by thus crushing words together. He has in effect stamped the special character of the danger on the diction: “they are carried away from under death.”

7 Compare Archilochus on the shipwreck, and Demosthenes on the arrival of the news (“It was evening . . .”).³⁸

In short, one might say that these writers have taken only the very best pieces, polished them up and fitted them together. They have inserted nothing inflated, undignified, or pedantic. Such things ruin the whole effect, because they produce, as it were, gaps or crevices, and so spoil the impressive thoughts which have been built into a structure whose cohesion depends upon their mutual relations.³⁹

Amplification.

11.1 The quality called “amplification” is connected with those we have been considering. It is found when the facts or the issues at stake allow many starts and pauses in each section. You wheel up one impressive unit after another to give a series
2 of increasing importance. There are innumerable varieties of amplification:⁴⁰ it may be produced by commonplaces, by exaggeration or intensification or arguments, or by a build-up of action or emotion. The orator should realize, however, that none of these will have its full effect without sublimity. Passages expressing pity or disparagement are no doubt an exception; but in any other instance of amplification, if you take away the sublime element, you take the soul away from

³⁸The example from Archilochus cannot be certainly identified. That from Demosthenes (*On the Crown* 169) describes the alarm at Athens when news arrived of Philip’s occupation of Elatea (339 B.C.): “It was evening when somebody brought the *prutaneis* the news that Elatea was captured. Some of them got up in the middle of dinner and began to drive the traders from the stalls in the *agora* and burn the wicker hurdles. Others sent for the generals and gave instructions to the trumpeter. The town was full of uproar.” [Tr.]

³⁹Text uncertain in detail; general sense clear. [Tr.]

⁴⁰See Quint. 8. 4. [Tr.]

the body. Without the strengthening influence of the sublimity, the effective element in the whole loses all its vigor and solidity.

What is the difference between this precept and the point made above about the inclusion of vital details and their combination in a unity? What in general is the difference between amplification and sublimity? I must define my position briefly on these points, in order to make myself clear.

I do not feel satisfied with the definition given
12.1 by the rhetoricians: “amplification is expression which adds grandeur to its subject.” This might just as well be a definition of sublimity or emotion or tropes. All these add grandeur of some kind. The difference lies, in my opinion, in the fact that sublimity depends on elevation, whereas amplification involves extension; sublimity exists often in a single thought, amplification cannot exist without a certain quantity and superfluity. To give a general definition, amplification is an
2 aggregation of all the details and topics which constitute a situation, strengthening the argument by dwelling on it; it differs from proof in that the latter demonstrates the point made . . .

[Lacuna equivalent to about two pages.]

Same general subject continued:

A comparison between Plato and Demosthenes, with a word on Cicero.

. . . spreads out richly in many directions into an open sea of grandeur. Accordingly, Demosthenes, the more emotional of the two, displays in abundance the fire and heat of passion, while Plato, consistently magnificent, solemn, and grand, is much less intense—without of course becoming in the least frigid. These seem to me,
3 my dear Terentianus—if a Greek is allowed an opinion—to be also the differences between the grandeur of Cicero and the grandeur of Demosthenes. Demosthenes has an abrupt sublimity; Cicero spreads himself. Demosthenes burns and ravages; he has violence, rapidity, strength, and force, and shows them in everything; he can be compared to a thunderbolt or a flash of lightning. Cicero, on the other hand, is like a spreading conflagration. He ranges everywhere and rolls majestically on. His huge fires endure; they are re-

newed in various forms from time to time and repeatedly fed with fresh fuel.—But this is a comparison which your countrymen can make better than I.

Anyway, the place for the intense, Demosthenic kind of sublimity is in indignant exaggeration, in violent emotion, and in general wherever the hearer has to be struck with amazement. The place for expansiveness is where he has to be deluged with words. This treatment is appropriate in *loci communes*, epilogues, digressions, all descriptive and exhibition pieces, historical or scientific topics, and many other departments.

To return to Plato, and the way in which he combines the “soundless flow”⁴¹ of his smooth style with grandeur. A passage of the *Republic*⁴² you have read makes the manner quite clear: “Men without experience of wisdom and virtue but always occupied with feasting and that kind of thing naturally go downhill and wander through life on a low plane of existence. They never look upwards to the truth and never rise, they never taste certain or pure pleasure. Like cattle, they always look down, bowed earthwards and tablewards; they feed and they breed, and their greediness in these directions makes them kick and butt till they kill one another with iron horns and hooves, because they can never be satisfied.”

Imitation of earlier writers as a means to sublimity.

Plato, if we will read him with attention, illustrates yet another road to sublimity, besides those we have discussed. This is the way of imitation and emulation of great writers of the past. Here too, my friend, is an aim to which we must hold fast. Many are possessed by a spirit not their own. It is like what we are told of the Pythia at Delphi: she is in contact with the tripod near the cleft in the ground which (so they say) exhales a divine vapour, and she is thereupon made pregnant by the supernatural power and forthwith prophesies as one inspired. Similarly, the genius of the ancients acts as a kind of oracular cavern, and effluences flow from it into the minds of

⁴¹Plato, *Theaetetus* 144 b. [Tr.]

⁴²*Republic* 9. 586 a (adapted). [Tr.]

their imitators. Even those previously not much inclined to prophesy become inspired and share the enthusiasm which comes from the greatness of others. Was Herodotus the only “most Homeric” writer? Surely Stesichorus and Archilochus earned the name before him. So more than any, did Plato, who diverted to himself countless rills from the Homeric spring. (If Ammonius had not selected and written up detailed examples of this, I might have had to prove the point myself.) In all this process there is no plagiarism. It resembles rather the reproduction of good character in statues and works of art.⁴³ Plato could not have put such a brilliant finish on his philosophical doctrines or so often risen to poetical subjects and poetical language, if he had not tried, and tried wholeheartedly, to compete for the prize against Homer, like a young aspirant challenging an admired master. To break a lance in this way may well have been a brash and contentious thing to do, but the competition proved anything but valueless. As Hesiod says, “this strife is good for men.”⁴⁴ Truly it is a noble contest and prize of honour, and one well worth winning, in which to be defeated by one’s elders is itself no disgrace.

We can apply this to ourselves. When we are working on something which needs loftiness of expression and greatness of thought, it is good to imagine how Homer would have said the same thing, or how Plato or Demosthenes or (in history) Thucydides would have invested it with sublimity. These great figures, presented to us as objects of emulation and, as it were, shining before our gaze, will somehow elevate our minds to the greatness of which we form a mental image. They will be even more effective if we ask ourselves “How would Homer or Demosthenes have reacted to what I am saying, if he had been here? What would his feelings have been?” It makes it a great occasion if you imagine such a jury or audience for your own speech, and pretend that you are answering for what you write before judges and witnesses of such heroic stature. Even more stimulating is the further thought: “How will

⁴³Text uncertain: perhaps “the reproduction of beauty of form . . .” [Tr.]

⁴⁴*Works and Days* 24: healthy rivalry contrasted with the strife that produces war. [Tr.]

posterity take what I am writing?" If a man is afraid of saying anything which will outlast his own life and age, the conceptions of his mind are bound to be incomplete and abortive; they will miscarry and never be brought to birth whole and perfect for the day of posthumous fame.

Visualization (phantasia).

- 15.1 Another thing which is extremely productive of grandeur, magnificence and urgency, my young friend, is visualization (*phantasia*). I use this word for what some people call image-production. The term *phantasia* is used generally for anything which in any way suggests a thought productive of speech;⁴⁵ but the word has also come into fashion for the situation in which enthusiasm and emotion make the speaker *see* what he is saying and bring it *visually* before his audience. It will not escape you that rhetorical visualization has a different intention from that of the poets: in poetry the aim is astonishment, in oratory it is clarity. Both, however, seek emotion and excitement.

Mother, I beg you, do not drive them at me,
the women with the blood in their eyes and the
snakes —
they are here, they are here, jumping right up to me.⁴⁶

Or again:

O! O! She'll kill me. Where shall I escape?⁴⁷

The poet himself saw the Erinyes, and has as good as made his audience see what he imagined.

- 3 Now Euripides devotes most pains to producing a tragic effect with two emotions, madness and love. In these he is supremely successful. At the same time, he does not lack the courage to attempt other types of visualization. Though not formed by nature for grandeur, he often forces himself to be tragic. When the moment for greatness comes, he (in Homer's words)

whips flank and buttocks with his tail
and drives himself to fight.⁴⁸

⁴⁵A Stoic definition. [Tr.]

⁴⁶Euripides, *Orestes* 255–7. Orestes sees the Furies. [Tr.]

⁴⁷Euripides, *Iphigenia in Tauris* 291. Again Orestes and the Furies. [Tr.]

⁴⁸*Iliad* 20. 170. [Tr.]

For example, here is Helios handing the reins to Phaethon:⁴⁹

"Drive on, but do not enter Libyan air —
it has no moisture in it, and will let
your wheel fall through —"

and again:

"Steer towards the seven Pleiads."
The boy listened so far, then seized the reins,
whipped up the winged team, and let them go.
To heaven's expanse they flew.
His father rode behind on Sirius,
giving the boy advice: "That's your way, there:
turn here — turn here."

May one not say that the writer's soul has mounted the chariot, has taken wing with the horses and shares the danger? Had it not been up among those heavenly bodies and moved in their courses, he could never have visualized such things.

Compare, too, his Cassandra:

Ye Trojans, lovers of horses . . .⁵⁰

Aeschylus, of course, ventures on the most heroic visualizations; he is like his own Seven against Thebes —

Seven men of war, commanders of companies,
killing a bull into a black-bound shield,
dipping their hands in the bull's blood,
took oath by Ares, by Enyo, by bloodthirsty
Terror —

in a joint pledge of death in which they showed themselves no mercy. At the same time, he does sometimes leave his thoughts unworked, tangled and hard. The ambitious Euripides does not shirk even these risks. For example, there is in Aeschylus a remarkable description of the palace of Lycurgus in its divine seizure at the moment of Dionysus' epiphany:

⁴⁹Fr. 779 Nauck. Euripides' lost *Phaethon* told the story of Phaethon's marriage and how his mother Clymene revealed to him that Helios was his father; he then begs to be allowed to drive the sun's chariot, and disaster follows. The passages quoted are probably from a messenger's speech recounting Phaethon's fall. [Tr.]

⁵⁰Fr. 935 Nauck, perhaps from the *Alexandros*. As the context is lost, we do not know the point. Compare p. 473, n. 4 for a similar abridged quotation, where "Longinus" assumes his readers to know the context. [Tr.]

the palace was possessed, the house went bacchanal.

Euripides expresses the same thought less harshly:

the whole mountain went bacchanal with them.⁵¹

7 There is another magnificent visualization in Sophocles' account of Oedipus dying and giving himself burial to the accompaniment of a sign from heaven,⁵² and in the appearance of Achilles over his tomb at the departure of the Greek fleet.⁵³ Simonides has perhaps described this scene more vividly than anyone else; but it is impossible to quote everything.

8 The potential examples, as I said, have a quality of exaggeration which belongs to fable and goes far beyond credibility. In an orator's visualizations, on the other hand, it is the element of fact and truth which makes for success; when the content of the passage is poetical and fabulous and does not shrink from any impossibility, the result is a shocking and outrageous abnormality. This is what happens with the shock orators of our own day; like tragic actors, these fine fellows see the Erinyes, and are incapable of understanding that when Orestes says

Let me go; you are one of my Erinyes,
you are hugging me tight, to throw me into Hell,⁵⁴

he visualizes all this *because he is mad*.

9 What then is the effect of rhetorical visualization? There is much it can do to bring urgency and passion into our words; but it is when it is closely involved with factual arguments that it enslaves the hearer as well as persuading him. "Suppose you heard a shout this very moment outside the court, and someone said that the prison had been broken open and the prisoners had escaped—no one, young or old, would be so casual as not to give what help he could. And if someone then came forward and said 'This is the man who let them out,' our friend would never

⁵¹Aeschylus, fr. 58 Nauck; Euripides, *Bacchae* 726. Euripides makes the idea easier by adding the notion that the mountain *shared* the ecstasy of the bacchanals themselves. [Tr.]

⁵²Closing scene of *Oedipus Coloneus*. [Tr.]

⁵³Probably in the lost *Polyxena*. It is possible that something is lost between this sentence and the reference to Simonides. [Tr.]

⁵⁴Euripides, *Orestes* 264–5. [Tr.]

get a hearing; it would be the end of him."⁵⁵ There is a similar instance in Hyperides' defence of himself when he was on trial for the proposal to liberate the slaves which he put forward after the defeat.⁵⁶ "It was not the proposer," he said, "who drew up this decree: it was the battle of Chaeronea." Here the orator uses a visualization actually in the moment of making his factual argument, with the result that his thought has taken him beyond the limits of mere persuasiveness. Now our natural instinct is, in all such cases, to attend to the stronger influence, so that we are diverted from the demonstration to the astonishment caused by the visualization, which by its very brilliance conceals the factual aspect. This is a natural reaction: when two things are joined together, the stronger attracts to itself the force of the weaker.

This will suffice for an account of sublimity of thought produced by greatness of mind, imitation, or visualization.⁵⁷

(iii) *Figures*:⁵⁸ an example to illustrate the right use of figures: the "oath" in "on the crown."

The next topic is that of figures. Properly handled, figures constitute, as I said, no small part of sublimity. It would be a vast, or rather infinite, labour to enumerate them all; what I shall do is to expound a few of those which generate sublimity, simply in order to confirm my point.

Here is Demosthenes putting forward a demonstrative argument on behalf of his policy.⁵⁹ What would have been the natural way to put it? "You have not done wrong, you who fought for the liberty of Greece; you have examples to prove this close at home: the men of Marathon, of Salamis, of Plataea did not do wrong." But instead of this he was suddenly inspired to give voice to the oath by the heroes of Greece: "By those who risked their lives at

⁵⁵Demosthenes 24. 208. [Tr.]

⁵⁶I.e. after Philip's victory at Chaeronea (338 B.C.). The speech is not extant. [Tr.]

⁵⁷Note that this is not a complete summary of chaps. 9–15. [Tr.]

⁵⁸The second "source," emotion, does not appear in its expected place: see p. 460. [Tr.]

⁵⁹The passage discussed is in 18. 208. Cf. below, p. 575. [Tr.]

Marathon, you have not done wrong!" Observe what he effects by this single figure of conjuration, or "apostrophe" as I call it here. He defies his audience's ancestors, suggesting that it is right to take an oath by men who fell so bravely, as though they were gods. He inspires the judges with the temper of those who risked their lives. He transforms his demonstration into an extraordinary piece of sublimity and passion, and into the convincingness of this unusual and amazing oath. At the same time he injects into his hearers' minds a healing specific, so as to lighten their hearts by these paeans of praise and make them as proud of the battle with Philip as of the triumphs of Marathon and Salamis. In short, the figure enables him to run away with his audience.

3 Now the origin of this oath is said to be in the lines of Eupolis:

By Marathon, by *my* battle,
no one shall grieve me and escape rejoicing.⁶⁰

But the greatness depends not on the mere form of the oath, but on place, manner, occasion, and purpose. In Eupolis, there is nothing but the oath; he is speaking to the Athenians while their fortunes are still high and they need no comfort; and instead of immortalizing the men in order to engender in the audience a proper estimation of their valour, he wanders away from the actual people who risked their lives to an inanimate object, namely the battle. In Demosthenes, on the other hand, the oath is addressed to a defeated nation, to make them no longer think of Chaeronea as a disaster. It embraces, as I said, a demonstration that they "did no wrong," an illustrative example, a confirmation, an encomium,
4 and an exhortation. Moreover, because he was faced with the possible objection "your policies brought us to defeat—and yet you swear by victories!" he brings his thought back under control and makes it safe and unanswerable, showing that sobriety is needed even under the influence of inspiration: "By those who *risked their lives* at Marathon, and *fought in the ships* at Salamis and Artemisium, and *formed the line* at Plataea!" He never says *conquered*; throughout he withholds the word for the final issue, because it was a

⁶⁰From the lost comedy *Demoi*. Eupolis parodies Euripides, *Medea* 395 ff. [Tr.]

happy issue, and the opposite to that of Chaeronea. From the same motives he forestalls his audience by adding immediately: "all of whom were buried at the city's expense, Aeschines—all, not only the successful."

The relation between figures and sublimity.

At this point, my friend, I feel I ought not to pass
17. over an observation of my own. It shall be very brief: figures are natural allies of sublimity and themselves profit wonderfully from the alliance. I will explain how this happens.

Playing tricks by means of figures is a peculiarly suspect procedure. It raises the suspicion of a trap, a deep design, a fallacy. It is to be avoided in addressing a judge who has power to decide, and especially in addressing tyrants, kings, governors, or anybody in a high place. Such a person immediately becomes angry if he is led astray like a foolish child by some skilful orator's figures. He takes the fallacy as indicating contempt for himself. He becomes like a wild animal. Even if he controls his temper, he is now completely conditioned against being convinced by what is said. A figure is therefore generally thought to be best when the fact that it is a figure is concealed.

Thus sublimity and emotion are a defence and a marvellous aid against the suspicion which the use of figures engenders. The artifice of the trick is lost to sight in the surrounding brilliance of beauty and grandeur, and it escapes all suspicion. "By the men of Marathon . . ." is proof enough. For how did Demosthenes conceal the figure in that passage? By sheer brilliance, of course. As fainter lights disappear when the sunshine surrounds them, so the sophisms of rhetoric are dimmed when they are enveloped in encircling grandeur. Something like this happens in painting: when light and shadow are juxtaposed in colours on the same plane, the light seems more prominent to the eye, and both stands out and actually appears much nearer. Similarly, in literature, emotional and sublime features seem closer to the mind's eye, both because of a certain natural kinship⁶¹ and because of their brilliance. Consequently, they always show up above the figures, and overshadow and eclipse their artifice.

⁶¹See below, chap. 35. [Tr.]

Quintilian

ca. 35–96 C.E.

Marcus Fabius Quintilian was born in the Roman province of Calagurris in Spain, probably to a well-to-do Spanish family that had obtained citizenship in the Empire. He was educated both in Roman schools in Spain and in Rome itself, where he studied rhetoric with the famous forensic orator and consul, Domitus Afer. Quintilian's background and training thus resemble Cicero's; however, he was a provincial, one of many who flocked to Rome in imperial times and enriched its culture. When Afer died, around 59 C.E., Quintilian returned to Spain to practice law and to teach rhetoric. He returned to Rome in 68 in the entourage of Galba, who was briefly emperor. There followed a year of great political upheaval in which two other men seized the throne before Vespasian established his reign. Somehow Quintilian avoided being swept away in Galba's downfall, and he began teaching rhetoric, for which he soon became renowned. Vespasian gave him the first imperial endowed chair in rhetoric in 71. During a teaching career of more than twenty years, Quintilian received other honors as well, and he instructed such illustrious pupils as the satirist Juvenal; Suetonius, and perhaps also Tacitus, historians who were also successful imperial administrators; Pliny the Younger, noted for his volumes of highly rhetorical letters; and young men from the imperial household. Apparently Quintilian taught only young men, and his writings address the education of men only. Of his few published works, the only one extant is the magisterial *Institutes of Oratory* (*Institutio Oratoria*), composed in the years following his retirement from teaching in 90 C.E. The work was published in 95. Quintilian's death date is uncertain but apparently followed shortly thereafter.

It is a commonplace of the history of rhetoric, one encouraged by contemporary commentators such as Tacitus,¹ that the Rome of Quintilian's day afforded no scope for the practice of rhetoric. Certainly, larger political issues came under close imperial scrutiny and censorship. It could be fatal to express views inimical to the emperor. But good forensic oratory and epideictic oratory were still needed; indeed, they needed to be rescued from the declamatory excesses that were fashionable in Rome. Vespasian associated the rhetorical display of the Second Sophistic with the corruption of previous emperors, which he was determined to reform. This may be one reason why he extended his patronage to Quintilian, who declared himself the enemy of rhetorical excesses. Quintilian published a condemnation, *On the Causes of Corruption in Oratory*, in about 85 C.E. (now lost), and he consistently called for a return to the good style of Cicero. Quintilian did teach declamation in his school, but he tried to prune its excesses and to better suit it for practical life.

Historians of rhetoric often compare Quintilian unfavorably with Cicero to demonstrate the decline of rhetoric under the emperors. Quintilian never claimed to

¹See Tacitus, *Dialogus de Oratoribus* (*Dialogue on Orators*), ca. 75 C.E., in Tacitus, *Agricola*, trans. M. Hutton, rev. R. M. Ogilvie; *Germania*, trans. M. Hutton, rev. E. H. Warmington; *Dialogus*, trans. W. Peterson, rev. M. Winterbottom; 2d ed. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970).

be Cicero's equal and frequently cites him as the greatest Latin master of eloquence. Born only about eighty years after Cicero's death, Quintilian found no scope for the kind of powerful political career Cicero pursued. He practiced oratory only in forensic speeches, and his *Institutes* devotes much more attention to the forensic than to any other kind of oratory. Some historians of rhetoric, if they do not share Tacitus's avowed cynicism about the retreat of rhetoric teachers like Quintilian to the classroom, do seem to take Quintilian somewhat less seriously than the other major classical rhetoricians because of his uninvolved in the admittedly tricky and treacherous political life of his day.

Along the same lines, the *Institutes* is often praised faintly as a masterful synthesis that adds little of importance to classical rhetorical theory. Quintilian almost seems to encourage us to view his work as derivative, for his method of approaching any subject is first to canvass numerous Greek and Latin authors, summarizing their perspectives in some detail, and then to indicate his own position by aligning himself with one of these authorities (often Cicero). Yet Quintilian does not treat these sources in a servile manner; he analyzes them acutely and provides enough detail about them to give modern readers a sense of their work even if the originals are now lost.

Quintilian's insistence that the good speaker be a good man is usually cited as the only important idea for which he might claim originality. Yet, in its broad outlines, this idea is already familiar from Plato's *Phaedrus*, Isocrates' *Antidosis*, and Cicero's *De Oratore*. As historian of rhetoric James J. Murphy explains, some scholars have noted that Quintilian does differ from his rhetorical predecessors in his much more detailed attention to pedagogy.² The *Institutes* gives advice on the development of a good man who speaks well, from his birth through his early education, apprenticeship, mature career, and dignified retirement. Earlier books in the *Institutes* seem addressed to parents and teachers, as when Quintilian recommends giving the infant ivory alphabet blocks to play with, or when he condemns corporal punishment. Later books address the adult orator himself, as when Quintilian advises on what kind of court cases to take and how much to charge clients. Although Plato, Isocrates, and Cicero all claimed an interest in training the young—indeed, the first two devoted themselves to teaching, like Quintilian—none goes into such detail as Quintilian does.

Quintilian's focus on the lifelong development of the orator may have theoretical implications. Like his predecessors, Quintilian recommends that the orator study philosophy; but in spite of the otherwise exhaustive nature of Quintilian's treatise, he goes into much less detail on what the orator should study than, for example, Cicero does in *De Oratore*. Quintilian wishes to call attention not just to the quantity of the orator's reading, but to the sincerity with which he applies the ideas to life. Quintilian seems to think the orator must undergo not so much training as formation, in the sense of a religious vocation. Those in authority over the young man must see to this formation while he is young; upon maturity he assumes responsibil-

²James J. Murphy, "Introduction," in *Quintilian on the Teaching of Speaking and Writing*, ed. James J. Murphy (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1987), pp. xiii, xxxix.

ity for his own moral development. By thoroughly blending instruction in rhetoric with moral philosophy, Quintilian implicitly responds to Plato's fears about the corrupt uses of oratory.

Quintilian compares the teacher-student relationship to one between a loving father and a devoted son (all the more poignant in that his own two sons predeceased him). Thus the teacher would inspire love of learning, not fear of punishment. Quintilian believes in adapting instruction to age and ability and eschewing pettifogging controversies over rhetorical classifications in favor of teachable syntheses. He stresses the importance of instilling good habits of composition and delivery, so that eventually the orator may express himself with seemingly natural facility. These and many other facets of Quintilian's pedagogy suggest that he wants to design a total environment for encouraging love of the good, as embodied in caring teachers, as well as mastery of rhetorical technique, as simplified in the practicing orator's rules of thumb.

Like Cicero in *De Oratore*, Quintilian feels he must answer charges that the ideal he seeks is impossible for mortals to achieve, that such a good man will be hard to find. Quintilian's answer is that he will make one, through what modern readers might regard as an interdisciplinary effort involving educational psychology, sociology, literary criticism, and moral philosophy. Quintilian's insistence on the moral element may bespeak his own quiet desperation about what sort of leader would be needed to galvanize the corrupt Rome of his day. At any rate, this emphasis may help to explain why Quintilian became a particularly influential resource for Christian rhetoricians from the early Middle Ages until well into the nineteenth century. Some version of the *Institutes*, though not always a complete one, was available throughout the period.

Included here are Book II and substantial portions of Books X and XII. What follows is a synopsis of the entire *Institutes of Oratory*.

SYNOPSIS OF *INSTITUTES OF ORATORY*

Book I treats the earliest stages of the orator's education. Fathers are encouraged to have high hopes for their sons. The boy's mother, nurse, and pedagogue should speak good Latin. Formal education can begin at about age three and will involve speaking Greek and reading and writing Latin (instruction in rhetoric at this time was bilingual). Quintilian argues that a good school provides better education than home tutoring because it offers peer criticism. Early signs of a young student's aptitude, he finds, are a good memory and a talent for mimicry.

Grammar is the first course of study. The boy must master correctness, perspicuity, elegance, and standard spelling and punctuation. He should read aloud from Latin poets and prose writers, analyzing their style. Good beginning exercises for his written and oral compositions are retelling fables and illustrating maxims, the earliest exercises in a series inherited from Greek education called the *progymnasmata*. Music, mathematics, acting, gymnastics, and dance should also be introduced.

Book II describes the next level of formal education, when the boy is ready to go from the grammarian to the rhetorician, usually as a young adolescent. Quintilian

here prescribes the more advanced exercises of the progymnasmata, exercises in speaking and writing that progress ultimately to the topic “praise or blame of laws.” The teacher should not correct the boys’ compositions very much. Their subjects should be as close to real life as possible—not the usual fantastic declamations about pirates kidnapping heirs and so on. This instruction in rhetoric cannot be approached in rule-book fashion, says Quintilian. He defines rhetoric as the “art of speaking well,” punning on “well” to mean both effectively and virtuously. Oratory that does not move its hearers toward the good is not “rhetoric,” by Quintilian’s definition. Natural ability and learning contribute equally to rhetorical skill (a departure from Isocrates and Cicero, who gave natural ability primacy). Mastery of rhetoric should be considered a “virtue” because it entails intimate knowledge of the good.

Book III rehearses Quintilian’s scholarly sources for his views of rhetoric. The art of rhetoric has five parts: “invention, arrangement, expression, memory, and delivery or action” (Bk. III, Ch. 3). The three kinds of subject matter for speeches are “the panegyric [epideictic], the deliberative, and the judicial [forensic]” (Bk. III, Ch. 4). Oratorical ability is produced by nature, art (including imitation), and practice. The three “offices” an orator must accomplish in every speech are “to inform, to move, to please” (Bk. III, Ch. 5). Oratory may treat of “indefinite theses” (“Should a man marry?”) or “definite,” circumstantial “causes” (“Should Cato marry?”) (Bk. III, Ch. 5). The best version of stasis theory asks three questions: “whether a thing is,” “what it is,” and “of what species it is” (Bk. III, Ch. 6; note that Quintilian departs from the four-question format of Aristotle and Hermagoras). Quintilian concludes this book with advice on how to compose panegyric, deliberative, and judicial speeches.

Book IV begins a discussion of invention by telling how to manage the parts of a forensic speech. Book V goes into more detail on kinds of proof: the “inartificial”—for example, legal precedent, evidence from torture, and the like—and the “artificial,” divisible into “indications” (signs), “arguments” (enthymemes), or “examples” (Bk. V, Ch. 9). Quintilian suggests that the essential characteristic of the enthymeme is to establish a doubtful point by reference to a point that is more probable. He observes that argument by example works best in conversation, which is why Socrates favored it. Book VI returns to the parts of a speech and discusses the conclusion, which is especially appropriate to emotional appeals. Quintilian emphasizes that the orator must strive to feel the emotions he attempts to invoke in his audience and must use the skill of the poet to picture scenes that bring forth these emotions.

Although Books IV, V, and VI ostensibly deal with forensic speeches only, Quintilian drops several hints that what he says about invention can be applied to all kinds of speeches. In Book VII he turns to arrangement, the second part of the art of rhetoric. Quintilian declines to specify the parts of a speech, suggesting that those parts should be included that will be most effective on a particular occasion: For example, sometimes an exordium will be very important and sometimes it should be omitted. Again, while discussing arrangement in terms of forensic speeches, Quintilian implies that his statements can be applied more broadly. The bulk of his discussion concentrates on stasis theory.

Book VIII turns to the third part of the art of rhetoric: expression, style, or, as Quintilian terms it, “elocution.” Above all one should try to sound like a native Roman, not a naturalized citizen (ironic advice, considering Quintilian’s own provincial origin). “Perspicuity” is the chief excellence of style. “Embellishment” (the use of “ornaments”) is what most distinguishes each individual orator’s style. Amplification, *sententia* (epigrams), and tropes such as metaphor, allegory, and irony should all be used, but sparingly.

Book IX begins by differentiating tropes and figures. In a trope, words are turned from their usual meaning to something quite different, whereas figures simply use words in a slightly unusual way, unlike daily speech. Quintilian enumerates the figures; he follows Cicero and favors a shorter list than other ancient authorities. He suggests that figures can be used to tactfully veil one’s thoughts, in politically risky situations, for instance.

Book X discusses the importance of reading and writing to the development of oratorical powers. The book’s audience now seems to be adult rhetoricians. Style, like morals, can be improved by imitating good models, says Quintilian. Book XI briefly treats memory and delivery, the last two parts of the art of rhetoric, setting them in a discussion of *ethos*. Quintilian says that “propriety” is served by speaking both “what is to the [practical] purpose” and “what is [morally] becoming”; but if these are at odds, choose the latter, as Socrates did at his trial (Bk. XI, Ch. 1). Quintilian gives much less attention to *kairos*, or the situation of the speech, than do other rhetoricians, such as Aristotle. Thus it seems that Quintilian defines propriety much more in terms of the speaker’s integrity, which should be steadfast. But this emphasis could also reflect the reduced opportunities in Quintilian’s day for using rhetoric in real-life times and places.

Book XII begins with Quintilian’s longest and strongest argument for the necessity of the orator’s being a good man. The quality of mind he seeks is shaped by the study of moral philosophy, civil law, history, and poetry. “Presence of mind” or grace under pressure is crucial to success. Quintilian advises the mature orator on such matters as what causes to prefer (defense is better than prosecution), how to prepare a lawsuit, and how to correct one’s style (oratorical style should sound more like writing than like everyday conversation). Cicero is held up as the best model. The book, and the *Institutes of Oratory*, conclude with Quintilian’s appraisal of his own career and his advice on what the orator should do in old age.

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[1981]: 45–62) is a thousand-item bibliography that deals with Quintilian’s influence up to the modern period.

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From *Institutes of Oratory*

BOOK II

Chapter I

Boys are not put under the professor of rhetoric early enough; reasons why they should begin to receive instruction from him at an earlier age. § 1–3. The professions of the grammarian and teacher of rhetoric should be in some degree united, 4–13.

1. It has been a prevalent custom (which daily gains ground more and more) for pupils to be sent to the teachers of eloquence, to the Latin teachers always, and to the Greeks sometimes, at a more advanced age than reason requires. Of this practice there are two causes: that the rhetoricians, especially our own, have relin-

quished a part of their duties, and that the grammarians have appropriated what does not belong to them. 2. The rhetoricians think it their business merely to declaim, and to teach the art and practice of declaiming, confining themselves, too, to deliberative and judicial subjects,¹ (for others they despise as beneath their profession,) while the grammarians, on their part, do not deem it sufficient to have taken what has been left them, (on

¹The other department of eloquence, the demonstrative or *epideictic*, which ought to command the attention of rhetoricians, they despise. Thus in the speeches of Seneca the father, we see only *suasoriae* and *controversiae*, deliberative and judicial addresses; and in the declamations circulated under the name of Quintilian we find nothing but mere *controversiae*. *Spalding*. Quintilian would have narratives, or statements of facts, eulogies, and invectives, to form part of the first exercises in rhetoric, as will appear hereafter. *Capperonier*. [Tr.]

Translated by John Selby Watson.

which account also gratitude should be accorded them,) but encroach even upon *prosopopeia*² and suasory³ speeches, in which even the very greatest efforts of eloquence are displayed. 3. Hence, accordingly, it has happened, that what was the first business of the one art has become the last of the other, and that boys of an age to be employed in higher departments of study remain sunk in the lower school, and practice rhetoric under the grammarian. Thus, what is eminently ridiculous, a youth seems unfit to be sent to a teacher of declamation until he already knows how to declaim.

4. Let us assign each of these professions its due limits. Let *grammar*, (which, turning it into a Latin word, they have called *literatura*, "literature,") know its own boundaries, especially as it is so far advanced beyond the humility indicated by its name, to which humility the early grammarians restricted themselves; for, though but weak at its source, yet, having gained strength from the poets and historians,⁴ it now flows on in a full channel; since, besides the art of speaking correctly, which would otherwise be far from a comprehensive art, it has engrossed the study of almost all the highest departments of learning; 5. and let not *rhetoric*, to which the power of eloquence has given its name, decline its own duties, or rejoice that the task belonging to itself is appropriated by another; for while it neglects its duties, it is almost expelled from its domain. 6. I would not deny, indeed, that some of those who profess grammar, may make such progress in knowledge as to be able to teach the principles of oratory; but, when they do so, they will be discharging the duties of a rhetorician, and not their own.

7. We make it also a subject of inquiry, when a boy may be considered ripe for learning what

²By *prosopopeia* we must here understand speeches suited to the characters of persons by whom they are supposed to have been spoken. Quintilian speaks of them in b. ii. c. 8. *Regius*. Such are the speeches in Livy and other historians. *Turnebus*. [Tr.]

³*Suasorias*. Speeches of the kind which they call *deliberative*, differing from *controversiæ*, which is a term properly applied only to *judicial* pleadings. *Capperonier*. The term *suasoriæ* included both *persuatory* and *dissuatory* speeches. [Tr.]

⁴Whom the grammarians undertake to explain and illustrate. *Capperonier*. [Tr.]

rhetoric teaches. In which inquiry it is not to be considered of what age a boy is, but what progress he has already made in his studies. That I may not make a long discussion, I think that the question *when a boy ought to be sent to the teacher of rhetoric*, is best decided by the answer, *when he shall be qualified*. 8. But this very point depends upon the preceding subject of consideration; for if the office of the grammarian is extended even to suasory speeches, the necessity for the rhetorician will come later. If the rhetorician, however, does not shrink from the earliest duties of his profession, his attention is required even from the time when the pupil begins narrations, and produces his little exercises in praising and blaming. 9. Do we not know that it was a kind of exercise among the ancients, suitable for improvement in eloquence, for pupils to speak on *theses*,⁵ *common places*,⁶ and other questions, (without embracing particular circumstances or persons,) on which causes, as well real as imaginary, depend? Hence it is evident how dishonorably the profession of rhetoric has abandoned that department which it held originally,⁷ and for a long time solely. 10. But what is there among those exercises, of which I have just now spoken,⁸ that does not relate both to other matters peculiar to rhetoricians, and, indisputably, to the sort of causes pleaded in courts of justice? Have we not to make statements of facts in the forum? I know not whether that department of rhetoric is not most of all in request there. 11. Are not eulogy and invective often introduced in those disputations? Do not common places, as well those

⁵By this term Quintilian means *quæstiones infinitæ*, on either side of which a rhetorician may speak with plausibility. This kind of exercise was in use in Cicero's time, when what we now call *declamations*, as Seneca observes, were called *theses*. *Turnebus*. *Theses*, or *quæstiones infinitæ*, are questions or topics not circumscribed by any particulars relating to persons, places, or times; *theses* being thus distinguished from *hypotheses*. *Capperonier*. See ii. 4, 24; iii. 5, 5, 7; Cic. Orat. c. 14. 36; Topic. c. 21. *Spaulding*. [Tr.]

⁶"*Communes loci*," says *Turnebus*, "are general disquisitions on points of morality; or questions on points of law, on which the speaker might take either the affirmative or negative side;" as *how far we ought to trust witnesses*, or *what credit should be given to written documents*. [Tr.]

⁷Suetonius observes that the old rhetoricians employed themselves greatly in *progymnasmata*. *Turnebus*. [Tr.]

⁸He means at the end of sect. 8. *Spaulding*. [Tr.]

which are levelled against vice, (such as were composed, we read, by Cicero,⁹) as those in which questions are discussed generally, (such as were published by Quintus Hortensius, as, *Ought we to trust to light proofs?* and *for witnesses and against witnesses*;) mix themselves with the inmost substance of causes? 12. These weapons are in some degree to be prepared, that we may use them whenever circumstances require. He who shall suppose that these matters do not concern the orator, will think that a statue is not begun when its limbs are cast.¹⁰ Nor let any one blame this haste of mine (as some will consider it) on the supposition that I think the pupil who is to be committed to the professor of rhetoric is to be altogether withdrawn from the teachers of grammar. 13. To these also their proper time shall be allowed, nor need there be any fear that the boy will be overburdened with the lessons of two masters. His labor will not be increased, but that which was confounded under one master will be divided; and each tutor will thus be more efficient in his own province. This method, to which the Greeks still adhere, has been disregarded by the Latin rhetoricians, and, indeed, with some appearance of excuse, as there have been others to take their duty.¹¹

Chapter II

Choice of a teacher, § 1–4. How the teacher should conduct himself towards his pupils, 5–8. How the pupils should behave, 9–13. Some additional observations, 14, 15.

1. As soon therefore as a boy shall have attained such proficiency in his studies as to be able to comprehend what we have called the first pre-

⁹Gesner very properly refers to the end of the preface to the *Paradoxes*, where Cicero observes that he used, for the sake of exercise, to occupy himself about the $\theta\epsilon\tau\iota\chi\acute{\alpha}$ of the schools, that is, on questions having no reference to particular circumstances or persons. . . . But whether “we read” should be understood as signifying that Quintilian had himself read Cicero’s compositions, or that he had merely seen some reference to them in some other writer, we have nothing to enable us to decide. The latter supposition appears to me the more probable. *Spalding*. [Tr.]

¹⁰See Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*, i. 16. [Tr.]

¹¹Namely the grammarians who continue their instruction even after pupils are put under the rhetorician. [Tr.]

cepts of the teachers of rhetoric, he must be put under the professors of that art.

2. Of these professors the morals must first be ascertained; a point of which I proceed to treat in this part of my work, not because I do not think that the same examination is to be made, and with the utmost care, in regard also to other teachers, (as indeed I have shown in the preceding book,¹²) but because the very age of the pupils makes attention to the matter still more necessary. 3. For boys are consigned to these professors when almost grown up, and continue their studies under them even after they are become men; and greater care must in consequence be adopted with regard to them, in order that the purity of the master may secure their more tender years from corruption, and his authority deter their bolder age from licentiousness. 4. Nor is it enough that he give, in himself, an example of the strictest morality, unless he regulate, also, by severity of discipline, the conduct of those who come to receive his instructions.

Let him adopt, then, above all things, the feelings of a parent towards his pupils, and consider that he succeeds to the place of those by whom the children were entrusted to him. 5. Let him neither have vices in himself, nor tolerate them in others. Let his austerity not be stern, nor his affability too easy, lest dislike arise from the one, or contempt from the other. Let him discourse frequently on what is honorable and good, for the oftener he admonishes, the more seldom will he have to chastise. Let him not be of an angry temper, and yet not a conniver at what ought to be corrected. Let him be plain in his mode of teaching, and patient of labor, but rather diligent in exacting tasks than fond of giving them of excessive length. 6. Let him reply readily to those who put questions to him, and question of his own accord those who do not. In commending the exercises of his pupils, let him be neither niggardly nor lavish; for the one quality begets dislike of labor, and the other self-complacency. 7. In amending what requires correction, let him not be harsh, and, least of all, not reproachful; for that very circumstance, that some tutors blame as if they hated, deters many young men from their

¹²See c. 5. [Tr.]

proposed course of study. 8. Let him every day say something, and even much, which, when the pupils hear, they may carry away with them, for though he may point out to them, in their course of reading, plenty of examples for their imitation, yet *the living voice*, as it is called, feeds the mind more nutritiously, and especially the voice of the teacher, whom his pupils, if they are but rightly instructed, both love and reverence. How much more readily we imitate those whom we like, can scarcely be expressed.

9. The liberty of standing up and showing exultation, in giving applause,¹³ as is done under most teachers, is by no means to be allowed to boys; for the approbation even of young men, when they listen to others, ought to be but temperate. Hence it will result that the pupil will depend on the judgment of the master, and will think that he has expressed properly whatever shall have been approved by him. 10. But that most mischievous *politeness*, as it is now termed, which is shown by students in their praise of each other's compositions, whatever be their merits, is not only unbecoming and theatrical,¹⁴ and foreign to strictly regulated schools, but even a most destructive enemy to study, for care and toil may well appear superfluous, when praise is ready for whatever the pupils have produced. 11. Those therefore who listen, as well as he who speaks, ought to watch the countenance of the master, for they will thus discern what is to be approved and what to be condemned; and thus power will be gained from composition, and judgment from being heard.¹⁵ 12. But now, eager and ready, they not only start up at every period, but dart forward, and cry out with indecorous transports. The compliment is repaid in kind, and upon such applause depends the fortune of a declamation; and hence result vanity and self-conceit, inso-much that, being elated with the tumultuous ap-

¹³Not to the master, but to one another, as Spalding observes, and as appears from what follows. [Tr.]

¹⁴Such as is given by spectators in the theater; see i. 2, 9. Spalding. Quintilian appears also to intimate the *insincerity* of the applause. [Tr.]

¹⁵*Sic stilo facultas continget, auditione iudicium.* The style meant is that of the speaker or reciter himself, who brings with him from home a written speech, which is the *auditio* or "recitation heard" by his fellow students that form the audience. Spalding. [Tr.]

probation of their class-fellows, they are inclined, if they receive but little praise from the master, to form an ill opinion of him. 13. But let masters, also, desire to be heard themselves with attention and modesty; for the master ought not to speak to suit the taste of his pupils, but the pupils to suit that of the master. If possible, moreover, his attention should be directed to observe what each pupil commends in his speeches, and for what reason; and he may then rejoice that what he says will give pleasure, not more on his own account than on that of his pupils who judge with correctness.

14. That mere boys should sit mixed with young men, I do not approve; for though such a man as ought to preside over their studies and conduct, may keep even the eldest of his pupils under control, yet the more tender ought to be separate from the more mature, and they should all be kept free, not merely from the guilt of licentiousness, but even from the suspicion of it. 15. This point I thought proper briefly to notice; that the master and his school should be clear of gross vice, I do not suppose it necessary to intimate. And if there is any father who would not shrink from flagrant vice in choosing a tutor for his son, let him be assured that all other rules, which I am endeavoring to lay down for the benefit of youth, are, when this consideration is disregarded, useless to him.

Chapter III

A pupil should be put under an eminent teacher at first, not under an inferior one, § 1–3. Mistakes of parents as to this point, 3, 4. The best teacher can teach little things best, as well as great ones, 5–9. The pupils of eminent teachers will afford better examples to each other, 10–12.

1. Nor is the opinion of those to be passed in silence, who, even when they think boys fit for the professor of rhetoric, imagine that he is not at once to be consigned to the most eminent, but detain him for some time under inferior teachers, with the notion that moderate ability in a master is not only better adapted for beginning instruction in art, but easier for comprehension and imitation, as well as less disdainful of undertaking

the trouble of the elements. 2. On this head I think no long labor necessary to show how much better it is to be imbued with the best instructions, and how much difficulty is attendant on eradicating faults which have once gained ground, as double duty falls on succeeding masters, and the task indeed of unteaching is heavier and more important than that of teaching at first. 3. Accordingly they say that Timotheus, a famous instructor in playing the flute, was accustomed to ask as much more pay from those whom another had taught as from those who presented themselves to him in a state of ignorance. The mistakes committed in the matter, however, are two; one, that people think inferior teachers sufficient for a time, and, from having an easily satisfied appetite, are content with their instructions; (such supineness, though deserving of reprehension, would yet be in some degree endurable, if teachers of that class taught only worse, and not less;) 4. the other, which is even more common, that people imagine that those who have attained eminent qualifications for speaking will not descend to inferior matters, and that this is sometimes the case because they disdain to bestow attention on minute points, and sometimes because they cannot give instruction in them. 5. For my part, I do not consider him, who is unwilling to teach little things,¹⁶ in the number of preceptors; but I argue that the ablest teachers can teach little things best, if they will; first, because it is likely that he who excels others in eloquence, has gained the most accurate knowledge of the means by which men attain eloquence; 6. secondly, because method,¹⁷ which, with the best qualified instructors, is always plainest, is of great efficacy in teaching; and lastly, because no man rises to such a height in greater things that lesser fade entirely from his view. Unless indeed we believe that though Phidias made a Jupiter well, another might have wrought, in better style than he, the accessories to the decoration of the work; or that an orator may not know how to

¹⁶Comp. i. 4, 23. [Tr.]

¹⁷*Ratio*. *Ratio* is the same as *theoria*; opposed to *praxis*. *Spaulding*. Quintilian means *method*; and intimates that the more learned teacher will be more methodical, the less learned less methodical. *Turnebus*. [Tr.]

speak; or that an eminent physician may be unable to cure trifling ailments.

7. Is there not then, it may be asked, a certain height of eloquence too elevated for the immaturity of boyhood to comprehend it? I readily confess that there is; but the eloquent professor must also be a man of sense, not ignorant of teaching, and lowering himself to the capacity of the learner; as any fast walker, if he should happen to walk with a child, would give him his hand, relax his pace, and not go on quicker than his companion could follow. 8. What shall be said, too, if it generally happens that instructions given by the most learned are far more easy to be understood, and more perspicuous than those of others? For perspicuity is the chief virtue of eloquence, and the less ability a man has, the more he tries to raise and swell himself out,¹⁸ as those of short stature exalt themselves on tiptoe,¹⁹ and the weak use most threats. 9. As to those whose style is inflated, displaying a vitiated taste, and who are fond of sounding words,²⁰ or faulty from any other mode of vicious affectation, I am convinced that they labor under the fault, not of strength, but of weakness, as bodies are swollen, not with health, but with disease, and as men who have erred from the straight road generally make stoppages.²¹ Accordingly, the less able a teacher is, the more obscure will he be.

¹⁸*Dilatate*. In allusion, perhaps, to the fable of the frog and the ox, Phædr. i. 24. *Spaulding*. [Tr.]

¹⁹*Staturâ breves in digitos eriguntur*. An illustration borrowed by Johnson in his *Life of Gray*, who, he says, is "tall by walking on tip-toe." [Tr.]

²⁰*Tumidos, et corruptos, et tinnulos*. The *tumidi* are those who are foolishly ambitious of sublimity; the *corrupti*, those who are always aiming to say something witty or clever; the *tinnuli*, those who seek for fine-sounding words and phrases. *Rollin*. [Tr.]

²¹*Devertunt. Devertunt in hospitia*, go to seek lodging for the night, and thus arrive at a later period at their place of destination, which, if they had kept to the right road, they might have reached on the day on which they started. *Spaulding*. An obscure passage, and perhaps not free from unsoundness. The second comparison, like the first, ought to indicate something wrong lying hid under the appearance of what is right. . . . We may suppose that those who have quitted the right track, see for *deverticula*, bye-roads, for the sake of amusing themselves, or of shortening the remainder of their journey. *Rollin*. The reader may use his judgment as to which of these two illustrations is to be preferred. That of *Rollin* may receive

10. It has not escaped my memory, that I said in the preceding book,²² (when I observed that education in schools was preferable to that at home,) that pupils commencing their studies, or but little advanced in them, devote themselves more readily to imitate their school-fellows than their master, such imitation being more easy to them. This remark may be understood by some in such a sense, that the opinion which I now advocate may appear inconsistent with that which I advanced before. 11. But such inconsistency will be far from me; for what I then said is the very best of reasons why a boy should be consigned to the best possible instructor, because even the pupils under him, being better taught than those under inferior masters, will either speak in such a manner as it may not be objectionable to imitate, or, if they commit any faults, will be immediately corrected, whereas the less learned teacher will perhaps praise even what is wrong, and cause it, by his judgment, to recommend itself to those who listen to it. 12. Let a master therefore be excellent as well in eloquence as in morals; one who, like Homer's Phœnix, may teach his pupil at once to speak and to act.

Chapter IV

Elementary exercises, § 1. Narratives, or statements of facts, 2-4. Exuberance in early compositions better than sterility, 4-8. A teacher should not be without imagination, or too much given to find fault with his pupil's attempts, 8-14. The pupil's compositions should be written with great care, 15-17. Exercises in confirmation and refutation, 18, 19. In commendation and censure of remarkable men, 20-21. Common places, 22, 23. Theses, 24, 25. Reasons, 26. Written preparations for pleadings, 27-32. Praise and censure of particular laws, 33-40. Declamations on fictitious subjects a later invention, 41, 42.

I. I shall now proceed to state what I conceive to be the first duties of rhetoricians in giving instruction to their pupils, putting off for a while the consideration of what is alone called, in com-

something like support from Liv. ix. 7: *Et legentibus velut deverticula amœna—quærerem.* [Tr.]

²²C. 2, sect. 26. [Tr.]

mon language, *the art of rhetoric*; for to me it appears most eligible to commence with that to which the pupil has learned something similar under the grammarians.

2. Since of *narrations*, (besides that which we use in pleadings,) we understand that there are three kinds; the *fable*,²³ which is the subject of tragedies and poems,²⁴ and which is remote, not merely from truth, but from the appearance of truth;²⁵ the *argumentum*, which comedies represent, and which, though false, has a resemblance to truth;²⁶ and the *history*, in which is contained a relation of facts; and since we have consigned poetic narratives to the grammarians,²⁷ let the historical form of commencement of study under the rhetorician; a kind of narrative which, as it has more of truth, has also more of substance.

3. What appears to me the best method of narrating, I will show when I treat of the judicial part of pleading.²⁸ In the meantime it will suffice to intimate that it ought not to be dry and jejune, (for what necessity would there be to bestow so much pains upon study, if it were thought sufficient to state facts without dress or decoration?) nor ought it to be erratic, and wantonly adorned with far-fetched descriptions, in which many speakers indulge with an emulation of poetic license. 4. Both these kinds of narrative are faulty; yet that which springs from poverty is worse than that which comes from exuberance.

From boys perfection of style can neither be required nor expected; but the fertile genius, fond of noble efforts, and conceiving at times a more than reasonable degree of ardor, is greatly to be preferred. 5. Nor, if there be something of exuberance in a pupil of that age, would it at all displease me. I would even have it an object with

²³Or mythological subject. [Tr.]

²⁴That is *epic* poems, in which we find much that is at variance, not only with truth, but with probability; narratives which Aristotle in his *Poetics* calls ἄλογα, ἀδύνατα. *Capperonier.* [Tr.]

²⁵As the fables of Atreus and Thyestes, Medea, Iphigenia, and all the stories of metamorphoses. Cic. *Rhetor.* i. 19. *Camperarius.* [Tr.]

²⁶As approaching nearer to nature and the real events of life. [Tr.]

²⁷Book i. c. 4. [Tr.]

²⁸Book iv. c. 2. [Tr.]

teachers themselves to nourish minds that are still tender with more indulgence, and to allow them to be satiated, as it were, with the milk of more liberal studies. The body, which mature age may afterwards nerve, may for a time be somewhat plumper than seems desirable. 6. Hence there is hope of strength; while a child that has the outline of all his limbs exact commonly portends weakness in subsequent years. Let that age be daring, invent much, and delight in what it invents, though it be often not sufficiently severe and correct. The remedy for exuberance is easy; barrenness is incurable by any labor. 7. That temper in boys will afford me little hope in which mental effort is prematurely restrained by judgment. I like what is produced to be extremely copious, profuse even beyond the limits of propriety. Years will greatly reduce superfluity; judgment will smooth away much of it; something will be worn off, as it were, by use, if there be but metal from which something may be hewn and polished off, and such metal there will be, if we do not make the plate too thin at first, so that deep cutting may break it. 8. That I hold such opinions concerning this age, he will be less likely to wonder who shall have read what Cicero²⁹ says: "I wish fecundity in a young man to give itself full scope."

Above all, therefore, and especially for boys, a *dry master* is to be avoided, not less than a dry soil, void of all moisture, for plants that are still tender. 9. Under the influence of such a tutor, they at once become dwarfish, looking as it were towards the ground, and daring to aspire to nothing above everyday talk. To them, leanness is in place of health, and weakness instead of judgment; and, while they think it sufficient to be free from fault, they fall into the fault of being free from all merit. Let not even maturity itself, therefore, come too fast; let not the must, while yet in the vat, become mellow, for so it will bear years, and be improved by age.

10. Nor is it improper for me, moreover, to offer this admonition; that the powers of boys sometimes sink under too great severity in correction; for they despond, and grieve, and at last hate their work, and, what is most prejudicial,

while they fear every thing, they cease to attempt any thing. 11. There is a similar conviction in the minds of the cultivators of trees in the country, who think that the knife must not be applied to tender shoots, as they appear to shrink from the steel, and to be unable as yet to bear an incision. 12. A teacher ought therefore to be as agreeable as possible, that remedies, which are rough in their own nature, may be rendered soothing by gentleness of hand; he ought to praise some parts of his pupils' performances, to tolerate some, and to alter others, giving his reasons why the alterations are made; and also to make some passages clearer by adding something of his own. It will also be of service too at times, for the master to dictate whole subjects himself, which the pupil may imitate and admire for the present as his own. 13. But if a boy's composition were so faulty as not to admit of correction, I have found him benefited whenever I told him to write on the same subject again, after it had received fresh treatment from me, observing that "he could do still better," since study is cheered by nothing more than hope. 14. Different ages, however, are to be corrected in different ways, and work is to be required and amended according to the degree of the pupil's abilities. I used to say to boys when they attempted any thing extravagant or verbose, that "I was satisfied with it for the present, but that a time would come when I should not allow them to produce compositions of such a character." Thus they were satisfied with their abilities, and yet not led to form a wrong judgment.

15. But that I may return to the point from which I digressed, I should wish *narrations* to be composed with the utmost possible care; for as it is of service to boys at an early age, when their speech is but just commenced, to repeat what they have heard in order to improve their faculty of speaking; (let them accordingly be made, and with very good reason, to go over their story again, and to pursue it from the middle, either backwards or forwards; but let this be done only while they are still at the knees of their teacher, and, as they can do nothing else, are beginning to connect words and things, that they may thus strengthen their memory;) so, when they shall have attained the command of pure and correct language, extemporary garrulity, without waiting

²⁹De Orat. ii. 21. [Tr.]

for thought, or scarcely taking time to rise,³⁰ is the offspring of mere ostentatious boastfulness. 16. Hence arises empty exultation in ignorant parents, and in their children contempt of application, want of all modesty, a habit of speaking in the worst style, the practice of all kinds of faults, and, what has often been fatal even to great proficiency, an arrogant conceit of their own abilities. 17. There will be a proper time for acquiring facility of speech, nor will that part of my subject be lightly passed over by me; but in the mean time it will be sufficient if a boy with all his care, and with the utmost application of which that age is capable, can write something tolerable. To this practice let him accustom himself, and make it natural to him. He only will succeed in attaining the eminence at which we aim, or the point next below it, who shall learn to speak correctly before he learns to speak rapidly.

18. To *narrations* is added, not without advantage, the task of refuting and confirming them, which is called ἀνασχευή and κατασχευή.³¹ This may be done, not only with regard to fabulous subjects, and such as are related in poetry, but with regard even to records in our own annals; as if it be inquired *whether it is credible that a crow settled upon the head of Valerius when he was fighting, to annoy the face and eyes of his Gallic enemy with his beak and wings*, there will be ample matter for discussion on both sides of the question; 19. as there will also be concerning *the serpent, of which Scipio is said to have been born*, as well as about *the wolf of Romulus*, and *the Egeria of Numa*. As to the histories of the Greeks, there is generally license in them similar to that of the poets. Questions are often wont to arise, too, concerning the time or place at which a thing is said to have been done; sometimes even about a person; as Livy, for instance, is frequently in doubt, and other historians differ one from another.

³⁰*Vix surgendi mora*. They scarcely allow themselves time to rise from their seat before they begin to speak. *Cap-peronier*. [Tr.]

³¹The meaning of these terms is pretty well intimated by Quintilian himself; ἀνασχευή is *refutation*, and κατασχευή is *assertion*. Turnebus. More concerning them may be seen in Aphthonius. [Tr.]

20. The pupil will then proceed by degrees to higher efforts, *to praise illustrious characters* and *censure the immortal*; an exercise of manifold advantage; for the mind is thus employed about a multiplicity and variety of matters; the understanding is formed by the contemplation of good and evil. Hence is acquired, too, an extensive knowledge of things in general; and the pupil is soon furnished with *examples*, which are of great weight in every kind of causes, and which he will use as occasion requires. 21. Next succeeds exercise in *comparison, which of two characters is the better or the worse*, which, though it is managed in a similar way, yet both doubles the topics, and treats not only of the nature, but of the degrees of virtues and of vices. But on the management of praise and the contrary, as it is the third part of rhetoric, I shall give directions in the proper place.³²

22. *Common places*, (I speak of those in which, without specifying persons, it is usual to declaim against vices themselves, as against those of *the adulterer, the gamester, the licentious person*,) are of the very nature of speeches on trials, and, if you add the name of an accused party, are real accusations. These, however, are usually altered from their treatment as general subjects to something specific, as when the subject of a declamation is *a blind adulterer, a poor gamester, a licentious old man*. 23. Sometimes also they have their use in a defense; for we occasionally speak in favor of *luxury* or *licentiousness*,³³ and a procurer or parasite is sometimes defended in such a way, that we advocate, not the person,³⁴ but the vice.

24. *Theses*, which are drawn from the comparison of things, as *whether a country or city life is more desirable*, and *whether the merit of a lawyer or a soldier is the greater*, are eminently proper and copious subjects for exercise in speaking, and contribute greatly to improvement, both in the province of persuasion and in discussions on

³²B. iii. c. 7. [Tr.]

³³Gesner observes that Cicero has done something of this kind in his oration for Cælius, though with great caution and modesty. There is certainly some palliation of those vices offered in c. 17–21. *Spaulding*. [Tr.]

³⁴For then it would cease to be a *locus communis*, and become a *cause*. *Spaulding*. [Tr.]

trials. The latter of the two subjects just mentioned is handled with great copiousness by Cicero in his pleading for Muræna. 25. Such theses as the following, *whether a man ought to marry*, and *whether political offices should be sought*, belong almost wholly to the deliberative species, for, if persons be but added, they will be suatory.³⁵

26. My teachers were accustomed to prepare us for *conjectural causes*³⁶ by a kind of exercise far from useless, and very pleasant to us, in which they desired us to investigate and show *why Venus among the Lacedæmonians was represented armed*;³⁷ *why Cupid was thought to be a boy, and winged, and armed with arrows and a torch*, and questions of a similar nature, in which we endeavored to ascertain the intention, or object about which there is so often a question in controversies. This may be regarded as a sort of *chria*.³⁸

27. That such questions as those about witness, *whether we ought always to believe them*, and concerning arguments, *whether we ought to put any trust in trifling ones*, belong to forensic pleading, is so manifest that some speakers,³⁹ not undistinguished in civil offices, have kept them ready in writing, and have carefully committed them to memory, that, whenever opportunity should offer, their extemporary speeches might be decorated with them, as with ornaments fitted into them.⁴⁰ 28. By which practice, (for I cannot delay to express my judgment on the point,) they appeared to me to confess great weakness in themselves. For what can such men produce appropriate to particular causes, of which the aspect

³⁵*Suasoria*, persuatory or dissuatory; i.e., deliberative. [Tr.]

³⁶In which it is inquired whether a thing is, or is not; why anything is as it is; with what intention anything was done. Such questions were said to belong to the *status conjecturalis*; see b. vii. c. 2. *Capperonier*. [Tr.]

³⁷The cause is said by Lactantius, Inst. Div. i. 20, to have been the bravery exhibited by the Spartan women on a certain occasion against the Messenians, when a temple was vowed to *Venus armata*. [Tr.]

³⁸See i. 9, 4. [Tr.]

³⁹As Hortensius; see ii. 1, 11. *Spalding*. [Tr.]

⁴⁰*Emblematis*. The word signifies anything that is inserted in or applied to any other thing. Thus in Cicero *emblemata* is used for ornaments attached to gold and silver vases, capable of being taken off at pleasure. *Rollin*. [Tr.]

is perpetually varied and new? How can they reply to questions propounded by the opposite party? How can they at once meet objections, or interrogate a witness, when, even on topics of the commonest kind, such as are handled in most causes, they are unable to pursue the most ordinary thoughts in any words but those which they have long before prepared? 29. When they say the same things in various pleadings, their cold meat, as it were, served up over and over again, must either create loathing in the speakers themselves, or their unhappy household furniture, which, as among the ambitious poor, is worn out by being used for several different purposes, must, when detected so often by the memory of their hearers, cause a feeling of shame in them; 30. especially as there is scarcely any *common place* so *common*, which can incorporate well with any pleading, unless it be bound by some link to the peculiar question under consideration, and which will not show that it is not so much inserted as attached; 31. either because it is unlike the rest, or because it is very frequently borrowed without reason, not because it is wanted, but because it is ready; as some speakers, for the sake of sentiment, introduce the most verbose common places, whereas it is from the subject itself that sentiments ought to arise. 32. Such remarks are ornamental and useful if they spring from the question, but every remark, however beautiful, unless it tends to gain the cause, is certainly superfluous, and sometimes even noxious. But this digression has been sufficiently prolonged.

33. The *praise or censure of laws* requires more mature powers, such as may almost suffice for the very highest efforts. Whether this exercise partakes more of the nature of deliberative or controversial oratory, is a point that varies according to the custom and right of particular nations. Among the Greeks the proposer of laws was called to plead before the judge; among the Romans it was customary to recommend or disparage a law before the public assembly.⁴¹ In either case, however, few arguments, and those al-

⁴¹Certain judges were appointed by the assembly of the people called *nomothetæ*, before whom the proposer of a new law had to appear and support it; his adversaries were the defenders of the old law which the new one would abrogate. *Spalding*. [Tr.]

most certain,⁴² are advanced; for there are but three kinds of laws, relating to *sacred, public, or private rights*. 34. This division has regard chiefly to the commendation of a law,⁴³ as when the speaker extols it by a kind of gradation, because it is *a law*, because it is *public*, because it is *made to promote the worship of the gods*. 35. Points about which questions usually arise, are common to all laws,⁴⁴ for a doubt may be started, either concerning the right of him who proposes the law, (as concerning that of *Publius Clodius who was accused of not having been properly created tribune*,⁴⁵) or concerning the validity of the proposal itself, a doubt which may refer to a variety of matters, as for instance, *whether the proposal has been published on three market-days*, or whether the law may be said to have been proposed, or to be proposed, *on an improper day, or contrary to protests, or to the auspices, or in any other way at variance with legitimate proceedings; or whether it be opposed to any law still in force*. 36. But such considerations do not enter into these early exercises, which are without any allusion to persons, times, or particular causes. Other points, whether treated in real or fictitious discussions, are much the same; for the fault of any law must be either *in words* or *in matter*. 37. As to words, it is questioned *whether they be sufficiently expressive; or whether there is any ambiguity in them; as to matter, whether the law is consistent with itself; whether it ought to have ref-*

erence to past time, or to individuals. But the most common inquiry is, *whether it be proper or expedient*. 38. Nor am I ignorant that of this inquiry many divisions are made by most professors; but I, under the term *proper*, include consistency with *justice, piety, religion*, and other similar virtues. The consideration of justice, however, is usually discussed with reference to more than one point; for a question may either be raised about the subject of the law, as *whether it be deserving of punishment or reward*, or about the *measure of reward or punishment*, to which an objection may be taken as well for being *too great* as *too little*. 39. Expediency, also, is sometimes determined by the nature of the measure, sometimes by the circumstances of the time. As to some laws, it becomes a question, *whether they can be enforced*. Nor ought students to be ignorant that laws are sometimes censured *wholly*, sometimes *partly*, as examples of both are afforded us in highly celebrated orations. 40. Nor does it escape my recollection that there are laws which are not proposed for perpetuity, but with regard to temporary honors or commands, such as the *Manilian law*, about which there is an oration of Cicero. But concerning these no directions can be given in this place; for they depend upon the peculiar nature of the subjects on which the discussion is raised, and not on any general consideration.

41. On such subjects did the ancients, for the most part, exercise the faculty of eloquence, borrowing their mode of argument, however, from the logicians. To speak on fictitious cases, in imitation of pleadings in the forum or in public councils, is generally allowed to have become a practice among the Greeks, about the time of Demetrius Phalereus. 42. Whether that sort of exercise was invented by him, I (as I have acknowledged also in another book⁴⁶) have not succeeded in discovering; nor do those who affirm most positively that he did invent it, rest their opinion on any writer of good authority; but that the Latin teachers of eloquence commenced this practice towards the end of the life of Lucius Crassus, Cicero tells us; of which teachers the most eminent was Plotius.

⁴²*Fere certa*. In opposition to the particulars to which he alludes in the following section, *de quibus quæri solet*, i.e., *dubitari*. The arguments advanced in favor or condemnation of a law are generally such as can have but one tendency, that is, to prove the law to be either extremely good or extremely bad; they are very seldom such as can be turned to advantage on either side of the question. *Spalding*. [Tr.]

⁴³It is only however the old law that can be thus praised; for the new, when it is proposed, is not properly a law. *Spalding*. [Tr.]

⁴⁴The points meant by Quintilian, says Spalding, are such as regard the mere form and mode of proposing or bringing forward a law; for whether a law was good or bad would appear from the nature and tendency of it. [Tr.]

⁴⁵Clodius, being a patrician by birth, could not be made a tribune of the people, without having been first made a plebeian by adoption. Cicero maintained that his adoption had been irregular, *Pro Domo*, c. 13–17, where reference is also made to the *auspices* and to *three market-days*; on which the reader may consult Ernesti's *Clavis*. *Spalding*. [Tr.]

⁴⁶If that acknowledgment was made in the book *De Causis Corruptæ Eloquentiæ*, it does not occur in the Dialogue which we have under that title. *Spalding*. [Tr.]

Chapter V

Advantages of reading history and speeches, § 1–3. On what points in them the professor of rhetoric should lecture, 4–9. Faulty composition may sometimes be read, to exercise the pupil's judgment, 10–13. Usefulness of this exercise, 14–17. Best authors to be read at an early age, 18–20. The pupil should be cautious of imitating very ancient or very modern writers, 21–26.

1. But of the proper mode of declaiming I shall speak a little further on; in the meanwhile, as we are treating of the first rudiments of rhetoric, I should not omit, I think, to observe how much the professor would contribute to the advancement of his pupils, if, as the explanation of the poets is required from teachers of grammar, so he, in like manner, would exercise the pupils under his care in the reading of history, and even still more in that of speeches; a practice which I myself have adopted in the case of a few pupils, whose age required it,⁴⁷ and whose parents thought it would be serviceable to them. 2. But though I then deemed it an excellent method, two circumstances were obstructions to the practice of it; that long custom had established a different mode of teaching, and that they were mostly full-grown youths, who did not require that exercise, that were forming themselves on my model. 3. But though I should make a new discovery ever so late, I should not be ashamed to recommend it for the future. I know, however, that this is now done among the Greeks, but chiefly by assistant-masters, since the time would seem hardly sufficient, if the professors were always to lecture to each pupil as he read. 4. Such lecturing, indeed, as is given, that boys may follow the writing of an author easily and distinctly with their eyes, and such even as explains the meaning of every word, at all uncommon, that occurs, is to be regarded as far below the profession of a teacher of rhetoric.

5. But to point out the beauties of authors, and, if occasion ever present itself, their faults, is eminently consistent with that profession and engagement, by which he offers himself to the pub-

⁴⁷For most of his pupils, according to the custom of the Romans, had come to Quintilian at too advanced an age. See c. 1, sect. 1 and 8. *Spalding*. [Tr.]

lic as a master of eloquence, especially as I do not require such toil from teachers, that they should call their pupils to their lap, and labor at the reading of whatever book each of them may fancy. 6. For to me it seems easier, as well as far more advantageous, that the master, after calling for silence, should appoint some one pupil to read, (and it will be best that this duty should be imposed on them by turns,) that they may thus accustom themselves to clear pronunciation; 7. and then, after explaining the cause for which the oration was composed, (for so that which is said will be better understood,) that he should leave nothing unnoticed which is important to be remarked, either in the *thought* or the *language*; that he should observe what method is adopted in the *exordium* for conciliating the judge; what *clearness, brevity, and apparent sincerity*, is displayed in the *statement of facts*; what *design* there is in certain passages, and what well concealed *artifice*; (for that is the only true art in pleading which cannot be perceived except by a skillful pleader;) 8. what judgment appears in the *division* of the matter; how subtle and urgent is the *argumentation*; with what force the speaker excites, with what amenity he soothes; what severity is shown in his *invectives*, what urbanity in his *jests*; how he commands the feelings, forces a way into the understanding, and makes the opinions of the judges coincide with what he asserts. 9. In regard to the *style*, too, he should notice any expression that is peculiarly appropriate, elegant, or sublime when the *amplification* deserves praise; what quality is opposed to it, what phrases are happily *metaphorical*, what figures of speech are used, what part of the *composition* is smooth and polished, and yet manly and vigorous.

10. Nor is it without advantage, indeed, that inelegant and faulty speeches, yet such as many, from depravity of taste, would admire, should be read before boys, and that it should be shown how many expressions in them are inappropriate, obscure, tumid, low, mean, affected, or effeminate; expressions which, however, are not only extolled by many readers, but, what is worse, are extolled for the very reason that they are vicious; 11. for straightforward language, naturally expressed, seems to some of us to have nothing of

genius; but whatever departs, in any way, from the common course, we admire as something exquisite; as, with some persons, more regard is shown for figures that are distorted, and in any respect monstrous, than for such as have lost none of the advantages of ordinary conformation. 12. Some, too, who are attracted by appearance, think that there is more beauty in men who are depilated and smooth, who dress their locks, hot from the curling-irons, with pins, and who are radiant with a complexion not their own, than unsophisticated nature can give as if beauty of person could be thought to spring from corruption of manners.

13. Nor will the preceptor be under the obligation merely to teach these things, but frequently to ask questions upon them, and try the judgment of his pupils. Thus carelessness will not come upon them while they listen, nor will the instructions that shall be given fail to enter their ears; and they will at the same time be conducted to the end which is sought in this exercise, namely that they themselves may conceive and understand. For what object have we in teaching them, but that they may not always require to be taught?

14. I will venture to say that this sort of diligent exercise will contribute more to the improvement of students than all the treatises of all the rhetoricians that ever wrote; which doubtless, however, are of considerable use, but their scope is more general; and how indeed can they go into all kinds of questions that arise almost every day? 15. So, though certain general precepts are given in the military art, it will yet be of far more advantage to know what plan any leader has adopted wisely or imprudently, and in what place or at what time; for in almost every art precepts are of much less avail than practical experiments. 16. Shall a teacher declaim that he may be a model to his hearers, and will not Cicero and Desmosthenes, if read, profit them more? Shall a pupil, if he commits faults in declaiming, be corrected before the rest, and will it not be more serviceable to him to correct the speech of another? Indisputably; and even more agreeable; for every one prefers that others' faults should be blamed rather than his own. 17. Nor are there wanting more arguments for me to offer; but the advan-

tage of this plan can escape the observation of no one; and I wish that there may not be so much unwillingness to adopt it as there will be pleasure in having adopted it.

18. If this method be followed there will remain a question not very difficult to answer, which is, what authors ought to be read by beginners? Some have recommended inferior writers, as they thought them easier of comprehension; others have advocated the more florid kind of writers, as being better adapted to nourish the minds of the young. 19. For my part, I would have the best authors commenced at once, and read always; but I would choose the clearest in style, and most intelligible; recommending Livy, for instance, to be read by boys rather than Sallust, who, however, is the greater historian, but to understand him there is need of some proficiency. 20. Cicero, as it seems to me, is agreeable even to beginners, and sufficiently intelligible, and may not only profit, but even be loved; and next to Cicero, (as Livy⁴⁸ advises,) such authors as most resemble Cicero.

21. There are two points in style on which I think that the greatest caution should be used in respect to boys: one is that no master, from being too much an admirer of antiquity should allow them to harden, as it were, in the reading of the Gracchi, Cato,⁴⁹ and other like authors; for they would thus become uncouth and dry; since they cannot, as yet, understand their force of thought, and, content with adopting their style, which, at the time it was written, was doubtless excellent, but is quite unsuitable to our day, they will appear to themselves to resemble those eminent men. 22. The other point, which is the opposite of the former, is, lest, being captivated with the flowers of modern affectation, they should be so seduced by a corrupt kind of pleasure, as to love that luscious manner of writing which is the more agreeable to the minds of youth in proportion as it has more affinity with them. 23. When their taste is formed, however, and out of danger of

⁴⁸Quintilian repeats this advice of Livy in x. 1, 39, where he says that it was given in a letter to his son. But the letter is lost. *Spalding*. [Tr.]

⁴⁹The speeches of the Gracchi are lost. Of the many books that Cato wrote none has survived but his treatise on agriculture. [Tr.]

being corrupted, I should recommend them to read not only the ancients, (from whom if a solid and manly force of thought be adopted, while the rust of a rude age is cleared off, our present style will receive additional grace,) but also the writers of the present day, in whom there is much merit. 24. For nature has not condemned us to stupidity, but we ourselves have changed our mode of speaking, and have indulged our fancies more than we ought; and thus the ancients did not excel us so much in genius as in severity of manner. It will be possible, therefore, to select from the moderns many qualities for imitation, but care must be taken that they be not contaminated with other qualities with which they are mixed. 25. Yet that there have been recently, and are now, many writers whom we may imitate entirely, I would not only allow, (for why should I not?) but even affirm. 26. But who they are it is not for everybody to decide. We may even err with greater safety in regard to the ancients; and I would therefore defer the reading of the moderns, that imitation may not go before judgment.

Chapter VI

In composition, the pupil should have but moderate assistance, not too much or too little.

1. There has been also a diversity of practice among teachers in the following respect. Some of them, not confining themselves to giving directions as to the division of any subject which they assigned their pupils for declamation, developed it more fully by speaking on it themselves, and amplified it not only with proofs but with appeals to the feelings. 2. Others, giving merely the first outlines, expatiated after the declamations were composed, on whatever points each pupil had omitted, and polished some passages with no less care than they would have used if they had themselves been rising to speak in public.

Both methods are beneficial; and, therefore, for my own part, I give no distinction to either of them above the other; but, if it should be necessary to follow only one of the two, it will be of greater service to point out the right way at first, than to recall those who have gone astray from their errors; 3. first, because to the subsequent

emendation they merely listen, but the preliminary division they carry to their meditation and their composition; and, secondly, because they more willingly attend to one who gives directions than to one who finds faults. Whatever pupils, too, are of a high spirit, are apt, especially in the present state of manners, to be angry at admonition, and offer silent resistance to it. 4. Not that faults are therefore to be less openly corrected; for regard is to be had to the other pupils, who will think that whatever the master has not amended is right. But both methods should be united, and used as occasion may require. To beginners should be given matter designed,⁵⁰ as it were, beforehand, in proportion to the abilities of each. 5. But when they shall appear to have formed themselves sufficiently on their model, a few brief directions may be given them, following which, they may advance by their own strength without any support. 6. It is proper that they should sometimes be left to themselves, lest, from the bad habit of being always led by the efforts of others, they should lose all capacity of attempting and producing anything for themselves. But when they seem to judge pretty accurately of what ought to be said, the labor of the teacher is almost at an end; though, should they still commit errors, they must be again put under a guide. 7. Something of this kind we see birds practice, which divide food, collected in their beaks, among their tender and helpless young ones; but, when they seem sufficiently grown, teach them, by degrees, to venture out of the nest, and flutter round their place of abode, themselves leading the way; and at last leave their strength, when properly tried, to the open sky and their own self-confidence.⁵¹

⁵⁰*Præformata*. A metaphorical expression borrowed from architects, who sketch out their work either by *sciographia*, *ichnographia*, or *orthographia*. Turnebus. [Tr.]

⁵¹Valerius Flaccus, vii. 375:

Qualis adhuc teneros supremum pallida fœtus
Mater ab excelso produxit in aëra nido,
Hortaturque sequi, brevisusque insurgere pennis;
Illos cœrulei primus ferit horror Olympi;
Jamque redire rogant, adsuetaque quæritur arbor.

As when the anxious dam her tender young
Leads from their lofty nest to loftier skies,
Bidding them follow her, and rise upborne

Chapter VII

Pupils should not always declaim their own compositions, but sometimes passages from eminent writers.

1. One change, I think, should certainly be made in what is customary with regard to the age of which we are speaking. Pupils should not be obliged to learn by heart what they have composed, and to repeat it, as is usual, on a certain day, a task which it is fathers that principally exact, thinking that their children then only study when they repeat frequent declamations; whereas proficiency depends chiefly on the diligent cultivation of style. 2. For though I would wish boys to compose, and to spend much time in that employment, yet, as to learning by heart, I would rather recommend for that purpose select passages from orations or histories, or any other sort of writings deserving of such attention. 3. The memory will thus be more efficiently exercised in mastering what is another's than what is their own; and those who shall have been practiced in this more difficult kind of labor, will fix in their minds, without trouble, what they themselves have composed, as being more familiar to them; they will also accustom themselves to the best compositions, and they will always have in their memory something which they may imitate, and will, even without being aware, reproduce that fashion of style which they have deeply impressed upon their minds. 4. They will have at command, moreover, an abundance of the best words, phrases, and figures, not sought for the occasion, but offering themselves spontaneously, as it were, from a store treasured within them. To this is added the power of quoting the happy expressions of any author, which is agreeable in

common conversation, and useful in pleading; for phrases which are not coined for the sake of the cause in hand have the greater weight, and often gain us more applause than if they were our own.

5. Yet pupils should sometimes be permitted to recite what they themselves have written, that they may reap the full reward of their labor from that kind of applause which is most desired.⁵² This permission will most properly be granted when they have produced something more polished than ordinary, that they may thus be presented with some return for their study, and rejoice that they have deserved to recite their composition.

Chapter VIII

Variety of talent and disposition in pupils requires variety of treatment, § 1–5. How far an inclination for any particular line of study should be encouraged and cultivated, 6–15.

1. It is generally, and not without reason, regarded as an excellent quality in a master to observe accurately the differences of ability in those whom he has undertaken to instruct, and to ascertain in what direction the nature of each particularly inclines him; for there is in talent an incredible variety; nor are the forms of the mind fewer than those of the body. 2. This may be understood even from orators themselves, who differ so much from each other in their style of speaking, that no one is like another, though most of them have set themselves to imitate those whom they admired. 3. It has also been thought advantageous by most teachers to instruct each pupil in such a manner as to cherish by learning the good qualities inherited from nature, so that the powers may be assisted in their progress towards the object to which they chiefly direct themselves. As a master of palæstric exercises, when he enters a gymnasium full of boys, is able, after trying their strength and comprehension in every possible way, to decide for what kind of exercise each ought to be trained; 4. so a teacher

⁵²That is, the applause of their fellow students. If they merely wrote, and did not recite, they would gain, as Spalding observes, the commendation of the master only. [Tr.]

On half-grown wings; the blue expanse, first tried,
Strikes them with dread; they, fluttering, chirp for leave
Back to return, and seek th' accustom'd tree.

Of which lines the germ, as Burmann remarks, is found in Ovid, Met. vii. 213:

Velut ales ab alto
Quæ teneram prolem produxit in aëra nido,
Hortaturque sequi.

The simile is very happily adopted by Goldsmith:

And as a bird each fond endearment tries,
To lure her new-fledged offspring to the skies. [Tr.]

of eloquence, they say, when he has clearly observed which boy's genius delights most in a concise and polished manner of speaking, and which in a spirited, or grave, or smooth, or rough, or brilliant, or elegant one, will so accommodate his instructions to each, that he shows most ability; 5. because nature attains far greater power when seconded by culture; and he that is led contrary to nature, cannot make due progress in the studies for which he is unfit, and makes those talents, for the exercise of which he seemed born, weaker by neglecting to cultivate them.

6. This opinion seems to me (for to him that follows reason there is free exercise of judgment even in opposition to received persuasions) just only in part. To distinguish peculiarities of talent is absolutely necessary; and to make choice of particular studies to suit them, is what no man would discountenance. 7. For one youth will be fitter for the study of history than another; one will be qualified for writing poetry, another for the study of law, and some perhaps fit only to be sent into the fields. The teacher of rhetoric will decide in accordance with these peculiarities, just as the master of the *palæstra* will make one of his pupils a runner, another a boxer, another a wrestler, or fit him for any other of the exercises that are practised at the sacred games.

8. But he who is destined for public speaking must strive to excel, not merely in one accomplishment, but in all the accomplishments that are requisite for that art, even though some of them may seem too difficult for him when he is learning them; for instruction would be altogether superfluous if the natural state of the mind were sufficient. 9. If a pupil that is vitiated in taste, and turgid in his style, as many are, is put under our care, shall we allow him to go on in his own way? Him that is dry and jejune in his manner, shall we not nourish, and, as it were, clothe? For if it be necessary to prune something away from certain pupils, why should it not be allowable to add something to others? 10. Yet I would not fight against nature; for I do not think that any good quality, which is innate, should be detracted, but that whatever is inactive or deficient should be invigorated or supplied. 11. Was that famous teacher, Isocrates, whose writings are not stronger proofs that he spoke well, than his

scholars that he taught well, inclined, when he formed such an opinion of Ephorus and Theopompus as to say that "*the one wanted the rein and the other the spur,*" to think that the slowness in the duller, and the ardor in the more impetuous, were to be fostered by education? On the contrary, he thought that the qualities of each ought to be mixed with those of the other. 12. We must so far accommodate ourselves, however, to feeble intellects, that they may be trained only to that to which nature invites them; for thus they will do with more success the only thing which they can do. But if richer material fall into our hands, from which we justly conceive hopes of a true orator, no rhetorical excellence must be left unstudied. 13. For though such a genius be more inclined, as indeed it must be, to the exercise of certain powers, yet it will not be averse to that of others, and will render them, by study, equal to those in which it naturally excelled; just as the skillful trainer in bodily exercise, (that I may adhere to my former illustration,) will not, if he undertakes to form a pancratiast, teach him to strike with his fist or his heel only, or instruct him merely in wrestling, or only in certain artifices of wrestling, but will practice him in everything pertaining to the pancratiastic art.

There may perhaps be some pupil unequal to some of these exercises. He must then apply chiefly to that in which he can succeed. 14. For two things are especially to be avoided; one, to attempt what cannot be accomplished; and the other, to divert a pupil from what he does well to something else for which he is less qualified. But if he be capable of instruction, the tutor, like Nicostratus whom we, when young, knew at an advanced age, will bring to bear upon him every art of instruction alike, and render him invincible, as Nicostratus was in wrestling and boxing,⁵³ for success in both of which contests he was crowned on the same day. 15. How much more must such training, indeed, be pursued by the teacher of the future orator! For it is not enough that he should speak concisely, or artfully, or vehemently, any more than for a singing master to excel in acute, or middle, or

⁵³A pancratiast and wrestler. See Pausan. v. 21. The saying, ἐγὼ ποιήσω πάντα χατὰ Νιχόστρατον, which occurs twice in Suidas, in ἐγὼ and Νιχόστρατος, is said to refer to a player of that name. [Tr.]

grave tones only, or even in particular subdivisions of them; since eloquence is, like a harp, not perfect, unless, with all its strings stretched, it be in unison from the highest to the lowest note.

Chapter IX

Pupils should regard their tutors as intellectual parents.

1. Having spoken thus fully concerning the duties of teachers, I give pupils, for the present, only this one admonition, that they are to love their tutors not less than their studies, and to regard them as parents, not indeed of their bodies, but of their minds. 2. Such affection contributes greatly to improvement, for pupils, under its influence, will not only listen with pleasure, but will believe what is taught them, and will desire to resemble their instructors. They will come together, in assembling for school, with pleasure and cheerfulness; they will not be angry when corrected, and will be delighted when praised; and they will strive, by their devotion to study, to become as dear as possible to the master. 3. For as it is the duty of preceptors to teach, so it is that of pupils to show themselves teachable; neither of these duties, else, will be of avail without the other. And as the generation of man is effected by both parents, and as you will in vain scatter seed, unless the furrowed ground, previously softened, cherish it, so neither can eloquence come to its growth unless by mutual agreement between him who communicates and him who receives.

Chapter X

Remarks on declamations, § 1, 2. Injudiciousness in the choice of subjects has been an obstruction to improvement in eloquence, 3–5. On what sort of subjects pupils may be permitted to declaim, 6–8. What alterations should be made in the common practice, 9–15.

1. When the pupil has been well instructed, and sufficiently exercised, in these preliminary studies, which are not in themselves inconsiderable; but members and portions, as it were, of higher branches of learning, the time will have nearly arrived for entering on deliberative and judicial subjects. But before I proceed to speak of those

matters, I must say a few words on the art of declamation, which, though the most recently invented⁵⁴ of all exercises, is indeed by far the most useful. 2. For it comprehends within itself all those exercises of which I have been treating, and presents us with a very close resemblance to reality; and it has been so much adopted, accordingly, that it is thought by many sufficient of itself to form oratory, since no excellence in continued speaking can be specified, which is not found in this prelude to speaking. 3. The practice however has so degenerated through the fault of the teachers, that the license and ignorance of declaimers have been among the chief causes that have corrupted eloquence. But of that which is good by nature we may surely make a good use. 4. Let therefore the subjects themselves, which shall be imagined, be as like as possible to truth; and let declamations to the utmost extent that is practicable, imitate those pleadings for which they were introduced as a preparation. 5. For as to *magicians*,⁵⁵ and the *pestilence*, and *oracles*,⁵⁶ and *stepmothers more cruel than those of tragedy*, and other subjects more imaginary than these, we shall in vain seek them among *sponsions* and *interdicts*.⁵⁷ What, then, it may be said, shall we never suffer students to handle such topics as are above belief, and (to say the truth) poetical, so that they may expatiate and exult in their subject, and swell forth as it were into full body? 6. It would indeed be best not to suffer

⁵⁴See i. 4, 41, 42. [Tr.]

⁵⁵Such a subject as that of the tenth of the declamations ascribed to Quintilian, entitled *Sepulchrum Incantatum*. [Tr.]

⁵⁶*Pestilentiam, et responsa*. These two words appear to refer to the same subject, which is that of the 326th declamation of those called Quintilian's: A people suffering from pestilence sent a deputy to consult an oracle about a remedy; the answer given him was that he must sacrifice his own son. On his return he communicated the oracle to his son, but concealed it from the public authorities, telling them that they had to perform certain sacred rites. When the rites were finished, the pestilence did not abate; and the son then put himself to death. After the pestilence had subsided, the father was accused of treason to the state. See also *Declamat*, 384, and the 19th and 43rd of those ascribed to Calphurnius Flaccus. [Tr.]

⁵⁷Law terms; *sponsio* was when a litigant engaged to pay a certain sum of money if he lost the cause; an *interdict* was when the prætor ordered or forbade anything to be done, chiefly in regard to property. *Turnebus*. [Tr.]

them; but at least let not the subjects, if grand and turgid, appear also, to him who regards them with severe judgment, foolish and ridiculous; so that, if we must grant the use of such topics, let the declaimer swell himself occasionally to the full, provided he understands that, as four-footed animals, when they have been blown with green fodder, are cured by losing blood, and thus return to food suited to maintain their strength, so must his turgidity be diminished, and whatever corrupt humors he has contracted be discharged, if he wishes to be healthy and strong; for otherwise his empty swelling will be hampered at the first attempt at any real pleading.

7. Those, assuredly, who think that the whole exercise of declaiming is altogether different from forensic pleading, do not see even the reason for which that exercise was instituted. 8. For, if it is no preparation for the forum, it is merely like theatrical ostentation, or insane raving. To what purpose is it to instruct a judge, who has no existence? To state a case that all know to be fictitious? To bring proofs of a point on which no man will pronounce sentence? This indeed is nothing more than trifling; but how ridiculous is it to excite our feelings, and to work upon an audience with anger and sorrow, unless we are preparing ourselves by imitations of battle for serious contests and a regular field? 9. Will there then be no difference, it may be asked, between the mode of speaking at the bar, and mere exercise in declamation? I answer, that if we speak for the sake of improvement, there will be no difference. I wish, too, that it were made a part of the exercise to use names;⁵⁸ that causes more complicated, and requiring longer pleadings, were invented; that we were less afraid of words in daily use; and that we were in the habit of mingling jests with our declamation; all which points, however we may have been practiced in the schools in other respects, find us novices at the bar.

10. But even if a declamation be composed merely for display, we ought surely to exert our

⁵⁸Which were not introduced in declamations; for *pater*, *tyrannicida*, *abdicator*, *raptor* were used as general terms, rendering the whole performance less animated, and less like reality. In *suasoriae orationes* persons were specified, but to them Quintilian seems to make no reference in these remarks. *Spalding*. [Tr.]

voice in some degree to please the audience. 11. For even in those oratorical compositions, which are doubtless based in some degree upon truth, but are adapted to please the multitude, (such as are the panegyrics which we read, and all that *epideictic* kind of eloquence,) it is allowable to use great elegance, and not only to acknowledge the efforts of art, (which ought generally to be concealed in forensic pleadings,) but to display it to those who are called together for the purpose of witnessing it. 12. Declamation therefore, as it is an imitation of real pleadings and deliberations, ought closely to resemble reality, but, as it carries with it something of ostentation, to clothe itself in a certain elegance. 13. Such is the practice of actors, who do not pronounce exactly as we speak in common conversation, for such pronunciation would be devoid of art; nor do they depart far from nature, as by such a fault imitation would be destroyed; but they exalt the simplicity of familiar discourse with a certain scenic grace.

14. However some inconveniences will attend us from the nature of the subjects which we have imagined, especially as many particulars in them are left uncertain, which we settle as suits our purpose, as *age*, *fortune*, *children*, *parents*, *strength*, *laws*, and *manners of cities*; and other things of a similar kind. 15. Sometimes, too, we draw arguments from the very faults of the imaginary causes. But on each of these points we shall speak in its proper place. For though the whole object of the work intended by us has regard to the formation of an orator, yet, lest students may think anything wanting, we shall not omit, in passing, whatever may occur that fairly relates to the teaching of the schools.

Chapter XI

Some think instruction in oratory unnecessary, § 1, 2. Boasts and practices of the ignorant, 3–5. Some study only parts of their speeches; want of connection in their matter, 6, 7.

1. From this point, then, I am to enter upon that portion of the art with which those who have omitted the preceding portions usually commence. I see, however, that some will oppose me at the very threshold; men who think that elo-

quence has no need of rules of this kind, and who, satisfied with their own natural ability, and the common methods of teaching and exercise in the schools, even ridicule my diligence; following the example of certain professors of great reputation. It was one of those characters, I believe, who, being asked what a *figure* and what a *thought* was, answered that “he did not know, but that, if it had any relation to his subject, it would be found in his declamation.” 2. Another of them replied to a person who asked him “whether he was a follower of Theodorus or Apollodorus,” “I am a prize-fighter.”⁵⁹ Nor could he indeed have escaped an avowal of his ignorance with greater wit. But such men, as they have attained eminent repute through the goodness of their natural powers, and have uttered many things even worthy of remembrance, have had very many imitators that resemble them in negligence, but very few that approach them in ability. 3. They make it their boast that they speak from impulse, and merely exert their natural powers; and say that there is no need of proofs or arrangement in fictitious subjects, but only of grand thoughts, to hear which the auditory will be crowded, and of which the best are the offspring of venturesomeness. 4. In meditation, also, as they use no method, they either wait, often for some days, looking at the ceiling for some great thought that may spontaneously present itself, or, exciting themselves with inarticulate sounds, as with a trumpet, they adapt the wildest gestures of body, not to the utterance, but to the excogitation of words.

5. Some, before they have conceived any thoughts, fix upon certain heads, under which

⁵⁹*Percontanti* Theodorus an Apollodorus esset, Ego, *inquit*, *parmularis* sum. Theodorus and Apollodorus were well-known rhetoricians, often mentioned by Quintilian, and leaders of parties. That *parmularius* signifies one who favored the gladiators in the theater and arena, called *Thraces* from their armor, has been shown by the commentators on Suet. Domit. c. 10. . . . The man to whom Quintilian alludes intimates that he knew whom to favor in the arena and the circus, but that for parties among rhetoricians he had no care. *Gesner*. “It is almost the same as if a person, upon being asked whether he were a Nominalist or a Realist, were to reply, ‘I am a Carthusian,’ that is, I do not care for or do not know the names Nominalist and Realist.” Scheller’s *Lexicon*, s. v. *parmularius*. [Tr.]

something eloquent is to be introduced; but, after modulating their words to themselves, aloud and for a long time, they desert their proposed arrangement, from despairing of the possibility of forming any connection, and then turn to one train of ideas, and again to another, all equally common and hackneyed. 6. Those however who seem to have most method, do not bestow their efforts on fictitious causes, but on common topics, in which they do not direct their view to any certain object, but throw out detached thoughts as they occur to them. 7. Hence it happens that their speech, being unconnected and made up of different pieces, cannot hang together, but is like the notebooks of boys, in which they enter promiscuously whatever has been commended in the declamations of others. Yet they sometimes strike out fine sentiments and good thoughts (for so indeed they are accustomed to boast); but barbarians and slaves do the same; and, if this be sufficient, there is no art at all in eloquence.

Chapter XII

Why the ignorant often seem to speak with more force than the learned, § 1–3. They attack more boldly, and are less afraid of failure, 4, 5. But they cannot choose judiciously, or prove with effect, 6. Their thoughts sometimes striking, 7. Apparent disadvantages of learned polish, 8. Unlearned speakers often vigorous in delivery, 9, 10. Occasionally too much admired by teachers of oratory, 11, 12.

1. I must not forbear to acknowledge, however, that people in general adopt the notion that the unlearned appear to speak with more force than the learned. But this opinion has its origin chiefly in the mistake of those who judge erroneously, and who think that what has no art has the more energy; just as if they should conceive it a greater proof of strength to break through a door than to open it, to rupture a knot than to untie it, to drag an animal than to lead it. 2. By such persons a gladiator, who rushes to battle without any knowledge of arms, and a wrestler, who struggles with the whole force of his body to effect that which he has once attempted, is called so much the braver; though the latter is often laid prostrate by his own strength, and the other, however violent his assault, is withstood by a gentle turn of his adversary’s wrist.

3. But there are some things concerning this point that very naturally deceive the unskillful; for *division*, though it is of great consequence in pleadings, diminishes the appearance of strength; what is rough is imagined more bulky than what is polished; and objects when scattered are thought more numerous than when they are ranged in order.

4. There is also a certain affinity between particular excellences and faults, in consequence of which a *railer* passes for a *free speaker*, a *rash* for a *bold* one, a *prolix* for a *copious* one. But an ignorant pleader rails too openly and too frequently, to the peril of the party whose cause he has undertaken, and often to his own. 5. Yet this practice attracts the notice of people to him, because they readily listen to what they would not themselves utter.

Such a speaker, too, is far from avoiding that venturesomeness which lies in mere expression, and makes desperate efforts; whence it may happen that he who is always seeking something extravagant, may sometimes find something great; but it happens only seldom, and does not compensate for undoubted faults.

6. It is on this account that unlearned speakers seem sometimes to have greater copiousness of language, because they pour forth every thing; while the learned use selection and moderation. Besides, unlearned pleaders seldom adhere to the object of proving what they have asserted; by this means they avoid what appears to judges of bad taste the dryness of questions and arguments, and seek nothing else but matter in which they may please the ears of the court with senseless gratifications.

7. Their *fine sentiments* themselves, too, at which alone they aim, are more striking when all around them is poor and mean; as lights are most brilliant, not amidst shades as Cicero says,⁶⁰ but amidst utter darkness. Let such speakers therefore be called as ingenious as the world pleases, provided it be granted that a man of real eloquence would receive the praise given to them as an insult.

⁶⁰De Orat. iii. 26. The reference was first discovered by Almelooven. Gesner justly observes that Quintilian alludes to the passage in jest. [Tr.]

8. Still it must be allowed that learning does take away something, as the file takes something from rough metal, the whetstone from blunt instruments, and age from wine; but it takes away what is faulty; and that which learning has polished is less only because it is better.

9. But such pleaders try by their delivery to gain the reputation of speaking with energy; for they bawl on every occasion and bellow out every thing *with uplifted hand*, as they call it, raging like madmen with incessant action, panting and swaggering, and with every kind of gesture and movement of the head. 10. To clap the hands together, to stamp the foot on the ground, to strike the thigh, the breast, and the forehead with the hand, makes a wonderful impression on an audience of the lower order,⁶¹ while the polished speaker, as he knows how to temper, to vary, and to arrange the several parts of his speech, so in delivery he knows how to adapt his action to every variety of complexion in what he utters; and, if any rule appears to him deserving of constant attention, it would be that he should prefer always to be and to seem modest. But the other sort of speakers call that force which ought rather to be called violence.

11. But we may at times see not only pleaders, but, what is far more disgraceful, teachers, who, after having had some short practice in speaking, abandon all method and indulge in every kind of irregularity as inclination prompts them, and call those who have paid more regard to learning than themselves, foolish, lifeless, timid, weak, and whatever other epithet of reproach occurs to them. 12. Let me then congratulate them as having become eloquent without labor, without method, without study; but let me, as I have long withdrawn from the duties of teaching and of speaking in the forum, because I thought it most honorable to terminate my career while my services were still desired, console my leisure in meditating and composing precepts which I trust will be of use to young men of ability, and which, I am sure, are a pleasure to myself.

⁶¹*Mirè ad pullatum circum facit.* The color or dirt of the *toga*, and still more of the *tunica*, which many of the poor wore without anything over it, characterizes a multitude of the lower and uneducated class of people. So Plin. Ep. vii. 17: *Illos quoque sordidos et pullatos reveremur.* See Quint. vi. 4. 6. *Spalding.* [Tr.]

Chapter XIII

Quintilian does not give rules from which there is no departure; pleaders must act according to the requisitions of their subjects, 1–7. What an orator has chiefly to keep in view, and how far rules should be observed, 8–17.

1. But let no man require from me such a system of precepts as is laid down by most authors of *books of rules*, a system in which I should have to make certain laws, fixed by immutable necessity, for all students of eloquence, commencing with the *proæmium*, and what must be the character of it, saying that the *statement of facts* must come next, and what rule must be observed in stating them; that after this must come the *proposition*, or as some have preferred to call it, the *excursion*,⁶² and then that there must be a *certain order of questions*; adding also other precepts, which some speakers observe as if it were unlawful to do otherwise, and as if they were acting under orders; 2. for rhetoric would be a very easy and small matter, if it could be included in one short body of rules, but rules must generally be altered to suit the nature of each individual case, the time, the occasion, and necessity itself; consequently, one great quality in an orator is discretion, because he must turn his thoughts in various directions, according to the different bearings of his subject. 3. What if you should direct a general, that, whenever he draws up his troops for battle, he must range his front in line, extend his wings to the right and left, and station his cavalry to defend his flanks? Such a method will perhaps be the best, as often as it is practicable; but it will be subject to alteration from the nature of the ground, if a hill come in the way, if a river interpose, if obstruction be caused by declivities, woods, or any other obstacles; 4. the character of the enemy, too, may make a change necessary, or the nature of the contest in which he has to engage; and he will have to fight, sometimes with his troops in extended line, sometimes in the form of wedges, and to employ, sometimes his auxiliaries, and sometimes his own legions; and sometimes it will be of advantage to turn his back in pretended flight. 5. In like manner, whether an

exordium be necessary or superfluous, whether it should be short or long, whether it should be wholly addressed to the judge, or, by the aid of some figure of speech, directed occasionally to others, whether the statement of facts should be concise or copious, continuous or broken, in the order of events or in any other, the nature of the causes themselves must show. 6. The case is the same with regard to the order of examination, since, in the same cause, one question may often be of advantage to one side, and another question to the other, to be asked first; for the precepts of oratory are not established by laws or public decrees, but whatever is contained in them was discovered by expediency. 7. Yet I shall not deny that it is in general of service to attend to rules, or I should not write any; but if expediency shall suggest anything at variance with them, we shall have to follow it, deserting the authority of teachers.

8. For my part I shall, above all things,

Direct, enjoin, and o'er and o'er repeat.

that an orator, in all his pleadings, should keep two things in view, *what is becoming*, and *what is expedient*; but it is frequently *expedient*, and sometimes *becoming*, to make some deviations from the regular and settled order, as, in statues and pictures, we see the dress, look, and attitude, varied. 9. In a statue, *exactly* upright, there is but very little gracefulness,⁶³ for the face will look straight forward, the arms hang down, the feet will be joined, and the whole figure, from top to toe, will be rigidity itself; but a gentle bend, or, to use the expression, motion of the body, gives a certain animation to figures. Accordingly, the hands are not always placed in the same position, and a thousand varieties are given to the countenance. 10. Some figures are in a running or rushing posture, some are seated or reclining, some are uncovered, and others veiled, some partake of both conditions. What is more distorted and elaborate than the Discobolus of Myron? Yet if any one should find fault with that figure for not being upright, would he not prove himself void of all understanding of the art, in which the very novelty and difficulty of the execution is what is most deserving of praise?

⁶²See b. iv. c. 3, 4. [Tr.]

⁶³Quintilian had some notion of the waving line of beauty, of which Hogarth has so ably treated. [Tr.]

11. Such graces and charms rhetorical figures afford, both such as are in the thoughts and such as lie in words, for they depart in some degree from the right line, and exhibit the merit of deviation from common practice. 12. The whole face is generally represented in a painting, yet Apelles painted the figure of Antigonus with only one side of his face toward the spectator, that its disfigurement from the loss of an eye might be concealed. Are not some things, in like manner, to be concealed in speaking, whether, it may be, because they ought not to be told, or because they cannot be expressed as they deserve? 13. It was in this way that Timanthes, a painter, I believe, of Cythnus,⁶⁴ acted, in the picture by which he carried off the prize from Colotes, of Teium; for when, at the sacrifice of Iphigenia, he had represented Calchas looking sorrowful, Ulysses more sorrowful, and had given to Menelaus the utmost grief that his art could depict, not knowing, as his power of representing feeling was exhausted, how he could fitly paint the countenance of the father, he threw a veil over his head, and left his grief to be estimated by the spectator from his own heart. 14. To this device is not the remark of Sallust somewhat similar, *For I think it better to say nothing concerning Carthage, than to say but little?* For these reasons it has always been customary with me, to bind myself as little as possible to rules which the Greeks call *καθολικὰ*, and which we, translating the word as well as we can, term *universalia* or *perpetualia*, “general” or “constant”; for rules are rarely found of such a nature, that they may not be shaken in some part, or wholly overthrown.

⁶⁴*Timanthes, opinor, Cythnius.* See Plin. H. N. xxxv. 36; Cic. Orat. c. 22; Val. Max. viii. 11, ext. But it has been justly observed that the painter took the hint from Euripides, Iphig. Aul. 1550. *Spalding.* What Euripides says is, that “Agamemnon, when he saw Iphigenia going to be sacrificed, uttered a groan, and, turning away his head, shed tears, veiling his face with his robe.” *Spalding* remarks that the doubt implied in *opinion* refers to the country of Timanthes, Quintilian not being certain whether he was a Cythnian or not; though why Quintilian should have been so anxious to avoid error about the painter’s country, when he was merely making a passing observation on his picture, it is not easy to say. For further particulars about Timanthes and his painting, the reader may consult Smith’s Dict. of Biog. and Mythol. [Tr.]

But of rules I shall speak more fully, and of each in its own place. 15. In the mean time, I would not have young men think themselves sufficiently accomplished, if they have learned by art some one of those little books on rhetoric, which are commonly handed about, and fancy that they are thus safe under the decrees of theory. The art of speaking depends on great labor, constant study, varied exercise, repeated trials, the deepest sagacity, and the readiest judgment. 16. But it is assisted by rules, provided that they point out a fair road, and not one single wheel-rut, from which he who thinks it unlawful to decline, must be contented with the slow progress of those who walk on ropes. Accordingly, we often quit the main road, (which has been formed perhaps by the labor of an army,) being attracted by a shorter path; or if bridges, broken down by torrents, have intersected the direct way, we are compelled to go round about; and if the gate be stopped up by flames, we shall have to force a way through the wall. 17. The work of eloquence is extensive and of infinite variety, presenting something new almost daily; nor will all that is possible ever have been said of it. But the precepts which have been transmitted to us I will endeavor to set forth, considering, at the same time, which of them are the most valuable, whether anything in them seems likely to be changed for the better, and whether any additions may be made to them, or anything taken from them.

Chapter XIV

Of the term rhetoric or oratory, § 1–4. Heads under which Quintilian considers the art of oratory, 5.

1. Some who have translated *ῥητορικὴ* from Greek into Latin, have called it *ars oratoria* and *oratrix*. I would not deprive those writers of their due praise, for endeavoring to add to the copiousness of the Latin language, but all Greek words do not obey our will, in attempting to render them from the Greek, as all our words, in like manner, do not obey that of the Greeks, when they try to express something of ours in their own tongue. 2. This translation is not less harsh than the *essentia* and

entia of Flavius,⁶⁵ for the Greek οὐσία: nor is it indeed exact, for *oratoria* will be taken in the same sense as *elocutoria*, *oratrix* as *elocutrix*, but the word *rhetoric*, of which we are speaking, is the same sort of word as *eloquentia*, and it is doubtless used in two senses by the Greeks. 3. In one acceptation it is an adjective, *ars rhetorica*, as *navis piratica*: in the other a substantive, like *philosophia* or *amicitia*. We wish it now to have the signification of a substantive, just as γράμματιχῆ is rendered by the substantive *literatura*, not by *literatrix*, which would be similar to *oratrix*, nor by *literatoria*, which would be similar to *oratoria*; but for the word *rhetorice*, no equivalent Latin word has been found. 4. Let us not, however, dispute about the use of it, especially as we must adopt many other Greek words; for if I may use the terms *physicus*, *musicus*, *geometres*, I shall offer no unseemly violence to them by attempting to turn them into Latin; and since Cicero himself uses a Greek title for the books which he first wrote upon the art, we certainly need be under no apprehension of appearing to have rashly trusted the greatest of orators as to the name of his own art.

5. Rhetoric, then, (for we shall henceforth use this term without dread of sarcastic objections,) will be best divided, in my opinion, in such a manner, that we may speak first of the *art*, next of the *artist*, and then of the *work*. The *art* will be that which ought to be attained by study, and is the *knowledge how to speak well*. The *artificer* is he who has thoroughly acquired the art, that is, the orator, whose business is *to speak well*. The *work* is what is achieved by the artificer, that is, *good speaking*. All these are to be considered under special heads; but of the particulars that are to follow, I shall speak in their several places; at present I shall proceed to consider what is to be said on the first general head.

⁶⁵It is probable that he is the same person whom writers in general call Papirius Fabianus, a contemporary of Seneca, a philosopher well acquainted with the nature of things, as he is called by Plin. H. N. xxxvi. 24. Both the Senecas, father and son, say a great deal of him, the one in the Praef. Controv. ii. p. 132–34; the other in the Epist. ad Lucil. 100. Spalding. But from Sen. Ep. 58, it appears, according to the emendation of Muretus, now generally adopted, that Cicero had previously used the word. Compare Quint. viii. 3. 53. [Tr.]

Chapter XV

What rhetoric is, § 1, 2. To call it the power of persuading is to give an insufficient definition of it, 3–9. To call it the power of persuading by speech is not sufficient, 10, 11. Other definitions, 12–23. That of Gorgias in Plato; that of Plato or Socrates in the Phædrus, 24–31. That of Cornelius Celsus, 32. Other definitions more approved by Quintilian, 33–37. Quintilian's own definition, 38.

1. First of all, then, we have to consider what rhetoric is. It is, indeed, defined in various ways; but its definition gives rise chiefly to two considerations, for the dispute is, in general, either concerning the *quality of the thing itself*, or concerning the comprehension of the terms in which it is defined. The first and chief difference of opinion on the subject is, that some think it possible even for bad men to have the name of orators; while others (to whose opinion I attach myself) maintain that the name, and the art of which we are speaking, can be conceded only to good men.⁶⁶

2. Of those who separate the talent of speaking from the greater and more desirable praise of a good life, some have called rhetoric merely a *power*, some a *science*, but not a *virtue*,⁶⁷ some a *habit*, some an *art*, but having nothing in common with science and virtue; some even an abuse of art, that is, a χαχοτεχνία.⁶⁸ 3. All these have generally supposed, that the business of oratory lies either in *persuading*, or in *speaking in a manner adapted to persuade*, for such art may be attained by one who is far from being a good man. The most common definition therefore is, that *oratory is the power of persuading*. What I call a *power*, some call a *faculty*, and others a *talent*, but that this discrepancy may be attended

⁶⁶This was the opinion also of Cato the Censor, given in his book *De Oratore* addressed to his son, as appears from Seneca the father, Praef. ad Controv. i. i., a remarkable passage, and worthy of attention from the studious. *Orator est, Marce fili, vir bonus dicendi peritus*. Antonius, in Cic. De Orat. ii, 20, distinguishes the orator from the good man, as does also Cicero himself, Invent. i. 3, 4. See Quintilian xii. 1, 1; and Proœm. tot. op. sect. 9. Spalding. [Tr.]

⁶⁷See c. 20. [Tr.]

⁶⁸We call that art a χαχοτεχνία which has not a good, but a bad end, as the magic art; and some abuse oratory to the hurt of their fellow creatures. Turnebus. [Tr.]

with no ambiguity, I mean by *power*, δύναμις. 4. This opinion had its origin from Isocrates, if the treatise on the art, which is in circulation under his name, is really his.⁶⁹ That rhetorician, though he had none of the feelings of those who defame the business of the orator, gives too rash a definition of the art when he says; “That rhetoric is the *worker of persuasion*, πειθοῦς δημιουργός for I shall not allow myself to use the peculiar term that Ennius applies to Marcus Cethegus, *SUADÆ medulla*. 5. In Plato too, Gorgias, in the Dialogue inscribed with his name, says almost the same thing; but Plato wishes it to be received as the opinion of Gorgias, not as his own. Cicero, in several passages of his writings, has said, that the duty of an orator is *to speak in a way adapted to persuade*. 6. In his books on Rhetoric also, but with which, doubtless, he was not satisfied,⁷⁰ he makes the end of eloquence to be *persuasion*.

But money, likewise, has the power of persuasion, and interest, and the authority and dignity of a speaker, and even his very look, unaccompanied by language, when either the remembrance of the services of any individual, or a pitiable appearance, or beauty of person, draws forth an opinion. 7. Thus when Antonius, in his defense of Manius Aquilius, exhibited on his breast, by tearing his client’s robe, the scars of the wounds which he had received for his country, he did not trust to the power of his eloquence, but applied force, as it were, to the eyes of the Roman people, who, it was thought, were chiefly induced by the sight to acquit the accused. 8. That Servius Galba⁷¹ escaped merely through the pity which

⁶⁹The treatise of Isocrates Cicero (de Invent. ii. 2) intimates that he had not seen. There is a learned discussion of Manutius concerning it in a note on Epist. ad Div. i. 9. He conjectures that there may have been a treatise of Isocrates the younger, of Apollonia, a disciple of the greater Isocrates, mentioned by Harpocration (in ἐπαχτός) and Suidas. See Ruhnk. Hist. Crit. Oratt. Græcc. prefixed to Rutilus Lupus, p. 84. seqq. Spalding. [Tr.]

⁷⁰He shows his dissatisfaction with his *Rhetorica*, or books *de Inventione*, “qui sibi exciderint,” Orat. i. 2, *init*. See Quint. iii. 1, 20; iii. 6, 58, 63. Spalding. [Tr.]

⁷¹When he was prætor in Spain he had put to death a body of Lusitanians after pledging the public faith that their lives should be spared; an act for which he was accused before the people by the tribune Libo, who was supported by Cato. Turnebus. See Cic. de Orat. i. 53. [Tr.]

he excited, when he not only produced his own little children before the assembly, but carried round in his hands the son of Sulpicius Gallus, is testified, not only by the records of others, but by the speech of Cato. 9. Phryne too, people think, was freed from peril, not by the pleading of Hyperides, though it was admirable, but by the exposure of her figure, which, otherwise most striking, he had uncovered by opening her robe. If, then, all such things *persuade*, the definition of which we have spoken is not satisfactory.

10. Those, accordingly, have appeared to themselves more exact, who, though they have the same general opinion as to rhetoric, have pronounced it to be the *power of persuading by speaking*. This definition Gorgias gives, in the Dialogue which we have just mentioned, being forced to do so, as it were, by Socrates. Theodectes, if the treatise on rhetoric, which is inscribed with his name, is his, (or it may rather, perhaps, as has been supposed, be the work of Aristotle,) does not dissent from Gorgias, for it is asserted in that book, that the object of oratory is *to lead men by speaking to that which the speaker wishes*. 11. But not even this definition is sufficiently comprehensive; for not only the orator, but others, as harlots, flatterers, and seducers, persuade, or *lead to that which they wish*, by speaking. But the orator, on the contrary, does not always persuade; so that sometimes this is not his peculiar object; sometimes it is an object common to him with others, who are very different from orators. 12. Yet Apollodorus varies but little from this definition, as he says, that the first and supreme object of judicial pleading is *to persuade the judge, and to lead him to whatever opinion the speaker may wish*, for he thus subjects the orator to the power of fortune, so that, if he does not succeed in persuading, he cannot retain the name of an orator. 13. Some, on the other hand, detach themselves from all considerations as to the event, as Aristotle, who says, that *oratory is the power of finding out whatever can persuade in speaking*. But this definition has not only the fault of which we have just spoken, but the additional one of comprehending nothing but invention, which, without elocution, cannot constitute oratory. 14. To Hermagoras, who says, that the object of oratory is *to speak persuasively*,

and to others, who express themselves to the same purpose, though not in the same words, but tell us that the object of oratory is *to say all that ought to be said in order to persuade*, a sufficient answer was given when we showed that *to persuade* is not the business of the orator only.

15. Various other opinions have been added to these, for some have thought that oratory may be employed about *all subjects*, others only about *political affairs*, but which of these notions is nearer to truth, I shall inquire in that part of my work which will be devoted to the question.

16. Aristotle seems to have put everything in the power of oratory when he says, that it is *the power of saying on every subject whatever can be found to persuade*: and such is the case with Patrocles,⁷² who, indeed, does not add *on every subject*, but, as he makes no exception, shows that his idea is the same, for he calls oratory *the power of finding whatever is persuasive in speaking*, both which definitions embrace invention alone. Theodorus,⁷³ in order to avoid this defect, decides oratory to be *the power of discovering and expressing, with elegance, whatever is credible on any subject whatever*. 17. But, while one who is not an orator may find out what is credible as well as what is persuasive, he, by adding *on any subject whatever*, grants more than the preceding makers of definitions, and allows the title of a most honorable art to those who may persuade even to crime. 18. Gorgias, in Plato, calls himself a master of persuasion in courts of justice and other assemblies, and says that he treats both of what is just and what is unjust; and Socrates allows him the art of *persuading*, but not of *teaching*.

19. Those who have not granted all subjects to the orator, have made distinctions in their definitions, as they were necessitated, with more anxi-

⁷²He is mentioned again, iii. 6, 44. Nothing more is known of him than is to be learned from these two passages. [Tr.]

⁷³I do not suppose him to be the same that is mentioned in sect. 21, for Quintilian would scarcely have added "of Gadara" when he mentioned him the second time, unless he had intended to distinguish the one from the other. We must suppose, therefore, that it is Theodorus of Byzantium who is meant; a rhetorician mentioned by Plato Phædr. p. 266 E, as well as by Quint. iii. I, II; and see Cic. Brut. c. 12; Orat. c. 12. Spalding. [Tr.]

ety and verbosity. One of these is Ariston, a disciple of Critolaus, the Peripatetic, whose definition of oratory is, that it is *the science of discovering and expressing what ought to be said on political affairs, in language adapted to persuade the people*. 20. He considers oratory a *science*, because he is a Peripatetic, not a *virtue*, like the Stoics,⁷⁴ but, in adding *adapted to persuade the people*, he throws dishonor on the art of oratory, as if he thought it unsuited to persuade the learned. But of all who think that the orator is to discourse only on political questions, it may be said, once for all, that many duties of the orator are set aside by them; for instance, all *laudatory* speaking, which is the third part of oratory.⁷⁵ 21. Theodorus, of Gadara, (to proceed with those who have thought oratory an *art*, not a *virtue*,) defines more cautiously, for he says, (let me borrow the words of those who have translated his phraseology from the Greek,) that oratory is *an art that discovers, and judges, and enunciates with suitable eloquence, according to the measure of that which may be found adapted to persuading, in any subject connected with political affairs*. 22. Cornelius Celsus, in like manner, says that the object of oratory is *to speak persuasively on doubtful and political matters*. To these definitions there are some, not very dissimilar, given by others, such as this: *oratory is the power of judging and discoursing on such civil questions as are submitted to it, with a certain persuasiveness, a certain action of the body, and a certain mode of delivering what it expresses*. 23. There are a thousand other definitions, but

⁷⁴Cicero, de Orat. iii. 18, says that *the Stoics alone, of all the philosophers, have called eloquence virtue and wisdom*; see also Acad. Quæst. i. 2. The Stoics necessarily held this opinion, as they also gave *dialectics* and *physics* the name of *virtues*, Cic. de Fin. iii. 21; and of dialectics, taken in its widest sense, oratory or rhetoric may be considered as a part. The Stoics, indeed, make the word ἐπιστήμη the basis of all their definitions of virtues; see Stob. Eclog. p. 167, ed. Antv.; and virtue itself is defined by Musonius Rufus, the master of Epictetus, as *knowledge not merely theoretical, but practical*: Stob. Serm. p. 204, ed. Tigr. If therefore the definition of eloquence in the text had proceeded from a Stoic, and not a Peripatetic, he would have acknowledged it to be a virtue by the very admission that it was knowledge. See c. 20 of this book. Spalding. [Tr.]

⁷⁵The *epideictic*, the other two parts being the *deliberative* and the *judicial*. [Tr.]

either similar, or composed of similar elements, which we shall notice when we come to treat upon the subjects of oratory.

Some have thought it neither a *power*, nor a *science*, nor an *art*; Critolaus calls it the *practice of speaking*; (for such is the meaning of the word *τρούβη*;) Athenæus,⁷⁶ *the art of deceiving*.⁷⁷ 24. But most writers, satisfied with reading a few passages from Plato's *Gorgias*,⁷⁸ unskillfully extracted by their predecessors, (for they neither consult the whole of that dialogue, nor any of the other writings of Plato,) have fallen into a very grave error, supposing that that philosopher entertained such an opinion as to think that *oratory was not an art, but a certain skillfulness in flattering and pleasing*; 25. or, as he says in another place, the *simulation of one part of polity*, and the *fourth sort of flattery*, for he assigns two parts of polity to the body, *medicine*, and, as they interpret it, *exercise*, and two to the mind, *law* and *justice*, and then calls the *art of cooks* the flattery or simulation of *medicine*, and the *art of dealers in slaves* the simulation of the effects of *exercise*, as they produce a false complexion by paint and the appearance of strength by unsolid fat; the simulation of *legal science* he calls *sophistry*, and that of *justice* *rhetoric*. 26. All this is, indeed, expressed in that Dialogue, and uttered by Socrates, under whose person Plato seems to intimate what he thinks; but some of his dialogues were composed merely to refute those who argued on the other side, and are called *ἐλεγχτικοί*: others were written to teach, and are called *δογματικοί*. 27. But Socrates, or Plato, thought that sort of oratory, which was then practiced, to be of a dogmatic character, for he speaks of it as being *κατὰ τοῦτον τὸν τρόπον ὃν ὑμεῖς πολιτεύεσθε*,⁷⁹ "according to the manner in which you manage public affairs," and understands oratory of a sincere and honorable nature. The dispute with Gorgias is accordingly thus terminated: "It is therefore

⁷⁶He is mentioned again, iii. 1, 16. Nothing more is known of him than is to be learned from these two passages of Quintilian. [Tr.]

⁷⁷It is strange that among those who said that oratory was neither a *power*, nor a *science*, nor an *art*, Quintilian should rank one who called it the "art of deceiving." *Spalding*. [Tr.]

⁷⁸Plato *Gorg.* sect. 43, *seqq.* p. 462, ed. Steph. [Tr.]

⁷⁹Sect. 120, p. 500 C. [Tr.]

necessary that the orator be a just man, and that the just man should wish to do just things."⁸⁰ 28. When this has been said, Gorgias is silent, but Polus resumes the subject, who, from the ardor of youth, is somewhat inconsiderate, and in reply to whom the remarks on simulation and flattery are made. Callicles, who is even more vehement, speaks next, but is reduced to the conclusion, that "he who would be a true orator must be a just man, and must know what is just;"⁸¹ and it is therefore evident, that oratory was not considered by Plato an evil, but that he thought true oratory could not be attained by any but a just and good man. 29. In the *Phædrus* he sets forth still more clearly, that the art cannot be fully acquired without a knowledge of justice, an opinion to which I also assent. Would Plato, if he had held any other sentiments, have written the *Defense of Socrates*, and the *Euology* of those who fell in defense of their country,⁸² compositions which are certainly work for the orator? 30. But he has even inveighed against that class of men who used their abilities in speaking for bad ends. Socrates also thought the speech, which Lysias had written for him when accused, improper for him to use, though it was a general practice, at that time, to compose for parties appearing before the judges speeches which they themselves might deliver; and thus an elusion of the law,⁸³ by which one man was not allowed to speak for another, was effected. 31. By Plato, also, those who separated oratory from justice, and preferred what is probable to what is true, were thought no proper teachers of the art, for so he signifies, too,

⁸⁰Sect. 35, p. 460 C. [Tr.]

⁸¹Sect. 136, p. 508 C. [Tr.]

⁸²Plato wrote a funeral oration on some Athenians who had fallen in battle; a composition, says Cicero, which was so well received, that it was recited publicly on a certain day in every year. *Turnebus*. [Tr.]

⁸³Of this law I have found no mention in any other author, nor has any one of Quintilian's commentators paid due attention to this passage. That what he says is true, and that it was not customary at Athens for one man to speak for another, seems to be shown by the fact that in the works of the Greek orators the litigants always speak for themselves. The only exception was, when the litigant had not the privilege of speaking, as Callias, who was a *metæc*, and for whom Lysias spoke; (see *Lys. Orat. v.*, and *Wolf. Prol. in Lept. p. 69*;) and persons under age, and women. *Spalding*. He adds a few more remarks, which the reader may consult. [Tr.]

in his Phædrus. 32. Cornelius Celsus, moreover, may be thought to have been of the same opinion with those to whom I have just referred, for his words are, *the orator aims only at the semblance of truth*; and he adds, a little after, *not purity of conscience, but the victory of his client, is the reward of the pleader*. Were such assertions true, it would become only the worst of men to give such pernicious weapons to the most mischievous of characters, and to aid dishonesty with precepts; but let those who hold this opinion consider what ground they have for it.

33. Let me, for my part, as I have undertaken to form a *perfect orator*, whom I would have, above all, to be a *good man*, return to those who have better thoughts of the art. Some have pronounced oratory to be identical with *civil polity*; Cicero calls it *a part of civil polity*; and a *knowledge of civil polity*, he thinks, is nothing less than wisdom itself. Some have made it a part of *philosophy*, among whom is Isocrates.⁸⁴ 34. With this character of it, the definition that *oratory is the science of speaking well*, agrees excellently, for it embraces all the virtues of oratory at once, and includes also the character of the true orator, as he cannot speak well unless he be a good man. 35. To the same purpose is the definition of Chrysippus, derived from Cleanthes,⁸⁵ *the science of speaking properly*. There are more definitions in the same philosopher, but they relate rather to other⁸⁶ questions. A definition framed in these terms, *to persuade to what is necessary*, would convey the same notion, except that it makes the art depend on the result. 36. Areus⁸⁷

⁸⁴This we may suppose to have been said in the lost treatise mentioned in sect. 4. In the rest of his writings he is accustomed to use the word *philosophy* with more latitude than was usual; as in the Panegyric, ἡ περὶ τοῦς λόγους φιλοσοφία. Spalding. [Tr.]

⁸⁵"Cleanthes wrote a treatise on the art of rhetoric, and so did Chrysippus, but their writings were of such a nature that if a man wished his mouth closed for ever he has nothing to do but read them." Cic. de Fin. iv. 3. In their definition the expression doubtless was ὀρθῶς λέγειν, instead of εὖ λέγειν, which is found in Sext. Empir. p. 289, and Diog. Laërt. vii. 42. Spalding. [Tr.]

⁸⁶Not to this, whether eloquence is to be attributed to a good man only. [Tr.]

⁸⁷He may possibly have been the Stoic philosopher of Alexandria, for whose sake Cæsar Octavianus spared that city; see Plut. in Anton. p. 953 A. His name is sometimes

defines oratory well, saying that it is *to speak according to the excellence of speech*. Those also exclude bad men from oratory who consider it as the knowledge of civil duties, since they deem such knowledge virtue; but they confine it within too narrow bounds, and to political questions. Albutius,⁸⁸ no obscure professor or author, allows that it is the *art of speaking well*, but errs in giving it limitations, adding, *on political questions*, and *with probability*, of both which restrictions I have already disposed; those, too, are men of good intention, who consider it the business of oratory *to think and speak rightly*.

37. These are almost all the most celebrated definitions, and those about which there is the most controversy; for to discuss all would neither be much to the purpose, nor would be in my power; since a foolish desire, as I think, has prevailed among the writers of treatises on rhetoric, to define nothing in the same terms that another had already used; a vainglorious practice which shall be far from me. 38. For I shall say, not what I shall invent, but what I shall approve; as, for instance, that *oratory is the art of speaking well*; since, when the best definition is found, he who seeks for another must seek for a worse.

This being admitted, it is evident at the same time what object, what highest and ultimate end, oratory has; that object or end which is called in Greek τέλος, and to which every art tends; for if oratory be *the art of speaking well*, its object and ultimate end must be to speak well.

Chapter XVI

Oratory said by some to be a pernicious art, because it may be perverted to bad ends, § 1–4. We might say the same of other things that are allowed to be beneficial, 5, 6. Its excellences, 7–16. The abundant return that it makes for cultivation, 17–19.

I. Next comes the question *whether oratory is useful*; for some are accustomed to declaim

written Arius, the Greek being Ἀρειος, See Fabric. bibl. Gr. Harl. vol. iii., p. 540. Spalding. [Tr.]

⁸⁸Caius Albutius Silus, of Novaria, a rhetorician of the age of Augustus. See Senec. Rhet. Contro. iii. præf. p. 197 Bip.; also Sueton. de Rhet. 6. [Tr.]

violently against it, and, what is most ungenerous, to make use of the power of oratory to lay accusations against oratory; 2. they say that *eloquence is that which saves the wicked from punishment; by the dishonesty of which the innocent are at times condemned; by which deliberations are influenced to the worse; by which not only popular seditions and tumults, but even inexplicable wars, are excited; and of which the efficacy is the greatest when it exerts itself for falsehood against truth.* 3. Even to Socrates, the comic writers make it a reproach that *he taught how to make the worse reason appear the better*; and Plato on his part says that Tisias and Gorgias⁸⁹ professed the same art. 4. To these they add examples from Greek and Roman history, and give a list of persons who, by exerting such eloquence as was mischievous, not only to individuals but to communities, have disturbed or overthrown the constitutions of whole states; asserting that eloquence on that account was banished from the state of Lacedæmon, and that even at Athens, where the orator was forbidden to move the passions, the powers of eloquence were in a manner curtailed.

5. Under such a mode of reasoning, neither will generals, nor magistrates, nor medicine, nor even wisdom itself, be of any utility; for Flaminus⁹⁰ was a general, and the Gracchi, Saturnini, and Glauciæ were magistrates; in the hands of physicians poisons have been found; and among those who abuse the name of philosophers have been occasionally detected the most horrible crimes. 6. We must reject food, for it has often given rise to ill health; we must never go under roofs, for they sometimes fall upon those who dwell beneath them; a sword must not be forged for a soldier, for a robber may use the same weapon. Who does not know that fire and water, without which life cannot exist, and, (that I may not confine myself to things of earth,) that the sun and moon, the chief of the celestial luminaries, sometimes produce hurtful effects?

7. Will it be denied, however, that the blind

⁸⁹"Tisias and Gorgias, by the power of words, make small things great, and great things small." Plato Phædr. p. 267, A.; see also p. 273, A, B, C. *Spalding*. [Tr.]

⁹⁰The general who was defeated by Hannibal at the lake Thrasimenus. [Tr.]

Appius, by the force of his eloquence, broke off a dishonorable treaty of peace about to be concluded with Pyrrhus? Was not the divine eloquence of Cicero, in opposition to the agrarian laws, even popular?⁹¹ Did it not quell the daring of Catiline, and gain, in the toga, the honor of thanksgivings, the highest⁹² that is given to generals victorious in the field? 8. Does not oratory often free the alarmed minds of soldiers from fear, and persuade them, when they are going to face so many perils in battle, that glory is better than life? Nor indeed would the Lacedæmonians and Athenians influence me more than the people of Rome, among whom the highest respect has always been paid orators. 9. Nor do I think that founders of cities would have induced their unsettled multitudes to form themselves into communities by any other means than by the influence of the art of speaking,⁹³ nor would legislators, without the utmost power of oratory, have prevailed on men to bind themselves to submit to the dominion of law. 10. Even the very rules for the conduct of life, beautiful as they are by nature, have yet greater power in forming the mind when the radiance of eloquence illumines the beauty of the precepts. Though the weapons of eloquence, therefore, have effect in both directions, it is not just that that should be accounted an evil which we may use to a good purpose.

11. But these points may perhaps be left to the consideration of those who think that the substance of eloquence lies in the power to persuade. But if eloquence be the *art of speaking well*, (the definition which I adopt,) so that a true *orator* must be, above all, *a good man*, it must assuredly be acknowledged that it is a useful art. 12. In truth, the sovereign deity, the parent of all things, the architect of the world, has distinguished man from other beings, such at least as were to be mortal, by nothing more than by the faculty of speech. 13. Bodily frames superior in size, in

⁹¹A speech against the agrarian laws could not have been well received by the people, without being in the highest degree forcible and eloquent. "While you spoke, (O Cicero!) the tribes relinquished the agrarian law, that is, their own meat and drink." Plin. H. N. vii. 31. [Tr.]

⁹²Being preliminary to a triumph, by which, however, it was not always followed. Cic. Ep. ad Div. xv. 5. [Tr.]

⁹³See Cicero de Inv. i. 2; De Orat i. 8. [Tr.]

strength, in firmness, in endurance, in activity, we see among dumb creatures, and observe, too, that they have less need than we have of external assistance. To walk, to feed themselves, to swim over water, they learn, in less time than we can, from nature herself, without the aid of any other teacher. 14. Most of them, also, are equipped against cold by the produce of their own bodies; weapons for their defense are born with them; and their food lies before their faces; to supply all which wants mankind have the greatest difficulty. The divinity has therefore given us reason, superior to all other qualities, and appointed us to be sharers of it with the immortal gods. 15. But reason could neither profit us so much, nor manifest itself so plainly within us, if we could not express by speech what we have conceived in our minds; a faculty which we see wanting in other animals, far more than, to a certain degree, understanding and reflection. 16. For to contrive habitations, to construct nests, to bring up their young, to hatch them,⁹⁴ to lay up provision for the winter, to produce works inimitable by us, (as those of wax and honey,) is perhaps a proof of some portion of reason; but as, though they do such things, they are without the faculty of speech, they are called *dumb and irrational*. 17. Even to men, to whom speech has been denied, of how little avail is divine reason! If, therefore, we have received from the gods nothing more valuable than speech, what can we consider more deserving of cultivation and exercise? or in what can we more strongly desire to be superior to other men, than in that by which man himself is superior to other animals, especially as in no kind of exertion does labor more plentifully bring its reward? 18. This will be so much the more evident, if we reflect from what origin, and to what extent, the art of eloquence has advanced, and how far it may still be improved. 19. For, not to mention how beneficial it is, and how becoming in a man of virtue, to defend his friends, to direct a senate or people by his counsels, or to lead an

⁹⁴Do they then bring them up before they hatch them? Yet the expression of Homer is exactly similar, ἔτραφεν ἡδ' ἐγένοντο. *Spalding*. Guthrie ignorantly supposed (let me be pardoned for noticing so small a matter) that *excludere* meant to exclude the young ones from the nest when they are able to shift for themselves. [Tr.]

army to whatever enterprise he may desire, is it not extremely honorable to attain, by the common understanding and words which all men use, so high a degree of esteem and glory as to appear not to speak or plead, but, as was the case with Pericles, to hurl forth lightning and thunder?

Chapter XVII

Oratory is manifestly an art, § 1–4. Yet some have denied that it is, and said that its power is wholly from nature, 5–8. Examples from other arts, 9, 10. Every one that speaks is not an orator, 11–13. Opinion of Aristotle, 14. Other charges against oratory; that it has no peculiar subject or matter, and that it sometimes deceives, 15–18. Refutation of these charges, 19–21. Unfairly objected to it that it has no proper end, 22–26. Not pernicious because it sometimes misleads, 27–29. Another objection, that it may be exerted on either side of a question, and that it contradicts itself; answered, 30–36. Oratory is sometimes ignorant of the truth of what it asserts; but the same is the case with other arts and sciences, 36–40. Confirmation of its being an art, 41–43.

1. There would be no end if I should allow myself to expatiate, and indulge my inclination, on this head. Let us proceed, therefore, to the question that follows, *whether oratory be an art*. 2. That it is an art, every one of those who have given rules about eloquence have been so far from doubting, that it is shown by the very titles of their books, that they are written *on the oratorical art*; and Cicero also says, that what is called *oratory is artificial eloquence*. This distinction, it is not only orators that have claimed for themselves, (since they may be thought, perhaps, to have given their profession something more than its due,) but the philosophers, the Stoics, and most of the Peripatetics, agree with them. 3. For myself, I confess, that I was in some doubt whether I should look upon this part of the inquiry as necessary to be considered; for who is so destitute, I will not say of learning, but of the common understanding of mankind, as to imagine that the work of building, or weaving, or molding vessels out of clay, is *an art*, but that oratory, the greatest and noblest of works, has attained such a height of excellence *without being an art*? 4. Those, indeed, who have maintained the

contrary opinion, I suppose not so much to have believed what they advanced, as to have been desirous of exercising their powers on a subject of difficulty, like Polycrates, when he eulogized Busiris and Clytæmnestra; though he is said also to have written the speech that was delivered against Socrates; nor would that indeed have been inconsistent with his other compositions.⁹⁵

5. Some will have oratory to be a natural talent, though they do not deny that it may be assisted by art. Thus Antonius, in Cicero *de Oratore*, says that oratory is *an effect of observation*, not *an art*; but this is not advanced that we may receive it as true, but that the character of Antonius, an orator who tried to conceal the art that he used, may be supported. 6. But Lysias seems to have really entertained this opinion; for which the argument is, that the ignorant, and barbarians, and slaves, when they speak for themselves, say something that resembles an *exordium*, they *state facts, prove, refute*, and (adopting the form of a *peroration*) *deprecate*. 7. The supporters of this notion also avail themselves of certain quibbles upon words, that *nothing that proceeds from art was before art*, but that mankind have always been able to speak for themselves and against others; that teachers of the art appeared only in later times, and first of all about the age of Tisias and Corax;⁹⁶ that oratory was therefore before art, and is consequently not an art. 8. As to the period, indeed, in which the teaching of oratory commenced, I am not anxious to inquire; we find Phœnix, however, in Homer,⁹⁷ as an instructor, not only in acting but in speaking, as well as several other orators; we see all the varieties of eloquence in the three generals,⁹⁸ and contests in eloquence proposed among the young men, and among the figures on the shield of Achilles are

⁹⁵Because in every case he took the wrong side. [Tr.]

⁹⁶Corax was a Sicilian, who, about B.C. 470, secured himself great influence at Syracuse by means of his oratorical powers. He is said to have been the earliest writer on rhetoric. Tisias was his pupil. See Cic. Brut. 12; de Orat. i. 20; Quint. iii. 1, 8. [Tr.]

⁹⁷Il. ix. 432. [Tr.]

⁹⁸The *copious* style in the oratory of Nestor; the *simple* in that of Menelaus; and the *middle* in that of Ulysses. See Aul. Gell. vii. 14; Clarke ad Il. iii. 213. Capperonier thinks that Phœnix, Ulysses, and Ajax are meant, the speakers in the deputation to Achilles, Iliad ix. [Tr.]

represented both law-suits and pleaders. 9. It would even be sufficient for me to observe, that *everything which art has brought to perfection had its origin in nature*, else, from the number of the arts must be excluded *medicine*, which resulted from the observation of what was beneficial or detrimental to health, and which, as some think, consists wholly in experiments, for somebody had, doubtless, bound up a wound before the dressing of wounds became an art, and had allayed fever by repose and abstinence, not because he saw the reason of such regimen, but because the malady itself drove him to it. 10. Else, too, *architecture* must not be considered an art, for the first generation of men built cottages without *art*; nor *music*, since singing and dancing, to some sort of tune, are practiced among all nations. 11. So, if *any kind of speaking whatever* is to be called oratory, I will admit that oratory existed before it was an art; but if every one that speaks is not an orator, and if men in early times did not speak as orators, our reasoners must confess that an orator is formed by art, and did not exist before art. This being admitted, another argument which they use is set aside, namely, that *that has no concern with art which a man who has not learned it can do*, but that men who have not learned oratory can make speeches. 12. To support this argument they observe, that Demades, a waterman, and Æschines, an actor, were orators; but they are mistaken; for he who has not learned to be an orator cannot properly be called one, and it may be more justly said, that those men learned late in life, than that they never learned at all; though Æschines, indeed, had some introduction to learning in his youth, as his father was a teacher; nor is it certain that Demades did not learn; and he might, by constant practice in speaking, which is the most efficient mode of learning, have made himself master of all the power of language that he ever possessed. 13. But we may safely say, that he would have been a better speaker if he had learned, for he never ventured to write out his speeches for publication, though we know that he produced considerable effect in delivering them.

14. Aristotle, for the sake of investigation, as is usual with him, has conceived, with his peculiar subtlety, certain arguments at variance with

my opinion in his Gryllus,⁹⁹ but he has also written three books *on the art of rhetoric*, in the first of which he not only admits that it is an art, but allows it a connection with civil polity, as well as with logic.¹⁰⁰ 15. Critolaus, and Athenodorus, of Rhodes, have advanced many arguments on the opposite side. Agnon,¹⁰¹ by the very title of his book, in which he avows that he brings an accusation against rhetoric, has deprived himself of all claim to be trusted.¹⁰² As to Epicurus, who shrunk from all learning, I am not at all surprised at him.

16. These reasoners say a great deal, but it is based upon few arguments; I shall therefore reply to the strongest of them in a very few words, that the discussion may not be protracted to an infinite length. 17. Their first argument is with regard to the *subject* or *matter*, “for all arts,” they say, “have some *subject*,” as is true, “but that oratory has *no peculiar subject*,” an assertion which I shall subsequently prove to be false. 18. The next argument is a more false charge, for “no art,” they say, “acquiesces in false conclusions, since art cannot be founded but on perception, which is always true; but that oratory adopts false conclusions, and is, consequently, not an art.” 19. That oratory sometimes advances what is false instead of what is true, I will admit, but I shall not for that reason acknowledge that the speaker acquiesces in false conclusions, for it is one thing for a matter to appear in a certain light to a person himself, and another for the person to make it appear in that light to others. A general often employs false representations, as did Hannibal, when, being hemmed in by Fabius, he tied faggots to the horns of oxen, and set them on fire, and, driving the herd up the opposite hills in the night, presented to the enemy the appearance of a retiring army; but Hannibal merely deceived

⁹⁹The work is lost. Gryllus was the son of Xenophon, that was killed at Mantinea. Aristotle seems to have borrowed his name; and he related, according to Diog. Laërt. ii. 58, that many eulogies were written on Gryllus, even for the sake of pleasing his father. The Gryllus of Aristotle is mentioned by Diog. Laërt. v. 22. *Spalding*. [Tr.]

¹⁰⁰Rhet. i. 2, 1. [Tr.]

¹⁰¹Of Athenodorus and Agnon nothing certain is known. *Spalding*. [Tr.]

¹⁰²The title of his book shows that he is not an impartial judge. [Tr.]

Fabius; he himself knew very well what the reality was. 20. Theopompus, the Lacedæmonian, when, on changing clothes with his wife, he escaped from prison in the disguise of a woman, came to no false conclusion concerning himself, though he conveyed a false notion to his guards. So the orator, whenever he puts what is false for what is true, knows that it is false, and that he is stating it instead of truth; he adopts, therefore, no false conclusion himself, but merely misleads another. 21. Cicero, when he threw a mist, as he boasts, over the eyes of the judges in the cause of Cluentius, was not himself deprived of sight; nor is a painter, when, by the power of his art, he makes us fancy that some objects stand out in a picture, and others recede, unaware that the objects are all on a flat surface.

22. But they allege also, that “all arts have a certain definite end to which they are directed; but that in oratory there is sometimes no end at all, and, at other times, the end which is professed is not attained.” They speak falsely, however, in this respect likewise, for we have already shown, that oratory has an end, and have stated what that end is, an end which the true orator will always attain, for he will always *speak well*. 23. The objection might, perhaps, hold good against those who think that the end of oratory is *to persuade*, but my orator and his art, as defined by me, do not depend upon the result; he indeed who speaks directs his efforts towards victory, but when he *has spoken well*, though he may not be victorious, he has attained the full end of his art. 24. So a pilot is desirous to gain the port with his vessel in safety, but if he is carried away from it by a tempest, he will not be the less a pilot, and will repeat the well-known saying, “May I but keep the helm right!”¹⁰³ 25. The physician makes the health of the patient his object, but if, through the violence of the disease, the intemperance of the sick person, or any other circumstance, he does not effect his purpose, yet, if he has done

¹⁰³A proverbial expression, from the Greek ὀρθῶν τὰν νεῦν: a portion of a prayer to Neptune: Grant, O Neptune, that I may guide the ship right. Spalding refers to Cic. ad Q. Fr. i. 2; Ep. ad Div. xii. 25; Sen. Epist. 85; Aristid. in Rhod. 542 ed. Jebb; Stobæus. p. 577; Isodore, Orig., who gives from Ennius, *Ut clavum rectum teneam navimque gubernem*; also Sen. Cons. ad M. Fil. c. 16; Erasmus, Adag. iii. 1, 28. [Tr.]

everything according to rule, he has not lost sight of the object of medicine. So it is the object of an orator to speak well, for his *art*, as we shall soon show still more clearly, consists in the *act*, and not in the *result*. 26. That other allegation, which is frequently made, must accordingly be false also, that *an art knows when it has attained its end, but that oratory does not know*, for every speaker is aware when he has spoken well.

They also charge oratory with having recourse to vicious means, which no true arts adopt, because it advances what is false, and endeavors to excite the passions. 27. But neither of those means is dishonorable, when it is used from a good motive, and, consequently, cannot be vicious. To tell a falsehood is sometimes allowed, even to a wise man; and the orator will be compelled to appeal to the feelings of the judges, if they cannot otherwise be induced to favor the right side. 28. Unenlightened men sit as judges,¹⁰⁴ who must, at times, be deceived, that they may not err in their decisions. If indeed judges were wise men; if assemblies of the people, and every sort of public council, consisted of wise men; if envy, favor, prejudice, and false witnesses, had no influence, there would be very little room for eloquence, which would be employed almost wholly to give pleasure. 29. But as the minds of the hearers waver, and truth is exposed to so many obstructions, the orator must use artifice in his efforts, and adopt such means as may promote his purpose, since he who has turned from the right way cannot be brought back to it but by another turning.

30. Some common sarcasms against oratory are drawn from the charge, that orators speak on both sides of a question; hence the remarks, that "*no art contradicts itself, but that oratory contradicts itself*"; that "*no art destroys what it has itself done, but that this is the case with what oratory does*"; that "*it teaches either what we ought to say, or what we ought not to say*, and that, in the one case, it cannot be an art, because it teaches what is not to be said, and, in the other, it cannot be an art, because, when it has taught

¹⁰⁴The reader will remember that the *judices* of the Romans were similar to our jurymen, but more numerous. See Adam's Roman Antiquities, or Smith's Dict. of Gr. and Rom. Ant. [Tr.]

what is to be said, it teaches also what is directly opposed to it." 31. All these charges, it is evident, are applicable only to that species of oratory which is repudiated by a good man and by virtue herself; since, where the cause is unjust, there true oratory has no place, so that it can hardly happen, even in the most extraordinary case, that a real orator, that is, a good man, will speak on both sides. 32. Yet, since it may happen, in the course of things, that just causes may, at times, lead two wise men to take different sides, (for the Stoics think that wise men may even contend with one another, if reason leads them to do so,¹⁰⁵) I will make some reply to the objections, and in such a way that they shall be proved to be advanced groundlessly, and directed only against such as allow the name of orator to speakers of bad character. 33. For *oratory does not contradict itself*; one cause is matched against another cause, but not oratory against itself. If two men, who have been taught the same accomplishment, contend with one another, the accomplishment which they have been taught will not, on that account, be proved not to be an art; for if such were the case, there could be no art in arms, because gladiators, bred under the same master, are often matched together; nor would there be any art in piloting a ship, because, in naval engagements, pilot is often opposed to pilot; nor in generalship, because general contends with general. 34. Nor does oratory *destroy what it has done*, for the orator does not overthrow the argument advanced by himself, nor does oratory overthrow it, because, by those who think that the end of oratory is to persuade, as well as by the two wise men, whom, as I said before, some chance may have opposed to one another, it is probability that is sought; and if, of two things, one at length appears more probable than the other, the more probable is not opposed to that which previously appeared probable; for as that which is more white is not adverse to that which is less white, nor that which is more sweet contrary to that

¹⁰⁵The Stoics were compelled to hold this opinion, for they said that to govern a state was the business of a wise man, and yet could not venture to affirm that a wise man was to be found in any particular state only. I cannot at this moment, however, find any passage among the ancient authors expressly to that effect. *Spalding*. [Tr.]

which is less sweet, so neither is that which is more probable contrary to that which is less probable. 35. Nor does oratory ever *teach what we ought not to say*, or that which is contrary to what we ought to say, but that which we ought to say in whatever cause we may take in hand. 36. And truth, though generally, is not always to be defended; and public good sometimes requires that a falsehood should be supported.¹⁰⁶

In Cicero's second book *De Oratore*,¹⁰⁷ are also advanced the following objections: *that art has place in things which are known, but that the pleading of an orator depends on opinion, not on knowledge, since he both addresses himself to those who do not know, and sometimes says what he himself does not know.* 37. One of these points, whether the judges have a knowledge of what is addressed to them, has nothing to do with the art of the orator; to the other, that *art has place in things which are known*, I must give some answer. Oratory is the art of speaking well, and the orator knows how to speak well. 38. But it is said, he does not know whether what he says is true; neither do the philosophers, who say that fire, or water, or the four elements, or indivisible atoms, are the principles from which all things had their origin, know that what they say is true; nor do those who calculate the distances of the stars, and the magnitudes of the sun and the earth, yet every one of them calls his system an *art*,¹⁰⁸ but if their reasoning has such effect that they seem not to *imagine*, but, from the force of their demonstrations, to *know* what they assert, similar reasoning may have a similar effect in the case of the orator. 39. But, it is further urged, he does not know whether the cause which he advocates has truth on its side; nor, I answer, does the physician know whether the patient, who says that he has the head-ache, really has it, yet he will treat him on the assumption that his assertion is true, and medicine will surely be allowed to be an art. Need I add, that oratory does not always purpose to say what is true, but does always purpose to say what is like truth? but the orator must

¹⁰⁶Compare c. 7, sect. 27, and sect. 27–29 of this chapter.

[Tr.]

¹⁰⁷C. 7. The words are put into the mouth of Antonius.

[Tr.]

¹⁰⁸Or *science*, as we should now term it. [Tr.]

know whether what he says is like truth or not. 40. Those who are unfavorable to oratory add, that pleaders often defend, in certain causes, that which they have assailed in others; but this is the fault, not of the art, but of the person.

These are the principal charges that are brought against oratory. There are others of less moment, but drawn from the same sources.

41. But that it is an *art*, may be proved in a very few words; for whether, as Cleanthes maintained, *an art is a power working its effects by a course*, that is *by method*, no man will doubt that there is a certain course and method in oratory; or whether that definition, approved by almost everybody, that *an art consists of perceptions consenting and cooperating to some end useful to life*, be adopted also by us, we have already shown that everything to which this definition applies is to be found in oratory. 42. Need I show that it depends on understanding and practice, like other arts? If logic be an art, as is generally admitted, oratory must certainly be an art, as it differs from logic rather in *species* than in *genus*. Nor must we omit to observe that in whatever pursuit one man may act according to a method, and another without regard to that method, that pursuit is an art; and that in whatever pursuit he who has learned succeeds better than he who has not learned, that pursuit is an art.

43. But, in the pursuit of oratory, not only will the learned excel the unlearned, but the more learned will excel the less learned; otherwise there would not be so many rules in it, or so many great men to teach it. This ought to be acknowledged by every one, and especially by me, who allow the attainment of oratory only to the man of virtue.

Chapter XVIII

Arts or sciences are of three kinds; rhetoric is a practical art or science, § 1, 2. Partakes of the nature of arts of other kinds, 3–5.

1. But as some arts consist merely in an insight into things, that is, knowledge of them, and judgment concerning them, such as *astronomy*, which requires no *act*, but is confined to a mere understanding of the matters that form the subject of it (a sort of art which is called θεωρητική, “theo-

retic"¹⁰⁹); others in action, the object of which lies in the act, and is fulfilled in it, leaving nothing produced from it (a sort of art which is called *πραχτική*, "practic"), as *dancing*; 2. others in production, which attain their end in the execution of the work which is submitted to the eye (a sort which we call *ποιητική*, "productive"), as *painting*, we may pretty safely determine that *oratory* consists in act, for it accomplishes in the act all that it has to do. Such indeed has been the judgment pronounced upon it by every one.

3. To me, however, it appears to partake greatly of the other sort of arts; for the subject of it may sometimes be restricted to contemplation; since there will be oratory in an orator even though he be silent; and if, either designedly, or from being disabled by any accident, he has ceased to plead, he will not cease to be an orator, more than a physician who has left off practice ceases to be a physician. 4. There is some enjoyment, and perhaps the greatest of all enjoyments, in retired meditation; and the pleasure derived from knowledge is pure when it is withdrawn from action, that is, from toil, and enjoys the calm contemplation of itself. 5. But oratory will also effect something similar to a productive art in written speeches and historical compositions, a kind of writings which we justly consider as allied to oratory. Yet if it must be classed as one of the three sorts of arts which I have mentioned, let it, as its performance consists chiefly in the mere act, and as it is most frequently exhibited *in act*, be called an *active*, or a *practical* art, for the one term is of the same signification as the other.

Chapter XIX

Nature and art; nature contributes more to oratory, in students of moderate ability, than art; in those of greater talent, art is of more avail; an example.

I. I am aware that it is also a question whether *nature* or *learning* contributes most to oratory. This inquiry, however, has no concern with the subject of my work; for a perfect orator can be

¹⁰⁹Such *artes* we call "sciences." The term *art* we distinguish from science by applying it only to that which produces something, as painting, architecture. [Tr.]

formed only with the aid of both; but I think it of great importance how far we consider that there is a question on the point. 2. If you suppose either to be independent of the other, nature will be able to do much without learning, but learning will be of no avail without the assistance of nature. But if they be united in equal parts, I shall be inclined to think that, when both are but moderate, the influence of nature is nevertheless the greater; but finished orators, I consider, owe more to learning than to nature. Thus the best husbandman cannot improve soil of no fertility, while from fertile ground something good will be produced even without the aid of the husbandman; yet if the husbandman bestows his labor on rich land, he will produce more effect than the goodness of the soil of itself. 3. Had Praxiteles attempted to hew a statue out of a millstone, I should have preferred to it an unhewn block of Parian marble;¹¹⁰ but if that statuary had fashioned the marble, more value would have accrued to it from his workmanship than was in the marble itself. In a word, nature is the material for learning; the one forms, and the other is formed. Art can do nothing without material; material has its value even independent of art; but perfection of art is of more consequence than perfection of material.

Chapter XX

Whether rhetoric be a virtue, as some call it, § 1-4. Proofs of this, according to the philosophers, 5-7. Other proofs, 8-10.

I. It is a question of a higher nature, whether oratory is to be regarded as one of those *indifferent* arts, which deserve neither praise nor blame in themselves, but become useful or otherwise according to the characters of those who practice them; or whether it is, as many of the philosophers are of opinion, a positive *virtue*.¹¹¹

¹¹⁰The lover of art will hardly agree with Quintilian. *Spalding*. But, as Rollin observes, nothing could have been less suitable for sculpture than the stone used for millstones; and Quintilian might suppose that it would have been impossible, even for a Praxiteles, to have produced even a tolerable statue from it. [Tr.]

¹¹¹See note on c. 15, sect. 20. "Virtues are distinguished by Aristotle into two kinds, the *intellectual*, which are exerted in the discovery of truth and the accomplishment of our ob-

2. The way, indeed, in which many have proceeded and still proceed in the practice of speaking, I consider either as *no art*, ἀτεχνία, as it is called, (for I see numbers rushing to speak without rule or learning, just as impudence or hunger has prompted them,) or as it were a *bad art*, which we term χαχοτεχνία; for I imagine that there have been many who have exerted, and that there are some who still exert, their talent in speaking to the injury of mankind. 3. There is also a kind of ματαιοτεχνία, a vain imitation of art, which indeed has in itself neither good nor evil, but a mere frivolous exercise of skill, such as that of the man who sent grains of vetches, shot from a distance in succession, and without missing, though a needle, and whom Alexander, after witnessing his dexterity, is said to have presented with a bushel of vetches; which was indeed a most suitable reward for his performance.¹¹²

4. To him I compare those who spend their time, with great study and labor, in the composition of declamations, which they strive to make as unlike as possible to anything that happens in real life.

But that oratory which I endeavor to teach, of which I conceive the idea in my mind, which is attainable only by a good man, and which alone is true oratory, must be regarded as *a virtue*. 5. This is an opinion which the philosophers support by many subtle arguments, but which appears to me to be more clearly established by the simpler mode of proof which follows, and which is pecu-

jects, under which head oratory may be included, as it is an art; and the *moral*, which influence the will, actions, and conduct, under which head Quintilian shows that oratory may also be ranked as a virtue." *Turnebus*. [Tr.]

¹¹²It has been a question what sort of performance we should conceive this man's to have been. Naudæus, or Naudé, in his *Syntagma de Studio Liberali*, cited by Bayle, Art. Macedonia, note S, says that the man put a pea in his mouth, and, blowing it out, made it stick upon the point of the needle. The interpretation is adopted by Bayle, and by Spalding; by Bayle with the utmost confidence, and by Spalding with some hesitation, for he admits that the verb *inserere* is hardly applicable to the fixing of peas on the point of a needle. For my part, I consider that the expression *inserere in acum* wholly forbids us to understand anything else than that the peas were driven through the needle's eye. We may suppose it to have been a peculiar needle, with a large eye, made for the purpose. How the peas were impelled, Quintilian leaves us to conjecture. [Tr.]

liarily my own. What is said by the philosophers is this: If it is a quality of virtue to be consistent with itself as to what ought to be done and what ought not to be done, (that quality, namely, which is called *prudence*,) the same quality will have its office as to what ought to be said or not to be said. 6. And if there are virtues, for the generation of which, even before we receive any instruction, certain principles and seeds are given us by nature,¹¹³ (as for that of justice, of which some notion is manifested even in the most ignorant and the most barbarous,) it is evident that we are so formed originally as to be able to speak for ourselves, though not indeed perfectly, yet in such a manner as to show that certain seeds of the faculty of eloquence are in us. 7. But in those arts which have no connection with virtue, there is not the same nature.¹¹⁴ As there are two kinds of speech, therefore, the *continuous*, which is called *oratory*, and the *concise*, which is termed *logic*, (which Zeno thought so nearly connected that he compared the one to a clenched fist, and the other to an open hand,) if the art of disputation¹¹⁵ be a virtue, there will be no doubt of the virtue of that which is of so much more noble and expansive a nature.

8. But I wish the reader to understand this more fully and plainly from what is done by oratory; for how will an orator succeed in *eulogy*, unless he has a clear knowledge of what is honorable and what is disgraceful? Or in *persuasion*, unless he understands what is advantageous? Or in *judicial pleadings*, unless he has a knowledge of justice? Does not oratory also demand fortitude, as the orator has often to speak in opposition to the turbulent threats of the populace, often with perilous defiance of powerful individuals, and sometimes, as on the trial of Milo, amidst surrounding weapons of soldiers? So that if oratory be not a virtue, it cannot be perfect.¹¹⁶

9. If, moreover, there is a sort of virtue in

¹¹³The Stoics and Academics said that the seeds of virtues were innate in us, and that, if we would but suffer them to grow, they would secure us a happy life. *Turnebus*. [Tr.]

¹¹⁴I wish that he had given an illustration of this position. [Tr.]

¹¹⁵*Ars Disputatrix*. That is, dialectics or logic. If mere dry logic be a virtue, how much more will rich and forcible eloquence be a virtue! [Tr.]

¹¹⁶On the contrary, if oratory be *perfect oratory*, it must necessarily be a *virtue*. [Tr.]

every species of animals, in which it excels the rest, or the greater number, of other animals, as force in the lion, and swiftness in the horse, and it is certain that man excels other animals in reason and speech, why should we not consider that the distinctive virtue of man lies as much in eloquence as in reason? Crassus in Cicero¹¹⁷ justly makes an assertion to this effect: "For eloquence," says he, "is one of the most eminent virtues," and Cicero himself, in his own character, both in his epistles to Brutus,¹¹⁸ and in many other passages of his writings, calls eloquence a virtue.

10. But, it may be alleged, a vicious man will sometimes produce an exordium, a statement of facts, and a series of arguments, in such a way that nothing shall be desired in them. So, we may answer, a robber will fight with great bravery, yet fortitude will still be a virtue; and a dishonest slave will bear torments without a groan, yet endurance of pain will still merit its praise. Many other things of the same nature occur, but from different principles of action. Let what I have said, therefore, as to eloquence being a virtue, be sufficient, for of its usefulness I have treated above.

Chapter XXI

Opinions as to the subject of rhetoric, § 1–4. That of Quintilian, which agrees with those of Plato and Cicero, 5, 6. Objections to it noticed, 7–11. No dispute between rhetoric and philosophy about their respective subjects, 12, 13. The orator not obliged to know everything, 14, 15. He will often speak better on arts than the artists themselves, 16–19. The opinion of Quintilian supported by those of other authors, 20–23.

1. As to the *material* of oratory, some have said that it is *speech*; an opinion which Gorgias in Plato¹¹⁹ is represented as holding. If this be un-

¹¹⁷De Orat. iii. 14. [Tr.]

¹¹⁸This passage the learned have in vain sought in the Epistles to Brutus; nor is their disappointment at all wonderful, if the ingenious and learned Tunstall is right, in his Epistle to Middleton, in condemning those epistles as spurious. His condemnation has an authoritative supporter in Ruhnken, ad Vell. Pat. ii. 12. *Spalding*. Of the spuriousness of the epistles to Brutus, as they are called, few, surely, will now be found to doubt. Such is their poverty of matter, and affectation of style, that it is wonderful that Middleton should ever have thought them comparable to the genuine letters of Cicero. [Tr.]

¹¹⁹Plato Gorg. p. 449–E. [Tr.]

derstood in such a way that a discourse, composed on any subject, is to be termed a *speech*, it is not the material, but the work; as the statue is the work of a statuary; for speeches, like statues, are produced by art. But if by this term we understand mere words, words are of no effect without matter. 2. Some have said that the material of oratory is *persuasive arguments*; which indeed are part of its business, and are the produce of art, but require material for their composition. Others say that its material is *questions of civil administration*; an opinion which is wrong, not as to the quality of the matter, but in the restriction attached; for such questions are the subject of oratory, but not the only subject. 3. Some, as oratory is a *virtue*, say that the subject of it is *the whole of human life*. Others, as no part of human life is affected by every virtue, but most virtues are concerned only with particular portions of life, (as *justice, fortitude, temperance*, are regarded as confined to their proper duties and their own limits,) say that oratory is to be restricted to one special part, and assign to it the *pragmatic* department of ethics, or *that which relates to the transactions of civil life*.

4. For my part, I consider, and not without authorities to support me, that the material of oratory is *everything that may come before an orator for discussion*. For Socrates in Plato seems to say to Gorgias¹²⁰ that *the matter of oratory is not in words but in things*. In the Phædrus he plainly shows that oratory has place, not only in judicial proceedings and political deliberations, but also in private and domestic matters. Hence it is manifest that this was the opinion of Plato himself.¹²¹

5. Cicero, too, in one passage,¹²² calls the material of oratory the topics which are submitted to it for discussion, but supposes that particular topics only are submitted to it. But in another passage¹²³ he gives his opinion that an orator has to speak upon all subjects, expressing himself in the following words: "The art of the orator, however, and his very profession of speaking well, seems to undertake and promise that he will speak ele-

¹²⁰Gorg. pp. 449–54. [Tr.]

¹²¹As being put into the mouth of Socrates. [Tr.]

¹²²De Orat. i. 15; Inv. i. 4. [Tr.]

¹²³De Orat. i. 6. [Tr.]

gantly and copiously on whatever subject may be proposed to him.” 6. In a third passage,¹²⁴ also, he says: “But by an orator, whatever occurs in human life (since it is on human life that an orator’s attention is to be fixed, as the matter that comes under his consideration) ought to have been examined, heard of, read, discussed, handled, and managed.”

7. But this *material* of oratory, as we define it, that is, the subjects that come before it, some have at one time stigmatized as indefinite,¹²⁵ at another as not belonging to oratory, and have called it, as thus characterized, an *ars circumcurrens*, an infinitely discursive art, as discoursing on any kind of subject. 8. With such as make these observations I have no great quarrel; for they allow that oratory speaks on all matters, though they deny that it has any peculiar *material*, because its material is manifold. 9. But though the material be manifold, it is not infinite; and other arts, of less consideration, deal with manifold material, as *architecture*, for instance, for it has to do with everything that is of use for building; and the art of *engraving*, which works with gold, silver, brass, and iron. As to *sculpture*, it extends itself, besides the metals which I have just named, to wood, ivory, marble, glass, and jewels. 10. Nor will a topic cease to belong to the orator because the professor of another art may treat of it; for if I should ask what is the material of the statuary, the answer will be “brass”; or if I should ask what is the material of the founder of vases, that is the worker in the art which the Greeks call *χαλκευτική*, the reply would also be “brass”; though vases differ very much from statues. 11. Nor ought medicine to lose the name of an art, because anointing and exercise are common to it with the *palæstra*, or because a knowledge of the quality of meats is common to it with cookery.

12. As to the objection which some make, that it is the business of *philosophy* to discourse of what is good, useful, and just, it makes nothing against me; for when they say a philosopher, they

¹²⁴De Orat. iii. 14. [Tr.]

¹²⁵*Infinitam*. Indefinite, indeterminate; because it represents oratory as devoted to no particular subject, but as ready to exert itself on any topic on which men can speak. *Capperonier*. [Tr.]

mean a good man; and why then should I be surprised that an orator, whom I consider to be also a good man, should discourse upon the same subjects? 13. especially when I have shown, in the preceding book,¹²⁶ that philosophers have taken possession of this province because it was abandoned by the orators, a province which had always belonged to oratory, so that the philosophers are rather trespassing upon our ground. Since it is the business of logic, too, to discuss whatever comes before it, and logic is uncontinuous oratory, why may not the business of continuous oratory be thought the same?

14. It is a remark constantly made by some, that *an orator must be skilled in all arts if he is to speak upon all subjects*. I might reply in this in the words of Cicero,¹²⁷ in whom I find this passage: “In my opinion no man can become a thoroughly accomplished orator, unless he shall have attained a knowledge of every subject of importance, and of all the liberal arts;” but for my argument it is sufficient that an orator be acquainted with the subject on which he has to speak. 15. He has not a knowledge of all causes, and yet he ought to be able to speak upon all. On what causes, then, will he speak? on such as he has learned. The same will be the case also with regard to the arts and sciences; those on which he shall have to speak he will study for the occasion, and on those which he has studied he will speak.

16. What then, it may be said, will not a builder speak of building, or a musician of music, better than an orator? Assuredly he will speak better, if the orator does not know what is the subject of inquiry in the case before him, with regard to matters connected with those sciences. An ignorant and illiterate person, appearing before a court, will plead his own cause better than an orator who does not know what the subject of dispute is; but an orator will express what he has learned from the builder, or the musician, or from his client, better than the person who has instructed him. 17. But the *builder* will speak well on *building*, or the *musician* on *music*, if any point in those arts shall require to be established by his opinion; he will not be an orator, but he

¹²⁶Procem. sect. 10 *seqq.* [Tr.]

¹²⁷De Orat. i. 6. [Tr.]

will perform his part like an orator, as when an unprofessional person binds up a wound, he will not be a surgeon, yet he will act as a surgeon.

18. Do subjects of this kind never come to be mentioned in *panegyric*, or *deliberative*, or *judicial* oratory? When it was under deliberation, whether a harbor should be constructed at Ostia,¹²⁸ were not orators called to deliver opinions on the subject? yet what was wanted was the professional knowledge of the architect. 19. Does not the orator enter on the question, whether discolorations and tumors of the body are symptoms of ill health or of poison?¹²⁹ yet such inquiries belong to the profession of medicine. Will an orator never have to speak of dimensions and numbers? yet we may say that such matters belong to mathematics; for my part, I believe that any subject whatever may, by some chance, come under the cognizance of the orator. If a matter does not come under his cognizance, he will have no concern with it.

20. Thus I have justly said, that *the material of oratory is everything that is brought under its notice for discussion*, an assertion which even our daily conversation supports, for whenever we have any subject on which to speak, we often signify by some prefatory remark, that the matter is laid before us. 21. So much was Gorgias¹³⁰ of opinion that an orator must speak of everything, that he allowed himself to be questioned by the people in his lecture-room, upon any subject on which any one of them chose to interrogate him. Hermagoras also, by saying, that “the matter of oratory lies in the cause and the questions¹³¹ connected with it,” comprehends under it every subject that can possibly come before it for discussion. 22. If indeed he supposed that *the questions* do not belong to oratory, he is of a different opinion from me; but if they do belong to oratory, I

¹²⁸See Suet. Claud. c. 20, where it is stated that the work had often been contemplated by Julius Cæsar, but deferred from time to time on account of its difficulty. [Tr.]

¹²⁹Cicero touches on this medical part, so to speak, of eloquence in his speech for Cluentius, c. 10. *Spalding*. [Tr.]

¹³⁰Plato Gorg. p. 447 C. In reference to this passage of Plato, see Cic. de Orat. iii. 32; i. 22; de Inv. i. 5; de Fin. ii. 1. [Tr.]

¹³¹See iii. 5, 16, iii. 6, 2. The questions meant are *general questions*, as, “Whether the senses may be trusted,” “Whether an old man ought to marry,” and the like, which Cicero excludes from the department of the orator, de Invent. i. 6. [Tr.]

am supported by his authority, for there is no subject that may not form part of a cause or the questions connected with it. 23. Aristotle,¹³² too, by making three kinds of oratory, the *judicial*, the *deliberative*, and the *demonstrative*, has put almost everything into the hands of the orator, for there is no subject that may not enter into one of the three kinds.

24. An inquiry has been also started, though by a very few writers, concerning the *instrument* of oratory. The instrument I call *that without which material cannot be fashioned and adapted to the object which we wish to effect*. But I consider that it is not the art that requires the instrument, but the artificer. Professional knowledge needs no tool, as it may be complete though it produces nothing, but the artist must have his tool, as the engraver his graving-instrument, and the painter his pencils, I shall therefore reserve the consideration of this point for that part of my work in which I intend to speak of *the orator*. . . .¹³³

BOOK X

Chapter II

Of imitation; necessity of it, and remarks upon it, § 1–13. Not every quality, even in eminent authors, is to be imitated; necessity of judgment in the choice of models for imitation, 14–21. We are not to imitate one author only, 22–26. Not to imitate style only, 27, 28.

1. From these authors, and others worthy to be read, a stock of words, a variety of figures, and the art of composition, must be acquired; and our minds must be directed to the imitation of all their excellences; for it cannot be doubted that a great portion of art consists in *imitation*, since, though to invent was first in order of time, and holds the first place in merit, yet it is of advantage to copy what has been invented with success. 2. Indeed the whole conduct of life is based on the desire of doing ourselves that which we approve in others.¹³⁴ Thus boys follow the traces of letters in order to acquire skill in writing; thus musicians follow the voice of their teachers,

¹³²Rhet. i. 3, 3; Cic. de Invent. i. 5. [Tr.]

¹³³B. xii. c. 5. [Tr.]

¹³⁴We might suppose that this sentence suggested to Adam Smith his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*. [Tr.]

painters look for models to the works of preceding painters, and farmers adopt the system of culture approved by experience. We see, in short, that the beginnings of every kind of study are formed in accordance with some prescribed rule.

3. We must, indeed, be either like or unlike those who excel; and nature rarely forms one *like*, though imitation does so frequently. But the very circumstance that renders the study of all subjects so much more easy to us, than it was to those who had nothing to imitate, will prove a disadvantage to us, unless it be turned to account with caution and judgment.

4. Undoubtedly, then, imitation is not sufficient of itself, if for no other reason than that it is the mark of an indolent nature to rest satisfied with what has been invented by others. For what would have been the case, if, in those times which were without any models, mankind had thought that they were not to execute or imagine anything but what they already knew? Assuredly nothing would have been invented. 5. Why then is it unlawful for anything to be devised by us which did not exist before? Were our rude forefathers, led, by the mere natural force of intellect, to the discovery of so many things, and shall not we be roused to inquiry by the certain knowledge which we possess that those who sought, found? 6. When those who had no master in any subject, have transmitted so many discoveries to posterity, shall not the experience which we have in some things assist us to bring to light others, or shall we have nothing but what we derive from other men's bounty, as some painters aim at nothing more than to know how to copy a picture by means of compasses and lines?

7. It is dishonorable even to rest satisfied with simply equalling what we imitate. For what would have been the case, again, if no one had accomplished more than he whom he copied? We should have nothing in poetry superior to Livius Andronicus, nothing in history better than the Annals of the Pontiffs; we should still sail on rafts; there would be no painting but that of tracing the outlines of the shadow which bodies cast in the sunshine.¹³⁵ 8. If we take a view of all arts,

¹³⁵That such delineation was the origin of painting every one asserts; who first practiced it, no one tells us. See Pliny,

no one can be found exactly as it was when it was invented; no one that has confined itself within its original limits; unless, indeed, we have to convict our own times, beyond all others, of this unhappy deficiency, and to consider that now at last nothing improves; for certainly nothing does improve by imitation only. 9. But if it is not allowable to add to what has preceded us, how can we ever hope to see a complete orator, when among those, whom we have hitherto recognized as the greatest, no one has been found in whom there is not something defective or censurable? Even those who do not aim at the highest excellence, should rather try to excel, than merely follow, their predecessors; for he who makes it his object to get before another, will possibly, if he does not go by him, get abreast of him. 10. But assuredly no one will come up with him in whose steps he thinks that he must tread, for he who follows another must of necessity always be behind him. Besides, it is generally easier to do more, than to do precisely the same; since exact likeness is attended with such difficulty that not even nature herself has succeeded in contriving that the simplest objects,¹³⁶ and such as may be thought most alike, shall not be distinguished by some perceptible difference. 11. Moreover, everything that is the resemblance of something else, must necessarily be inferior to that of which it is a copy, as the shadow to the substance, the portrait to the natural face, and the acting of the player to the real feeling. The same is the case with regard to oratorical composition; for in the originals, which we take for our models, there is nature and real power, while every imitation, on the contrary, is something counterfeit, and seems adapted to an object not its own. 12. Hence it happens that declamations have less spirit and force than actual pleadings, because in one the subject is real, in the other fictitious. In addition to all this, whatever excellences are most remarkable in an orator, are inimitable, as natural talent,

H. N. xxxv. 3; Athenag, Leg. pro Christ. p. 59 ed. Dechair. Gesner. [Tr.]

¹³⁶*Res simplicissimæ*. That is, those among which the least variety is found; those which we must not expect to be much distinguished one from another; as blades of grass and leaves. Spalding. [Tr.]

invention, energy, easiness of manner, and whatever cannot be taught by art. 13. In consequence, many students, when they have selected certain words, or acquired a certain rhythm of composition, from any orator's speeches, think that what they have read is admirably represented in their own sentences; though words fall into desuetude, or come into use, according to the fashion of the day, of that the most certain rule for their use is found in custom, and they are not in their own nature either good or bad, (for in themselves they are only sounds,) but just as they are suitably and properly applied, or otherwise; and when our composition is best adapted to our subject, it becomes most pleasing from its variety.

14. Everything, therefore, relating to this department of study, is to be considered with the nicest judgment. First of all, we must be cautious as to the authors whom we would imitate, for many have been desirous to resemble the worst and most faulty originals. In the next place, we must examine what there is in the authors whom we have chosen for models, that we should set ourselves to attain, for even in great writers there occur faulty passages and blemishes, which have been censured by the learned in their remarks on one another; and I wish that our youth would improve in their oratory by imitating what is good, as much as they are deteriorated in it by copying what is bad.

15. Nor let those who have sufficient judgment for avoiding faults, be satisfied with forming a semblance, a mere cuticle, if I may so express myself, of excellence, or rather one of those images of Epicurus, which he says are perpetually flying off from the surfaces of bodies. 16. This, however, is the fate of those who, having no thorough insight into the merits of a style, adapt their manner, as it were, to the first aspect of it; and even when their imitation proves most successful, and when they differ but little from their original author, in language and harmony, they yet never fully attain to his force or fertility of language, but commonly degenerate into something worse, lay hold on such defects as border on excellences, and become tumid instead of great, weak instead of concise, rash instead of bold, licentious instead of exuberant, tripping instead of dignified, careless instead of simple. 17. Accordingly, those who have produced something dry and inane, in a rough and inele-

gant dress, fancy themselves equal to the ancients; those who reject embellishment of language or thought, compare themselves, forsooth, to the Attic writers; those who become obscure by curtailing their periods, excel Sallust and Thucydides; the dry and jejune rival Pollio; and the dull and languid, if they but express themselves in a long period, declare that Cicero would have spoken just like themselves. 18. I have known some, indeed, who thought that they had admirably represented the divine orator's manner in their speeches, when they had put at the end of a period *esse videatur*.¹³⁷ The first consideration, therefore, for the student, is, that he should understand *what he proposes to imitate*, and have a thorough conception *why it is excellent*.

19. Next, in entering on his task, let him consult his own powers, (for some things are inimitable by those whose natural weakness is not sufficient for attaining them, or whose natural inclination is repugnant to them,) lest he who has but a feeble capacity, should attempt only what is arduous and rough, or lest he who has great but rude talent, should waste his strength in the study of refinement, and fail of attaining the elegance of which he is desirous; for nothing is more ungraceful than to treat of delicate subjects with harshness. 20. I did not suppose, indeed, that by the master whom I instructed in my second book,¹³⁸ those things only were to be taught, to which he might see his pupils severally adapted by nature; he ought to improve whatever good qualities he finds in them; to supply, as far as he can, what is deficient; to correct some things and to alter others; for he is the director and regulator of the minds of others; to mold his own nature may be more difficult. 21. But not even such a teacher, however he may wish everything that is right to be found in the highest excellence in his pupils, will labor to any purpose in that to which he shall see that nature is opposed.

There is another thing also to be avoided, a matter in which many err; we must not suppose that poets and historians are to be the objects of our imitation in oratorical composition, or orators and declaimers in poetry or history. 22. Every species of writing has its own prescribed law;

¹³⁷IX. 4, 73. [Tr.]

¹³⁸C. 8. [Tr.]

each its own appropriate dress; for comedy does not strut in tragic buskins, nor does tragedy stop along in the slipper of comedy: yet all eloquence has something in common; and let us look on that which is common as what we must imitate. 23. On those who have devoted themselves to one particular kind of style, there generally attends this inconvenience, that if, for example, the roughness of some writer has taken their fancy, they cannot divest themselves of it in pleading those causes which are of a quiet and subdued nature; or if a simple and pleasing manner has attracted them, they become unequal to the weight of their subject in complex and difficult causes; when not only the nature of one cause is different from that of another, but the nature of one part of a cause differs from that of another part, and some portions are to be delivered gently, others roughly, some in a vehement, others in an easy tone, some for the purpose of informing the hearer, others with a view to excite his feelings; all which require a different and distinct style. 24. I shall not, therefore, advise a student to devote himself entirely to any particular author, so as to imitate him in all respects. Of all the Greek orators Demosthenes is by far the most excellent; yet others, on some occasions, may have expressed themselves better; and he himself has expressed many things better on some occasions than on others. But he who deserves to be imitated most, is not therefore the only author to be imitated. 25. "What then?" the reader may ask, "is it not sufficient to speak on every subject as Cicero spoke?" To me, assuredly, it would be sufficient, if I could attain all his excellences. Yet what disadvantage would it be to assume, on some occasions, the energy of Cæsar, the asperity of Cælius, the accuracy of Pollio, the judgment of Calvus? 26. For besides that it is the part of a judicious student to make, if he can, whatever is excellent in each author his own, it is also to be considered, that if, in a matter of such difficulty as imitation, we fix our attention only on one author, scarcely any one portion of his excellence will allow us to become masters of it. Accordingly, since it is almost denied to human ability to copy fully the pattern which we have chosen, let us set before our eyes the excellences of several, that different qualities from different writers may fix themselves in our minds, and that

we may adopt, for any subject, the style which is most suitable to it.

27. But let imitation (for I must frequently repeat the same precept¹³⁹) not be confined merely to words. We ought to contemplate what propriety was observed by those great men,¹⁴⁰ with regard to things and persons; what judgment, what arrangement, and how everything, even what seems intended only to please, was directed to the attainment of success in their cause. Let us notice what is done in their exordium; how skillful and varied is their statement of facts; how great is their ability in proving and refuting; how consummate was their skill in exciting every species of emotion; and how even the applause which they gained from the public was turned to the advantage of their cause; applause which is most honorable when it follows unsolicited, not when it is anxiously courted. If we gain a thorough conception of all these matters, we shall then be such imitators as we ought to be. 28. But he who shall add to these borrowed qualities excellences of his own, so as to supply what is deficient in his models, and to retrench what is redundant, will be the complete orator whom we desire to see; and such an orator ought now surely to be formed, when so many more examples of eloquence exist than fell to the lot of those who have hitherto been considered the best orators; for to them will belong the praise, not only of surpassing those who preceded them, but of instructing those who followed.

Chapter III

Of writing; utility of it, § 1–4. How, and what, we should write; necessity of correction, 5–14. Judicious exercise requisite, 15–18. Objections to dictation, 19–21. A retired place desirable for composition; of writing at night, 22–27. But retirement cannot always be secured, and we must do our best in the circumstances in which we find ourselves, 28–30. Further remarks, 31–33.

1. Such, then, are the means of improvement to be derived from external sources. But of those which we must secure for ourselves, *practice in*

¹³⁹Comp. sect. 13, 16. [Tr.]

¹⁴⁰Who are named in the preceding paragraph. [Tr.]

writing, which is attended with the most labor, is attended also with the greatest advantage. Nor has Cicero without reason called the pen *the best modeler and teacher of eloquence*; and by putting that opinion into the mouth of Lucius Crassus, in his Dialogues on the character of the Orator,¹⁴¹ he has united his own judgment to the authority of that eminent speaker.

2. We must write, therefore, as carefully, and as much, as we can; for as the ground, by being dug to a great depth, becomes more fitted for fructifying and nourishing seeds, so improvement of the mind, acquired from more than mere superficial cultivation, pours forth the fruits of study in richer abundance, and retains them with greater fidelity. For without this precaution, the very faculty of speaking extempore will but furnish us with empty loquacity, and words born on the lips.¹⁴² 3. In writing are the roots, in writing are the foundations of eloquence; by writing resources are stored up, as it were, in a sacred repository, whence they may be drawn forth for sudden emergencies, or as circumstances require. Let us above all things get strength, which may suffice for the labor of our contests, and may not be exhausted by use. 4. Nature has herself appointed that nothing great is to be accomplished quickly, and has ordained that difficulty should precede every work of excellence;¹⁴³ and she has even made it a law with regard to gestation, that the larger animals are retained longer in the womb of the parent.

5. But as two questions arise from this subject, *how*, and *what*, we ought principally to write, I shall consider them both in this order. Let our pen be at first slow, provided that it be accurate. Let us search for what is best, and not allow ourselves to be readily pleased with whatever presents itself; let judgment be applied to our thoughts, and skill in arrangement to such of

¹⁴¹De Orat. i. 33. [Tr.]

¹⁴²In *labris nascentia*. Not coming from the depths of the understanding. [Tr.]

¹⁴³In allusion, probably, to the line of Hesiod, Op. et Di. i. 287,

Τῆς δ' ἀρετῆς ἰδρωῶτα θεοὶ προσᾶρξοιθεν ἔθηχαν.

Where Virtue dwells, the gods have plac'd before

The dropping sweat that springs from ev'ry pore. *Elton*.

[Tr.]

them as the judgment sanctions; for we must make a selection from our thoughts and words, and the weight of each must be carefully estimated; and then must follow the art of collocation, and the rhythm of our phrases must be tried in every possible way, since any word must not take its position just as it offers itself. 6. That we may acquire this accomplishment with the more precision, we must frequently repeat the last words of what we have just written; for besides that by this means what follows is better connected with what precedes, the ardor of thought, which has cooled by the delay of writing, recovers its strength anew, and, by going again over the ground, acquires new force; as is the case, we see, in a contest of leaping; men run over a certain portion of ground that they may take a longer spring, and be carried with the utmost velocity to the other part on which they aim at alighting; as in hurling a javelin, too, we draw back the arm; and, when going to shoot an arrow, we pull back the bowstring. 7. At times, however, if a gale bear us on, we may spread our sails to it, provided that the license which we allow ourselves does not lead us astray; for all our thoughts please us at the time of their birth; otherwise they would not be committed to writing. But let us have recourse to our judgment, and revise the fruit of our facility, which is always to be regarded with suspicion. 8. Thus we learn that Sallust wrote; and his labor, indeed, is shown in his productions. That Virgil wrote very few verses in a day Varus bears testimony.¹⁴⁴ 9. With the speaker, indeed, the case is different; and I, therefore, enjoin this delay and solicitude only at the commencement of his course; for we must make it first of all our object, and must attain that object, to write as well as we can; practice will bring celerity; thoughts, by degrees, will present themselves with greater readiness, words will correspond to them, and suitable arrangement will follow; and everything, in a word, as in a well ordered household, will be ready for service. 10. The sum of the whole matter, indeed, in this; that by writing quickly we are not brought to

¹⁴⁴See Aul. Gell. xvii. 10, where it is related that Virgil used to say of himself, that he licked his verses into shape as bears lick their cubs. [Tr.]

write well, but that by writing well we are brought to write quickly. But after this facility has been attained, we must then, most of all, take care to stop and look before us, and restrain our high-mettled steeds with the curb; a restraint which will not so much retard us, as give us new spirit to proceed.

Nor, on the other hand, do I think that those, who have acquired some power in the use of the pen, should be chained down to the unhappy task of perpetually finding fault with themselves. 11. For how could he perform his duty to the public, who should waste his life in polishing every portion of his pleadings? But there are some whom nothing ever satisfies; who wish to alter everything, and to express everything in a different form from that in which it first occurs to them. Some, again, there are, who, distrustful of themselves, and paying an ill compliment to their own powers, think that accuracy in writing means to create for themselves extraordinary difficulties. 12. Nor is it easy for me to say which I regard as more in the wrong, those whom everything that they produce, or those whom nothing that they produce, pleases; for it is often the case even with young men of talent, that they wear themselves away with useless labor, and sink into silence from too much anxiety to speak well. In regard to this subject, I remember that Julius Secundus,¹⁴⁵ a contemporary of mine, and, as is well known, dearly beloved by me, a man of extraordinary eloquence, but of endless labor, mentioned to me something that had been told him by his uncle. 13. This uncle was Julius Florus,¹⁴⁶ the most celebrated man for eloquence in the provinces of Gaul, (for it was there that he practiced it,) and, in other respects, an orator to be ranked with few, and worthy of his relationship to Secundus. He, happening one day to observe that Secundus, while he was still working at school, was looking dejected, asked him what was the reason of his brow being so overcast. 14. The youth used no concealment, but told him that that was the third day that he had been vainly endeavoring, with his utmost efforts, to find an

exordium for a subject on which he had to write; whence not only grief had affected him in respect to the present occasion, but despair in regard to the time to come. Florus immediately replied with a smile, *Do you wish to write better than you can?* 15. Such is the whole truth of the matter; we must endeavor to speak with as much ability as we can, but we must speak according to our ability. For improvement there is need of application, but not of vexation with ourselves.

But to enable us to write more, and more readily, not *practice* only will assist, (and in practice there is doubtless great effect,) but also *method*, if we do not, lolling at our ease, looking at the ceiling, and trying to kindle our invention by muttering to ourselves,¹⁴⁷ wait for what may present itself, but, observing what the subject requires, what becomes the character concerned, what the nature of the occasion is, and what the disposition of the judge, set ourselves to write like reasonable beings; for thus nature herself will supply us not only with a commencement but with what ought to follow. 16. Most points, indeed, are plain, and set themselves before our eyes if we do not shut them; and accordingly not even the illiterate and untaught have long to consider how to begin; and therefore we should feel the more ashamed if learning produces difficulty. Let us not, then, imagine that what lies hid is always best; or, if we think nothing fit to be said but what we have not discovered, we must remain dumb.

17. A different fault is that of those who wish, first of all, to run through their subject with as rapid a pen as possible, and, yielding to the ardor and impetuosity of their imagination, write off their thoughts, extemporaneously, producing what they call a rough copy,¹⁴⁸ which they then go over again, and arrange what they have hastily poured forth; but though the words and rhythm of the sentences are mended, there still remains the same want of solid connection that there was originally in the parts hurriedly thrown together. 18. It will be better, therefore, to use care at first,

¹⁴⁵C. 1, sect. 120. [Tr.]

¹⁴⁶Spalding supposes this to be the Julius Florus to whom Horace addresses the third epistle of his first book. [Tr.]

¹⁴⁷Comp. ii. 11, 4. [Tr.]

¹⁴⁸*Silvam*. The thoughts being committed to writing, without any regular order, like trees in a wood. Cicero uses the word more than once in this sense. [Tr.]

and so to form our work from the beginning that we may have merely to polish it, and not to mold it anew. Sometimes, however, we may give a loose to our feeling, in the display of which warmth is generally of more effect than accuracy.

19. From my disapprobation of carelessness in writing, it is clearly enough seen what I think of the fine fancy of dictation;¹⁴⁹ for in the use of the pen, the hand of the writer, however rapid, as it cannot keep pace with the celerity of his thoughts, allows them some respite; but he to whom we dictate urges us on, and we feel ashamed at times to hesitate, or stop, or alter, as if we were afraid to have a witness of our weakness. 20. Hence it happens, that not only inelegant and casual expressions, but sometimes unsuitable ones, escape us, while our sole anxiety is to make our discourse connected; expressions which partake neither of the accuracy of the writer nor of the animation of the speaker; while, if the person who takes down what is dictated, prove, from slowness in writing, or from inaccuracy in reading, a hindrance, as it were, to us, the course of our thought is obstructed, and all the fire that had been conceived in our mind is dispelled by delay, or, sometimes, by anger at the offender. 21. Besides, those gestures which accompany the stronger excitements of the mind, and which, in some degree, rouse the imagination, such as waving of the hand, alteration of the features, turning from side to side, and all such acts as Persius satirizes, when he alludes to a negligent species of style, (the writer, he says,

Nec pluteum cædit, nec demorsos sapit ungues,
Nor thumps his desk, nor tastes his bitten nails,)

are utterly ridiculous except when we are alone. 22. In short, to mention once for all the strongest argument against dictation, privacy is rendered impossible by it; and that a spot free from wit-

¹⁴⁹*De illis dictandi deliciis.* Self-indulgence, and dislike of labor, had then become so prevalent that men of any station were growing careless about manual dexterity in writing, and, subsequently, *to dictate*, instead of *to write*, became a great portion of the business of the learned. Thus Sidonius Apollinaris, viii. 6, says that he had excelled many others *vario dictandi genere*, "in the various departments of dictation," and speaks of the three employments *certandi, dictandi, lectitandique*. Gesner. [Tr.]

nesses, and the deepest possible silence, are the most desirable for persons engaged in writing, no one can doubt.

Yet we are not therefore necessarily to listen to those, who think that groves and woods are the most proper places for study, because, as the free and open sky, they say, and the beauty of sequestered spots, give elevation to the mind and a happy warmth to the imagination. 23. To me, assuredly, such retirement seems rather conducive to pleasure than an incentive to literary exertion; for the very objects that delight us must, of necessity, divert our attention from the work which we designed to pursue; for the mind cannot, in truth, attend effectually to many things at once, and in whatever direction it looks off, it must cease to contemplate what had been intended for its employment. 24. The pleasantness, therefore, of the woods, the streams gliding past, the breezes sporting among the branches of the trees, the songs of birds, and the very freedom of the extended prospect, draw off our attention to them; so that all such gratifications seem to me more adapted to relax the thoughts than to brace them. 25. Demosthenes acted more wisely, who secluded himself in a place where no voice could be heard, and no prospect contemplated, that his eyes might not oblige his mind to attend to anything else besides his business. As for those who study by lamplight, therefore, let the silence of the night, the closed chamber, and a single light, keep them as it were wholly in seclusion. 26. But in every kind of study, and especially in such nocturnal application, good health, and that which is the principal means of securing it, regularity of life,¹⁵⁰ are necessary, since we devote the time appointed us by nature for sleep and the recruiting of our strength, to the most intense labor; but on this labor we must not bestow more time than what is too much for sleep, and what will not leave too little for it; 27. for weariness hinders application to writing; and daylight, if we are free from other occupations, is abundantly sufficient for it; it is necessity that drives men en-

¹⁵⁰*Frugalitas.* Beware of circumscribing the meaning of this word within the limits to which we at present generally confine it, and of understanding it merely as temperance in regard to meat and drink. It signifies *boni mores*, as in xii. 1, 8. Spalding. [Tr.]

gaged in business to read at night. Yet study by the lamp, when we come to it fresh and vigorous, is the best kind of retirement.

28. But silence and seclusion, and entire freedom of mind, though in the highest degree desirable, cannot always fall to our lot; and therefore we must not, if any noise disturbs us, immediately throw aside our books, and deplore the day as lost, but we must strive against inconveniences, and acquire such habits, that our application may set all interruptions at defiance; for if we direct our attention, with our whole mental energy, to the work actually before us, nothing of all that strikes our eyes or ears will penetrate into the mind. 29. Does a casual train of thought often cause us not to see persons in our way, and to wander from our road, and shall we not attain the same abstraction if we resolve to do so? We must not yield to excuses for idleness; for if we fancy that we must not study except when we are fresh, except when we are in good spirits, except when we are free from all other cares, we shall always have some reason for self-indulgence. 30. In the midst of crowds, therefore, on a journey, and even at festive meetings, let thought secure for herself privacy. Else what will be the result, when we shall have, in the midst of the forum, amid the hearing of so many causes, amid wranglings and casual outcries, to speak, perhaps on a sudden, in a continued harangue, if we cannot conceive the memoranda which we enter on our tablets, anywhere but in solitude? For this reason Demosthenes, though so great a lover of seclusion, used to accustom himself, by studying on the seashore, where the breakers dashed with the loudest noise, not to be disconcerted at the uproar of public assemblies.

31. Some lesser matters also (though nothing is little that relates to study) must not be left unnoticed; one of which is, that we can write best on *waxen tablets*, from which there is the greatest facility for erasing, unless, perchance, weakness of sight¹⁵¹ requires the use of parchment; but parchment, though it assists the sight, yet, from the frequent movement of the hand backwards and forwards, while dipping the pen in the ink,

¹⁵¹The letters, it appears, were plainer and more legible on parchment or paper than on waxen tablets. [Tr.]

causes delay, and interrupts the current of thought. 32. Next we may observe, that in using either of these kinds of material, we should take care to leave some pages blank, on which we may have free scope for making any additions (since want of room sometimes causes a reluctance to correct, or, at least, what was written first makes a confused mixture with what is inserted). But I would not have the waxen tablets extravagantly broad, having found a youth, otherwise anxious to excel, make his compositions of too great a length, because he used to measure them by the number of lines, a fault which, though it could not be corrected by repeated admonitions, was at last removed by altering the size of his tablets. 33. There should also be a portion of space left vacant on which may be noted down what frequently occurs *out of order* to persons who are writing, that is, in reference to other subjects than those which we have in hand; for excellent thoughts sometimes start into our minds, which we cannot well insert in our pages, and which it is not safe to delay noting down, because they sometimes escape us, and sometimes, if we are anxious to keep them in memory, divert us from thinking of other things. Hence they will be properly deposited in a place for memoranda.

Chapter IV

Observations on correction; we must not indulge in it too much.

1. Next follows *correction*, which is by far the most useful part of our studies; for it is believed, and not without reason, that the pen is not least serviceable when it is used to erase.¹⁵² Of correction there are three ways, to *add*, to *take away*, and to *alter*.

In regard, however, to what is to be *added* or *taken away*, the decision is comparatively easy and simple; but to compress what is tumid, to raise what is low, to prune what is luxuriant, to regulate what is ill-arranged, to give compactness to what is loose, to circumscribe what is extravagant, is a two-fold task; for we must reject things

¹⁵²When it prunes luxuriance and exuberance of style. See Cicero de Orat. ii. 23. [Tr.]

that had pleased us, and find out others that had escaped us. 2. Undoubtedly, also, the best method for correction is to lay by for a time what we have written, so that we may return to it, after an interval, as if it were something new to us, and written by another, lest our writings, like newborn infants, compel us to fix our affections on them.

3. But this cannot always be done, especially by the orator, who must frequently write for present purposes; and correction must therefore have its limits; for there are some that return to whatever they compose as if they presumed it to be incorrect; and, as if nothing could be right that has presented itself first, they think whatever is different from it is better, and find something to correct as often as they take up their manuscript, like surgeons who make incisions even in sound places; and hence it happens that their writings are, so to speak, scarred and bloodless, and rendered worse by the remedies applied. Let what we write, therefore, sometimes please, or at least content us, that the file may polish our work, and not wear it to nothing. To the time, too, allowed for correction, there must be a limit; for as to what we hear about Cinna's *Zmyrna*,¹⁵³ that it occupied nine years in writing, and about the Panegyric of Isocrates, which they who assign the shortest period to its production,¹⁵⁴ assert to have been ten years in being finished, it is of no import to the orator, whose aid would be useless if it were so long in coming.

Chapter V

What sort of composition we should practice; of translating Greek into Latin, § 1–8. Of putting the writing of eminent authors into other words, 9–11. Of theses, common places, declamations, and other species of composition and exercise, 12–20. Cases for declamation should be as similar as possible to real cases, 21–23.

1. The next point is, to decide *on what we should employ ourselves when we write*. It would be a

¹⁵³*Zmyrna* or *Myrrha*, see ix. 2, 64. The author was Caius Helvius Cinna; and that he was nine years about the poem, (or play, as Gedoyne inclines to think it,) is stated in one of the epigrams of Catullus. Horace's term of "nine years" was probably taken from Cinna's period of devotion to his work. [Tr.]

¹⁵⁴Some say that it occupied fifteen years, as Plutarch observes in his *Life of Isocrates*. *Spalding*. [Tr.]

superfluous labor, indeed, to detail what subjects there are for writing, and what should be studied first, or second, and so on in succession; for this has been done in my first book,¹⁵⁵ in which I prescribed the order for the studies of boys, and in my second,¹⁵⁶ where I specified those of the more advanced; and what is now to be considered, is whence copiousness and facility of expression may be derived.

2. To translate Greek into Latin our old orators thought to be a very excellent exercise. Lucius Crassus, in the well-known books of Cicero *De Oratore*,¹⁵⁷ says that he often practiced it; and Cicero himself, speaking in his own person,¹⁵⁸ very frequently recommends it, and has even published books of Plato and Xenophon¹⁵⁹ translated in that kind of exercise. It was also approved by Messala; and there are extant several versions of speeches made by him, so that he even rivalled the oration of Hyperides for Phryne in delicacy of style, a quality most difficult of attainment to Romans. 3. The object of such exercise is evident; for the Greek authors excel in copiousness of matter, and have introduced a vast deal of art into the study of eloquence; and, in translating them, we may use the very best words, for all that we use may be our own. As to figures,¹⁶⁰ by which language is principally ornamented, we may be under the necessity of inventing a great number and variety of them, because the Roman tongue differs greatly from that of the Greeks.

4. But the conversion of Latin writing into other words will also be of great service to us. About the utility of turning poetry into prose, I suppose that no one has any doubt; and this is the

¹⁵⁵C. 9. [Tr.]

¹⁵⁶C. 4, 10. [Tr.]

¹⁵⁷I. 34. [Tr.]

¹⁵⁸I am not able to point out any passage to that effect in Cicero's works; for I have no recollection that the study of Greek literature is recommended by him otherwise than generally, as at the beginning of the first book *De Officiis*, in the books *De Finibus*, and in that part of the *Brutus* where he speaks of his own plan of study. *Spalding*. [Tr.]

¹⁵⁹The *Timæus* and *Protagoras* of Plato, and the *Æconomics* of Xenophon. [Tr.]

¹⁶⁰Verbal figures, says *Spalding*, and figures of grammar rather than of rhetoric, the allusion being to the art which a translator must use in rendering from Greek into Latin. See i. 1, 13; iv. 2, 118. [Tr.]

only kind of exercise that Sulpicius is said to have used; for its sublimity may elevate our style, and the boldness of the expressions adopted by poetic license does not preclude the orator's efforts to express the same thoughts in the exactness of prose. He may even add to those thoughts oratorical vigor, supply what has been omitted, and give compactness to that which is diffuse, since I would not have our paraphrase to be a mere interpretation, but an effort to vie with and rival our original in the expression of the same thoughts. 5. I therefore differ in opinion from those who disapprove of paraphrasing Latin orations,¹⁶¹ on the pretext that, as the best words and phrases have been already used, whatever we express in another form, must of necessity be expressed worse. But for this allegation there is no sufficient ground; for we must not despair of the possibility of finding something better than what has been said; nor has nature made language so meager and poor that we cannot speak well on any subject except in one way; unless we suppose, indeed, that the gestures of the actor can give a variety of turns to the same words, but that the power of eloquence is so much inferior that when a thing has been once said, nothing can be said after it to the same purpose. 6. But let it be granted that what we conceive is neither better than our original nor equal to it; yet it must be allowed, at the same time, that there is a possibility of coming near to it. 7. Do not we ourselves at times speak twice or oftener, and sometimes a succession of sentences, on the same subject, and are we to suppose that though we can contend with ourselves we cannot contend with others? If a thought could be expressed well only in one way, it would be but right to suppose that the path of excellence has been shut against us by some of our predecessors; but in a reality there are still innumerable modes of saying a thing, and many roads leading to the same point. 8. Conciseness has its charms, and so has copiousness; there is one kind of beauty in metaphorical, another in simple expressions; direct expressions become one subject, and such as are varied by figures another. In addition, the difficulty of the exercise is most serviceable. Are not our great-

¹⁶¹Something to this effect is said by Crassus in Cicero de Orat. i. 34. [Tr.]

est authors by this means studied more carefully? For, in this way, we do not run over what we have written in a careless mode of reading, but consider every individual portion, and look, from necessity, thoroughly into their matter, and learn how much merit they possess from the very fact that we cannot succeed in imitating them.

9. Nor will it be of advantage to us only to alter the language of others; it will be serviceable also to vary our own in a number of different forms, taking certain thoughts for the purpose, and putting them, as harmoniously as possible, into several shapes, just as different figures are molded out of the same wax. 10. But I consider that the greatest facility in composition is acquired by exercise in the simplest subjects; for in treating of a multiplicity of *persons, causes, occasions, places, sayings, and actions*, our real weakness in style may readily escape notice amidst so many subjects which present themselves on all sides, and on some of which we may readily lay hold. 11. But the great proof of power is to expand what is naturally contracted, to amplify what is little, to give variety to things that are similar, and attraction to such as are obvious, and to say with effect much on a little.

To this end *indefinite questions* will much contribute, questions which we call *θεσεις*, and on which Cicero, even when he had become the first orator in his country, used to exercise himself. 12. Next in utility to these are *refutations and defenses of sentences*; for as a sentence is a sort of decree and order, whatever questions may arise regarding the subject of it, may also arise regarding the decision on the subject. Next stand *commonplaces*, on which we know that accomplished orators have written. For he who shall succeed in treating fully on questions that are plain and direct, and do not involve any complicated inquiries, will be still better able to expatiate on such as admit of excursive discussion, and will be prepared for any cause whatever. 13. All causes, indeed, rest on general questions; for what difference does it make, for instance, whether *Cornelius, as tribune of the people, is accused of having read to the people the manuscript of a proposed law*, or whether we have to consider the general question, *Is it a breach of the dignity of office, if a magistrate reads his own law to the people in his own person?* What

difference does it make whether the question to be tried is, *Did Milo lawfully kill Clodius?* or, *Ought a liar-in-wait to be killed, or a mischievous member of the commonwealth, even though he be not a liar-in-wait?* What is the difference whether the question is, *Did Cato act properly in giving up his wife to Hortensius?* or, *Does such a proceeding become a respectable man?* Decision is pronounced concerning the persons, but the dispute concerns the general questions.

14. *Declamations*, too, such as are usually pronounced in the schools, are, if but adapted to real cases, and made similar to actual pleadings, of the greatest service, not only while our education has still to reach maturity, (for the exercise is alike both in conception and in arrangement,) but even when our studies are said to be completed, and have obtained us reputation in the forum; since eloquence is thus nurtured and made florid, as it were, on a richer sort of diet, and is refreshed after being fatigued by the constant roughnesses of forensic contests. 15. Hence, also, the copious style of *history* may be tried with advantage for exercising the pen; and we may indulge in the easy style of *dialogues*. Nor will it be prejudicial to our improvement to amuse ourselves with verse; as athletes, relaxing at times from their fixed rules for food and exercise, recruit themselves with ease and more inviting dainties. 16. It was from this cause, as it seems to me, that Cicero threw such a glorious brilliancy over his eloquence, that he used freely to ramble in such sequestered walks of study; for if our sole material for thought is derived from law cases, the gloss of our oratory must of necessity be rubbed off, its joints must grow stiff, and the points of its wit be blunted by daily encounters.

17. But though this feasting, as it were, of eloquence, refreshes and recruits those who are employed, and, as we may say, at war, in the field of the forum, yet young men ought not to be detained too long in fictitious representations and empty semblances of real life; to such a degree, I mean, that it would be difficult to familiarize them, when removed from such illusions, to the occupations of the forum; lest, from the effect of the retirement in which they have almost wasted away their life, they should shrink from the field of action as from too dazzling sunshine. 18. This is said indeed to have been the case with Porcius

Latro, who was the first professor of rhetoric of any eminence, so that, when he was called on to plead a cause in the forum, at the time that he bore the highest character in the schools, he used earnestly to entreat that the benches of the judges might be removed into the hall; for so strange did the open sky appear to him, that all his eloquence seemed to lie within a roof and walls. 19. Let the young man, then, who has carefully learned skill in conception and expression from his teachers, (which will not be an endless task if they are able and willing to teach,) and who has gained a fair degree of facility by practice, choose some orator, as was the custom among the ancients, whom he may follow and imitate; let him attend as many trials as possible, and be a frequent spectator of the sort of contest for which he is intended. 20. Let him set down cases also in writing, either the same that he has heard pleaded, or others, provided that they be on real facts, and let him handle both sides of the question; and, as we see in the schools of gladiators, let him exercise himself with arms that will decide contests,¹⁶² as we observed that Brutus did in composing a speech for Milo.¹⁶³ This is a much better practice than writing replies to old speeches, as Cestius¹⁶⁴ did to the speech of Cicero on behalf of Milo, though he could not have had a sufficient knowledge of the other side from reading only the defense.

21. The young man will thus be sooner qualified for the forum, whom his master has obliged to approach in his declamations as nearly as possible to reality, and to range through all sorts of cases, of which masters now select only the easiest parts, as most favorable for exhibition. The ordinary hindrances to such variety in cases, are the crowd of pupils, the custom of hearing the classes on stated days, and, in some degree, the influence of parents, who count their sons' declamations rather than judge of the merit of them. 22. But a good master, as I said, I believe, in my

¹⁶²*Decretoriis*. "The gladiators," says Seneca the Rhetorician, *Controv. lib. iv. præf.* "exercise themselves with heavier arms than those with which they actually fight." So Caligula is said by Suetonius, c. 54, to have used *pugnatoria arma*, which are the same as those here called *decretoria* by Quintilian. *Spalding*. [Tr.]

¹⁶³C. I, sect. 23. [Tr.]

¹⁶⁴A man of Greek origin, who practiced rhetoric at Rome. See Seneca the father, p. Bip. 399. *Spalding*. [Tr.]

first book, will not encumber himself with a greater number of pupils than he can well undertake to teach; he will put a stop to all empty loquacity, allowing everything to be said that concerns the question for decision, but not everything, as some would wish, within the range of possibility; and he will relax the stated course for speaking by granting longer time, or will permit his pupils to divide their cases into several parts, for one part carefully worked out will be of more service than many only half finished or just attempted. 23. It is from this desultoriness that nothing is put in its proper place in a speech, and that what is introduced at the beginning does not keep within its due bounds, as the young men crowd all the flowers of eloquence into what they are just going to deliver, and hence, from a fear of losing opportunities in the sequel, throw their commencement into utter confusion.

Chapter VI

Of thought and premeditation.

1. Next to writing is *meditation*, which indeed derives strength from it, and is something between the labor of writing and the trial of our fortune in extemporary speaking; and I know not whether it is not more frequently of use than either; for we cannot write everywhere and at all times; but there is abundance of time and room for thought. Meditation may in a very few hours embrace all points of the most important causes. When our sleep is broken at night, meditation is aided by the very darkness. Between the different stages in the pleading of a cause it finds some room to exercise itself, and never allows itself to be idle. 2. Nor does it only arrange within its circle the order of things, (which would itself be a great assistance to us,) but forms an array of words, and connects together the whole texture of a speech, with such effect, that nothing is wanting to it but to write it down. That, indeed, is in general more firmly fixed in the memory, on which the attention does not relax its hold from trusting too securely to writing.

But at such power of thought we cannot arrive suddenly or even soon. 3. In the first place, a certain *form* of thinking must be acquired by great practice in writing, a form which may be contin-

ually attendant on our meditations; a *habit* of thinking must then be gradually gained by embracing in our minds a few particulars at first, in such a way that they may be faithfully repeated; next, by additions so moderate that our task may scarcely feel itself increased, our power of conception must be enlarged, and sustained by plenty of exercise; power which in a great degree depends on memory, and I shall consequently defer some remarks on it till I enter on that head of my subject.¹⁶⁵ 4. Yet it has already been made apparent,¹⁶⁶ that he to whom nature does not obstinately refuse her aid, may, if assisted only by zealous application, attain such proficiency that what he has merely meditated, as well as what he has written and learned by heart, may be faithfully expressed in his efforts at oratory. Cicero indeed has acquainted us that, among the Greeks, Metrodorus of Scepsis,¹⁶⁷ and Emphylius¹⁶⁸ of Rhodes, and Hortensius among our own countrymen, could, when they pleaded a cause, repeat word for word what they had premeditated.

5. But if by chance, while we are speaking, some glowing thought, suggested on the instant, should spring up in our minds, we must certainly not adhere too supersitiously to that which we have studied; for what we meditate is not to be settled with such nicety, that room is not to be allowed for a happy conception of the moment, when thoughts that suddenly arise in our minds are often inserted even in our written compositions. Hence the whole of this kind of exercise must be so ordered that we may easily depart from what we have arranged and easily return to it; since, though it is of the first importance to bring with us from home a prepared and precise array of language, yet it would be the greatest folly to reject the offerings of the moment. 6. Let our *premeditation*, therefore, be made with such care that fortune, while she is unable to disappoint,

¹⁶⁵B. xi. c. 2. [Tr.]

¹⁶⁶*Eo tamen pervenit, sc. res;* "the subject has come to this," that is, what has been previously said is sufficient to show this. [Tr.]

¹⁶⁷He was celebrated for the cultivation of his memory. See Cicero de Orat. ii. 88. See also Pliny, H. N. vii. 24. [Tr.]

¹⁶⁸The name Emphylius does not occur in any work of Cicero that we now have. A rhetorician of that name is mentioned by Plutarch as the companion of Brutus, Vit. Brut. c. 2. [Tr.]

may have it in her power to assist us. But it will depend on the strength of our memory, whether that we have embraced in our minds flows forth easily, and does not prevent us, while we are anxious and looking back, and relying on no hope but that of recollection, from casting a glance in advance; otherwise I should prefer extemporaneous venturesomeness to premeditation of such unhappy coherence. It has the very worst effect to be turning back in quest of our matter, because, while we are looking for what is in one direction, we are diverted from what is in another, and we derive our thoughts rather from mere memory than from our proper subject. Supposing, too, that we had to depend wholly on premeditation or wholly on the conceptions of the moment, we know very well that more may be imagined than has been imagined. . . .

BOOK XII

Introduction

1. I have now arrived at by far the most important part of the work which I had contemplated. Had I imagined, when I first conceived the idea of it, that its weight would have been so great as that with which I now feel myself pressed, I should have earlier considered whether my strength would be able to bear it. But, at the commencement, the thought of the disgrace that I should incur if I did not perform what I had promised, kept me to my undertaking; and afterwards, though the labor increased at almost every stage, yet I resolved to support myself under all difficulties, that I might not render useless what had been already finished. 2. For the same reason at present, also, though the task grows more burdensome than ever, yet, as I look towards the end, I am determined rather to faint than to despair.

What deceived me, was, that I began with small matters; and though I was subsequently carried onwards, like a mariner by inviting gales, yet, as long as I treated only of what was generally known, and had been the subject of consideration to most writers on rhetoric, I seemed to be still at no great distance from the shore, and had many companions who had ventured to trust themselves to the same breezes. 3. But when I entered upon regions of elo-

quence but recently discovered,¹⁶⁹ and attempted only by very few, scarcely a navigator was to be seen that had gone so far from the harbor as myself; and now, when the orator whom I have been forming, being released from the teachers of rhetoric, is either carried forward by his own efforts, or desires greater aid from the inmost recesses of philosophy, I begin to feel into how vast an ocean I have sailed, and see that there is

— *Cælum undique et undique pontus,*

On all sides heaven, and on all sides sea.

I seem to behold, in the vast immensity, only one adventurer besides myself, namely Cicero; and even he himself, though he entered on the deep with so great and so well equipped a vessel, contracts his sails, and lays aside his oars, and contents himself with showing merely what sort of eloquence a consummate orator ought to employ. But my temerity will attempt to define even the orator's moral character, and to prescribe his duties. Thus, though I cannot overtake the great man that is before me, I must, nevertheless, go rather than he, as my subject shall lead me. However, the desire of what is honorable is always praiseworthy, and it belongs to what we may call cautious daring, to try that for failure in which pardon will readily be granted.

Chapter 1

A great orator must be a good man; according to Cato's definition, § 1, 2. A bad man cannot be a consummate orator, as he is deficient in wisdom, 3–5. The mind of a bad man is too much distracted with cares and remorse, 6, 7. A bad man will not speak with the same authority and effect on virtue and morality as a good man, 8–13. Objections to this opinion answered, 14–22. A bad man may doubtless speak with great force, but he would make nearer approaches to perfect eloquence if he were a good man, 23–32. Yet we must be able to conceive arguments on either side of a question, 33–35. A good man may sometimes be justified in misleading those whom he addresses, for the attainment of some good object, 36–45.

1. Let the orator, then, whom I propose to form, be such a one as is characterized by the definition

¹⁶⁹Because the ancient orators used but a rude kind of language, not having discovered that regular and numerous com-

of Marcus Cato, *a good man skilled in speaking*.¹⁷⁰

But the requisite which Cato has placed first in this definition, that an orator should be *a good man*, is naturally of more estimation and importance than the other. It is of importance that an orator should be good, because, should the power of speaking be a support to evil, nothing would be more pernicious than eloquence alike to public concerns and private, and I myself, who, as far as is in my power, strive to contribute something to the faculty of the orator, should deserve very ill of the world, since I should furnish arms, not for soldiers, but for robbers. 2. May I not draw an argument from the condition of mankind? Nature herself, in bestowing on man that which she seems to have granted him preeminently, and by which she appears to have distinguished us from all other animals,¹⁷¹ would have acted, not as a parent, but as a step-mother, if she had designed the faculty of speech to be the promoter of crime, the oppressor of innocence, and the enemy of truth; for it would have been better for us to have been born dumb, and to have been left destitute of reasoning powers, than to have received endowments from providence only to turn them to the destruction of one another.

3. My judgment carries me still further; for I not only say that he who would answer my idea of an orator, must be a good man, but that no man, unless he be good, can ever be an orator. To an orator discernment and prudence are necessary; but we can certainly not allow discernment to those, who, when the ways of virtue and vice are set before them, prefer to follow that of vice; nor can we allow them prudence, since they subject themselves, by the unforeseen consequences of their actions, often to the heaviest penalty of the law, and always to that of an evil conscience. 4. But if it be not only truly said by the wise, but always justly believed by the vulgar, that no man is vicious who is not also foolish, a fool, assuredly, will never become an orator.

position which was afterwards adopted by Thrasymachus and Gorgias, and brought to such a height of excellence by Isocrates. *Turnebus*. [Tr.]

¹⁷⁰See note on ii. 15. 1. [Tr.]

¹⁷¹See ii. 16, 16, *seq.* [Tr.]

It is to be further considered that the mind cannot be in a condition for pursuing the most noble of studies, unless it be entirely free from vice; not only because there can be no communion of good and evil in the same breast, and to meditate at once on the best things and the worst is no more in the power of the same mind than it is possible for the same man to be at once virtuous and vicious; 5. but also, because a mind intent on so arduous a study should be exempt from all other cares, even such as are unconnected with vice; for then, and then only, when it is free and master of itself, and when no other object harasses and distracts its attention, will it be able to keep in view the end to which it is devoted. 6. But if an inordinate attention to an estate, a too anxious pursuit of wealth, indulgence in the pleasures of the chase, and the devotion of our days to public spectacles, rob our studies of much of our time,¹⁷² (for whatever time is given to one thing is lost to another,) what effect must we suppose that ambition, avarice, and envy will produce, whose excitements are so violent as even to disturb our sleep and our dreams? 7. Nothing indeed is so preoccupied, so unsettled, so torn and lacerated with such numerous and various passions, as a bad mind; for when it intends evil, it is agitated with hope, care, and anxiety, and when it has attained the object of its wickedness, it is tormented with uneasiness, repentance, and the dread of every kind of punishment. Among such disquietudes, what place is there for study, or any rational pursuit? No more certainly than there is for corn in a field overrun with thorns and brambles.

8. To enable us to sustain the toil of study, is not temperance necessary? What expectations are to be formed, then, from him who is abandoned to licentiousness and luxury? Is not the love of praise one of the greatest incitements to the pursuit of literature? But can we suppose that the love of praise is an object of regard with the unprincipled? Who does not know that a principal part of oratory consists in discoursing on justice and virtue? But will the unjust man and the vicious treat of such subjects with the respect that is due to them?

9. But though we should even concede a great

¹⁷²Compare i. 12, 18. *Spalding*. [Tr.]

part of the question, and grant, what can by no means be the case, that there is the same portion of ability, diligence, and attainments, in the worst man as in the best, which of the two, even under that supposition, will prove the better orator? He, doubtless, who is the better man. The same person, therefore, can never be a bad man and a perfect orator, for that cannot be perfect to which something else is superior.

10. That I may not seem, however, like the writers of Socratic dialogues, to frame answers to suit my own purpose, let us admit that there exists a person so unmoved by the force of truth, as boldly to maintain that a bad man, possessed of the same portion of ability, application, and learning, as a good man, will be an equally good orator, and let us convince even such a person of his folly.

11. No man, certainly, will doubt, that it is the object of all oratory, that what is stated to the judge may appear to him to be true and just; and which of the two, let me ask, will produce such a conviction with the greater ease, the good man or the bad? 12. A good man, doubtless, will speak of what is true and honest with greater frequency; but even if, from being influenced by some call of duty, he endeavors to support what is fallacious, (a case which, as I shall show, may sometimes occur,) he must still be heard with greater credit than a bad man. 13. But with bad men, on the other hand, dissimulation sometimes fails, as well through their contempt for the opinion of mankind, as through their ignorance of what is right; hence they assert without modesty, and maintain their assertions without shame; and, in attempting what evidently cannot be accomplished, there appears in them a repulsive obstinacy and useless perseverance; for bad men, as well in their pleadings as in their lives, entertain dishonest expectations; and it often happens, that even when they speak the truth, belief is not accorded them, and the employment of advocates of such a character is regarded as a proof of the badness of a cause.

14. I must, however, notice those objections to my opinion, which appear to be clamored forth, as it were, by the general consent of the multitude. Was not then Demosthenes, they ask, a great orator? yet we have heard that he was not a good

man. Was not Cicero a great orator? yet many have thrown censure upon his character. To such questions how shall I answer? Great displeasure is likely to be shown at any reply whatever; and the ears of my audience require first to be propitiated. 15. The character of Demosthenes, let me say, does not appear to me deserving of such severe reprehension, that I should believe all the calumnies that are heaped upon him by his enemies, especially when I read his excellent plans for the benefit of his country and the honorable termination of his life. 16. Nor do I see that the feeling of an upright citizen was, in any respect, wanting to Cicero. As proofs of his integrity, may be mentioned his consulship, in which he conducted himself with so much honor; his honorable administration of his province; his refusal to be one of the twenty commissioners;¹⁷³ and, during the civil wars, which fell with great severity on his times, his uprightness of mind, which was never swayed, either by hope or by fear, from adhering to the better party, or the supporters of the commonwealth. 17. He is thought by some to have been deficient in courage, but he has given an excellent reply to this charge, when he says, *that he was timid, not in encountering dangers, but in taking precautions against them*;¹⁷⁴ an assertion of which he proved the truth of his death, to which he submitted with the noblest fortitude. 18. But even should the height of virtue have been wanting to these eminent men, I shall reply to those who ask me whether they were orators, as the Stoics reply when they are asked whether Zeno, Cleanthes, and Chrysippus, were wise men; they say that they were great and deserving of veneration, but that they did not attain the highest excellence of which human nature is susceptible.

19. Pythagoras desired to be called, not *wise*, like those who preceded him, but a *lover of wisdom*. I, however, in speaking of Cicero, have often said, according to the common mode of

¹⁷³For dividing the lands of Campania. See Vell. Pat. ii. 45; Dion Cass. xxxviii. 1; Cicero ad Att. ix. 2. [Tr.]

¹⁷⁴I have not been able to find these words in Cicero, nor have any of the commentators pointed them out. The sentiment Cicero often expresses; when, for example, he complains of the rashness of the party of Pompey; as in Ad Fam. vi. 21, and in many other passages. *Spalding*. [Tr.]

speech, and shall continue to say, that he was a *perfect orator*, as we term our friends, in ordinary discourse, *good and prudent men*, though such epithets can be justly given only to the perfectly wise. 20. But when I have to speak precisely, and in conformity with the exactness of truth, I shall express myself as longing to see such an orator as he himself also longed to see;¹⁷⁵ for though I acknowledge that Cicero stood at the head of eloquence, and that I can scarcely find a passage in his speeches to which anything can be added, however many I might find which I may imagine that he would have pruned, (for the learned have in general been of opinion that he had *numerous excellences* and *some faults*, and he himself says that he had cut off most of his *juvenile exuberance*,¹⁷⁶) yet, since he did not claim to himself, though he had no mean opinion of his merits, the praise of perfection, and since he might certainly have spoken better if a longer life had been granted him, and a more tranquil season for composition, I may not unreasonably believe that the summit of excellence was not attained by him, to which, notwithstanding, no man made nearer approaches. 21. If I had thought otherwise, I might have maintained my opinion with still greater determination and freedom. Did Marcus Antonius declare that *he had seen no man truly eloquent*,¹⁷⁷ though to be eloquent is much less than to be a perfect orator; does Cicero himself say that *he is still seeking for an orator*, and merely conceives and imagines one; and shall I fear to say that in that portion of eternity which is yet to come something may arise still more excellent than what has yet been seen? 22. I take no advantage of the opinion of those who refuse to allow great merit to Cicero and Demosthenes even in eloquence; though Demosthenes, indeed, does not appear sufficiently near perfection even to Cicero himself, who says that he *sometimes nods*,¹⁷⁸ nor does Cicero appear so

to Brutus and Clavus,¹⁷⁹ who certainly find fault with his language even in addressing himself, or to either of the Asinii,¹⁸⁰ who attack the blemishes in his style with virulence in various places.

23. Let us grant, however, what nature herself by no means brings to pass, that a bad man has been found endowed with consummate eloquence, I should nevertheless refuse to concede to him the name of orator, as I should not allow the merit of fortitude to all who have been active in the field, because fortitude cannot be conceived as unaccompanied with virtue. 24. Has not he who is employed to defend causes need of integrity which covetousness cannot pervert, or partially corrupt, or terror abash, and shall we honor the traitor, the renegade, the prevaricator, with the sacred name of orator? And if that quality, which is commonly called *goodness*, is found even in moderate pleaders, why should not that great orator, who has not yet appeared, but who may hereafter appear, be as consummate in goodness as in eloquence? 25. It is not a plodder in the forum, or a mercenary pleader, or, to use no stronger term, a not unprofitable advocate, (such as he whom they generally term a *causidicus*,) that I desire to form, but a man who, being possessed of the highest natural genius, stores his mind thoroughly with the most valuable kinds of knowledge; a man sent by the gods to do honor to the world, and such as no preceding age has known; a man in every way eminent and excellent, a thinker of the best thoughts and a speaker of the best language. 26. For such a man's ability how small a scope will there be in the defense of innocence or the repression of guilt in the forum, or in supporting truth against falsehood in litigations about money? He will appear great, indeed, even in such inferior employments, but his powers will shine with the highest luster on greater occasions, when the counsels of the senate are to

¹⁷⁵Orat. c. 2; De Orat. iii. 22. [Tr.]

¹⁷⁶See c. 6. sect. 4; Cic. Brut. c. 91. [Tr.]

¹⁷⁷Cic. Orat. c. 5; De Orat. iii. 22. [Tr.]

¹⁷⁸*Dormitare interim dicit*. See x. 1, 24. Is the passage of Cicero lost in which this expression occurred? Or did Quintilian, after using it with regard to Homer, in the place to which I have just referred, attribute it to Cicero through a lapse of memory? *Gesner*. [Tr.]

¹⁷⁹Gesner refers to the Dial. de Orat. c. 18, where Calvus is said to have called Cicero *solutus* and *enervis*; Brutus, *fractus* and *elumbis*. See ix. 4, 1; xii. 10, 12. [Tr.]

¹⁸⁰Father and son. The son wrote a book in which he compared his father with Cicero; Pliny. Ep. vii. 4, 4, says that he had read it. It was answered by the Emperor Claudius according to Sueton. c. 41 and Aul. Gell. xvii. 1. *Gesner*. That Asinius Pollio criticized Cicero with great illiberality appears from Senec. Suasor. *Spalding*. [Tr.]

be directed, and the people to be guided from error into rectitude. 27. Is it not such an orator that Virgil appears to have imagined, representing him as a calmer of the populace in a sedition, when they were hurling firebrands and stones?

*Tum pietate gravem et meritis si forte virum quem
Conspexere, silent, arrectisque auribus adstant,
Then if perchance a sage they see, rever'd
For piety and worth, they hush their noise,
And stand with ears attentive.*

We see that he first makes him a *good man*, and then adds that he is *skilled in speaking*:

*Ille regit dictis animos, et pectora mulcet,
With words
He rules their passions and their breasts controls.*

28. Would not the orator whom I am trying to form, too, if he were in the field of battle, and his soldiers required to be encouraged to engage, draw the materials for an exhortation from the most profound precepts of philosophy? for how could all the terrors of toil, pain, and even death, be banished from their breasts, unless vivid feelings of piety, fortitude, and honor, be substituted in their place? 29. He, doubtless, will best implant such feelings in the breasts of others who has first implanted them in his own; for simulation, however guarded it be, always betrays itself, nor was there ever such power of eloquence in any man that he would not falter and hesitate whenever his words were at variance with his thoughts. 30. But a bad man must of necessity utter words at variance with his thoughts; while to good men, on the contrary, a virtuous sincerity of language will never be wanting, nor (for good men will also be wise) a power of producing the most excellent thoughts, which, though they may be destitute of showy charms, will be sufficiently adorned by their own natural qualities, since whatever is said with honest feeling will also be said with eloquence.

31. Let youth, therefore, or rather let all of us, of every age, (for no time is too late for resolving on what is right,) direct our whole faculties, and our whole exertions, to this object;¹⁸¹ and perhaps to some it may be granted to attain it; for if

¹⁸¹The attainment of virtue and eloquence. [Tr.]

nature does not interdict a man from being good, or from being eloquent, why should not some one among mankind be able to attain eminence in both goodness and eloquence? And why should not each hope that he himself may be the fortunate aspirant? 32. If our powers of mind are insufficient to reach the summit, yet in proportion to the advances that we make towards it will be our improvement in both eloquence and virtue. At least, let the notion be wholly bannished from our thoughts, that perfect eloquence, the noblest of human attainments, can be united with a vicious character of mind. Talent in speaking, if it falls to the lot of the vicious, must be regarded as being itself a vice, since it makes those more mischievous with whom it allies itself.

33. But I fancy that I hear some (for there will never be wanting men who would rather be eloquent than good) saying "Why then is there so much art devoted to eloquence? Why have you given precepts on rhetorical coloring, and the defense of difficult causes, and some even on the acknowledgment of guilt,¹⁸² unless, at times, the force and ingenuity of eloquence overpowers even truth itself? for a good man advocates only good causes, and truth itself supports them sufficiently without the aid of learning." 34. These objects I shall endeavor to satisfy, by answering them, first, concerning my own work, and, secondly, concerning the duty of a good man, if occasion ever calls him to the defense of the guilty.

To consider how we may speak in defense of what is false, or even what is unjust, is not without its use, if for no other reason than that we may expose and refute fallacious arguments with the greater ease; as that physician will apply remedies with the greater effect to whom that which is hurtful is known. 35. The Academicians, when they have disputed on both sides of a point of morality, will not live according to either side at hazard; nor was the well known Carneades, who is said to have argued at Rome, in the hearing of Cato the Censor, with no less force against the observance of justice than he had argued the day before in favor of it, an unjust man. But *vice*, which is opposed to *virtue*, shows more clearly what virtue is; *justice* becomes more manifest

¹⁸²IV. 2, 68-75; xi. I, 76. [Tr.]

from the contemplation of *injustice*; and many things are proved by their contraries. The devices of his adversaries, accordingly, should be as well known to the orator, as the stratagems of an enemy in the field to a commander.

36. Even that which appears, when it is first stated, of so objectionable a character, *that a good man, in defending a cause, may sometimes incline to withhold the truth from the judge*,¹⁸³ reason may find cause to justify. If any one feels surprised that I advance this opinion, (though this is not mine is particular, but that of those whom antiquity acknowledged as the greatest masters of wisdom,¹⁸⁴) let him consider that there are many things which are rendered honorable or dishonorable, not by their own nature, but by the causes which give rise to them. 37. For if *to kill a man* is often an act of virtue, and *to put to death one's children* is sometimes a noble sacrifice;¹⁸⁵ and if it is allowable to do things of a still more repulsive nature when the good of our country demands them, we must not consider merely what cause a good man defends, but from what motive, and with what object he defends it. 38. In the first place, every one must grant me, what the most rigid of the Stoics do not deny, that a good man may sometimes think proper to tell a lie,¹⁸⁶ and occasionally even in matters of small moment, as, when children are sick, we make them believe many things with a view to promote their health, and promise them many which we do not intend to perform; 39. and much less, is it forbidden to tell a falsehood when an assassin is to be prevented from killing a man, or an enemy to be deceived for the benefit of our country; so that what is at one time reprehensible in a slave is at another laudable even in the wisest of men. If this be admitted, I see that many causes may occur for which an orator may justly undertake a case of such a nature, as, in the absence of any

¹⁸³See iv, 5, 6. [Tr.]

¹⁸⁴Among these we must number Panætius, as appears from Cicero Off. ii. 14. Compare Quint. 11. 17, 26. *Spalding*. [Tr.]

¹⁸⁵The examples of Ahala, Scipio Nasica, Brutus, and Manlius will at once occur to the reader. *Spalding*. [Tr.]

¹⁸⁶See ii. 17, 27. Examples of well-intended concealment of truth are given also by Plato, Rep. ii. p. 382 Steph. *Spalding*. [Tr.]

honorable motive, he would not undertake. 40. Nor do I say this only with reference to a father, a brother, or a friend, who may be in danger, (because even in such a case I would allow only what is strictly lawful), though there is then sufficient ground for hesitation, when the image of justice presents itself on one side, and that of natural affection on the other; but let us set the point beyond all doubt. Let us suppose that a man has attempted the life of a tyrant, and is brought to trial for the deed; will such an orator as is described by us, be unwilling that his life should be saved? and, if he undertake to defend him, will he not support his cause before the judge by the same kind of misrepresentation as he who advocates a bad cause? 41. Or what if a judge would condemn a man for something that was done with justice, unless we convince him that it was not done; would not an orator, by producing such conviction, save the life of a fellow-citizen, when he is not only innocent but deserving of praise? Or what if we know that certain political measures are in contemplation, which, though just in themselves, are rendered detrimental to the commonwealth by the state of the times, shall we not adopt artifices of eloquence to set them aside, artifices which, though well-intended, are nevertheless similar to those of an immoral character?

42. No man, again, will doubt, that if guilty persons can by any means be turned to a right course of life, and it is allowed that they sometimes may, it will be more for the advantage of the state that their lives should be spared than that they should be put to death. If, then, it appear certain to an orator, that a person against whom true accusations are brought, will, if acquitted, become a good member of society, will he not exert himself that he may be acquitted?

43. Suppose, again, that a man who is an excellent general, and without whose aid his country would be unable to overcome her enemies, is accused of a crime of which he is evidently guilty, will not the public good call upon an orator to plead his cause? It is certain that Fabricius made Cornelius Rufinus,¹⁸⁷ who was in other respects a bad citizen, and his personal enemy, consul, by voting for him when a war threatened

¹⁸⁷Cicero de Orat. 11. 66; Aul. Gell iv. 8. [Tr.]

the state, because he knew him to be a good general; and when some expressed their surprise at what he had done, he replied, that *he had rather be robbed by a citizen than sold for a slave by the enemy*. Had Fabricius, therefore, been an orator, would he not have pleaded for Rufinus even though he had been manifestly guilty of robbing his country?

44. Many similar cases might be supposed, but even any one of them is sufficient; for I do not insinuate that the orator whom I would form should often undertake such causes; I only wish to show that if such a motive as I have mentioned should induce him to do so, the definition of an orator, *that he is a good man skilled in speaking*, would still be true.

45. It is necessary, too, for the master to teach, and for the pupil to learn, how difficult cases are to be treated in attempting to establish them; for very often even the best causes resemble bad ones, and an innocent person under accusation may be urged by many probabilities against him; and he must then be defended by the same process of pleading as if he were guilty. There are also innumerable particulars common alike to good and bad causes; as oral and written evidence, and suspicions and prejudices to be overcome. But what is probable is established or refuted by the same methods as what is true. The speech of the orator, therefore, will be modeled as circumstances shall require, uprightness of intention being always maintained.

Chapter II

An orator must study to maintain a high moral character, § 1, 2. Tendencies to virtue implanted by nature may be strengthened by cultivation, 3–9. Division of philosophy into three parts, natural, moral, and dialectic; remarks on the last kind, 10–14. On moral philosophy, 15–20. On natural philosophy, 21–23. Observations on the different sects of philosophers; an orator need not attach himself to any sect in particular, but may be content with learning what is good wherever it is to be found, 24–31.

1. Since an orator, then, is a good man, and a good man cannot be conceived to exist without virtuous inclinations, and virtue, though it receives certain impulses from nature, requires

notwithstanding to be brought to maturity by instruction, the orator must above all things study *morality*, and must obtain a thorough knowledge of all that is just and honorable, without which no one can either be a good man or an able speaker. 2. Unless, indeed, we feel inclined to adopt the opinion of those who think that the moral character is formed by nature, and is not at all influenced by discipline; and who, forsooth, acknowledge that manual operations, and even the meanest of them, cannot be acquired without the aid of teachers, but say that we possess virtue, (than which nothing has been given to man that raises him nearer to the immortal gods,) unsought and without labor, simply because we are born what we are. 3. But will that man be temperate, who does not know even what temperance is? Or will that man be possessed of fortitude, who has used no means to free his mind from the terrors of pain, death, and superstition? Or will that man be just, who has entered into no examination of what is equitable and good, and who has never ascertained from any dissertation of the least learning, the principles either of the laws which are by nature prescribed to all men, or of those which are instituted among particular people and nations? Of how little consequence do they think all this, to whom it appears so easy! 4. But I shall say no more on this point, on which I think no man, who *has tasted of learning*, as they say, *with but the slightest touch of his lips*, will entertain the least doubt.

I pass on to my second proposition,¹⁸⁸ that no man will ever be thoroughly accomplished in eloquence, who has not gained a deep insight into the impulses of human nature, and formed his moral character on the precepts of others and on his own reflection. 5. It is not without reason that Lucius Crassus, in the third book *De Oratore*,¹⁸⁹ asserts that everything that can come under discussion respecting equity, justice, truth, goodness, and whatever is of an opposite nature, are the proper concerns of the orator; and that the philosophers, when they inculcate those virtues with the force of eloquence, use the arms of the

¹⁸⁸This must be understood as contained in the latter half of sect. 1. [Tr.]

¹⁸⁹C. 19, 27, 31. [Tr.]

orator and not their own. Yet he admits that the knowledge of these subjects must now be sought from philosophy, because philosophy, apparently, seems to him to be more fully in possession of them. 6. Hence also it is that Cicero remarks, in many passages both of his books and of his letters,¹⁹⁰ that the power of eloquence is to be derived from the deepest sources of wisdom, and that accordingly the same persons were for a considerable time the teachers at once of eloquence and of morality.

This exhortation of mine, however, is not designed to intimate that I should wish the orator to be a philosopher, since no other mode of life has withdrawn itself further from the duties of civil society, and all that concerns the orator. 7. Which of the philosophers, indeed, ever frequented courts of justice, or distinguished himself in public assemblies? Which of them ever engaged even in the management of political affairs on which most of them have given such earnest precepts? But I should desire the orator, whom I am trying to form, to be a kind of *Roman wise man*, who may prove himself a true statesman, not by discussions in retirement, but by personal experience and exertions in public life. 8. But because the pursuits of philosophy have been deserted by those who have devoted their minds to eloquence, and because they no longer display themselves in their proper field of action, and in the open light of the forum, but have retreated, at first into the porticoes and gymnasia, and since into the assemblies of the schools,¹⁹¹ the orator must seek that which is necessary for him, and which is not taught by the masters of eloquence, among those with whom it has remained, by perusing with the most diligent application the authors that give instruction in virtue, that his life may be in conformity with a thorough knowledge of divine and human things; and how much more

¹⁹⁰It would be tedious to refer to passages; and I wish that I could point out a greater number in the letters than I can. But I find one, which I may notice here, in the epistle to Cato (Ad. Fam. xiv. 4) where he says that philosophy was introduced both by Cato and himself to the forum. See de Orat. iii. 15; Tuscul. i. 3; Orat. c. 21. *Spalding*. [Tr.]

¹⁹¹Quintilian alludes first to the condition of philosophy among the ancient Greeks, and then to its condition among the Romans in his own time. *Spalding*. [Tr.]

important and noble would these things appear, if those were to teach them who could discourse on them with the highest eloquence? 9. Would that there may some day come a time, when some orator, perfect as we wish him to be, may vindicate to himself the study of philosophy, (which has been rendered odious as well by the arrogant assumptions, as by the vices, of those who have disgraced its excellent nature,) and by a reconquest as it were, annex it again to the domain of eloquence!

10. As philosophy is divided into three parts, *physics*, *ethics*, and *dialectics*, by which of the three is it not allied with the business of the orator?

To consider them in the order contrary to that in which I have named them, no man can surely doubt whether the last, which is wholly employed about words, concerns the orator, if it be his business to know the exact significations of terms, to clear ambiguities, to disentangle perplexities, to distinguish falsehood from truth, and to establish or refute what he may desire; 11. though, indeed, we shall not have to use these arts with such exactness and preciseness in pleadings in the forum, as is observed in the disputations of the schools; because the orator must not only instruct his audience, but must move and delight them, and to effect that object there is need of energy, animation, and grace; the difference between the orator and the dialectician being as great as that in the courses of rivers of an opposite character; for the force of streams that flow between high banks, and with a full flood, is far greater than that of shallow brooks, with water struggling against the obstructions of pebbles. 12. And as the teachers of wrestling do not instruct their pupils in all the *attitudes*, as they call them, that they may use all that they have learned in an actual struggle with an adversary, (for more may be effected by weight, and firmness, and ardor,) but that they may have a large number of artifices, of which they may adopt one or other as occasion may require; 13. so the art of logic, or of *disputation*, if we had rather give it that name, though it is often of the greatest use in definitions and deductions, in marking differences and in explaining ambiguities, in distinguishing and dividing, in perplexing and

entangling, yet, if it assumes to itself the whole conduct of a cause in the forum, will prove but a hindrance to what is better than itself, and will waste, by its very subtilty, the strength that is divided to suit its niceties. 14. We may accordingly see that some people, extremely acute in disputations, are, when they are drawn beyond the sphere of calling, no more able to support any important exertion of eloquence, than certain little animals, which are active enough to escape being caught in a small space, can prevent themselves from being seized in an open field.

15. As to that part of philosophy which is called *moral*, the study of it is certainly wholly suited to the orator; for in such a variety of causes, (as I have remarked in the preceding books,) in which some points are ascertained by conjecture,¹⁹² others are settled by definition,¹⁹³ others are set aside by the law,¹⁹⁴ others fall under the state of exception,¹⁹⁵ others are determined by syllogism,¹⁹⁶ others depend on a comparison of different laws,¹⁹⁷ others on explanations of ambiguous terms,¹⁹⁸ scarcely a single cause can occur in some part of which considerations of equity and morality are not concerned. Who does not know, also, that there are numbers of cases which depend entirely on the estimation of the quality of an act, a question purely moral? 16. In deliberative oratory, also, what means would there be of exhortation unconnected with questions of honesty? As to the third kind of oratory, too, which consists in the duties of praising and censuring, what shall be said of it? It is assuredly engaged about considerations of right and wrong. 17. Will not an orator have to speak much of justice, fortitude, abstinence, temperance, piety? Yet the good man, who has a knowledge of these virtues, not by sound and name only, not as heard merely by the ear to be repeated by the tongue, but who has embraced them in his heart, and thinks in conformity with

¹⁹²*Status conjecturalis*. iii. 6, 31, 45. [Tr.]

¹⁹³*Status definitivus*. ib. [Tr.]

¹⁹⁴*Status legalis*. iii. 6, 45. [Tr.]

¹⁹⁵*Status translativus*, or "state of exception." iii. 6, 23. [Tr.]

¹⁹⁶See iii. 6, 15. [Tr.]

¹⁹⁷B. vii. c. 7. [Tr.]

¹⁹⁸B. vii. c. 9. [Tr.]

them, will have no difficulty in conceiving proper notions about them, and will express sincerely what he thinks.

18. Again, as every general question is more comprehensive than a particular one, as a part is contained in the whole while the whole is not included in a part, no one will doubt that general questions are intimately connected with that kind of studies of which we are speaking. 19. As there are many points also which require to be settled by appropriate and brief definitions, whence one *state* of causes is called the *definitive*,¹⁹⁹ ought not the orator to be prepared for giving such definitions by those who have given most attention to that department of study? Does not every question of equity depend either on an exact determination of the sense of words, or on the consideration of what is right, or on conjecture respecting the intention of the author of something written? and of all such questions part will rest on logical and part on ethical science. 20. All oratory, therefore, naturally partakes of these two departments of philosophy; I mean all oratory that truly deserves the name; for mere loquacity, which is ignorant of all such learning, must necessarily go astray, as having either no guides, or guides that are deceitful.

But the department of *natural* philosophy, besides that it affords so much wider a field for exercise in speaking than other subjects, inasmuch as we must treat of divine in a more elevated style than of human things, embraces also the whole of moral science, without which, as I have just shown,²⁰⁰ there can be no real oratory. 21. For if the world is governed by a providence, the state ought surely to be ruled by the superintendence of good men. If our souls are of divine origin, we ought to devote ourselves to virtue, and not to be slaves to a body of terrestrial nature. Will not the orator frequently have to treat of such subjects as these? Will he not have to speak of auguries, oracles, and of everything pertaining to religion, on which the most important deliberations in the senate often depend, at least if he is to be, as I think that he ought to be, a well qualified statesman? What sort of eloquence can be imagined, in-

¹⁹⁹III. 6, 31. [Tr.]

²⁰⁰Sect. 15. [Tr.]

deed, to proceed from a man who is ignorant of the noblest subjects of human contemplation?

22. If what I say were not evidently supported by reason, we might nevertheless believe it on the authority of examples; for it is well known that Pericles, of whose eloquence, though no visible proofs of it have come down to us, not only historians, but the old comic writers, a class of men not at all inclined to flattery, say that the power was scarcely credible, was a hearer of Anaxagoras, the great natural philosopher; and that Demosthenes, the prince of all the orators of Greece, attended the lectures of Plato. 23. As to Cicero, he frequently declares²⁰¹ that he owed less to the schools of the rhetoricians than to the gardens of the Academy. Nor indeed would so wonderful a fertility of mind have displayed itself in him, if he had circumscribed his genius by the limits of the forum, and not allowed it to range through all the domains of nature.

But from these reflections arises another question, *what sort of philosophers will contribute most to the improvement of eloquence*; though it is a question which will concern but a small number of sects. 24. Epicurus, in the first place, excludes us from all communication with him, as he directs his disciples to flee from all learning *with the utmost speed at which they can sail*.²⁰² Nor does Aristippus, who makes the chief happiness to consist in the pleasures of the body, encourage us to support the fatigues of study. As to Pyrrho, what concern can he have with our labor, he who is not certain whether there are judges to whom he speaks, or a defendant for whom he pleads, or a senate in which his opinion is to be given? 25. Some think the Academy most serviceable to eloquence, as its practice of disputing on both sides of a question is closely allied to the exercises preparatory to pleading in the forum; and they add as a proof of their opinion that that sect has produced men extremely eminent in eloquence.²⁰³ The Peripatetics also boast that they

²⁰¹The passage in the *Orator*, c. 3, has readily occurred to the commentators; but as Quintilian uses the word “frequently,” I could wish to find more passages in Cicero to that effect. *Spalding*. [Tr.]

²⁰²II. 17, 15. [Tr.]

²⁰³As Plato, whom Demosthenes is said to have been old enough just to hear, Carneades, and Cicero himself. *Gesner*. [Tr.]

have a strong bearing upon oratory,²⁰⁴ as the practice of speaking on general questions for the sake of exercise had its origin chiefly among them. The Stoics, though they must allow that copiousness and splendor of eloquence have been wanting in most of their eminent men,²⁰⁵ yet assert that no philosophers can either support proofs with greater force, or draw conclusions with greater subtilty. 26. But this is a notion among themselves, who, as if bound by an oath, or influenced by some superstitious obligation, think it criminal to depart from a persuasion which they have once embraced.

27. But an orator has no need to bind himself to the laws of any particular sect; for the office to which he devotes himself, and for which he is as it were a candidate, is of a loftier and better nature, since he is to be distinguished as well by excellence of moral conduct as by merit in eloquence. He will accordingly select the most eloquent orators for imitation in oratory, and for forming his moral character will fix upon the most honorable precepts and the most direct road to virtue. 28. He will indeed exercise himself on all subjects, but he will attach himself most to those of the highest and noblest nature; for what more fertile subjects can be found, indeed, for grave and copious eloquence, than dissertations on virtue, on government, on providence, on the origin of the human mind, and on friendship? These are the topics by which the mind and the language are alike elevated; *what is really good; what allays fear, restrains cupidity, frees us from the prejudices of the vulgar, and raises the mind towards the heaven from which it sprung*.

29. Nor will it be proper to understand those matters only which are comprehended in the sciences of which I have been speaking, but still more to know, and to bear continually in mind, the noble deeds and sayings which are recorded of the great men of antiquity, and which certainly are nowhere found in greater number or excellence than in the annals of our own commonwealth. 30. Will men of any other nation give

²⁰⁴For who has written better on the art of oratory than Aristotle, or who can be thought to have written more elegantly than Theophrastus? *Gesner*. [Tr.]

²⁰⁵See ii. 15, 35, and note. [Tr.]

better lessons of fortitude, justice, honor, temperance, frugality, contempt of pain and death, than a Fabricius, a Curius, a Regulus, a Decius, a Mucius, and others without number? for highly as the Greeks abound in precepts, the Romans, what is of far more importance, abound quite as much as in examples; 31. and that man will feel himself in a manner impelled by the biography of his country to a similar course of conduct, who does not think it sufficient to regard merely the present age, and the passing day, but considers that any honorable remembrance among posterity is but the just sequel to a life of virtue, and the completion of a career of merit. From this source let the orator whom I would form derive strong encouragements to the observance of justice, and let him show a sense of liberty drawn from hence in his pleadings in the forum and in his addresses to the senate. Nor will he indeed ever be a consummate orator who has not both knowledge and boldness to speak with sincerity.

Chapter III

Proofs that a knowledge of the civil law is necessary to an orator.

1. For such an orator, too, a knowledge of the *civil law* will be necessary, and of the manners and religion of that state, whatever it be, over which he shall endeavor to exert any influence; for what sort of an adviser will he be, whether in public or in private deliberations, who shall be ignorant of things by which a state is principally held together? or how will he not falsely call himself a defender of causes, who has to seek from another that which is of most importance to the pleading of his causes, almost like those who recite the writings of poets?²⁰⁶ 2. He will resemble in a manner a person carrying messages; what he desires the judge to believe, he will have to advance on the faith of another; and while he professes to aid parties going to law will stand in need of aid himself. Though this may indeed sometimes be done with but little inconvenience,

²⁰⁶Spalding supposes that actors are meant. Perhaps we should rather understand persons employed by poets who distrusted their voice or delivery, to recite their verses for them in public; as was the practice among the Romans of Quintilian's day. [Tr.]

when he shall bring before the judge what he has taught himself and arranged at home, and which he has learned by heart like other component parts of the cause, how will he fare with regard to those questions which often arise suddenly in the middle of a case? 3. Will he not look about him covered with shame, and ask questions of the inferior advocates²⁰⁷ on the benches? and even if he receives an answer, will he be able fully to comprehend what he hears, when he has to deliver it on the instant? Or will he be able to assert anything with confidence, or to speak with any appearance of sincerity for his clients? Perhaps he may in a set speech; but what will he do in altercations,²⁰⁸ where he must reply to the opposite party at once, and no time will be allowed him for gaining information? Or what if perchance a person skilled in the law be not at hand to prompt him? What if a person but imperfectly acquainted with the subject suggests to him something incorrect? For it is one of the greatest misfortunes of ignorance to fancy that whoever offers instruction is a man of knowledge.

4. I am not indeed forgetful of our practice, or unmindful of those who sit as it were by the store-chests²⁰⁹ to furnish weapons for forensic combatants; nor am I unaware that the Greeks also had the same custom, from whom the name of *pragmatici*,²¹⁰ bestowed upon these gentlemen, was derived. But I am speaking of a genuine orator who is to bring to the support of his cause not only his voice, but everything that can possibly be of service to it. 5. I would not think him therefore useless, if he stand perchance for his hour, or unskillful in establishing evidence. For who will prepare better than himself that which he shall wish to appear in the cause when he shall plead it? Unless, indeed, we consider that an able general is one who is active and brave in the field, and skilled in everything which an engagement

²⁰⁷*Minores advocatos*. Quintilian here uses *advocatus* for him *qui jus suggerit*, the attorney who suggested or explained points of law; or rather, perhaps, he alludes to the custom of having several advocates, so that he who spoke might be called the *major advocatus*, and the others, who assisted him with their advice, *minores*. Turnebus. [Tr.]

²⁰⁸See b. vi. c. 4. [Tr.]

²⁰⁹*Qui ad arculas sedent*. I suppose, says Buttmann, that Quintilian alludes to chests for holding weapons used in the *palæstræ* or other places of exercise. [Tr.]

²¹⁰III. 6, 59. [Tr.]

requires, but who knows neither how to levy troops, nor to muster or equip forces, nor to secure provisions, nor to select a position for a camp; though it is surely of more importance to make preparations for success in a fight, than to have the command in it. 6. But an orator would very greatly resemble such a general, if he should leave much that would promote his success to the management of others, especially as this knowledge of the civil law, which is of the utmost importance to him, is not so difficult to be acquired as it may perhaps appear to those who contemplate it from a distance. For every point of law, which is *certain*, rests upon something *written*, or upon *custom*; whatever is *doubtful* must be decided on grounds of equity. 7. What is written, or dependent on the custom of a country, is attended with no difficulty; for it is a matter of knowledge, not of invention,²¹¹ and points which are explained by the comments of lawyers, lie either in interpretations of words, or in distinctions between right and wrong. To understand the sense of every word in a law, is either common to all men of education, or peculiar to the orator; equity is understood by every honest man. 8. We, moreover, are supposing our orator to be a man eminently good and sensible; a man who, when he has devoted himself to the study of what is excellent in its nature, will not be greatly troubled if a lawyer differ from him in opinion, since lawyers themselves are allowed to hold various opinions on the same points.

9. But if he shall desire to know what lawyers in general have thought of any matter, he has only to apply himself to reading, than which nothing in his course of study is less laborious; and if many, from despair of acquiring the necessary qualifications for speaking in public, have betaken themselves in consequence to the study of law,²¹² how easy is it for the orator to attain that which those acquire, who, according to their own confession, cannot become orators! But Marcus Cato was both highly distinguished for eloquence, and eminent for his knowledge of law; and the merit of eloquence who also allowed to Scævola and Servius Sulpicius. 10. Cicero, too, was not only never at a loss, in pleading, for

a knowledge of law, but had even begun to write on it,²¹³ whence it appears that an orator may not only have time for learning law, but also for teaching it.

11. But let no man suppose that the precepts which I have offered respecting the necessity of attention to the moral character, and to the study of law, need not be regarded, because we have known many who, from dislike of the labor which they must undergo who aspire to eloquence, have resigned themselves to employments better suited to their indolence. Some of these have given themselves up to the white and red;²¹⁴ or have preferred to become *formularii*, or, as Cicero terms them, *leguleii*,²¹⁵ on pretense of choosing what was more useful, when they in reality sought only what was easier. 12. Others there have been, of equal indolence but greater arrogance, who, having suddenly²¹⁶ settled their countenance with affected gravity, and let their beards grow, have sat for a time, as if they looked with contempt on the study of oratory, in the schools of the philosophers, in order that, by assumed solemnity in public, while they are abandoned to licentiousness at home, they may assume authority to themselves by setting others at naught.

Chapter IV

The mind of an orator must be stored with examples and precedents.

I. But an orator ought to be furnished, above all things, with an ample *store of examples*, as well ancient as modern; since he should not only be acquainted with matters which are recorded in

²¹³It appears from Aulus Gellius, i. 22, that Cicero wrote one book which was entitled *De jure civili in artem redigendo*. Spalding. [Tr.]

²¹⁴*Ad album et rubricas*. By the *white* is meant the *jus prætorium*, or prætors' edicts, which were set forth *in albo*, "on white." By the *red* is signified the civil law, the titles and heads of which were written in red: Juv. Sat. xiv. 193. See Adam's Rom. Ant. p. 205, 8vo. ed. [Tr.]

²¹⁵Cicero de Orat. i. 55. "Thus the lawyer (*jurisconsultus*) is, of himself, nothing with you but a sort of wary and acute legalist (*leguleius*), an instructor in actions, a repeater of forms (*cantor formularum*, equivalent to *formularius*), a catcher at syllables." [Tr.]

²¹⁶After having devoted some time to the study of eloquence. Spalding. [Tr.]

²¹¹X. I, 106. [Tr.]

²¹²See viii. 3, 79. [Tr.]

history, or transmitted from hand to hand as it were by tradition, or are of daily occurrence, but should not even be neglectful of the fictions of the more eminent poets; for those of the former kind have the authority of testimonies, or even of precedents; and the latter sort are either supported by the sanction of antiquity, or are supposed to have been invented by great men to serve as precepts. 2. Let the orator, therefore, know as many as possible of every kind; for hence it is that greater authority is attributed to old men, as they are thought to have known and seen more than others; a fact which Homer frequently attests. But we must not wait till the last stage of life to acquire authority; for study affords us such advantage, that, as far as knowledge of events is concerned, we seem even to have lived in past ages.

Chapter V

Necessity of firmness and presence of mind to an orator, § 1-4. Natural advantages to be cultivated, 5, 6.

1. Such are the acquirements of which I had promised to give an account. They are instruments, not of the art, as some have thought, but of the orator; they are the arms which he ought to have at hand, and with a knowledge of which he ought to be thoroughly prepared, united with a ready store of words and figurative language, as well as with power of imagination, skill in the disposition of materials, strength of memory, and grace of delivery.

2. But the most important of all qualities is steady presence of mind, which fear cannot shake or clamor intimidate, nor the authority of an audience restrain beyond the just portion of respect that is due to them; for though faults of an opposite nature, those of presumption, temerity, audacity, and arrogance, are in the highest degree offensive, yet without proper firmness, confidence, and courage, neither art, nor study, nor knowledge would be of the least avail, any more than weapons put into the hands of weakness and timidity. It is not without unwillingness, indeed, that I observe (for what I say may be misunderstood) that modesty itself, which, though a fault, is an amiable one, and frequently the parent of virtues, is to be numbered among qualities detri-

mental to the orator, and has had such an effect on many, that the merits of their genius and learning have never been brought into light, but have wasted away under the rust contracted in obscurity. 3. Should any young student, however, not yet sufficiently experienced in distinguishing the meaning of words, read this remark, let him understand that it is not a reasonable degree of diffidence which I blame, but an excess of modesty, which is a species of fear that draws off the thoughts from what we ought to do, whence proceeds confusion, repentance that we ever began, and sudden silence; and who can hesitate to number among faults an affection by the influence of which we become ashamed to do what is right? 4. Nor, on the other hand, should I be unwilling that he who is going to speak should rise with some concern, change color, and show a sense of the hazard which he is encountering; feelings which, if they do not arise within us, should be assumed. But this should be the effect of consciousness of the weight of our task, not of fear; and though we should be moved, we should not sink down in helplessness. The great remedy for bashfulness, however, is confidence in our cause; and any countenance, however likely to be daunted, will be kept steady by a consciousness of being in the right.

5. But there are, as I observed before, advantages from nature, which may doubtless be improved by art; such as good organs of speech and tone of voice, strength of body, and grace of motion; advantages which are often of such effect that they gain the possessor of them reputation even for genius. Our age has seen more fertile orators than Trachalus;²¹⁷ but, when he spoke, he seemed to be far above all his contemporaries; such was the loftiness of his stature, the fire of his eyes, the authority of his look, and the grace of his action; while his voice was, not indeed, as Cicero²¹⁸ desires, similar to that of actors in tragedy, but superior to that of any tragic actor that I ever heard. 6. I well remember that on one occasion, when he was speaking in the *Basilica Julia*²¹⁹ before the first tribunal, and the four com-

²¹⁷X. 1, 119. [Tr.]

²¹⁸De Orat. i. 28. [Tr.]

²¹⁹A large court or hall erected by Julius Cæsar in the forum. [Tr.]

panies of judges, as is usual, were assembled,²²⁰ while the whole place resounded with noise, he was not only heard and understood, but was applauded from all the four tribunals, to the great prejudice of those who were speaking at the same time. But the possession of such a voice is the very height of an orator's wishes, and a rare happiness; and whoever is without it, let it suffice for him to be heard by those to whom he immediately addresses himself. Such ought an orator to be; and such are the qualifications which he ought to attain. . . .

Chapter XI

The orator must leave off speaking in public before he fails through old age, § 1–4. How his time may be employed after he has retired, 5–7. Quintilian hastens to conclude his work; he shows that students have ample time for acquiring all the qualifications, as far as nature will allow, that he has specified, 8–20. He proves, from the examples of great men, how much may be done, and observes that even moderate attainments in eloquence are attended with very great advantages, 21–29. Exhortation to diligence, and conclusion, 30, 31.

1. The orator, after displaying these excellences of eloquence on trials, in councils, at the assemblies of the people, in the senate, and in every province of a good citizen, will think of bringing his labors to an end worthy of an honorable man and a noble employment, not because it is ever time to leave off doing good, or because it is not proper for one endowed with such understanding and talents to spend the longest possible time in so dignified an occupation, but because it becomes him to take care that he may not speak worse than he has been in the habit of speaking.

2. The orator does not depend merely on knowledge, which increased with years, but on strength of voice, lungs, and constitution, and if these are weakened or impaired by age or ill health, he

²²⁰The *centumviri litibus judicandis* were anciently divided into two *hastæ*, or companies, but subsequently into four tribunals. These four, on the occasion to which Quintilian alludes, were assembled in one hall. Trachalus was speaking at the one called *the first*, but his voice was so full and sonorous that he caught the attention of the people at the other three, who neglected their own business to applaud him. [Tr.]

must beware lest something of his usual excellence be missed, lest he should be obliged to stop from fatigue, lest he should perceive that what he says is imperfectly heard, and lest he should not recognize his former in his present self. 3. I myself saw Domitius Afer, by far the most eminent orator of all whom it has been my fortune to know, losing daily, at an advanced period of life, something of the authority which he had so justly acquired,²²¹ since when he, who had doubtless once been the prince of the forum, was speaking, some (what may well be thought disgraceful) laughed, while others blushed for him; and his inefficiency gave occasion to the remark, that *he had rather faint than leave off*. Yet his pleading, such as it was, was not bad, but inferior in energy to what it had been. 4. The orator, therefore, before he falls into the grasp of old age, will do well to sound a retreat, and gain the harbor while his vessel is still undamaged.

Nor, when he has done so, will less honorable advantages from his acquirements attend on him. He will transmit the history of his own times to posterity, or, as Lucius Crassus, in the books of Cicero,²²² expresses his intention to do, will explain points of law to those who consult him, or will compose a treatise on eloquence, or will set forth the finest precepts of morality in a style worthy of the subject. 5. In the meantime well-disposed youth, as was customary with the ancients, will frequent his house, and will consult him, as an oracle, on the best mode of attaining eloquence; and he, as a father in the art, will form them, and, as an old pilot on the ocean of oratory, will give them instruction respecting coasts and harbors, and show them what are the signs of tempests, and what management a ship may require under favorable or adverse winds; being induced to do so, not only by the common obligations of humanity, but by his love for his profession; for no man would like that art, in which he himself has been great, to fall into decay. 6. What, indeed, can be more honorable to a man, than to teach that of which he himself has a thorough knowledge? It was thus that Cicero says

²²¹Quintilian had studied rhetoric with Domitius Afer up to the time of the latter's death. [Ed.]

²²²De Orat. i. 42. [Tr.]

Cælius was brought to him by his father; and it was thus that, like a master, he exercised Pansa, Hirtius, and Dolabella, daily speaking and listening to them. 7. And I know not whether an orator ought not to be thought happiest at that period of his life, when, sequestered from the world, devoted to retired study, unmolested by envy, and remote from strife, he has placed his reputation in a harbor of safety; experiencing, while yet alive, that respect which is more commonly offered after death, and observing how his character will be regarded among posterity.

8. For my own part, I know that, as far as I could, with my moderate ability, I have imparted, candidly and ingenuously, whatever I previously knew, and whatever I could discover in furtherance of my present work, for the improvement of such as might wish to learn; and it is enough for an honorable man to have taught what he knows. 9. Yet I fear lest I may be thought, not only to require too much in expecting a man to be at once good and eloquent, but also to specify too many qualifications, by giving, in addition to so many accomplishments necessary to be gained in youth, precepts on morals, and enjoining a knowledge of civil law, not to mention the rules which I have laid down concerning eloquence; and I am apprehensive lest even those who allow that all these requirements were necessary to my design, should nevertheless dread them as too oppressive, and despair of fulfilling them before they proceed to a trial. 10. But let those who think thus, reflect, in the first place, how great the power of the human mind is, and how capable of accomplishing whatever it makes its object; since even arts of less importance than oratory, though more difficult of attainment, have been able to effect voyages over the ocean, to discover the courses and number of the stars, and to measure almost the whole universe. Next let them consider how honorable is the end which they desire to attain, and that no labor should be spared when such a reward is in view. 11. If they allow such conceptions to have due weight with them, they will the more easily be induced to believe that the way to eloquence is not impracticable, or indeed extremely difficult; for that which is the first and more important point, that an orator should be a

good man, depends chiefly on the will; and he who shall sincerely cherish a resolution to be good, will easily attain those qualifications that support virtue. 12. The duties incumbent upon us are not so complex or so numerous, that they may not be learned by the application of a very few years. What makes it so long a labor, is our own reluctance; the ordering of an upright and happy life is but a short task, if we but give our inclination to it. Nature formed us for attaining the highest degree of virtue; and so easy is it, for those who are well disposed, to learn what is good, that to him who looks fairly on the world, it is rather surprising that there should be so many bad men. 13. As water, indeed, is suitable to fishes, as the dry land to terrestrial animals, and the air that surrounds us to birds, so it ought to be more agreeable to us to live conformably to nature than at variance with her.

As to other qualifications, although we should include in our estimate of life, not the years of old age, but merely those of youth and manhood, it is apparent that there is time enough for acquiring them; for order, and method, and judgment, will shorten all labor. 14. But the fault lies, first, with teachers, who love to retain under them those whom they have taken in hand, partly from covetousness, in order to be longer in receipt of fees, partly from vanity, to make it appear that what they profess is very difficult, and partly perhaps from ignorance or neglect of the proper mode of teaching; and, secondly, in ourselves, who are fonder of dwelling on what we have learned than of learning what we do not yet know. 15. For, to confine myself chiefly to oratorical studies, of what advantage is it to declaim so many years in the schools as is customary with many, (to say nothing of those by whom a great portion of life is wasted in that exercise,) and to bestow so much labor on imaginary subjects, when it is possible to gain, in but a short time, a sufficient notion of real pleading, and of the rules of oratory? 16. In making this remark, I do not intimate that exercise in speaking should ever be discontinued, but only signify that we should not grow old in one species of exercise. We may be gaining general knowledge, learning the duties of ordinary life, and trying our strength in the

forum, while we are still scholars.²²³ The course of study is such, that it does not require many years; for any of those sciences, to which I have just alluded,²²⁴ may be comprised in a few treatises, so far are they from requiring infinite time and application. All else depends on practice, which will soon increase our ability. 17. Our knowledge of things in general will daily increase; though it must be admitted that the perusal of many books, by means of which examples of things may be gained from historians, and of eloquence from orators, is necessary for great advancement in it. It is requisite also that we should read, as well as some other things, the opinions of philosophers and eminent lawyers.

All this knowledge we may acquire; but it is we ourselves that make time short. 18. For how much time do we seriously devote to study? The empty ceremony of paying visits²²⁵ steals some of our hours, leisure wasted in idle conversation others, public spectacles and entertainments others. Take into consideration also our great variety of private amusements, and the extravagant care which we bestow on our persons; let traveling, excursions into the country, anxious meditations on our losses and gains,²²⁶ a thousand incentives to the gratification of the passions, wine, and the corruption of the mind with every species of pleasure, claim their several portions of our time; and not even that which remains will find us in a proper condition for study. 19. But if all these hours were allotted to study, our life would seem long enough, and our time amply sufficient, for learning, even if we take into account only our days; while our nights, of which a great part is more than enough for all necessary sleep, would add to our improvement. We now compute, not how many years we have studied, but how many we have lived. 20. Nor, if geometricians and grammarians, and profes-

sors of other sciences, have spent all their lives, however long they were, in their respective pursuits, does it follow that we should require several lives to learn several sciences; for they did not continue adding to their knowledge in these sciences to the time of old age, but were content with having merely learned them, and spent that great number of years rather in practicing than in acquiring.

21. To say nothing of Homer, in whom either instruction, or at least indisputable indications of knowledge in every kind of art are to be found; to make no mention of Hippias of Elis, who not only professed a knowledge of every liberal science, but used to have his dress, and ring, and shoes, all made with his own hand, and had so qualified himself as to require no one's assistance in anything;²²⁷ Gorgias, even in extreme old age, was accustomed to ask his auditors in his lecture-room to name the subject on which they wished him to speak. 22. What knowledge, or any value for literature, was wanting in Plato? How many lives did Aristotle spend in learning, so as not only to embrace within his knowledge all that relates to philosophers and orators, but to make researches into the nature of all animals and plants? Those great men had to discover branches of knowledge which we have only to learn. Antiquity has provided us with so many teachers, and so many models, that no age can be imagined more eligible for us, in regard to being born in it, than our own, for the instruction of which preceding ages have toiled.

23. If we look to our own countrymen, we see that Marcus Cato the Censor, an orator, a writer of history, eminently skilled alike in law and agriculture, amidst so many occupations in war, and so many contentions at home, and in an unpolished age, learned the Greek language in the very decline of life, as if to give an example to mankind that even old men may acquire what they desire to learn. 24. How much has Varro told us, or, let us rather say, has he not told us almost everything? What qualification for speaking was deficient in Cicero? But why should I multiply examples, when even Cornelius Celsus, a

²²⁷Cic. de Orat. iii. 32. [Tr.]

²²³See c. 6, sect. 6. [Tr.]

²²⁴Sect. 10. [Tr.]

²²⁵*Salutandi*. Visits of ceremony, to pay respect to great men, which were made in the morning. See Virg. Georg. ii. 461: *Ingentem foribus domus alta superbis Manè salutantum totis vomit œdibus undam*. [Tr.]

²²⁶*Calculorum anxie sollicitudines*. Calculations about income, interest of money, &c. *Buttmann*. [Tr.]

man of but moderate ability,²²⁸ has not only written on all literary studies, but has besides left treatises on the military art, on husbandry, and on medicine? Well worthy was he, if only for the extent of his design, to enjoy the credit of having known everything on which he wrote.

25. But, it may be said, to accomplish such a task is difficult, and no one has accomplished it. I answer, that in the first place, it is sufficient for encouragement in study, to know that it is not a law of nature that what has not been done cannot be done; and, in the second, that everything great and admirable had some peculiar time at which it was brought to its highest excellence. 26. Whatever luster poetry received from Homer and Virgil, eloquence received equal luster from Demosthenes and Cicero. Whatever is best, had at one time no existence. But though a man despair of reaching the highest excellence, (and yet why should he despair who has genius, health, aptitude, and teachers?) yet it is honorable, as Cicero says,²²⁹ *to gain a place in the second or third rank.* 27. If a man cannot attain the glory of Achilles in war, he is not, therefore, to despise the merit of Ajax or Diomedes; if he cannot rival the fame of Homer, he is not to condemn that of Tyrtæus. If men, indeed, had been inclined to think that no one would be better than he who was best at any given time, those who are now accounted best would never have distinguished themselves; Virgil would not have written after Lucretius and Macer;²³⁰ Cicero would not have pleaded after Crassus and Hortensius; nor would others, in other pursuits, have excelled their predecessors.

28. Even though there be no hope of excelling the greatest masters of eloquence, it is yet a great honor to follow closely behind them. Did Pollio

²²⁸See x. 1, 24. That the judgment of Quintilian on Celsus may not appear too unfavorable to those who have given their attention to him, we must consider that he is here compared with the greatest men of every age. *Gesner*. [Tr.]

²²⁹*Orat.*, c. 1. [Tr.]

²³⁰*VI.* 3, 96. [Tr.]

and Messala, who began to plead when Cicero held the highest place in eloquence, attain but little estimation during their lives, or transmit but little reputation to posterity? The advancement of the arts to the highest possible excellence would be but an unhappy service to mankind, if what was best at any particular moment was to be the last. 29. It may be added, that moderate attainments in eloquence are productive of great profit; and, if an orator estimates his studies merely by the advantage to be derived from them, the gain from inferior oratory is almost equal to that from the best. It would be no difficult matter to show, as well from ancient as from modern instances, that from no other pursuit has greater wealth, honor, and friendship, greater present and future fame, resulted to those engaged in it, than from that of the orator, were it not dishonorable to learning to look for such inferior recompense from one of the noblest of studies, of which the mere pursuit and acquirement confer on us an ample reward for our labor; for to be thus mercenary would be to resemble those philosophers²³¹ who say that virtue is not the object of their pursuit, but the pleasure that arises from virtue.

30. Let us then pursue, with our whole powers, the true dignity of eloquence, than which the immortal gods have given nothing better to mankind, and without which all nature would be mute, and all our acts would be deprived alike of present honor and of commemoration among posterity; and let us aspire to the highest excellence, for, by this means, we shall either attain the summit, or at least see many below us.

31. Such were the observations, Marcellus Victor, from which thought that the art of oratory might, as far as was in my power, derive some assistance from me; and attention to what I have said, if it does not bring great advantage to studious youth, will at least excite in them, what I desire even more, a love for doing well.

²³¹As the followers of Aristippus and Epicurus; Cicero de *Off.* iii. 33. [Tr.]

Part Two

MEDIEVAL RHETORIC

Introduction

The phrase *Middle Ages* refers to the period in European history from the fall of Rome to the Renaissance. During this thousand-year span, much Greco-Roman learning was lost, Christian leaders frequently denounced what was left, and Greco-Roman public forms of rhetoric all but disappeared. But rhetoric as a field of study did not disappear. Christian scholars preserved and studied some surviving classical texts—especially works by or attributed to Cicero (see Part One)—and under the influence of these texts, they created new forms of rhetoric suited to the developing European culture.

CHRISTIAN TREATMENTS OF RHETORIC TO AUGUSTINE

In the first four centuries of the Common Era, Roman society under the emperors was increasingly torn by conflict. Dynastic succession was far from certain, since a successful general could and often did usurp the throne. Rulers were despots. There were no public deliberations on national policy, and even in the law courts one had to be circumspect when treating private cases. Political oppression increasingly confined rhetoric to the study of style and to the declamatory rhetoric of the Second Sophistic (see Part One). Periodically Christians and Jews were persecuted: Nero martyred Peter and Paul in 67 C.E., the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem was razed in 70, and Jewish culture in Palestine dispersed after the failed revolt of Bar Kokhba and Rabbi Akiba in 132–135. Christianity continued to spread, however.

Meanwhile, Germanic tribes infiltrated the Empire from the north, sometimes invited as mercenaries and paid with land where they settled, and sometimes attacking for spoils. They sacked Rome in 410 C.E. Invaders from other regions also began to threaten Europe. Huns from central Asia, led by Attila, swept through to France around 450 C.E. Clearly, Greco-Roman cultural and political hegemony was breaking up, and Mediterranean civilization increasingly broke up, too, into a Latin-speaking western part and a Greek-speaking eastern part. These regions were separated by land as a result of Slavic invasions in the Balkans, and by sea because of increasing

Arab control of the Mediterranean. Rome continued to be an important city because the wealthy and well-protected senatorial families were based there, but a rival seat of government arose in Byzantium, in what is now Turkey. Constantine, who became emperor in 306 C.E., moved his administration there in 330 and changed the name to Constantinople. A convert to Christianity, Constantine legalized the religion in 313. The dynastic line that he established in Constantinople became the real power in the Empire thereafter, although the last Roman emperor was not deposed until 476.

Throughout the turmoil of the Roman Empire's collapse, Christian learning was maintained in the eastern Mediterranean. Origen, a Christian teacher and theologian, headed a famous school in Palestine in the mid-200s C.E. Talmudic textual commentary was flowering at this time, as Jews retreated from the ruined Temple into much smaller local gathering places for prayer and study (prototypes of the modern synagogue). Origen used Jewish exegetical methods to legitimate a kind of allegorical reading that extracted moral and spiritual meanings from the Bible. Also, drawing on Greco-Roman rhetorical concepts of persuasion, Origen developed a method of composing a homily, or sermon, that began with the meaning exegesis had discovered in the text and that employed colloquial, emotional language to move the audience to understand and apply this meaning in their lives. Historian of rhetoric George Kennedy suggests that what dialectic is to rhetoric in the Aristotelian system, hermeneutics, in this case biblical interpretation, is to homiletics for Origen and later Christian thinkers.¹

After Constantine gave Christianity his lavish support, the fourth century C.E. produced a number of eloquent Christians preaching simple homilies in Greek; an example is John Chrysostom, who became the chief priest, or patriarch, of Constantinople. These men were educated in Greco-Roman philosophy and rhetoric, including the works of Plato (see Part One), as well as in Judeo-Christian exegesis. They also sometimes denounced classical learning as inimical to Christianity, but this view was not as strong in the Byzantine empire as it was in western Europe. Rather, a scholarly tradition emerged and remained remarkably stable over the next ten centuries, while western Europe struggled to retain basic literacy. The ambivalent attitude toward Greco-Roman learning is aptly represented by the acts of two successive Byzantine emperors: In 392 Theodosius outlawed pagan religions, and in 425 Theodosius II founded a school in Constantinople that preserved much "pagan" learning for a thousand years.

In 529 C.E. the Byzantine emperor Justinian closed the schools of philosophy and rhetoric in Athens. Most of these schools' best teachers, however, had already migrated to Constantinople. Although besieged by the Arabs in 717 and conquered by the European Crusaders in 1204, Constantinople maintained its scholarly traditions essentially intact until it was conquered by the Turks in 1453. Attic Greek was the language of instruction, and the principal texts studied included the works of Homer, Demosthenes, Plato, Aristotle (see Part One), and Hermogenes, as well as the Bible. The intellectual elite, by and large, were not churchmen but laypeople of

¹George A. Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric and Its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980), p. 138.

high social position, participants in the imperial bureaucracy. Notable scholars included Michael Psellus; Anna Comnena, daughter of Emperor Alexius I; and, much later, George of Trebizond, who emigrated to Italy and restored the Byzantine Greek rhetorical tradition to western Europe in the Renaissance.

In the first and second centuries C.E., while political and ecclesiastical power was collecting in Constantinople and while Origen and others were consolidating a tradition of Greek-influenced Christian learning, Latin-speaking Christians felt embattled. They suffered the repeated attacks of Germanic pagans, only some of whom could be converted to Christianity. Yet amid this political turmoil, the only cultural refuge for Latin-speaking Christians, Greco-Roman learning, appeared irremediably tainted by the corruption of the late Empire. Not only was there no Christian content in Latin literature, but its subject matter was frequently downright salacious. It often bespoke a world-weariness and moral relativism that Christians abhorred. Hence the exclamation of Origen's Latin-speaking contemporary Tertullian: "What has Athens to do with Jerusalem? What concord is there between the Academy and the Church?"²

Tertullian, who like many of the early Latin Church leaders had been a professional rhetorician before his conversion, here condemns classical philosophy more than classical rhetoric. But Jerome (d. 420 C.E.), another important Latin Father of the Church, does not scruple to denounce classical rhetoric, although he too was well trained in it. "What has Horace to do with the Psalms, Virgil with the Gospels, Cicero with the Apostle?" Jerome exclaims in a letter on Christian education addressed to Eustochium, who later became an abbess.³ In the same letter he tells the now-famous story of his dream: During a severe illness, Jerome imagines himself called before a heavenly judge who condemns him for being more of a Ciceronian than a Christian and makes him promise to eschew all secular books. The implication seems to be that the good Christian should rely solely on the Bible and Christian commentary for her or his education. Yet even Jerome ultimately failed to give up his Cicero. Dangerous though classical learning might be, it also represented the only solid intellectual tradition available, and Jerome later included it in the curriculum of the monastery he founded. Historian and theorist of rhetoric James Kinneavy has argued that the Christian conception of faith—what kind of a belief it is and how it is achieved or induced—was influenced by Greek rhetorical concepts of persuasion.

Jerome's contemporary Augustine (354–430 C.E.; p. 450) recognized that classical learning was an invaluable resource for Christianity, and he attempted to reconcile the two. Augustine was thoroughly trained in classical rhetoric and taught it until shortly before his conversion. In his spiritual autobiography, the *Confessions* (ca. 398), he tells how Christianity was initially distasteful to him because the literary style of the Bible offended one accustomed to the sonorous sentences of Cicero. Yet Augustine also testifies that his very love for Cicero's philosophy prompted him to reexamine Christianity because his mother claimed that Christianity, too, was philosophical, and ultimately he was attracted by it. Classical learning had

²Quoted in Kennedy, p. 147.

³Quoted in Kennedy, p. 147.

other uses for the Christian, as Augustine shows in *On Christian Doctrine* (*De Doctrina Christiana*; ca. 397, 427; p. 456). Here Augustine in his role as bishop instructs Christian pastors in biblical hermeneutics and also in a homiletics that makes significant use of classical rhetoric. Augustine argues that it would be foolish for Christians to neglect this powerful means of teaching.

Augustine's authority in this matter legitimated the study of classical learning for all Latin-speaking Christians, including those of later ages for whom Latin was a scholarly, not a native, tongue. Augustine also recommended preparing compendiums of classical learning for easy reference by the Christian scholar. These initiatives prevented classical learning from being wholly lost. Yet many Christian intellectuals remained hostile. For example, the practice of making compendiums, which Augustine had advocated in a conservationist spirit, was defended by some as a way of keeping less trustworthy minds away from the dangerous classical texts themselves. Continuing political turmoil also contributed to the fragmentation and loss of knowledge, breaking down lines of communication as pagan tribes wandered around the isolated Christian towns and monasteries. Augustine's own episcopal seat of Hippo in North Africa was under Vandal siege at the time of his death.

RHETORIC UNDER SIEGE IN EUROPE TO 1000 C.E.

For the next five centuries — sometimes termed the “Dark Ages” — the sparse population of Europe survived in small local economic units, such as towns, religious houses, or noble families' estates or “manors,” that produced virtually everything their residents used. Most people never traveled more than a few miles from their place of birth. Trade and cultural exchange between regions ceased almost completely. Even minimum subsistence could be swept away by marauding invaders—central Asians in the 400s, Arab Muslims in the 600s and 700s, and Asians, Muslims, and Norsemen in the 900s. The religion of Islam, founded by the prophet Mohammed (d. 632), had arisen in the Middle East in the 600s, and its adherents quickly became a potent political and military force around the eastern and southern Mediterranean.

Only the Christian Church maintained any organizational structure beyond the local level in western Europe, and even the Church had to deal with frequent schisms and many sects. Civil authority and religious authority were often linked, thus enhancing the power of both. The bishop of Rome, thought to have been given secular as well as religious control of the city by Constantine as a means of maintaining some civil order in the face of pagan invasions, took the title of pope. This office was crucial to uniting western Christendom, even though it was regarded as renegade by the patriarchs in Constantinople, supposedly still the center of the Christian Church.

In 529 C.E., the same year that Justinian closed the schools of Athens, Benedict founded the monastery of Monte Cassino in Italy. Symbolizing the way Latin-speaking Christian culture would appropriate classical learning, Benedict built the monastery on the site of an old temple of Apollo and required that sacred texts replace the secular for his monks' reading, even though he himself had a good classi-

cal education and even though monasteries' scriptoriums copied and preserved many classical texts. Benedict's rules for monastic life were widely adopted in western Europe in the next few centuries. His authority helped to ensure that access to classical learning would be much more limited and controlled by the Church in the West than in Byzantium.

What was known of classical rhetoric was generally known from extremely brief and schematic digests prepared by Church scholars or approved classical authors. The first of these influential digests was composed by a non-Christian, Martianus Capella, a contemporary of Augustine's who lived in Carthage, the North African intellectual center to which Augustine had also been drawn. In 429 C.E. Martianus finished a long *prosimetrum*, or mixture of poetry and prose, titled *The Marriage of Philology and Mercury (De Nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii)*, in which he describes seven necessary branches of education: grammar, dialectic, rhetoric, geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, and music. Martianus follows Cicero's contemporary Varro in this listing, although he omits two other arts that brought Varro's total up to nine—medicine and architecture.

Martianus's work, widely used as a school text throughout the Middle Ages, provided what became the definitive listing of the seven liberal arts, divided in medieval education into the trivium (the first three, with a linguistic focus) and the quadrivium (the last four, all mathematical). Martianus personifies the seven liberal arts as wedding guests. Rhetoric is a tall, handsome woman, ornamented with figures and tropes and fearsomely armed. In Martianus's formulation, rhetoric is concerned primarily with invention, the canon to which the writer devotes the most space, not surprising considering that he drew heavily on Cicero's *De Inventione*. Martianus also discusses style, as his personification of Rhetoric might suggest, especially that style which could be most effective in combative political and judicial deliberation. Cicero's *De Inventione* and the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, also thought to be Cicero's (see Part One), were by far the most frequently used classical sources in rhetoric throughout the Middle Ages. Cicero's name occurs again and again, even if his work is put to new medieval uses.

Boethius (ca. 480–524 C.E.; p. 486), a Christian scholar with a knowledge of Greek, also drew on Cicero. Boethius was respected throughout the medieval period for his philosophy, logic, and commentary on Aristotle and Cicero. In his brief and highly schematic "An Overview of the Structure of Rhetoric" (p. 488), rhetoric is primarily concerned with style and is subordinate to dialectic. This view was shared by Boethius's fellow scholar and encyclopedist Cassiodorus, a Christian who, like Boethius, served an illiterate Ostrogothic ruler in Italy, Theodoric the Great. Among other activities, Boethius and Cassiodorus handled diplomatic correspondence; the rhetorical art of letter writing would become a formal discipline in the later Middle Ages. The presence of these scholars in the court testifies to the respect for Greco-Roman learning that often grew in pagan invaders who became somewhat assimilated to the culture.

Boethius was eventually executed on suspicion of plotting with the Byzantine emperor to remove Theodoric. Cassiodorus was captured during war with Byzantium and taken to Constantinople. Upon his return, the elderly Cassiodorus retired

to family estates at Vivarium in southern Italy and founded a monastery. His book directing the monks' education, *Institutiones Divinarum et Saecularium Litterarum*, cites Cicero, Quintilian, and the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, but only briefly. Cassiodorus gave more emphasis to learning than Benedict did in his influential rules; he endowed his monastery with an excellent library and encouraged the preservation and copying of manuscripts. But Cassiodorus downplays rhetoric. He reorganizes the seven liberal arts of Martianus so as to place rhetoric between grammar and dialectic, thus suggesting that the study of rhetoric is preliminary to the study of dialectic. Further, he continues Martianus's emphasis on rhetoric as style by recommending that rhetoric be used in analyzing the style of the Bible.

Another influential compendium of classical learning was created by Archbishop Isidore of Seville (d. 636 C.E.), a monastic scholar pressed into service as an ecclesiastical administrator after the death of his brother, who had been archbishop of Seville before him. It seems that Isidore would have preferred to continue his studies. His work was shaped by monastic rules that both preserve classical study and limit its results to the collocation of fragments. His encyclopedic *Etymologiae* outlines the seven liberal arts, gives a political and literary history of the world, and, among other things, summarizes rhetoric, relying heavily on Cicero and Quintilian: "Rhetoric is the science of speaking well: it is a flow of eloquence on civil questions whose purpose is to persuade men to do what is just and good. . . . The orator is the good man skilled in speaking."⁴ Isidore identifies "civil questions" as the proper subject matter for rhetoric, suggesting that he is still thinking of rhetoric as primarily a secular and especially a legal occupation, though he adds that the questions must be answered in a morally correct way. He forbade his monks to study secular books, and so—without access to these works—his monks and other Christians of the period showed little influence of rhetoric in their preaching. His contemporary, Pope Gregory the Great, makes no mention of rhetoric when he treats preaching in his *Cura Pastoralis* (591 C.E.). Evidently most homilies continued in the same simple, loose structure inherited from the first centuries C.E.

At this time the best scholars of classical learning in Europe were Irish monks. The man who would become Saint Patrick was a Roman Christian who lived in England. He was captured by Irish raiders and spent several years as a slave in Ireland. After regaining his freedom, he returned to Ireland around 432 C.E. and proselytized for Christianity so successfully that tradition credits him with converting the entire island. Along with Christianity, Patrick and his followers brought the Latin language and classical learning to Ireland, where monasteries soon flourished and promoted the study and preservation of classical texts. By the time of Saint Columban (ca. 543–615 C.E.), these monasteries were sending missionaries to Scotland, northern Europe, France, and even Italy, where Columban established a monastery at Bobbio that became an important center of learning. Viking incursions greatly reduced the power of the Irish monasteries after about 800 C.E., but they

⁴Isidore of Seville, "The Etymologies, II. 1–15: Concerning Rhetoric," in *Readings in Medieval Rhetoric*, ed. Joseph M. Miller, Michael H. Prosser, and Thomas W. Benson (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1973), pp. 80, 81.

served as an important refuge of classical learning during the darkest centuries following the fall of Rome.

After Roman civilization and its schools disintegrated, some upper-class families attempted to continue education in Latin through home tutoring. But as the number of those literate in Latin continued to decline, such informal methods could not meet the Church's demand for a literate clergy. Increasingly, Latin became a foreign language and had to be taught as such. Pope Gregory the Great had permitted the foundation of song schools at the major cathedrals to provide training in music and in minimal Latin literacy for Church choristers. Literacy began—and for many ended—with the Bible in Latin. But sometimes the song schools also offered informal instruction in Latin grammar to a few young men, candidates for the priesthood or the sons of local leaders, although Gregory opposed such instruction. Gradually the cathedrals came to support not only song schools but also separate grammar schools whose curriculum attempted to roughly cover all seven liberal arts. Girls were not usually admitted to these schools and indeed were not usually educated in the liberal arts; home tutoring provided minimal literacy and numeracy for some girls from wealthy families.

Also in the seventh century C.E. Islam was extending its power in Palestine and Africa, and about seventy years after the deaths of Isidore and Gregory, Arab Muslims conquered Spain. An army of Frankish converts to Christianity stopped them from moving further into Europe at the Battle of Tours in 732. The Frankish kings allied themselves with the bishop of Rome, protecting his secular power from incursions by pagan tribes and Byzantine and Muslim empire builders and using his religious authority to bolster their own position. In 800, the pope crowned the Frankish king Charlemagne Emperor of the West. Charlemagne subdued pagan rulers in Italy and Germany, pushed the Muslims back over the Pyrenees, and sent embassies to the Byzantine emperor and to the chief Muslim caliph, Haroun al Rashid, in Baghdad. Charlemagne imposed the first large-scale political organization on western Europe since the fall of Rome.

Charlemagne also sought to make his capital city, Aix-la-Chapelle in France, into a cultural center. He encouraged the preservation of manuscripts, and his patronage ensured that many Latin texts were not lost. An improved script for speeding up copying—the Carolingian minuscule—bears his name. Nearly illiterate himself, Charlemagne founded a palace school for the education of his family and the nobility, and brought in scholars from all over Europe. Among them was Alcuin, an English monk who came to France in 781 to direct the school. Alcuin systematized the Church's earlier efforts to educate its clergy in Latin, greatly raising the level of clerical literacy and also encouraging Charlemagne to promote literacy among the general population—hence Charlemagne's proclamation of 785, *De Litteris Colendis*, directing the clergy to teach the laity grammar and rhetoric. Alcuin was unusual among the Church-educated of his day in that he greatly valued education in rhetoric. He composed a dialogue, *Disputatio de Rhetorica et de Virtutibus*, in which he depicts himself defending the study of rhetoric to the concerned Christian monarch. Charlemagne questions Alcuin, and the monk gives lengthy

answers drawing heavily on Cicero in which he stresses the civic usefulness of rhetoric, especially for the conduct of government. Rhetoric may also be used to encourage Christian virtue, Alcuin explains, if the neophyte practices speaking on virtuous subjects.

Alcuin had come to Charlemagne from a cathedral school at York, and by the late 700s such schools, developed from the song schools, could be found throughout Christian Europe. Charlemagne counted on them to provide the educated clergy who would spread literacy among the laity. In *Versus de Patribus Regibus et Sanctis Eboracensis Ecclesiae* (*Poem on the Bishops, Kings, and Saints of the Church of York*, ca. 790), Alcuin praises the learning available there:

There you will find the legacy of the ancient fathers:
All the Roman possessed in the Latin world,
Whatever famous Greece has transmitted to the Latins,
Draughts of the Hebrew race from Heaven's showers,
And what Africa has spread abroad in streams of light.⁵

Among those Alcuin names as represented in the York library are “keen-minded Aristotle,” “Cicero the great rhetorician,” Donatus, John Chrysostom, Jerome, Augustine, Cassiodorus, and Boethius. Even if Alcuin is exaggerating the endowment of his alma mater, the list is more complete and expresses a more expansive view of learning than that found in the work of Isidore, Cassiodorus, or Benedict. Although such schools could educate only a tiny fraction of the population—even most nobles were illiterate, and almost all women were—they did establish resources that would later be developed by medieval universities. These schools provided important supplements to the works preserved in the monasteries, where the commitment to learning was not always profound.

THE “RENAISSANCE OF THE TWELFTH CENTURY”

Charlemagne's empire fell apart after his death in 814 C.E., and further pagan incursions plagued Europe. The political turmoil contributed to crop failures and famines, and, as the millennium approached, people feared that the end of the world was truly at hand. Gradually, however, many of the invaders became Christianized, and around the year 1000 C.E. political conditions improved. Feudal governments headed by kings were established in France and England, and in 962 the pope crowned another Frankish king as emperor, creating the Holy Roman Empire from parts of Germany and Italy. These larger political entities curbed the power of local nobles, who reduced their destructive warfare with each other when they swore fealty to a royal government. Europe was in the throes of transition to larger national governments headed by hereditary kings, a process that would eventually give rise to the Hundred Years' War in the 1300s between England and France, as rival dynasties struggled for control of the two countries.

Nevertheless, greater political stability improved the quality of life, and popula-

⁵Alcuin, *The Bishops, Kings, and Saints of York*, ed. and trans. Peter Godman (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), p. 123.

tions grew dramatically. Walled cities, formed as refuges from pagan, Arab, or Byzantine invasions, began to flourish as centers of commerce. Towns grew and more towns were founded. Craft guilds began to form, increasing the quality and distribution of manufactured goods. By the 1300s, urban industrial centers had developed in northern Italy and in northern France and Flanders. Literacy and numeracy began to spread more quickly among the lay population, both male and female. This growth occurred in spite of the depredations of warfare and the Great Plague of the mid-fourteenth century, which carried off about one-third of the population of Europe.

During this time the Church became an even stronger unifying force in western Europe, influencing political events by wielding political sanctions. The Roman bishop's anomalous position with respect to the Church in Constantinople was clarified in 1054, when the split between Rome and Constantinople was formalized, creating a Roman Catholic Church headed by the pope in western Europe and a Greek Orthodox Church headed by a patriarch in Palestine, Asia Minor, the Balkans, and Russia. The Church also attempted to strengthen itself by reaffirming the need for monastic asceticism and spirituality, reforms begun at Cluny in the tenth century. One sign of the Church's new power to direct political events was its launching of joint European military expeditions to free the land where Jesus lived and taught, and eventually other areas as well, from Muslim control. The first of these "Crusades" was called up by Pope Urban II in 1095, and over the next three hundred years the expeditions went to Palestine, Spain, and Sicily. One consequence was the introduction into Europe of Arab scholarship on classical learning, especially the teachings of Aristotle.

With the new prosperity brought on by the growth of political stability, and the contact with classical learning facilitated by the Crusades, a decided shift in European thinking occurred around the twelfth century C.E., a change literary historian Charles Haskins and other scholars have termed a renaissance.⁶ The renaissance of the twelfth century apparently entailed not only increased knowledge of classical literature, especially Greek, but also a different attitude toward the classical heritage, one akin to later Renaissance humanism in its optimistic emphasis on individual human powers. Study was less restricted by pious fears of contamination from classical sources and branched out in many directions.

For example, the study of grammar, as historian of rhetoric James J. Murphy argues, had for hundreds of years been essentially descriptive and had relied on the late-classical handbooks of Donatus and Priscian.⁷ But in the twelfth century a new interest in the nature of language arose, producing new grammars that took into account the changes in Latin since classical times. The study of style also received new emphasis. The classical teacher of grammar had analyzed poetry with students to demonstrate correct grammar and some use of tropes and figures. Grammar had been a preliminary subject for the youngest students. Although still for beginners in

⁶Charles H. Haskins, *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1927); see also Kennedy, p. 188; James J. Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), p. 123.

⁷Murphy, pp. 138–39, 161.

medieval times, the study of grammar ramified as students went on to cover virtually all five canons of classical rhetoric. The medieval grammarian might begin by working carefully through a passage of classical poetry, noting the standard and variant grammatical forms and explaining any figures and allusions: John of Salisbury depicts his beloved teacher Bernard of Chartres doing so in the *Metalogicon* (Bernard acknowledges his debt to the pedagogy of Quintilian in his own writings). Students were then encouraged to memorize and declaim the texts so analyzed, as well as to compose and declaim their own compositions in imitation of them. Older students looked at larger structures of arrangement, such as genre, and finally the most advanced students considered theories of rhetorical invention. Memory and delivery were also needed as students recited their own work, although, as medievalist Marjorie Curry Woods has pointed out, the order of instruction—from style to arrangement to invention—reverses the order of the classical canon and reflects the primacy given to studies related to logic, as invention was seen to be. It is placed last and designated for the most advanced students.

Late in the twelfth century, medieval grammarians began to produce treatises that described their educational approach, the “ars poetriae” or manuals of poetry writing (which also usually gave some attention to writing prose). These handbooks explored the use of tropes, figures, and descriptive formulas in detail, and sometimes treated other canons, especially arrangement. The *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (called in medieval times the *Rhetorica Nova* because it was thought to be a “new” rhetoric written by Cicero after he wrote *De Inventione*; see Part One) is often the source of the figures discussed. Matthew of Vendome’s *Ars Versificatoria* (ca. 1175), the first surviving example of these treatises, and Geoffrey of Vinsauf’s *Poetria Nova* (between 1200 and 1216; p. 506), by far the most popular, are often referred to as rhetorical treatises and their authors as rhetoricians, although they would have described themselves as grammarians. Geoffrey’s work acknowledges all five canons of classical rhetoric, however briefly, and the *Poetria Nova* was often used as a school text in rhetoric. These medieval poetry manuals are often discussed in scholarship on Geoffrey Chaucer (ca. 1342–1400), which often debates the extent to which he was influenced by the *Poetria Nova*.

Philosophy was also transformed in the twelfth century by the influence of Aristotle, whose works on logic were newly available through Arab and Jewish sources. Peter Abelard turned these new philosophical insights to the service of theology by examining apparent contradictions in Church doctrine through a new method of dialectics. His method was initially quite controversial, since it was seen as placing too much confidence in the power of human reason to resolve difficulties. Nevertheless, this intellectual technique grew and flourished, gaining the name *Scholasticism* because it was taught in the schools.

Although Scholasticism is seen as a new spirit of independent thought, arising out of the twelfth-century interest in classical studies, classical historian R. R. Bolgar suggests that its ascendance ultimately closed off the possibility for a full-fledged renaissance of classical learning at that time, because it elevated dialectic and generally subordinated grammar, rhetoric, and classical studies as mere prelimi-

naries.⁸ Increased attention to what had survived of classical rhetoric, mainly Cicero's *De Inventione* and the *Rhetorica ad Herrenium*, only revealed the discipline's irrelevance in a society from which the Roman law courts, scene of Cicero's triumph, had long since disappeared.

Dialectic flourished for its usefulness not only to theology but also to the increasingly professionalized disciplines of law and medicine. The relative positions of rhetoric and dialectic in the *Metalogicon* (1159) of John of Salisbury, Abelard's student, are revealing. Eloquence is promoted as an important study, bolstered by citations from Cicero and Quintilian. Yet what John means by eloquence seems mainly to be the study of stylistic ornamentation as found in the poetry-writing manuals. Eloquence thus is not securely identified with an independent discipline of rhetoric but instead merges into the concerns of grammar and is ancillary to the serious business of Aristotelian logic to which John devotes most of his treatise. By the thirteenth century, dialectic dominated European intellectual life, especially in Scholastic theology such as that of Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274), whose *Summa Theologica* remained a central pillar of Roman Catholic doctrine well into the nineteenth century. Scholasticism is still respected today for the rigor it imparted to Western thought, even if its methods have sometimes been denigrated as hair-splitting.

The Church was now entering a period of great growth and ferment that eventually culminated in the first movements of the Protestant Reformation in the late 1300s. Church-sponsored social service agencies, including hospitals and schools, grew quickly. New religious orders were founded, such as the Franciscans and Dominicans in the early 1200s, who quickly began to develop their own networks of schools at their religious houses. Other new movements, millennialist or utopian, were suppressed as heretical, and non-Christians in Europe—mainly Jews and Muslims—suffered increasing persecution. Jews were expelled from England and France in the late 1200s and were forced into restricted living areas, called ghettos, in Germany in the 1300s. Bishops and abbots demanded more consultative power in setting Church policies, which were discussed at increasingly frequent leadership councils. Ferment within the Church came to a crisis in the late 1300s, when from 1378 to 1418 two popes claimed authority, one in Rome and one, backed by the French king, in Avignon.

THE RISE OF THE UNIVERSITY

Educational institutions played a crucial role in the way European thought changed in the later Middle Ages, as the term *Scholasticism* suggests. More students came to the cathedral schools, especially where there were great teachers, such as Bernard and Thierry at Chartres, and a greater percentage of these students intended to devote themselves to secular pursuits. Education was not limited to clerics and to children of the nobility, for men of the new middle classes aspired to the learned

⁸R. R. Bolgar, *The Classical Heritage and Its Beneficiaries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1954), pp. 200–11.

professions. In fact, the student population had more diverse social classes than it would at any later time before the modern period. Historian Joan Ferrante has argued that women not destined for the religious life were occasionally educated in these schools, as we may infer from Church pronouncements turning them out. Deeply learned women often headed abbeys and nunneries, and a few of these institutions supported libraries and scriptoria.

One such learned religious was Hildegard of Bingen (1098–1179). Immured with an anchoress at age seven, Hildegard became a leader of great influence, both religious and secular. After founding her own convent, she often traveled to other male and female religious houses to advise, heal, and even preach—apparently she occasionally addressed all-male audiences. She wrote voluminously, not only providing descriptions and theological interpretations of her many religious visions, but also compiling information on natural history and medicine. She corresponded with clergy and political leaders of the highest ranks and advised them, drawing on her authority as both theologian and prophetess. She also composed liturgical music that is still being sung today. Hildegard’s biographer Sabina Flanagan suggests that Hildegard was able to venture so far beyond the sphere usually allotted to medieval women because she claimed that her actions were commanded by God through her frequent and striking visions. Noting that Hildegard is the only woman to whom an entire volume of the *Patrologia Latina* is devoted, Ferrante wryly calls her “a ‘Father’ of the Church.”⁹

Where several schools were located in a cathedral city of sufficient size, what we now call universities began to develop. They did not necessarily spring from the cathedral schools themselves. More typically, several great teachers congregated along with the many students they attracted—in Paris or Oxford, for example. These embryonic universities did not have self-contained campuses. The students, usually ranging in age from the early teens to the early twenties, simply boarded in private homes or in houses run by teachers who offered both lodging and tutoring. They rented books from local stationers.

The collection of schools where lectures were offered was called a *studium*. A *studium* might gain the prestigious title *studium generale* because it drew students from a large geographical area, because its graduates were respected over a large area, or because in addition to instruction in the seven liberal arts (not all of which were always represented), it offered work in one or more of the graduate disciplines of law, medicine, and theology. The *studium* granted its graduates licenses to teach—*licentia docendi*—but the precise value of a given school’s licenses could be disputed. Eventually the Church undertook to regulate *licentia docendi*, and those schools gaining Church approval could license their graduates to teach anywhere in Christendom. The license also served as a newly professionalized credential for those who had completed the prescribed course of study in medicine or law. A teacher with a license from a prestigious school, such as the one in Paris, began to

⁹Joan M. Ferrante, “The Education of Women in the Middle Ages in Theory, Fact, and Fantasy,” in *Beyond Their Sex: Learned Women of the European Past*, ed. P. H. Labalme (New York: New York University Press, 1980), p. 22.

take on the stature of a modern university professor. Gradually these teachers organized themselves into a sort of guild called a *universitas*, a corporate entity that could own property and set educational policy. At Paris the *universitas* had to contend with ecclesiastical and civic authorities; at Bologna, with strong student organizations.

Students began to organize by lodging in large houses where they could band together according to country or region of origin. Students identified with their particular “nation,” as these sometimes transnational groupings were called, and the nations’ large lodging houses came to be called colleges. At Paris, where more of the students were young undergraduates, the colleges were supervised by young professors and postgraduate students who took on quasi-parental duties. At Bologna, where most of the students were grown men pursuing graduate professional studies, the nations wielded considerable power over what was taught and how professional credentials were granted, although the professors gradually consolidated their own control.

Universities became noted for particular areas of study. The scholars at Paris dominated theology well into the Renaissance. The Italian universities had initially served the more secular needs of the prosperous Italian towns, and hence law and medicine took preeminence. Bologna’s reputation as a site of legal studies was established early by the brilliant lectures of Irnerius (d. ca. 1125).

Scholastic teaching in the medieval university typically employed two methods, the *lectio* or lecture, in which the master teacher held forth, and the *disputatio*, or formal debate, in which both teachers and students orally proposed and attacked syllogisms. All instruction took place in Latin. Logic was always the most important subject of study, and theology was the highest discipline, closely followed by medicine and law. Of the seven liberal arts, the four mathematical ones (geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, and music) tended to be neglected or omitted altogether at the university level, while of the three language-based arts, dialectic was dominant and regarded as the only “adult” subject. Grammar was taught only to little boys, and rhetoric, where it retained any independent existence at all, was regarded as a preliminary subject to be studied schematically by the younger students. The works of Martianus Capella, Boethius, and Isidore were studied more often than the classical rhetorical texts. Of the classical texts, by far the most widely known were Cicero’s *De Inventione* and the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, thought to be Cicero’s. Although they circulated widely, these texts were typically read only in conjunction with elaborate commentaries supplied by the professors. Quintilian was frequently mentioned, but his *Institutes of Oratory* (*Institutio Oratoria*; see Part One) was known only in fragments. Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* (*Rhetorica*; see Part One), translated into Latin in the twelfth century, was taught as part of moral philosophy.

Although law and theology were studied through a process of oral disputation that we might today regard as highly rhetorical, medieval scholars were uninterested in pursuing the connections with rhetoric. The one “adult” development of rhetoric at the university level, which occurred only in northern Italy, involved the composition of legal letters. The art of letter writing, or *ars dictaminis*, was often associated with education in law, since letters could be important legal documents.

Another sort of practical rhetoric emerged in the art of preaching, or *ars praedicandi*. The hyperlogical structure it imposed on sermons may have been influenced by the universities.

THE ARTS OF LETTER WRITING AND PREACHING

Letter writing hardly seems important enough today to merit a separate discipline. But in a largely illiterate society, official letters were often the only record of laws or commercial transactions and hence had legal standing. The person who could compose letters had access to considerable political power, as Cassiodorus had realized; he says that the literate minister must learn his illiterate ruler's "inmost thoughts, that he may utter them to [the king's] subjects. . . . He has to speak the king's words in the king's own presence . . . with suitable embellishments."¹⁰ The art of letter writing began with formulas for common types of letters to help the scribe less educated than Cassiodorus negotiate this tricky business. Both reflecting and advancing the current practice, in the 1080s Alberic, a monk in the monastery of Monte Cassino, wrote *Dictaminum Rarii* and *Breviarium de Dictamine*. These works drew on Ciceronian concepts of arrangement within standardized letter formats and encouraged the use of rhetorical figures and rhythmic Latin, which would later develop into a form of Latin prose used especially in letters, the *cursus*.

Alberic's methods for letter writing in Latin were developed by the professors of law at Bologna, as in the anonymous treatise *The Principles of Letter Writing (Rationes Dictandi*, ca. 1135; p. 496). These teachers of the *ars dictaminis* also occasionally gave instruction in forensic speaking, or *ars arengandi*. Later manuals on letter writing, whether in Latin or in vernacular languages, took on an encyclopedic quality, since they often included appendixes listing proverbs and historical and literary allusions that might be used to ornament one's missives. The manuals also give an interesting picture of medieval life, providing model letters on such topics as how an impecunious but diligent scholar should ask his father for more money and how the appeal should change if he knows his father has heard reports of his dissipation; or how a wife who has left an abusive husband should ask for legal assurances that he has changed his ways before she will return to him. Much later, Erasmus was to jest with this tradition in *On Copia* (or *Copia: Foundations of the Abundant Style*, 1511, p. 597; see Part Three).

If it is surprising that an art of letter writing developed at all, it is more surprising that an art of preaching did not develop sooner. After Augustine (d. 430), the only major work before the twelfth century was the *Cura Pastoralis* (591) of Pope Gregory the Great, noted above. The book details the duties of a bishop: To add to the power of his message, he must lead a good life and make himself loved. He must preach eloquently by varying the subject matter of his sermons (but not the style, apparently) to suit his audience. Gregory lists thirty-six pairs of human characters defined antithetically with suggestions on the material appropriate to each,

¹⁰Quoted in Murphy, p. 197.

such as the young and the old or “those who commit small but frequent faults” and “those who sometimes commit big faults.”¹¹ James J. Murphy and George Kennedy agree that Gregory’s approach shows little sign of the rhetorical learning he was said to have gained from his education in Roman schools.¹² Gregory himself on numerous occasions denounced such learning.

The approach to preaching began to change around 1200, however, perhaps following the twelfth-century renewal of interest in classical rhetoric, when Alain de Lille, a Cistercian monk, wrote *De Arte Praedicatoria* (ca. 1199). Like Gregory, he uses an image from Augustine to emphasize that the function of preaching is to “cure the disease” of sin: “Just as medicine can produce different remedies for a variety of diseases, so the preacher should adapt his healing admonitions.”¹³ Also like Gregory, Alain makes little overt use of classical rhetorical theory in organizing his treatise. For example, he reduces invention to scriptural hermeneutics; he does not mention arrangement, style, and memory; and he addresses delivery only to caution against display. Nevertheless, Alain’s approach seems more rhetorical than Gregory’s. He advocates appealing to authorities like Gregory, Jerome, and Augustine to persuade the audience by reason. He also habitually employs the organizational pattern of division, usually into three members, hence providing a model of arrangement that was to dominate preaching for centuries thereafter. He even suggests that these preaching methods could be adapted to guide men to the good in secular matters.

In the thirteenth century, a new form of preaching emerged that emphasized the rational persuasion seen in Alain. This new form is sometimes called the university sermon, perhaps because it was first or most often heard in university cities. The earliest collection of such sermons was published in Paris in 1231. This type of sermon is also called the thematic sermon because it takes a scriptural text as its theme and then explicates this text in great detail. Typically the text is divided phrase by phrase, sometimes word by word, and the body of the sermon consists of a series of miniature homilies, each drawing a moral lesson from a word or phrase and pointing it up with further citations from the Bible and other authorities. Many medieval manuals of preaching are extant. Like the manuals of letter writing, many are encyclopedic, with appendixes listing historical, biographical, and scientific anecdotes that might be worked effectively into a sermon. Robert of Basevorn’s *The Form of Preaching* (*Forma Praedicandi*, 1322; p. 528) is typical.

This emphasis on preaching and legal letter writing might seem to imply that women did not participate in rhetoric, since they seldom functioned as preachers or lawyers. Indeed, they seldom achieved literacy—and so could hardly leave records of the eloquence they undoubtedly exercised orally in many private, and some public, venues. The learning available to a female religious was restricted by the fact that only a few nunneries preserved and copied manuscripts, as did male monasteries. Members of female religious orders did not usually preach or engage in theological disputation. But the examples of Julian of Norwich (d. 1415), discussed

¹¹Murphy, p. 295.

¹²Murphy, p. 296; Kennedy, p. 179.

¹³Alan of the Isles, “A Compendium on the Art of Preaching, Preface and Selected Chapters,” in Miller, Prosser, and Benson, p. 237.

by rhetoric historian Cheryl Glenn, and Hildegard of Bingen show that they occasionally did so. Moreover, laywomen sometimes engaged in informal exhortation, whether as part of lay religious movements or—in another example from Glenn—as moved by their own inspiration, like Margery Kempe (d. ca. 1439). Upper-class women in secular life, too, though they might not be as well educated as their brothers and did not often speak in public, used carefully crafted speech behind the scenes to serve familial and national interests. In addition, as Malcolm Richardson has shown, medieval women at all social levels learned about letter writing from practical experience in serving the needs of craft guilds, family businesses, and noble estates.

Yet because, by and large, they did not use language in “rhetorical” ways, few medieval women produced works that might be called rhetoric texts, although Glenn presents persuasive arguments for medieval women’s rhetorical sophistication. Even Hildegard, so far as we know, did not write anything on how to preach, although she did preach to a variety of audiences. Perhaps the best place to look for medieval women’s reflections on language use is in texts that give advice to women on how to behave generally—what are sometimes called conduct books—which treat language use as well as other aspects of behavior. If women did not have overt political power, they could wield considerable covert power, whether in a royal court, a wealthy mercantile house, or, more modestly, in the domain of a simple farmer or craftsman. Advice on how to use language in these ways can be found, for example, in the *Book of the City of Ladies* and *The Treasure of the City of Ladies* (1405; pp. 544, 546) by Christine de Pizan (ca. 1364–ca. 1430). Born into an Italian family that was well connected at the French court, Christine is often called the first Western “woman of letters.” She was a poet, historian, and what we would now designate a feminist theorist, who supported herself and her family with her writing and who forged a new rhetorical persona for women. Her work looks ahead to the new possibilities for women’s education in rhetoric that would arise with the Renaissance.

The medieval period in rhetoric has no clear terminus. As the introduction to Part Three suggests, a long transition occurred between the medieval and Renaissance cultures that influenced the treatment of rhetoric. Renaissance writers tended to obscure this transition by claiming a clean break, emphasizing the novelty of their own approaches and underplaying the extent to which they were influenced by medieval developments. For example, while medieval attitudes toward rhetoric as a schematic subject still flourished in the fourteenth century, a richer, classicizing view, to which Renaissance scholars would lay claim as their exclusive territory, was already anticipated with the establishment of a chair in rhetoric at the University of Bologna in 1321, whose holder taught Cicero and Latin composition.

Furthermore, the “discoveries” of classical texts heralded with so much fanfare in the early fifteenth century ignored the existence of some of the discovered texts in complete or nearly complete versions throughout the medieval period. In 1416, Poggio Bracciolini unearthed a complete manuscript of Quintilian’s *Institutes of Oratory* in a neglected storeroom in the monastery of St. Gall in Switzerland. Though it was founded by Irish missionary-scholars eight centuries earlier, in

Bracciolini's time St. Gall's monks were not interested in classical scholarship. Bracciolini, one of the early Italian humanists, apparently suspected that the monks might have neglected manuscript treasures. But nearly complete texts of Quintilian were known in earlier periods. Cicero's mature work on rhetorical theory was reintroduced to European scholars who had long revered him through Bishop Gerardo Landriani's discovery in 1421 of a complete manuscript of Cicero's *De Oratore* (see Part One) in the cathedral of Lodi, Italy. But other works of Cicero's, if not *De Oratore*, had been known in the Middle Ages, indeed, had been among its most revered classical texts. Nevertheless, it is probably fair to say that in the Renaissance rhetoric moved away from medieval schematizing and subordination to dialectic and recovered the humanistic breadth that Cicero and Quintilian had tried to give it.

Selected Bibliography

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Augustine

354–430 C.E.

Aurelius Augustinus, or Augustine, now a saint of the Roman Catholic Church, was born in Thagaste, North Africa, to Latin-speaking Berber parents. Augustine's father, Patricius, a small landowner and local official, remained a pagan until Augustine was in his teens, but his mother, Monica, was a devout Christian. Although she labored throughout Augustine's youth and young manhood to draw him to Christianity, Augustine did not convert until the age of thirty-two. His father promoted his secular education, sending him to the North African intellectual center of Carthage around 371 C.E. to study rhetoric. He received the best sort of late-classical education in letters.

By 374, at the age of twenty, Augustine was studying law on his own and supporting himself by teaching rhetoric. By this time he also had a two-year-old son with the mistress whom he was to keep until just before his conversion (her name is not recorded). In Carthage, he frequented the theater and gave himself over to the typical dissipations of the young professionals of the day. (Augustine paints an exaggerated picture of his vices in the *Confessions*, a spiritual autobiography written around 398, after his conversion.) He taught rhetoric in North Africa for about ten years.

During this period, Augustine was also seeking an intellectually satisfying religion, one that could speak to the philosophical interests aroused by his reading of Cicero's *Hortensius*, which draws heavily on Greek thought to discuss the relationship of rhetoric and philosophy. Augustine was attached for some time to Manichaeism, which sees the world as governed by two equal, struggling forces of good and evil. Meanwhile, in 383 he went to Rome to better himself professionally and a year later moved to Milan to accept a prestigious chair in rhetoric. Monica, now a widow, joined him there in 385, and at her urging Augustine began to study with Ambrose, bishop of Milan and an eloquent orator and subtle hermeneut. Ambrose's Christian circle was profoundly influenced by Neoplatonism, and scholars have debated the importance of this influence in drawing Augustine to the faith. In the *Confessions*, Augustine describes his progress toward conviction with sensitivity and wit. He was converted after hearing a divine voice in a country garden in 386. At Eastertime in 387, Ambrose baptized him and the illegitimate son he was raising. Soon thereafter Monica died.

Augustine made his way back to Thagaste by 388 and entered monastic life. Valerius, bishop of Hippo, ordained him in 391 and allowed him to found a monastery in Hippo, where Augustine remained for the next forty years. He became bishop of Hippo on the death of Valerius, around 396. In addition to fulfilling his pastoral duties, Augustine wrote voluminously, and many of his letters, sermons, theological and philosophical works, and biblical exegeses are extant. Augustine saw himself primarily as a controversialist, defending the correct doctrine of a young and volatile Christian Church against various heresies—as if transforming

for sacred use his old ambition to be a secular lawyer. The world around Augustine was volatile as well; his episcopal seat came under Vandal siege several times during his tenure, and Augustine died during another attack in 430.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF *ON CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE*

The City of God (413–426), which according to some scholars was prompted by the sack of Rome in 410, is Augustine's most comprehensive application of Christian ideas to the governance of the secular state. His *Confessions* may be seen as illustrating the application of Christian ideas to the governance of one's own soul. *De Doctrina Christiana*, or *On Christian Doctrine*—Augustine's most important work on rhetoric—advises the Christian pastor on how to foster both psychological and social order by correctly interpreting the Scriptures and conveying this truth to diverse audiences.

Augustine wrote the first three books of *On Christian Doctrine* at about the time he became bishop of Hippo (ca. 397), and he wrote Book IV (included here) in 427, a few years before his death. The first three books discuss how to interpret the Bible. In assuming that the Bible requires expert exegesis, Augustine implies that it is as rich in both style and meaning as the classics of Greek and Roman literature. For the highly literate Augustine, the very difficulty of the scriptural text adds to its value, although perhaps this difficulty is a consequence of defective human understanding caused by humans' original fall from grace with the sin of Adam and Eve. Book IV takes up the important topic of how to convey the truths so discovered. It is important to remember, as medievalist John D. Schaeffer has argued, that Augustine is dealing primarily with oral sermons that are not composed in detail before delivery; the preacher may be prepared with notes (if his memory is not as compendious as Augustine's apparently was) and with well-stored knowledge of Scripture and Christian doctrine, but he must also be ready to adapt his discourse on the spot to the reactions of the audience.

Like many other late-classical and medieval Christians, Augustine was strongly influenced by Cicero in his views on rhetoric. He quotes or paraphrases Cicero several times in *On Christian Doctrine*. At the same time, Augustine (who apparently had little Greek) knew something of Plato and Aristotle through Latin translations and Neoplatonic compendiums. In *The City of God* he states that the Platonic philosophers come closer to the truth of Christianity than any other pagan thinkers. This view has influenced Western treatment of Plato well into modern times.

Scholars disagree on the extent to which Augustine follows Plato and Cicero. On the one hand, he seems as suspicious of the declamatory rhetoric of the Second Sophistic—a subject he once taught—as Plato is of the Sophistic rhetoric he condemns. Sounding Platonic, Augustine insists that wisdom (comprising, for him, the understanding of the Bible) is more important than eloquence. He also suggests that eloquence can be achieved without rhetorical training, especially if one has good models to imitate and if God answers one's humble prayers for aid. The separation of wisdom and eloquence implies a separation of things (truths, realities) and words

(signs of things), thus leading Augustine to the Platonic conclusion that language is only a means to the final, silent contemplation of divine truth.

Yet words are also a kind of thing for Augustine, and in Book IV of *On Christian Doctrine* he argues vigorously against the conclusion that, because rhetoric is not necessary for achieving truth, it is therefore wholly dispensable. Since people's understanding is imperfect, the Christian pastor cannot assume that they will accept Christian truths unaccompanied by persuasive words. Even the Bible exhibits a type of rhetorical eloquence. Moreover, the use of persuasion is justified by the importance of the message. Augustine thus shares with Cicero—and through him, with Isocrates—the conviction that rhetoric must be employed for people's own good. Philosopher Alan Brinton has argued, however, that Augustine always stressed that the truths of religion may not be compromised or deceptive methods employed for the sake of persuasion.

Augustine follows Cicero in discussing the three offices of rhetoric: pleasing, teaching, and moving to action. Because the appeal of Christianity is democratic, Augustine must attempt to exercise these offices on more diverse audiences than Cicero faced and also, like Isocrates, use writing to disseminate speeches—or in Augustine's case, sermons—more widely. Some scholars argue that Augustine also departs from Cicero in emphasizing teaching over the other two offices of rhetoric, an emphasis inspired by Augustine's conviction that he is offering his audiences the truth, whereas Cicero sought only to convey the plausible. According to religious historian John C. Cavadini, however, teaching must be accompanied by sweet, pleasing discourse so that it can wean people away from the false pleasures of the world to those that lead to God; only then will they be moved to amend their lives. Augustine and other Christian thinkers of the day did not believe that preaching alone could effect conversion. The preacher had to be supported by divine aid to make God's word acceptable to his hearers, and the hearers had to be prepared by divine aid to receive it. The preacher's function in conveying God's word, however, was extremely important and could assist the operation of divine grace—a grave responsibility for rhetoric. Some scholars see Augustine in *On Christian Doctrine* not so much denouncing the Second Sophistic as pruning its excesses in light of his own professionally developed taste and turning its secular epideictic oratory to homiletic uses.

On Christian Doctrine was widely used to train medieval preachers, as medievalist Thomas Amos has shown. It continued to be invoked frequently well into the Renaissance as an authoritative text on Christian preaching, although scholars disagree about the extent of its influence in this period. Still in print today, Augustine's text is still regarded as a major landmark in Christian thinking about biblical exegesis and preaching.

SYNOPSIS OF BOOKS I–IV

In the prologue to *On Christian Doctrine*, Augustine describes the work as conveying “certain precepts for treating the Scriptures,” thus emphasizing the hermeneutic (or interpretive) over the homiletic (or didactic). However, the relative length of the

chapters suggests a greater balance: The first three books, which discuss how to interpret the Bible, are only about twice as long, all together, as the last, which deals with how to convey the truths thus uncovered.

Book I discusses “things.” Things to be “enjoyed” make us blessed; things to be “used” sustain us on the way to blessedness. Augustine develops a Platonic metaphor here: For the Christian, being in the world is like being a traveler trying to return to his or her native land. The “land” is the condition of blessedness or love of God. Using another metaphor with Platonic overtones, one that became popular among later medieval writers, Augustine suggests that our worldly journey to blessedness should be a cleansing or healing process. God “cures” our impurities with the “medicine” of God’s word. Augustine says that God is to Christ as our thoughts are to our words.

Reading Scripture can help us on our journey to blessedness so long as our reading encourages charity, the love of one’s neighbor that leads to the love of God. Any interpretation that encourages charity is not wrong, says Augustine. But an interpretation should be corrected if it deviates from what the biblical author clearly intends, for otherwise the reader could come to love his or her interpretations more than what the Bible says and so fall into error. The reader needs faith, charity, and hope: to believe in God, love God, and hope to return to God.

In Book II, Augustine discusses the sign, that which “causes us to think of something beyond the impression the thing itself makes on our senses.” He says, “Conventional signs are those which living creatures show one another for the purpose of conveying . . . something they have sensed or understood.” Written words are signs of spoken words, which are signs of thoughts.

Scripture presents many obscurities to those who read carelessly, Augustine says, because God wants to correct our pride and make us value the meaning more highly since we must work hard for it. Familiarity with all the canonical Scriptures and a good memory for what one has read are essential prerequisites for correct interpretation. Augustine sorts interpretive problems into four categories: unknown literal, unknown figurative, ambiguous literal, and ambiguous figurative signs. A literal sign is used “as all men use it”; a figurative sign includes both its literal meaning and “something else.” To interpret unknown literal signs, a knowledge of languages, especially Hebrew and Greek, is essential. To interpret unknown figurative signs, Augustine advises finding out about the literal things to which they refer. For example, to understand Christ’s injunction that we be “wise like serpents,” one must know how serpents actually behave.

Augustine also commends the study of dialectical logic, “the science of disputation,” so long as one avoids “Sophisms.” Since God has made a “reasonable order of things,” to learn logic is to point out preexisting (divinely created) truth but not to create truth with one’s words. Augustine cautions against confusing knowledge of logic, the “rules of inference,” with knowledge of the “truth of propositions.” One may, unfortunately, have one without the other, and it is better to have truth than logic. Similarly, says Augustine, to study rhetoric or the “rules of eloquence” is to point out how God has made human nature amenable to persuasion. “Men did not themselves institute the fact that an expression of charity conciliates an audience,”

says Augustine. But one should take care not to use these rules to persuade people to falsehood.

The careful Christian scholar can also approach non-Christian philosophy. “If those who are called philosophers, especially the Platonists, have said things which are indeed true and are well accommodated to our faith,” says Augustine, “they should not be feared; rather, what they have said should be taken from them as from unjust possessors and converted to our use.” Here Augustine develops his famous comparison with the Israelites despoiling the Egyptians: At God’s command they took not the idols but the gold and silver ornaments. So too may Christian scholars take from classical learning not the superstition but what is valuable. This rebuttal of Tertullian and Jerome, who sternly rejected all classical learning (even though they made use of it themselves), was widely influential throughout the Middle Ages.

In Book III, Augustine turns to ambiguous signs. For ambiguous literal signs, he suggests that the reader make sure that punctuation and construing are accurate; comparing translations can help. The ambiguous figurative sign must first be recognized as figurative. “Whatever appears in the divine Word that does not literally pertain to virtuous behavior or to the truth of faith you must take to be figurative,” he says. The spiritually more advanced, however, may read figuratively where the “lower grades” read literally. To resolve the ambiguity of a figurative sign, Augustine suggests looking at how the sign is used elsewhere in Scripture. Also, the sign may be a trope (Augustine briefly describes several, including metaphor).

Although in Book II Augustine briefly referred to the “rules of eloquence” as if they were to be learned elsewhere, when he returned to write Book IV of *On Christian Doctrine*, almost thirty years after the first three books were written, he had obviously decided to give more attention to the way to teach the truth discovered in the Bible. Still, he says, he will not enumerate the “rules of rhetoric” here. Rather, he discusses the relationship between Christian truth and eloquence, as this relationship is demonstrated in the Bible and in pastoral practice. But he clearly shows how the Christian preacher can use precepts from classical rhetoric. Augustine employs Cicero’s conception of the three offices of rhetoric and also of the three levels of style. He fuses these categories more neatly than Cicero does, associating teaching with conveying “small things” in a “subdued” style, delighting with “moderate things” in a “temperate” style, and moving to action with “great things” in a “grand” style. The Christian orator should use subdued style to teach, temperate style to “condemn or praise,” and grand style when he wants to move to action, even though at all times he speaks of “great things” in that what he says always pertains to salvation.

God’s truth belongs ultimately to God, not the speaker. For this same reason, he who cannot think of anything to say may deliver the speech of another. Augustine’s sanctioning of a kind of plagiarism here influenced the medieval practice of quoting lengthily from other sources without attribution. Augustine himself was often the one to be so quoted—for his work has been enormously influential from his own day up to the present.

Selected Bibliography

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History of Ideas 23 [1962]: 175–96). Mazzeo’s view depicts Augustine as strongly influenced by Neoplatonism, but Marcia Colish disputes this influence in “St. Augustine’s Rhetoric of Silence Revisited” (*Augustine Studies* 9 [1978]: 15–24). Weighing in with those who see Augustine as using a full range of rhetorical resources is John C. Cavadini, who argues that pleasing discourse must be used to teach and move (“The Sweetness of the Word: Salvation and Rhetoric in Augustine’s *De Doctrina Christiana*, in “*De Doctrina Christiana*”: *A Classic of Western Culture*, ed. Duane W. H. Arnold and Pamela Bright, 1995).

On Christian Doctrine

Book IV

1. This work of mine, entitled, “Christian Teaching,”¹ I had, according to my first arrangement, divided into a certain two parts.² For after the

Translated by Thérèse Sullivan.

¹Doctrina is used, of course, in the classical sense of “teaching,” or “instruction”: cf. Cic. *De Orat.* 1, 48, 208: *illa non sunt aliqua mihi doctrina tradita, sed in rerum use causisque tractata.* [Tr.] In this note Sister Thérèse explains why she uses this title, *On Christian Teaching*, rather than the more common title, *On Christian Doctrine*. [Ed.]

²Augustine reduces the traditional fivefold division of oratory (*inuentio, dispositio, elocutio, memoria, actio*) to a twofold division. *Inuentio (modus inueniendi)*, he treats at length in the first three books of *De Doctrina Christiana*; *dispositio*, he omits; *elocutio, memoria*, and *actio (modus proferendi)*, he develops in Book IV, analyzing fully the first, and giving a passing notice to the other two. His emphasis on *inuentio* and *elocutio* is, however, only a natural one, and is by no means peculiar to him alone. Aristotle divides oratory into *εὐρεσις, λέξις*, and *τάξις* (*Rhet.* 3, 1, 1403b), treating *εὐρεσις (inuentio)* in his first two books, and dividing his last book between the other two, giving the first twelve chapters to *λέξις (elocutio)*, and the last six to *τάξις (dispositio)*. Both Cicero and Quintilian also recognize the greater importance of *inuentio* and *elocutio*, and though they do not leave undeveloped the other parts as Augustine does, they give greater space to the discussion of these two. In *De Orat.*, Cicero treats *inuentio, dispositio*, and *memoria* in Book II, and *elocutio* and *actio* in Book III; but in both these books more than two-thirds of the discussion is given to *inuentio* and *elocutio*, respectively. The *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, in four books, gives the first two, and a third of Book III to *inuentio*, the remainder of this book to *dispositio, pronuntiatio*, and *memoria*, and Book IV to *elocutio*. Quintilian devotes Books III through VI of *De Institut. Orat.* to *inuentio*, Book VII to *dispositio*, Books VIII and IX to *elocutio*.—Note the characteristically neat manner in which Augustine here states his twofold division, making use of common rhetorical figures in order to heighten

introduction, in which I answered those who were likely to be critical, I said: “There are two things upon which every treatment of the Scriptures depends: the means of discovering what the thought may be, and the means of expressing what the thought is. We shall discuss first the discovery of the thought, then its expression.” And so, because we have already spoken at length on the discovery of the thought, and have finished three books on this part alone, we shall, with the help of God, speak in brief on the expression of the thought, so as, if possible, to include all in one book, and to finish this whole work in four sections.

2. And so, first, in this introduction, I wish to put down the hopes of readers who, it may be, think that I am going to set forth the rules of rhetoric which I learned and taught in the public schools, and I wish to warn them not to look for this from me, not because such things have no utility, but because, if they have any, it must be got elsewhere if perchance a worthy person have time to learn even such things; but this must not be required of me, either in this work or in any other.

3. For since through the art of rhetoric both truth and falsehood are pleaded, who would be so bold as to say that against falsehood, truth as regards its own defenders ought to stand unarmed,

his contrast: polyptoton, in *intellegenda . . . intellecta*; homoioteleuton, in *modus inueniendi . . . sunt, modus proferendi . . . sunt*; and parison, in the close agreement in number of syllables in the contrasted clauses. The expression is artificial, but it flows spontaneously from the writer’s pen. [Tr.]

so that, forsooth, those who attempt to plead false causes know from the beginning how to make their audience well-disposed, attentive, and docile, while the others remain ignorant of it; so that the former utter their lies concisely, clearly, with the appearance of truth, and the latter state the truth in a way that is wearisome to listen to, not clear to understand, and finally, not pleasant to believe; so that one side, by fallacious arguments, attacks truth and propounds falsehood, the other has no skill either in defending the true, or refuting the false; so that the one, moving and impelling the minds of the audience to error by the force of its oratory, now strikes them with terror, now saddens them, now enlivens them, now ardently arouses them, but the other in the cause of truth is sluggish and cold and falls asleep! Who is so foolish as to be thus wise? Since, therefore, there has been placed equally at our disposal the power of eloquence, which is so efficacious in pleading either for the erroneous cause or the right, why is it not zealously acquired by the good, so as to do service for the truth, if the unrighteous put it to the uses of iniquity and of error for the winning of false and groundless causes?

4. But, whatever the rules and precepts are on this subject, which, with the addition of adroit oral practice in the use of a large vocabulary and rich diction, result in what we term eloquence, or oratory, they must be acquired by those who can do so quickly, outside of this treatise of ours, at a proper and fitting age, when a suitable amount of time has been set aside for them. For even the very masters of Roman eloquence themselves have not hesitated to say that no one can ever acquire this art at all unless he do so quickly. What need is there to question the truth of this? For even if these rules can at length finally be mastered by the plodder, we do not consider them of such value that we wish the mature, or even the later years of life, to be spent in their acquisition. It is enough that this be the concern of the young, and not even of all whom we wish trained for service in the Church, but of those whose attention is not required by a more pressing duty, and one which ought unquestionably to take precedence of this study. For in the case of a keen and ardent nature, eloquence will come more readily through

reading and hearing the eloquent, than through pursuing the rules of eloquence. Nor is the Church wanting in its own literature, even apart from the Canon which is with saving grace fixed in the place of supreme authority; and if a man of ability use this literature, although he has no further aim, but is occupied only with the matter which he finds there, even while he is attending to this alone, he becomes imbued with the eloquence of its diction. This is even especially the case if he adds practice in writing, or dictating, or too, even in speaking his views as guided by the rule of righteousness and faith. But if such ability be wanting, either the precepts of rhetoric will not be grasped, or if by dint of great labor they are grasped to some degree at least, they will be of no avail. For indeed even the very ones who have learned them, and express themselves fluently and elegantly, cannot all, when they are talking, think of these rules, in order to speak in accordance with them, unless the discussion be on the rules themselves. Nay more, I believe there are scarcely any who can do both things, viz., speak well, and in order to do so, think of the rules of oratory while speaking. For they have to be careful not to forget what they want to say, while they are attending to saying it according to theory. And yet, the rules of eloquence are found fully exemplified in the speeches and discourses of the eloquent, even though to arrive at that eloquence, or in the midst of that eloquence, these men did not think of them, whether indeed they had ever learned them, or whether perhaps they had not even slightly engaged in them. For they exemplify them because they are eloquent; they do not use them to become eloquent.

5. Wherefore, as children do not learn to talk except by listening to the talking of those who talk, why cannot men learn to be orators not by studying the rules of oratory, but by reading and listening to the orations of orators, and, in as far as it is possible, by imitating them? Is it not true that in actual experience we find that this is so? For we know many who are more eloquent without the rules of rhetoric than many who have learned them, but none who are eloquent without having read and heard the discussions and speeches of the eloquent. Children, for instance, would not even need the very rules of grammar,

through which the purity of speech is attained, if they had the opportunity of growing up and living with men who talked correctly. For though ignorant of the names of mistakes in speech, they would recognize whatever was faulty in the language of another, and would, because of their own good usage, criticize it and guard against it; just as city people, even when unlettered, criticize country people.

6. It is the duty, then, of the student and teacher of the Holy Scriptures, who is the defender of the true Faith, and the opponent of error, both to teach what is right, and to correct what is wrong,³ and in this function of discourse, to conciliate the hostile, to arouse the careless, and to inform those ignorant of the matter in hand, what they ought to expect. But when he finds his audience kindly disposed, attentive, and docile, or when he has himself made them so, the rest must be carried out as each case demands. If his hearers need information, the matter under discussion must be made clear by giving the history of the question, if indeed that is wanting. On the other hand, to make clear a doubtful matter, there is need of argument and the presentation of evidence.⁴ But if the audience needs to be aroused rather than to be informed, in order that they may

³As will be seen below, the foundation of Augustine's offices is entirely classical; the spirit is wholly Christian; the result is a new rhetorical ideal. [Tr.]

⁴The instruments of *docere* are exposition (*narratione*) and proof (*documentis adhibitis ratiocinandum est*), which are the matter, as Augustine will explain below, of the *genus submissum*, the "plain style"; the instruments of *mouere* are entreaty, reproach, upbraiding (*obsecrationes*, etc.), and the style accommodated to these is *genus sublime*, "grand." Note the intended omission of *conciliare* as an object in oratory. The fact is that Augustine is here recognizing the time-honored conception of the means of persuasion, established by Aristotle: the pragmatic or dialectical (*πίστευς ἐν αὐτῷ τῷ πράγματι* = *docere* with its *narratio* and *documenta*), and the rhetorical, properly so-called, *i.e.*, those means which lie outside of the facts, and look especially to emotional effect on the hearers (*πρὸς τὸν ἀχρυστήν* = *mouere* with its *obsecrationes*, etc.). *Conciliare*, in Aristotle, has a subordinate place under the means: *πρὸς τὸν ἀχρυστήν*. This interpretation of persuasion as twofold was carried on by the Peripatetic school, and thence was accepted by Dionysius, Auct. ad Her., and Cicero, etc. Augustine recognizes it here, as also in Contr. Cresc. 1, 13, 16, and in De Dial. 7. In Contr. Cresc., however, he draws such a sharp distinction between these two aspects of persuasion as to make one feel that he is separating them not merely as different phases of rhetoric, but as differ-

not be slow in living up to what they already know, and that they may give their assent to what they are convinced is true, greater powers of oratory are required. In such a case, entreaties and reproaches, exhortations and compulsion, and every other means conducive to stirring the heart, are necessary. And indeed, every one of the methods which I have enumerated are continually made use of by nearly all men in their efforts in speaking.

7. But as some do this bluntly, inelegantly, and coldly, while others, with tact, elegance, and force, the important thing now is that the instruction of which we speak, be made the business of one who, even though he has no powers of eloquence, does possess *wisdom* in arguing and speaking, so that he may do good to his audience, even though that be less than if he could at the same time use eloquence in speaking. But a man who has merely an empty flow of eloquence, ought to be the more guarded against as he is the more pleasing to his audience in those matters which have no expedience, and as, since his audience hears him speak with fluency, it judges that he likewise speaks with truth. This view, indeed, did not escape even those who considered rhetorical training necessary, for they hold that wisdom without eloquence is of small avail to a country, but that eloquence without wisdom is generally a great hindrance, and never a help. If, therefore, those who have given us the rules of oratory, in the very books in which they have treated this subject are forced through the urgency of truth to make this confession, ignorant as they are of the true, that is, of the supernal wisdom which comes down from the Father of lights, how much more are we, who are the children and the ministers of this wisdom, under obligation to hold no other opinion! But a man speaks with more or less wisdom as he is the more or less versed in the Holy

ent arts: dialectic (*subtiliter arguteque disserere, hoc est dialectice*), and rhetoric (*copiose ornateque explicare, hoc est eloquenter*). In reality they form, in his larger conception, the *officia oratoris*, including as was the custom of the schools somewhat before Cicero's time, and from his time on, a third, *conciliare*, recognized, especially by Augustine, as of vastly less importance than the other two, but a convenient middle ground between the extremes of dialectic and impassioned prose. [Tr.]

Scriptures—I do not mean in the very copious reading and memorizing of them, but in the true understanding and the careful investigation of their meaning. For there are some who read them, but indifferently; they read them in order to memorize them, but they are indifferent to understanding them. There can be no question but that they by far deserve the preference who know them less, word for word, but who look into the heart of the Scriptures, with the eyes of their own hearts. But he is better than either of these, who both quotes them at will, and understands them as he ought.

8. And so, for one who should speak with wisdom, even for the very reason that he cannot do so with eloquence, it is absolutely necessary that he remember the words of the Scriptures. For in as much as he sees himself poor in his own resources, in so much the more does it behoove him to be rich in those of the Scriptures, that what he says in his own words, he may prove by the Scriptures; and that he who was of little importance in his own words may gain, in some measure, from the authority of the great. For by his proofs he satisfies, even though he cannot satisfy by his bare statements. Furthermore, the man who wishes to speak not only with wisdom but also with eloquence, since indeed he will do more good if he be able to do both, I rather send to read or hear the eloquent, and to imitate them by practice, than advise to give his time to professors of rhetoric,⁵ on this condition, however, that those who are read and heard be recommended, in all truth, as men who have spoken

⁵Oratory degenerated into mere theatrical declamation, after Tiberius by the abolition of the assemblies closed to the orator his proper field. Schools of rhetoric became increasingly popular, but their professors through the superficiality and insincerity of their methods brought the name of “rhetorician” into ill-repute. Though Quintilian and Tacitus did their part to reclaim rhetoric from the excesses to which it had passed in their day, their influence was outweighed in the second and succeeding centuries by that of the Greek rhetors and sophists, so popular in those years. It is no wonder, therefore, that Augustine, feeling the distrust with which his age regarded rhetoricians, should be on his guard to explain his meaning in regard to them. See Norden 351 ff.; Lezat 11–12, 14, for a convenient summary of the conditions of oratory and rhetoric from Tiberius to Augustine. Cicero reflects the contempt of his time for *isti rhetores*, in the words which he ascribes to the Athenian Menedemus in *De Orat.* 1, 19, 87. [Tr.]

and who speak not only with eloquence, but also with wisdom. For those who speak eloquently are listened to with pleasure; those who speak with wisdom are heard with profit. Wherefore, the Scripture does not say, “The multitude of the eloquent,” but *The multitude of the wise is the welfare of the whole world*. But as often even bitter medicine must be taken, so always harmful sweets must be avoided. Still, what is better than wholesome sweets or sweet wholesomeness? For the greater the desire of sweets in such a case, the more readily does their wholesomeness prove beneficial. So there are churchmen who have expounded Sacred Scripture not only with wisdom, but also with eloquence; and for reading these, students and those at leisure have not sufficient time in which to exhaust them.

9. Here, someone perhaps may ask whether our authors, whose divinely inspired writings, with saving authority, make up the Canon for us, should be ranked merely as wise, or also as eloquent men. For myself, and for those whose opinions are the same as mine, this question is, of course, easily settled. For when I understand them, it seems to me that nothing can have more wisdom or even more eloquence. And I venture to state this also, that all who rightly understand what these writers say, understand too that they could not have spoken otherwise. For as there is a certain eloquence which is more becoming to youth, and a certain one to old age; and as eloquence does not deserve the name, if it be not in accord with the person who speaks, so there is a certain eloquence suitable to men especially worthy of the highest authority, and who are clearly inspired. With such eloquence have our authors spoken. No other is fitting to them, nor is theirs, to others; for it perfectly accords with them; but as it seems the more lowly, so it the more highly transcends others, not by its inflation, but by its solidity. Where, however, I do not understand these writers, then indeed their eloquence is less apparent to me, but still I doubt not but that it is such as it is where I do understand them. Indeed, that very obscurity of the divine and saving writings had, of necessity, to be mingled with such eloquence whereby our minds should profit, not only through the working out of their meaning, but also through the practice of their art.

10. All the merits and beauties of eloquence, about which those critics are puffed up, who, not because of its real greatness, but because of its bombast, prefer their own language to the language of our writers, I could, if there were time, point out in the Sacred Writings of those whom Divine Providence has provided to instruct us, and to bring us from this corrupt world to the world of the blessed. But it is not the points which they have in common with the pagan orators and poets that please me more than I can say, in their eloquence; what I admire and wonder at more, is that they so use our eloquence, through another kind of eloquence, as it were, of their own, that ours is not wanting to them, and still is not conspicuous in them, for it would not be fitting for them either to reject it, or to flaunt it. The former would be the case if they avoided it, the latter might be imputed to them if they made it too noticeable. And in those places where it happens to be recognized by scholars, the subject-matter is such that the words in which it is expressed seem not to have been sought out by the writer, but seem to belong naturally to the matter itself, as if, to express a comparison, wisdom came forth from its own dwelling-place, that is, from the heart of the wise man, and eloquence, its inseparable handmaid, followed, even though uninvited.

11. For who cannot but see what the Apostle⁶ wished to say and with what wisdom he has said it, in the following: *We glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience trial; and trial hope; and hope confoundeth not: because the charity of God is poured forth in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost; who is given to us?* Here if anyone, unlearnedly learned, so to speak, contend that the Apostle has followed the rules of rhetoric, will he not be laughed at by Christians, cultured and uncultured alike?⁷ And still we recognize here the figure called in Greek, *χλίμαξ*, in Latin, by some, *gradatio*—a name which they prefer to *scala*, lad-

⁶The Apostle is Paul. [Ed.]

⁷Norden (503), however, rightly observes that St. Paul knows well the figures of rhetoric, and half consciously, half unconsciously uses them as the occasion demands. An analysis of the preceding passage proves this.

Oxymoron: A. falls as naturally into figurative terms as does St. Paul, in the passage just quoted. [Tr.]

der—for the words or the thoughts are connected one with another, as, for example, here we see *patience* connected with *tribulation*, *trial* with *patience*, *hope* with *trial*. Another ornament, too, is recognized here, for after several elements marked off by an unbroken utterance in delivery, which we call *membra* and *caesa*, and the Greeks, *χῶλα* and *χόμματα*, there follows a rounded sentence, or period, which the latter call *περίοδος*, whose *membra* are held suspended by the voice of the speaker, until completed by the last one. For, of the *membra* preceding the period, the first one is, *since tribulation worketh patience*; the second, *and patience trial*; the third, *and trial, hope*. Then the period itself follows, which is completed in three *membra*, the first of which being, *and hope confoundeth not*; the second, *because the charity of God is poured forth in our hearts*; the third, *by the Holy Ghost, who is given to us*. But this, and things of this kind are set forth in the art of oratory. So, though we do not say that the Apostle followed the rules of eloquence, still, we do not deny that eloquence followed close upon his wisdom.

12. Writing to the Corinthians, in the second Epistle, he refutes certain false apostles from among the Jews, who were maligning him, and being obliged to speak of himself—granting it a kind of folly in himself—how wisely and how eloquently does he speak! But he is the attendant of wisdom, the master of eloquence; he follows the one, taking precedence of the other, and yet not spurning it as it follows him. *I say again* he says (let no man think me to be foolish, otherwise, take me as one foolish, that I also may glory a little). *That which I speak, I speak not according to God, but as it were in foolishness, in the matter of glorying. Seeing that many glory according to the flesh, I will glory also. For you gladly suffer the foolish; whereas yourselves are wise. For you suffer if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take from you, if a man be lifted up, if a man strike you on the face. I speak according to dishonor, as if we had been weak. Wherein if any man dare (I speak foolishly), I dare also. They are Hebrews? So am I. They are Israelites? So am I. They are the seed of Abraham? So am I. They are the ministers of Christ? (I speak as one foolish); I am more; in*

labors, very often, in prisons more frequently, in stripes above measure, in deaths, many times. Of the Jews five times did I receive forty stripes, save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once I was stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I was in the depth of the sea. In journeyings often, in perils of water, in perils of robbers, in perils from my own nation, in perils from the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils from false brethren. In labors and painfulness, in watchings many times, in hunger and thirst, in fastings very often, in cold and nakedness. Besides those things which are without: my daily care, the solicitude for all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is scandalized, and I am not on fire? If I must needs glory, I will glory in the things that concern my infirmity. The great wisdom with which this is expressed, those who have their eyes open can see. But too, the mighty torrent of eloquence with which these words rush on, even one snoring in sleep must notice.

13. Furthermore, the scholar recognizes that it is the *caesa* called by the Greeks, *χόμματα*, and the *membra* and periods mentioned a little above, which interspersed as they are in the most fitting variety, have here produced the whole form and feature, so to speak, of the diction, whereby even the unlettered are pleased and moved. For from the beginning of the preceding quotation, periods are used. The first is the shortest, that is, it has only two *membra*—periods cannot have less than this, though they may have more—so the first is: *I say again, let no man think me to be foolish*. Another, made up of three *membra*, follows: *Otherwise, take me as one foolish, that I also may glory a little*. The third in order has four *membra*: *That which I speak, I speak not according to God, but as it were in foolishness, in this matter of glorying*. The fourth has two: *Seeing that many glory according to the flesh, I will glory also*. And the fifth has two: *For you gladly suffer the foolish; whereas yourselves are wise*. In like manner the sixth has two: *For you suffer if a man bring you into bondage*. Three *caesa* follow: *If a man devour you, if a man take from you, if a man be lifted up*. Then three *membra*: *If a man strike you on the face. I speak according to dishonor, as if we had been weak*. A period of

three *membra* then follows: *Wherein if any man dare (I speak foolishly), I dare also*. Then several distinct *caesa* are put in question form, and as many distinct *caesa* are returned in answer, three against three: *They are Hebrews? So am I. They are Israelites? So am I. They are the seed of Abraham? So am I*. But the fourth, put likewise as a question, is answered not by the balance of another *caesum*, but of a *membrum*: *They are the ministers of Christ? (I speak as one foolish), I am more*. Then the question form being fittingly dropped, the four following *caesa* pour forth: *In labors, very often, in prisons more frequently, in stripes above measure, in deaths many times*. Next a short period is inserted, for by keeping the voice raised in delivery, *Of the Jews five times* is to be set off as one *membrum*, with which is connected a second, *did I receive forty stripes save one*. Then the *caesa* are taken up again, and three are given: *Thrice was I beaten with rods, once I was stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck*. A *membrum* follows: *A night and a day, I was in the depth of the sea*. Then fourteen *caesa* stream forth with most appropriate force: *In journeyings often, in perils of water, in perils of robbers, in perils from my own nation, in perils from the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils from false brethren. In labor and painfulness, in watchings many times, in hunger and thirst, in fastings very often, in cold and nakedness*. After this he inserts a period of three *membra*: *Besides those things which are without: my daily care, the solicitude for the churches*. And to this he adds two *membra* in question form: *Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is scandalized, and I am not on fire?* Finally the whole passage, as though panting for breath, ends with a period of two *membra*: *If I must needs glory, I will glory in the things that concern my infirmity*. But because after this outburst, by inserting a bit of narrative he calms down after a fashion, and makes his reader calm down, it is impossible to express what a fine and pleasing effect he attains. For he continues with the words: *The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed forever, knoweth that I lie not*. And then he proceeds to tell in short how he has been in danger, and how he has escaped.

14. It would be tedious to follow out other points, or to indicate such features in other places of the Holy Scriptures. What, if in the passages at least which I have quoted illustrative of the Apostle's eloquence, I had also wished to point out the figures of speech taught in rhetoric? Would not serious-minded men consider that I was going too far, rather than any student, that I was satisfactory to him? All these things, when taught by professors, are esteemed of great value; they are bought at a great price, and sold with great display. Such display, even I fear to smack of, as I thus discuss these matters; but it has seemed necessary to answer the ill-informed who think that our writers deserve contempt, not because they do not possess, but because they do not make display of the eloquence which the former too highly esteem.⁸

15. But some perhaps may think that I have chosen the Apostle Paul as *the* example of our eloquence.⁹ For where he says, *Although I be rude in speech, yet not in knowledge*, he seems to have spoken thus merely by way of giving in to his detractors, not of confessing it as if he recognized it to be true. If, however, he had said, "I, indeed, rude in speech, but not in knowledge," no other meaning could possibly be taken from his words. Clearly, he did not hesitate to profess knowledge, without which he could not succeed as the teacher of the Gentiles. And, indeed, if we point out any thing of his as an example of eloquence, we assuredly point it out from those Epistles which even his detractors, themselves, who wanted his spoken word to be thought contemptible, admitted to be weighty and strong. And so I see that I must say something also of the eloquence of the Prophets, greatly cloaked as it is in a metaphorical style. The more, however, that they seem obscure by the use of figurative expressions, the more pleasing they are when their meaning has been made clear. But I must here quote some passage wherein I may not have to

⁸A., while quietly denouncing the excesses of Sophistic, is here led to express one of the principal aims of the present treatise: to prove the value of Holy Scripture as a model of style. [Tr.]

⁹Of modern critics, this seems to be the opinion of Norden (528), who holds that outside of St. Paul, the Scriptures have no intrinsic claim to be reckoned rhetorical. [Tr.]

explain what is said, but may merely commend the manner in which it is said. Wherefore, I shall draw especially from the book of that Prophet,¹⁰ who says that having been shepherd and herdsman, he was by divine appointment taken and sent to prophesy to the people of God: but not according to the Septuagint translators, who even themselves, working under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, seem for this very reason to have expressed some things in a different way, in order that the attention of the reader might be rather directed to a study of the spiritual sense—and thus some of their passages are even more obscure because more figurative—but rather as the translation has been made from the Hebrew into the Latin language, done by the presbyter, Jerome, himself a skillful expounder of both tongues.

16. And so, when he was inveighing against the wicked, the proud, the luxurious, and those, therefore, who were totally indifferent to brotherly love, this peasant, or rather peasant become prophet, cried out, saying: *Woe to you that are wealthy in Sion, and to you that have confidence in the mountain of Samaria, ye great men, heads of the people, that go in with much state into the house of Israel. Pass ye over not Chalane, and see, and go from thence into Emath the great: and go down into Geth of the Philistines, and to all the best kingdoms of these: if their border be larger than your border. You that are separated unto the evil day: and that approach to the throne of iniquity: you that sleep upon beds of ivory, and are wanton on your couches: that eat the lambs of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the herd: you that sing to the sound of psaltery: they have thought themselves to have instruments of music like David: that drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the best ointments: and they are not concerned for the affliction of Joseph.* Tell me pray, would those very men who, as though themselves learned and eloquent, condemn our Prophet as unlettered and unskilled in speech, would they, if they had had to address some such rebuke to such people, have wanted to express themselves in any other way—those of them, of course, who would not have wanted to appear mad?

¹⁰The Prophet is Amos. [Ed.]

17. For what more could the sober ear desire in this passage? First of all, with what a clash does the mere denunciation beat against senses deadened, as it were, in order to arouse them: *Woe to you that are wealthy in Sion, and to you that have confidence in the mountain of Samaria: ye great men, heads of the people, that go in with state into the house of Israel!* Then in regard to the gifts of God who had bestowed on them wide regions for their kingdom, to show them how ungrateful they were, since they were then putting their confidence in the mountain of Samaria, where, in truth, idols were worshipped, he says: *Pass ye over to Chalane, and see, and go from thence into Emath the great: and go down into Geth of the Philistines, and to all the best kingdoms of these; if their border be larger than your border.* Moreover, also, in this passage the language is adorned by the names of places, as though by lights, to wit, *Sion, Samaria, Chalane, Emath the great, and Geth of the Philistines.* Then too, the words used in connection with these places are very fittingly varied, *you that are wealthy—have confidence—pass ye over—go—go down.*

18. Next, announcement is made that a future captivity under a cruel king is approaching, in the words: *You that are separated unto the evil day: and that approach to the throne of iniquity.* Then the evils of luxury are summed up: *You that sleep upon beds of ivory, and are wanton on your couches: that eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the herd.* These six *membra* make three periods of two *membra* each. For the writer does not say: “You that are separated unto the evil day, that approach to the throne of iniquity, that sleep upon beds of ivory, that are wanton on your couches, that eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the herd.” If he had so put it, it would, to be sure, be well expressed also, so that with the repetition of the same pronoun each of the six *membra* would be introduced, and each would be finished off by the fall of the speaker’s voice. But it is finer as it is written, with each two *membra* depending on one pronoun, in order to explain three ideas: one pertaining to the announcement of captivity. *You that are separated unto the evil day: and that approach to the throne of iniquity:*

the second, to unlawful pleasures: *You that sleep upon beds of ivory, and are wanton on your couches;* and the third, to gluttony: *that eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the herd;* so that the speaker is free either to complete each separately, and have six clauses, or to suspend by his voice the first, third, and fifth, and by connecting the second with the first, the fourth with the third, the sixth with the fifth, to make, very appropriately, three periods of two clauses each: one, to point out the impending calamity; the second, the unchaste couch; the third, the luxurious table.

19. Then he attacks the inordinate pleasure of the ears. And here having said, *You that sing to the sound of psaltery,* since the wise can use music wisely, he with admirable propriety checks his flow of invective, and now speaking not to them, but of them, in order to warn us to distinguish between the music of the wise, and the music of the licentious, he does not say, “You that sing to the sound of psaltery, and think you have instruments of music like David”; but when he has said to them what it behooves the licentious to hear, *You that sing to the sound of the psaltery,* he, after a manner, points out their ignorance to others, by adding, *They have thought themselves to have instruments of music like David; that drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the best ointments.* These three *membra* are delivered in the best way, by holding suspended the first two members of the period, and rounding them out by the third.

20. But now as to what follows all this, *And they are not concerned for the affliction of Joseph,* whether it be read straight through as one *membrum*, or whether more fittingly the words, *And they are not concerned,* be held suspended, and then after setting them off, *for the affliction of Joseph* be introduced, thus making a period of two *membra*, it is with rare propriety that the wording does not read thus, “And they are not concerned for the affliction of their brother,” but in the place of “brother,” “Joseph” is put, that brotherhood in general may be expressed by the proper name of one whose fame stands out from among brothers, whether as regards the evil which he suffered, or the good which he paid in return. Really, I do not know whether that figure

whereby "Joseph" is made to express brotherhood in general is explained in that art which we have studied and taught. But what its beauty is, and how affecting it is to readers and men of thought, there is no need of telling a person if he does not feel it himself.

21. And indeed many more things which pertain to the rules of eloquence can be discovered in this same passage which we have taken as an example. But its value lies not so much in the instruction it affords a good audience if it be analyzed carefully, as in the sentiment it enkindles if it be read with feeling. For these words were not written by human industry, but were poured forth by Divine Intelligence, with wisdom and eloquence—wisdom not being intent on eloquence, but eloquence not deserting wisdom. For as certain very able and discerning orators have been able to perceive and state, if what is laid down in the so-called art of oratory could not be observed and noted and reduced to this discipline unless it were first found in the natural genius of orators, what wonder is there that it is found likewise in those men whom He has sent who fashions natural genius? Wherefore, let us claim that our canonical writers and doctors possessed eloquence too as well as wisdom—eloquence of such a kind as was fitting to men of their character.

22. But though we take some examples from their writings which can without difficulty be understood, still we ought by no means to think that our authors are to be imitated by us in those places where they speak with useful and helpful obscurity, either to exercise and, as it were, to refine the minds of their readers, or to break down the prejudices and to whet the zeal of those who are willing to learn, or, too, to keep in the dark the minds of the wicked, either that they may be converted to a good life, or be excluded from the mysteries. Such, indeed, has been their manner of expressing themselves, that those following them, who have understood and expounded them aright have acquired distinction also in the Church of God, not in the same degree, of course, but next in order. Their interpreters, therefore, ought not to express themselves in such a way as if putting themselves forward to be interpreted with like authority; but in all their dis-

courses they should labor, first and foremost, to be understood through their clearness of expression, in as far as this is possible, so that either he who does not understand is very slow of wit, or in the difficulty and subtlety of the matters which we wish to unfold and make clear, not in our manner of expressing them, lies the reason why what we say is not understood, or is understood but slowly.

23. There are some matters, which in their true force are not intelligible, or scarcely intelligible, no matter how great the eloquence, nor how extended nor how clear the speaker's explanation. Such matters should be put before a popular assembly either rarely, if necessity urges, or not at all. In books, however, which are so written that they, so to speak, hold the reader to themselves, when they are intelligible, or when they are not intelligible are still not a burden to those who do not wish to read them, and in conversations with others, the duty ought not to be neglected of bringing the truth—though it may be most difficult to understand, which we, however, have already grasped—to the understanding of others, no matter what the labor of discussion, provided that the listener or interlocutor have the desire to be informed, and that mental capacity be not wanting to enable him to receive the information in whatever manner presented, the instructor attending not to the degree of eloquence with which he teaches, but to the degree of clearness.

24. A studied leaning toward such clearness, at times neglects the more elegant expression, and has no concern for what sounds well, but for what tells and explains well what one aims to point out. And so it is that a certain authority says, in treating of such kind of speech, that it possesses a kind of careful negligence. Still, while this discounts florid expressions, it does not countenance vulgar ones. And yet good teachers have, or ought to have such care in teaching that a word which cannot be expressed in good Latin except obscurely and ambiguously, but which as given in the common idiom, has neither ambiguity nor obscurity, should be expressed not as the cultured, but rather as the uncultured are wont to express it. For if our translators have not hesitated to say, *I will not gather together their meetings for blood*

offerings, since they consider that the subject matter called for the plural use of the noun in this place, though in good Latin this word is used only in the singular, then why should a teacher of righteousness when addressing the unlettered, hesitate to use *ossum* for *os* for fear lest this word might be understood as coming not from the same form as *ossa*, but from the same form as *ora*, since the African ear does not distinguish between short and long vowels? For what is the good of correctness of speech if the understanding of the hearer does not follow it, since there is absolutely no reason for speaking if they for whose instruction we speak are not instructed by our speaking? And so, one who teaches will avoid all words which do not teach; and if in place of them he can use other correct expressions which are intelligible, he will choose these by preference, but if he cannot, either because they do not occur to him at the moment, he will use words even less correct, provided, however, that the matter itself be taught and learned correctly.

25. And this indeed must be insisted upon, that we may be understood, not only in conversations with one person or with several, but also much more when a sermon is being delivered before assemblies.¹¹ For in conversations, each one has the opportunity of questioning; but when all are quiet, that one may be heard, and all are turned toward him with fixed attention, then it is neither customary nor proper for any one to ask about what he has not understood, and for this reason it should be the special concern of the speaker to assist the silent listener. But an assembly eager to learn generally shows by some movement whether it has understood, and until it does show this, the matter in hand ought to be presented in many different forms; but this they have not the power of doing who deliver word for word what they have prepared and committed to memory.¹² However, as soon as it is clear that

¹¹Again in *De Catech. Rud.* 15, 23, Augustine differentiates between instruction given to a few in private and after a fashion familiarly, and a sermon properly so called, delivered to a congregation. With true pedagogical instinct, he recognizes wherein these are to be handled alike, wherein differently. [Tr.]

¹²Augustine is clearly advocating extempore address. That this was the method of preaching used by such re-

the matter has been understood, the discourse ought to be ended, or to pass on to other things. For though one gives pleasure when he clears up matters that need to be made understood, he becomes wearisome when he keeps hammering at things which are already understood, at least to those men whose whole expectation was centered in the solution of the difficulty in the matter under discussion. It is true that for the sake of giving pleasure, even well-known things are talked over; when, not the facts themselves, but the manner in which they are expressed, holds the attention. And if this itself also is now well known, and is popular with the audience, it makes almost no difference whether the man talking be a speaker or a reader. For generally, things which are attractively written are also read with pleasure, not only by those who come to know them for the first time; but even by those who have already made their acquaintance, and from whose memory they have not yet been effaced, are they reread not without pleasure; or they are listened to willingly by both classes. On the other hand, what a person has forgotten, when it is recalled to him, he learns again. But I am not now treating of how to please; I am speaking of how they are to be taught who desire instruction. That, indeed, is the best method, which results in the listener hearing the truth, and understanding what he hears. When this end has been attained, then there should be no further effort toward expounding the matter longer, as it were, but perhaps toward commending it, so that it may be fixed deep in the heart; but if it seem that this ought to be done, it must be done with such moderation as not to lead to weariness.

26. This, of course, is eloquence in teaching, whereby the result is attained in speaking, not that what was distasteful becomes pleasing, nor that what one was unwilling to do is done, but that what was obscure becomes clear. Still, if this be done in an unpleasing manner, its fruit falls to the very few zealous persons, forsooth, who are eager for the knowledge which is

owned speakers as Origen, Cyril of Jerusalem, John Chrysostom, Pope Faustus, Jerome, and especially Augustine himself, is shown by Deferrari 97-123; 193-211. [Tr.]

proposed for instruction, no matter how meanly and inelegantly it be explained. When they have once gained this end, they feast upon the truth itself with delight; and it is the fine characteristic of great minds that they love the truth in words, not just the words. For what is the use of a golden key if it cannot open what we want it to? Or what is the objection to a wooden one if it can do so, since we are asking nothing save that what is closed be opened? But as eating and learning have a certain similarity one to the other, because of the natural fastidiousness of most people, even the very food which is necessary for life's sustenance must have seasoning.

27. And so, a well-known orator¹³ has said, and has said truly that an orator ought to speak in such a way as to instruct, to please, and to persuade. Then he adds, "Instructing belongs to necessity; pleasing, to interest; persuading, to victory." Of these three, that which is given first place, the necessity of instructing, depends upon the things we say; the other two, upon our manner of saying them. Therefore, the man who speaks with the view to instructing, as long as he is not intelligible, should consider that he has not yet said what he wishes to say to the one whom he wishes to instruct. Because, though he has said what he himself understands, he should not be thought yet to have said it to him by whom he has not been understood; if, however, he has been understood, whatever the manner of his having said it, he has said it. But if his aim is also to please the one to whom he speaks, or to persuade him, he will not accomplish it by any manner of speaking whatsoever, but it is of moment how he speaks, in order to accomplish it. Moreover, as a listener must be pleased if his attention is to be held, so he must be persuaded if he is to be moved to action. And as he is pleased if you speak attractively, so he is persuaded if he likes what you promise, fears what you threaten, hates what you censure, embraces what you command, grieves over what you emphasize as deserving of grief, rejoices when you say something should gladden, sympathizes with those whom you by your words set before his eyes as objects of pity, shuns those whom you with threats consider

¹³The well-known orator is Cicero. [Ed.]

ought to be avoided—and so on in regard to whatever else in the way of moving the hearts of an audience is possible through powerful eloquence, not that they may know what they must do, but that they may do what they already know they ought to do.

28. But if they do not yet know this, instruction must, of course, precede persuasion. And perhaps, when the facts themselves have been learned, they will be so far moved, that there will be no longer need that they be moved by greater powers of eloquence. However, when there is need, this must be used; but there is then need when, although they know what they ought to do, they do not do it. And for this reason, instruction is of necessity. For men have the liberty of doing or not doing the things they know. But who would say that they ought to do what they do not know? And so it is that persuasion is not of necessity, because there is not always need of it if only the listener is in agreement with the one who is instructing, or also pleasing. But so it is that persuasion is of victory, because there is the possibility that a person may be instructed, and pleased, and still not give his assent. But what will the two former things avail if the third be lacking?¹⁴ For too, pleasing is not of necessity, since, indeed, when in a speech the truth is pointed out—a thing which belongs to instruction to do—it is not done by using eloquence, nor indeed is attention given to this, to please by the matter or the style itself, but the mere exposition of the truth gives pleasure through its very nature, since it is the truth. Whence it is that many times, even falsehood, when exposed and refuted, is a source of pleasure. For it does not please because it is falsehood, but because it is true that it is falsehood, the very explanation which shows that this is true, is a matter of pleasure.

¹⁴Granting that persuasion is the end of oratory (cf. Arist. Rhet. 1, 2, 1355 b: ἔστω δὲ ῥητορικὴ δύναμις περὶ ἕχαστον τοῦ θεωρηῆσαι τὸ ἐνδεχόμενον πιθανόν), *docere* and *delectare* are merely steps in a sort of geometrical progression, as Baldwin (2, 66) puts it, leading up to *flectere*; the one, *docere*, a necessary groundwork (*necessitatis*), the second, *delectare*, of use for the purpose of interesting (*suauitatis*), the third, *flectere*, the culminating point whose function is to win (*uictoriae*). The mutual dependence, yet individuality, of these offices is brought out even more clearly in the next chapter. [Tr.]

29. But because of those whom by reason of their prejudice truth does not satisfy if it is put in any other way than that whereby the speaker's words also are attractive, no small place has been given in oratory even to the art of pleasing. And still, when this is added, it is not enough for hardened natures who reap no profit from having understood and having enjoyed the instructor's speech. For what do these two things avail a person who both owns the truth and praises eloquence, but who does not give his assent, although it is for this alone that the speaker in an argument gives close attention to the matter which he is treating?¹⁵ For if the matters taught are such that knowledge of and belief in them are sufficient, agreement with them is nothing more than confessing their truth.¹⁶ But when a line of action is the matter of instruction, and that this be followed is the reason for the instruction, in vain is conviction that the words are true, in vain is the style of the speech pleasing, if action does not follow upon understanding. It is necessary, therefore, that the sacred orator, when urging that something be done, should not only teach in order to instruct, and please in order to hold, but also move in order to win. For indeed, it is only by the heights of eloquence that that man is to be moved to agreement who has not been brought to it by truth, though demonstrated to his own acknowledgment, even when joined with a charming style.¹⁷

¹⁵A restatement of the conclusion reached in chapter 12; but it is by such repetitions that Augustine hopes to drive home his point. *Flectere*, persuasion, is the final and most important stage in the "rhetorical progression"; it is the end of oratory: cf. Arist. Rhet. 1, 1, 1354a: αἱ γὰρ πίστευς ἔντεχνόν ἐστι μόνον, τὰ δ' ἄλλα προσθήχαι. Cic. De Inuent. 1, 5, 6: officium autem eius facultatis [oratoriae] uidetur esse dicere apposite ad persuasionem; finis persuadere dictione; De Orat. 1, 61, 260; *ibid.* 1, 31, 138: primum oratoris officium esse dicere ad persuadendum accommodare; *ibid.* 1, 49, 213: eum puto esse [oratorem], qui et uerbis ad audiendum iucundis et sententiis ad probandum accommodatis uti possit. [Tr.]

¹⁶*Docere* may at times end with itself; i.e., to inculcate a truth may be the end of persuasion. Generally, however, *action* is the end of persuasion, and then not only *docere* and *delectare*, but also *flectere* must be used if the speaker expects *victoria*. Augustine returns again in chapter 25 to *docere* as an end. [Tr.]

¹⁷A final statement of the importance of *flectere*. A. finds the climax of his chapter in the culminating point of the *officia*. [Tr.]

30. And for the sake of this charm,¹⁸ such an amount of trouble has been taken by men, that not only must we not follow, but even we must shun and detest the many abominably wicked and shameful deeds which are urged in this most elegant way by the evil and unjust, not to gain assent for them, but that they may be read eagerly for the mere sake of the pleasure in them. But may God keep from the Church what the prophet Jeremias relates of the synagogue, saying: *Fearful and dreadful things have been done in the land. The prophets prophesied falsehoods, and the priests clapped their hands; and my people loved such things: and what will you do in the future?* O eloquence, so much the more terrible as it is so unadorned; and as it is so genuine, so much the more powerful! O truly, an axe hewing the rock! For it was in this similitude that God Himself through this same prophet spoke of His own word, which He has uttered through the holy prophets. Far be it, then, far be it from us, that priests should applaud evil-speakers, and that the people of God should be pleased thereat! Far be such great madness from us, I say, for what shall we do in the future!¹⁹ And assuredly let what is said be less understood, less pleasing, less moving, but still let it be said; and let righteousness, not evil, gain a willing hearing!²⁰ But this undoubtedly would not be possible unless it possess charm.

¹⁸Having explained the right order of "rhetorical progression," Augustine, in this chapter, forces his reader to conclude for himself the false basis of sophistic teaching, even from the standpoint of art, since contrary to the theory just explained, the principal aim of the Sophists, by their own acknowledgment, is to please. *Delectare*, he insists, is only the middle stage; it cannot be made the end. This is proved here, and is concluded with finality in chapter 25. [Tr.]

¹⁹In itself, because it is false, and has brought rhetoric into ill-repute, Sophistic deserves to be repudiated. Still, where it alone is concerned, A.'s mode of attack is quiet, and at times even indirect. Here, however, since the danger of its influence upon the sacred orator is felt, the writer in his indignation falls into the grand style. [Tr.]

²⁰Augustine is claiming for the sacred orator a lower place than that of the Sophist in popular favor, if that must be, but a definite place, where truth may gain a willing hearing over falsehood. He sees the necessity of the concession that to make this hearing a willing one, the eloquence of the Church must also use, to a moderate degree, the quality of *delectatio*. [Tr.]

31. But in a strong people,²¹ such as are spoken of by God—*I will praise thee in a strong people*—that charm of style is not pleasing in which, though indeed falsehood is not involved, still, slight and unimportant truths are adorned with a foamy redundancy of expression, such as even great and enduring matters would not fittingly and worthily be adorned with. There is such an instance in one of the letters of the blessed Cyprian, which, I think, so fell out, or was thus done on purpose, in order that succeeding ages might know from what redundancy the soundness of the Christian teaching has recalled his style, and to what more dignified and reticent eloquence it has restricted him; which is such in his succeeding letters that he is safely admired, scrupulously copied, but with difficulty imitated. So he says in a certain passage: “Let us seek for that spot; the neighboring solitudes offer a retreat, where, as the wandering tendrils of the vine-shoots with overhanging interlacings creep along the trellis supports, the covering leaves have formed an arbor of vines.” This is certainly expressed with marvelously flowing exuberance of language, but because of its excessive profuseness, it is not pleasing to the serious reader. However, those who admire this style think that of a certainty those who do not express themselves after this manner, but rather keep their eloquence within bounds, cannot thus be eloquent, and not that they avoid such language by preference. For this reason, this holy man shows that he *can* thus express himself, since he has done so in this place, but that he does not *wish* to do so, for nowhere does he do so afterward.

32. And so, that orator of ours, in speaking of justice, holiness, and a good life, the subjects on which alone he should speak, strives, in as far as possible, when speaking on such subjects, to make his words understood, enjoyed, and persuasive; and this he should not doubt but that he can

²¹A caution, in consequence of the concession just granted. Even where legitimately used, *i.e.*, where charm is not employed to cloak falsehood, *delectatio* must in the speech of an ecclesiastic be used *in moderation*. The excess in St. Cyprian’s Epistle, quoted below, not only proves this point, but also shows that ecclesiastics have equal ability with Sophists in the use of ornament, though because of their good taste, they generally prefer a restrained diction. [Tr.]

do if it is possible, and in so far as it is possible, more through the piety of his prayers than through his orator’s skill, so that by praying for himself and for those whom he is going to address, he is a petitioner before a speaker.²² At the very time, then, when he is going to preach, before he loosens his tongue to speak, he should lift up his thirsting soul to God, in order to give forth what he will drink in, and to pour out what he will be filled with. For although on every topic which can be treated according to faith and love, there is much that may be said, and many ways in which it may be said by those versed therein, who knows either what is best for us on a special occasion to say, or what is best that others should hear from us, if it be not He who sees the hearts of all?²³ And who can make us say what we ought, and in the manner we ought to say it, if not He in whose hands are both ourselves and our words? And for this reason the one who would both know and teach should learn, of course, all that he has to teach, and should acquire such skill in speaking as becomes an ecclesiastic; but indeed at the time of the sermon itself he should consider that admonition rather as befitting a good disposition, which the Lord utters: *Take no thought how or what to speak: for it shall be given you in that hour what to speak. For it is not you that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that*

²²This is the great mark of distinction between pagan and Christian orator. As it is developed in the remainder of this chapter, it shows the Saint’s intense realization of, and faith in the existence and power of the supernatural. Quite in keeping with his style, however, Augustine does not disdain a play on words even here, though his purpose in doing so—to mark more clearly his antithesis—is plainly evident. Note paragonism coupled with chiasmus in *pietate magis orationum, quam oratorum facultate*, and paronomasia in *sit orator antequam doctor*. This lightness of treatment, because of its restraint, and because of the writer’s evident sincerity and earnestness, does not detract from the authority of the explanation. [Tr.]

²³The ecclesiastical orator must prepare himself with as great thoroughness as the pagan orator, but he must pass beyond the pagan in his belief that in reality all his power comes from God. Cicero himself, however, also advocates self-diffidence, as an essential to success in speaking. His lines are interesting as proving that humility is a natural, as well as a supernatural virtue. Cicero realizes that man cannot rely upon himself; Augustine knows that man not only cannot rely upon himself, but must rely wholly upon God. Cf. *De Orat.* 1, 26, 119. [Tr.]

speakes in you. And so, if the Holy Spirit speaks in those who are given over to persecution for the sake of Christ, why will He not do so also in those who give Christ to their disciples?

33. But if any one says there is no need to lay down rules as to what and how men should teach, since it is the Holy Spirit who forms the teacher, he can say likewise that we do not need to pray, since the Lord says: *Your Father knoweth what is needful for you, before you ask Him,* or that the Apostle Paul ought not to have given instructions to Timothy and to Titus as to what or how to instruct others. Nay, he who has been given the role of teacher in the Church ought to have before his eyes three of the Apostle's Epistles. In the first Epistle to Timothy, do we not read: *These things announce, and teach,* that is the things which he explained above? Do we not read there too: *An ancient man rebuke not, but entreat him as a father?* In the Second Epistle does he not say: *Hold the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me?* And does he not say to him in the same place: *Carefully labor to present thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightfully handling the word of truth?* There too is this: *Preach the word: be instant in season, out of season: reprove, entreat, rebuke in all patience and doctrine.* And so too to Titus, does he not say that a bishop ought to be persevering *in that faithful word which is according to doctrine, that he may be able in sound doctrine to convince the gainsayers?* There again he says: *But speak thou the things that become sound doctrine, that the aged men are sober,* and so on. There, too, we read: *These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee. Admonish them to be subject to princes and powers.* When then should we think? Can it be that the Apostle holds contrary opinions to himself, since though he says that teachers are formed by the action of the Holy Spirit, he himself gives others instructions as to what and how they should teach? Or are we to understand that even with the outpourings of the Holy Spirit, man's help too is not to be dispensed with in the instructing of even the instructors themselves, and still, *neither he that planteth is anything, nor he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase?* And so it is that

though, too, holy men themselves should help, or even the holy Angels should lend their aid, no one learns aright the things which pertain to life with God, if he becomes not through God, docile to God, to whom it is said in the Psalms: *Teach me to do thy will, for Thou art my God.*²⁴ And therefore the Apostle says the like also to the same Timothy, speaking certainly as the master to his disciple: *But continue thou in those things which thou hast learned, and which have been committed to thee: knowing of whom thou hast learned them.* For as the medicine of the body, which is administered to men by men is of no avail except to those to whom God restores health, since He can cure even without it, though without Him, it cannot, and yet it is administered—and if this be done in kindness, it is counted among the works of mercy or charity—so, also, aids to learning, when given by men, are of help to the soul when God makes them of help, who could have given his Gospel to man even without man's agency or help.

34. He, therefore, who strives in speaking, to convince of what is good, since he is concerned with the threefold aim, viz., instructing, pleasing, and persuading, should pray and labor, as we have said above, to make himself understood, enjoyed, and persuasive. And when he accomplishes this rightly and fitly, he is not unworthily called eloquent, even though the agreement of his hearer does not follow him. For it is to these three points, viz., instructing, pleasing, and persuading, that the great authority on Roman eloquence²⁵ himself seems to wish to apply those other three points²⁶ in that place where he has

²⁴St. Augustine has the power of expressing truths of the deepest faith and spiritual penetration with such simplicity that the average reader is liable to see only the surface, and to miss the depth of meaning hidden within. This short sentence possesses the very key to all asceticism. [Tr.]

²⁵The great authority on Roman eloquence is Cicero. [Ed.]

²⁶Augustine's ingenious linking of Cicero's separate explanations of the styles and the offices makes a statement even more telling than Cicero's own expression of the relation between the two: cf. *Orat.* 21, 69: *erit igitur eloquens . . . is qui in foro causisque ciuilibus ita dicet, ut probet, ut delectet, ut flectat . . . sed quot officia oratoris, tot sunt genera dicendi: subtile in probando, modicum in delectando, uehemens in flectendo.* Thus we have developed the three traditional styles: the plain (*genus submissum*), the middle (*genus*

said, "He therefore will be eloquent, who can speak in a subdued manner on unimportant matters, in a moderate style on things of greater importance, and in a grand style on great matters," as if he would add also those other three points given above, and would express one and the same idea, thus: "He, therefore, will be eloquent who, in order to instruct, can speak in a subdued manner on unimportant matters; in order to please, in a moderate style on things of greater importance; and in order to persuade, in a grand style on great subjects."

35. Now our authority could have illustrated these three points, as explained by him, in legal cases; but he could not have done so here, i.e., in the instance of ecclesiastical questions, the type with which that form of discourse is concerned which we wish to describe. For in the former, those matters can be called unimportant where money questions are concerned; those are great

temperatum, or moderatum), the grand (*genus grande, or subline*). As the *officia oratoris* were found traceable to the Peripatetic School, so the styles grow out of Aristotle's conception of the two-fold aspect of persuasion, since as Cicero and Augustine show, the styles are merely an outflowing from the offices. Their history can quickly be summarized. Following the distinction of his master, Theophrastus took a step nearer to the definition of styles by applying Aristotle's division of *πίστεις* to language, speaking of *λόγος πρὸς τὰ πράγματα* and *λόγος πρὸς τοὺς ἀχρωμένους* (cf. fragment cited by Ammonius in *Aristotelis De Interpretatione Comm.* 65, 31). Of these parts the Stoics in the succeeding centuries, when they gained wide-spread influence, developed only the dialectical, and formulated a stylistic doctrine corresponding to pragmatic argument. Meanwhile, the Peripatetic School held to Aristotle's division of *πίστεις*, and in consequence must also early have developed a doctrine of style in accordance with it, though the actual record of this is not preserved. In *De Inventione*, we find the first record of a tacit or implied recognition of two styles corresponding to Aristotle's two aspects of argument. It must be recognized, however, that there is a long break in the tradition. Cicero merely echoes what was the traditional stylistic theory of his day. The same is, of course, true of the definition of the styles found in *Ad Her.* 4, 8, 11 (*sunt igitur tria genera, quae genera nos figuras appellamus, in quibus omnis oratio non vitiosa consumitur: unam grauem, alteram modiocrem, tertiam extenuatam uocamus*). This latter, however, is the earliest extant occurrence of the threefold division of style. Our next mention of the three styles is found in *De Orat.* 3, 45, 177; 3, 52, 199; 3, 55, 212. These references are mere allusions. Cicero gives his first clear explanation of the three styles and their development in *Orat.* 21, 69, quoted above. [Tr.]

where it is a question of the welfare and life of man; but where neither of these is concerned, and it is not a matter of pleading or judging, but merely of pleasing the listener, such questions are midway between the two, and for that reason are called "middling," that is "moderate." For "moderate" gets its name from *modus*, "measure," so we do not apply the term properly, but misuse it, when we say "moderate" for "small." However, in these discourses of ours, since indeed everything, especially all which we address to the people from our high position, we must direct to man's welfare—and that not his temporal but his eternal welfare—where, besides, we must warn against eternal destruction, all that we say is of great importance, even to the extent that even money matters themselves, whether in regard to gain or loss, when put forth by the ecclesiastical teacher ought not seem of small importance, let the amount be great or little. For the matter of justice is not of small importance, and this surely we must safeguard even as regards a small amount of money, since the Lord says: *He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in that which is greater*. And so a little thing is a little thing, but to be faithful in a little thing is a great thing. For as it is the nature of a circle that all the lines drawn from a point in the middle to the circumference are equal, and this principle is the same in a large disk and in a small coin, so when justice is administered even in a small matter, the greatness of justice is not diminished.

36. Therefore, when the Apostle spoke of worldly trials (and with what, truly, were these concerned unless with money matters?), he said: *Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to be judged before the unjust, and not before the saints? Know you not that the saints shall judge this world? And if the world shall be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know you not that we shall judge angels, not to speak of things of this world? If therefore you have judgments of things pertaining to this world, set them to judge, who are the most despised in the Church. I speak to your shame. Is it so that there is not among you one wise man, that is able to judge between his brethren? But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before unbelievers. Already indeed there*

is plainly a fault among you, that you have lawsuits one with another. Why do you not rather suffer wrong? Why do you not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded? But you do wrong and defraud, and that to your brethren. Know you not that the unjust shall not possess the kingdom of God? Why is it that the Apostle is so indignant, that he so upbraids, so reproaches, so rebukes, so threatens? Why is it that he calls the emotion of his soul to witness, with such numerous and harsh expressions? Why is it, finally, that he speaks in such a lofty strain on trivial matters? Is it that mere worldly questions deserved so much from him? Far from it! But he does so because of justice, charity, and righteousness, which no one in a sane mind can doubt but are great, even in things however insignificant.

37. Certainly, if we were to advise men how they ought to plead such worldly cases before ecclesiastical judges either for themselves or for their friends, we should be right in advising them to plead in a subdued manner, as of matters of small importance. But since it is a question of the eloquence of one whom we wish to be a teacher of those matters through which we are freed from eternal pains and brought to eternal happiness, it makes no difference where such things are treated, whether before the people or privately, whether with one person or with more, whether with friends or with enemies, whether in an unbroken speech or in a conversation, whether in tracts or in books, whether in letters, long or short, they are great; except perhaps that because a cup of cold water is a very little and unimportant thing, so what the Lord says is very little and unimportant, viz., that whosoever shall give one to his disciple shall not lose his reward; or, indeed, that when a preacher in the Church develops a sermon from this text, he ought to consider that he is talking on something of little weight, and so should express himself not in the moderate or in the grand style, but in the subdued style. It is not true that when we chance to speak to the people on this text, and God's Presence is with us so that we speak not unfittingly, that a kind of a flame darts forth, as it were, from that cold water, which inflames men's cold hearts to the accomplishment of works of mercy, through the hope of heavenly reward?

38. And still, although our teacher is necessarily the spokesman of great subjects, he need not necessarily always speak in the grand style, but in a subdued manner when something is being explained,²⁷ moderately when a thing is being criticized or commended,²⁸ but when something ought to be done, and we are speaking to those who ought to do it, although they do not wish to, then the matter which is an important one, should be stated in the grand style, and in a manner adapted to move their hearts.²⁹ But sometimes one and the same great matter is treated in a subdued way, if information is given; moderately, if commendation is made; and in the grand style, if adverse opinion is forced to change.³⁰ For what is greater than God Himself? But is that a reason why He should not be studied? Or should one who teaches about the unity of the Trinity use other than subdued language if he wishes to make a matter difficult of distinction understood, in as far as it is possible? In such a case, are embellishments demanded rather than proofs? Is the listener to be persuaded to do something, and not rather to be instructed so as to learn something? But when God is being praised either for Himself

²⁷As an example of the plain style, Auct. ad Her. gives a *narratio*, marked by a free, unconstrained, conversational tone; Cicero gives *Pro Caccina*, a piece of close reasoning; Augustine (Contr. Crese. 1, 16, 20) cites St. Paul on circumcision, or the distinction between the law and grace, and (De Doctr. 4, 20, 39) the 3rd and 4th chapters of the Epistle to the Galatians, all strictly dialectical. These models represent the two aspects of *docere* and the plain style: (1) its familiar, conversational side, and (2) its argumentative side: both, originally connoted in the Greek term *διαλέγεσθαι*. [Tr.]

²⁸Auct. ad Her. gives as example of the middle style, what seems to correspond to a *rationis confirmatio*, i.e., the elaboration of a proof; Cicero, the ornamental *De Manilia Lege*, with its praise of Pompey; Augustine, Cyprian's praise of virginity. This style is that most fitting for the panegyric. It depends on sound and rhythm for much of its pleasing effect. [Tr.]

²⁹To exemplify the grand style a peroration, highly figurative and elaborate, is given by Auct. ad Her.; the impassioned *Pro Rabirio* by Cicero; and 2 Cor. 6, 2-11 (ecce nunc tempus acceptabile, etc.) by Augustine. [Tr.]

³⁰The Auct. ad Her. (4, 8, 11ff.) exemplifies this by choosing a *narratio*, a *rationis confirmatio* and a *peroratio* to illustrate the different styles. All might belong to a single speech. Augustine proves the same possibility by showing, below, that the mysteries of God must be treated in the plain style, the praise of God in the middle style, the overthrowing of idols for the true worship of God, in the grand style. [Tr.]

or for His works, what a glory of beautiful and splendid language wells forth for one who can go to the very lengths of praise of Him whom no one fittingly praises, but whom no one fails to praise in one way or another. But if He be not worshipped, or if with Him or even before Him idols be worshipped, either demons or some other creature, the grievousness of this offense, and the exhortation to men to be converted from it, ought certainly be expressed in the grand style.

39. To speak more explicitly, we have an example of the subdued style in the Apostle Paul,³¹ where he says: *Tell me, you that desire to be under the law, have you not heard the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, and the other by a freewoman. But he indeed who was of the bondwoman, was born according to the flesh: but he of the freewoman, was by promise. Which things are said by an allegory. For these are the two testaments. The one from Mount Sinai, engendering to bondage; which is Agar. For Sinai is a mountain in Arabia, which hath affinity to that Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But that Jerusalem, which is above, is free: which is our mother.* So too, where he reasons, saying: *Brethren (I speak after the manner of a man) yet a man's testament, if it be confirmed, no one rendereth void, nor addeth to it. To Abraham were the promises made, and to his seed. He saith not, "And to his seeds," as to many, but as to one, "And to thy seed," which is Christ. Now this I say, that the testament which was confirmed by God, the law which was made after four hundred and thirty years, doth not weaken, to make the promises of no effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise. But God gave it to Abraham by promise.* And because it might occur to the mind of the listener,

³¹St. Augustine chooses as examples of the plain style, first, a passage which, while being didactic, shows a certain amount of attractiveness through its incorporation of a narrative element—an allegory; next, a selection purely dialectical in its use of argument and refutation. This choice is in strict accordance with the conventional rhetorical theory, as explained above. The best classical authorities bear witness to the plain style as being the instrument of both the ordinary conversational narrative, and of strict logical demonstration. [Tr.]

“But why, therefore, was the law given if there is no inheritance of the law?” he put this objection to himself, as if raising a question: *What then was the law?* Then he answered: *It was set for the sake of transgression, until the seed should come, to whom he made the promise, being ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator is not of one: but God is one.* And here arose an objection, which he put to himself: *Was the law then against the promises of God?* And he answered, *God forbid,* and gave his reason, saying: *For if there has been a law given which could give life, verily justice should have been by the law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by the faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe—or something to that effect.* It belongs, therefore, to the duty of the teacher not only to make clear obscure matters, and to solve the difficulties in question, but also while this is being done, to anticipate other questions, which perchance may come up, so that our words may not be disproved or refuted by them, provided of course that the solution itself, also, of these occur along with them, lest we bring up what we cannot remove. On the other hand, it happens sometimes in the handling and solving of certain questions coming out of a first question, and of others coming out of these, that the strain of reasoning is drawn out to such an extent, that unless the disputant's memory be very strong and vigorous, he is not able to go back to the original question. But it is a very good thing to answer whatever objection can be raised, as it occurs, for fear lest it occur at a time when there will be no one to answer it, or lest it occur to someone present indeed, but silent, and he go away unhelped.

40. But in the following words from the Apostle we have an example of the moderate style: *An ancient man rebuke not, but entreat him as a father: young men, as brethren: old women, as mothers: young women, as sisters.* And in these words: *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercy of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, pleasing unto God.* And almost the whole passage containing this exhortation is in the moderate style, but it is particularly fine in those places where, as with debts and pay-

ments, like things stand out with like, thus:³² *And having different gifts, according to the grace that is given us, either prophecy, to be used according to the rules of faith, or ministry in ministering; or he that teacheth, in doctrine; he that exhorteth, in exhorting; he that giveth, with simplicity; he that ruleth, with carefulness; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be without dissimulation, hating that which is evil, cleaving to that which is good. Loving one another with the charity of brotherhood, with honor preventing one another. In carefulness, not slothful. In spirit fervent. Serving the Lord. Rejoicing in hope. Patient in tribulation. Instant in prayer. Communicating to the necessities of the saints. Pursuing hospitality. Bless them that persecute you: bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that rejoice: weep with them that weep. Being of one mind one toward another.* And how beautifully is all this, flowing forth as it does, brought to a conclusion in a period of two *membra*: *Not minding high things, but consenting to the humble.* And a little below: *Persevering in this, render to all men their dues. Tribute, to whom tribute is due: custom, to whom custom: fear, to whom fear: honor to whom honor.* And this, flowing forth in *membra*, likewise is concluded by a period made up of two *membra*: *Owe no man anything, but to love one another.* And a little afterward: *The night is passed, and the day is at hand. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day: not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and impurities, not in contention and envy: But put you on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh in its concupiscences.* If this were written: “And provision for the flesh in its concupiscences, make not,” it would doubtless please the ear with a more

³²Parallelism, particularly antithetical, and often emphasized by similar endings in clauses, amounting at times to rhymes (homoioteleuton), is a most important feature in the middle style, which differs from the grand style in its use of *figurae uerborum* (οχήματα λέξεως) rather than of *figurae sententiarum* (οχήματα διανοίας), and in the importance which it attaches to sound and rhythm rather than to vehemence of feeling and emotion. It traces its source to Gorgias and the first Sophists; it reached perfection in Isocrates: cf. *Orat.* 12, 38. [Tr.]

rhythmic close, but the stricter translator has preferred to keep even the exact word order. How this sounds in Greek,³³ the language in which the Apostle spoke, I leave to those to explain who are more versed in that tongue even to these technicalities; but to me, it seems that the word order—and it is the same as in our translations—does not even there run musically.

41. We must confess, certainly, that our writers are faulty in that elegance of style marked by rhythmic closings.³⁴ Whether this is the fault of translators, or, as I rather believe, they themselves purposely avoided such claptraps, I dare not say, since I confess I do not know. But this I do know, that if some one who understands this rhythm, arrange the endings of these writings in accordance with the law of the said rhythms, as can easily be done by replacing certain words by others of the same meaning, or by changing the existing order of words, he will recognize that none of those points which he has learned to consider important in the schools of the grammarians or rhetoricians are missing in these divinely inspired authors; and he will find many kinds of expressions of great beauty—beautiful indeed also in our own language, but especially so in theirs, none of which are to be found in that literature of which they are so vain. But care must be taken not to detract from the weight of the divine and authoritative utterances, while adding rhythm to

³³Augustine confesses to his youthful abhorrence of Greek (cf. *Conf.* 1, 14, 23), and admits his deficiency in it even in his maturer years. It is not from the standpoint of the professional scholar, therefore, that he makes his next assertion; he speaks merely as one who ventures his opinion, dictated by the general norm of taste. On the whole, however, it should be noted that Augustine’s knowledge of Greek was not inconsiderable: cf. Angus, S., *The Sources of the First Ten Books of the De Civitate Dei of St. Augustine* (Princeton, 1906), 236 ff.; De Labriolle 528. [Tr.]

³⁴Augustine’s criticism of Paul’s rhythm in the preceding paragraph, and his admission here and below of the deficiency of the inspired writers in the use of clausulae, even though rhythm, and especially cadences form such an important element of the middle style, is an indirect answer to sophisticated criticism of Christian style. A. has shown above, Paul’s artistry in the use of words, but he desires to prove that in Paul as in all the inspired writers, verbal beauty is not of paramount importance as it is in the Sophists, but that in the Christian writer, the ornaments of the middle style, when they occur, are always made subservient to the matter they embellish. [Tr.]

them.³⁵ For that musical training in which rhythm is thoroughly learned is so far from being lacking in our Prophets that the learned Jerome even makes mention of the meters used by some, in the Hebrew only however, for in order to keep the true meaning of the words he has not translated them metrically. But as for myself, to speak of my own tastes—better known to me, of course, than to others, and than those of others—although in my own language, as far as I think it reasonable, I do not neglect these rhythmic endings, still, in our authors I am better pleased to find them used very rarely.

42. The grand style of speaking³⁶ differs from this moderate style especially in this that it is not so much adorned by ornate expressions, as rendered passionate by the heart's emotions. For it uses, indeed, almost all of the ornaments of the other, but if it does not have them at hand, it does not seek them out. It is borne on, in fact, by its own vehemence, and catches up any beauty of style, which may occur, through the very force of the matter, but it does not put on any such through care of ornament. It is enough for its purpose, not that fitting terms be chosen with

³⁵Cicero's ideal is much the same, but expressed from the standpoint of one claiming the necessity of rhythm. He holds that that rhythm is best which is so unobtrusive as not to be noticed by the listener. Weighty matter makes this all the more possible. The audience is pleased by the beauty of the *thought* in the words, not realizing that technique has a great part to play in the accomplishment of the effect: cf. *Orat.* 58, 197. [Tr.]

³⁶The grand style and the temperate spring from the same source, the λόγος πρὸς τοὺς ἀχρωμένους of Theophrastus, representing rhetoric proper vs. λόγος πρὸς τὰ πράγματα, dialectic. It is of importance to distinguish between the two styles properly called rhetorical. The middle style is characterized by the ornaments of figures of words (οἰήματα λέξεως), the grand by the emotion of figures of thought (οἰήματα διανοίας). It was when these figures were themselves definitely distinguished that these two styles found their proper differentiation. The figures of words belong particularly to the middle style because they most readily bring about its end, *delectare*, the office as seen above, developed from Aristotle's conception of the personal character of the speaker (ἦθος) as a means of persuasion; the figures of thought belong particularly to the grand style as being most adapted to its end, *flectere*, that office conceived of by Aristotle as especially dealing with the emotions (πάθη). These traditional distinctions, Cicero takes over, explaining in *Orat.* 37, 128, the character of the two styles, which may together be called eloquence in the true sense of the word. [Tr.]

thought of the expression, but that they be governed by the ardor of the heart. For if a brave man be armed with weapons adorned with gold and jewels, being fully intent on battle, he accomplishes indeed what he does with these very arms, not because they are precious, but because they are arms; and still he himself is the same, and very formidable even when but anger furnishes a weapon for him at his seeking.³⁷ The Apostle urges that for the sake of the ministry of the Gospel all the evils of this life be suffered through the help of the consolation accompanying God's gifts. Great is the theme, and grandly it is treated, though still not without ornaments of style. *Behold says he now is the acceptable time; behold now is the day of salvation. Giving no offense to any man, that our ministry be not blamed. But in all things commending ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in tribulations, in necessities, in trials, in stripes, in prisons, in seditions, in labors, in watchings, in fastings, in chastity, in knowledge, in long-suffering, in kindness, in the Holy Ghost, in charity unfeigned, in the word of truth, in the power of God; by the armor of justice on the right hand and on the left; by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report; as deceivers and yet true; as unknown, and yet known; as dying and behold we live; as chastised, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as needy, yet enriching many; as having nothing, yet possessing all things. Behold him still on fire: Our mouth is open to you, O ye Corinthians, our heart is enlarged,* and so on, but it would take long to pursue it further.

43. And so, too, he urges upon the Romans that the sufferings of this world be overcome by charity, with certain hope in the help of God. His exhortation is in the grand style, and at the same

³⁷To prove that the essential of the grand style is emotional appeal, whether made with the help of ornaments of speech or not, A. proceeds to give three examples of this style, all of which are grand by reason of the emotion with which they throb, but all of which attain this end by different means: the first from 2 Cor. 6, 2–11, making use of figures of thought; the second from Rom. 8, 28–39, using the lesser ornaments, figures of words, but raising them above mere floridness of style by the ardor with which they are expressed; the third from Gal. 4, 10–20, wanting in embellishments, but grand by reason of its moving force. [Tr.]

time figurative. We know he says that to them that love God, all things work together unto good, to such as, according to His purpose, are called. For whom He foreknew, he also predestinated to be made conformable to the image of His Son; that He might be the Firstborn among many brethren. And whom He predestinated, them He also called. And whom he called, them He also justified. And whom He justified, them He also glorified. What shall we say then to these things? If God be for us, who is against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, hath He not also, with Him, given us all things? Who shall accuse against the elect of God? God that justifieth? Who is he that shall condemn? Jesus Christ that died, but more, that is risen again; who is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us? Who then shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation? or distress? or persecution? or famine? or nakedness? or danger? or the sword? As it is written: “For thy sake we are put to death all the day long. We are counted sheep for the slaughter.” But in all these things we overcome, because of Him that hath loved us. For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor might nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Jesus Christ our Lord.

44. And in writing to the Galatians,³⁸ although the whole Epistle is written in the subdued style, except at the very end where the moderate style is used, nevertheless he inserts one passage of such emotion, that destitute as it is of such ornament as we see in the selection just quoted, still it could not but be expressed in the grand style.³⁹ *You observe days he says and months, and years, and times. I am afraid of you, lest perhaps I have labored in vain for you. Be ye as I, because I also am as you: brethren, I beseech you: you have not injured me at all. And you know, how through infirmity of the flesh, I preached the Gospel unto*

³⁸This Epistle, as a whole, exemplifies the blending of the three styles in one composition, though with the predominance of one—the ideal in writing or speaking, which Augustine will treat of in chapters 22, 23, and 26. [Tr.]

³⁹An example of the unadorned grand style. The emotion of the writer is sufficient in itself without ornaments, to lift the listener to the higher levels of grandeur of speech. [Tr.]

you heretofore: and your temptation in my flesh, you despised not, nor rejected: but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus. Where then is your blessedness? For I bear you witness, that if it could be done, you would have plucked out your own eyes, and would have given them to me. Am I then become your enemy, because I tell you the truth? They are zealous in your regard not well: but they would exclude you, that you might be zealous for them. But to be zealous in good always, is good: and not only when I am present with you. My little children, of whom I am in labor again, until Christ be formed in you. And I would willingly be present with you now, and change my voice: because I am ashamed for you. Here have we examples of antithesis, or climax, or the resonance of *caesa* and *membra* or periods? And yet, notwithstanding, there is no flagging in the deep emotion with which we feel that the language of the passage is aglow.

45. But these writings of the Apostle, though clear, are nevertheless also deep, and are so written and handed down, that they not only require to be read and heard, but also to be explained, if anyone, not content with superficial knowledge of them, inquire also into their depths. Therefore, let us examine these kinds of style in the writings of those men who through their reading of the Scriptures have attained knowledge of the divine and saving truths, and have ministered it unto the Church. The blessed Cyprian uses the subdued style of speech in his book on the Sacrament of the chalice. For there he answers the question as to whether the chalice of the Lord should contain water only, or water mixed with wine. But we must give a passage therefrom by way of illustration. After the introduction, therefore, to his letter, already beginning his answer to the question proposed, he says: “But you should know that we have been taught in offering the chalice, to observe the tradition of the Lord, and not to do anything other than what the Lord first did for us, namely, to offer water mixed with wine in the chalice which is offered in commemoration of Him. For since Christ says, *I am the true vine*, the Blood of Christ is certainly not water, but wine; and so His Blood, by which we are redeemed and vivified, cannot possibly be held to be in the chalice when the chalice does not contain wine,

for in the wine is Christ's Blood manifested as foretold by the mystical testimony of all the Scriptures. For we find in the book of Genesis in regard to the sacrament, that Noe has foreshadowed it and has stood out as a type of our Lord's Passion, in that he drank wine and was inebriated therewith, and that in his own house he lay uncovered, with limbs bare; and that this nakedness of his father was exposed by his second son, but that by his elder and his younger it was covered up—but there is no need to carry the account further, since it is sufficient to explain this one point, that Noe, showing himself a type of the future reality, drank not water, but wine, and thus set forth a figure of our Lord's Passion. In like manner we see the sacrament of the Lord prefigured in the priest Melchisedech, according to what Holy Scripture testifies in these words: *But Melchisedech, the King of Salem, brought forth bread and wine. For he was the priest of the most high God, and he blessed Abraham.* And that Melchisedech was a figure of Christ, is declared in the Psalms, by the Holy Spirit, where in the person of the Father addressing the Son, He says: *Before the day star I begot Thee. Thou art a priest forever according to the order of Melchisedech.*" This and the remainder of the letter maintained the subdued style of speech, as is easy for readers to ascertain.

46. St. Ambrose, too, though treating a subject of great importance, to prove that the Holy Spirit is equal to the Father and the Son, uses, nonetheless, the subdued style, for the matter in hand calls not for embellishment in words, nor for the stirring of the emotions to move hearts, but for the proof of facts. And so, among other things in the introduction to this work he says: "Gedeon, being troubled when he heard through the oracle of God that though thousands of people would fail, still through one man God would save his people from the enemy, took a goat's kid, and in accordance with the instruction of the angel, placed the flesh thereof with unleavened bread upon a rock, and sprinkled them with broth; and as soon as the angel of God touched them with the tip of the rod which he carried, a flame burst forth from the rock, and thus was consumed the sacrifice which was offered. By this sign it seems to be indicated that the rock was a type of Christ,

for it is written: *They drank of the rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ.* This of course refers not to His Divinity, but to His Flesh which waters the hearts of His thirsting people with the ever-flowing tide of His Blood. It was therefore declared mystically that the Lord Jesus in His Flesh would be crucified and would wash away the sins of the whole world, and not only the sinful deeds, but also the evil desires of their hearts. For the flesh of the kid refers to sinful deeds; the broth to the allurements of the passions, as it is written: *For the people gave way to the worst passions, saying:— 'Who will feed us with flesh?'* and so the angel stretching forth his rod and touching the rock from which a flame came forth, signified that the Flesh of the Lord, filled with the Holy Spirit, would burn away all the sins of man's condition. And so it is that the Lord says: *I am come to cast fire on the earth,*" and so on, wherein he particularly devotes himself to setting forth and proving the matter.

47. The well-known encomium of virginity in Cyprian is an example of the moderate style: "Now our discourse directs itself to the virgins, who as their honor is higher, are therefore our greater care. They are the flower of the tree of the Church, the beauty and ornament of spiritual grace, its bright natural virtue: of its praise and honor, a work pure and untarnished, the image of God, answering to the sanctity of the Lord, the brighter portion of the flock of Christ. The glorious fruitfulness of their Mother the Church rejoices through them, and in them richly flowers; and in proportion as glorious virginity adds to her numbers, in so much does the Mother's joy increase." And in another place, at the end of the letter, he says: "*As we have borne the image of the earthly, let us bear also the image of the heavenly.* This image does virginity bear, righteousness bears it, holiness bears it, and truth; they bear it who are mindful of God's law, who observe justice with the fear of God, who are firm in faith, humble in fear, strong in every suffering, meek in sustaining injuries, ready to grant mercy, of one mind and heart in brotherly concord. And each one of these things, O holy virgins, ought you to keep, to love, to fulfill, for you with hearts free for God and for Christ, lead the way through your greater and better part, to the

Lord to whom you have dedicated yourselves. You who are advanced in years, be the teachers of the younger; you who are younger, minister to the older, and be an inspiration to those of your own age; urge on one another by mutual encouragement; rouse one another to glory by rivaling each other in acts of virtue; endure valiantly, proceed in the spiritual life, attain your goal gloriously; only, be mindful of us then when your virginity will begin to be in honor.”

48. Ambrose also uses the moderate, adorned style of speech when, as though in illustration, he holds up to virgins who have made their profession a model for their imitation. He says: “She was a virgin, not only in appearance, but in heart, who sullied not upright sentiments with any leanings toward deceit; humble of heart, dignified in speech, prudent in spirit, sparing of words, devoted to study, placing her hope not in the uncertainty of riches, but in the prayers of the poor, attentive to duty, respectful to discourse; one wont to seek God, not man, as the guide of her judgment; harming no one, but wishing well to all; rising to her elders, not envying her equals; avoiding boastfulness, following reason, loving virtue. When did she wound her parents even by a look? When did she disagree with her relatives? When did she condemn the humble? When did she mock the weak? When did she shun the needy? She was wont to go only into those gatherings of men which charity would not be shamed by, and which modesty would not permit her to pass by. There was nothing sharp in her glance, nothing bold in her words, nothing unseemly in her conduct; her bearing was not sensuous, nor her gait too free, nor her voice petulant, so that her outward appearance was an image of her soul, and was a picture of purity. For a fine house ought to be recognized as such at its very vestibule, and ought at the first step inside to show that no darkness lurks within, as though the light from the lamp inside were illuminating the parts without. What need to mention her abstemiousness in food, her superabundance in duties—the one exceeding the powers of nature, the other almost falling below nature’s needs; in the one case, no intermissions in time; in the other, the days doubled for fasting! But when the want of refection did arise, it was an-

swered generally with such food as would prevent starvation, not with such as would afford pleasure.” This passage I have chosen to illustrate the temperate style for this reason, that here the author does not urge those who have not yet consecrated themselves to virginity to do so, but treats of what the character of those should be who have thus consecrated themselves. For, that the heart be led to make so important and so serious a decision, it must certainly be aroused and set on fire by the grand style of oratory. Cyprian, the martyr, has written on the dress of virgins, not on embracing the profession of virginity. And still this bishop inflames women even as to this, with great eloquence.

49. But I shall draw illustrations of the grand style from a subject which both have treated. For both have inveighed against those women who color, or rather discolor, their faces with paint. The first, in his condemnation of this, says among other things: “If some artist had painted the features, form, and outward appearance of a certain person in colors rivaling nature’s, and when the picture had been painted and finished, another hand, as if being more skilled, should set about doing over what had already been conceived and painted, the insult to the first artist would seem to be a serious one, and his indignation just. And you, do you think that you can carry through such shameless and daring insolence, an offense against God, the great Artist, without being punished? For although toward man you are not unchaste, nor are you corrupted in heart through your meretricious adornments, yet in spoiling and violating what is God’s, you are a worse adulteress. That you consider yourself adorned and beautified, this is an insult to the divine work, a violation of truth. The Apostle’s word of admonition is: *Purge out the old leaven that you may be a new paste, as you are unleavened. For Christ our Pasch is sacrificed. Therefore let us feast, not with the old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wrongdoing; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.* But can sincerity and truth remain when what is sincere is polluted, and when what is true is turned into a lie by immodest coloring and deceitful cosmetics? Your Lord says: *Thou canst not make one hair white or black,* and do you wish to be

more powerful, so as to set at naught the words of your Lord? With insolent daring and sacrilegious contempt, do you dye your hair; with evil presage of the future, do you make your locks flame-colored?" It would take long to quote all that follows.

50. And the later writer, speaking against such women, says: "Hence arise those allurements to sin, that they seek color with which to paint their cheeks, fearing to lose the good opinion of men; and from adultery of their faces, they consider adultery of their chastity. What folly is this to change the appearance of nature, and to seek merely for its likeness, and while fearing a husband's disapproval, to betray one's own! For that woman is the first to pronounce against herself who wishes to change what nature has made; and so, while she studies to make herself pleasing to another, she is already not pleasing to herself. What truer judge shall we ask, oh woman, of your want of beauty, than yourself, since you fear to be seen? If you are beautiful, why do you hide it? If ugly, why do you pretend to be beautiful, enjoying neither peace in your own conscience, nor satisfaction in misleading others? For he loves another; you wish to please another; and you are angry if he loves another, being taught adultery by you. You are the evil teacher of your own wrong. For a woman who has been the victim of the panderer, still herself refuses to pander, and bad woman as she is, still she sins not so much against another as against herself. The sin of adultery is almost more tolerable than yours, for in the first instance modesty is corrupted; in the second, nature." It is certainly clear, I think, that here women are eloquently and passionately dissuaded from spoiling their faces by paint, and are urged to modesty and fear of self. We recognize, therefore, not the subdued style of oratory here, but the grand style throughout. But in these two authors whom out of many I have chosen in illustration, and in the other ecclesiastical writers who speak on worthy subjects, and in a worthy way, that is, as the matter demands, to the point, eloquently, and passionately, these three styles can be found scattered through their many writings and treatises, and can, through abundant reading and hearing, with the addition of practice, become engrafted in students' minds.

51. No one should suppose that it is against the rule to mingle these three styles. On the contrary, as far as it can properly be done, one should vary his diction by using all three. For when a speech is surfeited with one style, it does not keep the listener's attention. But when a change is made from one to another, even if the discourse is stretched out to some length, it proceeds in a more pleasing fashion; although each style, too, has variations of its own in the language of the eloquent, which do not allow the attention of the audience to grow languid or to cool off. However, we can more readily bear the subdued style alone for a longer time, than the grand style alone. For the higher the pitch to which the feelings are to be excited in order to gain the assent of the audience, the shorter the time that this can be maintained once they have been sufficiently excited. And so we must take care lest desiring to lift higher what is already lifted high, there be rather a fall from the pitch of excitement already attained. But by interspersing matter which requires rather the subdued style, a pleasing return can then be made to the subject calling for grand expression, so that the flow of diction comes and goes like the tides of the sea. Hence it is that the grand style of diction, if it has to be continued for some time, must not be used alone, but must be varied by the interspersion of the other styles. The whole discourse, however, is attributed in kind to the style which predominates.⁴⁰

52. It is, therefore, a matter of importance to know what style should be interspersed with what other style, and what kind should be used in definite, necessary places. For even in the grand style, properly the introduction should always, or nearly always be moderate.⁴¹ And the orator has the right in some places to speak in the subdued style, even when the grand style could have been

⁴⁰Augustine brings out the necessity of rhetoric to dialectic, and *vice versa*, in *De Dial.* 7. The dialectician must, at times, borrow some of the graces of rhetoric if he sees the need of attracting his audience; the orator, on the other hand, must strengthen his cause by making dialectic the bones and sinews, as it were, of his persuasion. [Tr.]

⁴¹Although certain places call for the grand style, there is no violation of principle to use a lesser style in part, in order by contrast to enhance the grand style when used. [Tr.]

used, so that what he expresses in the grand style may by comparison become even grander, and as it were, through the shadows of the other appear even more luminous. But whatever the style, if some knotty question demands solution, acumen is called for, And this the subdued style claims as its own.⁴² And for this reason, this style must be used even in the other two, when such questions arise in them; just as when something requires praise or censure, and it is not a question of the condemnation or the acquittal of anyone, nor of a person's assent to some course of action, no matter what the kind of style used when this occurs, the moderate style must then be taken up and interposed. And so in the grand style and in the subdued also, the other two find place.⁴³ The temperate style, on the other hand,⁴⁴ not indeed

⁴²As the plain style accomplishes the *officium* of *docere*, and is used particularly in judicial oratory (considering classical *genus*; dialectic, considering Augustine's conception of kind of speech), and in the *narratio*, *confirmatio*, *confutatio* (considering parts of a speech), so the moderate style accomplishes the *officium* of *delectare*, and is used particularly in deliberative oratory (considering classical *genus*; panegyric in Augustine's conception), and in the *exordium* (aiming to make the audience *attentos*, *dociles*, *beneuolos*) and *rationis confirmatio*, or elaboration of the proof (considering parts of a speech). [Tr.]

⁴³In a speech preponderatingly grand, the plain style has place (1) where *docere* is the object, *i.e.*, clearly to define a position, or to prove or refute an argument, (2) in more elevated thought, in order to enhance the grand by contrast. In a speech outstandingly grand, the moderate style has place (1) where *delectare* is the aim, *i.e.*, to conciliate the audience in the *principium*, and to please in the amplification of the proof, (2) in oratory leaning to the panegyric, where violence of feeling is not called into play. Considering, on the other hand, a speech preponderatingly plain, or dialectical, the moderate style has place where the circumstances just mentioned are evident, and the grand style has place where, as Augustine will emphasize below, the audience needs to be persuaded, by the moving of their emotions, to do that which, through reasoning, they realize is right. Cicero expresses this last relation in the conclusion to the quotation given above (in note: *in quocumque . . . uindicat*) where he speaks of the styles in their connection with the various parts of a speech (Orat. 36, 125). [Tr.]

⁴⁴There is a difference in regard to the temperate style. It, at times, uses the plain style, when the circumstances are such as explained above, where the plain was found necessary to the *genus grande*. But it has no need of the grand style, from the very nature of its purpose, *delectare*, which does not seek to rise to *flectere*, as *docere* often does, but is rather an aim in itself. Augustine, though he maintains the threefold division traditional and popular in Roman rhetoric, still often recog-

always, but still sometimes requires the subdued style if, as I have said, some question occurs whose difficulty demands solution, or when something which could be embellished is not embellished, but expressed in subdued language that it may furnish a more conspicuous place for certain bows, as it were, of embellishment. But moderate diction does not need the grand style, for it is used to please the mind, not to move it.

53. If a speaker get frequent and loud applause, it should not on that account be imagined that he is talking in the grand style, for this is the effect of the acumen of the subdued style, and of the ornament of the temperate.⁴⁵ But the grand style does generally silence all voices by its impressiveness, and calls forth tears. In fact, when at Caesarea in Mauritania,⁴⁶ I was urging the people against civil strife or worse than civil strife, which they called *caterva*—for not only fellow citizens, but also relatives, brothers, even fathers and sons, setting themselves into two divisions, fought each other with stones for several days at a time regularly each year at a certain

nizes, as here, that style is fundamentally twofold, as the Peripatetics conceived it, λόγος πρὸς τὰ πράγματα and λόγος πρὸς τοὺς ἀχρωμένους, and that the grand and the temperate styles are connected in being merely phases of the latter. [Tr.]

⁴⁵The grand style appeals not merely to the mind; it touches the heart. Therefore, though the plain and the temperate styles may receive great applause, the grand style is heard rather in hushed silence, or with tears. Augustine must have frequently experienced this himself. He gives one example of it below, in the instance of the effect of his address at Caesarea. Another interesting one is found in *Retract.* 2, 51, where he describes the utter silence with which Emeritus, the Donatist bishop, heard the discourse delivered in answer to the charges he had brought against the church: *ubi non inueniens quid responderet, totum sermonem meum quem de solis Maximianistis in auribus eius et omnium quo aderant explicauit tamquam mutus audiuit.* Turning to the *De Gestis cum Emerito*, to examine the speech itself for evidence of its power, while one recognizes that the force of its dialectic must have had a strong effect in silencing Augustine's opponent, still it is evident that the moving eloquence of its final words, spoken in the unadorned grand style, could not but have helped powerfully not only to hold silent the Donatist bishop himself, but also to move to tears the Catholic bishops who were also present at the conference. [Tr.]

⁴⁶Sister Thérèse summarizes evidence to indicate that Augustine made this trip to Caesarea in 418 C.E., on Church business. [Ed.]

season, and each killed whomever he could⁴⁷ — I pleaded indeed in the grand style to the best of my power, to root out and dispel by my words so cruel and inveterate an evil from their hearts and lives; still, it was not when I heard their applause, but when I saw their tears, that I felt I had gained something. For by their applause they showed that they understood and were pleased, but that they were won, they made evident by their tears. When I saw these, I knew, even before they proved it by the actual fact, that that barbarous custom, handed down from fathers, grandfathers, and far back from their ancestors, which had obsessed, or rather possessed their hearts in so savage a manner, was conquered. And directly my discourse was ended, I turned their hearts and lips to offering thanksgiving to God. And behold, it is now almost eight or more years since, through the grace of Christ, anything of that kind has been attempted there. And there are also many other experiences through which I have found out that men manifest the effect of the grandeur of grave eloquence not by shouting, but rather by groans, sometimes by tears, finally by change of life.⁴⁸

54. But even by the subdued style many have been changed, but only to know what they were ignorant of, or to believe what seemed unbelievable to them, not, however, to do what they already knew they should do, and did not wish to do.⁴⁹ For truly to bend stubbornness of this kind,

⁴⁷Augustine refers to a very turbulent celebration held in honor of the god Mars, the festival of the October horse. . . . [Tr.]

⁴⁸The effect of the grand style, when successful, is the touching of the heart and the moving of the will, revealed immediately by the restraint of the audience rather than by a demonstration, and ultimately by conversion of life. [Tr.]

⁴⁹The temperate style, aiming primarily to please, may however, through its aptness to praise or blame, influence its audience to change of life in accordance with this censure or praise. But unlike the other two styles, the middle style does not directly set out to effect change in its hearers, and does so only at times, not as a rule. Augustine's language here is also in imitation of the style under discussion. His use of the figure of derivation, paragenon (laudibus: laudabiliter: uituperationibus: uituperabiliter), accompanied by chiasmus (laudabiliter appetant fugiantque uituperabiliter) is more ornate and pleasing than the simpler figure of polyptoton used in the sentence above, explaining the plain style, since the latter implies only the more usual difference of mood and tense in the repetition of a word (agerent . . . agendum . . . agere), though

the grand style is necessary. For even when praise and censure are expressed eloquently, though merely in the moderate style, some people are so affected that they are not only pleased by the eloquence with which the praise or censure are expressed, but they seek to live in a manner deserving praise, and they avoid living in one deserving censure. But who will claim that all who are pleased by a speech, model themselves on it, as all who are moved by the grand style act in accordance with it, and all who are instructed by the subdued style understand or believe the truth of which they are ignorant?

55. From this we may conclude that the end which the two last named styles aim to bring about is very important to those who desire to speak with wisdom and eloquence.⁵⁰ But the end in view in the moderate style, namely, to please by eloquence, is not in itself worthy of being used, except, through the very pleasing quality of the expression, to gain a somewhat more willing assent or a firmer hold for a matter which is useful and good⁵¹ but which does not require explanation or persuasive eloquence, since it already has its audience well informed or favorably disposed. For since the function of all eloquence, no matter in which of these three styles, is to speak in a way adapted to persuasion, and the end, that is, what you aim at, is to persuade by speaking,

this too is accompanied by paronomasia (nesciebant: scirent; incredibile: crederent), used however not to please the fancy, but to clarify the thought. [Tr.]

⁵⁰All of Augustine's teaching in regard to the temperate style tends toward, and finds its conclusion in this chapter. He here differentiates definitely between Christian ideals and Sophistic, in regard to that all important tenet of sophistic teaching, "art for art's sake." [Tr.]

⁵¹Augustine's expression of this fundamental truth of Christian oratory could not be clearer or more concise. He has been preparing for it in all he has taught above, especially in chapters 13 and 14, so that he can afford here to state his ground in the most succinct, decisive terms: "Art for art's sake" has no place in Christian oratory; "art for truth's sake" should have, and has. This can be illustrated from almost any of Augustine's own sermons. An interesting example is found in Serm. 52, 14. There, being assured that he has made his point as to *docere* in regard to the mystery of the Blessed Trinity, he concludes by a summary of the doctrine, but in order to gain a prompt and firmer hold on the audience (ut promptius . . . uel tenacius . . . adherescat assensus) he clothes his reasoning in an attractive style. . . . [Tr.]

so, in whatever of the three styles indeed an orator speaks in a manner adapted to persuasion, unless he does persuade, he does not attain the end of eloquence.⁵² For instance, in the subdued style he persuades his audience that what he says is true; he persuades them in the grand style, to do what they now know they ought to do, but are not doing; he persuades them in the moderate style that he is expressing himself in beautiful and elegant language. But of what use to us is this end? Let them aim at it who glory in fine language, and who show off in panegyrics and such like modes of speech, in which the aim is not to instruct the audience, nor to move them to some course of action, but merely to please them. But as for us, let us turn this end to another end;⁵³ for instance, to aim to bring about, even by this style, what we aim to effect in a speech in the grand style, that is, to make good morals esteemed or evil morals avoided, if the audience are not so hostile to this course of action as to seem to need urging to it by the grand style, or if they are now following it, to make them follow it with greater zest and to persevere in it with constancy. Thus it is that we use even the ornament of the moderate style not ostentatiously, but wisely, not content with its own purpose, namely, merely to please the audience, but rather striving for this, to help them even thereby to the good toward which our persuasion aims.⁵⁴

56. And so those three points which we named above as ends to be striven for by everyone who

⁵²Augustine has in mind the general classical teaching: cf. again the standard authorities quoted above in chapter 13: Arist. Rhet. 1, 1, 1354a; De Invent. 1, 5, 6; De Orat. 1, 61, 260; *ibid.* 1, 31, 138; *ibid.* 1, 49, 213, etc. Since persuasion is the end of oratory, it is likewise the end of each and all of the styles; and unless one succeeds in persuading, he does not attain the end of oratory. A. wants to prove that the middle style also aims at persuasion—in its case, merely this: that it is persuading well—a wholly unlawful end, and therefore to be rejected, or rather turned into something useful and fitting, by the Christian orator. [Tr.]

⁵³The insinuation is unmistakable: Let Sophists vaunt themselves in the middle style; the Christian orator must turn *delectatio* to a nobler end. [Tr.]

⁵⁴A.'s conclusion: The ornament of the middle style is to be used as an aid to the other styles, and in order to insure the accomplishment of their ends.—Note how well Augustine recognizes this in practice, as for instance in the sermon quoted above. [Tr.]

desires to speak with wisdom and with eloquence,⁵⁵ namely, to make one's words understood, enjoyed, and persuasive, are not to be so taken as to be applied only respectively to the three styles of speaking: being understood, to the subdued style; being enjoyed, to the moderate style; and being persuasive to the grand style; but rather in such a way that the orator ever aims at all three, and employs them all, in so far as it is possible, even when he is concerned with each one of them separately. For it is not our desire that even what we say in the subdued style be tiresome, but through this style we wish not only to make ourselves understood, but even enjoyed.⁵⁶ And why do we enforce what we have to say in teaching, by quotations from Holy Scripture, but to make ourselves persuasive, that is, to make our audience believe us, with the assistance of Him to whom it is said, *Thy testimonies are become exceedingly credible?*⁵⁷ What too does he desire except to be believed, who tells a story to an audience even though in the subdued style?⁵⁸ But who would wish to give one his attention unless the latter could hold his listener by some charm of style? For who does not know that one who is not understood cannot make himself either pleasing or persuasive? For as to this subdued style,⁵⁹ many times when it unravels

⁵⁵In chapter 12, Augustine discussed the three *officia oratoris*; in chapter 17, he showed their relation to the three styles, *i.e.*, how they give rise to the plain, the middle, and the grand styles respectively (is erit igitur eloquens, etc.), *docere* being the end of the plain style, *delectare*, of the middle, *flectere*, of the grand. But viewing the styles in a broader way, *viz.* as all being the vehicles of persuasion, and as all having, in reality, this one end, namely, to persuade, the conclusion is here drawn that each style while aiming particularly at its own special *officium*, must necessarily include the other *officia* also, in order to reach the general end, *persuadere*.—Augustine thus logically proves how the individuality of each style merges into a unity, perfect in its interlocked relation of part to whole, and part to part. [Tr.]

⁵⁶The plain style aims at *docere*, but without tedium, hence it includes also *delectare*. [Tr.]

⁵⁷The plain style aims to teach, but when scriptural proofs are adduced, it aims to teach so as to persuade, hence it involves *docere* and *flectere*. [Tr.]

⁵⁸A narration belongs to the plain style, but it exhibits this style in its most attractive form, hence it belongs both to necessity and to charm, involving *docere* and *delectare*. [Tr.]

⁵⁹The plain style, even of the *argumentative* type, when it is accompanied by a natural grace (*decus naturale*), and a

very difficult questions, and proves them by an unexpected explanation, when it unearths and displays the most penetrating observations from obscure caverns, as it were, whence they were not expected, when it proves an opponent's error, and shows that to be false which seemed to have been stated as unassailable by him, especially if a certain grace accompanies it, not aimed at, but, in a certain measure natural, and some use of rhythm in clausulae, not obtrusive, but, as it were, necessary, and, so to speak, drawn out of the subject itself, it excites such applause that one would scarcely believe it to be the subdued style. For from the very fact that it does not come forth adorned and armed, but stalks out stripped bare, as it were, for that very reason it does not fail to crush its opponent by its very sinew and muscle, and to overwhelm and destroy the resistance of falsehood by its own strong arm. But whence comes it that such speakers are so frequently and greatly applauded except that truth thus set forth, thus defended, thus rendered unassailable, gives pleasure? And, therefore, in this subdued style, that teacher and speaker of ours ought to strive not only to make his discourse understood, but also to make it enjoyable and persuasive.

57. The eloquence of the moderate type, too, in the case of the ecclesiastical orator is not left unadorned,⁶⁰ and yet it is not unbecomingly adorned, nor does it only aim at giving pleasure, the sole end that it professes in the hands of others, but in holding up those things which it praises or censures, on the one hand as matters worthy of being sought for and firmly maintained, on the other, as deserving to be avoided and rejected, it also certainly aims at being per-

rhythm of cadences (*numerositas clausularum*), inherent in the subject itself, often accomplishes, because of its unadorned simplicity and its evident strength and truth, all three ends, *docere*, *delectare*, and *flectere*, just as well as does the narrative plain style. The conclusion is that the plain style is naturally apt to the accomplishment of the three *officia*. [Tr.]

⁶⁰The temperate style calls for ornament, but ornament in moderation. Note how A., in his final summary of the styles, repeats the points he has made above as essentials. *Moderation* in the use of the florid style was insisted on in chapter 14, where the excess of the Sophists was decried. Consideration so far is only of *delectare* in the middle style. [Tr.]

suasive. But if it is not understood, neither can it give pleasure. And so all three ends, viz., that the audience should understand, be pleased, and be persuaded, must be striven for even in this one style, where giving pleasure holds first place.

58. But when it is necessary to move and convince a listener by the grand style—as it is when one's opponent grants the truth and attractiveness of what is said, but is unwilling to act upon it—one must without doubt express himself *grandly*. But who is moved if he does not understand what is said, or whose attention is held if he is not pleased? Wherefore, in this style also, when an obdurate heart has to be bent by the grand manner of speech, unless the speaker makes himself both understood and enjoyed, he cannot make himself persuasive.⁶¹

59. But the life of the speaker has greater force to make him persuasive than the grandeur of his eloquence, however great that may be. For the man who speaks wisely and eloquently, but lives evilly, instructs indeed many who are eager to learn⁶² though *he is unprofitable to his own*

⁶¹A final summarizing sentence. This chapter is a good example of Augustine's admirable power as a teacher and a dialectician. Every link in his chain of reasoning is perfectly welded and connected with what precedes and with what follows, so that the conclusion is accepted by the reader as a simple matter of course. Such paragraphs represent Augustine's power of expressing clearly, simply, and succinctly the relation of part to part, of his subject, and by linking-summaries, the connection between part to whole. Such treatment is only possible to a mind at once lucid and penetrating, and as simple as profound. [Tr.]

⁶²The classical student may be struck by the fact that here Augustine's views seem less strict, and more compromising than Quintilian's. Cf. Quint. 12, 1, 2-3: *mutos enim nasci et egere omni ratione satius fuisset, quam providentiae munera in mutam perniciem conuertere . . . neque enim tantum id dico, eum qui sit orator, uirum bonum esse oportere, sed ne futurum quidem oratorem nisi uirum bonum*. In reality, Quintilian and Augustine deal with different circumstances, in their respective discussions. Quintilian has to do with the legal orator whose ideals are not set for him, but who is guided wholly by the case in hand, and the attitude which he himself brings to bear upon it. Such a one when evil minded, Quintilian cannot but consider a menace to the public. Augustine realizes that the ecclesiastical orator, dealing as he does with the Word of God, possesses an instrument which will effect its end, even though the speaker himself is not exemplary of life. The Christian in his possession of Truth can meet and combat error in a way of which the pagan is wholly incapable. Moreover, Quintilian in his discussion is expressing

soul, as it is written. And so the Apostle says: *Whether by occasion, or by truth, Christ be preached.* Now Christ is truth and still, truth can be preached, even though not with truth, that is when by a mean and deceiving heart righteousness and truth are preached. Thus, indeed, Jesus Christ is preached by those who seek their own ends, not those of Jesus Christ. But since good Christians obey not any man whatsoever, but the Lord Himself, who says: *Whatsoever they say to you, do: but according to their works, do you not, for they say and do not,* therefore are they heard with profit, even though they themselves do not lead profitable lives. For they are zealous in seeking their own ends, but they dare not teach their own from the high place, forsooth, of ecclesiastical authority, which sound doctrine has established. For this reason the Lord Himself, before saying what I have just quoted about men of this kind, declared: *They have sitten on the chair of Moses.* That chair, therefore, which was not theirs but Moses', forced them to say what was good, even though they were not doing what was good. And so they pursued their own ends in their lives, but to teach their own, that, the chair which belonged to another did not allow them to do.

60. And so they do good to many by preaching even what they do not live up to; but far more would they do good to by practicing what they preached. For there are many who seek to defend their own evil lives by their very superiors and teachers, answering in their hearts, or even if they go so far, saying with their lips, "What you tell me to do, why do you not do yourself?" And so it comes about that they do not follow one who does not follow his own preaching, and they condemn the word of God which is preached to them, along with the preacher himself.⁶³ Accord-

his ideal of a *perfect* orator; Augustine, speaking from a more practical standpoint, explains the ideal, *i.e.*, eloquence coupled with nobility of character, but he also has to recognize the truth, *viz.* that Holy Scripture, explained eloquently, even without a corresponding integrity in the speaker, is necessarily effective, since it is the Word of God. [Tr.]

⁶³Cf. the pagan's realization of a similar loss accruing, in his case, to eloquence: The harm done by the Christian is incomparably greater, since it involves contempt for the Word of God. [Tr.]

ingly, the Apostle, in writing to Timothy, after saying, *Let no man despise thy youth,* adds how he would avoid being despised, saying, *Be thou an example of the faithful in word, in conversation, in charity, in faith, in chastity.*

61. Such a teacher, to render himself persuasive, may without presumption express himself not only in the subdued and in the moderate style, but also in the grand style, because his life is beyond reproach. For truly he so chooses to live a good life as not indeed to neglect a good reputation, but especially so as to forecast what is good before God and man, in as far as possible, by fearing God and by caring for man.⁶⁴ Even in his very speech he should prefer to please through his matter rather than through his words, and he should consider that a thing is not well said unless it be truthfully said; nor should the teacher serve words, but words, the teacher.⁶⁵ For this is what the Apostle says: *Not in wisdom of speech lest the cross of Christ be made void.* Of the same purport, too, is what he says to Timothy: *Contend not in words, for it is to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers.* This, however, is not said to the end that we should say nothing in defense of truth whenever opponents attack it. And where will be what, among other things, he said when he was showing what character a bishop ought to be: *That he may be able in sound doctrine, also to convince the gainsayers?* For to contend in words is not to care how error may be overcome by truth, but how your style may be preferred to another's. However, the man who does not contend in words, whether he expresses himself in the subdued, or in the moderate, or in the grand

⁶⁴Sincerity should be dominant in the Christian orator, and a singleness of purpose that aims first at pleasing God, then, as a necessary consequence, at pleasing men. A good reputation naturally follows, but is not primarily sought for. Augustine, of course, is guarding his disciples against the pitfalls of Sophistic. This, his next words make clear. [Tr.]

⁶⁵A. crystallizes in a brief sentence what he has tried to inculcate throughout the entire treatise. With the Christian orator, matter is of first importance, style is secondary; truth is the grand object, ornament must be subservient to it. As shown above in chapter 5, in quotations from Cicero, this was recognized and practiced by the best speakers of classical times, but the prevalent formalism of the third and fourth centuries was, in A.'s time, a factor that had to be combatted, and this is done here by a trenchant restatement of old ideals. [Tr.]

style, has this aim in speaking, that truth be made clear, that truth be made pleasing, that truth be made convincing; for not even love itself, which is the end of the commandment and the fulfilling of the law, can in any way be right if the objects of love are not true but false.⁶⁶ For as one whose body is comely, but whose heart is depraved is more to be pitied than if his body also were deformed, so those who express falsehood with eloquence are more to be deplored than if they should express the same in an unseemly way.⁶⁷ And so what is it to speak not only with eloquence but also with wisdom, except to employ words which are adequate, in the subdued style; striking, in the temperate style; and strong, in the grand style—in regard to truth, of course, which it is fitting should be heard?⁶⁸ But if a person cannot do both, let him speak with wisdom, even though he cannot with eloquence, rather than with eloquence without wisdom. But if even this is impossible, let him so conduct himself as not only to deserve a reward for himself, but also to offer an example to others; and in his case, let his manner of life be, as it were, a flowing speech.⁶⁹

⁶⁶This is A.'s culminating statement in regard to the three styles and the three *officia*. Having carefully explained their nature, relation, and effects, their striking individuality, and their yet grander unity, he here shows that in the highest oratory, they find their most complete *one-ness* in the singleness of their matter, *i.e.*, in *ueritas*. [Tr.]

⁶⁷This expresses, in its proper connection with *ueritas* as the dominating factor of eloquence, the contrary practice of the Sophists, of clothing falsehood in fine language. See chapter 14 for Augustine's full treatment of this point. [Tr.]

⁶⁸A. again looks back to his earlier discussion (cf. chapter 5), and connects with the styles and their common subject-matter, *ueritas*, the eloquence and wisdom there differentiated and explained. He now states that the orator who would speak *eloquently* must use the styles, but that if he would also speak *with wisdom* he must (1) make the subject of these, *truth*, and (2) apply the styles to this subject in such a way as to be adequate in the plain style, attractive in the temperate, and moving in the grand. This second point is nothing else than the application of the old classical ideal of τὸ πρέπον, *decorum*, "fittingness." It is characteristic of Augustine thus to lead up to the orator's supreme quality, which though hinted at, wherever it was fitting to do so, throughout the treatise, is here given its proper importance. . . . [Tr.]

⁶⁹A spiritual point of view, showing how the Christian standard transcends the pagan. Cicero concedes that eloquence without wisdom is of small avail, but the idea that wisdom (particularly that, expressed by integrity of life) without eloquence can effect anything in oratory, is something quite beyond his conception. [Tr.]

62. But there are, indeed, some men who can deliver a sermon well, but who cannot think out its matter. Now if they take what has been eloquently and wisely written by others, and commit it to memory, and deliver it before the people, if they assume this character, they do no wrong.⁷⁰ For thus, as is certainly profitable, many become preachers of truth, though not many, teachers, if they all speak the same thing of one true teacher, and there are no schisms among them. Nor need they be frightened by the word of Jeremias the Prophet, through whom God rebukes those who steal His words, everyone from his neighbor. For those who steal take what belongs to another, but the word of God belongs to those who obey it; and that man rather speaks the words of another, who speaks well but lives badly. For whatever good sentiments he expresses seem to proceed from his own thought on them, but they do not belong to his way of living. And so God has said that those men steal His words who wish to appear good by speaking God's word, though they are evil in following a course of their own. And indeed it is not they themselves who speak the good that they speak, if you study the matter closely. For how can they express in words what they do not express in deeds? Truly not for nought does the Apostle say of such: *They profess that they know God: but in their works they deny Him*. And so in a certain sense they speak, and again in another sense they do not, since both these verses are true, because Truth itself utters them. For, again, speaking of such as these, He says: *What they shall say to you, do; but according to their words, do ye not*. That is, "What from their lips you hear, that do, but what in their works you see, that do not do." *For they say*, he continues, *and do not*. And so though they *do not*, still they *say*. But in another place, rebuking such men, He says: *Hypocrites, how can you*

⁷⁰This in no wise proves that Augustine himself was accustomed first to write his sermons and then to memorize them, nor that he in any way rejects extempore address either for himself or for others. On the contrary, as expressed above, in chapters 3, 4, 5, 10, Augustine inculcates the doctrine of adaptation to one's matter and audience—a thing which is only perfectly attainable in speeches that are extemporaneous. What he says here in regard to memorizing a set speech is clearly by way of concession, for one of mean abilities. . . . [Tr.]

speak good things, whereas you are evil? And from this it would seem that even what they say when they speak good things, they do not themselves say, since forsooth in will and in deed, they gainsay what they say. And so it may happen that an eloquent man, though bad, may himself compose a sermon in which truth is set forth to be delivered by another who, though not eloquent, is good. And when this is done, the former gives as from himself what belongs to another, while the latter receives from another what is really his own. But when good Christians render this service to good Christians, both speak what is their own, because God is theirs, and to Him belong the words which they speak;⁷¹ and they make these, too, their own, though they were not able to compose them, if they compose their lives in accordance with them.

63. But whether a person is now making ready to speak before the people or before any other group whatever, or to compose something neither to be delivered before the people or read by those who wish or can do so, he should pray God to put a fitting discourse upon his lips. For if Queen Esther prayed when she was about to address the king in regard to the temporal affairs of her people, that God might give her a well-ordered speech in her mouth, how much more ought he to pray to receive such a gift who labors in word and teaching for the eternal welfare of mankind? Those, too, who are to deliver what they receive from others, even before they receive it, ought to pray for those from whom they receive it, that

⁷¹Another evidence of that dependence on faith which distinguishes Christian from pagan oratory. [Tr.]

what they wish to receive, may be given to them; and when they have received it, they should pray that they themselves may deliver it well, and that those to whom they speak may take it; and for the successful issue of their discourse, they should give thanks to Him from whom they cannot doubt but that they have received it, that he who glories may glory in Him in whose hand are both we and our words.

64. This work has turned out longer than I had wished, and than I had planned. But if it is interesting to one who reads it or listens to it, it will not be long; if, however, anyone finds it long, he should read it in parts if he still wishes to become acquainted with it; on the other hand, one who is not interested in making its acquaintance should not complain of its length.⁷² But for my part, I give thanks to God that in these four books, I have treated with whatever little ability I have, not of such a one as I myself am, for I have many deficiencies, but of such a person as he should be who in sound teaching, that is in Christian teaching, strives to labor not only for himself, but also for others.⁷³

⁷²A. can never entirely rid himself of his training as a dialectician. Here, even in his words of apology for a long work, he is not able to refrain from getting the better of his reader by this clever turn of a dilemma, which is all the more characteristic of him by being expressed in the order of the figure of *climax*. [Tr.]

⁷³Augustine ends on the note which he has tried to keep dominant throughout this book, viz., that the instruction aimed at by the Christian speaker is, unlike that prevalent in the schools of the Sophists, a thoroughly sound and wholly natural one. It is for this reason that passing over the popular rhetorical precepts of the fourth century, he returns to the same theory of classical times. This, vivified by the Christian spirit, he puts forward as a new-old ideal. [Tr.]

Boethius

ca. 480–524 C.E.

Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius was born into a patrician Roman family, received an excellent classical education, and served as a senator while pursuing his avocation in philosophy. In its bare outlines, his life thus resembles Cicero's. But Boethius was born after the fall of the last Roman emperor. He served the court of Theodoric the Great, an illiterate Ostrogoth. With Cassiodorus, his contemporary, and other Christian and pagan scholars, Boethius undertook to educate Theodoric's family, to write his official correspondence, and to deliver panegyrics for the court. Theodoric had him executed in 524 on suspicion of plotting with the Byzantine emperor Justinian I to retake the Italian peninsula from its pagan overlords. Boethius describes his own offense (in *The Consolation of Philosophy*) as defending the rights of the Roman senate, still extant in his day but subservient to the pagan rulers. A Christian, like most of the Roman aristocrats of his day, Boethius is also regarded as a martyr for his faith, and he was beatified by the Roman Catholic Church in 1883.

Aware that Greco-Roman culture was in danger of being lost, Boethius tried to preserve what he could through his own scholarship, which was enriched by contacts with classical scholars of the Byzantine empire. He became an important source of classical learning for medieval scholars. Boethius aimed to translate the whole of Plato and Aristotle into Latin. This project was cut short by his death, but Boethius was right to think that it was necessary: Before the thirteenth century, almost the only Greek philosophy known to western Europe was in his translations. Boethius also wrote widely read commentaries on Aristotle and Cicero. Considering his importance to the history of rhetorical theory, it is ironic that Boethius, like so many later medieval intellectuals, was not particularly interested in rhetoric. He saw himself as a philosopher. Indeed, one of his most influential works up to the present time is *The Consolation of Philosophy*, which was written while he was in prison awaiting execution and which poignantly describes the power of philosophy to help one prepare for death.

The most important work by Boethius on rhetoric is actually a treatise on logic, *De Topicis Differentiis* (ca. 522), which was well known throughout medieval times under the title *Topica Boetii*. Here Boethius focuses on topical logic, that is, logic that uses rhetorical topics or commonplaces to explore ideas. In the first three books of the treatise, Boethius analyzes and compares various classical systems of topical invention, concentrating primarily on Aristotle's and Cicero's. In the last book, he turns to the theoretical issue implicitly raised by the borrowing of rhetorical topics for philosophical inquiry: namely, the exact boundaries between philosophy and rhetoric. Boethius holds that philosophical argument, or dialectic, deals with general questions—theses—whereas rhetorical argument deals with specific instances—hypotheses. Dialectic employs complete syllogisms, which can be examined in dialogue with an adversary, whereas rhetoric employs truncated syllogisms, which are simply presented persuasively to the audience.

These distinctions subordinate rhetoric to dialectic. Rhetoric becomes a means of applying general rules of argumentation, established by dialectic, to specific cases. Rhetorical argument has no epistemological force of its own. Speech communication scholar Michael Leff has argued that this treatment of rhetoric places Boethius squarely in the Aristotelian tradition—not surprising, given Boethius’s interest in all of Aristotle’s works. Boethius goes further than Aristotle, however, in denying rhetoric a separate knowledge-generating status. It is merely the servant of dialectic, a method of applying arguments. Boethius thus works against what Leff denotes as the other, Ciceronian tradition of classical rhetoric, a more humanistic approach that treats language and knowledge as interrelated and thus affords rhetoric some parity with philosophy.¹

Boethius’s Aristotelian approach proved most attractive to later medieval scholars in the universities, which were dominated by the dialectical study of theology and law. As Boethius seemed to advocate, rhetoric takes a preliminary and subordinate place in the medieval university curriculum. Book IV of the *Topica Boetii* was often used alone as a textbook on rhetoric, thus forming a digest very like Boethius’s “Overview of the Structure of Rhetoric” (included here). The “Overview” almost appears to be a summary of *Topica Boetii*, Book IV, in that it sometimes uses similar wording and similar examples (e.g., the young man seen exiting the brothel).

The most important classical source of this work is the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. By and large, Boethius uses its terminology, and his treatment also reflects that work’s emphasis on invention (which occupies about two and a half of its four books). But Boethius barely mentions style, memory, and delivery, giving the reader very little sense of how rhetoric might actually be used to affect an audience. In this light it is suggestive that when he mentions the “duties” of rhetoric, “to teach and to move,” he omits the third duty listed in the Ciceronian source of this traditional definition, namely, “to please.” Boethius’s characteristic approach may be seen in his attempt, so to speak, to philosophize rhetoric by treating it only in the most general way, in a series of definitions that analyze its parts. As historian of rhetoric James J. Murphy has observed, it seems that Boethius wishes only to “account for” rhetoric, not to explore it: to place it in an intellectual system hierarchically dominated by dialectic.²

Selected Bibliography

Joseph M. Miller’s translation (reprinted here) of “An Overview of the Structure of Rhetoric” is taken from *Readings in Medieval Rhetoric* (ed. Joseph M. Miller, Michael H. Prosser, and Thomas W. Benson, 1973). Eleonore Stump has translated *Boethius’s “De Topicis Differentiis”* (1978) and has provided helpful notes and longer discussions of difficult terms; she also explains her preference for the version of the work’s title used here, instead of the more commonly seen *De Differentiis Topicis*.

¹Michael Leff, “Boethius and the History of Medieval Rhetoric,” *Central States Speech Journal* 24 (1973): pp. 134–41.

²James J. Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), p. 69.

Most histories of medieval rhetoric discuss Boethius. See also the capsule biography in George Kennedy's *Classical Rhetoric and Its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times* (1980). A longer treatment, with information on Boethius's education program and views on the seven liberal arts, can be found in Henry Chadwick, *Boethius: The Consolations of Music, Logic, Theology, and Philosophy* (1981). More biographical information can be found in "Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius," by John Matthews, which details the political contexts of Boethius's life and work, and in "The Scholar and his Public," by Helen Kirkby, focusing more on his (and Cassiodorus's) educational background and cultural contexts (both in *Boethius: His Life, Thought and Influence*, ed. Margaret Gibson, 1981).

An excellent overview of Boethius's thought, with further bibliography, is Michael Leff, "Boethius and the History of Medieval Rhetoric" (*Central States Speech Journal* 24 [1973]: 134-41). See also Howard Rollin Patch, *The Tradition of Boethius: A Study of His Importance in Medieval Culture* (1935), which discusses his influence both as Neoplatonist and as expounder of Aristotle, and his effect on medieval literature, particularly Chaucer and Dante.

An Overview of the Structure of Rhetoric

1. It is not easy to analyze the strength of the structural bond which holds rhetoric together; the listener can hardly ever recognize it, and it is certainly not easy to describe. The angry disputes which center about the rules governing each of its parts may lead to a serious error: [Readers] may investigate each of the separate parts of the act and ignore the final product. It is this treatment of the whole, heretofore neglected, to which we now address ourselves as best we can. So we shall treat of the genus of the art, its species, its parts, its tools and the parts of the tools, the duty of its practitioners, and its goals. With this general outline of what is to be covered, we conclude the exordium of this investigation.

2. By genus, rhetoric is a faculty; by species, it can be one of three: judicial, demonstrative, deliberative. It is clear that the genus is what we have said. What we have said about the species, moreover, is true because rhetoric deals with all these processes. There is one special kind of rhetoric for judicial matters, based upon their special goals; there are other kinds of deliberative and demonstrative purposes. These species of rhetoric depend upon the circumstances in which they are used; all cases deal either with

general principles or with the specific application of those principles, in either case using one of the three species we have already identified. For example, judicial rhetoric can treat either of general topics like rendering just honor or demanding satisfaction, or of individual cases, like paying honor to Cornelius or demanding satisfaction of Verres. Likewise, cases which involve deliberation fall under the heading of deliberative rhetoric in the same way: they may deal with general topics like war and peace or with specific issues like the Pyrrhic war and the peace which followed. Similarly, in demonstrative oratory, we deal with what deserves praise or blame; we may do this either in a general way, as when we praise bravery, or in a particular case, as when we praise the bravery of Scipio.

3. The subject matter for the faculty is any subject at all which can be proposed by speaking; it is usually a question of civil importance. On such a matter, the three species of rhetoric act as molds which shape the topic to themselves; as soon as one of these forms is applied to the question, it is held to that particular structure, as will be evident in what follows. Thus, when a question of public interest which has not yet been given a form is directed at a specific goal, it immediately becomes part of one of the species of

Translated by Joseph M. Miller.

rhetoric. So a civil question can take any of the forms: when it seeks the ends of justice in a court of law, it becomes judicial; when it asks in an assembly what is useful or proper, then it is a deliberative act; and when it proclaims publicly what is good, the civil question becomes demonstrative rhetoric. So the category into which the material falls comes from the rhetoric; otherwise the faculty would be unable to work with the topic which requires special parts of its own; for when those other parts are not present, then rhetoric itself is missing.

4. But since we are treating of the species of rhetoric and how those species relate to the case being dealt with, we must make clear that they apply to every kind of business which can arise in civil matters. Anything seeking justice for its goal is judicial; anything dealing with what is useful or proper in public action is deliberative; and anything treating of the propriety, justice, or goodness of an act already performed in a matter of public interest is demonstrative. But enough of this.

5. And now we must treat of the parts of rhetoric. Rhetoric has five parts: invention, disposition, style, memory, and delivery. These are referred to as parts because if an orator lacks any one of them, then his use of the faculty is imperfect. And clearly it is not absurd to call those elements of the faculty of rhetoric its parts when, if taken together, they make the faculty itself complete. But, since these are the parts of the faculty of rhetoric and since they comprise the whole of that faculty, it is absolutely necessary that wherever rhetoric is to be used, they must be present as well. Now if rhetoric is completely present in each of its species, then all these parts must be present in each of the species. Therefore they all must be used in treating any public business when the issues are clearly assigned to one of the above-mentioned species of rhetoric. It makes no difference whether the matter is treated in a judicial manner, in a deliberative manner, or in a demonstrative manner; invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery must all be present.

6. Since nearly every faculty must use a tool to accomplish what it can do, we must look for some tool here. That tool is the oration, which is sometimes a civil nature, sometimes not. We are

speaking now of the [rhetorical], which deals with some such question or is designed to expedite a solution to such a question. When that kind of oration treats an issue of civil importance, it moves forward without a break in continuity; when it does not deal with matters of public concern, it is developed through questions and answers. The former is rhetoric, the latter is called dialectic. They differ because the former treats of civil hypotheses, the latter of theses; the former is an unbroken oration, the latter is interrupted; the former needs both an adversary and a judge, the latter has for a judge the same person who acts as adversary.

7. The rhetorical oration has six parts: the introduction or exordium, the argument,¹ the partition, the proof, the refutation, and the peroration. These therefore are the parts of the tool of the rhetorical faculty, and since rhetoric is completely present in each of its species, these also must be present in each of them. Nor can they be any more present than to accomplish what they are intended for. And so the structure of introduction and narration and of all the other parts of the tool is necessary in the judicial type of rhetoric, just as it is all necessary in the deliberative and demonstrative types. Now it is the duty of the faculty of rhetoric to teach and to move;² the same duty falls no less to the lot of these six elements, which are the parts of the oration. Now the parts of rhetoric, being parts of a faculty, are themselves faculties; therefore the tools which work in the entire oration must also function in each part of the oration, and so they must be present in order to work. For unless the previously mentioned parts of rhetoric are present, that is, unless the author discovers suitable material, clothes it in a good style, arranges it properly, remembers it and delivers it well, he accomplishes nothing. And the same is true regarding the parts of the tool: unless all parts of the oration have them [the parts of rhetoric], they will be useless. And, in conclusion, the practitioner of this faculty

¹In this list of the parts of a speech, the text uses the word *ratio* rather than the traditional *narratio* to indicate the second part. This may be a corrupt reading, since the ms. is unedited; at any rate, all subsequent references are to *narratio*. [Tr.]

²For some reason, the text omits the traditional third function: Cicero's *delectare* (to please). [Tr.]

is the orator, whose duty it is to speak in such a way as to persuade.

8. The orator must look for his goal both in himself and in his audience. In himself, because he must be able to say upon completion of the act that he has spoken well—that is, that he has spoken in a way calculated to persuade; in his audience, because he must in truth have persuaded them. For if a deficiency in any of those qualities which are expected of orators causes him to fail to persuade, then, even though the act of speaking be complete, the goal is not attained. And also, one who is truly wrapped up in his work and tied to it, will succeed when the task is done, but one who is unconcerned usually will not succeed. Nor does an orator lessen the dignity of his oratory because he seeks to attain his goal. And all of these factors are all bound together in the same way that rhetoric is complete in each of its species, and each species is a complete piece of rhetoric. Now the parts of cases are known as the *status*;³ and we must now make a detailed examination of them. How can they be considered parts of a case if “parts of a case” means the same things as “species of a genus”? And how is it possible that in one case there should be many *constitutiones*? The answer is that the species are very closely bound in with one another. There are indeed many *constitutiones* in a case; but they are no more “parts of cases” than *status* is “part of the species.” This is all the more clear because no species strengthens another species opposed to itself insofar as content is concerned; however each *constitutio* adds strength to every other *constitutio*. Besides, it is impossible that there should be as many parts of cases as there are parts of an entire oration. Nothing composed of one part can be whole and entire, but a single *constitutio* can be enough to build a whole case.

9. Then what is there to be said about this? It

³At this point it becomes quite difficult to translate Boethius’s explanation. The reason for this is that he uses two terms which should be synonymous, *status* (Quintilian’s word for “issue”) and *constitutio* (the word used in *Ad Herennium*); at times he seems to consider them synonymous, but at other times he seems to maintain that *status* is the “case” being discussed and *constitutio* the individual issues. Because of this confusion, I shall not attempt to translate the two words, but shall use them as Boethius did. [Tr.]

is clear to one who thinks it out. No *constitutio* can be called a “part of the case” in which it figures, because it is the subject of the dispute and the status establishes it as an issue. This is especially true when we consider that a *status* which is added to the case after one *constitutio* has been settled is not considered principal, but subsidiary. Besides, in one affair there are as many points to be argued as there are *constitutiones*, and there are as many cases as there are points to be argued; and, even granted that one piece of business may need to consider all of them, yet the cases themselves are different, despite the fact that they are so closely related to one another. For example, if a husband sees a young man coming out of a brothel, and a few minutes later sees his own wife coming out of the same place, he may accuse the young man of adultery. This, then, is the one matter to be decided; yet there are two cases: one is a conjectural one, if the young man denies that he has done anything; the other is a case of definition, which hinges on whether an act of intercourse in a brothel can be considered adulterous. But for the man who denies having done anything wrong, the conjectural *status* is not part of the controversy; to the one who is arguing definition, the definition is not part of the controversy: it is the whole controversy. Of course, I am not speaking now of “a case” in the generic sense of that word, but of an argument based on a particular *constitutio*.

10. The *constitutiones* are, however, parts of the case as a genus in this sense. For if every case were conjectural, and if there were no other status to be investigated, then the conjectural *status* would not be just a part of the case, but would be the very case itself, without exception. But since every case depends partly upon the conjectural, partly upon the end, partly upon the quality, and partly upon objection,⁴ the *constitutio* is part of

⁴In identifying these four questions, Boethius ignores the approach of *Ad Herennium*, to which he has adhered thus far, and returns to the *staeseis* as identified by Hermagoras: (1) Conjecture, “Did it happen?”; (2) Definition, “Was it really theft?”; (3) Quality, “Did circumstances justify it?”; and (4) Objection, “Does this assembly have the right to judge?” It seems, moreover, that the text of Boethius’ list is corrupt, since it reads, “*partim conjectura, partim sine, partim qualitate, partim translatione,*” while the customary Latin words

the case—not of the one particular case on which it imprints its mark, but of the case generically, because it is one of the alternative approaches which can be used independently of the others, like cutting one member off from the others. The *constitutiones* are, therefore, parts in the sense of species of the genus case, but there are not parts of any given case in which they function as necessary to the structure.

11. In summary, then, the faculty of rhetoric is a genus of which the species are judicial, demonstrative and deliberative. The subject matter is any question of civil importance, called “a case.” The parts of this subject matter are the *constitutiones*. The parts of rhetoric are invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery. The tool used is the oration, and the parts of the tool are the exordium, the narration, the division, the proof, the refutation, the peroration. The function of the oration is to teach and to move. The practitioner is the orator, his duty is to speak well, and his goal is to have spoken well and to persuade.

12. All rhetoric is contained in each one of its species; and the species exercise final control over the content, so that they truly make it their own. We can understand this from the fact that each of the species controls completely all the material which it contains. Thus you may find four *constitutiones* in judicial rhetoric, and in deliberative or demonstrative rhetoric you may expect to find the same four. From this we may conclude that if each of the species has all the parts of a case, speaking generically, that is of a civil question to be decided, then the case is the combination of all those parts. The entire case it-

would have been *conjectura, fine, qualitate, and tralatione*. See M. L. Clarke, *Rhetoric at Rome* (London, 1953), pp. 26–27. [Tr.]

self, then, which is the civil question, is determined by the species. It is much like the way a word comes to the ears of many people at once, complete in all its parts, that is in its syllables; for the whole case with all its parts comes under the different species at one time.

13. But when the species asserts itself over the subject matter, which is the civil question, and imposes itself upon the subject with all its parts, then it brings with it into the question the faculty of rhetoric, and also, in consequence, all the parts of rhetoric. Therefore the parts of rhetoric are necessary in each of the *constitutiones*. But when rhetoric is given authority over the material, it brings in its tool with it: it applies the oration, with all its peculiar parts. So there will be in each *constitutio* an exordium, a narration, and so on. And when the instrument is brought into play, it in turn adds its own function to the civil question; it will, therefore, teach and persuade concerning each *constitutio*. But none of these elements can enter the picture unless there is someone to move them, like an operator or an architect. This person, then, is the orator, who comes into the case and makes it his own project. Therefore he must speak well in every manner of case and in every *constitutio*. The orator also must seek his goal, both to speak well on every *constitutio* and to persuade as well.

We have treated in this discussion, now, everything about rhetoric in general terms. Later, if it is possible, we shall go into greater detail about each item separately.⁵

⁵Whether Boethius carried out this promise is not certain. There are no extant tracts about the subjects he has discussed; however, we do have his short treatise on the rhetorical places, as well as tracts on some of the works of Aristotle and Cicero. [Tr.]

Anonymous

fl. ca. 1135

Ars dictaminis is usually translated as the “art of letter writing.” Early in the medieval period, this art was assumed to apply to any written text—that is, any text dictated to a scribe, as written texts usually were. As such, it could have referred to the composition of poems, sermons, and other sorts of texts as well as letters. Later in the medieval period, however, the phrase came to refer to the composition of letters only, and this is how it is generally used today. Separate arts arose for the composition of poems (see p. 503) and sermons (see p. 525). Until the very end of the medieval period, the texts covered by all these arts were usually written in Latin, not in the various vernaculars of the composers.

If a literary discipline devoted exclusively to letter writing seems strange to modern readers, they should realize that from classical times and throughout the medieval period letters were regarded as important compositions. Letters might be more informal and intimate than public documents and orations, but given the high costs of acquiring literacy and preparing and preserving writing materials, letters were never treated quite so casually as they are today. The private correspondence of noted authors was collected and published. For example, Cicero’s letters were widely read and imitated, Paul’s letters achieved canonical status in the Christian New Testament, and the letters of Church leaders such as Augustine and Gregory the Great were treated as important theological statements.

Moreover, letters took on significant legal and political functions as the Roman Empire declined and illiterate rulers came to control most of Europe. Letters written for a monarch, such as those that Cassiodorus and Boethius (p. 486) composed for Theodoric, became the only record of many governmental transactions. Such letters had to express official positions clearly and thoroughly and to record the relative status of all parties involved in the transaction, by means of carefully graded salutations and the learning displayed in the body of the letter. Collections of model letters helped scribes meet these requirements. One such early collection was the *Variae* of Cassiodorus (d. 585 C.E.), and other collections survive from the 800s and 900s.

A full-fledged *ars dictaminis*, or art of letter writing, did not emerge until after 1000 C.E. With the establishment of a separate Roman Catholic Church (1054), the jurisdiction of the Church administration (the Curia) increased, along with the need to produce documents legislating Church doctrine and government. In the secular world, too, as commerce grew and feudal governments formed, civil law, like canon law, increased its range of control and its need for documentation. Also, the laws became more complicated as their range spread, necessitating more accurate written records. Scholars in the Benedictine abbey of Monte Cassino, one of the oldest Christian institutions in Europe, brought classical learning to the problem of refining letter writing for Church purposes. In the 1080s, one of these monks, Alberic, produced two seminal treatises on style and form in letters. These treatises, which show the influence of Cicero, draw illustrative examples from classical prose and

poetry. Alberic's *Breviarium de Dictamine* encourages the use of rhythmic Latin, which would develop into a formal rhythmic style used for letters, the *cursus*. Alberic's pupil John of Gaeta would make the *cursus* standard in letters of the Curia when he became Pope Gelasius II. Alberic's *Dictaminum Rarii* moves beyond providing model letters to discussing how to compose letters, giving attention to tropes and figures.

In developing this method, Alberic draws heavily on Cicero. Cicero had listed six parts of a speech: *exordium* (introduction), *narratio* (background information), *divisio* (outline of parts of the upcoming argument), *confirmatio* (argument or proof), *refutatio* (rebuttal of opposing arguments), and *peroratio* (conclusion). Alberic insists that what Cicero says of speech can also be applied to writing. This makes sense given the fact that official letters were usually read aloud by, or to, their recipient, often in front of an audience of courtiers or counselors. Alberic reduces the parts of the letter to four: *exordium*, *narratio*, *argumentatio*, and *conclusio*. He says very little about the *argumentatio* and *conclusio* and recommends brevity as the chief virtue of the *narratio*. He devotes most of his attention to the *exordium*, which he embellishes with a *salutatio* preceding the *exordium* proper.

This emphasis is appropriate because Alberic is concerned primarily with letters that do not make arguments but rather state official positions or make official requests (hence a later name for the *argumentatio*, the *petitio*). His main concern, then, is to prepare the reader or hearer to accept the letter's pronouncement or act on its request. Alberic concentrates on how to use the two opening sections to make the recipient "attentive, docile, and well-disposed," the Ciceronian goals for the *exordium*. One of Alberic's phrases became a later synonym for the *exordium* performing this function: the *captatio benevolentiae*.

Secular authors quickly began to produce treatises on letter writing, particularly in Bologna, where such works were associated with legal studies at the university. Increasingly, however, they did not show Alberic's strong grounding in classical rhetoric and classical literature. They focused more narrowly on the legal forms to be observed in official documents and presented the material schematically, with fewer classical allusions or lengthy appendixes of contemporary model letters. One Italian master of the genre, Boncompagno (d. ca. 1240), asserted (incorrectly) that he never even mentioned Cicero in his lectures.

The anonymous *Rationes Dictandi*, or *The Principles of Letter Writing* (excerpted here), produced in Bologna ca. 1135, is typical of this later focus. Such manuals were used not only by practicing notaries but also by university students who studied them in conjunction with lessons from a *dictator*, a master of letter writing. The manual refreshes their memory of the lectures and provides basic guidelines. This kind of manual spread quickly into France and Germany, and the art of letter writing dominated rhetoric instruction in continental schools from about 1150 to 1350. In France, where Orleans became a center of the *ars dictaminis* that rivaled Bologna, the style recommended in the manuals remained more embellished and classically influenced than in Italy. The French introduced the *cursus*, already being used in Church writings, into secular documents. In Germany imitating model letters was emphasized more than elsewhere. In England, however, the *ars dictaminis*

spread more slowly. Before the fourteenth century, few English scholars attempted to compose their own treatises on letter writing, and the art was known mostly through Italian works.

The art of letter writing was generally regarded as a rhetorical art, not, perhaps, because classical rhetoricians such as Cicero influenced mature Italian versions of these treatises, but because the treatises dealt with verbal compositions—usually presented orally—that were intended to move people to action, to persuade in a special sense. Moreover, the artful letter exhibited rhetorical tropes and figures and was written in a rhythmic style, allowing even for some rapprochement between the art of letter writing and the art of poetry writing, which developed somewhat later. Medievalist Martin Camargo has traced these confluences in the work of Geoffrey of Vinsauf (p. 503), author of the best-known manual of poetry writing. According to historian of education Louis Paetow, he taught the *ars dictaminis* at Bologna and even wrote a manual on it for his students.

Because the art of letter writing was taught in medieval universities, it might be presumed to be the exclusive province of men, who made up the overwhelming majority of university students. As medievalist Malcolm Richardson has shown, however, women often participated in business affairs in the Middle Ages, and thus might learn from experience what was required in formal letter writing. Working-class women might be members of craft guilds and might participate in drawing up the guild's official correspondence. Middle-class women could assist in running the family business, composing the correspondence necessary to that task. Upper-class women might have heavy responsibilities for managing the family estates, again with attendant correspondence, especially when their husbands were absent on military or political business. As Richardson shows, extant letter collections demonstrate women's ability to practice this genre even without university instruction, although they apparently wrote most often in vernacular languages, not Latin.

At many medieval universities, instruction in "rhetoric" came to be exclusively instruction in the art of letter writing. Masters of this art, the *dictatores*, sometimes also taught other verbal arts, such as the study of tropes and figures in poetry traditionally associated with the work of the grammarian (see headnote to Geoffrey of Vinsauf, p. 503). At some universities, too, rhetoric teaching that did not involve the *ars dictaminis* still took place—students studied commentaries on Cicero, Boethius, or Aristotle or schematic representations of classical rhetoric such as Martianus Capella's. It could be said that the *ars dictaminis* emphasized the practical application of rhetoric over theoretical considerations and that this practical orientation became increasingly dominant.

Over the next two hundred years, strengthening this trend, the *ars dictaminis* was gradually absorbed by law. Treatises became increasingly formulaic, finally reaching a point where a letter could be assembled from sections in the manual, without any original content. This development brought the art of letter writing more and more in line with the technical knowledge of the notary, which was concerned with the physical format of documents; how they looked, rather than how they sounded, became increasingly important. After 1300, little new work was done on letter writing, although old manuals continued to be used. Interest now centered on the notary

and on legal studies generally, although letter writing continued to be taught as a separate university subject, at least at Bologna.

In the Renaissance, letters came to be regarded as more informal and intimate (although still important) compositions, as they had been in earlier, classical times. By the fifteenth century, Renaissance scholar Ronald Witt argues, Italian humanists were openly using classical models for public oratory and private letters written in Latin, and the vernacular languages were also increasingly employed in public and private genres. If the *ars dictaminis* still dominated official documents, such documents themselves were beginning to wane in power as more diplomatic and trade agreements were conducted by face-to-face negotiation. The form of letters came to be treated in etiquette manuals, as it still is today.

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Little material from medieval treatises on letter writing exists in English translation. *Readings in Medieval Rhetoric* (ed. Joseph M. Miller, Michael H. Prosser, and Thomas W. Benson, 1973) contains an excerpt from the work of Alberic of Monte Cassino. James J. Murphy has translated about half of a medieval manual on the art of letter writing: Anonymous, *The Principles of Letter Writing* (in *Three Medieval Rhetorical Arts*, ed. James J. Murphy, 1971). His translation is excerpted here. Joseph Purkart has translated *Rota Veneris* by Boncompagno da Signa (1975), and Ann Dalzell has translated *Introductiones Dictandi* by Transmundus (1995).

The best introduction to the medieval *ars dictaminis* is in James J. Murphy's *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages* (1974). A good overview can also be found in Martin Camargo, *Ars Dictaminis, Ars Dicandi* (Typologies des sources du moyen âge occidental, fasc. 60, 1991). Earlier and later periods in the development of the genre are covered, respectively, in William D. Patt, "The Early *Ars Dictaminis* as Response to a Changing Society" (*Viator* 9 [1978]: 133–55), and Ronald Witt, "Medieval *Ars Dictaminis* and the Beginnings of Humanism: A New Construction of the Problem" (*Renaissance Quarterly* 35 [1982]: 1–35). An engaging essay that illustrates the use of model letters is Charles H. Haskins's "The Life of Mediæval Students as illustrated by their Letters" [Haskins's capitals] (in *Studies in Mediæval Culture*, 1929). For a greater emphasis on the social context of letter writing, see Sidney J. Hill Jr., "Dictamen: That Bastard of Literature and Law" (*Central States Speech Journal* 24 [1973]: 17–24).

Martin Camargo traces the relations between the arts of letter writing and poetry writing in "Toward a Comprehensive Art of Written Discourse: Geoffrey of Vinsauf and the *Ars Dictaminis*" (*Rhetorica* 6 [spring 1988]: 167–94).

On the place of the *ars dictaminis* in university instruction, see Louis Paetow, *The Arts Course at Medieval Universities with Special Reference to Grammar and Rhetoric* (1910); for an analysis that modifies Paetow and traces the influence of the *ars* on early humanism, see Helene Wieruszowski, "Rhetoric and the Classics in Italian Education of the Thirteenth Century" (in *Politics and Culture in Medieval Spain and Italy*, 1971).

On medieval women's participation in the *ars dictaminis*, see Malcolm Richardson, "Women, Commerce, and Rhetoric in Medieval England" (in *Listening to Their Voices: The Rhetorical Activities of Historical Women*, ed. Molly Meijer Wertheimer, 1997).

From *The Principles of Letter Writing*

I. PREFACE

We are urged by the persistent requests of teachers to draw together in a brief space some certain points about the principles of letter writing. But we ask that the expert should not laugh, that the spiteful tooth of the envious should not bite, and that the unskilled in the art should not back away—for after all, even if the fullness of the moon is wanting, this undertaking is not on that account useless in every part.¹ Therefore let honest men hear honestly what is here honestly set forth, and by hearing understand, and lock what they understand securely in the treasure box of the heart. And even let those who are advanced in this art add in some other points, just as grain is thrown by the handful on the threshing floor for the sake of separating it out.

II. WHAT A WRITTEN COMPOSITION SHOULD BE

A written composition is a setting-forth of some matter in writing, proceeding in a suitable order. Or, a written composition is a suitable and fitting treatment of some matter, adapted to the matter itself. Or a written composition is a suitable and fitting written statement about something, either memorized or declared by speech or in writing.

Now, some written compositions are metrical, others rhythmic, others prosaic.²

Translated by James J. Murphy.

¹This type of flamboyant opening, often using multiple metaphors, is common to the authors of the *ars dictaminis*. Note for instance the “treasure box” and “threshing floor” metaphors later in the same paragraph. Nevertheless the actual text of the treatise is quite sober and businesslike. For an interesting study of this phenomenon see Ernst Kantorowicz, “An ‘Autobiography’ of Guido Faba,” *Medieval and Renaissance Studies* I (1941), 253–80. The Medieval tradition goes back at least to the fifth-century writer Martianus Capella, who introduces a dry compendium of rhetorical theory with a fanciful account of “Lady Rhetoric” in his encyclopedic *The Marriage of Philology and Mercury* (Latin text, *De Nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii*, ed. Wilhelm Dick, Leipsiz, 1925). [Tr.]

²This three-part division was to become standard in the

A metrical composition is a written presentation which is properly distinguished by prescribed measures of feet and duration.

A rhythmic composition is one which is bound together syllabically according to a fixed numerical rule.

But since it is our intention to treat only prose composition, let us describe more carefully what it is and how it should be written.

A prose composition is a written presentation ignoring the measures of meter, and proceeding in a continuous and suitable order. Now, here let us describe the proper meaning of this first term, for, in Greek, *proson* is said to be “continuous.” Then, we say that a written statement is “suitable” in which we treat the subject under discussion in words ordered according to the grammatical rules for prose or poetry.

Let us now examine particularly how to fashion this kind of composition, either in an approved and basic format or in accordance with circumstances.

The terms “approved and basic” (*recta et simpliciter*) are used at this point because the words of the writer might reach even the least educated or the most ignorant persons; for example, for this purpose I might say: “O loyal one and most beloved, I well believe that it is known to you what great trust I have in you concerning all my affairs.”

By the term “accordance with circumstances” we mean a method for the more experienced writers. It is an apt accordance, a set of words ordered in a way different from ordinary syntax; it must by all means be made harmonious and clear, that is, like a flowing current.

Although we could discuss a correct arrange-

middle ages. Another Italian writer, Thomas of Capua (d. 1239), added the names of writers as examples to set up a widely-used statement on the subject: “There are three kinds of writing known from of old: prosaic as in Cassiodorus, metrical as in Virgil, rhythmical as in Primatis.” Thomas’s text is edited by Emmy Heller, in *Die Ars dictandi des Thomas von Capua* (Heidelberg, 1929). [Tr.]

ment of words at this point, even though that will be decided more by the ear than anyone's teaching could explain, nevertheless we have enough to do here simply to provide some form of introduction to those untrained in this art.

III. THE DEFINITION OF A LETTER

An epistle or letter, then, is a suitable arrangement of words set forth to express the intended meaning of its sender. Or in other words, a letter is a discourse composed of coherent yet distinct parts signifying fully the sentiments of its sender.

IV. THE PARTS OF A LETTER

There are, in fact, five parts of a letter: the Salutation, the Securing of Goodwill, the Narration, the Petition, and the Conclusion.

V. WHAT THE SALUTATION IS

The Salutation is an expression of greeting conveying a friendly sentiment not inconsistent with the social rank of the persons involved.

Now, every salutation is said to be either "prescribed," "subscribed," or "circumscribed."

It is said to be "prescribed" if the name of the recipient is written first, followed by those things which are joined with that person's name, in this manner: "To *G*——, the most intimate of friends and the most eminent in the glory of all worthiness, *F*——, the student of letters who is ever so slow yet is also persistent, expresses greetings and the feeling of warm affection."

Next, a salutation is called "subscribed" if the name of the recipient is placed at the end, with those things which are joined with it coming before in such a way that the name is as clearly revealed in the preceding salutation as it would be if the whole were written in the opposite order.

A salutation is said to be "circumscribed" if the name of the recipient is written in several places in this way: "To Innocentius, revered in Christ our Lord, by the grace of God the highest Pontiff and universal Pope of all the holy church, *R*——, the bishop of Verona conveys due reverence in Christ."

What Should Be Included in a Salutation

Next, we must consider carefully how somewhere in the Salutation we want some additions to be made to the names of the recipients; above all, these additions should be selected so that they point to some aspect of the recipient's renown and good character.

Now, if we want to add something to the names of the senders, let it at least be made suitable, since it should be chosen to indicate humility and certainly not pride. It is therefore necessary for us to be guided by the ranks of the persons involved in such a way that, as often as names of ecclesiastical ranks or professional status are joined with the names of the senders, they will be qualified by added phrases so that through them no pride whatsoever is displayed; for example, if it is a clerk or someone of ecclesiastical status, he should always be titled thus: "Johannes, clerk" or "deacon" or "bishop" or "abbot," . . . "although unworthy" or "undeserving" or "sinful." In secular positions or offices, of course, it is not necessary for it to be done in this way, if we say for instance: "*N*——, friend of the Tuscans," or "*N*——, Duke of Venice," or "Marshall of Tusca" and the like.³

Next, it should be noted in regard to salutations that the names of the recipients should always be placed before the names of the senders, whether with all their adjectives in the dative case or, likewise with all their adjectives in the accusative, unless—and only when—a more important man is writing to a less important man. For then the name of the sender should be placed first, so that his distinction is demonstrated by the very position of the names.⁴

³The author frequently uses the letter *N* to stand for "Name" (*nomen*) indicating that the letter writer can fill in whatever name suits his particular purpose when writing. [Tr.]

⁴While the complex matter of case endings is difficult to understand because of the differences between Latin and English, it is important as a further indication of the great stress placed on the exact shadings of meaning used to point out the social relationships between recipient and writer. The gist of the admonition is that if you address someone in the dative case (English: "to John"), then you are obliged to end the whole Salutation with a declined word of either objective case, possessive case, or case of agency. [Tr.]

Now, when the name of the recipient is written with its adjectives in the dative case, then without fail we should end the salutations with declined words; that is, they should be added in the accusative or genitive or in a strong ablative, according to the discretion of the writer. A salutation is concluded in the accusative when we say: *salutem et intime dilectionis affectum* ("greeting, and of profound pleasure the feeling"). If, on the other hand, we should change the order, the salutation is concluded in the genitive, as we would say: *affectum intime dilectionis* ("feeling of profound pleasure"). It will conclude in the ablative if we add: *cum salute perenni* ("with continuing greeting") or something similar.

But if we write the names of the recipients with all their adjectives in the accusative case, it is absolutely necessary that we close the salutation itself with infinitives or in some way in which its words are related to the infinitive construction; for instance: "Gregorius, by divine grace, resplendent in the splendors of universal wisdom, *N*— wishes to live in happy prosperity and to abound always in success in the future," or "to carry on with continued success"—implying in this salutation, of course, the word "hopes" or "wishes" or "desires," just as in another salutation the word "sends" or "directs" or "entrusts" would be implied.

Next, let us show briefly what is proper in salutations sent to all sorts of persons.

Of course, among all people some are outstanding; others are inferior, and still others just in between. Now, people are said to be "outstanding" to whom no superiors are found, like the Pope or the Emperor.

Therefore, when a letter-writer (*dictator*) undertakes to write, and the difference between the ranks of the persons involved is known, he must take into consideration from the first whether the purpose is for one man to write to one other man, or for one to write to several, or several to one, or several to several; and whether equal is writing to equal, inferior to superior, or superior to inferior.

Next, the kind of subject must be considered, so that the writer may fashion the salutation with words suitable and prescribed according to it.

Next, the writer should know what is fitting to

be attached to the names of the persons involved, as for instance the proper ending of any salutation.

If one man is writing to one or several, or several to one or several, and the writing happens to be among equals, or from inferiors to superiors, the names of the recipients should be placed first, in the order of the salutation, in the dative or accusative case with their adjectives. The names of the senders, on the other hand, with their corresponding adjectives, should be placed last, in the nominative case. But if superiors are writing to inferiors, the names of the senders should be placed first so that their rank may be indicated by the sequence of the writing itself.

The Salutations of a Ruler to the Pope and of Every Subject to the Prelates

Furthermore, if the salutation is ever directed to the Pope from the Emperor himself, or from some man of ecclesiastical rank, it is best for it to be sent in the following form or one like it: "To the venerable in the Lord and Christ *N*—, by the grace of God highest and universal Bishop of all the Holy Church, *N*— by the grace of God august ruler of the Romans," or "*N*—, priest of the Ravenna church, although unworthy, expresses due reverence in Christ," or "steadfastness of due obedience," "stewardship of due reverence," "allegiance of due servitude," or "obedience of due allegiance."

Now, these salutations or ones similar to them are fittingly sent among ecclesiastics, at least from subordinates to prelates, and "in Christ" or "in the Lord Jesus Christ" must always be added.

In fact, there are particular terms which we are accustomed to put in salutations of this kind: "reverence," "allegiance," "devotion," "obedience," "servitude," and "servanthood."

And from these nouns adjectives should be developed which are similar to the nouns, and should be included in the salutation in the manner written above.⁵

⁵This idea is taken from medieval grammar which developed the ancient idea of word change (*metaplasmus*) into a highly complex pattern of word variation called Transsumption (*transsumptio*). For an example of its use in verse writing see Geoffrey of Vinsauf's *New Poetics*. [Tr.]

The Pope's Universal Salutation

"Bishop Innocentius, servant of the servants of God⁶ in His beloved son Christ, to *N*——, august emperor of the Romans, sends greetings and papal blessings."

The Emperor's Salutations to All Men

"*N*——, august emperor of the Romans by the grace of God, expresses friendship and good wishes to the Bishop of Faventia," or "to the Earl of Pictava," or "to the people of Pisa."

But when any bishop or duke or people of any city writes to the emperor, the following things or ones like them should be added in conjunction with the name of the ruler: "To the renowned, most excellent, most invincible, most eminent conqueror and always august emperor of the Romans, *C*——, *N*——, archbishop of Pisa, though unworthy, expresses his due obedience in Christ," or something similar to the forms above.

Salutations of Ecclesiastical among Themselves

"*N*——, by the grace of God bishop of the holy church of Bologna, although unworthy, sends unceasing good wishes in Christ," or "greeting in Christ eternal," fraternal greetings and prayers in the Lord," "desires an increase of fraternal goodwill and love," "expresses a feeling of brotherly affection," or "sends greetings and heartfelt prayers in the Lord."

Now, it may happen that prelates have reverend persons under their authority to whom not "blessings" but "greetings and an increase of true" or "sincere" or "pure piety" should be written.

Principally to Monks

"... An increase of true piety in Christ," "the reward of holy conversation," "the reward of eternal bliss."

For truly, in writing to monks we are accus-

⁶This standard formula "servant of the servants of God" (*servus servorum dei*) is still used by the Pope. [Tr.]

tomed to make mention always of "piety" or "holy conversation."

Salutations of Prelates to Their Subordinates

"*N*——, by the grace of God bishop of the holy church of Bologna, although unworthy, sends to *P*——, servant of the church of Holy Mary, greetings and blessings," "greetings and an increase of blessings," or "blessings in the Lord with good wishes."

For, indeed, it is always customary for ecclesiastical prelates in their salutations to their subordinates to pronounce a blessing.

And it should also be noted that the same prelates of churches, even if they are writing to subordinates who are under their own authority, do not send "blessings" to them unless they are priests; "greetings with a feeling of friendship" or whatever is appropriate are sent between friends. If, on the other hand, they are not priests, they should be sent "greetings with a feeling of esteem."

In a letter of suspension, excommunication, or harsh reproof, they should write simply as follows: "*N*——, by the grace of God bishop of Faventia, to *N*——, an elder"—and nothing else, as "writes this letter" will be understood. If, however, it is necessary to convey a warning, the salutation should say "greetings according to merit," or "favor where it is considered deserved," or "friendship which is deserved by worthiness," or "greetings as they can be deservedly bestowed."

Whoever would wish to know the salutations suitable from subordinates to prelates, would learn that there are six words appropriate to the composition of these: "allegiance," "reverence," "obedience," "devotion," "servitude," and "servanthood." And to whichever of these we could use, we would add an adjective which suits it: adding "due allegiance," or "veneration," or inserting "in Christ," or "in the Lord," or "in Jesus Christ," or "in the Lord Jesus Christ" in this way: "due veneration in Christ," or "due allegiance in Christ Jesus."

Now if we should want to vary the form, the accusatives should be changed to genitives, and

whichever of the things mentioned above that would be suitable should be added on, so that we would say: "the servitude," or "allegiance of due veneration in Christ," or "the veneration of due servitude in the Lord."

We may make these as humble as we might suitably wish, as in "the most devoted veneration in Christ," or "the servitude of the most devoted veneration"; moreover, "in Christ Jesus," or "in those who are of Christ" might also be added.

Salutations among Noblemen, Princes, and Secular Clergy

"To the vigorous soldier and noble friend, Earl *N*——, *P*——, the Duke of Venice, sends greetings and wishes for every good fortune," "greetings and warm affection," or "uninterrupted affection with unceasing good wishes," if perhaps one of these forms is suitable to be sent between these men. The following passage will show which forms are clearly appropriate to be sent between comrades and friends.

Salutations of Close Friends or Associates

"To *N*——, the closest of friends," or "the most beloved of comrades," or "the dearest of favorites," or "bound to one another by a mutual union of affection," or "linked together by an indissoluble chain of affection," or "*N*——, devoted to the study of letters, sends greetings and a feeling of warm affection," "the affection of warm feeling with unceasing good wishes," "steadfastness of personal fellowship," "the sweetness of the dearest friendship," "the constancy of sincere goodwill," or "the sweetness of imperishable love."

Another example of uniting in friendship: "Guido, already bound by a sincere bond of affection, *N*——, follower of the profession of logician, wishes to be bound further to him by a mutual chain of affection and to be disturbed by no hostility, wishes him to live forever and to abound in all good things, to live always honorably and never to cease in his affection, to possess always wisely a happy life, and to hold always more firmly to the rightful ways."

These salutations are also sent appropriately to comrades or close friends, since the different ranks of these persons can be indicated by a rather easy variation. For where, "Guido, already bound by a sincere bond of affection" is written, "friendship" or "fellowship" or "brotherhood" could be written where "of affection" is written, in whichever way the truth of the matter will require.

Salutations of Subjects to Their Secular Lords

When secular subordinates write a salutation to their lords, they should not under any circumstances say "veneration" or "allegiance," but should say instead "service," "compliance," "servitude," "loyalty," "subordination," and the like.

"To his most beloved lord" or else "to his most pre-eminently esteemed and most worthy excellency," "*N*——, his loyal servant" or "his devoted follower" or "subject to him in all things," "declares his loyal servitude," "earnestness in the highest loyalty," "obedience of due servitude," "servanthood of due obedience," "loyalty and all manner of servitude," "servitude in the warmest loyalty," and the like.

Salutations of These Same Lords to Their Subordinates

"*N*——, son of Guido, *N*——, loyal servant" or "devoted follower," "sends greetings and goodwill," "greetings and enduring good wishes," "goodwill and every support," "unceasing assistance, with greetings," and the like.

Salutations of Lords to Blamable and Offending Subordinates

"*N*——, bishop of Faventia although unworthy, to John, presbyter of the church of Holy Mary, sends greetings and pardon according to merit," "greetings as they have been deserved," "pardon insofar as it is considered deserved," or "greetings proportionate to his iniquity" and the like.

The Salutation of a Teacher to His Pupil

"N——, promoter of the scholastic profession, wishes N——, his most dear friend and companion, to acquire the teachings of all literature, to possess fully all the diligence of the philosophical profession, to pursue not folly but the wisdom of Socrates and Plato."

The Salutation of a Pupil to His Teacher

"To N——, by divine grace resplendent in Ciceronian Charm,⁷ N——, inferior to his devoted learning, expresses the servitude of a sincere heart," or "always obedient honorable service," or some other phrase corresponding to those suitable to be sent from subordinates to prelates.

What Should Be Included in Parents' Salutations to Their Sons

In salutations which are sent out of a feeling of love from parents to their sons, we are accustomed always to put the term "blessings"; this is stipulated since it is written: "The obedience of sons gladdens their parents, and the sons are always enriched by their blessings."

Salutations of Parents to Their Sons

"Peter the father and Mary the mother, to John their most beloved son, send parental blessings with their greetings," or "fresh greetings and eternal blessings."

Salutations of Sons to their Parents

On the other hand, a salutation of a son to his parents should by all means be one which is described above as appropriate to be sent to superiors by subordinates, as for example, "filial veneration with love," "servitude of filial veneration," and the like.

⁷Cicero was popularly acknowledged in the Latin middle ages as "Master of Eloquence" (*magister eloquentiae*) even by those who had never read his rhetorical works or seen the widely distributed collections of his speeches. See James J. Murphy, "Cicero's Rhetoric in the Middle Ages," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 53 (1967), 334-41. [Tr.]

Salutations of Delinquent Sons to the Same Parents

"To Peter and Mary his parents, N——, once their son but now deprived of filial affection," "once dear to them but now without cause become worthless, does whatever he can though he seems to be able to do nothing."

Another example: "To N——, most beloved lord," or "dearest father" or "relation" or "brother" or "comrade," "N——, shackled by iron chains" or "subjected to the harshest confinement of prison" or "tied by heavy bonds," "sends wishes for all manner of good fortune which he himself utterly lacks," "sends wishes with his greetings for all the prosperity he does not have," and the like.

Considerations in Salutations

It is necessary to reflect carefully at this point so that we may apply ourselves to preparing several such letter salutations as will be appropriate to the subject we are going to take up later in the letter.

For instance, if someone wanted to chide someone else who seemed to have deserted good customs and devoted himself to vicious ones, he should express his greetings thus: "Alderic, indecently devoting himself to vicious conduct and presenting himself otherwise than is proper, N——, his brother" or "once his close friend," "advises him to abandon vices altogether and to return to the pursuit of honor."

Another Consideration

Furthermore it is a custom to take the material of the salutation from the name of the recipient in such a way that we urge him to greater goodwill.⁸ In this way, for example, if he is called Benedictus or Gratianus or Johannes (which means "grace of God"), or Benignus or Amatus or some similar names, we can begin in someone's salutation as follows:

To Benedictus by name: "To the man of all

⁸Note that Geoffrey of Vinsauf begins his Preface to the *New Poetics* with a play on the name of Pope Innocent III. [Tr.]

wisdom by divine grace, Benedictus by grace, Benedictus by name, Benedictus even by deed, *N*—offers loyal service and wishes the protection of divine blessings.”

The Gratianus by name: “Gratianus, resplendent by divine grace both in deeds and in honors, *N*—wishes to be uplifted always by divine grace and not ever to be disturbed by any evil.”

To any whatsoever: “Maximus” or “Honorius” or “Odorius, blessed with invigorating spirits,” or “Desiderius, desirable according to the meaning of his name itself, *N*—wishes to flourish in prosperous successes and to shine forth in the fame of all honor.”

VI. THE SECURING OF GOODWILL

Now that these things have been explained, especially the varieties of salutations, let us turn to the Securing of Goodwill. The Securing of Goodwill (*benevolentiae captatio*) in a letter is a certain fit ordering of words effectively influencing the mind of the recipient.

Now this may be secured in a letter in five ways: from the person sending the letter, or from the person receiving it, or by both at once, or from the effect of circumstances, or from the matter at hand.

Goodwill will be secured by the person sending the letter if he mentions humbly something about his achievements or his duties or his motives.

On the other hand, it will be secured according to the person receiving the letter when not only the humility of the sender but also the praises of the recipient are duly indicated.

Goodwill will be secured also from the effect of circumstances if something is added which would be appropriate to both persons involved, or which would be in the purpose of things, or could be suitably or reasonably connected to goodwill, such as “intimacy,” “affection,” “fellowship,” “familiarity,” “lordship and service,” “fatherly feeling and filial feeling,” and the like.

In any case, goodwill will be secured from the matter at hand if the extent of its future importance is openly set forth. That kind of securing of goodwill is also used in the conclusion of a letter.

If however the situation arises for a combative letter to be written, that is, for enemies or opponents, the goodwill could in fact be sought in it according to the persons of the adversaries, namely in that fashion which Cicero introduces in his *Books on Rhetoric*; ⁹ this method should be used, by all means, if we would lead our opponents into hatred, jealousy, or contention. If the matter at hand is honorable, or if the auditor is known to be friendly, we should seek goodwill immediately and clearly; if it is not honorable, we should use indirection and dissimulation. As a matter of fact, opponents are led into hatred if their disgraceful deeds are cited with cruel pride; into jealousy if their bearing is said to be insolent and insupportable; and into contention if their cowardice or debauchery is exposed.

Besides, very often the largest part of the securing of goodwill is in the course of the salutation itself. For that reason we should devise our letters in such a way that whenever the humility of the sender or the merits of the recipient are advanced at large in the salutation, we should either begin the rest of the letter immediately with the narration or with the petition, or we should point out our own goodwill rather briefly and modestly.

Also, in the remaining parts of the letter a not inconsiderable goodwill is expressed again and again—such as in certain names indicating the honor or glory of the recipient’s office or rank. The recipient himself would be called many times “father” or “lord” or “eminent pontiff” or “noble duke” or “closest of comrades” according to the principles of variation noted earlier.

⁹Probably Cicero’s *De Inventione*, which includes a discussion of means for countering prejudice or hostility in an audience (I. xvii). However, the same material appears in the pseudo-Ciceronian *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (I. v.). Both works were readily available in twelfth-century Bologna. [Tr.]

Geoffrey of Vinsauf

fl. ca. 1200

The life of Geoffrey of Vinsauf is known primarily through autobiographical references in four works on language use. These are the *Poetria Nova* (excerpted here; written between 1200 and 1216); the *Documentum de Modo et Arte Dictandi et Versificandi* (covering in prose the same material as the *Poetria*, and probably written at about the same time), the *Summa de Coloribus Rhetoricis* (a list of tropes and figures), and the *Causa Magistri Gaufredi Vinesauf* (a short poem). According to historian of rhetoric James J. Murphy, Geoffrey's surname derives from the title of a small treatise he wrote on the preservation of wines. He was an Englishman who studied in Paris and taught in Hampton, England, and possibly also in Bologna. At some point he journeyed to Rome, although it is unlikely he ever met Pope Innocent III, to whom the *Poetria* is dedicated. Geoffrey's *Poetria Nova* was apparently the most popular of the *ars poetriae*, or manuals of poetry writing, that flourished in Europe from around 1170 to around 1280. Medievalist Douglas Kelly says that over two hundred manuscripts of Geoffrey's work exist from all over Europe, as opposed to forty-three for the next most popular author, Eberhard the German. Furthermore, Geoffrey's text itself was the subject of numerous commentaries that have also survived.

As Kelly points out, calling treatises like Geoffrey's "arts of poetry" is somewhat misleading, for these works usually also discuss prose that uses figures or rhythmic patterns. Poetry and prose were not as sharply distinguished in the Middle Ages as they are today; both were intended to persuade, and the important distinction was whether the persuasion was to be undertaken orally or in writing. The treatises on poetry writing focused on ornaments for written texts, whether verse or prose, but might also give some attention to the larger formal concerns of the *ars dictaminis*, or arts of letter writing (see p. 492), which dealt primarily with the prose of official letters. Overlap was appropriate because the documents discussed by the *ars dictaminis* were ornamented with figurative language, as well as being written in a rhythmic form of prose called the *cursus*. Geoffrey's *Documentum* differs from the *Poetria Nova* in adding some attention to letter writing.

The treatises on poetry writing usually concentrate on instruction concerning tropes and figures, verse form, and the construction of rhythmic prose styles; the content varies, in part according to the level of student addressed and the degree to which all five canons of classical rhetoric are acknowledged. Geoffrey's treatise goes further than most by giving at least brief attention to invention, arrangement, memory, and delivery as well as style. Murphy suggests that Geoffrey probably thought of himself as a grammarian, not a rhetorician. For the most part, the manuals of poetry writing codified the teaching of medieval grammarians. At the same time, the boundaries between grammar and rhetoric were blurred, and depending on the age and ability of the students, the grammarian might well introduce rhetorical matters, or even alternate teaching personae as grammarian or as rhetorician.

Grammar was always the beginning subject in the verbal liberal arts in the Middle Ages, whether followed by dialectic, as in the classical scheme, or rhetoric, as was increasingly the medieval practice. Dialectic gained prominence as supposedly the most advanced of these arts. Although grammarians worked usually with younger students, they did more than teach correct Latin. In a typical lesson, the grammarian worked slowly through a section of classical poetry, analyzing its grammar and pointing out the parts of speech and how they were used, but also identifying any tropes and figures and explaining any historical or literary allusions. The students took notes on these lectures and were then asked to imitate the analyzed texts and compose original work to be read aloud or declaimed from memory. Medieval grammar classes, then, resembled today's English literature and composition classes. Students advanced their ability not only to read and write Latin (a second language for every educated person by 1000 C.E., if not sooner), but also to appreciate classical literature as well as the culture reflected in these works.

Before the manuals on poetry writing appeared, medieval grammarians had sometimes written commentaries on classical poets or on the Latin poet Horace's treatise on poetry writing, the *Ars Poetria*. But the manuals on poetry writing systematically summarize this kind of teaching. Their lists of tropes and figures are accompanied by illustrations drawn from classical literature or composed by the author, and sometimes, too, by references to Horace or Cicero. As necessary companion texts to his work, Geoffrey cites Horace, Cicero's *De Inventione*, and the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. Book IV of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (p. 243) was the source of the figures listed in the treatises on poetry writing by Geoffrey and others. Because more advanced students might also study the larger text structures with the grammarian, matters of form and arrangement are sometimes also treated in these works, as seen in the *Poetria Nova*. Clearly, as students advanced, their work became increasingly rhetorical, as they produced longer, more ambitious compositions. The blurred line between grammar and rhetoric at this level can be seen in Geoffrey's treatise, which acknowledges the importance of invention as a first step in composing, even if it gives little advice on how to invent, and which very briefly touches on memory and delivery at the end of the treatise (relevant topics in that much medieval poetry and prose was intended to be heard, not read).

As Geoffrey's work shows, the manuals on poetry writing often took care to differentiate among various organizational and stylistic options. For arrangement, students are advised that a text is composed in "natural order" if it narrates events in chronological order, or follows the geographical layout of the scene of the story, or uses something similar to the classical parts of a speech, in which an opening narration is followed by positive points, refutation of opponents, and conclusion. "Artificial orders" violate these conventions—one might begin a story in the middle of the action, for example. Concerning style, the student is told that in the proper "material style" the degree of ornateness corresponds to the social class of the people being discussed—more ornament is appropriate to noble subjects, and so on (this is the medieval adaptation of the classical high, middle, and low styles). The "ornata difficultas or gravitas," the difficult or grave style, uses tropes, especially metaphor, and was thought to be more suitable to upper-class material and to tragic themes.

The “ornata facilitas or levitas,” the facile or light style, uses figures and was deemed more suitable to middle- and lower-class material and to comedy. In general, ornamentation may be achieved by amplification, using tropes and figures that restate and elaborate, or by abbreviation, using figures—chiefly metaphors—that convey much in a few words.

The treatises on poetry writing were widely used as school texts to supplement the lessons of the grammarian, not only during the period when most were composed, but later on into the early Renaissance. Geoffrey’s text was particularly valued in the schools because he habitually exemplifies the techniques he describes, treating amplification at length and abbreviation briefly, and so on. In the late thirteenth century and after, material from the earlier treatises began to be adapted for texts on the vernacular languages. Chaucer acknowledges Geoffrey’s influence in a salute (possible exaggerated) in the *Nun’s Priest’s Tale*, and in *Troilus and Criseyde*, in which he uses Geoffrey’s opening analogy between the writer and an architect. The positive influence of Geoffrey lasted at least until the time of Erasmus (see p. 581), who equated him with Cicero, Quintilian, and Horace as a valuable source of literary training. Although the detail of the manuals on poetry writing may seem tedious to the modern reader, medieval and Renaissance writers found that these manuals produced good habits of composition that students could carry over into adult work.

Selected Bibliography

All of the extant *ars poetriae* have been translated into English, though not all of these translations have been published. A thorough listing of the available texts can be found in Douglas Kelly’s *The Arts of Poetry and Prose* (Typologies des sources du moyen âge occidental, fasc. 59, 1991). Well-regarded translations of the *Poetria Nova* include *The “Poetria Nova” and Its Sources in Early Rhetorical Doctrine* (1971), by Ernest Gallo, which reprints E. Faral’s edition of the original Latin text with facing English translation; “*Poetria Nova*” of Geoffrey of Vinsauf, by Sr. Margaret F. Nims (1967); and the translation excerpted here, by Jane Baltzell Kopp, in *Three Medieval Rhetorical Arts* (ed. James J. Murphy, 1971). Gallo’s edition also traces Geoffrey’s classical sources in detail.

James J. Murphy’s discussion of the *ars poetriae* in *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages* (1974), though now somewhat dated, is the best short introduction to the genre. Murphy’s account helpfully locates these works in the tradition of grammar study from classical times to their own day, and provides synopses of all the major treatises, including the *Poetria Nova*. Also extremely helpful is Kelly’s *The Arts of Poetry and Prose*. In addition to a thorough history of the genre, Kelly provides current bibliography on both primary and secondary sources, and an outline showing where in the major treatises can be found material on the five canons of rhetoric, the parts of a speech, particular tropes and figures, and special topics (e.g. “the student”).

An excellent short introduction to Geoffrey and the *Poetria Nova* is “Geoffrey of Vinsauf: Introduction” by O. B. Hardison Jr., in *Classical and Medieval Literary Criticism* (1974). Hardison’s introduction to the medieval section in the same volume covers forms of literary study from late classical times to the fourteenth century and helpfully locates the *ars poetriae* in this tradition. Martin Camargo discusses the relations between the arts of letter writing and poetry writing in “Toward a Comprehensive Art of Written Discourse: Geoffrey of Vinsauf and the *Ars Dictaminis*” (*Rhetorica* VI.2 [spring 1988]: 167–94).

For a better view of how Geoffrey's text would have been used in grammar classrooms of the day, see Marjorie Curry Woods, "Some Techniques of Teaching Rhetorical Poetics in the Schools of Medieval Europe" (in *Learning from the Histories of Rhetoric*, ed. Theresa Enos, 1993). Woods also shows how the sections of the *Poetria Nova* correspond to the five canons of classical rhetoric and the six parts of a classical speech.

From *Poetria Nova*

If a man has a house to build, his hand does not rush, hasty, into the very doing: the work is first measured out with his heart's inward plumb line, and the inner man marks out a series of steps beforehand, according to a definite plan; his heart's hand shapes the whole before his body's hand does so, and his building is a plan before it is an actuality.¹

Poetry herself may see in this analogy what law must be given to poets: let not the hand be in a rush toward the pen, nor the tongue be on fire to utter a word; commit not the management of either pen or tongue to the hands of chance, but let prudent thought (preceding action, in order that the work may fare better) suspend the offices of pen and tongue and discuss long with itself about the theme.

Let the mind's inner compass circumscribe the whole area of the subject matter in advance. Let a definite plan predetermine the area in which the pen will make its way or where it will fix its Gibraltar.²

Ever circumspect, assemble the whole work in the stronghold of your mind, and let it be first in the mind before it is in words.

When a plan has sorted out the subject in the secret places of your mind, then let Poetry come to clothe your material with words. Inasmuch as she comes to serve, however, let her prepare herself to be apt for the service of her mistress; let her be on guard, lest either a head of tousled hair, or a body clothed with rags, or any minor details

be displeasing. Neither let her spoil anything in one place by overdoing something in another: for if a single part turns out, in whatever manner, to be inept, the whole arrangement can attract blame from that quarter alone. A little gall makes all the honey bitter; a single blemish mars a whole face; therefore consult your material carefully, lest it deserve to dread reproaches.

Let the beginning of your poem, as if it were a courteous servant, welcome in the subject matter. Let the middle, as if it were a conscientious host, graciously provide it hospitality. Let the ending, as if it were a herald announcing the conclusion of a race, dismiss it with due respect. In each section, let everything in its own way do honor to the poem; neither let anything in any section sink or in any way suffer eclipse.

Now in order that your pen may not be uninformed as to what it may look for in the use of a plan, notice that the following discussion provides itself here in advance with a course based upon a plan.³ And since the ensuing discussion takes its own course from a plan, of primary importance is, from what boundary line the plan

³Geoffrey makes the point here that he is following his own advice and exemplifying it even as he writes. That is, he has determined in advance that his treatise will have four parts concerned respectively (as later appears more clearly), with where and how to begin; how to make particular parts of narrative material more or less prominent by augmenting or curtailing the amount of treatment accorded to them; how to enhance style by the use of figures of speech; and how to manage face and voice in oral delivery. This four-fold division is probably derived from classical rhetoric's four divisions (i.e., invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery), but obviously it represents a radical transformation of them: classical oratory was concerned with argument, deliberation, and panegyric almost exclusively; Geoffrey, on the other hand, is concerned with literary *narrative*. [Tr.]

Translated by Jane Baltzell Kopp.

¹With this whole passage, cf. Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*, I, 11. 1065-69. [Tr.]

²In the text, *Gades*, i.e. Cadiz or Gibraltar, traditionally metaphorical for a limit or terminus. [Tr.]

ought to run; the next concern, how to balance several weights against one another in the scale, if the *sententia*⁴ is to weigh out correctly; the third task,⁵ to insure that the herd of words is not wild but domesticated; the final labor, to see that a voice managed discreetly may enter the ears of the hearer and feed his hearing, being seasoned with matched spices of facial expression and gesture.

Arrangement's road is forked: on the one hand, it may labor up the footpath of art; on the other, it may follow nature's main street. The line of nature's avenue governs when the action and the words follow the same course and the discourse does not deviate from the natural order of events.⁶ The work proceeds along the footpath of art, on the other hand, if, as being more suitable, the plan places ensuing things first, or draws to the rear things intrinsically prior. But in the latter arrangement, neither do the things ensuing incur shame from what precedes (their order having been transposed), nor is what precedes shamed by those things that follow; on the contrary, without strife they take up their alternate positions, and freely, and in a spirit of good humor they cede to one another willingly. Skillful art so inverts the material that it does not pervert it; art transposes, in order that it may make the arrangement of the material better. More sophisticated than natural order is artistic order, and far preferable, however much permuted the arrangement be.

The first sort of order is barren, but the second branch is fertile; and from that origin one branch miraculously grows up into many, the single into

⁴This term, whose simple meaning is "sense, meaning, signification, idea, notion, proverb," etc. (and probably "theme" in a literary work) is perhaps used in a special sense in medieval literary theory. For extended discussion, see two articles by D. W. Robertson Jr.: "Historical Criticism," in *English Institute Essays: 1950*, ed. Alan S. Downer (New York, 1951), pp. 3–31, and "Some Medieval Literary Terminology, with Special Reference to Chrétien de Troyes," *Studies in Philology*, XLVIII (1951), 669–92. [Tr.]

⁵In the text, *studor*, i.e. "sweat." On sweat as a metaphor for literary composition, see Curtius, *op. cit.*, p. 468, n. 1. [Tr.]

⁶That is, as Geoffrey goes on to explain, the narrative poet may either keep to the natural temporal sequence of the events in his plot, or, for the order in which he presents them, he may permute the natural temporal sequence. [Tr.]

several, one into eight. Now in the area of this technique the air may seem to be dark, the path rugged, the doors closed, and the problem knotty. The following words, then, are doctors of this malady: ponder them. There will be found the means by which you may cleanse the shadows from the light, the foot on which you may traverse the rugged ground, the key with which you may open the doors, and the finger with which you may loose the knots. Look, a road lies open! Guide the reins of your mind by the law of this road.

Let the part of the material which is first in natural order wait at the entrance of your work; let the end, an apt forerunner, enter first and preempt a place—as if it were a more distinguished guest, or even the master himself. Nature has placed the end last in order, but art shows deference to it, and, taking up the lowly, raises it on high.

The first peak of the work is not only luminous with light⁷ from the very end, but its glory is twofold: coming either from the end of the theme, as has been said, or from the middle of it. Art draws from either an elegant beginning. It plays, as it were, the prestidigitator, and arranges that the last may be made first, the future present, the bias straight, the far near; thus may the rustic be made urbane, the old new, the public private, black white, and vile precious.

If the first part of the work aims at even greater splendor (the natural sequence of the theme being kept intact), let a well-chosen *sententia*⁸ incline in no respect to the particular, but rather raise its head higher, to something universal;⁹ and in its new splendor, let it not desire to

⁷Metaphors based on light (shining, gleaming, splendor, illumination, etc.) are pervasive in the *Poetria nova*. A possible source is Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 11, 15 and 143. The metaphor of food, also frequent in the *Poetria Nova*, is discussed by Curtius, *op. cit.*, pp. 134–36. [Tr.]

⁸See n. 4 above. In this section of the *Poetria Nova*, Geoffrey perhaps means by the word no more than a traditional proverb. But he may also have in mind an original generalized moral, to be drawn by the poet himself after reflection on the implications of his plot. [Tr.]

⁹That is, the *sententia* should not be confined, in the form of its statement, to particulars of the specific plot, but rather should be couched in abstract terms suitable for wider application. [Tr.]

remember the actual form of the material, but refuse to rest in the embrace of that, just as if that were unworthy. Let the *sententia* stand above the given theme, but glance straight at it; let it say nothing outright, but develop its thought therefrom.

This kind of beginning is threefold, rising from three shoots. The shoots are the first, second, and third parts within the material. From their common trunk, another shoot sends itself forth, and thus is wont to be born, so to speak, from a triform mother. But it remains in hiding and obeys only when summoned; it is not in the habit of coming forward at the mind's bidding; it has, as it were, a proud nature; neither spontaneously does it offer itself, nor to everyone; it comes only unwillingly, if not, indeed, actually forced to come.

In the aforesaid way, *sententiae* may lend splendor to the work. And no less appropriately may *exempla* stand in the foremost position; but the same splendor proceeds from each, and the distinction is equal in each. Indeed *sententiae* alone compare, for beauty, with *exempla*. Art has produced other ways of beginning,¹⁰ but it prefers these two; they have more dignity. The other devices are of less worth and considerably more tender age; the greater antiquity is to be found in these two. In them, the footpath winds up more narrowly, the usage is more fitting, the art is greater: a thing we come to see both by art and by experience.

So these are the three principal branches discovered by diligent study: beginning at the end, at the middle, and with *sententiae*; a fourth way is with an *exemplum*. But this last also, like the next-

¹⁰Matthew of Vendôme and Évrard l'Allemand, for example, recommend beginning with constructions featuring the rhetorical figures *zeugma* and *hypozeuxis* as alternatives to beginning with a *sententia*. To these, Matthew as a sole voice adds the possibility of beginning with the rhetorical figure *metonymy*. John of Garland recognizes the procedure of beginning with proverbs and *exempla*, but also approves beginning with a simile or metaphor or with an "if," "since," or "while" clause, or (in Latin) with an ablative absolute construction. For Matthew's and Évrard's remarks on ways of beginning, see Edmond Faral, *Les Arts poétiques du xii^e et du xiii^e siècle* (Paris, 1924), pp. 111-16 and 346-47 respectively; for John of Garland's treatment, see *Romanische Forschungen*, XIII (1902), 905-7. [Tr.]

to-last, grows up in three branches. And in these eight branches,¹¹ all told, the pen prides itself.

That your eyes may see as witnesses what we have said to the ear, take that fable in which the first part is about Minos, the middle about the death of his boy, the end about the confounding of Scylla.¹²

Natural order begins it something like this:

Apart from the gifts of Fortune, whose number streamed to him abundantly, over-flowing as from a torrent, Nature brightens the renown of Minos with another splendor:¹³ for she arms his body with special strength; she tints his limbs in a certain novel way; likewise she refines the gold of his mind and the silver of his tongue; she polishes everything fully, infusing a marvelous sweetness into his manners. Charm, as much as becomes a king, answers alike in all his parts.

Or, from the end of the material, art extracts this beginning for the poem:

The treachery of Scylla led Scylla herself to ruin; she was injured by the same wound with which she gave injury, and she who betrayed her parent lost what most she longed for; and because she wrought destruction, in like destruction she was caught. In suitable requital of her treachery, treachery recoiled upon its authoress in like measure.

¹¹What he means is simply not clear in the Latin at this precise point. From his examples and earlier discussion, it appears that he thinks all the following are artistic or "unnatural" (and therefore, for him, desirable) ways of beginning: 1) at the end of a story; 2) at the middle of a story; 3) at the beginning with a *sententia*; 4) at the middle with a *sententia*; 5) at the end with a *sententia*; 6) at the beginning with an *exemplum*; 7) at the middle with an *exemplum*; and 8) at the end with an *exemplum*. He considers 3 and 6 to be artistic, even though they begin with the chronological beginning, simply because they prefix a *sententia* or an *exemplum*. He does not consider beginning at the beginning without adornment as one of the "eight ways discovered by diligent study" because he thinks that to begin so is "natural" and requires no "study." [Tr.]

¹²Scylla was the daughter of Nisus of Megara. For love of Minos, she cut off her father's hair, upon which his life depended; she was transformed as a consequence into the bird Ciris. See Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, VIII. Geoffrey relates the full story he has in mind in the *Documentum de Modo et Arte Dictandi et Versificandi*, I. 2-17 (Faral, *op. cit.*, pp. 265-68). [Tr.]

¹³Faral prints 1. 161 as "Minois titulos; alios natura nitore," but shows "Minoris" as a variant reading for "Minois" in two manuscripts. [Tr.]

From the middle, we are able to imagine a beginning in a form like this:

Envy, observing the intelligence and the years of Androgeos, perceives him to be in the latter regard a boy, in the former an old man. For, mature in intellect, the boy has no air of boyishness about him. On account of his very triumphs, he begins to be wretched: because his praises mount on high, he is for this very reason brought low; in that he is so glorious, he makes against his own destiny; and his intelligence works against his own youth.

Or, near the very beginning of the material, this generalization is apposite:

Anything very much wished for is very apt to evanesce. Everything is certain to pass away, and prosperous times are all the more prompt of ruin. Cruel Fortune is always laying her stratagems with an innocent face, and Good Fortune is always planning her own sudden departure.

In the middle, this common sentiment may be referred to:

Worst of all things is envy, pure mortal venom: to the evil alone a good, only against the good an evil. It silently conceives in advance of every evil possibility, and gives birth publicly to whatever bitter thing it conceives.

The ending, in this form of expression, amounts to an adage:

That law is just, which provides that injury strike back with injury, that hurt redound on the head whence it originated.

This model image may serve at the beginning:

A gloomy wind rages unexpectedly under a clear sky. A cloudy atmosphere rains beneath a bright sun.

Or, for the middle, choose an exemplum in form like this:

Against the sown seed the weed, foster child of the nursing earth, gloomily conspires: it contends against the seed when it is longing to be born, and, blocking all its exits, grudges it the sprouting.

And likewise, with a similar choice, will you be able to prelude the end:

Often the arrow manages to strike back upon the archer, and a blow, reversed, to rebound against the author of that blow.

As aforesaid, art has given a varied purport to the beginning of the poem. Now progress beckons you farther. Direct your step and your course farther along the path, overall structure being now the consideration stressed.¹⁴

The path is pursued in one of two ways. For either your path will be broad or narrow, either a river or a rivulet; either you will proceed discursively, or you may skip along hastily; either you will note a thing briefly, or draw it out in an extended treatment. Not without toil is either path pursued; if you wish to be well guided, commit yourself to a dependable guide: turn over the following remarks in your mind; they will guide your pen and will teach you those things which are to be taught about either length.

The mass of the subject matter, like a lump of wax, is at first resistant to handling; but if diligent application kindles the intellect, suddenly the material softens under this fire of the intellect and follows your hand wherever it leads, docile to anything. The "hand" of the inner man leads, in order that it may either draw out or compress the material.

If you make your path the broad one, proceed with this first step: though your sententia be one single thing, let it not come content with one costume, but rather let it vary its apparel and assume changes; take up again with other words what has already been said; repeat one clause in many clauses; let one and the same thing be disguised in multiple form; be various and yet the same.¹⁵

¹⁴Having concluded the first part of his treatise, which was concerned with where and how to begin, Geoffrey proceeds to his second topic, how to make particular parts of the narrative material more or less prominent by augmenting or curtailing the amount of treatment accorded to them, i.e. by "amplification" or "abbreviation." For discussion of amplification and abbreviation as concepts in medieval literary theory see J. W. H. Atkins, *English Literary Criticism: The Medieval Phase* (Cambridge, England, 1943), p. 102; E. R. Curtius, *op. cit.*, p. 492; and Jane Baltzell, "Rhetorical 'Amplification' and 'Abbreviation' and the Structure of Medieval Narrative," *Pacific Coast Philology*, II (1967), 32-39 [Tr.]

¹⁵The procedure that Geoffrey refers to in this paragraph obviously amounts to a technique of repetition, perhaps to be identified as *expositio* or *interpretatio*. This passage from Chaucer (*Canterbury Tales*, B², II. 1637-41) may be an example:

My lady Prioress, by youre leve,
So that I wiste I sholde yow nat greve,

Then, it is a step onward when, since a statement merely hops through the ears if the expression of it be abrupt, a substitute phrasing is made for it in the form of a long sequence of statements, and a difficult sequence at that. In order that the work may be longer, do not put down the simple nouns for things: set down other particulars; neither plainly lay bare, but rather intimate a thing through little clues; do not let your expression march squarely through the subject, but, circumscribing it with long roundabout routes, circle what was on the point of being said abruptly, and retard your tempo, so giving increase of words.¹⁶ And a little forethought may spin out the various ways of expressing a thing, when abrupt statements abdicates in order that a long passage may be its heir. With a threefold lock the plain matter may be closed up: either in the noun itself, or in the verb, or in both. Let neither the noun, nor the verb, nor both together specify it, but let an invented form be offered, either in place of the verb or in place of the noun, or in place of both.

The third step is a comparison, which may be performed by a twofold principle, either covertly or openly.¹⁷ Note that certain things are linked with grace enough, but yet certain signs reveal the knot of the joining. That comparison made openly, which signs expressly reveal, behaves in such a manner. There are three of these signs: "more than," "less then," "just as."¹⁸ The com-

parison that is made covertly, on the other hand, comes with no tell-tale sign; it does not come in its own mien, but disguised, as if there were no comparison there, but rather some new transformation were being marvelously ingrafted; whence the idea may thus cautiously settle in your narrative as if born of your theme. The new concept is, of course, borrowed from elsewhere, but it seems native; it is foreign, but not completely evident as such; and it appears to be integral with your material, but it is not there either. Thus it fluctuates, as it were, between intrinsic and extrinsic, now here and now there, now near and now far; there is a difference and yet there is a similarity. This is that kind of plant,¹⁹ which, if planted in the garden of your subject-matter, so operates that the treatment will be rendered more agreeable; this is that stream in a spring where the spring runs purer; this is the form of subtle joining, the device in which the things joined come together and meet as if they were not contiguous; they are continuous, rather, as if the hand of art had not joined them, but rather the hand of Nature. This mode of comparison has more art in it; there is in it a more distinguished usage by far.

In order that you may run still more at large, let apostrophe be the fourth device of delay, by which you may conserve the material, and within which you may expand by the hour.²⁰ You may give pleasure with this device; without it your meal may be abundant enough, but with it your mere dishes become excellent courses. A parade of courses coming more numerous, and tarrying at the banquet table that proceeds more deliberately, is a mark of distinction. Long and richly we feed the ears with varied material, this food being to the ear flavorful, and fragrant, and precious when it comes. But now let an example of this theory serve me: the eye is a more accurate

I wolde demen that ye tellen sholde
A tale next, if so were that ye wolde.
Now wol ye vouche sauf, my lady deere?

It should be noted, too, that Geoffrey probably illustrates the procedure with his own synonymous phrases in this very paragraph of the *Poetria Nova*. [Tr.]

¹⁶Periphrasis (*circuitio*, *circumlocutio*), the substitution of a descriptive word or phrase for a proper noun or otherwise more straightforward statement, appears to be the procedure under discussion here in the *Poetria Nova*. Cf. Chaucer's *Franklin's Tale*, 11. V (F) 1016-18:

. . . The brighte sonne loste his hewe;
. . . th'orisonte hath reft the sonne his lyght, —
This is as muche to seye as it was nyght!

¹⁷The procedure that Geoffrey terms "comparison" (*collatio*) evidently includes both simile ("that comparison made openly, which signs expressly reveal") and metaphor ("the comparison that is made covertly"). [Tr.]

¹⁸The reference here is apparently to standard introductions for extended similes, as, for example, "more savage

than a lioness when her cubs are threatened . . .," "less audible than a breeze at dawn . . .," and "just as (or like) a mountain rising from the plain . . ." [Tr.]

¹⁹Note that at this point, where he begins to introduce several "covert comparisons" of his own, Geoffrey is exemplifying the figure even as he expounds it. [Tr.]

²⁰Apostrophe, of course, involves direct address of an absent person, an inanimate object, or a personified abstraction. [Tr.]

witness than the ear; neither does one instance suffice: my number of examples will be full; from my copiousness gather fully what kind of instance may justify apostrophizing what kind of thing, and in what kind of form.

If a man's heart leaps up excessively in time of joy, then do you, Dame Apostrophe, rise up and rebuke him thus:

O why do joys so great unsettle your senses? Bring your hand-clapping to a circumspect end, and do not stretch its limit out beyond what is meet. O mind heedless of disaster about to come, rather emulate Janus: look behind and in front of you, if things are now going well. Regard not beginnings, but rather endings: describe the day by its sunset, not by its dawning. If you would be wholly secure, fear things to come: just when you believe everything to have been won, the snake is lurking in the grass. Take the Sirens for a warning: be taught by them always, when in a better state, to beware a worse. There is no constancy in nature: poison follows after honey, and black night ends the day, and clouds close up a clear sky. Although all human affairs, fortunately, are subject to change, still, adversity has a way of returning with the greater facility.

If a boastful presumptuousness should even more shamelessly puff him up, anoint his swelling with this mild unguent of words:

Let your eyes run before your stride: search out your own intention, and take measure of your strength. If you are powerful, dare great things; if weak, lay lesser burdens on your shoulders; if of moderate strength, love moderate goals. Take on nothing in which, once it is taken on, you are obviously being presumptuous. In all affairs there is a single virtue: that is, staying within bounds. Recalling this, impress it upon your mind: when you are greater than your fellows, believe yourself lesser and be deceived about yourself; neither shove others into a bottomless pit nor pitch yourself sky-high. Let your deed outdo your declaration: boasting will diminish your reputation.

If in adverse circumstances a man gives the bit to fear, help the timid fellow with this powerful feat of words:

Be not afraid; but if by chance you are afraid, have the mind of a man who is experiencing fear, not the mind of a frightened man. Whenever fear manages to penetrate the door of your mind, let it be a mere

transient there, not a permanent dweller. Learn how to be afraid: if you are afraid, be afraid by yourself—without any witness. And do not let your face show knowledge of your mind's alarm. For if inner terror consumes and wastes your features, a more jovial state of mind will accordingly nourish and fatten your enemy, and sorrow sucking the marrow from your limbs will afford him delight. More advisedly, then, if fear bring your heart to its knees, simulate an upright bearing, and run to the aid of your fear with a shield for your face, so that if your spirit is afraid, your glance, at least may be such as to be feared. However, may you far rather desire to have hope, and may it shame you, when you are afraid, to turn pale after the fashion of the crowd. If possible, swell your constricted heart; if your body be weak, at least your spirit may be strong. And remember to round out your powers, when they are lacking, with lavish good hope. Lightweight performance should be a heavy disgrace to the man of fighting spirit; and heaviness of spirit should be a light matter to the willing man. In this way, only desire as much and it will be easy to be a man fearful of nothing.

In a time of prosperity, in a time of happy fate, this can you say with your eloquence—this, foretelling of future sorrow:²¹

England, queen of realms so long as your king, Richard,²² lives, whose glory is the wide fame of so great a name, to whom alone the sway of the world is entrusted, under whose great command the faith is secure: Your king is a mirror in which you, beholding yourself, feel pride; a constellation, in whose radiance you shine; a column, on whose support you flourish; lightning, which you hurl against your enemies; honor, because of which you send up your gables almost to heaven. But why mention details one by one? One better than he could not have been formed, nor did Nature wish him to have an equal. But beware of having absolute faith in his powers: death is that which breaks all strong things. Trust not, England, in your good omens. If for a short while these omens have been bright for you, fateful clouds are about to close out the fair sky, and twilight will lead in the night. Soon now may be shattered the mirror in

²¹The sorrow in question is, as the ensuing example of apostrophe immediately makes clear, the death of Richard Coeur de Lion. Presumably writing the *Poetria Nova* after Richard's actual death, Geoffrey is able in this model to make effective use of dramatic irony. [Tr.]

²²Richard Coeur de Lion (1157–1199). [Tr.]

whose reflex is so much glory for you; the constellation by which you shine may suffer eclipse; the column from which you draw strength may, being broken, sway; the bolt of lightning whereat your enemies tremble will die away; and, from a prince, you will be made a slave. Happy omens are about to bid you adieu: you now take your ease, you will toil; you now laugh, you will weep; you now grow rich, you will be in want; you now flourish, you will wither; you now *are*, soon you will barely be. Still, whence may you know all this? What can you do? Will you examine diligently by ear the murmurings of the birds? Or their motion with your eye? Or destiny with the aid of Apollo? Away with astrologers! The augur is deaf, the soothsayer blind, and the prophet demented. It is permitted to mankind to know the present, and to God alone to know the future. This false hope has no homeland here; that ancient error may take itself home again, and the father of pagan falsehood may feed that which he engendered, since true religion has dragged out of the sight of the Church the tripods of Phoebus and the throne of the Sybil. This one thing you may know in advance; that no power has power to endure, though it be stubborn; that Fortune decrees that times of prosperity shall be brief. If you want examples, look back on ancient lives. That flowering prosperity of former men has withered away: Minos overthrew Athens, the son of Atreus overthrew Ilium, Scipio overthrew the bulwarks of great Carthage, and many a one overthrew Rome. The dice-toss of Fate was reversed in a twinkling. Brief is the extent both of all happiness and all sorrow; night is the neighbor of day. These other instances advise, but your own experience, too, will teach you.

In time of sorrow, express sorrow with these words:²³

England, once defended under the shield of King Richard, now defenseless, witness your sorrow with this lament: let tears ooze from your eyes; let terror distend your lips; let twisting knot your fingers; let inner sorrow bleed; and let wailing beat against the sky. All of you dies in his death; the death was not his but yours. Not private, but public,

²³The following lament on the death of Richard (cast by Geoffrey in the form of an apostrophe) is presumably the one alluded to by Chaucer in the *Nun's Priest's Tale*, 11. B 4537–44. See Karl Young, "Chaucer and Geoffrey of Vinsauf," *Modern Philology*, XLI (1943–44), 172–82. [Tr.]

the source of that death. O tearful day of Venus.²⁴ O cruel star! That day was night for you, and Venus was that poison.²⁵ She gave the wound; but worst was that day, the one first after the eleventh, which, stepfather to life, ended his life.²⁶ Both days were homicides shocking in their cruelty. A sheltered man aggressed against one in the open, a hidden man against one exposed, a wily man against one unsuspecting; an armed soldier against one unarmed, and that his own king.²⁷ Why, soldier, soldier in treachery, soldier of the troop of treachery, did you dare such a thing—you being the disgrace of the world, the vilest scum of the military, and soldier only by the making of his own hands? And did you dare this heinous crime, this outrage? O woe, O more than woe, O death, O grim death: would God that death were dead! What did you think, Death, when you dared such villainy? Did it please you to take away the sun and to doom the day with shadows? Do you know whom you took? He was a radiant star before the eyes, and a sweet thing to the ears, and a wonder to the intelligence. Do you know, impious one, whom you have carried off? He was master of arms, glory of realms, darling of the world. Nature could have invented nothing more to add to him; he was everything she could produce. But that was why you seized him: precious things you snatch, and vile things you leave as if unworthy. About you, too, Nature, I complain, for were you not, while the universe was still young, while it lay in its cradle newborn,²⁸ already designing him? Your design is not finished, then, until his old age. Why so much travail to bring this wondrous being into the world, if so brief an hour was to see so much labor carried off? Did it please you to stretch forth your hand to the world and then withdraw it again? So to give and then take back your gift? Why do you try the patience of

²⁴Richard was wounded in the shoulder by a crossbow bolt on March 26, 1199, which was a Friday, the day traditionally associated with Venus. [Tr.]

²⁵Geoffrey exploits the similarity in sound of *Venus*, the Latin name of the goddess, and *venenum*, the Latin word for poison. [Tr.]

²⁶His wound mortifying as a result of unskillful treatment or his own neglect of it, Richard died on April 6, 1199, the twelfth day after he was wounded. [Tr.]

²⁷This account of Richard's injury makes the slayer a man of the king's own army. [Tr.]

²⁸Faral prints this phrase as *dum nata jaceres / In cunis* (11. 397–99), which would make Nature herself the newborn; but I have preferred the variant reading *natusque jaceret* also given by Faral. [Tr.]

the world? Either give back the one now buried or else give us his like again. But you no longer have the wherewithal: all that you had, precious or wonderful, you spent on him; your treasuries of charms were in him exhausted. In creating him, you were made most rich; you know yourself made bankrupt by his loss. If very happy you were, before, you are now as miserable as previously you were glad. If it be permitted, I even accuse God. God, best of beings, why in this case are you so unlike yourself? Why, hostile, do you strike down a friend? If you recall, Jaffa makes a case for the king. Jaffa, beleaguered by so many soldiers, which he alone defended;²⁹ and likewise Acre, which he restored to you by his valor;³⁰ and the enemies of the Cross, all of whom he so terrified when alive that he is feared by them even dead. He it was in whose keeping all that is yours was safe. If, God, you are faithful, just, upright, as you must be, and if you are apprised of wickedness, why then did you cut short his day? You could have spared him to the world; the world had need of him. But you preferred him to be with you rather than with the world. You preferred him rather to benefit heaven than earth. Lord, if divine law permit, I will say, and may it please you: you might have acted more ceremonially and less hastily—at least waited until he had put the bit into the mouth of the enemy. (And no real delay would have been involved: victory was at the threshold.) Then he could more honorably have gone to abide with you. But in all this you have given us to know how brief is the laughter, how long the heartbreak of the world.

If you wish to inveigh fully against foolish people, attack in this way:³¹ praise, but facetiously; accuse, but bear yourself good humoredly and in all ways becomingly; let your gesture more than your words nip the ones mocked. Lo, what was concealed under shadows will suffer under the light. A quick hit is turned so: “Boys are taken on high and made gods.” Or, let this same young lordship move outright laughter:

²⁹Ancient Jaffa or Joppa, now part of the metropolis Tel Aviv–Jaffa, was recaptured for the crusaders by Richard in 1191. [Tr.]

³⁰The long siege of Acre (1189–1191), an epic of medieval warfare, is narrated in detail in the Anglo-Norman poem *Carmen Ambrosii*. [Tr.]

³¹The rhetorical effect that Geoffrey begins here to describe, nominally under apostrophe, would seem to be more properly identified as verbal irony. [Tr.]

Though himself fit still for the ferule, now he sits above others freely endowed with the dignity of a master. To the common people he is authenticated by the freeman’s hat on his head, the cut of his clothes, the gold on his fingers, his seat on high, and the numerous commoners in his study.

You may laugh at a ridiculous man—suppose there is such a one: “As much in his own opinion as in the opinion of the vulgar, he is a learned man.” But suppose you feel exactly as I do: that a certain ape is among the learned doctors.³² I have said as much, but secretly, lest anyone clearly hear. But he nevertheless flaunts himself, and, facing about, he promises wonders indeed. “Now let everyone run up to hear; now the mountain will labor to give birth, but his offspring, in the end, will be a mouse,”³³ Anticipating his desire, greet him as “master”; nonetheless, in the meantime, laugh at him obliquely. Peck at him, as it were, with the “beak” of your hands; or writhe your jaws; or hold your nose: to describe such men, not the tongue but the nose should be used.

So, therefore, Apostrophe may change her face: either in the manner of a teacher she may eagerly seize upon a wicked error; or, with a lament, she may plunge into grief about all hard circumstances; or she may swell in wrath on account of a great crime; or she may be carried by ridicule against ridiculous men. When presented in such causes, Apostrophe achieves both beauty and copiousness.

Come, Prosopopoeia, fifth helpmeet in extending the journey. To a thing which has no power of speech, give the power lawfully to speak, and let license endow it with tongue.³⁴ Thus the earth, having experienced Phaeton’s heat, expostulated with Jove; thus Rome with disheveled hair resounded with a tearful voice at the death sleep of Caesar. If novelty of example pleases you, listen to this model: here is a

³²Cf. the *Laborintus* of Évrard l’Allemand, 1. 984 (Faral, *op. cit.*, p. 370). [Tr.]

³³Cf. Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 1. 139. [Tr.]

³⁴Geoffrey’s explanation can hardly be improved upon. Prosopopoeia involves investing abstractions or inanimate objects with human qualities, emotions, or abilities, especially the power of speech. [Tr.]

complaint in this form made in the voice of the Holy Cross.³⁵

I, the Cross, having been seized, make wail— seized by force and by bestial hand, and polluted by the touch of dogs. Long ago I was shamefully seized, and not to this day have I been taken back or redeemed by the sword. Tell me, man, did I not grow for you? Did I not bear you fruit? Did I not bear sweet fruit—salvation—for you? Speak, man, speak to me; tell me, man corrupt whom I redeemed, have I deserved to be so seized without an avenger? And have I deserved so to perish? The power of the enemy could not have brought it to pass that I could be taken from you; rather it was your vice which did so. And since I have seen your crimes to be so numerous, I, being taken, was glad to be taken: it was less shameful to be soiled in foreign camps than in my own. And whether or not you were soiled—even if it escaped the notice of the world—He who sees all things, your God, saw, and knew you to be fully soiled both in heart and in flesh and he took me from you. According to the demanding rigor of the law, a heavy penalty ought to have been inflicted: death without end. But “I have come,” the Sympathizer says, “to be wretched with those in misery, not to press for judgment. I have come to spare, not to punish.” Beware. Consider. Repent at last, Sunamite, lest you perish. I, if you will turn, will turn toward you, and instantly I will have mercy on your contrite hearts. Rise quickly. Hasten. The hour is speeding and hastening toward you. Why do you sleep? Awake! If the holy Cross redeems you, do you by the sword redeem the Cross, and thereby be made redeemer of that by which you were redeemed. Who that is sound in body can be sluggish in such a cause? The Lord labored on the Cross: and, then, does his servant rest? Take up your cross; He took up his. He tasted vinegar. Do you the same! Will the servant stand upon dignity if the lord does not? If you desire to be his follower, it is necessary to follow in his torments with torments. The road to heaven is not through pleasures: therefore pay that death which you owe to release you from Nature, to God; die in Him. Seeing that death is, of necessity, not to be avoided, translate it into a form of virtue: let me be to you a cause of war and even of death. If you

³⁵The following appeal would have pleased Innocent, one of whose major interests was the organization of Crusades for the relief of the Holy Land. The Cross had been captured by Saladin in 1187. [Tr.]

are conquered, as a consequence you triumph. But to be conquered is more than to conquer: a victory enjoys only the hope of a crown; those vanquished by the Cross, the reward of a crown. Therefore, break off delays: impose continence on your flesh; suspend pleasures; and stir a prompt hand quickly toward your weapons, and let a winged will beat back delays.

Another example of prosopopoeia may likewise aid the ornamental object when, now so worn, it says to the table:

I was accustomed to be an ornament of the banquet table when the springtime of my life was in flower, when I bore a face without a flaw. But since I am old and have a ruined face, I am not willing to come. Table, I am retiring: farewell.

And thus Prosopopoeia performs with two mouths: now she speaks sternly, and now humorously.

Or, if an old example does not suffice, here is a new one. Harsh Pride, natural in a military stronghold commanding the brow of a mountain, was seen to speak as follows:

Why, France, do you prattle? Whence come such threats? Why such proud language? Lower that eyebrow! Learn something about threatening postures! Whence the shields at your side? Or the spears? Or the swords? Effeminate crew, abandon the mannerisms of men so that your carriage may match your deeds. Strip off your shield and the crest of your helmet. It would behoove you to do the day's spinning and unwind the distaff. Why, therefore, or of what, do you feel proud? Put a lock on your tongue; be wary of puffing up with words; I will give a bit to your jaws and hang chains on your neck, and will render you a slave in no time. I am taken up with a mere nothing when I meet you decked out as if powerful in war; let other enemies arise in numbers as great as you please, they are not equal to me; but I am rather to them good reason for misery—I, fashioned on the model of the heart of Richard the King.

If the lines of the treatise need to be stretched out still farther, step outside the confines of the subject matter and give a little ground and divert your stylus; but do not divert it far off, to a point from which it may be troublesome to recall your

step. This device³⁶ requires a discreet talent lest it be a bypath longer than is meet. Indeed, it is a kind of digression when I pass over things which are near, presenting in inverted order what is at a distance. For now and then, being about to proceed to the middle, I leave off, and by a leap as it were, I vault over a certain matter; then I revert to the point whence I had before digressed. Lest the notion of digression be wrapped in a sooty cloud; I illustrate it in this fashion:

The knot of a single love bound two spirits into one. An unexpected occasion separated their bodies. But before the departure, mouth fixed kisses on mouth; a mutual embrace circles and strains fast both lovers. The fountain of their eyes pours down tears upon their faces; and an intervening sob cuts parting words asunder. And love is a spur to sorrow and sorrow testifies to the power of love. Winter gives place to spring. A breeze disperses the clouds and heaven woos the earth. Warm and moist he wantons with her, and because the air is masculine the earth feels herself woman. The flower, her son, comes forth in air and laughs upon his mother. The first leaves adorn the treetops; dead seeds wake into life; young corn about to sprout stirs in the blade. This season stimulates the birds. This time of year parted the lovers whom love made not yet separate.

The seventh device, Description, pregnant with words, follows that the work may swell.³⁷ But though she be large, let her be delightful: let her be handsome as well as big. Let the matter manage to marry with the words in due form. If she seeks to be nourishment and full refreshment for the mind, let not her brevity be too terse nor her conventional nature too trite. Let the following stand as illustrations varied by new turns of phrase, so that the eye and the ear may rove amid variety.

³⁶Digression, or brief departure from a subject or its main course of treatment, evidently illustrated in Geoffrey's example by the passage on the season of the year. [Tr.]

³⁷Geoffrey's explanation of description is brief and does little to elucidate the principles that underlie his examples. His exemplar in the matter, however, was evidently Sidonius, whose own technique for the description of persons, like Geoffrey's, involves presentation of details of costume, anatomy, equipment, and the like. Geoffrey mentions Sidonius by name in the *Documentum de Modo et Arte Dictandi et Versificandi* II.2.10 (Faral, *op. cit.*, p. 273). For a good example of Sidonius' technique, see his description of Theodoric, *Letters*, Bk. I, ii. [Tr.]

If you wish to shape a full picture of feminine beauty:

Let Nature's compass describe first a circle for her head. Let the color of gold be gilt in her hair; let lilies spring in the eminence of her forehead; let the appearance of her eyebrow be like dark blueberries; let a milk-white path divide those twin arches. Let strict rule govern the shape of the nose, and neither stop on this side of, nor transgress, what is fitting. Let the lookouts of her brow, her eyes, shine, both of them, either with gems' light or with light like that of a star. Let her face rival the dawn, neither red nor bright, but at once both and neither color. Let her mouth gleam in a form of brief extent and, as it were, a semicircle; let her lips, as if pregnant, rise in a swell, and let them be moderately red: warm, but with a gentle heat. Let order compose her snowy teeth, all of one proportion; let the fragrance of her mouth and that of incense be of a like scent. And let Nature, more potent than art, polish her chin more highly than polished marble. Let a milk-white column be with its precious color a handmaiden to the head, a column which bears up the mirror of the face on high. From her crystal throat let a kind of radiance go forth which can strike the eyes of a beholder and madden his heart. Let her shoulders adjust together with a certain discipline, and neither fall away as if sloping downward, nor stand, as it were, upraised, but rather rest in place correctly; and let her arms be pleasing, as slender in their form as delightful in their length. Let substance soft and lean join together in her slender fingers, and appearance smooth and milk white, lines long and straight: the beauty of the hands lies in these qualities. Let her breast, a picture of snow, bring forth either bosom as if they were, in effect, uncut jewels side by side. Let the circumference of her waist be narrowly confined, circumscribable by the small reach of a hand. I am silent about the parts just below: more fittingly does the imagination speak of these than the tongue. But let her leg for its part realize its length in slenderness; let a foot of excellent smallness sport in its own daintiness.

And thus let beauty descend from the top of the head to the very roots, and everything together be highly polished down to the very fingernail.³⁸

³⁸Cf. Horace, *Ars Poetica*, I. 294. H. Rushton Fairclough, ed. *Horace: Satires, Epistles, and Ars Poetica* (Cambridge, Mass., 1961), p. 66, explains that the Latin expression (*ad unguem*) "involves a metaphor from sculpture, for the artist

If to beauty so portrayed you wish to add clothing:

Let her hair, dressed down her back in braids, be entwined with gold. Let a band of gold give radiance to the brightness of her brow; let her face be bare, clothed only in its own color; let a starry necklace circle her milk-white neck; let her hem be white with linen, her mantle burn with gold; let a girdle everywhere bright with jewels cover her waist; let her arms be rich in bracelets; let gold circle her fine fingers, and a jewel prouder than gold pour forth its beams; let art contend with fabric in her bright attire. Let neither hand nor imagination be able to add anything to such array. But her face will be more than all the rich apparel. Who is there who is ignorant of the fire in this torch? Who is there who has not discovered this flame? If Jove in his time had seen her, he would not have sported with Alcmena in the shape of Amphitryon; nor assumed Diana's speech in order, Callisto, to deflower you; nor deceived Io by the cloud; nor Antiope by the satyr; nor Agenor's daughter by the bull; nor you, Mnemosyne, by the shepherd, nor Asopo's daughter by the fire, nor you, Deo's daughter, by the serpent, nor Leda by the swan, nor Danae by the gold.³⁹ He would have courted her alone and seen all others in a single woman.

But since the description of physical appearance is, as it were, a thing trite and outworn, let an example be found in these lines, in which the usage is more unusual:⁴⁰

With kings and potentates of the realm reclining on the welcoming couch, Ceres adorned—the very image of milk whiteness—introduces the delights of the feast. An old wine⁴¹ grows young again in a gold goblet: there alone, or imbued with nectared fragrance if you will, he allows his bouquet to escape and wanton round. Royal pomps of courses, coming on armed in gold, by turns are vain of themselves and of the gold. The guests note, above

would pass his finger-nail over the marble, to test the smoothness of its joints." [Tr.]

³⁹With this whole sentence compare Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, VI, 11. 110–20. [Tr.]

⁴⁰The following example is of another kind of description, representation of what might be called an "action scene." The procedure in this case seems to be presentation in rapid-fire order of many individual visual, aural, and kinaesthetic images. [Tr.]

⁴¹In the text, "Bacchus senex," literally old Bacchus. [Tr.]

all, the paragon of the board: His countenance vies with Paris, with Parthenopaeus his age, with Ceresus his wealth, with Caesar his breeding. If you would consider the rest—what is on his body—his linen vies with the snow, with flames the purple dye of it contends, his jewel with a star. You would see that particular details savor the more, seasoned, as they are, to the taste of the guests. Other delights, which the eye may covet and the ear, an entertainer affords. Taste is not the same for everyone, and to each his own! A varied pleasure has more honeyed sweetness. Tinkling tambourines fly, feasting the eyes of kings, and the hands alternate, and against one lively tambourine another rises in the clash. They hasten out and they return; and they rise again and fall again; and they feign threats, and put on the likeness of friendly combatants; and they flee from each other and pursue each other. Here in another sporting hand, twin cymbals play in the face of the sound. Nor does the foot go idle; rather, it frequently moves out, returns, and flits back with a light step to the same place. Charming voice and charming step. At the same time, in the air there sounds a song and the noise of a cymbal sounds in air. A third man spins himself with agile motion in a circle, or flies full length, or lifts up his supine limbs in a graceful leap, or bends his flexible joints in the form of a bow, neck to ankles, or sends up the point of a sword, and, resolute, leaps in amid its juggled edges. These individual things you may admire. But, even though up to this point you have proceeded pleasantly, now the clapping grows rapturous, now the fingers snap in playful art, now the arms, undivided, curve in a graceful arch, the motion of the shoulders is made frenzied by the swift and sidewise movement of the hands. And you may see the instruments follow the action, there being from them for every man his own kind of pleasure: the feminine hautboy, the masculine tuba, the raucous tympany, the clear-voiced cymbals, the harmonious symphonia, the sweet pipe, the soporific cithers, and the jolly fiddles. All applaud vigorously; such pleasures both lengthen out the hour and are becoming to the banquets of kings.

Thus you may celebrate feasts of kings and the joys of the banquet table; thus we protract a brief theme with long speech.

There remains even yet something which yields copious language: any statement you please may be dressed in twofold form. One sets out the thing proposed and the other denies the

reverse of it.⁴² A twofold mode thus harmonizes into one statement, and the stream of words flows in two branches. The two streams flow together; the words issue from a double stream. Let this be an example:

That youth is wise; his form is youthful and not aged. Give youth of countenance and take away age; give maturity of mind and take away juvenility. His mind is mature and not juvenile.

As is possible, too, if, for instance, your tongue discourses within limit such as this:

His cheek is not that of an old man, but that of a youth; his mind, however, is not that of a youth, but that of an experienced man.

Or, taking up something associated with the idea, you will go even farther—like this:

That face is not wrinkled, nor is the skin dry; the heart is not weakened with age, nor are the lungs spent, nor the limbs stiff, nor the spine bent: his body's age is youth, his mind's long-lived maturity.

Thus may a great deal of corn spring from a paucity of seed: great rivers have their source in an insignificant spring; from a slender sapling a great tree evolves.

If you wish to be brief, first cut out all the aforementioned devices, which make for conspicuousness; and let there be compressed into a modest circumference a little summary of the material, which you may effect by this sort of process: Let *Dame Emphasis*,⁴³ acting as speaker, bind many things straitly; let *Articulus*,⁴⁴

⁴²The procedure in question here is close to both oxymoron and paradox. That is, a suggestion is first made positively and then seemingly denied. Thus, "a *two-fold* mode harmonizes into *one* statement," "the streams *flow together*, [but] the words issue from a *double stream*." [Tr.]

⁴³The rhetorical figure that leaves more to be suspected than has been actually asserted. See [Cicero] *ad C. Herennium*, trans. Harry Caplan (Cambridge, Mass., 1954), IV.liv.67, pp. 401–03. Subsequent page references to this work, which will hereafter be designated the *ad Herennium*, are to Caplan's translation. [Tr.]

⁴⁴The classical figure indicated by this name involved single words set apart by pauses in staccato speech, as, for example: "By your vigor, voice, looks you have terrified your adversaries." Cf. the *ad Herennium*, IV. xix. 26, p. 295. However, as Geoffrey explains it here, and as he appears to illus-

trated in short phrases, compress broad roundabout things in a brief expression; the Ablative has certain abridged constructions in which it may stand alone without a "rower" [i.e., a preposition];⁴⁵ let the same thing disdain to be heard twice; let the skill of your expression signify what is not said in what is said; let no conjunction be at the joining of clauses, but leave them to go alone; or the hand of the artificer may so combine many matters in one, that by the insight of the mind many things may be apparent in a single statement.

By means of this brevity you can cinch in an extensive theme; in this small boat you can cross an ocean. Narration of action elects this form of expression, which, performed discreetly, does not spread a cloud, but, every such cloud being far away, ushers in the sun.

These abbreviating devices may operate together, therefore, but always only as is fitting: emphasis, articulus, the free ablative case without a rower, skillful indication of one thing among the rest, chains removed from between clauses, the sense of many clauses in one, no repetition of the same word. Use either all these things, or at least whatever the particular instance itself allows. Here is a model of abbreviation that reflects the whole technique:⁴⁶

Her husband being away at some distance engaged in increasing his wealth, the wife, adulterous, gives birth to a child. To him, returned after much time, she pretends that the boy was conceived of the snow. A reciprocal fraud: wily, he goes along with it. He carries off the child and sells him, bringing back to the mother a mocking likeness which he represents as the boy melted by the sun.

If your brevity needs to come to a stop at a still shorter boundary mark, let the whole of your *sententia*⁴⁷ at first be dormant. Consent not to be mindful of the verb, but with the heart's pen

trate it in the "Snowchild" anecdote, articulus seems to involve the deliberate use of sentence fragments. [Tr.]

⁴⁵That is, the Latin ablative absolute construction. [Tr.]

⁴⁶P. S. Allen quotes medieval analogues for Geoffrey's tale of the Snowchild in *The Romanesque Lyric* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1928), pp. 215–76 and 357–58. [Tr.]

⁴⁷See notes 4 and 8 above. Here, Geoffrey probably means simply "thought" or "idea." [Tr.]

write only the nouns that belong to your notions: in the nouns all the strength of the theme dwells. In doing this, work as if by the process of a blacksmith:⁴⁸ the iron of the subject matter, seethed with the fire of the mind, transfer to the anvil of study. Let the hammer of the intellect, whose close coming to grips may form from the unformed mass words more fit, work it all through. Later, the bellows of reason may fuse verbs (the elements being also added which follow verbs)—the nouns to verbs and verbs to the nouns—which express nothing either more or less than what is fitting.

The practice of the new brevity is more penetrating. This subscript serves as a brief example of it.

Whom the adulterous mother represents as having been conceived by the snow, the husband, selling, represents as having been melted by the sun. The husband, because his wife pretends that he whom she has brought forth was engendered by the snow, sells him and pretends by analogy that he has melted from the sun.

Be it brief or long, let your discourse always “color” itself [i.e., with figures of speech] within and without, the color being chosen by a careful plan.⁴⁹ First, muse upon the spirit of an expression, and only lastly upon its countenance; and be not credulous about the color of the latter: unless the inward color conforms to the outer, it is insulting to the intelligence. To paint the surface of an expression is like a picture made of mud,⁵⁰ a thing fabricated, a false beauty, a whitewashed wall, and a mime feigning some speech for him-

⁴⁸The blacksmith metaphor for the writer appears in several places in the *Poetria Nova*. [Tr.]

⁴⁹Cf. the *ad Herennium*, IV. xi. 16, p. 269: *quae si rarae disponentur, distinctam sicuti coloribus* (“distributed sparingly, these figures set the style in relief as with colors”). In his discussion of the “metaphorics” of medieval poetics, E. R. Curtius (*op. cit.*, pp. 128–44) does not mention the very common one of color. But cf. Chaucer, *Franklin’s Prologue*, which also uses the images, dear to Geoffrey as well, of “dyeing” and “painting” and of a “flowery meadow.” In this section of his treatise, Geoffrey expounds the so-called figures of diction, or tropes. Cf. the *ad Herennium*, IV. xxxi–iv, pp. 333–47. Geoffrey first considers the four tropes *transferatio*, or metaphor, *permutatio*, or allegory, *pronominationio*, or antonomasia, and *nominatio*, or onomatopoeia, under the general heading of “transsumption.” [Tr.]

⁵⁰Cf. Horace, *Ars Poetica*, II. 361–62. [Tr.]

self although he has none. Its form conceals its deformity; it flaunts itself outwardly, but has nothing within; it is a picture that pleases when distant, that does not please when near. Therefore remember: be not hasty; but in those things that you intend to say, be an Argus and spy out words for your proposed subject with sharp eyes. If your meaning be dignified, let its dignity be preserved to it: let no ignoble word dishonor it. But in order that all things may be governed by rule, let rich content be dignified by rich expression; do not let a wealthy matron blush in a pauper’s gown.

In order, then, that your theme may assume a rich costume, if the expression is old, be a physician and make the old veteran a new man. Do not always be willing to allow a word to rest in its usual place; such monotonous lodging is a shame to the word itself; let it avoid its usual haunts, and wander elsewhere and build a pleasing abode on another’s site; let it be there a novel guest and give pleasure by reason of its novelty. If you mix this antidote, you will make the face of a word grow young.

This method teaches how to “transsume” words properly.⁵¹ If it be a person about whom the discourse is made, let your speech transfer to its subject something *like* the thing being portrayed: when I see what its proper apparel is in a similar situation, I change it and transform for myself, out of old clothes, something new. See, here, what I mean: In strictly correct speech one says “yellow gold,” “white milk,” “scarlet rose,” “sweet-flowing honey,” “fiery flames,” “white mass of snow.” Say therefore: “snowy teeth,” “flaming lips,” “honied taste,” “rosy face,” “milky forehead,” “golden hair.” Well suited to each other are: “teeth” and “snow”; “lips” and

⁵¹Under discussion first is the trope metaphor (*transferatio*, in Geoffrey’s terminology). Geoffrey first illustrates the two main possibilities: metaphorical transfer of the attributes of inanimate objects to man; and metaphorical transfer of human attributes to inanimate objects. Next he discusses certain refinements: metaphorical use of adjectives to clarify the significance of metaphorical verbs; apparent opposition of meaning between noun and verb (i.e. paradox); and union of literal and figurative meaning in the same verb. Finally he shows how the metaphorical effect of a verb can apply either to its subject, to its object, or to both; and how an adjective, similarly, can have metaphorical force variously, according as it modifies different units of the syntax of a sentence. [Tr.]

“flames”; “taste” and “honey”; “face” and “rose”; “forehead” and “milk”; and “hair” and “gold.”

And, because an association of very similar things is obvious in that case, too, if the object of which you speak is not a person, twist the reins of the mind around to what it would be in the case of a person. Tastefully substitute a verb that a similar statement fittingly places in the same position. So that, if you wish to say vividly that “Springtime adorns the earth, the first flowers thrust up, the weather becomes pleasant, storms cease; the sea is smooth, its motion without turbulence; the valleys are deep, the mountains lofty,” then consider a like theme in the life of us men, which has verbs of its own to express it. If you are producing ornament, “you paint”; finding your beginning, “you are born”; if mild in speech, “you soothe”; ceasing from all action, “you sleep”; motionless, “you stand with fixed foot”; borne down, “you plunge”; raised in air, “you loom up.” Then the verb has good savor if you say:

Springtime “paints” the earth with flowers; flower buds are “born”; pleasant weather “soothes” us; the storms, now ceasing, “sleep”; the ocean “stands” as if immobile; the deep valleys “plunge”; the lofty mountains “loom up.”

When you transsume your own material, it has more pungency because it derives from what is your own. Such transsumption of language is like a mirror for you, since you see yourself in it and recognize your own sheep in a strange field. Now look at several such transsumptions—as, perchance, if we should wish to present in such transsumed form winter’s shameless behavior:

Winter, hardened in despotic cruelties, is always “opening wide his jaws”; clouds during his reign “grieve” the sky; fog “blinds” the day; the wind “gives birth to” storms; snow “closes” the roads; winter’s season “pierces” the bone marrow; hail “lashes” the earth; ice “locks” the waves.

Or, if we speak of weather fit for ships:

The north wind does not “chide” the waters, nor does the south wind “inebriate” the air; but the ray of the sun, like a broom “sweeps” the sky clean of murky air, and with bright face the season “flatters” the sea; the wind with secret whisper makes the ocean “stand still” and the sailing vessels “race.”

Or if we speak of a blacksmith’s procedures in this language:

The flames “wake” to the bellows; the unformed mass is “buried” in the fire; a pair of tongs “transmits” the fired mass from the freshened fire to the anvil. The hammer, as teacher, administers frequent “blows,” and vigorously “corrects” it with hard strokes, so that it performs as he wishes. Either he “entices” from it the circle of a helmet, useful “counsel” for the head, or he “fathers” a sword, lawful “companion” for a man’s side, or work proceeds on a coat of mail, “host” for the body. The more lowly greaves are “born” together with these, a “shield” which the shins “elect,” and the spur, the horse’s “instigator,” which the ankle “adopts”; and likewise the other kinds of armor which cunning prepares. Such a “dissonant” array of things, such varied kinds of arms, “exhaust” the iron. The hammer then “restrains” its blow; the bellows, their journey ended, “pant”; the work “crosses the finish line,” and “completes its meal.”

In this fashion, place your verbs with distinction; so placed, they will be transparent to the mind’s eye. But to place the verbs is indeed a weighty matter, as regards the application required. This mode of expression is both burdensome and easy: the discovery of the verb is a heavy task; the heart is easy after it is hit upon. So opposites mingle; but they pledge peace, and enemies stay on as friends.

In this, there is a certain blending process. Let not the verb be light, cheap, or rude: a verb draws charm and worth from a degree of seriousness. But let not its gravity be swollen or obscure; a light touch⁵² will promote clarity and check bombast; let the one correct the other. Therefore so speak, so join the sober with the light, that the one thing may not detract from the other, but that they may meet and enjoy the same abode, and a harmonious discord reconcile their quarrel.

In order that the transsumption of a verb may be more urbane, let it not come in the sole company of a noun. Give it an adjective, and let that be such as may be fully helpful and clear away

⁵²Pervasive in the section of the *Poetria Nova* devoted to style, the concepts of “lightness” or “ease” and of “heaviness,” “seriousness” or “soberness” require clarification. Words are considered to be used with a “light touch” when they are employed in their literal senses. They are regarded as “heavy,” “dignified,” or “sober” in effect when they are used not literally but metaphorically. [Tr.]

the cloud, if there be such present in the verb; if not, let it elucidate the verb more fully and shed full light upon it.

See now, if I portray something in the following form—the laws are “soft” or the laws are “stiff”—it does not yet adequately shed light, but the transsumption of the verb lurks, as it were, under a cloud. And whereas, so placed, the verb remains in obscurity, an adjective may lend light and assist it. Better say, therefore: “Merciful, the laws are ‘soft’; strict, they are ‘stiff.’” Now the adjective conveys the verb, for certainly strictness conveys rigor and rigid measures, whereas devout mercy tempers and softens the laws. But what if the transsumed verb is quite clear, in and of itself? Nonetheless, an adjective may help it; the light therefrom redoubles that of the verb. Suppose that I speak felicitously enough if I say: “The earth drank the dew of the sky more than was meet, and the rainstorm doled it out irresponsibly.” Nevertheless, you will express that better and more sweetly if you say: “A sottish earth drank the waters more than was meet, and the spendthrift rain distributed them irresponsibly”—because these images accompany each other and intertwine in the manner of ivy, as if they would not suffer to be separated from each other. Rather they swear a merger into one entity, and are companions of a single mind. Discrimination of this kind has “rubbed the file,” since the rust has been removed from the words.

But your picture masters this color better still when the substantive has strife with the verb, and they have the appearance of hating each other, and yet within all is love and concord in meaning. A technique which this illustrates:

He pours out lavishly, but in pouring out his riches,
he renews them; his hand is never tired except
when it rests.

And also this: “Before the face of God, devout silence cries aloud.” Consider other instances and you will be surprised to find the same possibility in them:⁵³

⁵³Faral prints the following paradoxes about lovers (illustrating opposition of meaning between a noun and its verb complement) as a part of Geoffrey’s remarks rather than as an italicized example. [Tr.]

When lovers make war with mutual wrangling,
peace of mind grows from the strife of tongues. By
this hate, love is established.

So it is, too, with these examples: their inner statements love one another, although their exteriors are at enmity. The quarrel is all in their sounds, and the sense of what they say settles all the dispute.

Yet another light by which a transsumed word may shine is when, once chosen, it is at the same time a transferred and a proper usage—as, for example, in this passage:

That ancient skill of Rome armed tongues with
laws and bodies with steel, in order to prepare
tongues and bodies for war at the same time.

Or let this be an example, since this brief speech has more savor: “Faith arms them in heart, steel in body.”

So verb, adjective, and noun seek to be transsumed. But the transsumption of a verb may be varied, by reason either of the words preceding or of those following, or of both cases at once. By reason of the words preceding, as in this example:

In springtime the clouds “stand still,” the air “grows tame,” the breeze “hushes,” the birds “joke,” conversing among themselves; the sea “sleeps,” the streams “frolic,” the branches “sprout beards,” the fields are “painted,” and the land “frisks.”

By reason of what comes after, as in this example:

If the Pope, mighty in words, loose his tongue, he
“sows grain” from his mouth, whence he “feeds”
the eyes and “makes drunk” the ears, and “sates”
the whole soul.

By reason of both, as in these examples:

When the mouth of the Pope “pledges a toast” in
sweet words, alert ears, while he speaks, “drink”
the words from his mouth as he speaks, and the
things heard “sleek down” their spirits with peace.

The adjective may similarly be transsumed in three different respects. Either by reason of its noun, to which it joins itself in an unusual way, as in this example:

Do away with speech that is either “raw” or “boiled
to pieces,” “watery” or “desiccated,” “shaggy” or

“combed to death,” “uncouth” or “effete,” “penniless” or “vulgarily wealthy.”

Or by reason of the complement of the noun, as in the passage below:

What may our king do, “unarmed” with counselors, “girt round” with ill will, “naked” of friends?

Or by reason of both, as when “eloquent in speech” is expressed as “flowery in eloquence,” or “an old man weak with age” as “a pauper in the thing you possess.”

Next follows transsumptions of the noun.⁵⁴ If the noun transsumed is a common noun, it gives to the verbs some such color as this: “the ‘thunder’ of the people struck the city”; or of this sort:

A “trumpet” of lightning, a “shock” of air, “quarrels” of the winds, “din” of the sea, the “wrath” of tempests.

If it should be a proper noun, it is transsumed either on the one hand, to the end that you may praise or blame with it, as if it were a nickname—you may praise with such words as “that Paris,” similarly you may blame by saying “that Ther-sites”—or, on the other hand, to the end that there may be a kind of analogy, as, obviously, in this example: “that master, our Tiphys, rules the boat”—or, as I may give it again, “that rustic fellow, our leader and our Automedon.”⁵⁵ Or I transfer a noun for other reasons, that it may not be a true resemblance, but rather through antiphrasis, derision as it were, as when someone deformed in body is called “Paris,” or someone savage at heart “Aeneas,” or when someone of feeble strength is called by the nickname of “Pyrrhus,” or someone of rude speech “Cicero,” or someone wanton “Hippolytus.”⁵⁶ Such change rejuvenates a word.

⁵⁴The first means of transsumption of a noun treated by Geoffrey is onomatopoeia (*nominatio* in Geoffrey’s terminology), i.e. a figure of speech whereby a thing that has no name, or an inadequate one, receives an appropriate name. Cf. the *ad Herennium* IV. xxxi. 42, pp. 333–35. [Tr.]

⁵⁵Here the second means of transsumption of a noun is indicated, namely antonomasia (*pronominatio* in Geoffrey’s terminology), the figure of speech whereby another epithet is substituted for a common or proper noun. Cf. the *ad Herennium* IV. xxxi. 42, p. 335. [Tr.]

⁵⁶Finally Geoffrey discusses transsumption of a noun by allegory (*permutatio* in his terminology), i.e. the figure of

Thus a simple change transsumes a single word. When there are several, it is as in this pattern of speech: “the shepherds are stealing the sheep.” Here you transfer the two nouns “shepherds” and “sheep”: you transsume the noun “shepherd” to prelates and the noun “sheep” to their subjects. Moreover, the whole location is transsumed, and not part of it, a technique which a speech like the following illustrates: “He plows the seashore, he washes a brick, he flogs the air.” These are the ways in which *transsumptio* colors words.

Transsume by well-tryed methods. Yet be moderate, neither inflated nor swollen. Honor and the onerous, these two, are intermingled: it is onerous to transsume a word as is fitting, but it is an honor when it is transsumed fittingly. Whenever your meaning comes clothed in apparel of this sort, the sound of the words is sweet to the happy ear, and it soothes the inner mind with an unexpected delight.

Transfero, permuto, pronomino, nomino—these verbs produce from themselves further words,⁵⁷ and they are the names of rhetorical colors, all of which transsumption alone includes in itself. Get for yourself these viands and these liquors: this feast gives content; this drink makes drunk the ears.

Skilled art has woven other garments of lighter value, but still there is in these, too, weight and a becoming usage. There are ten such bouquets of words, counted on this side and that: six on one side and four on the other.⁵⁸ This ten-count of colors dyes words with a gravity that is foreign, not intrinsic; their sound colors by an artificial technique. One thing is common to all: clearly, the position⁵⁹ of the words is uncommon and the

speech whereby one thing is denoted by the letter of the words but another by their meaning. Cf. the *ad Herennium*, IV. xxxiv. 46, pp. 345–47. [Tr.]

⁵⁷That is, the Latin verbs just mentioned yield the Latin nouns *transferatio, permutatio, pronominatio, nominatio*; “they” (the nouns) are the names of rhetorical figures. [Tr.]

⁵⁸Geoffrey has previously dealt with four tropes (*transferatio, permutatio, pronominatio, nominatio*). He states that he will now proceed to consider six others. Again, cf. the *ad Herennium*, IV. xxxi–xxxiv, pp. 333–47. [Tr.]

⁵⁹Here in question is not word order, i.e., a word’s “position” in the syntax of a sentence, but rather figurative as dis-

choice of words is exotic. Lest perchance your mind, doubtful, should hesitate about this, the following examples will give it confidence.

Let such a thought as this come forth for general consideration:

The sick man seeks a doctor; the mourner, consolation; the needy man, relief.

The words flower better in this arrangement:

Sickness needs a doctor; mourning, consolation; neediness, relief.

Intrinsic to these words is the charm of placing the abstract for the concrete:⁶⁰ thus, changing “the sick man” into “sickness”; “the mourner,” into “mourning”; “the needy man” into “neediness.”

What does dread produce? Turning pale. What does anger produce? Turning red. Or what does the plague of pride produce? Swelling. So, we rephrase: “Fear pales; wrath reddens; pride swells.” And it delights greatly and savors more sweetly in the ear when I apply to the cause what the effect claims for itself.

Let service of a comb part in order the hairs of that head that has first been washed. Let scissors cut away from the hair every superabundance, and a razor renew the face.

Thus art teaches us to attribute to an instrument (in a facetious manner) that which in fact it is the user’s to do with it. So arises, from art, the power to avoid trite paths and to proceed with greater distinction.

Likewise splendid is speech chosen like this:

We stripped bodies of their steel, purses of their silver, fingers of their gold.

tinguished from literal usage. A word is in normal “position” when used with its literal meaning; used figuratively, it is in uncommon or exotic “position.” [Tr.]

⁶⁰In the preceding example Geoffrey has illustrated the trope metonymy, i.e. the rhetorical figure whereby the name of one thing is substituted for the name of another that it suggests or is closely related to. Traditionally, metonymy has (and Geoffrey explicitly distinguishes) several subdivisions: the abstract for the concrete, the cause for the effect, the instrument for the user, the constituent material for the object, the container for the contained. Cf. the *ad Herennium*, IV, xxxii. 43, pp. 335–37. [Tr.]

—not because zeugma paints the words with its colors,⁶¹ but because, about to convey the whole of something, I suppress the abstract word for it and instead make a point of the constituent material. A more unsophisticated technique states both, but art is silent about one, and so serves two in one. This method, once introduced, brings with it three advantages: for it cuts down on expenditure of words, it “colors” the topic, and it is good for the work with respect to meter. The mode of expression cuts down on verbiage: i.e., a word is more succinct than a statement; and the more skilled word usage in this artistic arrangement gives aesthetic “color” to your material; and it is good for the work with respect to meter where the oblique case⁶² requires a word whose company the verse must avoid. All of which is evident in the following: “My finger sports in gold.” “Gold” is a shorter word; “a ring of gold” is more drawn out. The latter expression specifies the object itself, the former puts it more subtly. In the one instance, the metrical feet go along with the case requirements; in the other, they are rebellious.

Use the thing which contains, rather than the thing contained, putting down verb, noun, or adjective as you please, so long as it is done suitably. Insert the noun thus: “drunkard England,” “weaver Flanders,” “braggart Normandy.” Or place the adjective thus:

The “loud” forums; “close-lipped” silence; the “mournful” prison; the “cheerful” house; the “quiet” night; the “busy” day.

Likewise, use select verbs:

Salerno by its medical virtue heals the sick from diseases. Bologna with its laws arms those bared to

⁶¹The foregoing example happens, incidentally, to be an instance of zeugma (the stylistic figure whereby a word is used to modify or govern two or more words, with only one of which it makes strict sense: here the verb “stripped,” which Geoffrey considers to be only appropriate, strictly speaking, to “bodies” in the quotation); but Geoffrey’s interest in the example is, as he explains, something else, namely its illustration of metonymy. [Tr.]

⁶²The oblique case is any case except the nominative and vocative. Latin nouns in their oblique cases may of course be considerably changed from their forms in the nominative, and their forms in the oblique cases may be inconvenient or impossible for a given meter. [Tr.]

litigations. Paris dispenses through its arts those loaves wherewith it gives the hardy to eat. Orleans educates infants in their cradles with the milk of the great authors.

Give hyperbole⁶³ its head, but do not allow the speech to gallop away out of hand: let reason rein it in and let it give pleasure by a sensible termination, so that neither the mind nor the ear may abhor the excess. As, for example, in this passage:

A heavy rain, as it were, of javelins is falling on the foe. The shattered heap of spears resembles a forest. A wave of blood is flowing, after the fashion of the sea, and corpses burden the valleys.

This technique wonderfully diminishes or augments praise. Even excess pleases, when both ear and usage approve it.

When you are about to say, "I have studied three years," you may, if you will, color your words more attractively than that. The "color" above is a color crude and outworn. Rework that raw material as follows. Let your file redo the old phrase with these words:

A third summer found me in study; a third autumn enveloped me; a third winter involved me in its cares; three springs I completed.

I express a statement more subtly when the whole is so subordinated, when, by the methods aforesaid, I imply a whole by its parts.⁶⁴ Suppose part of the year is wet: say "it is a wet year." If part is dry, "it is a dry year"; if part is hot, "it is a hot year"; if part is mild, "it is a mild year." I appropriate for a whole year what belongs to part of it. With that same figure of speech, you, Gion,⁶⁵

⁶³Overstatement. Cf. the *ad Herennium* IV. xxxiii. 44, pp. 339-41. [Tr.]

⁶⁴This trope is usually known as synecdoche. Cf. the *ad Herennium* IV. xxxiii. 44-45, p. 341. [Tr.]

⁶⁵This reference is obscure. A likely explanation is Gihon, the river mentioned in Genesis ii. 13. It may, however, refer to one of the two French towns of Guillon. Guillon in the department of Yonne is traditionally famous for its wines; Guillon in the department of Doubs, for its mineral waters. There is also the Spanish port Gijon, famous in Roman times for its mineral baths. The Gion referred to by Geoffrey appears to be a liquid of some kind: depending on what liquid, the various adjectives employed would lend themselves to slightly different translation. [Tr.]

will be assessed for your various attributes: muddy and clear, narrow and broad, bitter and savory. Again, the day should be described by a like process as "dry" or "wet" still according to one of its parts. Since either color may be pleasing, you will please with either color.

And it is polite *abusio*,⁶⁶ when neither the proper nor the conventional word is chosen, but rather one that is a neighbor to the proper one. Consider if this be proposed: "The strength of the Ithacan is 'little' but his wit is 'great.'" *Abusio* may change the word like this: "Ulysses was 'short' on strength, but 'long' on wit"; for there are some boundaries belonging in common to the words "long, great" and "short, small."

In the figures mentioned above there is a certain effect of color and a certain gravity which arises from the fact that the statement does not show itself in public with a bare face or avail itself of its own voice, but rather uses a strange voice. And thus it covers itself, as it were, with a cloud (still clear, however, under its cloud).

In addition, a certain gravity arises out of mere word order when what the grammatical construction associates, the order separates⁶⁷ — as is the case in this permuted construction: *rege sub ipso; tempus ad illud; ea de causa; rebus in illis*; or an inversion of this kind: *Dura creavit pestiferam fortuna famem; letalis egenam gente fames spoliavit humum*. Thus stand separated in order things which properly constructed would instead stand close. Correct close structure manifests the meaning more readily; but a judicious

⁶⁶Catachresis, or inexact use of a merely like and kindred word in place of an exact one. Cf. the *ad Herennium* IV. xxxii. 45, 343. [Tr.]

⁶⁷The trope hyperbaton. Cf. the *ad Herennium* IV. xxxii. 44, pp. 337-39. Under consideration here is the violation of normal word order, common in Latin but comparatively uncommon in English. The orderly translations of these Latin phrases would run "under the king himself," "up to that time," "for that reason," and "cruel Fortune created a pestilential famine; fatal famine despoiled the impoverished land of its yield." A complex instance of hyperbaton in English is Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*, I, 11. 1-5:

The double sorwe of Troilus to tellen,
That was the kyng Priamus sone of Troye,
In lovyng, how his aventures fellen
Fro wo to wele, and after out of joie,
My purpos is, er that I parte fro ye. [Tr.]

distance between grammatically related words hangs more upon the ear and has more savor.

If you would trust in gravity, use these sails; keep to this harbor; here let the anchor of your mind be fixed. Yet be weighty in such wise that the topic is not covered with a cloud; let your words make for the meaning to which they are bound by rule.

The words that unlock a closed mind are words carefully hit upon, like so many keys to the mind: anyone who wishes to open a closed matter refuses to introduce a cloud of words; however, if he has introduced it, an injury has been done to his words, for he has made a lock out of a key. Be the bearer of a key, therefore; open up your subject the more speedily by means of your words. For if a speech enters through the ears into the mind's sight without light, it builds on river water, it plants in dryness, it flogs air, it draws a furrow in sterile sand. If, therefore, you use exotic or abstruse words, you are only making a show of your powers and you are not observing the law of discourse. Let your tongue recover itself from

such a blot, and see that you fasten a padlock on obscure vocabulary. Use good judgment: it is permitted to you to innovate in all things, being one greater in this than other men; yet still be, in your words, one man among others; be not exclusive but rather social in your eloquence. The advice of the ancients runs: "Speak as the many; think as the few." But at the same time, do not make yourself vulgar: you can be at the same time pleasant and skillful in speech. Therefore, do not have regard to your own powers, but rather his with whom you speak. Give a weight to your words that is suited to his shoulders, and speak words proper to your matter. When you teach a craft, let your speech be that native to the craft; every craft delights in its own vocabulary. But let the craft's words be content with the craft's boundaries. When you come outside into the common forum, let the craft be satisfied to use common terms. In its own house a speech may be its own man; in public, let it suit the public. Thus for each business its own custom should be satisfied. In speech, this is the better practice.

Robert of Basevorn

fl. ca. 1322

Robert of Basevorn is known only as the author of *Forma Praedicandi* (*The Form of Preaching*), a medieval manual on preaching. Because his work is regarded as a good example of the type, it is excerpted here. It illustrates the rhetorically organized art of preaching, or *ars praedicandi*, that began to develop in the twelfth century C.E.

The *ars praedicandi* was the latest of the medieval practical rhetorical arts to develop, postdating both the *ars dictaminis* (p. 492) and the *ars poetriae* (p. 503). Its late development may be attributed to the Church's prevailing attitude that rhetoric should not be used in preaching. One should present God's word with as little embellishment as possible (and, indeed, one might not present it more than three or four times a year in most parishes). Even Augustine, who salvaged classical rhetoric for Christian use in Book IV of his *On Christian Doctrine* (p. 456), does not treat all five canons and cautions against overuse. Moreover, even his cautious recuperation of classical rhetoric was not widely read until late in the medieval period. For a long time, the most influential treatment of preaching was the *Cura Pastoralis* of Pope Gregory the Great (591 C.E.). He insisted that the best sermon was a simple homily, or application of a scriptural text to common human problems, related in plain language. The homily, according to Gregory, might be rhetorical only in the sense that the preacher should try to adapt content to the audience's specific circumstances. Isidore, Alcuin, and others kept Cicero's views on rhetoric alive, but Cicero's work was not widely applied to preaching, in spite of Augustine's example.

Augustine's influence grew after Alcuin's pupil Hrabanus Maurus (778–856) published a treatise entitled *De Clericorum Institutione*, or *On the Education of Clerics*, in which he quotes *On Christian Doctrine* extensively to justify the study of rhetoric for priests. Alain de Lille (ca. 1128–1202) drew on both Gregory and Augustine in his *De Arte Praedicandi*, which began to turn the study of preaching in a more systematic direction. The formal study of preaching was part of the growth of humanistic learning in the so-called renaissance of the twelfth century (see the introduction to Part Two), which encouraged people to think that human reason could analyze and organize knowledge of the natural world, the classical heritage, and even, in the *ars praedicandi*, the word of God. Moreover, the *ars praedicandi* responded to the laity's growing desire to hear preaching during this time period, an appetite stimulated by the new Franciscan and Dominican orders, which were founded especially for preaching.

The sermons of the preaching friars displayed more internal organization and made more use of rhetorical devices than did the traditional homily. They were not as highly organized, however, as the "thematic" sermon, the new form addressed in the preaching manuals that began to appear at the beginning of the thirteenth century. These appeared rather suddenly and in great numbers: Some three hundred are still extant, although few have been edited or translated into modern English.

Among the first theorists of the thematic sermon were English scholars such as Alexander of Ashby, who published a manual around 1200. The earliest collection of thematic sermons was produced in Paris in 1231. These manuals constitute the first full-fledged *ars praedicandi* of the medieval period, and the kind of preaching they advocate continued to be practiced until the Reformation, although older, more informal kinds of pulpit oratory could also be heard.

The thematic sermon begins with a “thema,” or biblical text, chosen for a particular audience or occasion or perhaps dictated by the Church calendar. It is followed by a “prothema,” another biblical text chosen to complement the main text and to make a transition to an appeal for divine aid. Next, rather than simply elaborate on these texts’ lessons for living, the preacher divides the main text into brief phrases, sometimes into single words, and prepares a miniature sermon on each division, which is further subdivided. The method of analysis resembles Scholasticism and probably was influenced by this intellectual movement (see the introduction to Part Two). Each division, with its internal subdivisions, should be related, however distantly, to the lesson the preacher wants to draw from the text as a whole, and each should be developed with further citations from Scripture, the Church Fathers, and other supporting material. Anthologies of such material, including historical anecdotes, fables, and snippets of natural history, were sometimes appended to the manuals or published as companion volumes, as were collections of model sermons. Thematic sermons are also called “university” sermons, perhaps because they were first or most often heard in university towns, especially Oxford and Paris. It is easy to understand how the thematic sermon would require a highly literate audience, since the form is complex and relies heavily on interlocking textual citations.

Forma Praedicandi, or *The Form of Preaching*, published by Robert of Basevorn in 1322, is generally considered an excellent example of a manual on thematic preaching. Very little is known of Robert. Anglican Church historian Charles Smyth says that he was associated with the University of Oxford and that he was not a priest or monk. The initial letters of the treatise’s fifty chapters spell out his name and the dedication of the work to William, Abbot of the Cistercian monastery of Basingwerk, England.

SYNOPSIS OF THE FORM OF PREACHING

Robert’s work is excerpted here. What follows is a synopsis of the whole work.

Citing Boethius, Robert argues that the form of preaching is “the system and method” of theology just as “logic is the system of syllogizing in every field of knowledge.” Thus he gives his rhetoric of preaching a somewhat dialectical cast. He also defends the study of an “artistic” method of preaching as necessary to teaching, an argument that follows Augustine.

Robert goes on to define preaching and the character of the preacher. Of the many correct ways to preach, he announces that he will discuss only the modern methods associated with Paris and Oxford—although these methods abound with

“devices which, as it seems to me, appertain more to curiosity and vanity than to edification.” He notes that the English are the worst offenders here.

Nevertheless, the preacher can certainly use “verbal embellishments,” for “wisdom and eloquence together move us more than either does by itself.” Robert cites Augustine’s *On Christian Doctrine* to argue that the preacher must know how “to teach, please, and move.” He then lists the twenty-two rhetorical “ornaments” he will discuss in detail in subsequent chapters. These ornaments may seem like a strangely assorted lot to the modern reader. By no means do they all focus on stylistic devices, as the term *ornament* might make us think. But Robert probably uses the word in an older sense, meaning something like “equipment” (*ornaments* could also refer to the armor and weapons necessary to a fully appointed knight, for example). Thus in enumerating “ornaments,” he is simply telling what rhetorical features, in his opinion, the well-composed sermon ought to exhibit. In this connection we might recall that Martianus Capella depicted rhetoric as an armed—“ornamented”—woman.

Robert discusses in turn each of the ornaments listed in Chapter 14 of *The Form of Preaching*. Argument can be “by induction, by example, by syllogism, by enthymeme.” Robert says little about induction, but apparently he distinguishes it from example in that induction organizes many illustrations and example uses only a few. The syllogism must be brief and all premises must be proved. Robert discusses enthymeme in terms of “antecedent” and “consequence.” He says “commonplaces” that are probable may be used, but the “compelling” enthymeme will be reducible to a provable syllogism. This discussion once again emphasizes the close relation between rhetorical argument and dialectic, and the tone is rather Aristotelian. Robert refers to *The Prior Analytics*, without mentioning Aristotle, and to Boethius’s *Topics*.

Robert next discusses the “Proof of Parts,” that is, the justification for dividing the theme as one has chosen to do. Robert’s examples here give the reader some idea of what kind of sermon was actually produced through the use of such manuals. He discusses metaphor briefly as a kind of “Amplification,” thus seeming to treat it as something added on to the text’s meaning rather than as something that creates new meaning. He condemns some ornaments as too stylistically involuted. As a model for how to conclude the sermon, he cites Boethius’s *The Consolation of Philosophy*.

Finally, Robert discusses methods of organizing a sermon other than by the thematic structure he has discussed up to this point. A method for the most intelligent audiences requires them to possess considerable ability to pick up image patterns and to catch allusions to authorities who are not named. Robert concludes his treatise with a brief discussion of the last seven ornaments, which are purely stylistic. The *Rhetorica Secunda* of “Cicero”—actually, Book IV of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (p. 243)—is cited on tropes and figures and Augustine’s *On Christian Doctrine*, Book IV, is quoted on matching one’s tone of voice to the gravity of the subject matter. Some editions of Robert’s treatise include an addition on use of the *cursus*, the rhythmic prose used in official letters.

Selected Bibliography

There is little material from medieval treatises on preaching in English translation. *Readings in Medieval Rhetoric* (ed. Joseph M. Miller, Michael H. Prosser, and Thomas W. Benson, 1973) contains brief excerpts of several relevant works, including *On the Education of Clerics* by Hrabanus Maurus and *De Arte Praedicandi* by Alain de Lille. Excerpted here is Robert of Basevorn's *Forma Praedicandi*, the complete text of which has been translated by Leopold Krul (in *Three Medieval Rhetorical Arts*, ed. James J. Murphy, 1971). Marianne Briscoe mentions a few other English translations, not all of scholarly quality, in *Artes Praedicandi* (Typologies des sources du moyen âge occidental, fasc. 61, 1992).

James J. Murphy's account of *ars praedicandi* in *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages* (1974) is comprehensive. Harry Caplan's collected essays, *Of Eloquence: Studies in Ancient and Medieval Rhetoric* (ed. Anne King and Helen North, 1970), contains translations of two brief preaching manuals and several helpful studies of *ars praedicandi*, including "Classical Rhetoric and the Medieval Theory of Preaching." Gerald Owst concentrates on preaching in its social context in *Preaching in Medieval England* (1926). For a good idea of how the *ars praedicandi* actually worked in the assembly of a sermon, see Charles Smyth, *The Art of Preaching: A Practical Survey of Preaching in the Church of England 747-1939* (1940); Smyth also includes a detailed chapter on how medieval sermons were embellished with examples from history, mythology, and the like.

From *The Form of Preaching*

The Lord stood with me, and strengthened me, that by me the preaching might be fully known (2 Tim. 4:17).¹ As the Philosopher² says, they who seemed experienced reasoned falsely through bad logic. Not knowing the syllogistic form, they called themselves philosophers, in vain professing Philosophy, of whose beginning and in a way foundation, namely logic, they were ignorant. Grasping some parts of Philosophy's cloak, they vainly thought that the whole of it fell to them, as says Boethius.³ Thus also many presume to preach on Theology and to call themselves preachers, when they do not even know the form of preaching, which is the system and method of preaching on every subject, as

logic is the system of syllogizing in every field of knowledge.

Since preaching and teaching are necessary for the Church of God, that science which presents the form of preaching artistically is equally necessary, or even more so. For this reason I have tried to present this small offering of mine especially for the honor of God and His holy Church, although other concurrent motives strongly suggesting it are also involved. Therefore, since I was in many ways bored, and since I was importuned with many insistent requests by different Religious of various Orders and at the same time by Seculars, and also since I was not pressed by other occupations as once I was, I undertook to write this book. I have done so in the hope that it would please you to whom above all things I am humbly grateful; in the hope that applying my mind to other things I might lighten my boredom; in the hope that in my own little way I might satisfy my companions, whose ardent and constant insistence spurs me on; in the

Translated by Leopold Krul. Edited by James J. Murphy.

¹Scriptural citations are to the Douay-Rheims version. [Tr.]

²The Philosopher is Aristotle. [Ed.]

³Boethius, *Consolatio Philosophiae*, Book 3. For a translation see Boethius, *The Consolation of Philosophy*. Trans. Richard Green. Library of Liberal Arts No. 86. New York, 1962. [Tr.]

hope that the memory of you, my friend, might be the more precisely fixed in me and in our posterity; and, finally, in the hope that I, too, might not grow stale through leisure. It is in these hopes that I undertook to write the present work, which may be called the Form of Preaching.

When after such a beginning some things which ought to be included seemed difficult for me to invent, I began to be moved by doubts about my ability to bring to perfection what I had begun. And when I was anxiously pondering thus, suddenly and wonderfully there rose before my mind and vision the authority touched upon in the introduction above, and fixing itself with vividness it filled me with unwonted joy, so much that it dispelled a great part of my former sadness. Thus when I clearly saw that the first part of the authority was fulfilled in me, namely, that *the Lord stood by me*, strengthening me, I had no doubts about its remaining part, and made bold to continue what I had begun, rightly judging that I must begin from the place in which could be assigned the four causes of this work such as are usually noted in Introductions.

The final cause is designated when is said: *The Lord stood by me and strengthened me*. For this end the Apostle⁴ invites his followers (Eph. 6), saying: *be strengthened in the Lord and in the might of His power*. For he who rightly considers ought to establish Him as an end Who is a soothing consolation in dejection, complete satisfaction of desires, a charming alliance in friendship, and a profitable delight in studies. This end can be rightly expressed in the saying (Ezek. 3:14): *The hand of the Lord was with me, strengthening me*.

Secondly, the efficient cause is designated when is said: *by me*. May God, who is also the end, be primarily the efficient cause influencing the whole, as it were. You, my friend, are like a special attracting force, and the insistence of my colleagues is like a certain continual driving force; whereas I am more immediately the instrument putting the task into execution. However, because the primary cause has more influence, I do not dare to attribute anything to myself as proceeding from me; but I say with the Apostle (Rom. 15): *I dare not speak of any of those things*

which Christ worketh by me, and (Gal. 2): *And I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me*.

Should any one wish to know who and of what status is that friend to whom this work is dedicated, and who I am and what is my status—I write all this from the beginning to the end—let him look at the capital letters and he will learn.

Thirdly, the material cause is designated when is said: *preaching*, because the form of preaching is here considered as the matter. On this subject, because I know well enough that I am less fit to speak, I must say with Psalmist: *It is good for me to adhere to my God, to put my hope in the Lord God that I may declare all thy praises* (Ps. 72:28), that is, compose a form which should be a guide for all methods of preaching.

Fourthly, the formal cause is designated implicitly when is said: *may be accomplished*, as some books have it. A thing is formally transmitted and taught when a continuation carries through in an orderly way what the beginning of the work promises or proffers for investigation, and what the end brings to a conclusion, as the Apostle enjoins upon Timothy (2 Tim. 4): *do the work of an evangelist, fulfill thy ministry*. As St. Gregory says in the prologue to *Moralium super Job*: *He who treats sacred eloquence ought to imitate the way of a stream. A flowing stream, if it touches hollows along the side, immediately turns into them, and when it has sufficiently filled them, immediately flows back into its bed*. So says Gregory. In a similar way a stream moves gradually, in an orderly manner, from its source to its mouth. Thus one who deals with the divine word—yes, with any orderly treatise—should make sure that in discussing a subject he has an organized method of procedure. He should not dwell too long on the same point nor should he repeat more often than is right. He should hastily progress from one thing to another as the matter allows. An exception may be made when—without deviating too far from the matter—he finds along the way a source of edification into which, as I might say, he turns his stream of language as into a neighboring valley. When he has sufficiently filled the place of added instruction he turns back into the channel of the intended sermon. Whence the saying, in Eccles. 24, about

⁴The Apostle is Paul. [Ed.]

God, who brings about this formal filling, and from whom primarily comes that which seems to come from us. It is said that *He filleth up wisdom as the Phison*, and again, that *He maketh understanding to abound as the Euphrates*. In other words, just as those two rivers, Phison and Tigris, fill their beds in an orderly way, so does God do in the case of those who deal with his wisdom, pouring into them the grace and wisdom, or the knowledge of proceeding in an orderly and formal way, that thus by the opening of His hand all things may be filled with an agreeable goodness.

This filling, the formal cause, or method of procedure (if we may now turn to our proposal, having completed the foregoing Prologue) is treated and taught in fifty chapters. For, as is clearly evident, the Prologue shows to whom this treatise is dedicated, why its title, and its four causes. Here ends the Prologue.

The index for the following work, which is called *The Form of Preaching*, was composed in the year of our Lord 1322.

First chapter: What in the proper sense preaching is, and how much time one sermon should take.

2nd. Who should rightly be called a preacher, and when he deserves the aureole.

3rd. The difference between preachers by office and preachers by privilege.

4th. That three things are necessary for one preaching rightly, namely a good life, sufficient knowledge, and legal authority—that is conscience, knowledge, and power.

5th. That above all a proper limit must be established and fixed beforehand in sermons, from which follows that those eager for gain must not be listened to.

6th. What was the first sermon and who the first preacher if we extend the name “preaching” to “persuasion”; and that Christ did not deign in his preaching to refuse to accept the theme of his precursor; and that Christ’s method and that of the great teachers differ among themselves.

- 7th. That the modern method varies from all the methods mentioned above.
- 8th. In what ways Christ and His precursor preached.
- 9th. In what ways St. Paul preached.
- 10th. The method of St. Augustine’s preaching.
- 11th. The method of St. Gregory.
- 12th. The method of St. Bernard.
- 13th. Disproof of the prevailing notion that preaching should not be embellished.
- 14th. That twenty-two ways of ornamenting a sermon are observed in the English method.
- 15th. What things are required for a good Invention of the Theme; first, that it fit the feast and create a full understanding.
- 16th. Secondly, that the theme must come from a common text of the Bible.
- 17th. Which parts in a theme may be skipped and which not.
- 18th. That a text may not be perverted, and that it is not always perverted when given another sense.
- 19th. How a theme of three statements or one which is convertible into three should be selected.
- 20th. How, according to some, there can be a division into many statements, and yet it is incorrect to put into the theme more than the appropriate number of statements.
- 21st. That a sermon can be built upon one statement, and how it is built up in respect to the antetheme.
- 22nd. That one must foresee that vowel concordances can be found for the statements of the theme, and the number of these.
- 23rd. That the theme and antetheme should be the same, and in what way.
- 24th. Concerning the second ornament, namely Winning the Audience over and the five methods of its use.
- 25th. Concerning the third ornament, namely Prayer, and how it is exercised.
- 26th. From which Books and passages of the Bible the theme can be taken.
- 27th. What themes can be taken according to the aforementioned method *De tempore*, whether in general or in particular.

- 28th. What theme, according to the same method, can be taken from the saints in particular.
- 29th. What themes can be taken from the saints in general and from concurrent feasts.
- 30th. What themes can be taken from emerging material.
- 31st. Concerning the fourth ornament, namely the Introduction, where note the way in which different preachers use different methods of quoting, and four usual methods of Introduction.
- 32nd. How the Introduction should be formed when the theme consists of one statement.
- 33rd. Concerning Division, the fifth ornament.
- 34th. Concerning the sixth ornament, the Statement of the parts.
- 35th. Concerning the seventh ornament which is the Proof of the parts, and especially about the very unusual method of the Parisians.
- 36th. The usual method followed by the Parisians with respect to the antetheme.
- 37th. Their usual method with respect to the treatment, which does not extend beyond the seventh ornament, namely the Proof of the parts, except in the case of Conclusion.
- 38th. How the Oxonians use this ornament.
- 39th. Concerning the eighth ornament, namely Amplification, and its eight methods in general.
- 40th. The method of Amplification in particular, which the Oxonians especially use, and which is called the Subdivision.
- 41st. Concerning the ninth ornament, by some called the Digression, and incorrectly so, because it is properly the Transition.
- 42nd. Concerning Correspondence, which is the tenth ornament.
- 43rd. Concerning Agreement of Correspondence, which is the eleventh ornament.
- 44th. Concerning Circuitous Development, which is the twelfth ornament.
- 45th. Concerning the thirteenth ornament, which by some is called Convolution—to wit, all for all and each for each.

- 46th. Concerning the fourteenth ornament, which is called Unification.
- 47th. Concerning the fifteenth ornament, which is called Conclusion or Ending.
- 48th. Concerning sixteen other and diverse ways of preaching, whose subtleties can be understood from what has been said above.
- 49th. Specially devoted to one method which is in part similar to that of the Parisians, a method which is very effective in every language.
- 50th. Specially devoted to one peculiar method used in Latin which in part is like the Oxford method, and also briefly to the seven remaining ornaments, namely Coloration, Modulation of Voice, Appropriate Gesture, Timely Humor, Allusion, Firm Impression, Weighing of Subject Matter. . . .

CHAPTER XV

For a good Invention of the Theme the following are required: that it concur with the feast, that it beget full understanding, that it be on a Bible text which is not changed or corrupted, that it contain not more than three statements or convertible to three, that sufficient concordances can be found on these three ideas, even vowel concordances, and that the theme itself can serve in place of the antetheme or protheme. For example, concerning the first, suppose that someone has to preach about Advent and he takes as his theme: *Come, Lord Jesus*, from the Nativity: *the Grace of God has appeared*, from the Epiphany: *a great sign has appeared*; thus he will find the above-mentioned conditions concurrent.

Likewise concerning the saints. He should consider what or which things about the saints or saint about whom he preaches he especially wishes to commend. For example, as I consider St. Andrew, I see much that is especially commendable in him: that he hung on the cross for so long and did not waiver, that in spirit he seemed affixed to Christ than corporally to the cross. And thus the saying of his fellow Apostle is seen in his own person: *with Christ I am nailed to the cross* (Gal. 2:19).

Likewise I consider St. Nicholas who was much given over to works of piety and devotion, because of which he was made a bishop. Then one could say about him: his throne is prepared in mercy. And so concerning the rest. All of those fit their feasts well.

The second condition is that the theme create full understanding, that the statement be not uncertain or doubtful, lacking a verb; for example, if the theme on St. Catherine should be: *the virgin daughter of Sion*, such a theme would be judged faulty. This fullness of understanding must be looked at according to the situation, for it should not always be the greatest possible fullness. For example, suppose that the theme about St. Nicholas should be: *and all the Church of the saints shall declare his alms*. This is a full construction. But it is not so full as it would be if the following should be said: *it will declare the alms of the Bishop*, etc. It would be even fuller if the sentence were: *the alms of Nicholas*, etc. But the fullness in the first example is sufficient, and is frequently found to be better.

CHAPTER XVI

Some, on the other hand, use a good and commendable method in addition. They choose such a theme that immediately excites the audience to devotion, no matter what idiom is used, as in Advent: *Come, Lord Jesus*; or on the feast of St. John before the Latin Gate: *The just one is delivered out of distress*; and so concerning the rest. For this reason also such themes as invoke mercy, and consequently indicate misery, are often used by very many preachers, as *Have mercy on me (Lord)*, and *Jesus, son of David, have mercy on me* and the like.

Others also, for the same reason, choose themes in which there is this word which arouses emotion, as from Advent: *Let us put away the works of darkness*; and from Nativity: *Let us see this word*; from Passiontide: *His blood be upon us*; and on the feast of any martyr: *My life is wasted with grief*.

Let a preacher see to it that his theme is from a text of the Bible and not from any antiphony. Hence that theme is wrong which some take on

the feast of the Trinity: *He saw three and adored one*, because it is not a text from the Bible.

Likewise when Holy Writ contains a relative pronoun, in the theme it should not be changed to its antecedent: for example, if the following theme should be used on some saint: *my foot has followed God's step*, this would be faulty because it is not the letter of the Bible. Literally it reads: *His steps*, etc., and it ought be used in that form.

Indeed it is considered incorrect if one puts in his theme a quotation from another translation than the one commonly used. Hence, if for Passiontide the theme would be chosen which has the translation from Ps. 95, *Sing*, i.e., *Say among the nations, the Lord reigneth from the wood (cross)*, it would be incorrect, because literally from the accepted translation it is: *Say among nations, the Lord reigneth*, without anything more. I wonder about this, and do not find sufficient reason why the true translation, indeed, the one which the Church commonly uses, should not be accepted and that that is the literal translation is evident from the verse of the hymn (Passion Sunday hymn Vespers 3 v.): *Fulfilled are the things which (David) sings*, etc. Still, two reasons are assigned for not accepting such themes from an unknown translation: (1) in the first place one who proposes such an unknown theme seems to seek human praise, as if he himself knew unknown things, nor does he preserve the order of learning in which one proceeds from the known to the unknown; (2) if this procedure were allowed, liars, heretics, and ignorant men could make themes as they pleased and devise an unknown translation, of which the exemplar could not easily be found, and there would be a great occasion for error. Therefore, it is better here to follow the common method, that of taking a known theme or one from a known translation. That is why it is said that Christ did not change the theme which His precursor, John, before Him frequently had taken and preached.

CHAPTER XVII

Sometimes, however, we may omit and pass over some parts of speech which are in the Bible, for instance, conjunctions which join sentences.

For example the theme: *Let us put away the works of darkness*, is well taken, although literally it is: *Therefore let us put away*, etc. Likewise, literally, *For now our salvation is nearer*, etc.; and yet in the theme the word *for* can well be omitted and we can say: *Now our salvation*, etc. So also I say about the word *however* as in *now however you are converted*. One can say: *now you are converted*. Similarly a copulative conjunction can be omitted as long as the sentence is complete. For example, if from some saint is taken the theme: *Heal me, O Lord, and I will be healed*. For it is fitting to add the word *and*. And so for the others. Other conjunctions which make the propositions conditional, on which the sentence of the propositions depends, cannot be omitted. Such conjunctions are: *while, since, if, because, or*, and their equivalents, whether they go before or are placed in the middle.

An interjection also that precedes can be omitted, as long as the sentence stays complete. Hence in war, to arouse one's side against the adversary this can be accepted as a theme: *I will comfort myself over my adversaries*; however, literally it is: *Ah! I will comfort myself over my adversaries*. Therefore the interjection may in this way be omitted. Sometimes, however, if it is left out the sentence will remain incomplete. If in a sermon to contemplatives one should take as his theme: *woe is me because my sojourn has been prolonged*, one cannot leave out the interjection on account of the meaning of the sentence. The same must be held about interjections even in the middle of a proposition, for example, the word *also*. The other parts of speech can in no way be skipped nor left out because the omission would change the sentence. For example if on Pentecost would be accepted this theme: *the Spirit of wisdom came*. This would not be valid because the literal sense is: *The Spirit of wisdom came upon me*. However, if it were taken as: *The Spirit came upon me*, and without anything more it would not be incorrect, because, although the words of *wisdom* are missing, the sentence is not changed much.

Nor is it allowed to change one tense of a verb to another tense. Hence the theme which some

take on the Ascension: *He ascended opening the way before them*, is incorrect since the Bible literally has: *he will ascend opening the way before*, etc.

CHAPTER XVIII

Sometimes it happens that the text of the Bible is not changed, yet is perverted; as, if one giving a sermon to contemplatives should take as his theme: *you will believe if I speak of heavenly things*. This seems to me to be a perversion of the letter and sense of Scripture; for Christ in the Gospel uttered this interrogatively and in a negative sense, as if to say: *you will not at all believe*. Therefore it is a perversion if it draws to the opposite of this meaning.

The same perversion occurs when a thing is attributed to someone with whom there is no comparison, for example if a theme is taken from Easter: *Triphon arose*. There is no agreement there; Triphon is the worst of all; Christ, the best.

Likewise it is perversion to transfer a noun from the meaning in Scripture; for example if one should take as a theme on Palm Sunday: *I know O Lord, thy judgments are equity*, and should explain it as referring to his equitation on an ass, when the Scripture speaks of his *equity* which is a noun.

In the case of authorities it is likewise faulty if, for example, for St. Edmund the king this theme should be taken: *the sinners have bent their bow*, and then in the course of the sermon one should adduce an authority of another meaning for *bent* as (bend) *hearken to my voice*, and: *O God, (bend) come to my assistance*.

Similarly there is perversion when an incomplete part of a preceding clause is taken together with the beginning of the following clause, if for example in a sermon to penitents would be taken the theme: *Be sorry / offer up the sacrifice of justice* (Ps. 4 end v. 5 & begin v. 6).

A theme, then, is perverted by shortening, by too great a disagreement, and by too violent a transfer from its proper meaning.

Some shortening, however, is allowable, as is some disagreement, some transfer, as long as it is not excessive. On the first Sunday of Lent this

theme may well be taken: *May you receive the grace of God*; and yet the authority is shortened and what is there negatively is taken affirmatively. For in that locus is said: *Do not receive the Grace of God in vain*, and it is evidently negative. But it must be said that the Apostle urges two things here, that they receive grace, and that they do not receive in vain. For they would receive it in vain if they did not retain it, because it would not minister to them. Therefore, because either is in the intention of the Apostle, either member of the complete construction can be accepted for a theme.

Likewise on Easter Sunday may be accepted for a theme: *The man arose and opened the gate*; or on the Ascension what literally is said in Judges (19–20) about the Levite who divided his wife into twelve parts, between whom and Christ there is a very great disparity; but nevertheless tolerable and not too excessive. And thus also about Nicholas is taken: *the boy grew*, which literally is said about Samson.

Likewise in as far as a transfer can be made from the literal signification to the moral the theme can be taken about St. Paul or Peter, martyr: *He struck the rock and waters flowed forth*. Literally *rock* here means that stone which Moses struck with his rod, and *waters* means those natural waters and that striking was the action of Moses, who was a good man. And conversely, here the striking was that of an evil man. But certainly *rock* can morally mean a heart solid in faith, *water*, doctrine, and *striking* permissively can be God's; and thus it is well accepted.

CHAPTER XIX

Further, in this method of preaching only three statements, or the equivalent of three, are used in the theme—either from respect to the Trinity, or because a threefold cord is not easily broken, or because this method is mostly followed by Bernard, or, as I think more likely, because it is more convenient for the set time of the sermon. A preacher can follow up just so many members without tiring his hearers; and if he should mention fewer, he would occupy too little time.

The reason why a theme may be the equivalent of three statements is that it can happen that

some words which cannot be divided and should not be may fall into a theme. Of such kind are prepositions and conjunctions, and also a general word which is included in every other word. Hence if the theme were: *the just is delivered out of distress*, no division would fall upon *out of* nor upon *is*.

Hence, a division ought not to be made on the word *is* when it is placed thus. Yet sometimes it can. Sometimes it does not stand generally but gives its action to one particular only, as: *who is he who sent me*, and again: *you are the selfsame*. And then because it stands attributively, division can be made of it, so that one may say that identity, stability, uniformity, or the like is noted in it.

No matter how many statements there may be, as long as I can divide them into three, I have a sufficient proposition. Posit that the theme on the Annunciation, on the vigil of Nativity, or on the day, and on the first Sunday within the octave of the Nativity, and on the day of Circumcision: *God sent His Son made of a woman, made under the law, that He might redeem them who were under the law*. Here are seventeen words;⁵ yet the whole can be divided into three so that it may be said that in these words three things are touched upon: (1) There is noted in the doctor a generously-expanded sublimity because it says *God sent His Son*. (2) There is shown how virtuously-shown humility heals because it says *made of a woman, made under the law*. (3) There is shown how fruitfully-extended utility is derived, because it says *that he might redeem them who were under the law*.

But when the theme is thus divided, one must see that the dividing parts correspond with the parts of that which is divided. For example, here is said that in the doctor is noted a sublimity, etc. when is said *God sent* etc. Notice the correspondence, because *God*: sublimity; because *He sent*: expended; because *His Son*: generously. And thus about the rest. There is no lack of artistry if these three things can be confirmed by one authority in which verbally there are the three: *God, sent, and Son* and that in the sentence such great

⁵That is, it has seventeen words in the Latin: *Misit Deus filium suum factum ex muliere, factum sub lege, ut eos qui sub lege erant redimeret*. [Tr.]

nobility is communicated to us. But because such authorities are difficult to find, themes of so many words are not commonly accepted.

Sometimes it happens that there are only two words in the theme which can be turned into three: for example let the division be into three concerning St. Nicholas: *the boy grew*, that it may be said: "In these words St. Nicholas is commended for his state of purity, because it says *boy*, for his advance in dignity because it says *grew*, and in both for his reward of happiness, because it says *the boy grew*." And then it is right that this third member should have authority in which each is used vocally with the sentence of division. It is therefore clear what it is to take three statements for the theme or statements convertible into three because this can happen whether there are more or less than three.

CHAPTER XX

Those who follow this opinion say that if a theme is taken to be divided into four parts, the subdivision ought also to be divided into four, and if the theme is to be divided into five, then the subdivision ought also be divided into five parts, and it should so correspond and follow that the end should agree with the beginning and that there should be at least some evidence of art. With this I also agree, save that he who takes too long a theme and divides it into too many parts seems to show that he is rather incompetent. Yet one may immediately divide his theme into twelve parts or less and follow up with something about each, so that he does not make many divisions. For example, suppose the following theme on the Apostles: *there are twelve hours of the day*. Then immediately one would continue thus: The first hour of the day we may well call St. Peter, and so on with the rest. This method St. Bernard uses frequently. But this method is foreign to the artistic one of which there now is talk.

I have also heard a capable man use the following theme as a whole in a sermon to a synod: *Ask the lord of the harvest to send laborers into his vineyard. Go*. This fellow was a grand master in theology and a great prelate who was expert in problems as well as sermons, yet his theme was generally condemned by all intelligent men espe-

cially for the addition of the word *Go*. On this word alone there could be quite an artistic and useful sermon. And according to the Philosopher, it is inconvenient to do with more what equally and conveniently can be done with fewer words.

CHAPTER XXI

It is incidental to my plan to consider here whether there can be a sermon on one statement. It seems to me that there can be a sermon on one explicit statement, but which implies another statement or more, namely by discussing a word used in exhortation, saying: *understand ye, preach or preach ye, go ye, walk ye*, and the like. But this method is almost totally unknown. And therefore it pleases me, insofar as I am able, at this place to insert an example of such a sermon.

Let those, however, who intend to imitate this method know that it is incorrect to take only one word of which a full understanding is not aroused. For example, if one were to take as his theme on the Purification: *Simeon*; that would be wrong, no matter how interesting the continuation would be.

But that this unknown incidence be made known, let the theme be taken on Peter the martyr of the order of Preachers which is written in the epistle of that feast: *understand ye* (Tim. 2). Just as St. Gregory in his homily *If anyone love* uses as an antetheme: *no one rightly attributes to a man teaching that he understands from the mouth of the teacher, for unless there is one who teaches interiorly, the tongue labors in vain exteriorly*, etc. From this authority it is evident that in fruitful preaching there are three things necessarily required: the supreme teacher, God, teaching the intellect, the listener obeying the words of the teacher, and the teaching itself, useful and advantageous. And these three the Gospel of Luke 24:45 equally embraces. *He opened*, he says *their understanding that they might understand the scriptures. He opened their understanding*, behold the master teaching, *He who opens and no one closes, who closes and no one opens* (in the Apoc.). For sacred Scripture is closed by the mysteries of secrets, but opened through the ministries of preachers, because *the declaration of the word of God illumines and gives understanding*

to the little ones. Secondly, there is required the obeying listener, otherwise there is no understanding. Therefore it says: *that they might understand*. Hence in Eccles. 5:13: *Be meek to hear the word that thou mayest understand*. Thirdly, it is required that the teaching itself be useful and advantageous. And this is the last word: *Scriptures*, it says not *trifles*, of which there is written in Timothy: *All scripture inspired of God is profitable for teaching*; Gloss: first, the ignorant; secondly, to persuade the negligent; thirdly, to reprove those insisting on vain things.

But, as I have said, I doubt whether I can have this of myself; rather it is from the Lord of whom is written, Wis. of Sol. 3:9, *They that trust in the Lord will understand the truth*. Therefore let us ask in the accustomed manner *that he open for us the door of his word*, Col. 4:3, as long as *I sing thus and understand*, Ps. 100:1, for his and his saints' honor, that, as the Scripture says, *rivers of living water*, John 7:38, i.e. graces flow from us indeed, into us. Since this is so, anyone may say to him, at least mentally, *Give me understanding that I may know your testimonies*. Ps. 118:125.

Already there is evident in this antetheme sufficient subtlety because first, it is introduced with an original authority with which the authority of Scripture harmonizes; secondly, the authority of Scripture is divided according to the original and each part is so confirmed that it voices the statement about which there is preaching; thirdly, the third authority includes at the same time itself and the two preceding authorities; fourthly, for asking grace, the parts of the first authority are laid down in order, e.g., against *He opened their understanding* there is placed *may he open for us the door of His word*. And so for the rest.

Later on, further development of this will be shown; now, there is only talk about the antetheme.

Although, in Chapter XV, I said that for the good invention of a theme three statements or statements convertible to three are necessary, and afterwards, in Chapter XIX, that a theme may contain only two statements, and here, only one explicitly is needed, I have not contradicted myself, for the first represents the opinion of those who follow it as a principal method. Considering this fact it happens that another method may be

good enough. It is also evident how two statements can be converted into three. I say that they are converted into three when there can be a continuation in the same manner as if there were three statements, and this can happen even if there are twelve statements, or only two, as was shown, or only one, as will be shown later.

CHAPTER XXII

It is well stated in Chapter XV that in the beginning care must be taken to provide verbal concordance for the statements of the theme, because there are enough such in every language for presenting the proposition and avoiding contradictions. Otherwise the preacher will be rightly considered ignorant, for the Scriptures are definitely extensive enough in themselves so that what is necessary may be quickly and promptly found, once the beginning of a sermon has been well chosen. His ignorance, therefore, is greater because he binds and limits himself where it is not necessary to do so.

Next is found where the agreement of words is, rather than whether it is only real and not verbal. Although the learned Gregory and others do not follow this procedure closely, nevertheless they always observe it in principle. I say "in principle" for this reason: concordances can be well expressed and divided accidentally, just as long as enough is said about the essential division. For example, if the theme established is: *walk ye*, one can say that a road is threefold: straight, level, clear. Concerning the straight, which is the way of commands, it is written: *make straight the paths of our God*. Certainly this is the way, *walk ye* on it to *on the right*, etc., and so also concerning the other members. It is evident that what is said about the way is not a verbal concordance for *walk ye*, but nevertheless the division is concluded through one authority in which *walk ye* is included and this suffices.

But, say that one must preach in English and does not use as his theme: *walk ye*. Could he without fault choose as the main authority one in which there would not be *walk ye* but its convertible *to go*? For example if one would say: one must walk first, freely on the way of God because of definite and just reward; hence the Lord also

says *Go ye also into my vineyard and I will give you what is just?* It seems to me yes. Nor is there any difference in English between one or the other, and I see nothing to prevent this unless there be some learned men who note the authorities in their sermons because in Scripture the difference between *to walk* and *to go* is immediately evident but the unlearned do not know how to discern it.

To avoid all difficulty, and to make a sermon serve all languages and all to whom one preaches, it is better to use verbal agreements a little, in the way described. For example, in the theme: *walk ye*, it is permitted to take an authority in which is contained any derivative of this word. If seven verbal agreements on any statement can be found for the purpose, that is sufficient, and at least so many are required. But it is difficult to find so many that apply to novelty which one strives to attain unless the agreements are very many indeed.

CHAPTER XXIII

In the aforementioned Chapter XV, it is well stated that in selecting a theme, the antetheme and theme should be the same. In former times some preachers used to select one theme for themselves, and then took an authority dealing with some word of the theme in place of an antetheme; that is observable in the sermons of Guido⁶ and many others. Take, for example, the theme: *see how you walk*. Immediately they would add one authority which contained the words *to see* or *to walk*, saying *what I saw I will tell you*, or: *He walked with me in peace and truth and turned many from iniquity*. And then they would follow the second authority for an antetheme, and the first for the theme. I see no need for this unless the second authority is more properly and immediately suited to the preacher of God's word, or to the hearer, or to the word itself, or to all three at the same time, or to two of the three.

But here it must be carefully noted that it is not right to divide the antetheme so thinly that the three members of the division in the authority

⁶The identity of Guido is not known. (Could it be Guido Arezzo, . . . ?) [Tr.]

which is used instead of the antetheme are always explained. It is sufficient to mention the three members on the basis of which allusion is made to the parts of the authority, which is taken as an antetheme. For example, if the theme were: *The just man is delivered from distress*, one way the antetheme could be is:

As St. Gregory says, Christ taught truth and goodness yet he suffered evil; but *a helper in due time in tribulation* comforted him. Thus it is also with those who imitate him, the preachers of God's word. Hence in the preceding words a threefold condition of a preacher is noted namely, gravity of teaching, ferocity of pressure, and proximity of redress. 1. The gravity of teaching, so that about him can be said, Prov. 10:21, *The lips of the just teach many. The just man shall correct me*, says the Psalmist (140:5), *and shall reprove me. But let not the oil of the sinner fatten my head*, i.e., the fawning of a flatterer will not fatten my head, or, he will not overreach my reason, etc. 2. There follows with many the ferocity of pressure. Hence, in Job, according to the exposition of St. Gregory, a good preacher is called a lamp, despised in the thoughts of the rich; a lamp, because of true and lucid teaching; despised, because of the frequently brought-on assault. But, as is written for this one and the former: Wisdom 5:1, *the just shall stand with great constancy against those that have afflicted them*. The reason is that the use and action of these evils of which I now speak is against the Lord who is able to overcome His adversaries and is kind in helping His own. Therefore, no matter how much the pressure of persecution rages there always abounds the redress of consolations which is number three. To this the Psalmist (33:18) attests when he says: *The just cried, and the Lord heard them: and delivered them out of all their troubles*. Therefore, let the just cry through sincere teaching, which is first; and from all tribulations of those raging with pressure, which is second, God will deliver them through his assisting grace, which is third. Let us cry, therefore, in the accustomed manner for gaining that grace, and without a doubt the Lord will hear us, who, as the Psalmist attests (33:18), heard those praying, and will deliver them from all tribulations.

It is now evident that this antetheme is artistic enough, and yet there is only an allusion from the members of the division to the statements of the theme. Proof. It is certain that in the capacity of this word *just* there is not included the gravity of

doctrine, because one can be quite just without teaching anything; and, on the contrary, one can teach right things and yet not be just. And yet the authority which corresponds to this first member includes teaching and explains verbally that statement to which there is an allusion, and this suffices. In the second member the chosen authority does not express that preachers hear distress, nor does it imply this, but merely states it. It also places one authority which alludes to the second statement, as is evident, and this is less than in the first. Yet this suffices. Similarly the third authority does not touch upon preachers more than others, but still with a unique dexterity and subtlety is applied to them because of the connection with the preceding authorities.

CHAPTER XXIV

Now that we have treated in general the first ornament of preaching, to wit, the Invention of the Theme, the second ornament follows, namely the Winning-over of the Audience. The preacher, as far as he can do so according to God, ought to attract the mind of the listeners in such a way as to render them willing to hear and retain. This can be done in many ways. One way is to place at the beginning something subtle and interesting, as some authentic marvel which can be fittingly drawn in for the purpose of the theme. For instance, suppose that the theme is concerned with the Ascension or the Assumption: *a spring rose from the earth*. One could adduce that marvel which Gerald narrates in his book, *De mirabilibus Hiberniae* about the spring in Scicilia: if anyone approaches it dressed in red clothing, immediately water gushes from the place of the spring though none appeared there before, while it remains unmoved in the presence of all other colors. That spring is Christ, about Whom it is written in Eccles. 1: *the word of God is the fountain of wisdom*, to Whom he “approaches dressed red” who, devoutly suffering with Him and as it were incarnadined with the blood of His Passion, intently and inwardly revolves the thought (of Him), and considers the saying of Isaiah: *why is Thy apparel red?* Such a one approaching finds living water, viz. graces, because His blood was of such virtue that, when it was

shed, the earth quaked and the rocks were torn asunder. Much more ought our hearts to quake and be torn by the cry of God’s word, unless they be drier than the earth and harder than rocks.

Likewise if an unknown cause of some saying is used, it is reducible to the same category, for example if a cause is given to explain why the eye does not have a determined color; because if it did have a definite color, it would perceive only that color and there would have to be as many senses as there are colors; and this may be applied to sinners, especially the avaricious and clever ones who do not perceive the word of God or its effect because they are totally determined by its opposite.

Another way is to frighten them by some terrifying tale or example, in the way that Jacques de Vitry talks about some one who never willingly wanted to hear the word of God; finally when he died and was brought to the church, and the priest in the presence of the parish began the eulogy which is wont to be spoken over the body of the dead, the image of Christ standing between the choir and the church tore away and pulled His hands from the nails piercing them and from the wood to which they were fixed, and plugged His ears, as if to intimate that He did not wish to hear the prayer for him who once spurned to listen to Him in His preachers.⁷

Likewise, pertinent to the same topic are the different stories which teach how Christ appeared to some hardened sinners, extending His palm full of blood taken from His side, saying: This blood which you so obdurately contemn will bear witness against you on the day of judgment. After they lived awhile it was frequently disclosed that the blood could not be washed away and they were buried with it. Some repented and confessed and then easily enough, as it were, it disappeared.

This second example I myself have come upon, in connection with an infamous woman hardened to all sermons. Christ appeared to her and took the woman’s hand, putting it into the

⁷Jacques de Vitry was the compiler of a popular collection of such *exempla*. See *The Exempla or Illustrative Stories from the Sermones Vulgares of Jacques de Vitry*. Ed. Thomas F. Crane. Publications of the Folk-Lore Society, vol. 26. London, 1890. [Tr.]

wound in His side, saying, as she herself had said: the blood which you reject will adhere to you for evil, unless you correct yourself. It is well known that she confessed; still it adhered to her and could not be washed away till finally in some way she confessed a great hidden sin and immediately after that it disappeared. Such terrifying stories have great value in the beginning of a sermon.

The third way is to show by an example or story that the devil always tries to hinder the word of God and the hearing of it.

The fourth way is to show that to hear the word of God is a great sign of predestination. To this are reduced those ways which show that other benefits, earthly or heavenly, such as the fertility of the earth, the disposition to penitence, and the like, accrue to those who listen willingly.

The fifth way is to show that the preacher in-

tends only to convert them, and not immediately after that to start begging. He should draw them to the love of God, to the fear of evil, to the honor of God, lest, if it is a principal feast, it may lack due honor. Then he should put the hearers into the right disposition for the Indulgence, which is granted to those who listen to the word of God, and preach like things by which he rightly deems to win over the hearers according to their condition.

Zeal will teach him who does not have an evil intention about these and other methods. If someone should make it his goal to attract hearers in order that glory may follow for himself, he rather repels than attracts. Therefore some who are about to speak with mouth and heart say in the beginning—although beneath their breath lest it be ascribed to hypocrisy—*Not to us, O Lord, not to us*, etc. . . .

Christine de Pizan

ca. 1364–ca. 1430

Medieval women were eloquent. They had to use language effectively to be queens and courtiers, heads of religious houses, partners in family businesses and trades, and guides for the young. They engaged continually in rhetorical activity. The challenge for modern scholarship is to recover this activity for study when few medieval women achieved literacy. Before 1000, those who did were usually members of either a royal family or a religious order; after 1000, to these elite groups were added some middle-class women. Of the minority of women who were literate, few engaged in the forms of literacy regarded by the period as rhetorical, namely, the composition of sermons or legal letters or the formal analysis of poetry (see the introduction to Part Two). Historian of rhetoric Cheryl Glenn has explained how one can study other rhetorical activities by medieval women; she focuses on the religious writings of Julian of Norwich and Margery Kempe. As Glenn suggests, research can also center on works that discuss women's education and how they should use language at court and in other walks of life. One of the first women to compose such work, and indeed, perhaps the first "woman of letters" the West has produced, was Christine de Pizan (ca. 1364–ca. 1430).

Christine was born in Venice; her family name was derived from the town of Pizzano near Bologna, at whose university her father had taken a medical degree and where he lectured on astronomy and astrology. The spelling "Pisan," still often seen, is the French rendering of her name, which gives the misleading impression that she was from Pisa. Christine's father, well educated and well connected both politically and intellectually, had mastered the most advanced science of his day and also knew the early humanists Salutati and Petrarch.

Shortly after her birth, Christine's father accepted an appointment as court astrologer and physician to King Charles V of France, and the family moved to Paris. Educated by her father and court tutors, Christine acquired literacy in Italian, French, and Latin. She knew some classical texts (mostly in vernacular translations) and was widely acquainted with medieval learning. Also, she married one of the French king's legal secretaries, and so learned something about *ars dictaminis* and legal script. Few medieval women could have received a better education.

Nevertheless, it appears that Christine did not think of making a literary career for herself until disaster struck her family. In 1390, her father, her husband, and their patron, the French king, died within a short time. Christine was left at age twenty-five with major debts and with three children, a young niece, and an elderly mother to support. She turned to writing, apparently making some money by copying legal documents, as her husband had taught her to do. But Christine had higher ambitions, both literary and financial. She first achieved fame—and lucrative noble patronage—for her poetic ballads. She also wrote longer poems on moral and romantic themes, enriched with classical imagery and allegory, which she dedicated to various patrons in the French royal house. Her loyalty and skill earned her the

commission from Charles V's brother to write a history of the king's reign. These were all rather familiar literary genres of her day, if highly unusual as areas of endeavor for women.

Christine went even further, and pioneered in several literary areas of special significance to women, for which scholars today see her as a protofeminist. Her first foray involved her in controversy over a popular poem, the *Romance of the Rose*. Written in the thirteenth century, this poem satirizes the sentiments of courtly love while salaciously depicting women as foolish and corrupt, nothing more than legitimate prey for seducers. Christine joined in a discussion of this poem with several of her fellow courtiers, some of whom defended it while she and others attacked it for its immorality. Christine also criticized it for its unfair depiction of women. This "Quarrel of the Rose," as it came to be known, was conducted first in private conversation and then in private letters. Christine published a collection of these letters and became well known both for her advocacy of women and for the high learning and high moral tone evinced in her criticism. Her part in the exchange may well have been the first polemical defense of women against the classical and Christian misogynist tradition the poem invokes.

Christine also produced several writings that describe her own intellectual and spiritual journey, in which she appears not only as the recipient of a dream vision—a familiar medieval device employed in many of her works—but also as the protagonist. Scholars have characterized them as the first examples of autobiography as that genre would come to be known in the West, and they are strikingly modern in their account of female psychology. For example, Christine depicts herself struggling against the weight of tradition, which states that women are intellectually and morally inferior to men, as she tries to urge herself to literary excellence.

Two of Christine's most popular works in her own day, and the two for which she is best known now, transform familiar genres with a feminist edge. Both produced in 1405, they are *The Book of the City of Ladies* and *The Treasure of the City of Ladies (The Book of the Three Virtues)*. The first is a compendium of brief lives of worthy women, imagined as residents of an ideal "city of ladies." The work is modeled upon a volume by Boccaccio that uses examples from classical mythology and ancient history, but Christine adds Christian and other more contemporary examples. Rather than simply proceeding chronologically, as Boccaccio does, Christine sets her accounts of these women into a discussion of socially enforced misogyny and the limitations it has placed on women. In spite of these odds, as her famous examples show, women have achieved far more than their critics give them credit for. In the passage excerpted here, Christine defends the right of women to be educated by citing the rhetorical excellence of classical-era women who were well educated. Significantly, the portraits are presented to Christine by three allegorical figures of virtues, the chief of whom is Dame Reason—not a virtue traditionally associated with women.

The Treasure of the City of Ladies, intended as a companion piece to *The Book of the City of Ladies*, provides instruction that will help fit women of all social ranks for inclusion in Christine's ideal female community. Although the same three

virtues briefly appear to introduce the teachings, the main voice of instruction belongs to a character named Worldly Prudence. This choice is meant to indicate that the book will focus primarily on the active life of a woman engaged in familial and civic affairs, rather than that of one withdrawn into contemplative religion. Christine introduces some interesting variations into the conduct book genre to which this work belongs. For one thing, her work addresses women of all sorts, from queens to prostitutes. Moreover, she discusses the challenges that will face them throughout their lives, rather than simply advising the young on how to prepare for a suitable marriage, as most conduct books did. Also, despite its high moral tone, Christine's advice is notably realistic and practical. Perhaps of most significance for contemporary feminists, her discussion of medieval society recognizes the wide range of roles women were asked to play, even if the roles were not officially sanctioned (a widow might have to defend herself in court, for example—as Christine herself had done), and also acknowledges the many social constraints and barriers that worked against them. Most important to contemporary rhetoricians, Christine advises women on how they should use language to protect themselves and achieve their goals, as shown in the passages excerpted here. As medievalist Liliane Dulac puts it, “The dignity of women’s speech occupies the center stage of this work.”¹

Rhetoric per se is not a frequent concern of Christine's, although, as noted above, in *The Book of the City of Ladies* she uses rhetorical excellence to validate the need for more complete education for women. But even when she does not mention rhetoric as a formal discipline, Christine does frequently attend to the ways women should, and should not, use language, as the passages excerpted here from *The Treasure of the City of Ladies* illustrate. She herself used language, at least in her published texts, in strikingly new ways. As historian Joan Kelly has argued, Christine was one of the first Western women to take the offensive against the misogynist tradition, refuting the critics' charges and also exposing contemporary mistreatment of women. Furthermore, she clearly views gender as a social, not only a biological, category—she shows how sex roles are socially conditioned and how the expectations placed on women give them a group identity and solidarity. Finally, she uses her personal experience of women's talents and virtues to fight against the negative self-image that she and other women have internalized from their detractors.

At the same time that she does all of this, Christine basically supports the existing social order. She is a political conservative and does not apparently wish to overturn the traditional sexual division of labor. Rather, she wants women to receive more credit for what they do, as well as somewhat more freedom of movement, which she justifies as needed for them to meet their family responsibilities. Although many of her writings emphasize her own love of learning, she also intimates that she would not have published if not obliged by the death of male relatives to support her family. Then, too, the powerful women in Christine's texts are

¹Liliane Dulac, “The Representation and Functions of Feminine Speech in Christine de Pizan's *Livre des trois vertus*,” trans. Christine Reno, in *Reinterpreting Christine de Pizan*, ed. Earl Jeffrey Richards with Joan Williamson, Nadia Margolis, and Christine Reno (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1992), p. 13.

generally shown working behind the scenes. Her princess, for example, uses language to move men to public action; she does not take public action herself.

Nevertheless, one of Christine's last works was a poem of tribute to Joan of Arc, the peasant girl who took a very public role in organizing French military resistance to English domination in the early fifteenth century. After the French defeat at Agincourt in 1415, the French army was in disarray. Various members of the royal family fought for the throne, and factional strife made life in Paris increasingly difficult, adding to the ravages of war with the English. It is thought that Christine, now a middle-aged woman, retreated to a nunnery near Paris where her daughter had already entered religious life. From here Christine heard the heartening news that Joan had led the French troops to a resounding defeat of the English at Orleans and had accomplished the coronation of the Dauphin as Charles VII. Christine completed a poem heralding her courage in that same year, 1429, not failing to mention that Joan's example provided further ammunition against the misogynists.

The exact date of Christine's death is not known. It had certainly occurred by 1434. But Christine's biographer Charity Cannon Willard hopes that Christine may have died earlier, in 1430, before Joan of Arc's fortunes reversed and she was captured and executed by the English. Willard hopes that Christine did not live to see the downfall of her last woman hero.

Although Christine is usually considered a medieval writer, her work also shows signs of the transition to Renaissance humanism then beginning in Europe. Willard identifies as humanist traits her willingness to depict distinctive individuals, including herself, in her work (analogous to the contemporary trend in painting toward more realistic portraiture); her interest in moral teaching through writing, which may show the influence of Petrarch; her valuation of acquired (as opposed to revealed) knowledge that may be used for civic good, and a concomitant concern with the education of princes—and princesses; and her unabashed desire for personal fame, both in her lifetime and after. However, Christine lacks the education in the classics that Renaissance humanists touted, as well as their explicit interest in rhetoric.

Christine has been perceived nonetheless as an important contributor to the Western rhetorical tradition. As early as the sixteenth century, French man of letters Jean Bouchet identified her as a rhetorician in a catalog of illustrious women. Although the few references to rhetoric in her work are respectful, this recognition may come more from her readers' sense that she is indeed forging a new rhetorical identity for the woman writer—one that enables her to speak "as a woman," but with pride, learning, and a trenchant eye for the unfair treatment of her sex.

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From *The Book of the City of Ladies*

Against those men who claim it is not good for women to be educated.

Following these remarks, I, Christine, spoke, "My lady, I realize that women have accomplished many good things and that even if evil women have done evil, it seems to me, nevertheless, that the benefits accrued and still accruing because of good women—particularly the wise

and literary ones and those educated in the natural sciences whom I mentioned above—outweigh the evil. Therefore, I am amazed by the opinion of some men who claim that they do not want their daughters, wives, or kinswomen to be educated because their mores would be ruined as a result."

She responded, "Here you can clearly see that not all opinions of men are based on reason and that these men are wrong. For it must not be presumed that mores necessarily grow worse from

Translated by Earl Jeffrey Richards.

knowing the moral sciences, which teach the virtues, indeed, there is not the slightest doubt that moral education amends and ennobles them. How could anyone think or believe that whoever follows good teaching or doctrine is the worse for it? Such an opinion cannot be expressed or maintained. I do not mean that it would be good for a man or a woman to study the art of divination or those fields of learning which are forbidden—for the holy Church did not remove them from common use without good reason—but it should not be believed that women are the worse for knowing what is good.

“Quintus Hortensius, a great rhetorician and consummately skilled orator in Rome, did not share this opinion. He had a daughter, named Hortensia, whom he greatly loved for the subtlety of her wit. He had her learn letters and study the science of rhetoric, which she mastered so thoroughly that she resembled her father Hortensius not only in wit and lively memory but also in her excellent delivery and order of speech—in fact, he surpassed her in nothing. As for the subject discussed above, concerning the good which comes about through women, the benefits realized by this woman and her learning were, among others, exceptionally remarkable. That is, during the time when Rome was governed by three men, this Hortensia began to support the cause of women and to undertake what no man dared to undertake. There was a question whether certain taxes should be levied on women and on their jewelry during a needy period in Rome. This woman’s eloquence was so compelling that she was listened to, no less readily than her father would have been, and she won her case.

“Similarly, to speak of more recent times, without searching for examples in ancient history, Giovanni Andrea, a solemn law professor in Bologna not quite sixty years ago, was not of the opinion that it was bad for women to be edu-

cated. He had a fair and good daughter, named Novella, who was educated in the law to such an advanced degree that when he was occupied by some task and not at leisure to present his lectures to his students, he would send Novella, his daughter, in his place to lecture to the students from his chair. And to prevent her beauty from distracting the concentration of her audience, she had a little curtain drawn in front of her. In this manner she could on occasion supplement and lighten her father’s occupation. He loved her so much that, to commemorate her name, he wrote a book of remarkable lectures on the law which he entitled *Novella super Decretalium*, after his daughter’s name.

“Thus, not all men (and especially the wisest) share the opinion that it is bad for women to be educated. But it is very true that many foolish men have claimed this because it displeased them that women knew more than they did. Your father, who was a great scientist and philosopher, did not believe that women were worth less by knowing science; rather, as you know, he took great pleasure from seeing your inclination to learning. The feminine opinion of your mother, however, who wished to keep you busy with spinning and silly girlishness, following the common custom of women, was the major obstacle to your being more involved in the sciences. But just as the proverb already mentioned above says, ‘No one can take away what Nature has given,’ your mother could not hinder in you the feeling for the sciences which you, through natural inclination, had nevertheless gathered together in little droplets. I am sure that, on account of these things, you do not think you are worth less but rather that you consider it a great treasure for yourself; and you doubtless have reason to.”

And I, Christine, replied to all of this, “Indeed, my lady, what you say is as true as the Lord’s Prayer.”

From *The Treasure of the City of Ladies*

or *The Book of the Three Virtues*

PART ONE

This princess who would strive to amass virtue upon virtue will remember that St. Paul says that if someone has all other virtues and continually worships, goes on pilgrimages, makes great fasts and great abstinences and does all the good that he can and yet does not have charity in himself, all this will profit him nothing. And for this reason she, ever mindful of this teaching, will wish to have this excellent virtue so that she will be so compassionate towards all people that the wrongdoing of another will pain her like her own. Her charity will make her not only feel sorrow when she sees people in affliction, but oblige her to roll up her sleeves and help them as much as she can. And as a wise doctor of the Church says, charity exists in many modes and is not to be understood as helping another person only with money from your purse but also with help and comfort by your speech and advice wherever the need arises and with all the good that you can do.

And so this lady will be, by pure, mild and holy charity, an advocate and mediator between the prince her husband (or her child if she is a widow) and her people, or all people whom she may be able to help by doing good, depending on the situation. Sometimes it may happen that the prince, by bad counsel or from some other cause, will try to oppress his people with some expense. The subjects will realize that their lady is full of pity, goodness and charity, and will come to her and very humbly beseech her to represent them to the prince, for they are very poor and would not be able to meet such an expense without very great hardship or without being ruined. If they have offended the prince, whether because of someone's gossip of flattery or because they deserve his displeasure, they will come humbly to her to beg her to make peace for them. Or if they wish to ask some favour or privilege, the good princess will never refuse to speak to them, nor

will she make a great show of keeping them waiting. Receiving them very kindly, she will listen patiently and be attentive to everything they have to say. She will be accompanied by wise and upright gentlemen who will counsel her. She will reply wisely and suitably with the help of the good advice of those men; she will excuse her husband and speak well of him. If for any reason her subjects feel disgruntled with her reply, she will say that she promises to try her best to make peace, or to stand as their good friend in the petition they are making and in everything else in her power. She will ask them always to be loyal, good and obedient towards their lord, and in return they can always rely on her for help in emergencies, for she will not fail them in anything she can do.

In this way the noble lady will reply so wisely to the ambassadors of the people or of her subjects that when they go away from her they will be satisfied to the extent that if they previously had some grievance, rebellion or quarrel in mind, they will all be pacified. The good lady will not make them waste their time in vain hope, but without long delay she will scrupulously keep her word about what she has promised them; she will speak to her husband well and wisely, calling in other wise persons if necessary, and will very humbly petition him on behalf of the people. She will show the reasons, which she will understand thoroughly, and she will show how it is necessary for a prince, if he wishes to reign long in peace and glory, to be loved by his subjects and by his people. She will address him according to the form that Seneca lays down in the third book of *De Ira*, which says that although it may be good for everyone to practise kindness, it is especially advisable for the prince to exercise it towards his subjects. And so, in brief, she will make such an effort and pursue the thing so thoroughly that she will have all or part of her request, and so sensibly will she report it to the subjects that they will feel satisfied with the prince and with her, and they will thank her most humbly.

Translated by Sarah Lawson.

8. *How the good and wise princess will make every effort to restore peace between the prince and the barons if there is any discord.*

If any neighboring or foreign prince wishes for any reason to make war against her husband, or if her husband wishes to make war on someone else, the good lady will consider this thing carefully, bearing in mind the great evils and infinite cruelties, destruction, massacres, and detriment to the country that result from war; the outcome is often terrible. She will ponder long and hard whether she can do something (always preserving the honor of her husband) to prevent this war. In this cause she will wish to work and labor carefully, calling God to her aid, and by good counsel she will do whatever she can do to find a way of peace.

Or perhaps some one of the princes of the kingdom or one of the barons or knights or powerful subjects commits some crime, even against the majesty of his lord, or is to blame for it, and she sees that if he is captured and punished or warred against great evil can come to the land. Similar cases have often been seen in France and other places in episodes involving quite an insignificant baron or knight compared to the king of France (who is a great prince) whence have come many great evils and much harm to the kingdom, as the Chronicles of France relate of the Count of Corbeil,¹ the lord of Montlhéry,² and several others. And it even happened not long ago that my lord Robert d'Artois, by his dispute with the king, greatly harmed the kingdom of France to the benefit of the English.

Since the good lady will bear these things in mind and feel pity for the destruction of the people, she will wish to work to make peace. She will urge the people, her husband, and his council to consider this matter carefully before undertaking it, in view of the evil which could result from it. Any prince ought to avoid as far as he can the spilling of blood, especially that of his own sub-

jects. It is no small matter to undertake a new war, and it ought not to be done without deep reflection and serious deliberation. It would be much better to think of some more suitable way to reach agreement. This lady will not hesitate for a moment, but will speak or have someone else speak (preserving her honor and that of her husband) to the one or ones who have committed the misdeed. She will reproach them for it sharply, saying that the misdeed was very serious and that the prince is quite justifiably offended by it and that he has decided to avenge himself for it, as is only right, but nevertheless she, who would always wish the blessing of peace, in the event that they would wish to atone for it or to make suitable amends, would gladly go to some trouble to try if she could by some means to make peace between them and her husband.

With such words or similar ones, the good princess will always be the means of peace as far as she can be, just as the good Queen Blanche, mother of St. Louis, formerly was, who in this manner always exerted herself to make peace between the king and the barons, just as she did with the Count of Champagne and with others. This work is the proper duty of the wise queen and princess: to be the means of peace and concord, to work for the avoidance of war because of the trouble that can come of it. Ladies in particular ought to attend to this business, for men are by nature more courageous and more hot-headed, and the great desire they have to avenge themselves prevents their considering either the perils or the evils that can result from war. But women are by nature more timid and also of a sweeter disposition and for this reason, if they are wise and if they wish to, they can be the best means of pacifying men. In connection with this, Solomon says in Proverbs in the twenty-fifth chapter: "By long forbearing is a prince persuaded, and a soft tongue breaketh the bone." That is, gentle speech softens and breaks its hardness just as the water by its moisture and coldness extinguishes the heat of the fire.

O God, how many great blessings in the world have often been caused by queens and princesses making peace between enemies, between prince and barons, and between the rebellious people and their lords! The Scriptures are full of such

¹At the confluence of the Seine and Essonne, this town gave its name to a line of counts who were immediate vassals of the king of France, with whom they often had stormy relations. [Tr.]

²Near Corbeil. When the barons revolted on the accession of Louis IX, Queen Blanche of Castille took refuge with her son in the Château de Montlhéry. [Tr.]

examples. There is no greater good on earth than the good and wise princess and high-born lady. Happy is the land which has such a one and has had many such. But enough has already been said on this subject in *The Book of the City of Ladies*.³ And what happens to such princesses? All the subjects feel her to be of such knowledge and goodness that they pledge themselves to her, not only because she is their mistress, but because she seems to them a goddess on earth in whom they have the highest hope and faith, and she is the cause of the country remaining at peace. Her works are not without charity, but rather they are so meritorious that a greater good cannot be done. . . .

PART TWO

6. *The fourth point, which is the second of the two that are to be avoided. How women of the court ought to be careful to avoid committing slander. What gives rise to slander, its causes, and occasions.*

We come now to the second point, which is the other vice that the lady, maiden, and woman of the court and all others ought to guard against, that is, the sin of slander, because there is no excuse for slander. To elucidate our case better, we will touch on three causes from which slander commonly comes and arises and which are all common at court, individually and sometimes all three together.

The first of the causes is hatred, the second opinion, and the third is sheer envy. These three causes are indeed wicked, but the one that comes from envy is the least excusable. All three are to be avoided for in no circumstances is slander praiseworthy, but rather it is a most forbidden mortal sin. For this is against two of the Commandments of God: the one that says, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you," and the other, "Love thy neighbor as thyself." We will discuss these causes and teach ladies the remedies to use in guarding themselves against them.

³In *The Book of the City of Ladies* (1404) Christine attempts to refute misogynist literature of the day by giving examples of good and wise women from all the ages. [Ed.]

First we will touch on the first cause, which is hatred. We will formulate four principal reasons to show why one must not slander another out of hatred, regardless of whatever injury one has received. We do not usually hate someone unless the other person has injured us or, rightly or wrongly, we think he has. Then the injured party is most inclined by hatred and spite to slander the one who she thinks has injured her. This is a frequent occurrence at court. A lady or other woman of the court will find out that some people or a certain person is harming her and getting her in bad with her mistress, or the master, or her friends. This other person or faction may be trying to have her dismissed, and perhaps they will succeed in their intention. This lady or maiden stands to lose her service, her livelihood, and her position because of it, and perhaps her honor as well because of the things that she is accused of, perhaps without foundation. Even supposing that there was a good reason for these allegations, she will hate the person who has made them. She will doubtless slander her, in private and in public, if the person is not so great that she dares not speak of her, otherwise it will be very difficult to complain about it in the slightest. Her heart will ache greatly, and it is no wonder, in saying evil and villainy of this person, both what she knows to be true and also things she does not know. This cause of slander (that is, hatred for some wrong) could possibly seem just to some people, but undoubtedly it is not, and here is our first reason to demonstrate why.

God wishes you and expressly commands you to love your enemy and render him good for evil. Whoever acts against God's commandment damns himself and therefore gains nothing, and so it would be more to his advantage to hold his tongue. Furthermore, another trouble comes to him because of it, and that is our second reason: that he or she acts against his or her own honor. A person of great intelligence would never slander her enemy because she would know that it could seem to other people that she wanted to avenge herself with words. This is the vengeance of people with little power and faint hearts that few wise people use.

The third reason is that those who hear someone who bears a grudge slandering her adver-

saries or enemies will not believe her. They will say that she is saying it out of hatred and it ought not to be believed. The fourth reason is that the person who has already harmed her or is able to harm her will be that much more indignant when she hears that she is slandering her. She will be able to increase the injury and do still worse to her. It would be preferable to receive one injury rather than two.

And so in conclusion, the consequences of slander are well expressed by what is written of the man who decided to declare war on heaven and drew a bow against the sky, and the arrows returned on to his own head and wounded him. In just the same way the slander that the person who bears a grudge speaks of his enemy rebounds on to him and wounds his soul and his honor, as is demonstrated by the four reasons above.

7. Of the same: how women of the court ought to be very careful not to speak evil of their mistress.

The second cause that gives rise to slander is a wrong impression formed in something like the following manner: one person will have the idea that another is bad or at fault in something or in everything, or that she does not always behave well in all circumstances, and for this reason and without knowing the truth of the matter (which is perhaps quite otherwise than she thought), on the flimsiest grounds she will misjudge and slander her widely and blatantly with hardly a second thought. Such situations commonly arise everywhere. Doubtless because of opinion and because of not knowing all the facts of the case, those slander most who already have the tendency to slander anyway. There is commonly not a court of a prince and princess without such slanderers, who for such a cause, that is, opinion only, do not spare a soul, not even master or mistress. Therefore, in speaking of this vice, we must mention the great wrong that every person commits who defames and speaks evil of another, and especially of the one who feeds and cares for him, from whom he has his station and his living. Nevertheless, in many courts, if the servants or those men or women who live there see or imagine they see in a master or mistress any little sign

of some vice, because of a wrong impression they will immediately exaggerate the case, saying that the thing that they only suspected is actually done.

To speak directly to women (although it can just as well apply to men): there are a considerable number of women of all ranks in the courts of many countries who, if they see their lady or mistress merely speaking quietly to a person once or twice, or showing some sign of intimacy or of friendship, or if they see some laughter or some merriment, made perhaps out of youth or ignorance and in all innocence, they will jump to the wrong conclusion. If this mistress is slightly merry or in her clothing comely and neat (things that come to many people from good breeding, more to some than to others), these slanderers will soon be ready to misjudge her, and not just in this case but in all others as well in which for little reason they will sometimes form a bad impression of their mistress. But this misjudging is the least of their offenses, for she is their lady, who gives them food and shelter and good wages from her coffers. Although these people may well curtsy respectfully to her, with one knee touching the ground, and make deep bows and flatter her a great deal, yet they will not keep quiet about gossip, but they will tell each other their impressions, and they will whisper scandal to each other. In a word, they will be just like the bad sheep that is mangy and infects the others. But all of them, you notice, take care that their mistress does not get wind of it. They will be content as long as it is concealed from her alone. They will even agree with and support her, saying that it would be a good idea to do thus and so. They will laugh at her and talk about her behind her back, and they will embroider the story with invented details. A number of servant men and women also do it but for our purposes the ladies, maidens, and women of the court who behave in this way act wrongly to a very serious degree and commit a much greater sin than if they slandered each other or people other than their mistress. There are five principal reasons for this.

The first: the greater a lady she is, the more is her honor or dishonor celebrated throughout the country than that of another ordinary woman. For this reason, she who defames her does worse,

because this slander can spread into many regions. The second, because they betray the one to whom they are outwardly pleasant and obedient. Third, they act against their oath, which was to the effect that they would guard her well-being and her honor. Fourth, they render evil for good to those by whom they are maintained and nourished and to whom they owe their position. And fifth, they judge another, which is contrary to the commandment of God, who says "Judge not, and ye shall not be judged."

Let us suppose now that these women of the court know beyond a shadow of a doubt certain secrets about their mistress, as has already been mentioned, and that she is a very wicked and perverse person. They still ought not to defame her, either among themselves or elsewhere, for words can never be said privately enough that they may not be reported, and these women are obliged to guard her honor and cover her shame. If they hear evil spoken of her they must try to tone down the gossip and explain it away. In truth these women who do otherwise do great dishonor to themselves and they should be held in the contempt their inexcusable actions deserve.

You may say to us, "But I see something I have reason to talk and gossip about, and there is nothing else very interesting about my work."

We answer you: "Go away if you do not like it, but if you need to be employed as a servant and cannot go away because you would suffer too great a financial loss, just keep quiet about it and pretend that you do not see the least thing and that you notice nothing, since it is not within your ability to remedy it, nor is it any of your business. Do loyally what you should and do not get involved in anything else. Pray God that He is willing to help your mistress and that He will give her knowledge. If you see evil, and if you hear someone talk about her, play down the gossip if you can, or if not, keep your mouth shut about it, and for this you will be esteemed the more. God knows that many women who talk about their mistresses do it more out of spite because they are not in on the secret, and out of envy that other women know more about it, than for any other motive or gain."

Now here is what the good lady or maiden or other persons of the court will do who wishes to

enjoy a good conscience: she will love the well-being and honor of her mistress, and when she sees her honor decline and her mistress in peril of very unpleasant consequences, and if she does not dare speak to her or admonish her, she will go to her mistress's confessor and not to anyone else. She will tell him secretly and in confession what is being said about her, and the peril in which she is putting herself and the evil that could come to her from it. She will beg him for the love of God to teach her and not accuse her.

8. How it is unbecoming for women to defame each other or speak evil.

Furthermore, the women of the court ought likewise never to rebuke or defame one another, as much because of the sin and other reasons already mentioned, as for the fact that whoever would slyly defame another is herself defamed. For assuredly the person who knows that someone is defaming her will also slander that person, and she may even make up stories. Nor is any man or woman so upright that he or she ought to say, "I am not afraid of anyone. What could anyone say about me? I know I am blameless, therefore I can talk fearlessly about other people." But it is foolish for those men and women who say that sort of thing to believe it, for there is always something, somewhere, for which one may be reproached. And the Bible supports this when it says, "There is no man without offense," that is, without sin, and if you do not have one particular vice, you may have another one perhaps worse, or two, or three. If you were to look deeply into your conscience you would find plenty of faults there. For although your sin is a secret from everyone else, it is not hidden from God, and He alone knows the one who is a good pilgrim. Moreover, it is a very great shame that down in the town or elsewhere they may say, "The ladies and women of the court certainly know how to slander each other! I have heard about such-and-such a lady or maiden such-and-such a thing, and something else about such another." In this respect the court of a princess ought to be like a well-regulated abbey where the monks have an oath that they will say nothing to outsiders about their secrets or anything that may happen among

them. In just the same way ladies and women of the court ought to love and support each other like sisters. They ought not to quarrel with one another in the ladies' apartments, nor betray each other behind their backs like fishwives, for such things are extremely unbecoming at the court of a princess, and they ought not to be allowed.

We have said previously that the third cause of slander is envy, which makes the slander even less excusable. That is, it is the worst and the most wrong and unreasonable kind of slander. If a man full of hatred speaks harshly of the one who has injured him, it is natural for anyone to feel pain from his wound. If God did not forbid vengeance for the above-mentioned reason, it would be an acceptable thing for you in accordance with human law. He who slanders because of an honest opinion may base his opinion on some evidence or clue that seems clear to him, and he will be sincere in what he says. But he who slanders out of envy does it for no other reason than sheer wickedness, which exists and flourishes in his heart, and therefore it is the more damnable for the man or woman who says it and the more perilous to him or her of whom it is said than any other kind of slander. For never was ser-

pent's sting, thrust of sword, or other wound so envenomed or so dangerous as is the tongue of an envious person, for it strikes and often kills both itself and another, and sometimes in both soul and body. For if we wish to look into it, good Lord, how many kingdoms, how many countries, and how many good people have been destroyed by mischievous gossip based entirely on envy! We could find a number of examples of this, but I will leave them aside in the interest of brevity. It is true that the slander of an envious person stems entirely from unmitigated wickedness, for how has some good person or someone who has many of the qualities of grace, nature, and fortune deserved to be slandered or deserved for someone to try to make him unhappy? If these qualities come easily to him, or if he is happy and fortunate, this slander may not come from anything factual. Therefore, we conclude, as is said above, that it springs from pure wickedness and, therefore, it is the more damnable. We will say no more about this envy (for enough has been said of it before this in the fourth and fifth chapter of this second part). We have also now said quite enough about ladies, maidens, and women of the court.

Part Three

RENAISSANCE RHETORIC

Introduction

The Renaissance, designating roughly the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries, was a period of violent and sweeping change throughout Europe. For centuries the Roman Catholic Church had been the major intellectual and political as well as religious authority in the region; now its authority was being questioned on all fronts. The Church was shaken by schism and by the secession of Protestant Christian denominations. National governments formed around strong monarchs, and the merchant and professional classes grew. These changes established secular institutions that competed with the Church for people's allegiance. The intellectual movement called humanism emphasized human powers to know and change the world and insisted on scholars' rights to pursue knowledge without being constrained by Church dogma. The humanists directed attention to classical Greek and Roman learning and developed new approaches to studying literature, history, and science. During this period, rhetoric, in a variety of forms, was a central focus. Yet the very dynamism of cultural activity in the period makes it difficult to define Renaissance rhetoric as a cultural phenomenon.

Rhetoric in the Renaissance can scarcely be framed chronologically. Its beginning is often identified with the career of Francesco Petrarca, or Petrarch (1304–1374), a fourteenth-century Italian poet and man of letters. Petrarch revived the classical notion that the accomplished person, like Plato or Cicero (see Part One), unites broad learning, philosophical wisdom, and eloquence. Yet some historians refer to a kind of renaissance in European learning as early as the twelfth century (see the introduction to Part Two). At that time scholars such as Peter Abelard and John of Salisbury began trying to expand the scope of rhetoric and reunite it with philosophy after its earlier medieval reduction to tropes and figures. The end of Renaissance rhetoric is often marked by the founding of the Royal Society of London in 1660. This group of scientists and academics denounced eloquence or, at least, elaborate ornamentation in any language that was used for the serious purposes of philosophy and science. Yet the Renaissance, if nearly over in seventeenth-century England, had still hardly touched the English universities, where medieval Scholasticism continued to be taught.

Defining Renaissance rhetoric from a geopolitical perspective is also problematic. Rhetoric is commonly traced along the path of Renaissance cultural development from Italy to northern Europe and on to England. But the pace of change varied greatly from place to place, and the development of rhetoric was conditioned by the great political, social, and religious changes that also occurred in this period.

It is not too surprising, then, that a comprehensive history of Renaissance rhetoric has yet to be written. Literary historian Wilbur Samuel Howell's *Logic and Rhetoric in England, 1500–1700*, for example, focuses on only about half the Renaissance time period and on a single country. Historian of rhetoric James J. Murphy has characterized Renaissance rhetoric as a period of “one thousand neglected authors.”¹ Scholars have yet to examine fully the relationship between rhetoric and literature through the study of figures and tropes; the struggle between rhetoric and logic or dialectic, which was often played out through the search for a universally applicable method of inquiry; the cultural impact of the printing press in the period; the effect of rhetoric's renewed centrality in education; and the effect on rhetoric of renewed debate on its proper role in public life. Even this partial listing of scholarly problems hints at the vast scope of unexplored or underexplored territory.

The listing may also suggest that in the Renaissance, perhaps more than in other periods, it is misleading to speak of rhetoric as a unified subject of study. There were many rhetorics in the Renaissance. In early Renaissance Italy, the political structure of the city-states created a climate in which rhetoric seemed near to reclaiming the power assigned to it by the Sophists, Isocrates, and Cicero (see Part One). Rhetoric appeared on the verge of attaining so central a function in public life that it could justly be called the source of collective social action and perhaps of all human knowledge. Also, the uses of rhetoric in sacred oratory, already legitimated by Augustine and developed in the medieval art of preaching (see Part Two), were given serious new attention.

But as political conditions changed and large-scale monarchies came to dominate the European scene, rhetoric began to lose its political importance, and its epistemic function began to slip away. Rhetoric as a method for generating knowledge began to be compared unfavorably with dialectic, logic, and, later, science. Rhetoric as a means of bringing about social consensus, whether on political or religious matters, became suspect insofar as it charmed or even deceived, with figurative ornaments essentially superficial to the thought conveyed. By the end of the period, people who were most interested in the power of language seemed most eager to rid this power of any taint of eloquence.

RHETORIC AND ITALIAN HUMANISM

Humanism is generally regarded as the first great intellectual movement of the Renaissance, and to many contemporary scholars, it sets the tone for the whole period. It arose in northern Italy, a relatively safe place during the hard times of the four-

¹James J. Murphy, “One Thousand Neglected Authors: The Scope and Importance of Renaissance Rhetoric,” in *Renaissance Eloquence*, ed. James J. Murphy (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), p. 20.

teenth century. Late medieval prosperity, peace, and unity were disrupted after about 1250, as Europe was torn by warfare from within and without. Muslim forces began to subjugate eastern Europe and finally conquered Constantinople in 1453, bringing Byzantine civilization to ruin. France and England bled each other in the Hundred Years War (1337–1453). Xenophobic violence against Jews increased, and Jews were expelled from England in 1290, from France in 1306, and from Spain in 1492. Meanwhile, all Europe was ravaged by plagues: One in the fourteenth century, known as the Black Death, reduced the population by one-third within fifty years. Famine and social unrest followed, and the Roman Catholic Church was torn by schism, with one pope ruling for a time from Avignon while another claimed authority in Rome. The first Protestant reformers, John Wycliffe and John Hus, were silenced firmly; a London synod condemned Wycliffe's works in 1382, and the Church burned Hus for heresy in 1415 (for more details on late medieval history, see the introduction to Part Two).

The northern Italian towns, far away from most of the late medieval warfare, had been populous and prosperous almost continuously since Roman times, and in the Middle Ages they became centers for trade and learning—Padua for medicine, Bologna for law. They were nominally under the control of the Holy Roman Empire, but this meant little, especially after a late-thirteenth-century interregnum. The Roman Church's hegemony also dissipated as controversies directed its attention elsewhere. Although they did suffer from the Black Death, the Italian city-states took advantage of political opportunity to become even more vigorous, independent, and fiercely competitive. They became known as training centers for rhetoric-related professions such as lawyer or notary, and also as places with a rich tradition of public oratory for state occasions and family ceremonies.

Renaissance humanism, like Renaissance rhetoric, is often traced to the career of Petrarch, who flourished in this milieu. He grew up in Avignon, studied law at Bologna, and spent the latter part of his life in Venice, Milan, and Padua, where he died. Petrarch sought a model for thinking, writing, and acting in society that was faithfully Christian yet more conducive to the development of individual talents than Scholasticism seemed to be. Scholasticism was committed to a version of Aristotelian empiricism that stressed the knowledge of external reality rather than emphasizing the mind's power to reimagine and shape reality. Because the usefulness of language as a medium of philosophy was compromised by imaginative overlays, the Scholastics had developed a highly specialized form of Latin to achieve the required precision. Petrarch initiated what would become a typical Renaissance intellectual strategy: clearing a space for one's own position by attacking Scholasticism for its pettifogging arguments and execrable Latin. Scholasticism owed its vices, Petrarch believed, to its limited and servile view of Aristotle (see Part One), whose original eloquence could not be appreciated because no one could read him in Greek.

What was new about Petrarch's approach to the classics? Although a number of classical texts (as noted below) were rediscovered or newly translated in the Renaissance, Cicero and Aristotle had certainly not been unknown during the medieval period. Cicero's works, mainly *De Inventione*, and the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*

thought to be his, were sometimes taught in medieval Italy as part of the lawyer's and notary's training because they promoted stylistic fluency. But Petrarch introduced a self-consciousness about contemporary writers' relationship to classical models. The classics were not there simply to be mined for technical tips. Now they loomed large as an overwhelmingly impressive artistic and intellectual achievement, casting a huge shadow in which contemporary writers struggled to make their own place. The idea of asserting one's individual creative powers, an idea so often associated with the Renaissance, was put forward in the face of this challenging heritage. At the same time, Renaissance intellectuals struggled to develop new ways to understand the past historically—an effort that had profound epistemological implications for them (see below)—and how their own work should reflect its influence.

Petrarch offered a purchase on the classical heritage through a new understanding of the importance of Cicero. In place of the Scholastic model of the intellectual life, Petrarch advocated Cicero's concept of *humanitas*, and this became the seminal concept of Renaissance humanism. *Humanitas*, Cicero's word for the Greek *paideia*, indicated an ideal of cultivated learning. The accomplished man should be able to combine literary art, moral philosophy, and civic responsibility in his writing and oratory. Petrarch admired Cicero for embodying this ideal, an admiration enhanced by Petrarch's discovery in 1345 of a large collection of Cicero's personal letters. For Petrarch, these letters showed how one could adapt the amplified style of Ciceronian oratory to more private purposes, and he modified his own Latin writing style accordingly. Conversely, the letter, primarily a legal and public genre since medieval times, could now be used to display personal talents, could be given an expressive stamp in light of Cicero's example, yet could retain its political significance. Following Petrarch's lead, in the 1400s Italian scholars began to depart from the usual formulas of medieval letter writing and to encourage a more personal and literary style.

According to Petrarch, the Renaissance scholar who would emulate Ciceronian *humanitas* must be equipped to pursue classical learning in the original classical and patristic Latin and Greek texts. Petrarch, like most other scholars of his day, knew little Greek, and he sought in vain for a teacher. Like Petrarch, later humanists would be avid for Greek studies. One also needed historical learning to appreciate classical literature, so that one could understand how the authors had lived and served the state in their own times. Moreover, historical knowledge helped the humanist scholar appreciate the Italian heritage. Italian history aroused patriotic excitement in Petrarch, who dreamed of a return to Roman political and cultural ascendancy. This dream could inspire the humanist citizen, since Renaissance Italy, like classical Greece and Republican Rome, was organized into city-states in which the talented individual had the potential to strongly influence political and cultural life.

Nominally a cleric, Petrarch did not follow a public path himself, although he was the son of a notary and had studied law in his youth. But a whole generation of Italian intellectuals seized from Petrarch a Ciceronian image of the public man who unites eloquence and wisdom, rhetoric and philosophy. These men were profes-

sional rhetoricians, trained as lawyers in the traditional *ars dictaminis* and *ars notaria*. Renaissance scholar Paul Oskar Kristeller has suggested that Italian humanism grew precisely because it appealed to men with this kind of training.² They saw humanism's improved access to historical and classical learning better suiting them for their enlarged rhetorical responsibilities in the city-states, which involved achieving public consensus and harmony through persuasion. The ability to do so was put to the test when Florence stood alone among the city-states and successfully resisted Milanese tyranny in 1401–1402.

First among these humanists was Coluccio Salutati, who served as chancellor of the Republic of Florence from 1375 until his death in 1406. Salutati collected around him a group of younger scholars, including Leonardo Bruni, Poggio Bracciolini, and Lorenzo Valla. These men were also professional rhetoricians who served in the Florentine and papal governments and who advanced humanist learning, occasionally teaching in Italian universities. Poggio recovered many classical texts, including the first complete copy of Quintilian known since classical times (see Part One); he found the document at the monastery of St. Gall in 1416. Bruni succeeded Salutati as chancellor of Florence. He was noted for both historical work, such as his history of Florence, and textual studies. Bruni, one of the first humanists to know Greek well, produced new Latin translations of some of Aristotle's work (not including the *Rhetoric*), which, he claimed, revealed the philosopher's eloquence and—implicitly—his commitment to rhetoric.

Valla, also a textual scholar, produced new Latin translations of Platonic dialogues and proved philologically that the Donation of Constantine, on which the Roman Catholic Church based its claim to temporal power in Italy, was a forgery. In his treatise *On Pleasure or On the True Good* (first version, 1431), Valla defends Epicureanism in order to attack all schools of philosophy, whether ancient or Scholastic, that claim to possess a moral code superseding social convention. Valla argues that seeking after transcendent systems is both an affront to the role of faith in Christianity and an evasion of one's civic responsibility. Thus Valla harmonizes the orator's attention to *kairos*, or the socially defined situation of oratory, with Christianity, and he subordinates philosophy to rhetoric.

The Italians' desire for Greek learning reopened communication between Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Christendom in the late fourteenth century. Manuel Chrysoloras, the Byzantine ambassador, taught Greek in Florence. An important emigrant from Byzantium was George Trebizond, or Trapezuntius, who came to Venice in 1416 to work in the library of humanist aristocrat Francesco Barbaro. In 1426, Trebizond wrote *De Suavitate Dicendi* (*On the Sweetness of Speaking*), which brought to the West the stylistic ideas of Hermogenes, a Greek rhetorician of the Roman Second Sophistic. Trebizond also produced Latin translations of many classical and Christian Greek works previously unknown in the West, including Aristotle's *Rhetoric* (although, oddly enough, this text did not attract much attention

²Paul Oskar Kristeller, "Humanism and Scholasticism in the Renaissance," *Byzantion* 17 (1944): 346–74; rpt. in *Renaissance Thought: The Classic, Scholastic, and Humanist Strains* (New York: Harper, 1961); see also his "Rhetoric in Medieval and Renaissance Culture," in *Renaissance Eloquence*, ed. Murphy.

until the 1500s). Around 1433, Trebizond's *Rhetoricorum Libri V* (*Five Books of Rhetoric*), the first Renaissance rhetoric to treat all five canons of the classical art, appeared and became an instant "classic," often ranked with the work of Cicero and Quintilian. In 1440, Trebizond wrote *Isagoge Dialectica* (*Introduction to Dialectic*), the first humanist logic text, which subordinates logic to rhetoric. In Trebizond's time, Italian knowledge of Greek progressed to such an extent that Marsilio Ficino was able to produce the first complete translation of Plato's works into Latin (1463–1482), a very influential project.

The spread of classical ideas of rhetoric in Italy as a result of all this humanist activity is evinced even in the minority Jewish community, whose members were excluded from most universities and humanist schools. For the few allowed to study medicine at Padua and therefore in need of preliminary rhetorical training, Rabbi Judah Messer Leon published a Hebrew text that drew heavily on the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, Quintilian, and Aristotle (in Arab scholar Averröes's abridged and annotated version), but that took all its illustrations from the Hebrew Bible (*The Book of the Honeycomb's Flow*, ca. 1475). This Renaissance "Jewish rhetoric" thus amalgamated classical sources and biblical eloquence, as later Christian writers on sacred oratory would try to do.

The Italian humanists, as historian Nancy Streuver has argued, could see rhetoric and philosophy as united—and even rhetoric as supreme—because they began to understand meaning itself as historically established. The historical relativity of truth began to be noticed in the study of classical texts and was informed by the humanists' (often frustrated) desire to recreate the real Cicero or Aristotle in his historical context. Moreover, in the humanists' exercise of their civic responsibilities, the truly good course of action addressed the present situation in persuasive language. For these humanists, rhetoric becomes the means by which history helps to shape usable truth. To be actively useful, the responsible citizen must express philosophical insights in language that is convincing in contemporary circumstances.

Although religious belief might come from an ahistorical source, the humanists recognized that the form of belief was conditioned by social convention, just as other human activities were. One could take it on faith that religious belief was necessary, but one could not be sure that a universally acceptable expression of that belief did or could exist. Hence the humanists supported religious tolerance: People should follow the form of belief appropriate to their circumstances, while recognizing that all human beings possessed creative mental powers precisely because all people were made in the divine image. Although such a view of religious belief leaves much scope for sacred rhetoric, the early Italian humanists did not pay much attention to it; that field would be dominated by humanists in northern Europe, many of whose ideas would be imported back to Italy in Counter-Reformation treatises on preaching in the 1500s.

Streuver notes that the humanist historical consciousness emphasizes personal performance in all intellectual and political action. The individual makes history by attempting to develop personal talents amid the constraints of given historical circumstances; thus individuality is both historically constituted and an act of will. This notion of self as performance gave an aesthetic cast to humanist scholarship

that attracted the interest of aristocrats. One example is Leon Battista Alberti, a wealthy, handsome Florentine who was an accomplished architect, mathematician, musician, and athlete, as well as a humanist man of letters. This polymath is often cited as the quintessential Renaissance man.

The notion of self as performance became increasingly important to humanists in their role as public servants because the city-states in the fifteenth century increasingly came under the control of single families, such as the Medici in Florence. Under these conditions, the Ciceronian public man, who exercised some political power openly in the state, was often replaced by the figure of the courtier, who had to defer to the ruler in public and exercise political influence behind the scenes. The increasingly covert character of the public servant's political power is symbolized in part by the concept of *sprezzatura*, according to which the talented and humanistically learned person should make his or her accomplishments appear to be the outcome of unstudied nature, not art. This hidden exercise of power fosters a rhetoric of dissimulation, not display, as described in Baldesar Castiglione's influential etiquette manual, *The Book of the Courtier* (1528; p. 661).

Even the autocrat must wield power tactfully, as Niccolò Machiavelli urged in *The Prince* (ca. 1513, published 1532). But Machiavelli, a chancellor of Florence who addressed his book to the ruling Medici family, discards the traditional Christian advice that the ruler should embody timeless virtues. Rather, he says, the prince should do whatever the times require to preserve his state in a political world governed not by virtue but by force. Educated as a humanist, Machiavelli believed that successful rule by a single person would eventually lead to more republican forms of government, because the leader had to make his (or rarely, her) ideas acceptable to the populace. The implicit sharing of power would gradually become explicit; that is, even the most brutal "strong man" could not rule by force alone—persuasion was needed. Thus even the most manipulative rhetoric, one could hope, would finally lead to more consensual forms of government such as those which the earlier humanists would have applauded. But Machiavelli insisted on using the full range of rhetorical strategies to reach that goal.

As the times changed and humanist scholars found fewer opportunities in public life, they devoted more energy to work in education. The local ruler would invite a scholar to open a school for his own children, and the operation would grow as more students came from nearby aristocratic and well-to-do merchant families and sometimes even from among the poor, who were supported by aristocratic charity. Vittorino da Feltre opened such a school in 1423 for the children of the Marquis of Mantua, with a curriculum he modeled on Quintilian's recommendations. Another influential early example can be found in the schools of Guarino da Verona: one in Florence, established at the invitation of Leonardo Bruni, when Bruni was chancellor, and another in Verona. The humanist school ultimately provided a model for Roman Catholic and Protestant educators all over Europe.

Yet humanist education was something of a paradox from its very beginning. The humanist educators devised curricula to prepare children to embody the Ciceronian ideal of the public man at a time when to actually enact this ideal was becoming increasingly difficult except for the sons of a few aristocratic families. This

contradiction could perhaps be glossed over with boy students, for they could adapt their literary skills to the demands for accomplished writing that grew as government ramified. They could find places as public servants, even if those roles were the covert ones of courtiers or bureaucrats. But, as historian Anthony Grafton and literary scholar Lisa Jardine have pointed out, the contradiction emerges in full force with respect to the many girl students who were educated alongside the boys in most early humanist schools.³

Except for a few daughters of ruling aristocratic families—the well-educated and eloquent Queen Elizabeth I of England being a notable example—the humanist women were barred from entering public life in any way. Their example thus highlights the mismatch between the claims that humanist educators made for education's accomplishments and the realities of the society in which such education would be used. Elizabeth's tutor Roger Ascham praises her humanist learning, but usually links these praises with the theme of her virginity, thus, perhaps, even for the sovereign, suggesting that there is something removed from the world about her learning. He also lauds tutee Lady Jane Grey for reading Plato's *Phaedo* while the rest of the family was out hunting, but, as literary scholar Walter J. Ong points out, the anecdote suggests that humanist learning was simply to occupy the aristocratic woman's many idle hours, and not to be employed in the male, agonistic realm of politics.⁴

ITALIAN WOMEN HUMANISTS

In Quattrocento Italy, the ranks of humanist-educated women who were accomplished in Latin and Greek literature and well versed in the sciences of the day included Isotta Nogarola (d. 1466) and her sister Ginevra Nogarola, Cassandra Fedele (d. 1558), and Laura Cereta (1469–1499). Their lives followed remarkably similar patterns. All mastered humanist studies in their youth, working with private tutors. They exchanged letters with noted humanist men, which was then the accepted method of breaking into intellectual circles, and received letters of fulsome praise in return. Isotta Nogarola's correspondence was especially varied and copious. Cassandra Fedele was so valued by her native Venice that the senate refused to let her accept an invitation to visit the court of Isabella of Spain in 1488.

Such fame and respect, however, were fragile. When the women married, their public scholarship usually stopped, to resume only if the husband died, as in the case of Fedele. Ginevra Nogarola virtually ceased scholarly activity after her marriage. Isotta Nogarola attempted to escape this fate by refusing both marriage and religious vows, which would have restricted her freedom to study secular literature, but she then had to remain a recluse in the family home. Male scholars' responses to these women suggest that the women were valued only when they were very young—hence prodigies—and virginal—hence no threat to mature men. When the women

³Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine, *From Humanism to the Humanities* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986), pp. 29–57.

⁴Walter J. Ong, S.J., "Latin Language Study as a Renaissance Puberty Rite," in *Rhetoric, Romance, and Technology* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1971), pp. 136–37.

approached maturity, an age and social condition seeming to call for full parity with male scholars, they were rebuffed in a variety of ways: told to limit their secular studies or risk vulgarity, to turn to sacred studies or imperil their souls—or told to cease altogether or be proved unchaste. Isotta Nogarola gave up after Guarino delayed so long in answering a letter from her that the letter seemed an immodest advance rather than a scholarly exchange. An anonymous libel was published against her in her native Verona, accusing her of incest and averring that “the woman of fluent tongue is never chaste.”⁵

It is not surprising, then, that women humanists’ use of rhetoric usually resembled that depicted in *The Worth of Women* (written ca. 1592, published 1600) by Modesta Pozzo, who wrote under the pen name of Moderata Fonte. This work defends the female sex against explicitly misogynist publications by men, thus participating in the traditional *querelle des femmes* begun by Christine de Pizan (see Part Two). It is composed in the form of a conversation among seven well-to-do women of various ages who are enjoying one woman’s beautiful garden. At one point, while they are discussing the wrongs committed by men against women and possible remedies for these injustices, Leonora offers to deliver “a public oration in the demonstrative [or epideictic] genre,” showering men with praise as a means to persuade them to abandon their cruelties. Her most learned interlocutor, Corinna, replies:

Would you really dare stand up in front of all those censors, those know-alls, who do nothing but carp and jeer and mock? You could try all your best logical arguments, dialectical syllogisms, rhetorical colors, but it would all be to no avail. You could form fine concepts, clothe them in fine words, alter your voice, vary your style, draw on all the right figures of speech to construct arguments, prove laws, or recall examples, but you’d still have lost your case even before you started it, and even as you began your proem, you’d find your narration and epilogue already mapped out for you.⁶

Corinna’s speech not only reveals her detailed knowledge of the canons of rhetoric, but also hints at the kind of public censure that kept women from exercising this knowledge in public. Leonora does go on to deliver an oration, but not in public—only to the audience in the garden. She gains some revenge against the male censors, perhaps, by casting her speech in the form of a parody of serious male argument, which draws gales of laughter from her hearers.

First as a young woman and again as an elderly widow, Cassandra Fedele was unusual in that she risked male censure, and charges of unchastity such as silenced Isotta Nogarola, by delivering orations in public, among them an address to the students and faculty of the University of Padua on the value of humanistic learning (1487). If Fedele escaped chastisement, it may be because she was careful always to renounce ambition for a larger public role. In another oration in praise of letters, for example, she denies that humanistic studies can have any practical application for women—these studies are only to provide private enjoyment—and she arms herself only with accoutrements traditionally deemed useful for women:

⁵Quoted in Grafton and Jardine, p. 40.

⁶Moderata Fonte (Modesta Pozzo), *The Worth of Women*, ed. and trans. Virginia Cox (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), pp. 188–89.

As for the utility of letters . . . [n]ot only is this divine field, abundant and noble, amply useful, but it offers its copious, delightful, and perpetual fruits profusely. Of these fruits I myself have tasted a little and [have esteemed myself in that enterprise] more than abject and hopeless; and, armed with distaff and needle—woman's weapons—I march forth [to defend] the belief that even though the study of letters promises and offers no reward for women and no dignity, every woman ought to seek and embrace these studies for that pleasure and delight alone that [comes] from them.⁷

Laura Cereta attempted unsuccessfully to reject this humble posture. She was educated by her father, an aristocrat of Brescia, and did not suspend her studies upon her marriage in 1484, at the age of fifteen. Rather, she then began to write letters to humanists all over Italy, including Cassandra Fedele. She developed scholarly friendships with humanists in her region and drew the criticism usually heaped on women who made their learning known. Although devastated by her husband's death in 1486, Cereta attempted to gain wider recognition by circulating a manuscript book of her Latin letters in 1488. Among these are arguments in favor of serious education for women and exhortations to women not to be distracted by the frivolous pursuit of physical beauty and male flattery. The book did not receive the attention Cereta desired, however. Perhaps spurred by her father's death, as much as by the cold reception of her book, Cereta took the advice of a Dominican friend and devoted herself to sacred studies until her death in 1499, at the age of thirty. No other works of hers survive.

Nevertheless, women continued to gain access to education in the Renaissance and to use their education for rhetorical purposes. By the late seventeenth century, women such as Margaret Fell in England and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz in New Spain (Mexico) were defending their religious views, and attacking strictures against expressing these views, eloquently. (For more information on Renaissance women and rhetoric, see the headnote for Margaret Fell.)

The Italian Renaissance ended in 1527, when a Spanish army sacked Rome. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, political power was less centralized in the newly "monarchical" Italian city-states than it was elsewhere. Italy was vulnerable to invasion by a larger national entity such as Spain, which had been united by the marriage of Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile in 1469. The German states were tied together more firmly when the Hapsburg archduke of Austria was elected Holy Roman emperor in 1438: This emperor, Charles V (ruled 1519–1556), extended the Empire's holdings in northern Europe and also, by marriage, in Spain with its lucrative American colonies. The Valois took power in France in 1461 and produced strong kings such as Francis I (ruled 1515–1547). The Tudors assumed the throne in England in 1485; powerful monarchs such as Henry VIII (ruled 1509–1547) and Elizabeth I (ruled 1558–1603) came out of that line. If the city-state was the typical setting for Renaissance intellectual life from 1300 to 1500, this setting changed to the monarchic nation from 1500 to 1700, and the understanding of humanism and rhetoric changed accordingly.

⁷Cassandra Fedele, "Oration in Praise of Letters," in *Her Immaculate Hand*, ed. and trans. Margaret L. King and Albert Rabil Jr. (Binghamton: State University of New York Press, 1983), p. 77.

HUMANISM IN NORTHERN EUROPE: AGRICOLA, ERASMUS, AND RAMUS

In addition to political changes, religious controversy also influenced Renaissance thought as Protestants rebelled against Catholicism. The monk Martin Luther presented ninety-five theses critical of the Church in 1517 and went on to found an alternative branch of Christianity strongly tinged with German nationalism. The priest Jean Cauvin, or John Calvin, was moved by Luther's work to publish *Institutes of the Christian Religion* in 1536, but this work rejected nationalist identifications and indeed all forms of hierarchical government, whether religious or secular, in favor of locally governed godly communities. Calvin established such a community in Geneva, Switzerland, and it quickly became a model for Calvinist Protestantism in France, the Netherlands, England, Scotland, and, somewhat later, in New England.

Roman Catholicism reacted vigorously to these challenges, both politically and intellectually. Among political responses was that of the Roman Catholic Philip II of Spain (ruled 1556–1598), who attempted to chastise Protestants in the Netherlands and England; however, his invading armada was destroyed by the Anglican queen Elizabeth's forces in 1588. The Roman Catholic queen of France, Catherine de' Medici (ruled 1560–1589), attempted to extirpate Protestantism in her country and ordered the Saint Bartholomew's Day massacre of Protestants in 1572. But she was deposed by the Protestant duke of Bourbon, who became Henry IV (ruled 1589–1610). He converted to Catholicism on taking the throne but also passed the first laws of religious toleration in any European country, thereby protecting the Protestant minority.

The Church's intellectual responses were perhaps more successful, especially as embodied in Ignatius Loyola's order of religious "soldiers," the Society of Jesus, or Jesuits, which was recognized by the pope in 1540. One of the Jesuits' first goals was to establish a Roman Catholic alternative to humanist education for the ruling classes. The Jesuits adopted many humanist emphases, however, such as the grounding in classical languages, interest in rhetorical training, and attention to individual talent. Their approach to rhetoric followed the Italian humanists in using all five canons to prepare students for persuasion in public life. Their educational program, the *Ratio Studiorum*, was published in 1586. By the end of the 1500s the Jesuits ran schools and colleges throughout Europe and did indeed control the education of the aristocracy in the Catholic countries of Austria, France, and Spain.

Humanist learning moved north in the 1400s and 1500s, facilitated in part by the increased availability of printed books. Gutenberg's press had begun operating around 1450, and soon German printers were setting up shops all over Europe. Walter Ong, among others, has suggested that the spread of printing was crucial to the spread of humanism.⁸ In northern Europe, humanist scholars maintained the Italian interest in linking rhetoric and statecraft, but they also showed much more interest in the function of rhetoric in education, especially a version of humanist education

⁸Walter J. Ong, S.J., *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958), pp. 308–11.

directed to reform-minded Catholic or Protestant religious ends. Learning continued to be disseminated by charismatic humanists as well as by books, and the scholars increasingly viewed themselves as citizens of the world or of an international community of scholars rather than of one state. That two influential examples are Dutch is understandable, considering the worldwide spread of Dutch mercantile power during this period; they are Rodolphus Agricola and Desiderius Erasmus.

Agricola (ca. 1444–1485), originally trained as a Scholastic, studied in Italy for ten years. He translated the *Progymnasmata* of Aphthonius into Latin, thereby creating one of the most widely used Renaissance rhetoric schoolbooks, a set of exercises based on hypothetical cases. Around 1480, he also began to circulate the manuscript of his influential *On Dialectical Invention* (*De Inventione Dialectica*). Unlike the Italian humanist Valla, who had located logic under rhetoric as a part of invention, Agricola separates logic and rhetoric and thus seems to give relatively more importance to dialectic as a site of invention. He places logic with dialectic. In this work, however, Agricola presents a dialectic that is heavily influenced by rhetoric. His dialectic treats all arguments about the probable and incorporates many elements of invention and arrangement that are traditionally parts of rhetoric. Following Boethius (see Part Two), Agricola recommends using the classical rhetorical *topoi* to generate dialectical arguments. These arguments should then be arranged in the order Cicero ascribed to the parts of an oration. Agricola downplays stylistic rhetoric, however, associating it with pleasing the audience, or engaging the audience emotionally, which should be a distinctly secondary goal to instructing the audience and moving them to right action.

The whole tone of Agricola's work suggests that it is aimed at teachers, not at lawyers or politicians. The high praise given Agricola by contemporaries and his widespread and lasting influence, especially in northern Europe, in spite of the derivative quality of *De Inventione Dialectica*, may be explained by the fact that Agricola reduces rhetoric to a teachable method (thus, perhaps, showing the lingering effects of his Scholastic training in a fondness for schematizing knowledge). Rather than stay with a humanist mentor for many years, poring over classical texts line by line (in the Italian fashion) until the mind is sufficiently stocked to produce eloquence, Agricola's reader can supposedly use his method of invention and arrangement to construct an argument for any occasion.

Educators avidly sought for method in education in the 1500s, without, perhaps, being quite sure what it would mean. Protestant educators such as Philipp Melanchthon (1497–1560) needed to reach a much wider audience than the elitist Italian humanists if all men and women were to become responsible for their own Bible-guided spiritual lives. Moreover, since he was establishing schools all over Germany, Melanchthon needed some universally applicable system to control the quality of education wherever he could not be present. His *Rhetorica* (1519) and *Dialectica* (1520) were widely used, especially in the training of Protestant preachers, as was a collection of his advice to preachers compiled by his students and published in 1535 under the title *Ratio Brevis Sacrarum Concionum Tractandarum*. In these works Melanchthon struggles with the function of emotion in religious instruction. Although he acknowledges that it is appropriate, even necessary, for

preachers to arouse emotion in their audiences, he favors a minimally ornamented style that would be moving primarily because of the speaker's own passion.

The possibility of a universal method had powerful charm, as literary historian Frances Yates has shown: It seemed to promise an almost magical power that would align the knower and the known and confirm and extend the human mind's dominion over nature. What we now call the scientific method may have been another outcome of these same efforts. Moreover, two important yet very different thinkers were influenced by Agricola's search for method—Erasmus and Peter Ramus.

Erasmus (ca. 1469–1536; p. 581) had met Agricola at the humanist school in Denter, where Erasmus was educated. This school was associated with the Brothers of the Common Life, a lay Catholic order whose members took no vows but who devoted themselves voluntarily to simple communal living and local acts of charity. Agricola was a close friend of the headmaster of the school, and Erasmus tended to connect him with the Brothers' enlightened piety. Agricola claimed that his method was conducive to this piety. Erasmus, who was training to be a monk, valued this form of religious life over the Roman Catholic abuses that he attacked. But he also defended the Church from the Protestantism of Martin Luther.

Though he was a monk, Erasmus became a well-traveled and widely known scholar. His impact on humanist language studies was great, especially through his *Adagia* (1508), a collection of three thousand proverbs culled from classical sources, and his edition of the New Testament in Greek (1516), the first ever in the West and a work of great theological as well as philological importance. Erasmus also produced the period's first complete rhetoric text devoted to sacred oratory, *Ecclesiastes* (1535; p. 628). Although this work was still influenced by medieval schematic approaches to composing sermons, Erasmus greatly expanded the scope of sacred rhetoric. He followed Augustine's lead in claiming that the preacher must seek to move as well as teach and in exploring stylistic means for doing so. As literary scholar Debora Shuger has argued, Erasmus "make[s] the Christian grand style possible" with this work, recovering a full range of rhetorical resources for religious persuasion.⁹ Other Renaissance writers on preaching, however (such as Melancthon—see above), would debate the question of just how much art could legitimately be used in oratory that must seek to move primarily by the sincere passion and moral example of the preacher.

Consistent with his willingness to encourage the Christian preacher to awaken pious emotions in hearers, Erasmus's intellectual position resembled Lorenzo Valla's in that he was skeptical of reason and left room for the operation of faith. Erasmus was perhaps less sanguine than Valla, however, about the humanist scholar's ability to synthesize rhetoric and philosophy into an effective *modus operandi* for the man of affairs. *Moriae Encomium* (*The Praise of Folly* [1511]) is a biting commentary on scholarly and religious pretensions, including the search for a universal method. *De Copia Verborum ac Rerum* (*Copia: Foundations of the Abundant Style* [1512]; p. 597) is an ostensibly stylistic rhetoric that, while taking the

⁹Debora Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric: The Christian Grand Style in the English Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), p. 64.

need for an accomplished style quite seriously, can also be seen as a protest against stylistic display. Another significant rhetorical work by Erasmus is *On the Writing of Letters* (*Opus de Conscribendis Epistolis* [completed 1498, published 1522]), which provides advice on letter writing but departs so far from medieval formulae as to suggest that letters might encompass all three forms of classical rhetoric—the epideictic, forensic, and deliberative—and deal with virtually any topic. In none of these works does Erasmus adopt Agricola's confidence in a simplified method for framing and expressing arguments. Rather, Erasmus "followed" Agricola in wishing that such a method were possible, without giving in to his older, admired friend's assurance that this wish had in fact come true.

Of all the Renaissance seekers after method, however, the one to achieve the greatest influence was another northern European follower of Agricola, Pierre de la Ramée, Latinized as Petrus or Peter Ramus (1515–1572). Ramus was a professor at the University of Paris. In 1543 he published his seminal work advocating a new intellectual method, *Training in Dialectic* (*Dialecticae Partitiones*), and his most controversial work, *Remarks on Aristotle* (*Aristotelicae Animadversiones*), which attacked the Scholastic method derived from Aristotle. Over the next few years, several works expressing Ramus's views on rhetoric also appeared, published under the name of his close friend and collaborator, Omer Talon, or Audomarus Talaeus. These works include the *Rhetoricae Distinctiones in Quintilianum* (*Arguments in Rhetoric against Quintilian*, 1549; p. 681). In spite of the bitter controversy his work aroused in Paris and the political sanctions sometimes brought to bear against him, Ramus eventually rose to a high position in the university before he was killed in the Saint Bartholomew's Day massacre of Protestants in 1572. His works went into many editions, and his view of rhetoric as "mere" style became increasingly prevalent into the 1700s.

Ramus's thinking begins with the most violent rejection of Scholasticism that the period had yet produced, an attack that seemed all the more dramatic to contemporaries because it was hurled in the teeth of the greatest Scholastic stronghold in Europe, the University of Paris. Ramus condemned Scholastic reasoning as needlessly cumbersome and claimed that his own method was not only more clear but also more effective in accomplishing the Scholastics' goal of representing reality. And whereas earlier humanists carefully separated medieval scholarship from the classical authors they claimed it had corrupted, Ramus wished to throw off all authorities, classical or medieval. Hence he lays out his theoretical program by attacking Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian in turn. He also downplays the importance of classical languages in his educational scheme. Ramus was one of the first academics to publish his works in the vernacular—French, in his case—as well as in Latin. His attack on classical thought and language is so vigorous that one might question whether he can be called a humanist at all.

Ramus's positive program calls for the union of philosophy and eloquence, but by this he most emphatically does not mean the Ciceronian ideal. Like Agricola, Ramus simply includes in dialectic various activities of invention and arrangement that had been the province of rhetoric. He recommends sorting one's material according to its level of generality, proceeding from most general to most particular

by way of dichotomies. Meanwhile, by *rhetoric* Ramus means only the study of stylistic ornamentation, a harmless pastime with which he is little concerned (he gives some small attention to delivery as well); for serious business, a plain style is best. Ramism appealed especially to the Protestant bourgeoisie and flourished in areas where it was dominant: Germany, Scandinavia, the Netherlands, England, and, somewhat later, New England. The appeal of Ramism may be partly credited to Ramus's cachet as a Protestant martyr and partly to the way that the Ramistic dialectic, greatly simplifying material to fit into the dichotomies, proved to be a useful pedagogic tool.

In spite of Ramism's triumph, however, the classicizing view of rhetoric promoted by the Italian humanists was not without supporters in the north. One was Johann Sturm (b. 1507), another follower of Agricola but also a student of Hermogenes, about whom he lectured at the University of Paris and whose entire body of works he translated into Latin. Sturm separated rhetoric and dialectic in books published in 1539, *The Structure of Dialectic* (*Partitiones Dialecticae*; two volumes) and *Dialogues on the Structure of Cicero's Orator* (*In Partitiones Oratorias Ciceronis Dialogi*). The second of these, drawing on Cicero and Aristotle as well as Hermogenes, treats all five canons of rhetoric, and both books affirm the function of rhetoric in invention and arrangement. At least in Sturm's work, rhetoric is not reduced to style.

Classical rhetoric was also preserved in the work of Roman Catholic thinkers who resisted Protestant reforms in a so-called Counter-Reformation movement and who sought to revitalize Catholic preaching in the wake of Lutheran gains. Because of the spread of larger, monarchical governments in Europe, rhetoric might be declining as a tool of statecraft, but it still had an important adult audience to address for Christian preaching. The Protestants, as noted above, had already devoted considerable attention to effective preaching, by which they won adherents, and they produced several important manuals, most notably by Melancthon. In Counter-Reformation Italy of the late 1500s and early 1600s, Catholics now sought to do the same, borrowing sometimes from Melancthon and from Erasmus's *Ecclesiastes*, but relying most heavily on Augustine's *On Christian Doctrine* (see Part Two). The new Catholic ecclesiastical rhetorics sought to discourage Scholastic preaching that involved intricate arguments about doctrine. Rather, the preacher—whether addressing august prelates at Rome in Latin or common parishioners in the vernacular—should strive to set out virtue and vice, salvation and damnation in their true colors, and move his hearers to piety and right living. His style might vary from the grand or sublime, obviously ornamented and heated with emotion, to the plain style of clear exposition. This fluency was a product of the humanistic education that was increasingly required for priests (and advocated by the Jesuits, as noted above). His matter might also include those simple elements of Church doctrine that people needed to know in order to follow the right path—and to distinguish the Roman Catholic Church from Protestant “heresies.” But above all, though equipped for his task with rhetorical education drawing on Cicero, Quintilian, and Aristotle, the preacher must be sure that he lived the virtues he exalted, thereby establishing that crucial element for persuasion, a Christian ethos.

HUMANISM AND RHETORIC IN ENGLAND: RAMUS VERSUS CICERO

Humanism in England began in the fifteenth century with the work of a group of statesmen and educators led by Sir Thomas More, now a saint in the Roman Catholic Church. More was trained as a lawyer, knew Latin and Greek, and modeled his career on that of the early Italian humanist-statesmen. He translated into English the Latin biography of one of these men, Pico della Mirandola. More rose to the high office of chancellor of England, but he was executed in 1535 by Henry VIII for refusing to acknowledge the king's religious supremacy when Henry broke with the Roman Catholic Church.

More was attracted by the Epicureanism of Valla, especially as it had been further Christianized by Erasmus, a good friend of More's and a frequent visitor to his circle. In *Utopia* (1516), More imagines the application of this philosophy to political science, in a country where pleasure seeking becomes a Platonic motion toward transcendence. More and Erasmus see rhetoric's place within the polity as similar to the powerful position it had with early Italian humanists. Through his versatile use of language, the man of wisdom influences history and guides political affairs. Erasmus's *Copia*, intended for use by boys in an English school founded by one of More's friends, aims to develop the students' rhetorical versatility so that later on, as public men, they may use words amply and impressively or clearly and concisely, as the situation directs.

As the Tudor dynasty took control of England, however, English humanism experienced a pressure to change similar to that which had shaped Italian humanism as the city-state governments became autocracies. The power of the individual public man diminished—symbolized, in effect, by More's martyrdom—and political rhetoric increasingly became the province of the courtier or government functionary. In *Logic and Rhetoric in England, 1500–1700*, historian of rhetoric W. S. Howell refers to “traditional Ciceronians” as those whose understanding of rhetoric prevailed at the time Ramism began to enter England in the later sixteenth century.¹⁰ But these Ciceronians, while still seeing rhetoric as the “traditional” five-part classical art, already had a more limited focus than More or Erasmus. They tended to emphasize the study of style and to treat rhetoric more as a courtly accomplishment than as a powerful political tool. For example, in *The Scholemaster* (1570), Roger Ascham announces himself for Cicero and against Ramus, but this means promoting a version of rhetoric very close to Castiglione's, albeit with a bit more emphasis on the scholarly mastery of classical languages. This courtly focus reflects Ascham's role as teacher of the Tudor offspring, including the future Queen Elizabeth.

Ciceronian rhetoric was not only for aristocrats in sixteenth-century England, however. Scholars attempted to adapt it to the educational purposes of a broader social spectrum beyond the clergy and such learned professions as law and medicine. The Roman Catholic educational system had, of course, been dispossessed whole-

¹⁰Wilbur Samuel Howell, *Logic and Rhetoric in England, 1500–1700* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1956), p. 65ff.

sale after the Tudors established the Anglican Church, and Tudor monarchs generally favored humanist education as a replacement. They not only employed humanists as tutors for their children but also supported the foundation of humanist schools to serve a mixture of upper-class, middle-class, and some lower-class students.

In contrast, the university population in England, which had become more democratic in the late Middle Ages, was now more limited to the upper social classes, for now those of the classes below them who sought professional careers could prepare in the schools and in professional apprenticeships. At the same time, as government became more centralized, the young aristocrats had less to do with governing and so had more need of the occupation provided by university studies. Humanist education made little impact in the universities, where Scholasticism remained the basis of the curriculum into the 1600s. This meant subordination for rhetoric. Subjects were divided into the sciences, such as physics and mathematics, which generated knowledge, and the arts, where students learned how to put this knowledge to use. Among the arts, logic studied how ideas should be arranged and ethics studied the human passions; both contributed to rhetoric, essentially the art of style. A number of liberal arts subjects, such as poetry and history, were grouped under rhetoric, on the grounds that they provided various kinds of ornaments for effective writing and speech. Composition took place in Latin and involved the imitation of classical models and exercises on set topics such as whether Caesar was justly put to death—a far cry from the more creative and individualized humanist approach.

Rhetoric textbooks began to emerge to serve the new humanist schools and also adults who wanted access to humanist learning. These books showed that a vernacular language such as English could be shaped by classical rhetorical precepts. The earliest rhetoric textbook in English was Leonard Cox's *The Arte or Crafte of Rhetoryke* (ca. 1530); the book is Ciceronian in that it mentions all five parts of rhetoric, focusing on invention and borrowing extensively from Melancthon. *The Arte of Rhetorique* (1553; p. 702), by Thomas Wilson (ca. 1523–1581), was the first textbook in English not only to acknowledge rhetoric's five-part structure but to discuss all five parts in some detail. The examples of rhetorical performance included in Wilson's book, which are mostly written texts (one by Erasmus), suggest the extent to which rhetoric under the Tudors was a written art. This book, frequently reprinted, was the most influential English rhetoric in the sixteenth century. Another rhetoric book that relies heavily on model written texts was Richard Rainolde's *The Foundacion of Rhetorike* (1563).

As literary historian Frank Whigham has shown, the popularity of these rhetorics derived partly from the ambitions of social climbers in volatile Elizabethan society. The texts are thus allied with courtesy books, of which the original model is Castiglione's *The Book of the Courtier*. They were sources of information on how to behave, talk, and write like a member of the upper social classes. Social mobility reinforced the idea of identity as performance, since the courtier, possibly newly arrived at a high rank, had to show that he or she belonged there. Even if born into an aristocratic family, one was required to give a seemingly effortless imitation of an aristocrat to prove that one's rank was justified. This version of *sprezzatura* relies

heavily on the audience, which ratifies that one's performance has been successful, and requires continual vigilance on the part of the performer, who can never regard himself or herself as offstage. Rhetorically, it calls for a variety of talents, such as the ability to compose—or ghostwrite—political speeches, love letters, occasional poetry, and more on demand, and to praise the patron gracefully and denigrate his or her enemies. Whigham compares these verbal arts to those that flourished in ancient Rome as it moved from republic to empire.

In addition to complete rhetorics like Wilson's, sixteenth-century Ciceronian rhetorics focusing primarily on style were also popular. They sought to help the English language develop its semantic and syntactic resources, which were perceived as inferior to Latin's, without directly borrowing too much from Latin. Examples are Richard Sherry's *A Treatise of Schemes and Tropes* (1550), which draws heavily on the work of Erasmus, and Henry Peacham's *The Garden of Eloquence* (1577). To the modern reader, these works might appear similar to the Ramist rhetorics in English that began to appear in the latter part of the century, such as Gabriel Harvey's *Rhetor* (1577) and Abraham Fraunce's *The Arcadian Rhetorike* (1588), which draws heavily on the work of Ramus's collaborator Talaeus. According to W. S. Howell, the significant difference is that the Ciceronian stylistic rhetorics focused on figures and tropes but acknowledged that these were only a part of the study of style and that style was only the third of a five-part structure of rhetoric.¹¹ The Ramist stylistic rhetorics, on the other hand, reduced style to nothing but figures and tropes and rhetoric to nothing but style and, treated very briefly, delivery.

As Ramist influence—and with it the stylistic emphasis—grew in the later sixteenth century, rhetoric made a happier alliance with poetry than with statecraft. Rhetoric texts such as Fraunce's show the Ramist influence by dichotomizing their subject matter and then using examples drawn largely from poetry. In Ramist fashion, Fraunce divides rhetoric into two parts, elocution and pronunciation; elocution (style) into two parts, congruity (correct grammar) and bravery (ornamentation); bravery into two parts, tropes, or turnings, and figures, or fashionings; tropes into two kinds, the first containing *metonymia* and *ironia* and the second containing metaphor and synecdoche; and figures into two kinds, in the word or in the sentence. He then illustrates tropes and verse forms with extracts from a variety of classical and contemporary poets, including more than a hundred excerpts from the poetry of Sir Philip Sidney, then circulating in manuscript.

Although Sidney's allegiance to Ramism is debatable, he encourages a Ramist-influenced linkage between rhetoric and poetic in *The Apology for Poetry* (ca. 1583, published 1595). He says that poetry and "oratory" have a great "affinity in the wordish consideration," in that good style in both is characterized by an artless art that employs stylistic devices only as they would occur naturally in speech, in the heat of emotion.¹² He praises Cicero and Demosthenes for their style, but condemns their imitators—those modern academics, preachers, and poets who sprinkle devices derived from classical models all over their discourse. Renaissance rhetori-

¹¹Howell, p. 318ff.

¹²Sir Philip Sidney, *The Defense of Poesy, otherwise known as the Apology for Poetry*, ed. and intro. Albert S. Cook (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1890), p. 55.

cians and poets sometimes called tropes and figures “flowers” or “colors” of rhetoric—hence the images of the garden or bower that appear in many titles of rhetorics and poetry collections of the period. Readers relished highly colored discourse, but the degree and kind of stylistic ornamentation were open to debate and stricture such as that expressed by Sidney.

Fraunce’s rhetoric is frequently anthologized in twentieth-century collections of English Renaissance literature, and literary-critical discussions often focus on the prevalence in English poetry of figures and tropes also found in rhetoric. This focus and indeed the identification of rhetoric and poetic that Ramism encouraged are not contradictory to the overall spirit of rhetoric in the Renaissance. Style was a principal consideration of Renaissance rhetoricians from Petrarch forward. Like the earliest Sophists, students of rhetoric in the Renaissance did not want to separate rhetoric sharply from poetic, since both pertained to style—even though the Sophists and some Renaissance rhetoricians conceived of rhetoric as encompassing much more than style. Indeed, literary critic Brian Vickers has argued that figures and tropes were understood not merely as ornamenting thought but as shaping it at the level of phrase and sentence. Thus, even to the most stylistically oriented Renaissance rhetorician, figurative language had epistemic functions.

If Ramist influence did not separate rhetoric and poetic, it did, however, encourage rhetoricians to separate rhetoric sharply from logic, and this separation drained rhetoric’s epistemic power even if the identification with poetic did not. W. S. Howell has argued that Ramism’s triumph was virtually complete in England by 1700.¹³ Hence the process of generating knowledge shifted from rhetorical invention, or what Howell calls “mental interpretation,” such as searching for ideas in commonplaces or employing stasis theory, to empirical research on what he calls “external realities,” which anticipated the new science. The shaping power of language, though it might function in learned as well as popular discourse, was deplored. Simplicity in arrangement and style was more highly valued, and the vernacular language was used increasingly for all kinds of discourse. Howell suggests that the “best” language was seen as a value-neutral tool of inquiry, not a value-laden medium of communication.

Howell’s account of Ramism’s triumph links it to the rise of modern science, just as Walter Ong’s account links Ramism with the rise of the bourgeoisie and capitalism.¹⁴ Scientists and entrepreneurs alike could focus on “external realities” with a new eagerness to explore and manipulate them. We should remember that in the Renaissance, Europeans also traveled extensively to the Americas and Asia, in voyages that typically combined scientific, religious, and mercantile interests. Even the universe was expanding. Dutch scholar Nicholas Copernicus (d. 1543) had published his heliocentric theories from his deathbed; they had not attracted much notice since he had presented them as merely an aid to regularizing the Church calendar. But the findings of Galileo Galilei, published in the early 1600s, made a great impact, even though the Roman Inquisition compelled him to recant after the

¹³See Wilbur Samuel Howell, “Renaissance Rhetoric and Modern Rhetoric: A Study in Change,” in *Poetics, Rhetoric, and Logic* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975).

¹⁴See Walter J. Ong, S.J., “Ramist Method and the Commercial Mind,” in *Rhetoric, Romance, and Technology*.

appearance of *Dialogue on the Two Chief Systems of the World*, the Ptolemaic and the Copernican (1632), in which he sides boldly with the latter. The publication of René Descartes's *Discourse on Method* (1637) is often regarded as both the starting point of modern science and the beginning of the end of Renaissance rhetoric. In a letter of 1640, Descartes wrote: "One can talk of persuasion whenever there is ground for further doubt. One can talk of science however only when there is an unshakable ground."¹⁵

The rise of Cartesian science renewed discussions about the status of knowledge, especially concerns over when one should doubt versus when one should seek certainty. In the early Renaissance, philologically sophisticated humanist scholars and Protestant reformers had questioned received cultural and religious wisdom. They felt that individual human reason was capable of such a critique. Human beings, although shaped by their culture, could take a critical distance from it. Now, however, this critical distance was not enough. The new science attempted to elevate reason to an even more exalted position, claiming that it could free itself from all learned cultural dispositions and replace received wisdom with newly discovered universals or absolutes. Thus other forms of knowledge, including the earlier enlightened work in literature, history, and religion, tended to be devalued because they were obviously not universal but historically situated. In other words, with the rise of science, culture-bound knowledge began to seem second-rate, and with it rhetoric, both secular and sacred, that drew on cultural knowledge.

The early Italian humanists had valued historical knowledge because, among other things, it helped them to appreciate the culture of their own times and the potential for its future achievements, to which they could contribute as public servants. But now historical knowledge was diminished in stature and so could not be counted on to raise patriotic interest in culture. Instead, social convention and the cultural values that ratified it seemed merely arbitrary. Acting in society was no longer so much a matter of creating a whole personality by one's performance. To be sure, one performed by conforming to social conventions, but this performance was merely a matter of creating a facade that would allow one to live comfortably and profitably in the society in which the conventions happened to be current. There was no necessary connection between individuality and this particular set of conventions or social circumstances. Behind the facade of one's performance, one remained alone with one's private thoughts, testing them for the presence of any knowledge that could be scientifically established. The individual was thus more isolated than when performance could be conceived as *sprezzatura*, both because the performance with *sprezzatura* was imagined to actually constitute identity and because others played a more integral part in its success, since their approval and participation with the performer were required. With an individual's true identity harder to perceive, the assignment of moral responsibility became more tenuous, and public men emerged who were consummate stylists but whose intellectual life seemed divorced from their political functions. Two examples are Michel de Montaigne and Francis Bacon.

¹⁵Quoted in Samuel IJsseling, *Rhetoric and Philosophy in Conflict*, trans. Paul Dunphy (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976), p. 62.

Montaigne (d. 1592), who came from a well-to-do family, was a French diplomat who also was interested in humanist learning. His most important publication was *Essays* (complete edition 1588). This book comprises mostly short, personal essays, written in the vernacular (French), in which Montaigne describes and studies his own opinions about everything under the sun, concluding that he really can understand nothing except how powerful convention and education have been in shaping his opinions. Montaigne's tone in most of these essays is one of gentle cynicism or equally gentle melancholy. But in one long essay, "Apology for Raimond Sebond," he lays out his skepticism more seriously and maintains that human reason is incapable of any true knowledge. To some of his contemporaries as well as later scholars, Montaigne's position here is similar to that of Erasmus, who discredited reason so as to discredit rational arguments against religion. But to others, Montaigne is making a more radical move, casting off the authority of all received wisdom because such wisdom must change with changing historical circumstances, and thus clearing the ground for modern science.

The Englishman Francis Bacon (1561–1626; p. 736), also a professional politician from a well-to-do family, published his own collection of vernacular (English) *Essays or Counsels, Civill and Morall* (complete edition 1625), in which he propounds a worldly wisdom that takes for granted accommodation to convention. He disliked the bloodless prose of Ramism, and his own writing style makes elegant use of tropes and figures. But in *The Advancement of Learning* (1605; excerpted p. 740) and *Novum Organum* (1620; excerpted p. 745), Bacon demotes rhetoric to a technical skill that will simply help the one who knows convey knowledge to the less able. Bacon is more interested in the generation of knowledge by scientific means. He argues that the limitations that convention and human mental frailty have placed on knowledge in the past need not necessarily hold for the future. Perhaps humankind has known nothing or very little, but that is not to say that we can never attain knowledge—especially if we adopt Bacon's inductive program for interrogating nature. Doubt is a useful tool, but it must not disable us with despair.

The new scientific approach to learning had little impact on education at first. Indeed, in some places Scholasticism was still in force. But in most European schools and universities, humanist education had taken hold, only to harden into an elitist curriculum which avoided modern history, literature, and science even though it gave somewhat more attention to the vernacular languages as time went on. Signs of change did begin to emerge, however, in the seventeenth century. John Amos Comenius, a Moravian minister and educator, claimed to follow Bacon's advice to add practical experience to the teaching of general rules. Knowledge should come first through the senses; hence Comenius prepared the first schoolbook with pictures, *Orbis Sensualim Pictus* (*The World in Pictures*, 1658). This was essentially an illustrated word list; the words were given in Latin and several European vernaculars, and the illustrations, as Renaissance scholar Frances Yates has shown, were taken from mystical memory treatises.¹⁶ Comenius may have felt that his *Orbis Pictus* gained some sanction from what Bacon had said in praise of rhetoric, that it created lively "pictures" to impress the mind.

¹⁶Frances Yates, *The Art of Memory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), p. 377.

Another source of school reform in the period was a Roman Catholic sect, the Jansenists, at Port Royal, France. The Church eventually suppressed the movement, but not before it had attracted such notable intellectuals as Antoine Arnauld and Blaise Pascal. The Port-Royalists operated small schools that demanded asceticism and piety from the students, who were under close supervision, while at the same time advocating modern studies in the spirit of Descartes. Port-Royal schools were quite unusual for their attention to the vernacular. French was the language of instruction, and students learned composition in French before turning to the classics. The schools also taught modern history and science.

Arnauld, who is known to the history of philosophy chiefly for his insightful strictures on the reasoning of Descartes, wrote a widely influential textbook on logic, *L'Art de penser* (1662; English edition, *The Art of Thinking*, 1674), in which he popularizes the Cartesian method of inquiry. In Arnauld's eyes, human depravity seems to taint rhetoric, perhaps because rhetoric requires close knowledge of and accommodation to corrupt human nature. True knowledge is a knowledge of things, not words. Hence his logic text recommends beginning from personal experience and pursuing induction to achieve knowledge, just as the Port-Royalists tried to do in their schools. Language, to be sure, can be studied, but only to ensure that it does not get in the way of understanding. Arnauld did not publish a rhetoric to accompany his logic. Bernard Lamy's *De l'art de parler* (1675; English edition, *The Art of Speaking*, 1676), though not composed under Port-Royalist auspices, was widely regarded as embodying Port-Royalist attitudes toward rhetoric, because Lamy, also a follower of Descartes, rejects rhetorical invention.

In seventeenth-century England, the attitude toward rhetoric that developed from the works of Bacon and the Cartesian Port-Royalists is perhaps best exemplified in *The History of the Royal Society* (1667) by Thomas Sprat. Sprat's history amounts to a declaration of principles for the new scientific organization initiated by Oxford academics in 1660, and one of the principles rejects ornamentation: "Who can behold, without indignation, how many mists and uncertainties, these specious Tropes and Figures have brought on our knowledge?"¹⁷ Yet even this rejection of rhetorical style constitutes a style, one of directness and simplicity. A classical provenance was found for this kind of style: It was characterized as Senecan. The Senecans opposed seventeenth-century neo-Ciceronians, a stylistic school that acknowledged the five-part domain of rhetoric and hence attempted to preserve it from scientific reductionism. The neo-Ciceronians also focused on style and advocated more freedom with amplification and ornament than did the Senecans. The debate seemed to replay the controversy between Asianists (the neo-Ciceronians) and Atticists (the Senecans) in Roman times.

As in Roman times, the controversy had political overtones. French literary historian Marc Fumaroli has suggested that the neo-Ciceronians tended to be associated with monarchical government and Roman Catholic or High Church Protestant religion, whereas the Senecan sympathies were thought to lie with republicanism

¹⁷Thomas Sprat, *The History of the Royal Society of London*, ed. J. I. Cope and H. W. Jones (St. Louis: Washington University Press, 1958), p. 112.

and the more austere forms of Protestantism. These political overtones gave style serious consequences in a century beset by interrelated political and religious violence. England and Germany were torn by wars between Catholics and Protestants. The English king Charles I (ruled 1625–1649) was deposed and executed by a coalition of Puritans and supporters of Parliament, but then his Catholic-leaning Stuart line was restored, after the death of rebel leader Cromwell, with the reign of Charles II (ruled 1660–1685). The Thirty Years War bled Germany and an increasingly weakened Spain, which was involved as an ally of the German Catholics.

Meanwhile, Catholic influence grew in France, and a great neo-Ciceronian literary flowering occurred during the long reign of Louis XIV (ruled 1643–1715). A leader of French salon society was Madeleine de Scudéry, an aristocrat best known for her novels. She published a collection of imaginary speeches by women of antiquity (*Les Femmes illustres or The Heroick Harangues of the Illustrious Women*, 1641, English edition 1681) and a series of dialogues among invented classical interlocutors (*Conversations*, volume I 1680, English edition 1683, volume II 1685), all of which expressed the concept that conversation was the rhetorical realm in which women could excel. Scudéry did not challenge women's exclusion from public oratorical forums, but she suggested that women were naturally eloquent and could use language better than men in private conversation and private letters to improve their social standing, smooth social intercourse, and exert behind-the-scenes political power. Scudéry imagined that women's language, rather than showing evidence of education in classical rhetoric, would appear to be artless, and therefore more effective. Such a view of rhetoric gave women considerable power in a society in which the rule of an absolute monarch strictly limited the scope of public deliberations. Scudéry's views resemble those of Baldesar Castiglione (p. 651), which were written for a similarly constrained political world. However, as Renaissance scholar Jane Donawerth has argued, Scudéry goes much further than Castiglione to suggest that the ultimate goal of women's language should be conciliation and pleasure.

It would be a mistake, therefore, to suppose that all Ciceronian amplifications, all the Renaissance abundance of powerful rhetorical styles, fled before the strictures of Descartes and other adherents of the new science. But rhetoric from the late 1600s on, whether secular or sacred, was deeply discredited by the assumptions that rhetoric is no more than tropes and figures and, even if there were more to it, is unworthy of serious study. Those who in the future would rehabilitate its study would have to be prepared to defend rhetoric first on the ground of style, for if rhetoric as style could be valued once again, it might recover yet more of its ancient, extensive domain.

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Desiderius Erasmus

1469–1536

Desiderius Erasmus was born in Holland. The illegitimate son of a priest and a doctor's daughter, Erasmus was, from infancy, destined for holy orders. His parents placed him in a humanist school in Deventer. Agricola was a friend of the headmaster, and Erasmus saw him at the school around 1481, shortly before Agricola's death. After his parents' deaths in 1483, Erasmus was sent to a monastery school to prepare for entering the Augustinian order (the same order to which Martin Luther belonged). He entered in 1488 and was ordained a priest in 1492. Wishing to escape monastic life, Erasmus in 1494 obtained a post as Latin secretary to the bishop of Combrai, with whom he hoped to travel to Rome to further his humanist studies. Instead, Erasmus was sent to study theology in Paris, where he met a group of English students with humanist interests. One of them, Lord Mountjoy, brought him to England in 1499. From this point on, Erasmus was given considerable freedom by his order to pursue learning. He would not be formally recalled to the monastery until 1514, when the pope gave him leave to remain in the world.

In England, Erasmus befriended the humanists John Colet and Thomas More and was a frequent visitor to their circle for the next fifteen years. In 1500 he returned to the Continent to study Greek. Erasmus greatly admired the philological work of Lorenzo Valla, and his ambition was to follow Valla's hints for the production of a textually accurate Greek New Testament. Erasmus worked on this project for more than a decade, publishing it in 1516. The book was tremendously influential as a model of humanist scholarship. It also encouraged theologians to focus their study more on the early Church Fathers than on Scholastic commentaries.

Erasmus had obtained Greek manuscripts of the New Testament on a journey to England in 1504. His English friends secured him the post of tutor to the sons of Henry VIII's doctor, and in 1506 Erasmus traveled with the family to Italy, where he took a doctorate of divinity at Turin. He studied in Italy for the next three years, and in 1508 at Venice he published *Adagia*, a collection of three thousand proverbs from classical sources with accompanying explanatory essays. This work first established his reputation as a scholar. When Henry VIII, of whom the humanists had great hopes of patronage, ascended the throne in 1509, Erasmus returned to England. On this journey, he may have begun writing *The Praise of Folly* as a gift for More, who would be his host. The work was originally composed in Latin and was sprinkled with Greek and even a little Hebrew; it was entitled *Moriae Encomium*, the title Erasmus preferred. The Greek word for folly, which is Anglicized *Moria*, provided a pun on More's name. The book was published in Paris in 1511.

In England, Erasmus accepted a lectureship in Greek at Cambridge, a post he held until 1514. His friend John Colet, now dean of St. Paul's Cathedral, was about to open a humanist school for boys at St. Paul's, and around 1512 Erasmus wrote *Copia: Foundations of the Abundant Style* (*De Copia Verborum ac Rerum*; usually called *On Copia*; excerpted here) as a Latin textbook for this school. Erasmus was

deeply interested in education. For the common good, he hoped that peace would come if humanity were united in one political state (as in ancient Rome), with one religion (Roman Catholicism) and one language (Latin). For this dream to be realized, education must play an important role, since fluency in Greek and Latin would have to be encouraged from an early age. Classical and patristic texts would be the focus of instruction. Rhetoric would be a natural extension and aid of this work, because the only surviving classical textbooks treated rhetoric and because rhetoric's methods would help to analyze Greek and Latin texts. Erasmus draws heavily on Quintilian in his thinking on education, and his educational treatises have much of the same kindly, practical tone.

On Copia is generally regarded as Erasmus's most influential work on rhetoric. It dominated rhetoric instruction in both Latin and the vernacular languages throughout northern Europe for most of the sixteenth century. *On Copia* is intended to help the novice attain *copia*, or abundance, in his Latin style, and ultimately to attain that flow of powerful words and ideas that mark the accomplished rhetor. The work is divided into two books, the first variously translated as "abundance of expression" or "of words" and the second as "abundance of subject matter" or "of ideas." In the Toronto edition, Book I is divided into no fewer than 206 chapters (Chapter 206 is entitled "No Further"), which treat a wide variety of figures, tropes, and other methods of amplification. In addition to discussing such stylistic devices as metalepsis, metonymy, and synecdoche, Erasmus lists various ways of expressing syntactic relationships. For example, Chapter 129, "Nothing But," contains the following examples: "You are nothing but a poet, you are nothing else but a poet, you are nothing other than a poet, you are merely a poet, you are nothing more than a poet," and so on.¹ Excerpted here is a passage in which Erasmus demonstrates amplification by giving 150 ways to express the sentiment "Your letter pleased me very much" (something the Renaissance student might well want to know, given that one source of humanism was the *ars dictaminis* and that letters were a major vehicle of scholarly exchange). Erasmus frequently cites the authority of Cicero, and he displays his prodigious classical learning as well as his own ingenuity in fashioning illustrations.

Erasmus's Latin style was and is generally regarded as excellent. His relationship to stylistic rhetoric is subtle, however. He opposed the rigid Ciceronianism of his day, which advocated that the writer in Latin use no word or expression that could not be found in the classical master and which thus produced a highly labored and artificial style. At the same time, he was distrustful of *sprezzatura*, that ideal of Italian courtly conversation that hid art and learning in the verbal performance. Erasmus thought the good style need not avoid stylistic ornamentation and rhetorical polish, nor scruple to display learning and wit, yet it should remain flexible and adapted to its current uses. Erasmus both defended and exemplified the principle that the eloquent man of wisdom should take public stands on important issues of the day, as well as share his scholarship across national boundaries, and such a man

¹Desiderius Erasmus, *Copia: Foundations of the Abundant Style*, trans. Betty I. Knott, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, ed. Craig R. Thompson, 42 vols. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978), vol. 24: p. 500.

needed a command of Latin that would be equal to these tasks. Erasmus hoped that a Latin language revived and liberated by his stylistic principles could become, once again, the universal language of a united Christian civilization. His approach gained wide influence when stylistic elaborations such as Euphuism gradually began to cloy some palates. By the turn of the seventeenth century, however, although neo-Ciceronians still supported a concept of *copie*, it was increasingly under attack by advocates of the new science and of the plainer, so-called Senecan style that they developed from Bacon forward (see the introduction to Part Three).

Although it was best known later as a work on style, one should not see *On Copia* as merely a catalog of stylistic devices, as scholar of French literature Terence Cave has explained.² In fact, although Erasmus does discuss many tropes and figures in Book I, he never exhaustively catalogues them as in other rhetoric texts of the day. Rather, he seems to encourage a sort of superabundant verbal play (illustrated in our excerpt from *On Copia* by the variations on “Your letter pleased me very much”) that is designed to increase fluency of both words and ideas—the two are mutually generative. Although he provides many classical examples, too, Erasmus never advocates slavish imitation of them, as did some of his Ciceronian contemporaries. The ultimate goal seems to be to equip a rhetor so that he can improvise as the occasion demands, powerfully amplifying his speech or increasing its impact with terseness. As Cave points out, this is a classical notion of *copie*—an abundantly varied flow of speech that impresses with its energy and inventiveness and wrings assent from the audience. It is neither simplistic nor repetitive in style or content. As classicist Alvin Vos has argued, then, Erasmus’s approach in *On Copia* can be seen as a method of attaining not just stylistic fluency, but all the ends of classical rhetorical training.

A companion volume to *On Copia* is *On the Writing of Letters* (*Opus de Conscribendis Epistolis*), which was completed in 1498 but not published until 1522. This work was perhaps even more popular than *On Copia*. It too discusses rhetorical matters, but in the context of the important Renaissance genre of the letter. Rather than providing formulas as do the medieval manuals of letter writing, Erasmus suggests that letters might encompass all three forms of classical rhetoric—the epideictic, forensic, and deliberative—and might deal with virtually any topic. *On the Writing of Letters* was also widely used as a school text since, as Erasmus presents them, letters can be used for a variety of rhetorical exercises.

When Erasmus returned to the Continent around 1515, he traveled widely and also made frequent visits to England. He helped establish another humanist school, at Louvain. In Basel, he worked with printer Johann Froben to bring out an edition of his works, as well as a new series of editions of the Church Fathers. His health began to fail, however, and he also became embroiled in increasingly bitter religious controversies. Erasmus supported the Roman Catholic Church while vigorously criticizing its abuses, as in *The Praise of Folly*, and advocating a more simple piety. These views earned him the hostility of conservative Churchmen. He hoped

²Terence Cave, *The Cornucopian Text: Problems of Writing in the French Renaissance* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), pp. 17–31 and passim.

that reformed preaching could draw people back to the Church, and so he accepted a correspondent's suggestion in 1519 to prepare a manual on preaching that adapted classical precepts to Christian needs.

This project became the massive *Ecclesiastes* (*Ecclesiastes sive De Ratione Concionandi*, loosely translated as *The Preacher, or The Theory of Public Speaking*; excerpted here; summary below), Erasmus's longest and last published work, which finally appeared in 1535, the year before his death. As Debora Shuger has pointed out, this was a worthy project for a rhetorician in the classical mold, for sacred oratory was steadily becoming the only kind of public oratory in Renaissance Europe. The increasing consolidation of nations under monarchs limited the scope of political rhetoric (see the introduction to Part Three). But there was still a need, indeed a pressing need in view of the religious controversies of the day, to speak eloquently on sacred matters. Erasmus wished to put his humanist learning to the service of a self-reformed Roman Catholic Church by instructing its preachers. He himself never preached, except perhaps a few times in his youth; his treatise conveys the insights of an acute critic of other men's pulpit oratory. Although Erasmus was dissatisfied with the treatise he finally published, regarding it as badly organized and unfinished, it was a tremendous success; it ran through nine editions in ten years after its publication and inspired many imitators, both Catholic and Protestant.

Religious historian John W. O'Malley sees *Ecclesiastes* as nothing short of revolutionary. He argues that this work single-handedly routed the medieval thematic sermon (as explicated in the *ars praedicandi*; see Part Two). For scope, erudition, and impact, says O'Malley, the work can be compared only with Augustine's *On Christian Doctrine* (see Part Two), by which it is influenced (other influences were Quintilian and, to a lesser extent, Jerome). Erasmus calls for a type of sermon that is structured along classical lines, with an exordium, narratio, divisio, and so on. It is thus much more flexible than the thematic sermon, but not as loose as the patristic homily. It is to be based on accurate philological interpretation of Scripture, which will naturally reveal the simple truths of Christianity. Erasmus uses rhetorical methods to pursue this interpretation, not only seeking tropes and figures in biblical language, but also, for example, borrowing forensic methods of evaluating witnesses and documents to resolve doubtful readings. Since the sermon's purpose is both to instruct in the truths of religion and to persuade to right action, Erasmus classifies the sermon as a kind of deliberative rhetoric aimed at a popular audience; he thereby departs from the Italian humanists who saw sacred oratory as epideictic (Erasmus does retain a role for praise and blame, but within a larger deliberative context).

In spite of the attention he gives in *Ecclesiastes* to what rhetoric can add to the preacher's power, Erasmus insists, following Augustine, that a pure faith and the divine aid it will invoke are the factors most crucial to a preacher's success. This view would seem to harmonize well with Erasmus's basic skepticism about the powers of human reason, a skepticism that was congenial to the acceptance of Church doctrine on faith, as a necessary aid to social cohesion. In 1524 he attacked Martin Luther in print for insisting on certainty in religious matters and for relying on his human reason to achieve it; Luther replied angrily. Although increasingly attacked from all sides, Erasmus continued to work for peace and internal Church reform until his

death in Basel in 1536. While Protestant polemicists attempted to discredit him as an opportunist and lackey of the Church, the Spanish Inquisition extirpated his Catholic followers in Spain, and his works were placed on the Index of forbidden books in 1559.

Erasmus is generally held to be a key figure in the Renaissance, both for bringing Italian learning north and for making major contributions in his own right. Historian Anthony Grafton and literary scholar Lisa Jardine argue that Erasmus attempted to professionalize humanism as a philological discipline.³ Professional training for this discipline required early exposure to Greek and Latin, and the role of educator thus became an important one for Erasmus. Through publications on the topic and through his work at humanist schools, he ensured that these languages were taught so as to guarantee fluency without employing the brutal pedagogy of the day, a pedagogy that ignored the aptitudes of individual students. While such training suited young men for secular leadership roles, Erasmus argued, it was especially important for the clergy. The humanist analysis of sacred texts that Erasmus modeled and taught could become a means not only to verbal fluency but also to spiritual insight and piety. Contact with Scripture, free from needlessly elaborate and philologically inaccurate medieval commentaries, could inspire the priest with the true, original spirit of Christianity, which would then shine out in his life and, with the aid of some rhetorical art, in his preaching—hints for which Erasmus provided in the *Ecclesiastes*.

This monumental final work summarizes Erasmus's hopes both for humanist education and for a newly inspired and united Christendom. At the same time, Erasmus's enduring skepticism must have made him wonder if the hoped-for outcomes were possible. He was too good at seeing all sides of an issue not to see the strengths of the opposition he faced. Indeed, rhetorician Thomas O. Sloane believes that Erasmus's most characteristic intellectual method is expressed not in the *Ecclesiastes* but in *The Praise of Folly*.⁴ Sloane argues that Erasmus, through the persona of Folly, identifies himself with the Greek Sophists and their method of exploring arguments through contraries, or *dissoi logoi*. Sloane maintains that Erasmus saw all intellectual methods as leading ultimately to insight into the fallibility of human knowledge, not to a self-evident world system. If every issue has at least two sides, then one must argue for the most probable. Failing that, one must surrender to folly—that is, give up the idea that reason will provide a definitive answer, and decide on the basis of historically determined constraints and personal circumstances. For most people most of the time, the fallibility of human knowledge requires accepting social conventions, including common beliefs, as the delusions necessary to collective life. For some people at exceptional moments, awareness of this fallibility leads to the rejection of conventional wisdom in favor of a quest for spiritual transcendence that will seem mad to the common folk but that is the only possible antidote to the limits of human knowledge.

³Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine, *From Humanism to the Humanities* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986), pp. 137–45.

⁴Thomas O. Sloane, *Donne, Milton, and the End of Humanistic Rhetoric* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), pp. 72–84.

SUMMARY OF *ECCLESIASTES*⁵

Book I

Book I focuses on the character of the preacher. Drawing parallels between political and religious oratory, Erasmus begins by pointing out that both secular and sacred assemblies persuade the people, the former to obey the laws of earthly princes and the latter to obey those of the Divine Ruler. Both work together to keep the state peaceful and to conduce people to Christian devotion. But why, then, are only the carefully selected and trained allowed to speak on secular matters, while it seems that anyone can preach? Erasmus corrects this error by conveying the importance of the preacher's office. Jesus is the most perfect preacher of God's words, but his pious and well-trained followers can also be God's messengers. Thus Scripture bestows many honorific names on prophets and preachers.

Humans are most like God in their minds and speech. One must have God in the mind and heart for true piety to flow forth in speech. A pure heart is the preacher's first requirement, and it comes from God alone; it must be sought in prayer. The preacher must also live virtuously, avoiding vice or even the appearance of vice. In addition to being virtuous, the preacher must be thoughtful, able to adapt his message to the condition and circumstances of his audience. He must know when to bend the rules of rhetoric to suit particular cases. The ability to be thoughtful, too, comes from God, though it is aided by rhetorical precepts that can be quickly learned. Moral discipline and humility are more important than fasting and other ascetic practices for putting the preacher in the right frame of mind. Jesus himself did not practice the austerities of John the Baptist, nor require them of his disciples. The biblical prophets acknowledge that all these gifts of preparation and of good effect on the hearers come from God. Of all traits of the preacher, the most important for persuasion is to love what you are preaching.

Erasmus now discusses the depiction of the high priest Aaron in the Old Testament, his consecration, purity of life, vestments, and so on, and the allegorical meaning of all these details for the Christian preacher. Yet Aaron taught only how to live rightly and avoid punishments in this world; the Christian preacher speaks of the eternal world to come.

Nevertheless, though the preacher's most important gifts must come from God, many examples show that God wants us to improve these gifts with training. Therefore, the future preacher should be educated for his office from early youth. He will be, as it were, an ambassador of the Divine King, and he must behave suitably. One should not seek for candidates just anywhere, and their office requires at least as much expertise as a secular calling such as medicine. The quality of the recruits is more important than their quantity. Erasmus instructs bishops on how to perform the selection task properly, with examples. Current challenges to the faith require that the Church send competent workers into the field.

The challenges should not daunt us. If secular princes can command courage

⁵Because our excerpts from *Ecclesiastes* are drawn from a number of places in Book II, we will not interrupt this summary by noting, as we usually do, where in the summary excerpted passages begin and end. [Ed.]

from their followers, how much more should God be able to do so. God's prizes for bravery are much more valuable than any that princes can bestow. Christians show courage in going on pilgrimages and in submitting to monastic asceticisms; how much more important is it to spread the word of God to the benighted. The preacher's office is ultimately more powerful and important than the king's because of the rewards and punishments of which the preacher speaks.

The preacher must correctly read the Christian allegories of the Old Testament, as Jews foolishly refuse to do. Saint Paul excelled in this. Because our preachers offer eternal life, they are superior to the Jewish prophets, who spoke only of the good of this world. As Christ's divine nature is greater than his humble earthly embodiment, so the spiritual meaning of the Bible is much greater than the literal meaning.

Bishops administer the sacraments, pray for the people, judge, ordain, and teach—all offices greater than any king's. Of these, teaching is supreme because it brings people to the Lord. How terrible, therefore, is the priest who lowers himself to base pleasures. Touched by God, he should have too much self-respect to do so. Erasmus now cites more biblical texts on the dignity and power of the preacher's office. Great preaching is still needed, for not all have accepted Christ—the Jews, wicked people, and others deny him.

How can the preacher gain authority with his people? By love. He must be truly virtuous. He must make good use of whatever he has in common with his congregation, such as homeland or kinship. He should try, so far as possible, to give himself a pleasing appearance and to avoid contemptible vices. He must keep himself free from obligations to any person, for example, by accepting a costly gift. He should not participate in ridiculous local customs or sanction local superstitions, although he may have to allow them to prevent worse from taking their place. He may accept money but should use only a very modest portion to live on, dispensing the rest to the needy. Nothing wins love more effectively than kindness and charity—thus even savage beasts are tamed. If a preacher has any annoyingly excessive personality trait, or any weakness due to age, national origin, and so on, he must try to correct it.

Although the preacher may be discouraged by his audience's inattention, he should not be—however, the audience should be ashamed. Erasmus compares the preacher's vicissitudes to those of an actor, sometimes applauded for trifles and sometimes hissed off the stage. Erasmus exhorts audiences to listen carefully and not to condemn the preacher for trivial reasons.

Book II

Erasmus says that those well endowed by God, as described in Book I, need little instruction in how to preach. Besides, if the preacher is suspected of using art, he hurts his credibility. Furthermore, too great a devotion to study can keep the preacher from doing his proper work. It is best to learn what is needed in early youth. God expects us to improve His gifts with training.

First, the future preacher must learn grammar—not through mere drills, but

through extensive reading of the best classical authors. One must know the correct names of every thing, person, and place, which is not easy when often the names have changed since antiquity. One must know details in order to interpret scriptural allegories—for example, that the palm tree stays always green. One must also be able to compose good sentences. The study of grammar encompasses reading in history, poetry, cosmography, and more. Deep knowledge is not necessary, only enough to understand Scripture and to be ready with illustrations for one's sermons.

The good speaker must be aided by four things in particular: nature, art, imitation of good examples, and practice. Only minor impediments of nature can be overcome by the other three.

The future preacher must know Hebrew, Greek, and Latin so he can understand the holy writings, but he must also be fluent in the vernacular of his congregation, for this is the language in which he will preach. His teacher should take the young man to hear preachers of the day and should critique their performances with him. The teacher should also make sure that the young man reads examples of the best classical and patristic oratory; Erasmus names names.

Saint Augustine has encouraged us also to acquaint the preacher with the precepts of the rhetoricians, who classify three types of speeches. Although forensic oratory is far removed from the preacher's duties, its status theory will help him perceive the main points in any argument. The preacher is mainly concerned with teaching, which must not only inform about God's word but also persuade the hearers to embrace it and change their way of living. (This is deliberative oratory.) Finally, there is the encomiastic (epideictic) type of speech, which is useful for praising and thanking God.

When teaching, the preacher must delight his audience. There are many ways to do this, as Erasmus enumerates, but the preacher should be sure not to use foolish or scurrilous methods.

The parts of the orator's task are invention, arrangement, expression, memory, and performance. The preacher should also consider the parts of a speech: exordium, narration, division, confirmation, refutation, and conclusion. Of course, the Scriptures command attention in and of themselves, but the preacher can also make the sermon stronger by using rhetorical precepts correctly. They should not be applied rigidly. Erasmus gives many examples of both inept and skillful exordia. He now turns to the narration, about which he claims to have nothing to add (perhaps because he has covered the use of stories under exordia). He next discusses division. This part directs the hearer's attention to what follows, and hence implicitly promises that the topics it lists will indeed follow. Erasmus outlines the advantages and disadvantages of forecasting the parts of a sermon. To divide correctly requires knowing what the main points are, but the speaker should not list too many of them. The next parts of a speech to examine, Erasmus says, are confirmation and refutation. These must be accurately divided (hence their connection with what he's just discussed), and they comprise the speech's argument, which is why Erasmus says his next topic should be argument. But discussing argument would require a review of status theory, which he does not want to do at this point; instead, he will take up the "suasorial" (deliberative) and encomiastic types of speech first.

In suasorial speech, the speaker must be very clear about how to present his point to his particular audience, given his own ethos. We deliberate only over doubtful issues. The parts of a suasorial speech are based on its definitions of the honorable and the useful, which will vary with circumstances. Erasmus gives some other deliberative topics but concludes with the warning that not all will be useful in every speech. The preacher must be selective.

Erasmus now turns to the encomiastic type of speech, used mainly to praise God and the saints. He gives many hints on how they may be praised, what qualities to highlight, and so on. He warns against inflating praise with incredible miracles.

Erasmus now discusses “exhortation,” a type of suasorial speech that attempts to affect behavior but that makes special use of praise and blame, like an encomiastic speech, to arouse the audience’s emotions. The exhorter can urge people to emulate virtuous examples, holding out hope of glorious success and invoking the shame of not trying. He should offer rewards, both in this world and the next, and should be careful not to be so vehement as to give offense.

Next Erasmus speaks of the “consolatory” speech, in which the preacher either attempts to mitigate immoderate grief or shows that grief is appropriate and can lead to spiritual growth. The approach taken depends on the circumstances. Erasmus suggests topics for supporting both approaches.

Erasmus now discusses sermons in which one must rebuke sin. He gives the following cautions: Be gentle; do not describe the sin in such detail that you instruct the innocent in how to commit it; be sure to show how error may be corrected and damage repaired; and do not turn your rebuke into veiled flattery of the wealthy and powerful, whose sins come from their high position. The one who rebukes must lead as blameless a life as possible, while remaining aware that he is not and cannot be perfect.

Erasmus now returns to the issue of status that he promised to discuss earlier. Though employed primarily in court cases to determine the nature of the deed in question, status theory is also useful to the preacher to help him identify the main points of his argument and avoid digressions. Erasmus also gives examples of how status analysis can help clarify a scriptural interpretation or moral question.

Erasmus next moves to a discussion of propositions, the main points of the argument. He considers the extent to which a preacher should take his points from his adversaries. He urges that the main points be identified through a consideration of the whole case. One must then put these points in order, ideally in such a way that one point provides a step to the next. It is important to cover the whole case and answer any adversaries, including those silent listeners who may be harboring objections in their minds, and to present supporting arguments in an effective order. One may imagine hypothetical cases. On rare occasions, one may be able to argue from a person’s individual circumstances.

Propositions, of course, must be proved. To convince, the speaker must know what he is talking about, and he must be known as virtuous and full of good will toward his hearers. Proofs strengthen one’s position and weaken that of one’s adversaries. A preacher may use “nontechnical” proofs, such as documents or testimonies, or “technical” ones. Erasmus elaborates on the uses of nontechnical proofs

in sacred oratory, devoting the lengthiest section to advice on how to maintain the dignity of the authorities you cited.

Before turning to technical proofs, Erasmus offers some cautions: Don't argue for propositions the audience already completely believes. Don't think that mere assertion or denial constitutes an argument. It may be useful to introduce an argument with a comment on its appropriateness, provenance, and so on. Native intelligence may help to devise proofs, but early training in dialectic will help, too, provided it is not given over to foolish elaborations and pointless quarrels.

Technical proofs may be derived from the persons involved or from the case itself. Erasmus lists the attributes of a person, such as his or her homeland or education, and explores each in detail for its usefulness in sacred oratory. He cites classical literature as a rich source of examples. The preacher may also use these same attributes to analyze his hearers, suggesting how they may be best approached.

Properties of the case itself include cause and effect, matter and form, purpose or end, place where the event occurred, time when it occurred, the supposed agent's ability and willingness to do the deed, what instruments were used, and how it was done. Erasmus gives examples.

Erasmus now discusses what he calls common sources of arguments, *topoi* or *loci*. Although rhetoricians do not agree on the meaning of these terms, Erasmus means general sources of arguments drawn from the properties of things, including whether a thing exists, what it is (definition), and of what sort it is. The preacher seldom has to handle questions concerning the existence of his main subject matter, such as God. Questions of definition are much more common, and Erasmus explores these at length. He discusses different methods of defining, such as by describing the beginning, middle, and end of an event, or by comparing the present case with examples drawn from everyday life, classical sources, and so on. Such arguments work best when they mount up.

Another type of technical proof argues from cause and effect. Again, Erasmus illustrates variations with many examples.

Erasmus concludes his discussion of technical and nontechnical proofs with a list of each group. Next he briefly reviews some of those he called "topoi" or "loci" with an eye to their special usefulness to the preacher, and then illustrates their use in a sample sermon on baptism. He talks about how to meet an adversary's propositions with one's own, and then discusses paradoxes, many of them witty. Erasmus cautions the preacher not to be as pedantic in his use of loci as a dialectician. Erasmus now treats the locus of induction, not previously covered. It is a way of handling a large number of examples. Erasmus illustrates with religious topics and concludes his review of the loci by giving examples of how they can be related to one another.

Rhetoricians structure an argument using three to five parts: the "proposition," that which is to be proved; the "reason," which proves it; the "confirmation," which supports the reason; the "exornation," which adds illustrative enrichment to the argument; and the "complexion," which summarizes and concludes it. All but the first two parts are optional. The first three parts may be combined in a syllogism. You can influence your audience to accept an argument if you tell them that it is rigor-

ous. Also, you must not forget to keep the audience awake with occasional figures of speech, jests, evocations of emotion, and so on. Don't omit an epilogue or conclusion, which helps your hearers remember what you have said and rouses the appropriate emotions toward your message. Above all, convey your love for what you are teaching.

Book III

Book III begins with a discussion of *arrangement*, which has four meanings. First, it refers to word order, which must be clear, musical, and vigorous. Second, it concerns the order of propositions in a speech, which, as noted before, should be stepwise. Third, it refers to the parts of individual arguments within a speech. Fourth, it refers to large sections of the whole speech, such as chronological order in a history.

Erasmus now runs through various methods of arranging a whole sermon, such as following the order of ideas suggested by the Scripture reading. He gives many examples, of arrangements both good and bad. The best order is that which presents the propositions most convincingly, with stronger arguments at the beginning and end and weaker ones in the middle.

Concerning memory, Erasmus debunks elaborate schemes that assign parts of the speech to images; it is simpler just to memorize the whole speech. It is permissible to use written notes. One should avoid that which harms memory, such as drunkenness and indiscriminate reading.

According to Erasmus, a pleasing delivery comes partly from natural endowments and partly from practice. A friend can advise you concerning any unpleasant mannerisms. Imitate good examples. Training and sobriety can improve a weak voice. You should be able to be heard without shouting and should vary your tone of voice as emotion suggests, without exaggerating like a stage actor. Use refined, but not overly refined, pronunciation. Above all, let your variety of expression suit what you are saying. Next, Erasmus gives advice on how to use pauses of various lengths. Facial expression is also important, especially the eyes. Hand gestures are the most eloquent movements, but they should not be overused. Avoid all excessive movements and facial expressions, as well as melodramatic props, such as skulls. It is important to dress modestly and neatly. Above all, Erasmus says, use those methods of delivery that emphasize your own individual strengths and minimize your faults.

Erasmus now turns to the issue of how to add power and eloquence to a speech. To do so, a preacher may employ "commonplaces," that is, "amplifications" suggested by the subject matter, such as expanding on the merits of modesty when praising a bishop for possessing this virtue. All the virtues and vices provide such commonplaces, as do the common occasions of social relations and life events. Another method of amplification involves increasing or diminishing, as one might want to magnify or reduce the seriousness of a crime under discussion. Erasmus discusses several ways to do this. There is also comparison, which brings in many similar or dissimilar examples. Erasmus notes that he has treated this technique as a method of proof, but it should also be regarded as amplification. He gives many

examples of comparison. Another method of amplification is “ratiocination,” in which one adduces reasons from what follows, precedes, or occurs simultaneously with the main topic. One may also amplify by praising or blaming someone for doing something first, alone, and so on. Erasmus gives examples. Metaphor and related figures of speech amplify, since they add emphasis and richness. A related method heaps up synonyms or synonymous phrases. Most effective is to use maximizing and minimizing methods of amplification together.

Since amplification is related to arousing emotion, Erasmus now turns to this issue. Although Aristotle says you should not corrupt a judge by arousing his emotions, you need to use emotional appeals when dealing with the ignorant masses. The two main classes of emotion are gentle, everyday feelings such as love between parents and children, and more violent, powerful, painful and unusual emotions such as the tragic love of Phaedra for Hippolytus. One arouses emotions of either kind by appealing to either the facts of the case or the people involved. Erasmus shows with several examples that the material treated by Christian preachers is more appropriate to arousing the emotions than is the material of pagan orators. The simple truths of the Christian story will arouse emotion; but the preacher may also try to arouse pity and mercy for the innocent who are afflicted and anger against vices and their instigator, Satan. Above all, the preacher should arouse love of God. He who feels the emotions he seeks to arouse will be most successful. He should paint powerful word images and tell affecting stories to arouse emotion. (Examples follow.) The preacher should not try to keep the congregation at the height of emotion all the time but should build up gradually to the most powerful moments and then bring the people down gently from them. Erasmus demonstrates how to do this incorrectly, such as by using ridiculous, melodramatic props.

Erasmus now turns to the figures of speech. Figures add clarity, believability, pleasure, force, and splendor to oratory. Since rhetoricians disagree about the names of figures, Erasmus uses those from the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. He begins with figures that add forcefulness to a speech. For several dozen figures, Erasmus gives their names, explains how they work, and provides examples either from his classical and patristic reading or from his own imagination. One group of figures involves inventing characters who will speak in the sermon, perhaps in dialogue with the speaker. Erasmus cautions against using these devices except at the height of emotion. The speaker is like a painter when he brings such characters and their settings before the audience’s eyes. Next Erasmus considers figures that add pleasure, clarity, and impressiveness. Again, he names them, explains how they work, and gives examples. Some, he notes, have already been treated in his *On Copia* (excerpted here). Common sayings about everyday life, which the Greek call “gnome,” also greatly enhance a speech if not used excessively or indecorously. They are most effective used in pairs. Erasmus gives many examples, from traditional folk wisdom and classical and patristic sources.

Examples also ornament a speech. They may be drawn from Scripture, pagan sources, animal life, and elsewhere. Amplification and diminution of the significant traits in the examples should be used to increase their effectiveness. Fictitious or indecent examples should not be used in sermons.

Erasmus now turns to the most powerful verbal device of all, metaphor, which transfers a word from its normal meaning to another, as when we speak of a man “blazing” with anger. If all the language in a text is metaphorical, it is an allegory. A “similitude” relates two words as does a metaphor, but spells out the transfer of meaning explicitly. Giving many examples, Erasmus says that further directions on forming similitudes can be found in his *On Copia* and in Quintilian.

The preacher must have all these verbal devices ready to hand and must use his judgment in deciding how to deploy them in a particular sermon. Erasmus provides a sample sermon on the story of the paralytic brought to Jesus, from the Book of Matthew, in which he employs many figures and comments on their use.

Erasmus notes that Scripture is full of figures, and he gives many examples. The preacher must know how to interpret these correctly, using context, comparable passages, ancient sources, and the guidance of prayerful faith. At the same time, he must be careful not to read as a figure something that has an unproblematic plain sense. Also, certain scriptural words that seem to have a plain sense—such as *world* or *holy*—must be interpreted in their orthodox meaning, as the Church teaches. Erasmus explores several of these, pointing out errors in their use. The preacher should equip himself with Greek, Latin, and Hebrew so he can consult both original Bible texts and patristic sources. Erasmus cites some problematic scriptural passages and shows how philological knowledge helps to resolve them.

The preacher must take equal care when explaining allegories, whether biblical or patristic. Erasmus looks at many examples of interpretations, both astute and twisted. This leads into a discussion of allegory in general. Erasmus mentions that Augustine’s *On Christian Doctrine* contains useful advice on this topic. He reminds his readers that an allegory is really a collection of metaphors, and he discusses several types of extended metaphor, both praiseworthy and faulty. He notes the traditional fourfold method of interpreting Scripture: the literal, which reads for the plain sense; the “tropological,” which looks for moral lessons for individuals; the allegorical, which refers to the life of the Church in this world; and the “anagogical,” which refers to the triumph of the Church at the end of time and the mystical qualities of the triune God. Erasmus gives a lengthy example illustrating all four types and pointing out pitfalls.

While reading metaphors into literal meanings where they are not needed is wrong, so too is it an error to read metaphorical passages literally: This gives rise to many superstitions, such as those found among the Jews. Erasmus gives examples of both kinds of error. One should allegorize only when the literal meaning suggests something obviously false or absurd. Some scriptural allegories resist interpretation, but they are useful for stimulating the intellect. In *On Christian Doctrine*, Augustine offers a convincing explanation of why God would allow some passages of Holy Writ to be obscure: The veils protect sacred truth from the wicked, while yielding meaning to the pious. Also, the allegories delight us and lead us to study harder. Finally, the process of analysis gradually reveals divine truth so that we can absorb it, which we could not do if it were revealed all at once.

The preacher must be discriminating in his use of allegories, choosing the least far-fetched. Tropological analysis is often the best for sermons. Even if the allegory

is obscure, the preacher's words should be clear. Erasmus notes some sources of ambiguity that should be avoided. Once again, he calls frequently on the advice of Augustine. Because Augustine admired them, Erasmus cites the rules for interpreting allegory of an otherwise heterodox writer, Ticonius. Erasmus also discusses Augustine's rules for reconciling apparent contradictions between the Old and New Testaments. Rather than multiply rules, however, the preacher should rely primarily on his love of God and prayerful guidance to interpret allegories.

Erasmus says he cannot conclude Book III without keeping his promise in Book I to discuss judgment and counsel, those tools the preacher uses to apply general advice to particular cases. In fact, Erasmus claims to have been discussing judgment all along, as when he gave advice on how to judiciously select and interpret allegories. Erasmus proceeds, nonetheless, to give classical and biblical examples of orators who fitted their remarks to their audiences especially well. This sagacity is still needed even in a largely Christian world, because the preacher may still have to establish his personal authority tactfully or to criticize or praise others with decorum. The preacher must also carefully judge his audience's intelligence so he does not allow members to think that the saving grace of Christ abrogates their responsibility to do good works.

Book IV

Book IV, less than half the length of the other three, provides an index of topics for the preacher. Erasmus begins with an anatomy of God's domain: The heavenly world consists of angels and blessed souls; the ecclesiastical world is made up of Christians still living on earth, both the faithful and the erring; and the political world is that of civic society, its laws, and so on. God rules all, and each person has a soul that draws him or her to obey divine laws in spite of the flesh.

God's immensity can scarcely be represented in human language. His immutable powers are well described in the Old Testament, and preachers should refer to these powers frequently. No one should fail to understand that seemingly natural events, such as earthquakes, are God's doing. The Bible anthropomorphizes God only to assist our childish understanding. God is one, though in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Father is invisible, the Son appeared in a human body, and the Spirit has appeared as a dove or tongues of flame. The Son has three natures: his divinity, his human soul, and his human body. God redeemed the Church through the Son and governs it through the Holy Spirit. God presides over all three worlds. In the heavenly world, his angels are his ministers; in the ecclesiastical world, his bishops and preachers fill this role, as do good magistrates in the political world. In all creation God's preeminence is expressed by the very appearance of every thing. His spirit, too, rules in the hearts of the pious.

Satan as tyrant is opposed to God as monarch. God uses Satan to test the faithful and punish the wicked. Satan corrupts God's good creation as best he can, with the help of demons. Law creates a stable, happy community, none more so than divine law. Satan's laws bring only death. Erasmus discusses the immutability of God's

laws, their various applications, and the contrast between Old Testament and New Testament laws, both of which have their worthy purposes. Moral laws do not change, but those prescribing ceremonies do. Penalties may change. Next Erasmus catalogues the kinds of sin and death. He then treats true faith: what it is, how it is nurtured, and how it relates to hope and charity. Erasmus enumerates virtues and vices, with hints as to how to develop each in preaching. He calls these “loci” (rhetorical commonplaces).

At this point Erasmus presents an outline of the topics addressed in all of the preceding material. He follows this with “Sylva,” that is, suggestions for elaborating on each topic: reasons, confirmations, witnesses, types and figures, examples, and more. He does not get very far into these elaborations, however, before he breaks off, admitting that the work will have to remain incomplete.

Erasmus then adds a few remarks comparing matrimony with celibacy that is dedicated to God—both worthy conditions. He looks at several Old Testament figures—Enoch, Noah, Abraham—with hints on how to interpret them; this is intended to serve as a model for additional work that the reader can do for himself. Erasmus concludes by discussing the concept of concord, earthly and divine, of which his final example is friendship.

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From *Copia*: Foundations of the Abundant Style

BOOK I. ABUNDANCE OF EXPRESSION

I. *Copia*: Dangers Inherent in Its Pursuit

The speech of man is a magnificent and impressive thing when it surges along like a golden river, with thoughts and words pouring out in rich abundance. Yet the pursuit of speech like this involves considerable risk. As the proverb says, “Not every man has the means to visit the city of Corinth.”¹ We find that a good many mortal men who make great efforts to achieve this godlike power of speech fall instead into mere glibness, which is both silly and offensive. They pile up a meaningless heap of words and expressions without any discrimination, and thus obscure the subject they are talking about, as well as belaboring the ears of their unfortunate audience. In fact, quite a few persons of no real education or understanding have, heaven help us, undertaken to give instruction in this very subject, and these, while professing a mastery of *copia*, have merely revealed their own total lack of it.

Such considerations have induced me to put forward some ideas on *copia*, the abundant style, myself, treating its two aspects of content and expression, and giving some examples and patterns. Some of my material I have extracted from works dealing specifically with rhetorical theory. I have also drawn on my own now considerable experience of the art of speaking and writing, and on what I have observed in the course of wide reading over a considerable range of authors. It is not my intention to write a book dealing exhaustively with the whole subject, but rather a short

Translated by Betty I. Knott.

¹Horace *Epistles* 1.17.36, a favorite line of Erasmus', quoted again in chaps. 50, 154; see *Adagia* 1.iv.i. The proverb refers to the exorbitant price charged by the famous Corinthian courtesan Lais, who would receive no one, however distinguished, if he could not pay. [Tr.]

In the notes a simple reference indicates that Erasmus is quoting an example in the exact words of the original or with slight divergence; “cf” indicates a wider divergence from the original; “see” means that Erasmus is either using the subject-matter of the passage identified, or has invented a grammatical example with the quoted example in mind. [Tr.]

treatise in which I hope merely to open up the way for teachers and students and provide the raw material for future work. One of my reasons is that I have undertaken this task solely out of a desire to be helpful, so I shall be quite content for another to reap the glory, so long as I am ultimately responsible for some benefit reaching the students. Also I am committed to more serious studies which prevent me from expending a great deal of labor on topics which, in spite of their considerable contribution to serious subjects, themselves seem unimportant.

2. *Copia*: Its Invention and Practice

Now in case anyone should feel inclined to despise it as some newfangled discovery recently brought into the world within the four walls of my own study, I would have him know that this whole idea of being able to express one's meaning in a variety of ways is in a number of places touched on by that learned and thorough writer Quintilian,² further, that a number of famous sophists blazed a trail,³ showing how to compress and abridge what was being said, and this they could not have done without at the same time demonstrating how to expand it. If their books were extant, or if Quintilian had been prepared to set out his recommendations in full, there would not have been such need of these modest injunctions of mine.

The whole business is further recommended by the fact that men who were the intellectual leaders of their day were by no means averse from constant practice in it. We have a number of marvelous passages where Virgil tried his skill: descriptions of a mirror, a frozen river, a rainbow, a sunrise, the four seasons, the constellations.

²In *Institutio Oratoria*, where the importance of *varietas* in every aspect of speaking is mentioned in passing in many places; see fn 15. [Tr.]

³Itinerant teachers who traveled from city to city in Greece in the fifth century B.C., giving instruction (for a fee) which purported to enable students to get on in life; the systems of many of them included instruction in the art of speaking. A list is given in Quintilian 3.1.8ff. [Tr.]

There is further evidence in Apuleius' treatment of Aesop's fable about the fox and the crow: first he skims over it briefly with a wonderful economy of words, and then he sets it out expansively and in great detail, thus exercising and displaying his talents. But after all, who could possibly regret an enthusiasm for this subject after observing that Cicero, the great father of all eloquence, was so dedicated to this kind of exercise that he used to vie with his friend, the actor Roscius, to see whether Roscius could express the same material more often using different gestures, or Cicero himself applying the resources of eloquence and using different language? . . .

7. *Copia Is Twofold*

The abundant style quite obviously has two aspects. Quintilian,⁴ for example, among other virtues which he attributes to Pindar, especially admires his magnificently rich style, manifested both in subject matter and expression. Richness of expression involves synonyms, heterosis or enallage, metaphor, variation in word form, equivalence, and other similar methods of diversifying diction. Richness of subject matter involves the assembling, explaining, and amplifying of arguments by the use of examples, comparisons, similarities, dissimilarities, opposites, and other like procedures which I shall treat in detail in the appropriate place.⁵ It might be thought that these two aspects are so interconnected in reality that one cannot easily separate one from the other, and that they interact so closely that any distinction between them belongs to theory rather than practice. Even so, I intend to separate them as a teaching procedure, doing it in such a way that I lay myself open to the charge neither of drawing hair-splitting distinctions, nor of being careless about details.

8. *Advantages of Studying This Subject*

To encourage students to embark on this study with more enthusiasm I shall briefly set out the advantages it confers. First of all, exercise in ex-

⁴See 10.1.61. [Tr.]

⁵Erasmus deals with the first group in book 1 chapters 11-32, the second group in book 11. [Tr.]

pressing oneself in different ways will be of considerable importance in general for the acquisition of style. In particular however it will help in avoiding ταυτολογία, that is, the repetition of a word or phrase, an ugly and offensive fault.⁶ It often happens that we have to say the same thing several times. If in these circumstances we find ourselves destitute of verbal riches and hesitate, or keep singing out the same old phrase like a cuckoo, and are unable to clothe our thought in other colors or other forms, we shall look ridiculous when we show ourselves to be so tongue-tied, and we shall also bore our wretched audience to death. Worse than ταυτολογία is ὁμοιολογία [identical repetition], which, as Quintilian says, has no variety to relieve the tedium and is all of one monotonous color. Who has got ears patient enough to put up even for a short time with a speech totally monotonous? Variety is so powerful in every sphere that there is absolutely nothing, however brilliant, which is not dimmed if not commended by variety. Nature above all delights in variety; in all this huge concourse of things, she has left nothing anywhere unpainted by her wonderful technique of variety. Just as the eyes fasten themselves on some new spectacle, so the mind is always looking round for some fresh object of interest. If it is offered a monotonous succession of similarities, it very soon wearies and turns its attention elsewhere, and so everything gained by the speech is lost all at once. This disaster can easily be avoided by someone who has it at his fingertips to turn one idea into more shapes than Proteus himself is supposed to have turned into.⁷ Also this form of exercise will make no insignificant contribution to the ability to speak or write extempore, and will prevent us from standing there stammering and dumbfounded, or from disgracing ourselves by drying up in the middle. Nor will it be difficult to divert a speech, even when we have embarked upon it rather hastily, into the course we desire when we have so many expressions lined up ready for action. We shall also find it of great assistance in commenting on authors, translating books from foreign languages, and writing verse.

⁶For this section see Quintilian 8.3.50-2. [Tr.]

⁷A favorite figure of Erasmus. [Tr.]

Otherwise, if we are not instructed in these techniques, we shall often be found unintelligible, harsh, or even totally unable to express ourselves.

9. Exercises to Develop the Powers of Expression

It remains for me now to give some brief advice on the exercises by which this faculty may be developed. Once we have carefully committed the theory to memory, we should frequently take a group of sentences and deliberately set out to express each of them in as many versions as possible, as Quintilian advises,⁸ using the analogy of a piece of wax which can be molded into one shape after another. This exercise will be more profitable if a group of students competes together orally or in writing on a common theme; they will all be helped individually by the suggestions made by other members of the group, and each of them will have his imagination stimulated by being given a starting point. Second, we shall treat a connected line of thought in a number of ways. Here it will be best to copy the expertise of the famous Milo of Croton and develop our powers gradually,⁹ first of all rendering it twice, then three times, and eventually treating it over and over again, so as to attain such facility in the end that we can vary it in two or three hundred ways with no trouble at all. In addition we shall add greatly to our linguistic resources if we translate authors from the Greek, as that language is particularly rich in subject matter and vocabulary. It will also prove quite useful on occasion to compete with these Greek authors by paraphrasing what they have written. It will be of enormous value to take apart the fabric of poetry and reweave it in prose, and vice versa, to bind the freer language of prose under the rules of meter, and also to pour the same subject matter from one form of poetic container into another. It will also be very helpful to emulate a passage from some author where the spring of eloquence seems to bubble up particularly richly, and en-

deavor in our own strength to equal or even surpass it. We shall find it particularly useful to “thumb the great authors by night and day,” especially those who were outstanding in the rich style, such as Cicero, Aulus Gellius, and Apuleius. We must keep our eyes open to observe every figure of speech that they use, store it in our memory once observed, imitate it once remembered, and by constant employment develop an expertise by which we may call upon it instantly. . . .

II. Variety of Expression (I): Use of Synonyms

The first and simplest form of variation¹⁰ depends on using different words which indicate the same thing, so that as far as meaning goes it does not matter which you prefer to employ. The grammarians call these *synonyms*. Opposite to these are words called *homonyms*. These two types have also been called *equivocal* and *univocal*, although according to the logicians these terms are more applicable to the things signified than to the signifying words.¹¹ It will be more accurate to call different words signifying the same thing *ισοδυναμούσαι* [isodynamic] and their opposites *πολυσήμοι* [polysemantic]. Examples of the first sort are *ensis, gladius* “sword”; *domus, aedes* “house”; *codex, liber* “book”; *forma, decor, pulchritudo* “beauty.”

One should collect a vast supply of words like this from all sides out of good authors, provide oneself with a varied equipment, and, as Quintilian remarks, heap up riches so that we find we have a wealth of words to hand whenever we require it. It will not be sufficient to prepare a copious apparatus or an abundant store of such words unless you have them not only at the ready but in full view, so that they present themselves to the eyes even if you are not looking for them. But here we must take special care not to do what some do and use the first thing that presents itself out of the heap in any context without exercising any choice at all. For in the first place you will

¹⁰For the first section see Quintilian 10.1.5–15. [Tr.]

¹¹See Aristotle *Categories* 1; the terms *aequivoca* and *univoca* were used to represent *δμώνυμα* and *συνώνυμα* by Boethius in his Latin translation of this work. [Tr.]

⁸For this whole section see Quintilian 10.5. [Tr.]

⁹The famous athlete who lifted a calf every day until it had grown into a bull; see Quintilian 1.9.5. [Tr.]

hardly find two words anywhere so isodynamic that they are not kept apart by some distinction. What could be more identical in meaning than *men* and *mortals*? Yet the man who on every occasion said *all mortals* for *all men* was stigmatized in the words of the Greek proverb,¹² τὸ ἐν φαχῆ μύρον (sweet oils on lentils). Sometimes *litterae* and *epistola* signify the same thing [that is, letter], sometimes something different.

Even if we allow that there is absolutely no distinction in meaning, yet some words are more respectable than others, or more exalted, or more polished or delightful or powerful or sonorous, or more conducive to harmonious arrangement.¹³ Accordingly the man who is about to speak should exercise choice and take what is best. Judgment is necessary when bringing out of stock, whereas industry is necessary when storing away. You will learn to exercise judgment by carefully observing elegant and appropriate diction, while the assiduous reading of every type of author will allow you to fill your store.

There are many things for which the poets use one set of words, orators another. There are also words peculiar to different ages and centuries, and even the same authors often express the same thing by different means. So the first thing is to extract the best words one can from every type of writer, and, whatever they are like, add them to the collection. No word is to be rejected, provided it occurs in an author who is at all respectable, for there is no word which would not be the best one in some place or other. So however vulgar, unusual, poetic, archaic, novel, obsolete, harsh, barbarous, or foreign it may be, lay it up in its proper niche with its fellows, so that you may summon it if ever a use for it arises. If we are afraid that the antiquity or novelty of our word may offend the ears of our audience, the best thing will be to take Quintilian's advice¹⁴ and remember to forestall criticism by comment-

¹²English equivalent, "jewel of gold in a swine's snout"; *Adagia* 1 vii 23. See Aulus Gellius 13.29.5–6 where Fronto warns against overuse of *mortales*, quoting the proverb from Varro's *Satires*; Erasmus is quite fond of *mortales* himself (see chaps. 1, 10, 47), no doubt following the example of Salust, with whose writings he is thoroughly familiar. [Tr.]

¹³See Quintilian 8.3.16. [Tr.]

¹⁴8.3.37. [Tr.]

ing on the word ourselves. Here are some sample ways of doing this: Cato, a glutton for books, if it is right to use such a word of such a noble subject; the master's self, to use a phrase of Plautus'; for why should I not use words employed by Ennius? for I am glad to use a word of Horace's; for that is how your favorite moderns speak; you will recognize a barrack-room word; as the poets say; as they used to say long ago; to speak after the ancient fashion; if I may so express myself; if you allow me to use an everyday turn of phrase; I will say it in Greek, to express my meaning better.

We must do the same with χαχέμματα [cacemphatic words],¹⁵ that is, those that lend themselves to an obscene interpretation.

Vulgar Words

Vulgar words are those which will strike the hearer as rather too common for the dignity of the context, like calling one's familiar friend one's "old hearty," or an avid reader "a glutton for literature." I am surprised that Seneca found the words *acetum*, *spongia*, *pulegium* [vinegar, sponge, flea-bane] vulgar. I think one could more properly call vulgar the word he himself used in one of his letters: *pilicrepi*, *botularii*, *crustularii* [ballplayers, sausage makers, pastry cooks]. Words derived from low trades and occupations, like bath attendant, cook, tanner, and eating-house keeper, are usually vulgar, but we must of necessity use these words if we have to discuss such subjects. Surgeons and doctors often have to use words that are appropriate rather than fine. Pliny jokingly refers to words that originated in the army, and thieves' kitchens have provided us with the word *tuburcinari* "to guzzle."¹⁶ Some words are vulgar of themselves, others only in the wrong context, applied to the wrong persons and circumstances. For example, *dung* and the verb *to dung* are not vulgar if you are talking about farming to farmers, but they are if you are making a speech on affairs of state in the presence of the ruler.

¹⁵Quintilian 8.3.47. [Tr.]

¹⁶Probably gleaned from Nonius Marcellus 179, a lexicographer of the fourth century A.D., who quotes many excerpts from early poets illustrating interesting word usages, and whom Erasmus appears to be using extensively in this chapter. [Tr.]

Unusual Words

At one time common usage had a great deal of authority. Horace says as much in the lines: "Many words that now are dead will come to life again / Words honored now ill die the death, shall usage so proclaim." But nowadays we acquire our way of speaking not from the community at large but from the writings of learned men, so usage does not have the same prescriptive power. Even so, words can be considered unusual when they do not occur with any frequency in those authors which provide the bulk of scholars' reading. Today we have to take care not to speak in an artificial manner, and to keep a good distance between ourselves and the aspirations of those who think to speak strangely is to speak well—a mannerism which Cicero remarked on in Lucius Sisenna, who was in many respects a learned man. These same people also think themselves clever if one has to be clever to understand them, as Diomedes wittily remarked,¹⁷ and prefer to write something that will result in amazement rather than comprehension.¹⁸

An expression can be unusual in several ways, as will be made clear by what follows; to give some examples, the form of expression will be unusual if anyone says *passos senes* "prune-faced old men" for *rugosi* "wrinkled"; uses the [archaic] forms *interduatim* "somewhat" and *interatim* "in the mean" instead of *interdum* "sometimes" and *interim* "meanwhile";¹⁹ employs *titivillitium* "jot and tittle" for something of no account;²⁰ and the [less usual] form *vagor* for *vagitus* "wailing."

Poetic Words

There are also words in the poets which should be used only sparingly, especially when writing prose. In Horace for example we have *eliminare* "turn out of doors" used to mean "carry a confi-

¹⁷Not Diomedes but Quintilian 8 preface 25. [Tr.]

¹⁸Suetonius *Augustus* 86.2, where Augustus criticizes Mark Antony's style in these terms. [Tr.]

¹⁹Festus 234 (*Gloss. Lat. iv* Lindsay); Festus was a grammarian of the second century A.D. whose lexicon was printed at Milan in 1500. [Tr.]

²⁰*Adagia* iv viii 3; in medieval fancy a goblin Titivillus gathered up in a sack the unconsidered trifles of careless speech let fall by monks. [Tr.]

dence to the outside world" (though Cicero does use it in the sense "eject");²¹ *iuvenari* "act the irresponsible youth," a word modeled on the Greek verb *νεανίξειν* or *νεανεύειν* [with the same meaning]; *furiare* "furiate"; *clarare* "luminare"; *aeternare* "deathlessly memoriate"; *inimicare* "hostilize"; *pauperare* "pauperize"; or a form like *cinctutis* "girthed," instead of *cinctis* "girt"; or [the passive form] *invideor* "I am felt a grudge" instead of *mihi invidetur* "a grudge is felt against me"; or in Virgil *agmen* [usually "line" or "group in motion"] for "movement" or "course" in *leni fluit agmine Thybris* "The Tiber swells with gentle course"; or *indomitum furit* "he rages a boundless rage" instead of using [the adverb] *indomite* "boundlessly"; also *acerba tuens* "glaring savagely" instead of "glaring savagely"; or *sperare* "hope" in the sense of "fear" or "expect, foresee": "Could I this mighty grief foresee [*sperare*] / Then, sister dear, can I endure it." Likewise in Terence: "Now as for your expectation [*speras*] of keeping at bay . . ." Yet Cicero was quite prepared to use this turn of phrase in his letters to friends: "I had no expectation [*non sperabam*] that your feelings towards myself and my family would be so changeable."

The Greeks had a wonderful knack for forming compounds, and the Latin poets sometimes achieved a like felicity when imitating them, but the Latin orators never seemed to be quite so successful at it. Examples of such compounds are *vulnificus* "wound-inflicting," *tristificus* "grief-causing," *tabificus* "corruption-bearing," *fatidicus* "fate-uttering," *laurigeri* "laurel-crowned," *caprigenum pecus* "goat-natured flock," *velivolium mare* "sail-studded sea," *vitisator* "vine-planter," and many more of the same sort. Cato was bold enough to try *vilitigator* "fault-picker," another person *officiperda* "favor-waster."²²

The vocabulary of the historical writers is nearly as bold as that of the poets.

²¹There seems to be no record of Cicero's using this word. Possibly Erasmus has confused it with *exterminare* or *expectorare* which have a related meaning. Nonius Marcellus quotes all three (39, 27, 16), giving quotations from Cicero for *exterminare* and *expectorare*. [Tr.]

²²*Disticha Catonis* ed M. Boas (Amsterdam 1952) 4.42; this collection of gnomic sayings in verse was much read in the Middle Ages, and supposed to have been composed by

Archaic Words

Archaic words add charm if they are incorporated in small quantities and in appropriate places like inlaid decorations: for example, *expectorare* "disbosom," meaning to bring out thoughts and feelings with words;²³ *actutum* "straightway" for *quamprimum* "at once"; *antigerio*,²⁴ *oppido*, both meaning "verily," in place of *valde* "very"; *creperum bellum* "the twilight of war," for *dubium bellum* "doubtful or undecided war"; *hostire*, *hostimentum* "requite, requital" for *pensare*, *pensatio* "compensate, compensation"; *vitulantes* "joyful" for *gaudentes* "glad"; *iumentum* "carriage" for *vehiculum* "vehicle"; the [old] words *perduellis* and *perduellio* "foeman";²⁵ *duellum*, an [old] form of *bellum* "war"; *cernere* "determine the issue" for *pugnare* "fight"; *temetum* "mead" for *vinum* "wine"; and *Aemathia* [an old name] for Thessaly.

Obsolete Words

Unusual words are those which appear only occasionally, archaic ones those culled by later generations from texts discarded because of their antiquity, such as the Twelve Tables, Ennius, Lucilius, Naevius, Pacuvius. Obsolete ones have fallen completely out of use and passed into oblivion, for example, *bovinari*, the equivalent of *tergiversari* "to shuffle, evade"; *apludam edit et flocces bibit* "he eats draff and drinks the lees of wine" (using *apluda* and *flocces* instead of *furfur* and *faeces* for chaff and dregs)—an expression that Gellius derides with good reason. The ancients used *hostis*, now meaning "enemy," for "guest" and "stranger," but anyone would look a fool who tried to use it in that sense now.

I cannot see what use could arise for obsolete words, unless by way of joke and irony—if for example one wanted to stigmatize some bungling imitator of antiquity by calling him a fellow who deserves "to eat draff and drink lees."

the Elder Cato, though actually belonging to a period several centuries later. It was edited by Erasmus and published at Louvain in 1514; see 628.20n. [Tr.]

²³Quintilian 8.3.31. [Tr.]

²⁴Rejected as excessively antique by Quintilian 1.6.40, as is *oppido* 8.3.25. [Tr.]

²⁵*Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.10.15, where this word is given as an example of affected archaism. [Tr.]

On this question of words we must take into account not only the actual date, but also the predilections and affectations of writers. There is a stage of antiquity already superseded, and one still crude, as we see it at the time of Livius Andronicus; at which period the slow process of refinement began, and continued until the period of Cicero, when Roman eloquence attained such a peak of perfection that there was no possibility of further development, but, as is usual in human affairs, a gradual decline from that brilliance followed; it was inevitable that later generations should speak worse when they tried to speak differently. Yet, although Sallust wrote at the same period as Cicero, his style is more like Cato the Censor's than like Cicero's; and Maecenas²⁶ lived at much the same time, yet he falls very far short of the pure style of his age. Likewise Valerius Maximus, who belonged to the period of the Emperor Tiberius, when the brilliance of the Ciceronian age had not yet declined, nonetheless writes more in a style peculiar to himself than in that of his contemporaries. I shall say nothing of Tacitus, Suetonius, the two Plinys, Aelius Lampridius,²⁷ and other later writers.

While one must applaud the practice of those who set themselves to imitate the felicities of that great age, all the same I cannot approve of those who shudder at anything they find in the later writers as if it were a barbarism, especially as it is possible that the very feature from which they recoil was actually used by Cicero in books which have not come down to us.²⁸

Harsh Words

Harsh expressions are those used in an uncomfortable metaphorical sense. One speaker earned censure²⁹ by saying that Rome was "castrated" by the death of Camillus, meaning that

²⁶The literary patron of Virgil and Horace; his Latin style was considered extravagant and decadent. See Seneca *Epistles* 114.4–8. [Tr.]

²⁷Historian of the fourth century A.D. [Tr.]

²⁸A reference to Erasmus' long-standing battle with those who applied strict canons of classical conformity and would have no prose author used as a model but Cicero. See Erasmus *Ciceronianus* (1528). [Tr.]

²⁹See Cicero *De Oratore* 3.164; Quintilian 8.6.15 (death of Africanus, not Camillus). [Tr.]

the strength of the city collapsed at his death. Horace³⁰ obliquely censures a certain Furius for writing “Jove has the Alps with hoary snow bespewed.” Another similar example is: “He destroyed the plains of peace, and raised the mountains of war.”³¹ The metaphor would have been less violent if the writer had used the image of a calm sea and a stormy one.

Foreign Words

Foreign words also have a charm of their own when introduced in the appropriate place, like using *gazae*, a word meaning “treasures” taken from the Persians, since the Persians are famous for their opulence and for the luxury that accompanies it. *Acinaces* “scimitar” for *gladium* “sword” is borrowed from the Medes, and *essedum* “wagon” for *raeda* “carriage” from the British. *Ungulum* is Oscan for *anulus* “ring,” *cascus* for *vetulus* “old” Sabine. *Uri* “wild oxen” is Gallic, as also *merga* “marle,” the marrow or fat of the land, which is dug out to manure the fields, also *gaesa*, a sort of weapon. *Parasang*, a distance of thirty stades, is Persian. *Camurus* “with crumpled horn,” that is, turned in on itself, will also be listed among foreign words.

The early Christians adopted the words *nonnus* and *nonna* “holy man, holy woman” from Egypt, because it was in Egypt that crowds of male and female recluses were at one time earning their reputation for holiness.

If ever we are forced to use barbaric words, we must always preface their introduction with an apology, as Pliny says. There are many other words which have found their way in, together with the things they name, from barbarian nations to the Greeks, and from the Greeks to us, such as *sinapi*, *piper*, *zinziber* [mustard, pepper, ginger], etc.

Indecent Words

Indecent words should be utterly unknown to Christian speech, and no attention should be paid to the Cynics, who consider no act shameful to name that is not shameful to perform, and an act

that is not shameful to perform in private not shameful to perform in public, like making water or evacuating the bowels. On the other hand, it is not automatically shameful to talk about an act that is shameful to perform. One can name parricide and incest without less of modesty, though they would both be utterly shaming if committed. Again there are certain parts of the body which are not dishonorable in themselves, yet are kept covered because of a sense of decency peculiar to civilized man; likewise there are some actions which in themselves are neither good nor bad which nonetheless are kept private for modesty’s sake. Yet it is not automatically shameful to use the appropriate word for an act that it would be indecent to perform openly. One can talk about giving birth with decency, but it would be shameful for it to happen in public. “To piss” is not an indecent word (though “to make water” is a more decorous expression), but it is immodest to piss in public. On the other hand, “shit” is an improper word, though the action is neutral. The belly can be named with decency, but it is indecent to show it. The word “vulva” is respectable, but “cunt” is highly indecent.

How then do we recognize indecency? Only from usage, and I do not mean the usage of all and sundry, but of those whose speech is modest. The poets, in particular the satirists, have allowed themselves too much freedom in the employment of such words.

Sometimes a metaphorical expression is far more indecent than the direct word, as in “to grind others’ wives” (Horace) and “piss into an upper-class hole,” or in Catullus “he spat down his uncle” and “take the skin off men.” Some perfectly respectable words have been distorted in the direction of obscenity, like *dare* “give, allow” (a modest enough term in *dare fidem* “give one’s word”), which nonetheless appears in the *Priapeia*³² in an obscene sense: “Much simpler would good plain Latin be: Give me—you know what.” And also in Martial: “To give way you wish, but not to give away.”

Such obviously obscene words must be totally shunned, but neutral ones can be accommodated

³⁰*Satires* 2.5.41, referred to in Quintilian 8.6.17. [Tr.]

³¹See *Ad Herennium* 4.10.15, the passage that criticizes *perduellio* above 312:10. [Tr.]

³²A collection of obscene verse in honor of Priapus, a fertility god: 3.9–10 (misremembered). [Tr.]

to a decent meaning, like using *exosculari* or *dis-suaviari* [literally “to kiss passionately”] to express great pleasure at the ready wit of some person, or like calling the aspirant after learning “a wooer of Philology.”

New Words

Innovations can be taken in three ways: completely new creations, existing words diverted into a new meaning, and new words made by compounding existing forms. An example of the first is Nero’s *morari* with a long first syllable, meaning “to fool about,” from the Greek word μωρός [stupid];³³ of the second, Sallust’s³⁴ *ductare exercitum* “lead an army,” since *ductare* “lead about” as an indecent sense in Terence and other early writers, for example, *ut meam ductes gratis* “so that you can lead off my girl for nothing.” Likewise *patrare bellum*, equivalent to *gerere bellum* “wage war,” since *patrare* “achieve, perform” was earlier used of the endeavor to beget children. Of the third, *vitiligator*, “brawler,” compounded from *vitium* “the fault,” *litigandi* “of picking quarrels,” which I mentioned earlier, and *bubsequa* [from *bos* “ox” and *sequor* “follow”], equivalent to *bubulcus* “cowherd,” and Pacuvius’³⁵ *Nerei repandirostrum incurvicervicum pecus* “the snout-upturned, neck-arching flock of Nereus,” all examples which Quintilian mentions. To this class belong new words created by derivations from existing forms, like *vituperones* “vituperists,” *amorabundus* “love-bound,” *nupturire* “be wedding-mad,” *verbigerari* “word-bandy,” the sort of words particularly favored by Apuleius, Martianus Capella,³⁶ Sidonius Apollinaris,³⁷ and those who model themselves on those writers. Such words have their own charm, if they are sprinkled here and there with discretion

³³See Suetonius *Nero* 33, where Nero says of Claudius *morari eum desisse inter homines*, punning on the already existing verb *morari* with a short vowel, meaning “stay, hang about”; Erasmus explains this in detail in *De Recta Pronuntiatione* LB I 945B–C. [Tr.]

³⁴*Jugurtha* 38.1; See Quintilian 8.3.44, who comments on the change of meaning. [Tr.]

³⁵Quoted by Quintilian 1.5.67. [Tr.]

³⁶Author (fifth century A.D.) of a famous allegorical poem on the marriage of Mercury and Philology; it describes the seven liberal arts. [Tr.]

³⁷Christian Latin poet and bishop (fifth century A.D.). [Tr.]

and in the appropriate place. As Quintilian³⁸ neatly remarked, in food a touch of sharpness can at times give pleasure.

Not a little charm is added by the judicious mingling of Greek forms with the Latin. This can be when the Greek word is more expressive, like λογομαχία [battle of words] for “dispute” or “quarrel”; or shorter, like φίλαυτος [self-lover] for a man who is self-satisfied; or more forceful, like γυναιχομανής [mad on women] for a man who is over-fond of women; or more agreeable, like using μετεωρολεσχεῖν [star-gazing] for a man prating on involved but useless topics, or calling μωρόσοφος [fool-wise] a man who is a fool but thinks himself wise.

No Latin expression can approach the charm of a Greek one in which we allude to a passage or remark of some author; if, for example, in reprimanding someone for speaking without thinking, we quote Homer’s line ποῖου ἔπος . . . [“What a word escaped . . .”] or, in pointing out that someone has failed to keep to the point at issue, we say in Greek ἄμας ἀπήτουν [I was needing sickles]. If we were to say in Latin *falces petebam*, all the attractiveness disappears.

There is an allusion also in Horace’s lines: “Anointed, thrice through Tiber’s waves shalt pass, / At eve, in liquor soaked *corpus habeas*.” The speaker is Trebatius, a legal expert, and they enjoy words out of the Twelve Tables, a feature that Cicero imitates in his books on the laws.

Finally we can use Greek words when we wish our meaning not to be understood by all and sundry; and—not to go through every possibility—whenever there is a certain convenience, we are justified in mixing Greek with Latin, especially when writing for the educated public. But to produce a half-Greek, half-Latin mixture of set purpose when there is no particular justification for it may possibly be forgiven in the young who are endeavoring to acquire facility in both languages, but in grown men, in my opinion, such exhibitionism would be quite out of place, and would no more suggest seriousness of purpose than writing a book in a mixture of prose and verse—though we observe that some educated men have done even that, like

³⁸9.3.27. [Tr.]

Petronius Arbiter³⁹ whose book however has a certain air of mad irresponsibility, and Seneca in his mock-encomium of Claudius.⁴⁰ Boethius,⁴¹ more surprisingly, did so in a serious work, though in the poems he is so different from his usual self that scholars are not inclined to believe that he wrote them unaided. Boethius was copied by Jean Gerson⁴² who would be a writer of some standing if his lot had fallen in the present age.

It sometimes happens that we either have to express our meaning by a circumlocution, or borrow from the Greeks, for example, πολυπραγμοσύνη [officious meddling in many affairs], φιλαυτία [esteem for oneself], ἀφάμαρτοεπιής [talking at random], πολυφιλία [abundance of friends], δυσωπία [being put out of countenance], περισσολογία [talking too much], ταυτολογία [saying the same thing again], βαττολογία [talking gibberish],⁴³ and thousands more of the same sort, which I shall perhaps discuss on another occasion.

There are quite a number of Greek words which were given Latin citizenship in the classical period, and these may be used just like native Latin ones, for example, *rhettor/orator*; *hypotheca/pignus* “surety”; *elleborum/veratrum* “hellebore”; *feniculum/marathrum* “fennel”; *sycophanta/calumniator* “slanderer”; *praebibo* (used by Apuleius) *propino* “drink a health”; *mastigia/verbero* “scoundrel.” In some cases the borrowed word has become the standard one and there is no native Latin form, for example, *philosophus*, *theologus*, *grammatica*, *dialectica*, *epigramma*. With these words we can provide variety by declining them sometimes according to the Greek pattern, some-

³⁹Nero’s famous “Arbiter of Elegance” in the *Satyricon*, a picaresque novel detailing the adventures of three rascals; the *editio princeps* (without the section known as *Trimalchio’s Feast*) appeared in 1482. [Tr.]

⁴⁰*Apocolocyntosis* “The Pumpkinification,” first printed in 1513; included in Erasmus’ edition of Seneca (Basel 1515). [Tr.]

⁴¹*Consolatio Philosophiae*, in which verse and prose alternate. [Tr.]

⁴²1363–1429, a distinguished chancellor of the University of Paris; in his *Consolatio Theologiae* (1418) he deliberately imitates the form of Boethius’ work and the meters used. [Tr.]

⁴³From Battus, a bad poet whose verses were full of repetitions; *Adagia* II i 92. [Tr.]

times according to the Latin, for example, *scorpius/scorpio*; *elephantus/elephas*; *delphinus/delphin*; *lampas/lampada lampadae*; *grammatica grammaticae/grammaticae grammatices*. . . .

33. *Methods 1–20: Practical Demonstration*

To make it easier to understand what I have been saying, let us have a practical demonstration. We will take one or two sentences and see how far we can go in transforming the basic expression into a Protean variety of shapes — not that every method of variation can be applied to any one sentence, but we shall apply the ones that lend themselves to the example in question. Let us, for example, take this sentence: “Your letter pleased me mightily” *tuae litterae me magnopere delectarunt*.

your: There is no synonym for “your,” but a periphrasis is possible: Your excellency’s, your highness’s, your majesty’s. If we insert a proper name such as “Faustus”⁴⁴ and say “Faustus’ letter,” we employ two forms of heterosis, the substitution of a noun for a pronoun and of a third person for a second. If we say “Faustine letters,” using a derivative adjective instead of the genitive of the noun, that is yet another form of heterosis.

letter: epistle, letter, note (synonym); epistolet, letterette, notelet (heterosis, [using a diminutive form]); pages, lines (synecdoche); what you wrote to me (periphrasis).

pleased:⁴⁵ delighted, refreshed, exhilarated (synonyms, though “exhilarated” is better considered a metaphor); brought pleasure, were a pleasure, were delightful (these and similar expressions illustrate periphrasis); bathed in delight, were honey-sweet, and so on (transferred or metaphorical expressions); were not unwelcome, not unpleasing (these result from the interchange of opposites).

⁴⁴Erasmus is presumably thinking of his friend of early days in Paris, the poet Fausto Andrelini. See Ep 84 introduction. [Tr.]

⁴⁵The arrangement of LB I 23E–F, where the sections follow the Latin word order of the specimen sentence, has been adjusted to accord with the English word order. [Tr.]

me: my spirits, my heart, my eyes (periphrasis or synecdoche); us (enallage of the number); Erasmus (heterosis of the person).

mightily: greatly, intensely, extremely, wonderfully, marvelously, extraordinarily (synonym); mightily, hugely, superlatively, exceedingly, singularly (αὔξησις heightening); in no scant measure, on no small scale, in no common manner (opposites and negatives); it is impossible to say how much, it is beyond belief, I could not find words to express (these and similar expressions are on the way to hyperbole).

Other points can be conveniently illustrated only in the context of a complete sentence, so let us move on to our demonstration:

Your letter mightily pleased me; to a wonderful degree did your letter please me; me exceedingly did your letter please. (So far hardly anything has been changed but the word order.)

By your letter was I mightily pleased; I was exceedingly pleased by your letter. (Here only the voice of the verb is altered.)

Your epistle exhilarated me intensely; I was intensely exhilarated by your epistle; your brief note refreshed my spirits in no small measure; I was in no small measure refreshed in spirit by your grace's hand; from your affectionate letter I received unbelievable pleasure; your affectionate letter brought me unbelievable pleasure. (Here we have both hyperbole and reciprocal expression.)

Your pages engendered in me an unfamiliar delight; I conceived a wonderful delight from your pages; your lines conveyed to me the greatest joy; the greatest joy was brought me by your lines; we derived great delight from your excellency's letter. (Again we have examples of reciprocal expression.)

In the other examples the reader will easily identify the figure for himself:

From my dear Faustus' letter I derived much delight.

At your words a delight of no ordinary kind came over me.

I was singularly delighted by your epistle. In these Faustine letters I found a wonderful kind of delectation.

To be sure, how your letter delighted my spirits!

Your brief missive flooded me with inexpressible joy. (Here we have a metaphor.)

As a result of your letter, I was suffused by an unfamiliar gladness.

Your communication poured vials of joy on my head. (Again a metaphor.)

Your epistle afforded me no small delight.

How delighted I was to read your letter!

The perusal of your letter charmed my mind with singular delight.

Your epistle was delightful to a degree.

Your letter affected me with extraordinary gladness.

As a result of your letter I was affected with singular gladness.

Your epistle was the greatest joy to me.

Your missive was to me a very great delight.

Your epistle was an incredible joy to me.

How exceedingly agreeable did we find your epistle!

You could scarce credit what relief I find in your missive. (Cicero frequently uses "find relief" in the sense "take pleasure.")

Your epistle was to us one of great delightfulness.

Your letter was very sweet to me.

Your letter was the source of singular gladness.

Your letter made me positively jump for joy.

Your letter having arrived, I was transported with joy.

When your letter was delivered, I was filled with delight.

Once I had read your affectionate letter, I was carried away with a strange happiness.

On receipt of your letter, an incredible delight seized my spirits.

Your epistle poured the balm of happiness over me.

Your writing to me was the most delightful thing possible.

The fact that you had written to me was extremely pleasurable to me.
Your honoring me with a letter was the most agreeable of occurrences.
Your brief note made me burst with joy.
How overjoyed I was by your letter!
I was both pleased and delighted that you communicated with me by letter.
When your letter arrived, you could have seen me jumping for all the joy I felt.
That you paid your respects by letter was assuredly a satisfaction to me.
Nothing more wished for than your letter could have been brought me.
Your letter has reached us, and eagerly looked for it was.
Nothing more desired than your letter could have been brought us. (These last three illustrate metalepsis, or at any rate synecdoche, for things that we greatly desire are pleasurable when they arrive.)
Faustine letters cannot but be most delightful to Erasmus.
Not displeasing was your epistle to me.
Your by no means displeasing letter has arrived.
Your missive by no means failed of a welcome.
Your epistle was to me the sweetest of the sweet.
I read and reread your letter with great pleasure.
It was not without the greatest pleasure that I received your letter.
The man who delivered your letter conveyed a wealth of joy.
Wonderful to relate how your letter entranced me.
The pages I received from you sent a new light of joy stealing over my heart.
Your letter promptly expelled all sorrow from my mind.
I sensed a wonderful happiness in my spirits when your letter was handed me.
From your letter an unaccustomed happiness swept over my spirits.
Your letter caused me to rejoice to the full.
Because of your letter my whole self exulted with joy.

It is difficult to say how much happiness was occasioned in me by your letter.
I can hardly find words to express the extent of the joy to which your letter gave rise.
It is wonderful to tell what a ray of delight beamed forth from your letter.
Good God, what a mighty joy proceeded from your epistle!
Heavens, what causes for joy did your letter provide!
Ye gods, what a power of joy did your missive supply!
The happiness occasioned by your communication is greater than I can describe.
Your messenger brought me a deal of pleasure.
You could scarce credit the load of happiness your letters conveyed to my mind.
I cannot find words to tell the joys that your letter loaded on me. (Why hesitate to use such an expression, when Terence spoke of the day being "loaded" with blessings?)
Your letter heaped joy upon me.
I rejoiced greatly at your letter.
I found singular pleasure in your letter.
Your missive showered a wealth of gladness upon me.
Your epistle was most delightful to me.
Your letter caused me quite to smooth my brow.
At the sight of your letter the frown fled from my mind's brow.
As I read the words you wrote me, a marvelous happiness stole over my mind.
As soon as I looked into your letter, a strange force of joy occupied my mind.
As my eye fell on your letter, an incredible tide of joy swelled in my breast.
When I received your most gracious letter, boundless happiness occupied every recess of my soul.
May I die the death if anything more delightful than your letter ever came my way.
May I perish if I ever met with anything in my whole life more agreeable than your letter.
As I aspire to the love of the Muses, nothing more gladsome than your letter has ever ere this befallen me.

Never believe that fortune could cast anything
more delightful in my path than your letter.
As you are dear to my soul, even so does your
letter delight me.
Ye heavens, what joy your letter roused in
me!
What gaiety, what applause, what exultation
your letter occasioned!
Reading your tasteful letter, I experienced an
uncommon joy.
Your pen sated me with delight.
Your epistle provided me with much pleasure.
Your graceful epistle filled me wholly with
delight.
Your charming epistle filled every corner of
my heart with delight.
Your letter cast a dew of rare joy upon me.
Your epistle bedewed my spirit with an unfa-
miliar delight.
Nothing more delightsome than your letter
ever came my way.
I never set eyes on anything more gladly than
your letter.
There is not a thing that I would receive with
more pleasure than the latest letter from my
dear Faustus.
Can you imagine the tide of joy on which I
rode as I perceived in your letter your af-
fection for me?
When the messenger handed me your letter,
my spirit immediately felt the motions of
an inexpressible delight.
What need have I to tell you of the pleasure
that stirred the soul of your Erasmus on the
receipt of your letter?
My soul overflowed with joy when your letter
was delivered.
How glad I was to receive your epistle!
After your note was handed me, my spirit
quite bubbled over with joy.
I was beside myself with joy when I received
your letter.
The charm of your letter put shackles of de-
light on my soul.
I cannot but rejoice mightily whenever a mis-
sive of yours comes flying to me.
Your letter was pure honey to me.
Whatever kind of a letter leaves your hand seems
to me flowing with sweetness and honey.

I was most luxuriously refreshed at the sump-
tuous banquet of your letter.
What you wrote is sweeter to me than any am-
brosia.
The pages of my dear Faustus were more
splendid to me than Sicilian feasts.⁴⁶
There is no pleasure, no delight, that I would
willingly compare with your letter.
All else is utterly repellent compared with
your letter.
In the perusal of your affectionate letter the
heart of Erasmus leapt for joy.
The pages scratched by your pen filled every
part of me with joy.
Anything that arrives written by you is pure
delight to my heart.
Your epistle exudes nothing but joy.
The man who brought your letter brought a
feast day.
A triumph came with the man who delivered
your letter.
Nectar I would not prefer to a message from
you.
Could I possibly compare Attic honey with
your dear letter?
Sugar is not sugar when set beside your letter.
The lotus tastes not as sweet to any mortal
man as your letters do to me.
Your letters are to me like wine to a thirsty
man.
Like clover to the bee, willow leaves to goats,
honey to the bear, even so are your letters
to me.
You highness's letter was to me more hon-
eyed than any honey.
Once I had received your longed-for letter,
you might have said Erasmus was drunk
with joy.
When your letter was delivered, you might
have seen us tipsy with excess of delight.
I love you as no one else, and I delight in your
letters as in nothing else.
Your lines seem to me pure enchantment.

⁴⁶A proverbial expression; see Horace *Odes* 3.1.18: *Siculae Dapes*; *Adagia* 11 ii 68; ultimately derived, like the expressions on 354;6, 8, 10, 12, from *Paroemiographi Graeci*, a collection of proverbs originating in antiquity but given definite form in the early Middle Ages. [Tr.]

Sweetmeats do not so delight the palate as
your letter charms my soul.

No delicacies give such pleasure to the palate
as your communication to the mind.

The man who delivered your letter brought
ἀμάξας ῥόδων [cartloads of pleasure].

Your messenger brought Δάθον [an Eldorado]⁴⁷ of joy when he delivered your letter.

He who handed over your pages, brought with
him θάλασσαν [a sea] of joys.

Your letter was to me a positive Διὸς
ἐγχείφαλος [choice morsel] for a Persian,
as the Greeks say.

If anyone thinks that some of these suggestions would hardly be tolerable in prose, he should remember that this exercise is designed for the composition of verse as well.⁴⁸ . . .

BOOK II. ABUNDANCE OF SUBJECT MATTER

Enrichment of Material: Method 1

We have now presented as briefly as possible such thoughts as occurred to us on the subject of abundance of expression, so our next task is to review with equal conciseness abundance of subject matter. To start off this part of the work with material as similar as possible to that used in the corresponding section in Book 1, the first method on enriching what one has to say on any subject is to take something that can be expressed in brief and general terms, and expand it and separate it into its constituent parts. This is just like displaying some object for sale first of all through a grill⁴⁹ or inside a wrapping, and then unwrapping it and opening it out and displaying it fully to the gaze.

Here is an example of the method. Let us take the sentence: *He wasted all his substance in riotous living*. This is expressed in summary fashion, and is, so to speak, wrapped up. We can

⁴⁷Dathus was a colony of the Thasians, proverbial for its wealth; *Adagia* 1 iii 33. [Tr.]

⁴⁸Erasmus was himself an accomplished writer of Latin verse, which is collected in Reedijk. Most humanists wrote Latin (and sometimes Greek) verse, with greater or less skill, and schoolboys were expected to compose verses. [Tr.]

⁴⁹Cicero, *De Oratore* 1. 162. [Tr.]

open it out by enumerating all the different types of possessions and setting out the various ways of wasting them: All he had inherited from mother or father or acquired by the death of other relatives, all that was added by his wife's dowry (and that was nothing in the ordinary run of things), all the increase that accrued from various legacies (and that increase was very considerable), all he received by the prince's generosity, all that he raked in during his military service, all his money, plate, clothes, estates and land, together with farm buildings and stock, in short everything, chattels and real estate, even his very household, he threw away on degrading affairs with low women, revelry every day, extravagant parties, nights spent wining and dining, luxurious foods, perfumes, dicing and gambling, and all in a few days so squandered, gobbled up, and sucked it out that he did not leave himself two half-pennies to tub together.

In this way the two phrases "all his substance" and "wasted in riotous living" are explicated via their constituent parts.

Here is another example: *He completed a thoroughly comprehensive education*. This general statement can be expanded by listing all the separate disciplines and every aspect of learning: There is absolutely no area of learning in which he is not meticulously versed; there is no branch of learning which he has not grasped down to the last detail, and so grasped that he would appear to have labored at it to the exclusion of the rest; he has such a wonderful knowledge of all the tales of all the poets; he is so richly supplied with the finest turns of expression employed by the orators; he has so sifted the laborious rules of the grammarians; he is skilled in the subtleties of dialectic; he has probed the secrets of physical science; he has scaled the heights of ultramundane knowledge; he has penetrated the inmost recesses of the theologians; he has a thorough understanding of the demonstrations of mathematics; such is his knowledge of the movements of the stars, the principles of number, the dimensions of the various lands, the position and name of cities, mountains, rivers, springs, the harmony and intervals of musical sounds; such is his memory of ancient and modern history; every good writer, whether

of ancient or of modern times, he has them all; add to all this an equal skill in Greek and Latin language and literature; in short, whatever learning has been discovered and handed on by distinguished authors, this one man has completely assimilated and understood and holds fast in his memory.

Again, to expand the phrase *Endowed with every blessing of nature and fortune*, one can mention every separate good point of the body and then every separate gift of intelligence and spirit, and finally birth, wealth, nationality, success, and whatever comes to us from fortune. A third example is provided by *Hippias the omniscient*.⁵⁰ To elaborate this, one may introduce all the things listed by Apuleius in his description of this person in the *Florida*, a passage that is incidentally not devoid of diversity and richness of expression.

There is a very good example of this procedure in Lucian's *Harmonides*, where he could have said baldly τὴν ἀσλητικὴν ὅλην ἐχμεμάθηχα [I have thoroughly learned the art of flute-playing], but he preferred to make a display of *copia* by setting out the parts inherent in the total idea. The passage does not go very easily into Latin, but I will make some attempt to translate it for the sake of those who do not know Greek: "You have by now taught me to tune the flute accurately and breathe into the mouthpiece gently and tunefully, to put the fingers down flexibly and in time with the constant rise and fall of the melody, to move with the beat and play in unison with the chorus, and to observe the characteristics of the different modes, the sublime frenzy of the Phrygian, the Dionysiac storming of the Lydian, the solemnity and dignity of the Dorian, the elegance of the Ionian. [All this I have learned from you.]"

If we had decided to do with all the separate disciplines in our example above what Lucian has done here with the single discipline of music,

⁵⁰Of Elis, a sophist (297:14n and 583:5) contemporary with Socrates; equipped with a wide if superficial knowledge of many branches of learning and of art, combined with practical skills; he professed to be able to speak on any topic, and declared that everything he wore was made with his own hands. He was a celebrated figure, though criticized for arrogance and boastfulness. [Tr.]

you can see what riches of material would have been thus provided.

Here I would make what I think is a helpful suggestion: have the general statement set out right at the beginning, and then take it up again in a different form of words, returning to the basic idea as if you have wearied of enumerating details, even if in fact nothing has been omitted.

Furthermore, we should take care not to throw the proper order of the various parts into confusion by mixing everything up in an indiscriminate chaos of utterances, and piling up a boring mass of words totally devoid of attraction; but instead we should rather prevent tedium in reader or hearer by skillful arrangement, appropriate allocation, and elegant disposition.

Division of a Whole into Parts

We may include here the kind of example where some whole made up of subordinate parts rather than of a group of disparate items is separated out into its parts. Take the sentence: *He is a total monster*. This will be filled out by first dividing the man into body and mind, and then touching on the separate parts of the body followed by the separate parts of the mind: He is a monster both in mind and in body; whatever part of mind or body you consider, you will find a monster—quivering head, rabid eyes, a dragon's gape, the visage of a Fury, distended belly, hands like talons ready to tear, feet distorted, in short, view his entire physical shape and what else does it all present but a monster? Observe that tongue, observe that wild beast's roar, and you will name it a monstrosity; probe his mind, you will find a horror; weigh his character, scrutinize his life, you will find all monstrous; and, not to pursue every point in detail, through and through he is nothing but a monster.

It is clear what fullness that speech would acquire if anyone chose to dwell on the depiction of any of these separate items.

Here is another example: *He was quite drenched*; he was drenched with rain from the top of his head to the soles of his shoes; head, shoulders, chest, belly, legs, his entire body in fact, dripped with rainwater.

A small point, but one quite worth mentioning as possibly applicable to this type, is the intro-

duction of the genus if we are speaking of a species. This is usually done just for the sake of amplification: Learning of every kind both adorns and assists the race of men, but philosophy does so pre-eminently; Lust is disgusting at any age, but is most disgusting of all in old age; Prudence is of great importance in all human affairs, but especially in war. Here the simple statement would have been: Prudence is of great importance in war. Cicero has an example of this type in his speech *De domo sua*, delivered before the college of priests: “Our ancestors, your reverences, invented and established many practices in their extraordinary wisdom, but nothing was more striking than their decision that you, the priests, should direct both the worship of the immortal gods and the highest affairs of state.”

But there is little point in quoting this one specimen when examples of the type lie ready for the finding on every side.

Variation: Method 2

The second method of variation is very like the first. It arises when we are not satisfied with stating the final outcome and leaving preceding events to be deduced, but rehearse in detail everything which led up to the final result. Here is an example of what I mean: *Cicero crushed Catiline’s designs*. This may be elaborated as follows: The wicked designs of Catiline, put into effect through young men of desperate character plotting the ruin and destruction of the whole Roman state, the consul Marcus Tullius Cicero immediately sniffed out with his customary sagacity, hunted down with remarkable vigilance, caught by exercising great prudence, revealed with wonderful devotion to the country, convicted with incredible eloquence, broke by the weight of his authority, extinguished by the use of force, and with the aid of fortune removed for ever.

Here is another: *He acknowledged a son born to him from the girl*. You may expand this as follows: He fell passionately in love with the girl, who was extremely pretty. Unable to control his affection, he assailed her simple mind with promises, bribed her with gifts, cajoled her with flattery, induced her by kindnesses to return his

affection, and overcame her by his insistence. Finally he became intimate with her and deflowered her. After some time the girl’s belly began to swell as, of course, a child had been conceived. At the end of nine months she went into labor and produced a boy.

Here is yet another example: *He took the city*, which may be amplified as follows: First of all the heralds were sent to demand reparations and also to offer terms of peace. When the inhabitants refused to accept these, he gathered forces from all quarters, brought in a great supply of engines of war, and moved his army and the machines up to the city ramparts. The inhabitants replied by fiercely repelling the enemy from the walls, but the general eventually got the upper hand in the fighting, and, scaling the walls, invaded the city and seized control of it.

Method 9

The ninth method consists of amplification or building up, of which Quintilian⁵¹ lists a considerable number of types. We shall briefly deal with those that are relevant to our present purposes.

The first type uses augmentation, in which one advances by regular steps not only to the maximum, but even in a way beyond the maximum. An example of this may be found in Cicero’s fifth speech against Verres:⁵² “It is an offense to tie up a Roman citizen, a crime to flog him, equal to the murder of a kinsman to put him to death. What shall I call crucifying him? It is not possible to find a word to fit such a heinous act.”

There is also a variety of this figure in which we heap up “circumstances” while observing some kind of order, and let one run on from another so arranged that the next thing is always greater than the one that went before, as in Cicero’s passage in the *Second Philippic*⁵³ about Antony’s vomiting: “What a disgusting thing, not only to see but even to hear! If this had happened at dinner when you were quaffing those monstrous

⁵¹8.4, from which chapter Erasmus takes his examples. [Tr.]

⁵²*Verrines* 5.170; quoted in Quintilian 8.4.4. [Tr.]

⁵³*Philippics* 2.63; Quintilian 8.4.8. [Tr.]

tankards of yours, who would not think it disgraceful? But it was a formal assembly of the people of Rome, engaged in conducting the business of the state, holding the office of Master of the Horse, for whom it would be a disgrace even to belch, that this fellow spewed up morsels of food stinking of wine all over himself and all over the speakers' platform." Here each individual word has more effect than the one before. In the first place the action was disgusting in itself even if it had not been in an assembly, or if in an assembly not one of the people, or not of the Roman people, or if he had not been conducting formal business, or not formal public business, or if he were not Master of the Horse.

If anyone took these items separately and dwelt on the individual stages, he would indeed extend his material, but an amplification of this type would be less effective than the one we have.

The opposite method to this is comparison. In augmentation, the movement is constantly towards something more impressive; a comparison gets its effect by starting from something less striking. The comparison may be based on a supposition or may employ a real event. We had a supposition, for which the Greek term is ὑπόθεσις, in the first part of the example we quoted from Cicero, for he puts forward the supposition that it happened at a dinner party to a person holding no public office. There is another one in the well-known passage from one of the *Catilinarian*⁵⁴ speeches. "Upon my word, if my slaves feared me the way all your [fellow citizens] fear you, I should feel that I had better get out of my house."

When a real situation is used, we put forward a genuine circumstance that has some similarity with the thing we are boosting, and proceed to show how this is very close to it, or equal to it, or even greater. This is what Cicero does in the *Pro Cluentio*.⁵⁵ He describes how a certain woman of Miletus received money from the reversionary heirs in return for having an abortion. He goes on: "While Oppianicus shares the crime committed, he deserves much greater punishment. She

⁵⁴1.17; Quintilian 8.4.10. [Tr.]

⁵⁵*Pro Cluentio* 32; Quintilian 8.4.11. [Tr.]

ill-treated her own body and brought suffering on herself, but he achieved the same result through another person's suffering."

In this type we not only compare one whole situation with another, but we can compare one detail with another, as is done in this passage from the *Pro Milone*.⁵⁶ "Scipio, that distinguished figure, when holding no public office, killed Tiberius Gracchus when he was causing a moderately serious political upheaval in Rome; shall we, when clothed with the dignity of consul, stand by while Catiline seeks to lay the whole world waste with fire and slaughter?" Here Catiline is compared with Gracchus, the situation in Rome with the world, a moderate upheaval with slaughter and burning and desolation, a man holding no office with those who are entrusted with the highest. Again if anyone wished to expand these sections, he would have topics full of possibility at every point.

The second method of amplification uses the rhetorical figure known as inference; in this we actually build up one thing, and this suggests the build-up of another, as in this passage: "You, with a gullet of that capacity, with a chest of that girth, with a physique which would do credit to a gladiator, swilled so much wine at Hippias' wedding that the next day you couldn't help being sick in full view of the Roman people." Here one can infer how much wine Antony drank because, in spite of his gladiator's physique, he was not able to carry so much and digest it.

Associated with this is the procedure by which we take the most dreadful deeds and rouse the strongest resentment against them, and then deliberately tone them down so that what follows may seem even more serious, as in this passage from Cicero:⁵⁷ "In a prisoner like this these crimes are trivial. The commander-in-chief of the fleet of a noble city had to pay money to save himself from the fear of being flogged. But that's a human enough crime." We must needs expect something absolutely appalling, if deeds which are shocking seem human and normal beside it.

Another method of build-up is the piling up of

⁵⁶Actually *Catilinarians* 1.3; Quintilian 8.4.13. [Tr.]

⁵⁷*Verrines* 5.117; Quintilian 8.4.19. [Tr.]

words and phrases meaning the same thing. This is very like συναθροισμός [accumulation of synonyms] which I discussed earlier. Cicero uses this in his speech *Pro Ligario*:⁵⁸ “What was that sword of yours doing, Tubero, that you drew on the field of Pharsalus? Whose ribs was that weapon-point seeking? what was the purpose of your weapons? what was your own mind? what sort of eyes, what sort of hands did you have, what passion drove you on? what did you seek? what desire?” Here the speech grows like a heap by addition. Sometimes the emotional tone of the additions rises ever higher with each one, as in this:⁵⁹ “Present was the keeper of the prison gate, the praetor’s thug, the destruction and terror of allied and Roman citizens alike, the lictor Sextius.”

We can also build up by using a form of “self-correction,”⁶⁰ as Cicero does in this passage from the *Verrines*:⁶¹ “We have brought to your court not a mere thief but a brigand, not an adulterer but a stormer of chastity, not a temple-robber but a sworn enemy of religion and all that is sacred, not a cut-throat but a savage murderer of citizens and allies alike.”

There are just as many ways of toning down what we have to say as there are of building it up.

Our utterances may be expanded by everyday and unremarkable methods such as adding adverbs, nouns, and other parts of speech, either to express approval or censure: Cicero delights me to an inordinate extent: it is beyond words how well disposed your father-in-law is toward you; I cannot find words to express what pleasure I take in Cicero—but I have dealt with these methods of extension in Book 1.⁶²

A well-known and common method of expansion is to attach a species to its genus: All the disciplines of a liberal education bestow on a man either grace or advantage; eloquence does so beyond all others—though I have dealt with this method before too.⁶³

⁵⁸*Pro Ligario* 9; Quintilian 8.4.27; see above 320:28ff. [Tr.]

⁵⁹*Cicero Verrines* 5.118; Quintilian 8.4.27. [Tr.]

⁶⁰See book 1 chap 65. [Tr.]

⁶¹*Verrines* 1.9; Quintilian 8.4.2. [Tr.]

⁶²Chap. 46. [Tr.]

⁶³At 574:41ff. [Tr.]

Method 10

The tenth method of expansion depends on inventing as many propositions as possible.⁶⁴ I am speaking of rhetorical propositions or themes, which are demonstrated to be true by the exposition of arguments. As for inventing propositions, Quintilian⁶⁵ says that this skill cannot be learned as a technique, but comes from imagination and practice. Hence we find that a group of people may have received the same instruction, and may use similar types of argument, and yet one will discover more material than another.

Propositions or themes are derived partly from generalities, partly from the circumstances of the case. We can demonstrate the method with an example chosen by Quintilian:⁶⁶ “When Alexander overthrew Thebes, he discovered documents recording that the Thebans had lent the Thes-salians a hundred talents. These documents he handed over to the Thessalians as a reward for supporting him with troops in the campaign. The Thebans later had their fortunes restored by Cas-sander, and demanded repayment of the debt from the Thessalians. The case was taken before the Amphictyonic Council. It was not disputed that the Thebans had lent a hundred talents, and that this sum had not been repaid—the point at issue was the claim that Alexander had given the Thessalians the documents. Nor was it disputed that Alexander had not actually presented them with the money they owed the Thebans.”

In arguing this out we need to invent themes and sections of the following sort to provide the framework for our case: (1) Alexander’s gift was of no effect; (2) he had no power to give; (3) he did not actually give.

In the first section the first proposition on behalf of the Thebans will be that one has the right to demand back through the law what has been taken away by force. On behalf of the Thes-salians it will be propounded that the documents were not simply removed by force but by war, and the rights of war are the most powerful ones known in human affairs; by them are determined

⁶⁴See Quintilian 4.4. [Tr.]

⁶⁵5.10.119–21. [Tr.]

⁶⁶5.10.111–18; Erasmus changes Quintilian’s statement of the case slightly. [Tr.]

kingdoms and peoples and the territories of nations and cities. In answer to this the Thebans declare that not everything falls into the victor's power by the rights of war; the rights of war have no validity in matters which belong to the sphere of civil justice; that things seized by force of arms can only be retained by exercising that same force of arms; where arms hold sway, there is no place for a judge, but where there is a judge, arms have no authority. Here we argue from the circumstances special to the case, which enables us to show why this particular case differs from others. To support this last proposition, we can put forward as a parallel a statement of general validity: Captives become free again if they regain their native land, because ownership of things acquired in war can only be asserted by exercising the same physical force by which they were first acquired. The third proposition on behalf of the Thebans will also depend on the special circumstances of this case: In any case in which the Amphictyonic Council⁶⁷ is the judge, the main consideration must be equity. (The same lawsuit requires different handling according to where it is heard, for example, before the Centumviral Court⁶⁸ or before an arbitrator.) The effect of these arguments is again to show that this case is on a different footing from those where the rights of war should determine the issue.

In the second section we can state on behalf of the Thebans that the victor had no power to make a gift of a right, because only what can be seized belongs to the victor: a right is an incorporeal thing, and cannot be physically held. To support this proposition we can bring in an argument from the dissimilar: An heir and a conqueror are not in the same case; the right passes to the heir, the material object to the conqueror. The circumstances of the case provide the next proposition, which reinforces the previous one: Even if we concede that in other cases a right passes to the

⁶⁷Because it was associated with the shrine of Apollo at Delphi, which in theory meant that the council had dignity and authority and that its decisions carried religious sanction. [Tr.]

⁶⁸A court in ancient Rome dealing with property suits; Pliny began his legal career there, and speaks of it in his *Letters*. [Tr.]

conqueror, certainly the right attached to a state loan could not in any way pass to the conqueror, because if a loan is made by the whole people, the sum is owed to the whole people, and as long as one individual survives, he is the creditor to whom the sum is due; but not all the Thebans fell into Alexander's power. This argument needs no further support.

In the third section we can have a general proposition (that is, one not specifically tied to any case): When he gave the documents, Alexander did not really give anything, for rights do not reside in documents. This proposition can be supported by arguments of all kinds; such as arguments from a similar case: The man who possesses documents proving inheritance does not necessarily have the right of inheritance; or: If a creditor happens to lose his documentary proof, the debtor is not forthwith released from his debt. The second proposition in this section depends on conjecture: Alexander did not present the Thessalians with the documents to reward them, but to deceive them. This will have to be demonstrated by various suggestions and hypotheses. The third one is not simply a contribution to this stage of the argument, but is more or less the introduction of a new issue. It depends on material proper to the case, and takes this form: Even if we grant the Thessalians all this—that the law of war has authority in civil disputes in general, and before these judges in particular, and in the case of a state loan, and all the other points—all the same, whatever the Thebans lost when conquered by Alexander, they should have recovered when restored by Cassander, especially when this was Cassander's express wish. . . .

Method 11

The eleventh method⁶⁹ of enriching our style depends on the accumulation of proofs and arguments. The Greek word for these is *πίστεις* [reasons for belief]. Different reasons can be brought forward to confirm one and the same proposition,

⁶⁹This section summarizes material in Quintilian 5.9 and 10. The material is so compressed as to be difficult to follow; Quintilian's more extended version with examples is much clearer. [Tr.]

and the reasons themselves can be supported by further arguments.

Proofs fall into two classes: ἔντεχνοι [of the art], invented or artificial proofs, and ἄτεχνοι [not of the art], given proofs.⁷⁰ This second type is drawn mainly from previous legal judgments, hearsay, evidence extracted under torture, written evidence, oaths, and witnesses. The former type is derived first from “indications,” which are very like the ἄτεχνοι. (Of these “indications,” some are “compelling,” for which the Greek term is τεχμήρια [evidence], some are “noncompelling,” σημεῖα [signs].) Second, they are derived from “arguments”—Quintilian at any rate makes a distinction between these and “indications.” Arguments can be likely, possible, and not impossible. Most of these are derived from the circumstances of the case, which cover persons or things. “Persons” takes in family, nation, country, sex, age, education, physical condition, material circumstances, state, disposition, occupation, ambition, previous actions, previous statements, motives, purpose, name; “things” includes cause, place, time, opportunity, previous contemporary and subsequent events, means, instrument, method.

Commonplaces

There are also certain topics appropriate to all types of speech or even to all sections of a speech, whereas the ones I have just been discussing, though they can on occasion be handled in other contexts, are more suited to controversial issues dealt with in a court of law, and within this class, to cases which turn on a question of fact.

Generally speaking, arguments are derived from definition or defining formulae, from description, from exposition of the meaning of a word, which is a form of definition, or from things which definition by its very nature includes: genus,⁷¹ species, properties, differentiating characteristics, subdivision, classification (this last takes various forms, for example, a consideration of aspects such as commencement, completion, development); or from deductions based on similar or dissimilar situations; from

contraries, contradictions, consequences, related propositions, causes, results, comparisons (of which there are three forms: comparison with something greater, smaller, or equivalent), and from self-evident statements,⁷² and from all the others that have been suggested, since writers agree neither on the order of presentation, nor on the number, nor on the names to be used. The subject has been dealt with at length by Aristotle⁷³ and Boethius,⁷⁴ in fair detail but not very clearly by Cicero,⁷⁵ briefly by Quintilian.⁷⁶ Anyone training with a view to acquiring eloquence will have to look at all the possible topics in turn, go knocking from door to door⁷⁷ so to speak, to see if anything can be induced to emerge; but with practice the right ones will come to suggest themselves naturally, without this process being necessary.

Again, arguments can be derived from a “supposition,” which is itself appropriate to many contexts, and finally from the circumstances peculiar to the case in question.

[Illustrative Examples]

A most effective means of making what we are saying convincing and of generating *copia* at the same time is to be found in illustrative examples, for which the Greek word is παραδείγματα.⁷⁸ The content of the examples can be something like, unlike, or in contrast to what we are illustrating, or something greater, smaller, or equivalent. Contrast and dissimilarity reside in features such as type, means, time, place, and most of the other “circumstances” I enumerated above. We include under “examples” stories, fables, proverbs, opinions, parallels or comparisons, similitudes, analogies, and anything else of the same sort. Most of these are introduced not only to make our case look convincing, but also

⁷²For example, those who perform a just act, act justly; Quintilian 5.10.58. [Tr.]

⁷³*Topica*. [Tr.]

⁷⁴He translated Aristotle's *Topica* and wrote a commentary in six books on Cicero's *Topica*. [Tr.]

⁷⁵In *Topica*, professedly based on Aristotle's work. [Tr.]

⁷⁶5.10, a long chapter dealing with all kinds of argument. [Tr.]

⁷⁷Quintilian 5.10.122. [Tr.]

⁷⁸Quintilian 5.11.1. [Tr.]

⁷⁰Quintilian 5.1. [Tr.]

⁷¹See Quintilian 6.3.66, a section on sources of jests. [Tr.]

to dress it up and brighten, expand, and enrich it. Anyone therefore who chooses to furnish himself with a mass of material from the possibilities here listed can make what he has to say as copious as he likes, without thereby producing a meaningless accumulation of words; furthermore the variety of the material will prevent boredom. This is not the place⁷⁹ to discuss how to discover such material or how to apply it, but anyone who wants this information may find it in Aristotle,⁸⁰ Hermogenes,⁸¹ and Quintilian, who have written in great detail on these very topics. I shall deal with anything relevant to *copia*, but only briefly, so as not to appear to have written a whole book rather than a set of notes.

In the development of *copia*, then, illustrations play a leading role, whether the speech is the sort that debates what action should be taken, or urges to a particular course of action, or is intended to console someone in grief, or is laudatory or vituperative; in short, whether one is trying to convince one's audience, move them, or give them pleasure.

It is not enough to provide oneself with an enormous and very varied supply of illustrations, and to have them ready for use at a moment's notice; one must also be able to handle them with variety. Variety can be provided by the very nature of the illustrative examples themselves. They can be things done or said in the past, or be derived from the customs of various nations. There will be differences according to whether they are drawn from historians, or from poets (and poets include writers of comedy, tragedy, epigrams, epic, and pastoral poetry), or from philosophers (and again there are various schools of philosophers), or from the theologians, or the books of the Bible. Some variety will be provided by the differences between nations: the institutions and illustrative examples of the Romans are different from those of the Greeks, and

⁷⁹He deals with it later, at 635ff: Assembling illustrative material. [Tr.]

⁸⁰*Rhetoric* 2.20ff. [Tr.]

⁸¹Rhetorician of the second century A.D., who wrote a series of textbooks on rhetorical technique much read in succeeding centuries, including four books, *περὶ εὐρεσέων*, on invention. [Tr.]

among the Greeks those of the Spartans are not those of the Cretans and Athenians; nor again do we find the same habits among the Africans, Jews, Spaniards, French, English, or Germans. Or it may be a question of period: early times, then the subsequent periods of antiquity, recent history, and things in our own lives; or some inherent quality in the incident recorded: military or civil actions, examples of clemency or bravery or wisdom (and so on ad infinitum, for there is no end to this list); or the status of the person concerned: one finds different behavior in a prince, judge, parent, slave, rich man, poor man, woman, girl, or boy.

One should therefore apply as many different illustrations as possible at each point, derived not only from the whole range of Greek and Latin literature, but also from the history of other nations. We can also derive material from popular sayings. People are most impressed however by examples that are ancient, splendid, national, and domestic. In fact each nation, each class of person prefers what is his own, or else something that makes him feel superior, such as anecdotes about women, children, slaves, and barbarians.

Treatment of Examples

But examples not only acquire variety in our handling of them; they are also enlarged and expanded. I shall indicate some of the ways of doing this: first by "commendation," when we introduce a section in which we praise the incident, or the author, or the nation from which the illustration is drawn. If one quoted something done or said by a Spartan, for example, one could preface the anecdote by remarking that this people was always superior to the rest in wisdom and in military and civil organization, and abounded in splendid moral object-lessons. Or an example from Plutarch could be introduced by saying that this writer was of all authors particularly worthy of respect in that he combined a thorough knowledge of philosophy with the eloquent style of a historian, so that one would rightly expect to find in him not only a trustworthy account of events, but also the authority and judgment of a revered and learned philosopher. If one wished to use as an illustration the story of how Marcus Atilius

Regulus⁸² returned to the enemy, one could begin with something like this: Among all the honorable examples of Roman courage, there was never any act finer or more celebrated than that of Marcus Atilius.

One may invent little passages of commendation like this, making them long or short according to the requirements of the context; but one should take care to invent one that is appropriate; for example, if one is quoting something to illustrate faithfulness, one will commend one's source for seriousness and good faith, or if one wishes the audience to see something as an example of proper feeling, one will make proper feeling the subject of one's remarks. And so with other qualities.

Second Method of Expanding [Examples]

Next illustrative anecdotes can be presented in a richer form if we expand them and broaden the treatment by incorporating amplifications and extensions. Anyone who is concerned to be brief will find it enough merely to refer to the incident as being well known, as Cicero⁸³ does in the *Pro Milone* when he says: "If it were a crime to put villains to death, we would have to view as criminals famous men like Servilius Ahala, Publius Scipio Nasica, Lucius Opimius, and the whole senate headed by myself as consul."⁸⁴ But the speaker whose purpose is the rich treatment will narrate the incident in a more substantial manner, as we find Cicero doing in another passage from the same speech.⁸⁵ An officer in the army of

⁸²Consul during the First Punic War between Rome and Carthage; he was captured in Africa by the Carthaginians and sent to Rome to arrange an exchange of prisoners, under strict oath to return if he were unsuccessful. He dissuaded the Roman Senate from accepting the terms offered and returned to the enemy, who tortured him to death; see Cicero *De Officiis* 3.99. [Tr.]

⁸³*Pro Milone* 8; Servilius Ahala as Master of Horse in 439 B.C. killed Spurius Maelius on suspicion of aspiring to tyranny; Scipio Nasica, an exconsul, led the mob of senators that killed the reformer Tiberius Gracchus in 133 B.C. (see 593:27ff); Lucius Opimius as consul hounded down Gaius Gracchus in 121 B.C. [Tr.]

⁸⁴A reference to Cicero's execution of the Catilinarian conspirators when he was consul in 63 B.C. [Tr.]

⁸⁵*Pro Milone* 9, quoted in Quintilian 8.5.11; a speech in defense of the young man is found in Quintilian *Declamationes Maiores* 3, *Miles Marianus*; see 500:26n. [Tr.]

Gaius Marius, who was a relative of the commander, made a sexual assault on one of the soldiers, and was killed by the man he was trying to force. Cicero then added one of those remarks which effectively round off a story (*epiphonema*): "The fine young man preferred to act and incur peril rather than submit and incur disgrace." The great Marius acquitted him of guilt and let him go free.

In passages introduced for display purposes one may spend even longer on elaborating such illustrative anecdotes, especially if the subject is such that sheer pleasure will induce the audience to pay attention. For example, if someone were trying to urge the idea that foreign travel and the enlargement of personal experience do much to make a man wiser, he could dwell for a time on the praise of Solon, and then launch into an extended account of the city that Solon left, his reasons for going, the seas he crossed, the foreign peoples he visited, the dangers he encountered among them, the persons he met, the wonders he saw, how long he was away, and how much more famous and more wise he was when he returned to his native land.

Of the same sort are Jerome's anecdotes about the wanderings of Pythagoras and Apollonius in the preface to his complete edition of the Holy Scriptures. But the most convenient example of the whole procedure is to be found right at the beginning of the second book of Cicero's *De inventione*, where he tells the story about Zeuxis, who, when he was going to paint a picture of Helen, asked for a number of girls of outstanding beauty so that he could take the best feature from each and so produce a flawless portrait of beauty. . . .

Judgments

As I said, with examples we can include judgments, which the Greeks call *χρῖσεις*. These are *sententiae* or striking sayings of famous writers, of nations, of wise men, of distinguished citizens. A great supply can be discovered in the celebrated poets of old, also in the historiographers, the philosophers, and mystic writings.⁸⁶ Judgments

⁸⁶Erasmus means books of the Bible, especially those that lend themselves to an allegorical interpretation; he mentions these as a source in *Adagia* prolegomena v (LB II 5c). [Tr.]

accordingly show the same variety as examples. Collections of such things have been made by some of the Greeks, notably by one Stobaeus.⁸⁷ There are also apophthegms⁸⁸ of wise men, like “The sayings of famous men,” and the things recorded by Plutarch.⁸⁹ Here too the material is varied: as regards subject-matter, we have military and philosophical sayings; as regards speakers, we have kings, wise men, ordinary citizens; as regards tone, we have serious, humorous, and witty sayings. We can include here proverbs, whether extracted from authors or from popular speech. National customs are in my opinion no different from examples; oracles and replies from higher powers can certainly be included with judgments, for example, if one were to approve Socrates as a wise man, because this was the judgment pronounced by the oracle of Apollo.

Maxims

Next we come to *sententiae* or maxims, which are not extracted from authors but invented by ourselves to suit the matter in hand. These can be introduced into any part of the speech. One passage often generates quite a number of maxims. They can occur in the narration and in passages intended to stir the emotions of the audience, as well as in the proof section. Quite often the transition from one section to another is made by means of one of these terse sayings. By introducing them in appropriate contexts you will provide yourself with a not inconsiderable source of *copia*, which at the same time will lend your speech weight or attractiveness.

There are various forms of maxim.⁹⁰ Some of them are $\chi\alpha\theta\omicron\lambda\iota\chi\alpha\acute{\iota}$ [of universal application], such as: Envy brings its own punishment. Others will only do in certain contexts, such as: Nothing is so popular as generosity. Some need a specific

⁸⁷Author of an anthology of excerpts from earlier literature; see *Adagia* prolegomena iii (LB II 4A) where he is cited as a source. [Tr.]

⁸⁸Erasmus published a collection of such sayings, *Apophthegmata*, in 1531 (LB IV 93A–380D). [Tr.]

⁸⁹Collected sayings of kings and commanders, *De scite dictis regum ac imperatorum* (*Apophthegmata*). [Tr.]

⁹⁰For this whole section see Quintilian 8.5.3ff. [Tr.]

person: A prince who will know everything has many things to learn.⁹¹

Some *sententiae* are simple. Love conquers all. Some have some kind of reason incorporated: In every dispute the richer party, even if he is the victim, nevertheless seems the aggressor because he has more power. Some are double, composed of two contrasting statements, without any reason being expressed: Complaisance wins friends; truth begets ill will. Some consist of two distinct statements: Death is not unpleasant; the approach to death is unpleasant. If the argument is spelled out in each section, the *sententia* becomes four-fold.⁹² Those who think the faults of youth should be condoned are wrong (this is the first section; now the reason is appended), because that age is [not] a hindrance to sound study; (now the third section) those think wisely who punish the young most severely (now the reason) in order that they may wish to acquire at the age most suitable those virtues which will assist them throughout their lives. Although this example occurs in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, I do not think much of it. However, it is not difficult to invent another one of the same sort: Hard work is a good thing in the young, because (reason) it is disgraceful to squander on idleness and base pleasures those gifts which nature supplies in those years so that we may acquire worthwhile skills; but, on the other hand, affluence is a good thing in old age, so that (reason) that period of life which is somewhat lacking in the resources of nature may at least be supported by the props of material benefits. Or another: Old age, if destitute, is piteous; if ignorant, disgraceful; for it is misery to be in need just when the weakness of nature especially needs the support of money, and shameful to be ignorant of all that is best just at the time when not to be learning is right and proper, to be instructing others particularly becoming.

A maxim can be plain:⁹³ The miser is without

⁹¹This translates the readings of 1512, 1514, 1526, 1534, and LB: *necesse habet multa cognoscere*. Modern texts of Quintilian read *ignoscere* “must pretend not to know many things.” [Tr.]

⁹²Example taken from *Ad Herennium* 4.17.25, the section on *sententiae*. [Tr.]

⁹³For this section see Quintilian 8.5.6ff. [Tr.]

what he has as much as what he has not;⁹⁴ or it can incorporate a figure of speech: I had the power to preserve—and dost thou ask / Whether I have power to destroy?⁹⁵ The straightforward way of expressing this would be: It is easier to destroy than to preserve. It may have a general reference: It is easy to harm, harder to help; or be adapted to specific persons, in which case it is less clearly a maxim, as in this example from Cicero: “Caesar, your exalted position has bestowed on you no greater gift than your ability to save, nature no better gift than your willingness to do so.”

There is also the kind of unspoken and concealed maxim that we find in Virgil’s line: “She is consumed with hidden fire.” Ovid makes it explicit: “More fiercely burns the fire that is concealed.” Another form is the type that narrates a past event: The larger party has defeated the better. If this were made explicit, it would be: It usually happens that the larger party defeats the better.

Another form of maxim is the type the Greeks call ἐπιφώνημα, Quintilian “acclamation,”⁹⁶ that is a final triumphant remark appended either to a narrative, as in Virgil’s: “Such toil it was to found the Roman race”; or to the conclusion of an argument, as in this example from Cicero’s *Pro Ligario*:⁹⁷ “The pardon of these people, Caesar, is the glory of your clemency. Shall their language goad you into cruelty like their own?” Not every *epiphonema* is automatically a maxim, though it usually is, but anything in the closing section of an utterance which strikes on the ear as shrewd and pungent can be called an ἐπιφώνημα.

This is a particular feature of epigrams, as in the one about the sheep feeding with her milk the cubs of the wolf: Never once is nature changed

⁹⁴Publilius Syrus *Sententiae* ed W. Meyer (Leipzig 1880) 628; part of a collection of moral sayings drawn from the *Mimes* of Publilius and from other writers, going under the name of Seneca throughout the Middle Ages. Erasmus extracted those belonging to Publilius and ascribed them to their true author in an edition of 1514 which included the *Disticha Catonis* and other texts (see Ep 298:11–16). [Tr.]

⁹⁵From Ovid’s lost tragedy *Medea*, quoted in Quintilian 8.5.6. [Tr.]

⁹⁶8.5.11. [Tr.]

⁹⁷10, quoted in Quintilian 8.5.10. [Tr.]

by kindness. Martial’s poems very often end with such a clinching remark: “Either don’t sleep, Nasidienus, or dream about yourself”; or this one: “Shall I tell you what you are? You’re a jack-of-all-trades.”

Valerius Maximus makes great use of this sort of thing, and Seneca also usually closes his *Epistles* with a summing-up remark. There have been people so fond of using the *epiphonema* that they thought they must work in such an exclamatory appendage all over the place after anything they said. One should however show discretion in using all maxims, including these triumphant conclusions, and only employ them where the context demands it, or at least allows it.

The *noema* is a form of terse remark which is not expressed but understood, as in the story of the man who sued his sister for damages after she had cut off his thumb while he slept, because she was tired of buying him out of the gladiatorial school. She said “you were fit to have your hand complete,” implying “so that you could go back and fight as a gladiator all your days.”⁹⁸

Hortensius’ famous remark is much the same, I think. He said he had never been reconciled with his mother or sister, which gives one to understand that he had never quarrelled with them.

There are novel types of maxim⁹⁹ based on the unexpected, on allusion, on metaphorical uses, on using two words instead of one, on contraries. Examples of these may be found in Quintilian by anyone who wants them.

Elaboration

There is a certain affinity between the type of maxim which, as I showed above, consists of four subsections and the procedure known as “elaboration.”¹⁰⁰ In this we dwell for some time on the same point, vary the same maxim in all kinds of different ways, and thus enrich it. We may employ variation in language, expressing

⁹⁸See Quintilian 8.5.12. [Tr.]

⁹⁹A very compressed recollection of Quintilian 8.5.15–18. [Tr.]

¹⁰⁰See *Ad Herennium* 4.42.54–8. [Tr.]

the same sentiment in different words and different figures of speech; or variation in delivery, using different facial expressions, gestures, and tone of voice; or variation in treatment, first saying something in our own person, then putting it into the mouth of someone who expresses it rather differently; or we can put forward an argument coolly, and then produce it in a fierce and heated manner.

A complete "elaboration" contains seven parts: statement, reason, rephrasing of statement (to which one can add the reason restated), statement from the contrary, comparison, illustrative example, conclusion. Here is a specimen.¹⁰¹ The wise man will shirk no danger required by his country, because it often happens that a man who refuses to perish for his country of necessity perishes with it; and, since all blessings are received as the gift of our native land, no burden should be considered irksome when borne for our native land. (This is the first part, where the basic statement is simply set out and supported by its reasons. Next comes the rephrased statement, expanded by an equal or greater number of reasons.) For men are fools to run away from a danger that must needs be faced for the country's sake (statement—reason) because such a danger cannot be escaped, and because to do so reveals them as ungrateful to the state. (Next comes the section using the contrary statement.) The really wise men are those who at peril to themselves ward off the perils of their native land—(reasons) as they both render the state the respect they owe it, and prefer to perish for the multitude rather than with it. (Now we get opposites.) It is quite indefensible to surrender to nature, when you are forced, that life which you indeed received from nature but preserved by means of the state, and to refuse to give that life freely to the state when you are asked; to prefer, when you could perish for your country with courage and honor, to live in shame and cowardice; to be prepared to face danger for friends and parents and relations, to be unprepared to enter into peril for the state, which holds within itself every name revered by men, including the revered name of

¹⁰¹The whole example is taken from *Ad Herennium* 4.44.57. Erasmus merely interposes his own comments. [Tr.]

Fatherland. (Next we have a comparison.) Just as we rightly despise a voyager who prefers his own safety to that of the ship, so we execrate a man who, when the state is in peril, consults his own safety rather than the safety of all. (Now we put in the kind of parallel in which we move towards something bigger.) When a ship has been wrecked, many have often escaped unharmed; no one can swim away with his life from the wreck of the ship of state. (Now an illustrative example.) This was well understood by Decius, who, according to the story, vowed his own life, and to preserve the legions hurled himself into the midst of the enemy. (Next some maxims.) He parted with his life; he did not lose it. In return for something of little worth, he bought something of great value. He gave his life; he received his country. He gave his soul, and received a glory which, transmitted with renown from times long past, each day shines forth ever more splendidly. (Finally we have the conclusion as a kind of epilogue.) If we have proved by reasoning and demonstrated by example that one should embrace danger for the sake of the state, we must consider those men wise who shirk no danger that involves the safety of their native land.

Boys being trained in *copia* may be usefully exercised with themes of this sort—although I do not myself care much for this particular example either, which I have again taken from the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, except that it does at least illustrate the method. It could be expanded even further if you piled in several rephrasings and reasons to go with them, several similes, and several examples. . . .

Scriptural Allegories

Whenever we are endeavoring to turn men towards piety or from wickedness, we shall find very useful anecdotes drawn from the Old or the New Testament, that is from the Gospels. The hidden meaning of these can be variously handled; it can be explained in terms of human life, or of the body of the church joined and connected to Christ the head, or of the fellowship of heaven, or of those early days when the faith was newborn, or of our own times. However, I shall deal at greater length and in more detail with this subject

in a short work I have in hand on scriptural allegories.¹⁰²

All these types I have mentioned are to be classed as “examples.” I have spent rather a long time on this subject because it is from this depository in particular that the equipment for *copia* is drawn. There are however still a few points I should deal with briefly before leaving the topic altogether.

Assembling Illustrative Material

First of all, my earlier remarks have shown how any illustrative example you choose may be variously incorporated by means of a simile, contrary, comparison, hyperbole, epithet, likeness, metaphor, or allegory. I shall now show by what means we may acquire an ample supply of examples, have them ready in our pocket so to speak. What I shall advise is not so much impressive as useful, and I only wish I had carried it out long ago in my own youth (for it occurred to me even then), as I see how much my first efforts at writing would have gained in weight had I done so. However, a generous spirit does not grudge to young people of promise either what was denied oneself by fortune or what one failed to acquire by application.

Having made up your mind to cover the whole field of literature in your reading (and anyone who wishes to be thought educated must do this at least once in his life), first provide yourself with a full list of subjects. These will consist partly of the main types and subdivisions of vice and virtue, partly of the things of most prominence in human affairs which frequently occur when we have a case to put forward, and they should be arranged according to similars and opposites. Related topics naturally suggest what comes next in the list, and one remembers opposites in the same way.

¹⁰²Perhaps a reference to *Ratio Verae Theologiae* (1518), which uses the “tropological” method of scriptural exposition, as does also *Commentarius in Psalmum 1* (1515); LB V 75ff, 171ff. With certain reservations Erasmus accepted the conventional distinctions between literal and spiritual interpretation of Scripture. In *Enchiridion* (1503) he emphasized the danger of excessive literalism (LB V 8D–E, 29B–F). See also *Ecclesiastes*, his treatise on preaching (and last major publication, 1535), LB V 1026C–56E). [Tr.]

Suppose for the sake of example that the first heading is “Reverence and Irreverence.” To these will be subjoined the related subordinate types. Under “Reverence” we shall have different sorts of proper feeling: reverence towards God, patriotism towards one’s country, love for children, respect for parents or for those whom one should honor as parents, such as teachers and those whose generosity has preserved us. The opposite of this is “Irreverence,” and related to both is “Superstition,” so that should be added here. A wide field now opens up covering outlandish forms of worship, and the different rites of various peoples, also the foolish indulgence of parents towards children, which is a misdirected love for the child.

The next heading could be “Faith,” which you might subdivide into faith in God, human faith, faithfulness to friends, of servants to masters, good faith towards enemies; and “Faithlessness” could be likewise subdivided. Then could come “Beneficence,” and after you have listed its subdivisions, “Gratitude,” which is not a subsection of beneficence, nor its opposite, but its consequence and so naturally associated with it.

These topics can be developed through all the standard treatments: what reverence is, how it differs from other virtues, what is its particular characteristic, by what activities it is demonstrated or violated, what nourishes or destroys it, what advantages it brings to man. Here a whole field of illustrative examples and judgments opens up.

But each person should draw up a list of virtues and vices to suit himself, whether he looks for his examples in Cicero or Valerius Maximus or Aristotle or St. Thomas. If he prefers, he can make his list alphabetical—it does not matter much; although I would not have him putting into his lists every smallest hair-splitting subdivision of a topic, but only those that look as if they will often be of use in speaking. This can be discovered by looking at the topics that occur in various types of speech, epideictic, deliberative, and judicial. The headings in Valerius Maximus are mostly of this sort, and quite a lot of those in Pliny.

Topics that do not come under the head of vices and virtues belong partly to “examples,”

partly to "commonplaces." The first group covers things like: remarkable longevity, vigorous old age, old head on young shoulders, remarkable happiness, remarkable memory, sudden change of fortune, sudden death, self-inflicted death, horrible death, monstrous births, remarkable eloquence, remarkable wealth, famous men of humble birth, cunning, remarkable physical strength, remarkable beauty, outstanding mind in ugly body, and so on. To each of these heads should be attached their opposites and things associated with them: remarkable eloquence has as its opposite remarkable inarticulateness, and associated with it sweetness of voice, grace of movement, histrionic ability, and so on.

"Commonplaces" covers things like: It is very important what interests you develop as a boy; It matters what company you keep; His own is fair in each man's eyes; Offense is easy, reconciliation hard; The safest course is to believe no one; Love as one soon to hate, hate as one soon to love; He gives twice who gives readily; Each man manufactures his own fortune; The wrath of kings moves slowly; The friendship of princes is perilous; War is pleasant to those who have not experienced it;¹⁰³ A shared kingdom is insecure; The best provision for old age is learning. But what is the point of going on quoting these when there are thousands of them? One must choose from them the ones that seem most suited to speeches.

"Commonplaces" also includes stock comparisons like: Is the married or unmarried state happier? private or public life? Is monarchy preferable to democracy? Is the life of the student better than that of the uneducated?

Any of the commonplaces I quoted above which seem to have some affinity with virtue or vice can be listed under the appropriate heading. For example, under "Liberality" one could include things like these: He gives twice who gives readily; Nothing costs more than the thing for which you must beg; A service given to the worthy does a service to the giver; No gift is wasted as much as one bestowed on the ungrateful; The value of a kindness is destroyed if it is made a ground for reproach.

¹⁰³"Dulce bellum inexpertis," the title of one of Erasmus' most important writings against war, *Adagia* IV 1. [Tr.]

In order to avoid confusion caused by a disorganized mass of material, it will be a good thing to subdivide sections that cover a wide range. "Liberality," for example, could be subdivided as follows: benefits performed promptly and quickly, suitable benefits, benefits bestowed on the worthy and the unworthy, kindness made a ground for reproach, mutual benefit; and everything else which you may consider more suitable, for I am just giving a few examples to illustrate what I mean.

So prepare for yourself a sufficient number of headings, and arrange them as you please, subdivide them into the appropriate sections, and under each section add your commonplaces and maxims; and then whatever you come across in any author, particularly if it is rather striking, you will be able to note down immediately in the proper place, be it an anecdote or a fable or an illustrative example or a strange incident or a maxim or a witty remark or a remark notable for some other quality or a proverb or a metaphor or a simile.

This has the double advantage of fixing what you have read more firmly in your mind, and getting you into the habit of using the riches supplied by your reading. Some people have much material stored up so to speak in their vaults, but when it comes to speaking or writing they are remarkably ill-supplied and impoverished. A third result is that whatever the occasion demands, you will have the materials for a speech ready to hand, as you have all the pigeonholes duly arranged so that you can extract just what you want from them.

No discipline is so remote from rhetoric that you cannot use it to enrich your collection. Mathematics seems utterly remote, yet it will provide you with comparisons: the sphere totally consistent with itself, the square standing firm with its four right angles whichever way it falls, with which one can compare the wise man, entirely self-reliant, independent, firm, and unshaken in his virtue whatever the onslaughts of fortune. To say nothing at the moment of the fact that the theologians frequently look to mathematics when expounding mysteries because of the hidden analogy between things and numbers.

Natural science provides not only similes but

examples. A simile of this type would be: As the lightning most often strikes the tops of hills, so the position of highest authority is exposed to the worst misfortunes; or, As lightning liquifies bronze but leaves wax untouched, even so a prince should show the utmost severity to the rebellious and disobedient, but display clemency to all others. If one wished to inculcate modesty and reticence in pleasure even in the properly married, one could use as an example the elephant, which out of self-respect mates in concealment. Or to urge the care with which parents should guard and train those first vulnerable years of childhood, one could cite dolphins, which accompany their offspring until they are quite grown up, and do not allow their young to go anywhere unless an older dolphin is with them as tutor and chaperon.

So our student will flit like a busy bee through the entire garden of literature, will light on every blossom, collect a little nectar from each, and carry it to his hive. Since there is such an abundance of material that one cannot gather everything, he will at least take the most striking and fit this into his scheme of work.

Some material can serve not only diverse but contrary uses, and for that reason must be recorded in different places. For example, if you are describing the incurable greed of a miser, you may properly bring in the tale of Charybdis; but if you are talking of insatiable gluttony or woman's inexhaustible lust Charybdis will fit again. Likewise, Aesop's fable about the goat and the fox getting into the water-hole together will do either to illustrate forethought, which means that you do not embark on an enterprise without first considering how you may get out of it, or to exemplify false friends who appear to be consulting a friend's interest but are really doing the best they can for themselves.

The death of Socrates¹⁰⁴ can be used to show that death holds no fear for a good man, since he drank the hemlock so cheerfully; but also to show that virtue is prey to ill will and far from safe amidst a swarm of evils; or again that the study of philosophy is useless or even harmful

¹⁰⁴For all this material on Socrates see Plato *Crito* and *Phaedo*; also *Adagia* III iii 1. [Tr.]

unless you conform to general patterns of behavior.

This same incident can be turned to Socrates' praise or blame. He deserves praise for showing such a courageous contempt for death when condemned for no fault of his own but purely out of animosity; he is to be blamed, inasmuch as by his useless pursuit of philosophy and disregard of accepted standards he caused bitter grief to his friends, disaster to his wife and children, and destruction to himself, while others are useful to their country, and are an ornament as well as a support to their families; and for that reason the duty of the true philosopher is at some point to abandon the crabbed precepts of philosophy and accommodate himself to the interests and opinions of the majority, to serve the times, as the saying goes.

If you look at this example of Socrates and determine its successive scenes, how many subject headings you will thus elicit! First of all, we find Socrates accused out of ill will by Anytus and Meletus, two most undesirable individuals. This suggests the subject: Truth begets hatred; or Outstanding virtue earns ill will; or Juries often take more account of noble birth than honest character; or There is nothing more shameless than wealth allied to bad character. (For what could be more preposterous than to have Socrates brought to court by men discredited by every crime imaginable?) Another subject could be: Not every act befits all equally. It was for this reason that Socrates did not throw himself on the jury's mercy, for it was not fitting that a man who throughout his life had taught that death should not be viewed with horror unless it was shameful, should now sink to abject entreaties, apparently through fear of death. This too was the reason why he did not do anything to avoid being brought to court in the first place, did not halfway through the trial opt for exile, and finally would not agree to escape from the prison though the chance was offered him, lest he should appear to be deserting his own principles. This is just the first section.

Then when we find him engaging in philosophical discussion so calmly and unhurriedly as his execution rapidly drew near, and drinking the hemlock as cheerfully as he would wine, and,

just before he died, joking with Phaedo and reminding him to sacrifice a cock to Aesculapius, this suggests the topic: Death is even desirable to those who are conscious of a well-spent life; or this one: The nature of a man's life is revealed most clearly at his death. This is a good illustrative example of a steadfast and entirely consistent life, since Socrates when faced with imminent death looked and spoke just as he had done throughout his whole life.

The third section tells us that, while Socrates was in prison, there was no sign of Alcibiades, Agathon, and Phaedrus, but only of Crito, Phaedo, and Simmias. This leads to the thought that danger reveals who one's real friends are, for those everyday friends whose presence we have when nothing out of the ordinary is required look to themselves at such times.

In the fourth section he spends a long time discussing the immortality of the soul with his friends, but sends away his wife and family after giving them a few instructions. This gives us the heading: The philosopher should not be deeply involved in human relationships. (This tallies splendidly with the teaching of Christ.)

The fifth section shows the crowd immediately after Socrates' death turning its fury on his accusers, and setting up a golden statue to the Socrates whose loss they now regret. From this we may extract the heading: Fickle is the love or hate of the crowd; or this: Virtue's present form we hate / But when 'tis gone, in discontent / We seek it then—too late; or this: Counterfeit glory vanishes with the life, but the splendor of true virtue grows ever brighter after death.

All this makes it quite plain, I think, how many purposes the same illustrative example can serve.

The same is true of the simile. What a wealth of parallels can be derived from ships and sailing! Just as storms demonstrate the good helmsman, so reverses reveal the good general. No one entrusts the rudder to his closest friend but to the expert in navigation; even so no one will hand over the direction of the ship of state to his favorite, but to the man he considers most competent. Even as the crew take in the sails when a following wind blows too strongly, and spread them when the wind is less favorable, likewise

when all is prosperity, the spirit must be curbed to keep it from arrogance; yet when fortune is hostile, it must be expanded and strengthened by courage and hope of better things to come. Again: When we cannot hold a straight course ahead through the storm, we must take a round-about route and make for our goal just the same. When the uncontrolled violence of a storm is too much for the sailors' skill, they furl the sails and drop anchor; in like manner, one must sometimes cease to resist the raging mob until such time as it becomes ready to listen and manageable. As the sailor does not hold his sail always in the same position but raises it or lowers it, or swings it to this side or that to match the way the wind blows, even so the wise man should not at all times and in all places and in all situations keep the tenor of his life unchanged, but should accommodate to present circumstances his expression, his words, his behavior. As in great storms the most experienced sailors take suggestions even from the inexperienced because in a crisis like this different ideas occur to different people, even so a good king in great national dangers will be willing to listen to anyone's advice. When the danger is slight, the steering is still done by a man who has been tossed in grave dangers; even so, the state is safest when headed by a leader who has been tested in serious situations. Just as the helmsman does not consider he is properly performing his function unless he looks about him and tells each man what he should do, so no one properly acts the prince unless he directs and assumes responsibility for the functions of all his subordinate ministers. Any sailor would be crazy who allowed the vessel to be lost because of his hatred of some of the passengers, seeing that he could not survive himself if the ship foundered; likewise, any man is insane if he does not guard the safety of his country because of some party feeling, since he himself cannot remain in safety if the country is destroyed. As sailors drop the sheet anchor only in the most violent tempests, so one should not resort to the final remedy unless in the gravest peril when all hope is practically gone.

But it is foolish to go on like this, as you can see by now that this one topic can be the source of thousands of similes.

Quite often one aspect of a simile can be applied to various purposes. For example, the frequent changes of the moon can be used for the vicissitudes of fortune, or the mutability of human life, or the irresolution of the foolish. One basic idea can be adapted to various uses: A merry companion is a wagon in the way; Life is pleasanter if one does not pass it alone, but joins with pleasant and cheerful friends; One should always carry a good book, so that one can dispel boredom by reading; If a happy spirit and a clear conscience go with you, no part of life will ever be wearisome; The best companion on a journey is one who speaks of happy things; if he constantly reminds you of unpleasantnesses, he wears you to death.

The same is true of proverbs and sayings, and the use of these I demonstrated at the beginning of my own collection of proverbs.

Some extracts must therefore be written out in more than one place, or at least jotted down, for sometimes it will be sufficient to indicate the contents by a word or two accompanied by a reference to the source, especially if it is something that cannot be set out properly in a few words.

To make the whole thing clearer by means of an example, I shall take the heading "Changeableness" or "Irresolution," and see how much material I can collect under it. I shall start with the poets and take from them the god Mercury, a cunning divinity, whom we find assuming various shapes, and operating now among the gods, now in the underworld, now among men, and performing various functions, sometimes playing the part of Ganymede as Jove's cup-bearer or carrying messages, conducting the souls of the dead to Charon, giving help to businessmen and advocates, and playing his lyre or employing his wand. He has a parti-colored hat, and rejoices in names of all kinds. These occur in Aristophanes' *Plutus*, where he is called *στροφαῖος* [versatile], *ἐμπολαῖος* [trafficking], *δόλιος* [wily], *ἡγεμόνιος* [guiding], *ἐναγώνιος* [games-presiding]. In Homer and Hesiod he is *διάχτορος* [Guide] and *Ἀργειφόντης* [Slayer of Argos]. He is also called God of Cyllene and *ἐριούνιος* [Bringer of Luck]. I shall also take the good Vertumnus, who gets his name from the fact that he is continually changing (*vertere*) his form, and also Proteus who

transforms himself into all kinds of incredible things. I shall take Empusa from Aristophanes' *Frogs*, a kind of demon continually presenting itself under different shapes, also Morpheus, assuming any appearance he chooses, and Circe transforming men into various animal shapes with her spells and magic wand (for bad men do not act consistently but are prey to shifting emotions); I shall take *Καιρός* [Opportunity],¹⁰⁵ the mobile god who never stays the same, and one like him, if you will, the Rhamnusia goddess.¹⁰⁶ I shall take Jove, transformed into an eagle, swan, bull, or shower of gold, and Chimaera with the head of a lion, torso of a woman, tail of a dragon, and that variegated monster which Horace invents right at the beginning of the *Ars poetica*. I shall bring in two-faced Janus, and three-bodied Geryon, and Bacchus, to whom the poets attribute *εὐήθεια*, that is a volatile and complaisant nature (and that is how Aristophanes depicts him in the *Frogs*), and any other figures in the poets which exemplify prodigious variety. I shall bring Ulysses, adopting different characters according to the circumstances, which is why Homer, right at the beginning of his poem, calls him *πολύτροπος* [versatile].

Next I shall turn to science, and use the image of the moon which never returns the same in appearance as before, but is half-full, or full, old, new, pale, reddish, whitish, now precedes the sun, now follows him from behind. I shall use the image of the sky different in spring or autumn, now cloudy, now clear, now calm, now boisterous with winds. I shall extract the simile of the sea continually ebbing and flowing with the alternating tides, especially the Euripus which surges

¹⁰⁵The fleeting decisive moment which must be seized by the forelock as it passes; the divinity was variously represented in Renaissance art with wings, a precariously balanced pair of scales, a lock of hair, and, by fusion with the figure of Fortune, as standing on a wheel or a ball; see *Adagia* I vii 70: "Nosce tempus," where Erasmus quotes both Posidippus' epigram (*Anthologia Palatina* 16.275) on Lysippus' statue of *Καιρός*, and Ausonius' (epigram 33) on *Occasio* where the wheel is already present. [Tr.]

¹⁰⁶Nemesis, so called from her celebrated shrine at Rhamnus in Attica; her function was to punish presumption and overconfidence by turning prosperity to misfortune, in which her activities resembled those of the fickle goddess Fortune; *Adagia* II vi 38. [Tr.]

back and forth seven times each day and night. I shall add the polyp, whose changeableness has become proverbial, and the chameleon constantly changing its color, the panther and the pard with their parti-colored spots, and any other animals of the same sort, also the slippery snake, and childhood whose moods change from hour to hour, the peculiar inconstancy of women, the crowd veering at the slightest impulse, the wonderful mobility of quicksilver, the reed bowing to every breeze, the lightness of dry leaves, feathers, shavings, the soft pliable nature of wax, the shifting images of dreams, the mobility of wheels, the weather-vane set atop towers and church spires to record as it swings around the direction of the wind, the pans of the scale lightly dipping to this side and to that, and mosaic work with the wonderful variety of all its little different colored stones.

Some similes can be invented, like comparing the mind of the inconstant man, thinking first of one thing then another, to a reflecting globe hung up in a busy market place, and mirroring a constant succession of different figures as the crowd moves to and fro, or to a glass which appears to take on any color you put beneath it, or to an iron pendulum oscillating to and fro without stopping under the influence of a positive and a negative magnet, or to a ball rolling about on a flat surface.

From the non-fictional writers I shall borrow the inborn lightmindedness of the Greeks, which Juvenal describes; the slippery loyalty of the Allobroges, the Carthaginians of like inconstancy of character, the Scythians changing their pastures daily and having no fixed abode, the rod of Moses changing into one thing after another; Aristippus, playing any part you like, who "was suited by every shade of life," as Horace says, wearing the Cynic's cloak or royal purple as the case may be; also the ἡμίλευχος [half-white man] mentioned by Lucian, Catiline with his incompatible characteristics out of Sallust, Hannibal from Livy and Valerius Maximus¹⁰⁷ (both Catiline and Hannibal displayed a quite different

¹⁰⁷Both authors relate incidents illustrating, for example, Hannibal's skill as a general and his magnanimity, also his superhuman cruelty. [Tr.]

tenor of life in youth and old age), Tigellius out of Horace's third satire:

No consistency that fellow had;
Often he passed as if fleeing for his life,
More often still with solemn gait he paced
Like one bearing Juno's holy symbols.

Comedy will provide us with an example of female inconsistency when Sostrata in the *Adelphi* says "Why man, you must be mad. / Do you consider this a thing to tell abroad?" and then a few lines later says "Not for all the world will I do that. / I'll tell it out." The inconstancy of lovers is demonstrated by Phaedria, who goes to the country and suddenly comes back, the inconstancy of youth by Antipho in the *Phormio*. It would however take too long to pursue this topic properly.

From tragedy I shall borrow Phaedra arguing with herself and changing her mind, now willing, now unwilling; and Medea too, before she murders her children, swayed by different emotions; Byblis and Narcissus from Ovid; and Dido from Virgil at the point where Aeneas is preparing his departure. The poets provide us with countless characters of this type all over their writings.

From fables I shall bring in the countryman who could blow hot and cold from the one mouth to the amazement of the satyr. I could go on, but for the moment I am only illustrating the method. From proverbs I shall borrow τὴν παναγαίαν Ἄρτεμιν [ever-wandering Artemis], ἀνέμου πεδῖον [a field for the wind], εὐμεταβολώτερος χοθόρνου [more adaptable than an actor's sock], ὕδρου ποιχιλότερος [more pied than a water-snake], Λιβυχὸν θηρίον [a Libyan beast] and so on. (I have given the sources for all these in my *Adagia*.) A rolling stone gathers no moss. A tree that is always being moved does not flourish. From apophthegms I shall quote the remark made against Cicero: "to sit in two seats at once," and Sallust's comment on him (written, not spoken), "He says one thing standing up and another sitting down." From Homer we have ἄλλοπρόσ-αλλος [on different sides at different times]—this is the word he uses of the War God when he is favoring neither side definitely, but supporting first one party, then the other. From Ovid, I think, "Constant only in fickleness"; from Horace,

“Lighter than bark,” and “Turn round to square and square again to round,” and “At Rome, as fickle as the wind, / It’s Tivoli I love, at Tivoli it’s Rome”; from Plautus; “lighter than a water-spider”; from Terence’s *Phormio*, “I will, I won’t—I won’t, I will—what’s said is unsaid again,” and so on; from Euripides, “Your mind does not run straight—this you think now, / but something else you thought before, and soon / Will think something else again.”

By now it is clear, I should think, what a wealth of equipment in this line also we can discover out of all the writers at our disposal.

The same considerations apply to maxims, which one may not only extract from authors but invent according to one’s requirements. If you contrast each of these with its opposite, and subjoin related ideas to both headings, you can see what a vast store of speech will be laid up. As all this has so many applications (as I shall explain in detail in my work *De conscribendis epistolis*), there is nothing which you will not be able to apply somehow to the enrichment of your speech. Even opposite ideas can be brought in through irony, or by the adducing of a contrast, or by a comparison. It would be irony if one called Socrates a man who never agreed with himself, when throughout his whole life he was always seen with the same expression. It would be contrast if one said that Julius Caesar never regretted anything he did,¹⁰⁸ whereas this man never decreed anything that he did not before long rescind; a comparison if one said that it was just as difficult to make the famous Cato, whom Cicero calls inflexible, abandon his opinion as to make this man keep to his.

It is easy to modify related ideas and adapt them to neighboring concepts. To take Persius’

¹⁰⁸Erasmus specifically says Julius Caesar; according to Suetonius, Titus on his death-bed said: *neque enim exstare ullum suum factum paenitendum excepto dumtaxat uno* (Titus 10). [Tr.]

phrase, “Live in your own house.” This properly applies to one aiming higher than his lot in life allows, but since being discontented with one’s lot has affinities with inconstancy of mind, it can be wrested in this direction, especially when Seneca writes: “It seems to me a strong indication of a well-ordered mind to be able to stay at home and keep oneself company.”

One can even twist material to serve the opposite purpose. If you were praising a man for all seasons, endowed with a versatile and dexterous mind, you could dip into your “inconstancy” cupboard and bring out the polyp which changes color according to the surface beneath it, and then the Euripus, saying that this sea is not so versatile as this man’s mind. You could bring out the flame which cannot stand still, the sky which constantly presents a different face, the reed bending according as the breezes blow, and say that it is the mark of a wise man to change his views and his way of life according to events, circumstances, places. Only senseless rocks and the brute earth do not move. Of living creatures, those that are most impressive are the most mobile. In the universe things are nobler the further they are from immobility: earth which does not move is the lowest, then comes water which does move, then air which moves more, then fire which moves even more than air, and finally the heaven which moves most of all. This is why the ancients called the mind of man wind and fire, but the stupid, slow, and foolish they called stones and lead, things to which the word “immovability” is particularly applicable.

By means of passages of this sort you will be able to divert much of your equipment of “constancy” to purposes of blame, and that for “inconstancy” to praise. But as I said a short while ago, this will be dealt with more opportunely elsewhere.

Now I shall deal with the remaining methods of expansion.

From *Ecclesiastes*

From *Book II*

I. (247.4–250.80)

Anyone who through God's generosity possesses the characteristics that I mentioned in the previous book would have very little need for verbose instructions and advice, since that pure and perfect state of mind automatically supplies, even to someone who is not seeking them, the eloquence suitable to sacred subjects, not to mention the appropriate pronunciation and becoming gestures. Somehow or other the inner appearance of a mind is transferred into the outer man and alters him completely to its own image, in the same way that unseen ailments of the blood and internal organs reveal themselves in the body's external condition—those ailing in the liver are pale, the jaundiced turn black or yellow, those with gout flinch from pain, spastics and *apoplêktikoi* shake; and so the judgments that skilled physicians make from the eyes, the face, and the overall appearance of the body are no less certain than those made from the urine or the pulse, and the emotions of the heart are not infrequently evident in a person's external appearance. I am not talking now about insanity, about rage, about hate, about love, about modesty, fear, hope, joy, grief, and the other crude emotions that show themselves throughout the body even against our will, but also about those that are harder to judge because they are more hidden, such as humility or arrogance, fear or scorn toward God, indifference or love toward wealth, steadfastness or fickleness, modesty or immodesty, and finally those most spiritual of things, sincere faith, hope, and charity. If human conditions nearly have the power to make a man look completely different, the spirit of Christ is all the more likely to change a man's whole appearance if it occupies his heart. Do we not observe that the Holy Spirit, peaceful, mild, and ignorant of pretense, virtually gleams in the eyes and face of certain people?

Translated by James L. Butrica.

You could tell that there is already at work in them the power of a godhood which is to be completed in the resurrection, as the more powerful spirit somehow changes the very body into itself; on the other hand, those who have simply discarded their fear of God and surrendered to every impiety and every sort of crime seem to display the devil in their physical appearance.

I am concerned therefore that someone might think it foolish to mention rhetorical instructions here on the grounds that the suggestion of artistry is so detrimental to a speaker's credibility that the greatest of all orators considers the source of art to be the concealment of art; whenever someone believes that the person he is listening to is speaking artfully he is reluctant to agree because he thinks that the artist is setting a trap for him, and his attention is concentrated on observing how skillful or how clever his words are, not how salutary. But if we take note that a good many men who had absolutely no acquaintance with artistry have been quite eloquent and thus accept the opinion of certain ancient writers who said that rhetoric was nothing more than thoughtfulness in speaking, I do not see what use rhetorical teaching will bring to a preacher, given that we want him to be a man of outstanding goodness and divinely instructed and endowed with evangelical discretion. By the same reasoning, however, a preacher would not have to learn dialectic, an art so closely related to rhetoric that it is almost the same—if we believe Zeno, who demonstrated the difference by closing, then extending his hand. And yet there is no art that is taught in schools in a more precise and more serious manner than this one, even though—besides its deceitful subtleties and the dangerous nooses of its *paralogisms* [fallacious arguments]—it seems actually to compel and to drag a man by force, bound in chains, as it were, toward its own point of view. But who would trust a schemer, and how many would not prefer being led to being dragged?

But a preacher should come with these skills already learned rather than be learning them, and

should have them learned rather than thoroughly learned, in order to avoid the fate of those many individuals who, as the study becomes daily more appealing, grow old there as if at the Sirens' rocks. These studies suit childhood, though at the same time it is very important that they be imparted soberly, and the nature of the training has a very considerable impact. Those who teach dialectic and other philosophical subjects do substantial harm to boys' talents, since they fail to consider what is useful for their pupils rather than for the display of their own learning and train them more for the wrestling ring than for war, and consequently, by tormenting them with their pointless complications and riddles, they inflict three kinds of damage on their tender minds. First, they often deter the nobler talents from these disciplines. Next, they waste time (which is as valuable as it is fleeting), since the time could have been spent learning something else that it is useful to know. Finally, they cause them to seem more truly inept than trained when they get to serious business, in the same way that few men are more inept for real warfare than those who have learned and have spent their life teaching the art of sword-fighting. In their school they have learned how to cut an arrow with a sword before it reaches its target: but in war the person who is getting ready to shoot does not forewarn the one he is about to attack, and the rules of the swordsman's school are not observed there. Yet it would be useful to have a sound training in these disciplines right from childhood and to have applied the training to the function for which the youth has been intended. As well, someone who is intended for pleading cases in court or for undertaking princes' embassies and someone who is being prepared for sacred oratory should not be trained in the same way even within the same discipline, just as someone who is being trained for the schools must be exercised in dialectic differently from someone who is being trained for theology. Through sound instruction in these disciplines and their appropriate exercise one acquires a certain mental dexterity when it comes to both correct judgment and ease in speaking; when this ability has been acquired through human effort, the richer grace of the Spirit comes over it and,

rather than depleting it, it completes it, rather than taking it away, it assists it. Just as it displays its energy more impressively through an exceptional natural endowment when it finds one (precisely as an outstanding artist displays his artistry more exactly and to happier effect in impressive and tractable material), so that heavenly Spirit not only does not scorn our effort but even demands it, and it does not disdain having its gifts assisted in turn by our own application, so long as no wicked self-confidence is present.

II. (268.484–274.594)

The direction of my discussion reminds us to sample some of the rhetoricians' precepts that seem appropriate to the preacher's function, something that St. Augustine before us attempted in a part of his work *On Christian Learning*. Even if he had omitted nothing, the very different nature of the times still requires simpler and plainer instruction in certain topics.

First of all, then, out of those things that rhetoricians present for immediate consideration—the character of the art, the identity of the artist, the nature of the work—we gladly surrender the claim of artistry, since those very men who have written about the precepts of eloquence are themselves uncertain whether rhetoric is an art, and the greatest father of eloquence concedes that the essence of the art is to conceal its art. But what sort of art is this that harms if it is not concealed? Though we grant that the eloquence of a sacred preacher is not a matter of artistry, let us concede nevertheless that there needs to be a method and an understanding of oratory which consists of judgment and of counsel, and the heavenly Spirit, through whose inspiration the preacher talks, does not scorn human effort so long as it be sober; in the words of that divine orator Paul, “The spirits of the prophets were subject to the prophets.” In the previous book we said enough about the artist, who is the preacher, certainly as far as character and sacred teaching are concerned; here we shall touch briefly upon his duties in speaking and upon the parts of his work, after a brief treatment of his material.

The forensic type is quite remote from the function of the preacher, who is dealing with

human consciences, not with judges, and is treating divine oracles, not human laws, and is not pleading the cases of particular men but accusing in general the consciences of all those who live badly and assisting the consciences of all those who are merely in error or are grieving or are oppressed by some heavy affliction; and his concern is not with winning a human judge's support for some particular accused but with winning over everyone alike for God.

All the same, there are many things for this type which are also useful in the suatorial type and in others, such as the fact that an argument has a main point, which rhetoricians call its *status*. Keeping this in view will make our words internally consistent and prevent us saying something irrelevant and contradicting ourselves in the way that often happens to thoughtless people, with the result that an intelligent listener rightly mutters to himself Horace's words,

It was a wine jug as it started being made:
Why does a pitcher now come off the whirling
wheel?

Besides, it is infantile and pointless to brag and, in Persius' words, "everywhere follow crows with both pot and mud." Also useful would be the instructions about the circumstances of things and of persons from which both arguments and amplifications are derived in every sort of argument. Sometimes a controversy arises regarding the letter and the spirit of something, about seemingly contradictory passages of scripture, for example, about a word for something that is being approached through definition, such as when one asks what usury is, what the Law is, what grace is, or about whether something is inherently just or unjust, such as when one asks whether Abraham acted properly on the occasion when, while traveling in Gerar, he called his wife Sarah his sister and through these words prostituted his wife, so to speak, to the king of Gerar; and here will occur incidentally the conjectural *status* regarding Abraham's intention in doing this, likewise whether Lot's daughters sinned when they filched offspring from their drunken father (this is a *status* of characteristic) and, if they sinned, whether they committed incest, since it is obvious that Adam's offspring could only have been

propagated through the marriage of brother and sister (this is a *status* of definition). There are innumerable things like this in the Bible. Reasoning also occurs when no scripture offers a clear definition of the subject in question and instead God's will is inferred by reasoning from a comparison of several scriptural passages. Other *status* likewise occur, particularly the comparative, most often in language regarding no particular person, but often even when a particular person is designated.

But the preacher is especially occupied with teaching, with persuasion, with exhortation, consolation, advice and admonition. I am not unaware that teaching is involved in all cases and *status*, but I have decided to separate it for my present purpose. Our purpose in teaching is to have our hearer understand, such as when we demonstrate through scripture and through arguments that God is incorporeal, that the human soul is immortal. Our purpose in persuasion is to have our hearer want to embrace the honorable and the useful, such as when we persuade a wealthy miser to share his riches with the needy. Through exhortation we give courage to people who are persuaded but are sluggish or timid so that they are brave enough to approach what they applaud, such as when we urge the troubled to scorn the assistance of this world and commit themselves to God with complete trust. Our purpose in consolation is for them to bear the troubles of this life patiently and even eagerly. We are advising the confused when we show them how to acquire a tranquil conscience. We admonish either through criticism or through entreaty; such were the conversations that the early Christians had among themselves.

That leaves the encomiastic type, which is sometimes involved in doxology and thanksgiving, sometimes in praising the devout, especially the martyrs who have glorified God by their death. Once the congregation used to meet on certain days just for *doxologia* (this is the Greek term) and thanksgiving. There the prophet or bishop would extol in superb language God's goodness toward all creatures; the people would sing to the Lord in hymns and spiritual songs. Some psalms of this kind survive, as well as the hymn about the three boys in the furnace that im-

itates them, likewise certain songs created by later generations, among them the one sung on Palm Sunday in imitation of the Hebrew boys, and another one which is sung on the Spring holy day, and finally the one that is now sung almost daily in mass in imitation of the angels that sang at Christ's birth, "Glory to God in the highest." Hymns were added, and these are now all combined with prayers. Among these the ones by Ambrose have the highest reputation (if only many ignorant, not to say insane, ones had not been added!); some of this kind contain nothing but praying. To these was added the prose which they call the sequence. I grant that some of this kind are learned and devout, but many more are awkward and unworthy of divine worship. Though the Roman church does not allow this part, it has permitted them to the German and French students of singing, who like these additional ones so much that the important ones are passed over for their sake. The Credo is shortened, the Lord's Prayer goes unheard, and the singing of the prose, which no one understands, keeps the congregation for an entire half-hour. Verbal "tails" are added which are equal to or longer than the singing itself. Another custom that we see adopted among the early Christians is for a defunct patron or emperor to be praised publicly in church from the mouth of the priest, in the same way that distinguished men were praised publicly before the people in a funeral oration. Ambrose's two funeral orations, one praising the emperor Theodosius, the other praising Valentinian, demonstrate this; Gregory Nazianzen's monody praising St. Basil demonstrates it, as well as some of Chrysostom's homilies; and if we believe the book concerning the death of the most blessed Virgin, she was celebrated by the encomia of all the apostles in attendance. In similar fashion, the book entitled *Ecclesiasticus* pronounces the praises of distinguished men, but only those whose devotion is commended in sacred scripture. In fact the Lord Himself uses Abraham's example to rebuke the Jews; Peter invites matrons to imitate Sarah. St. Augustine was set afire for Christ by hearing about Antonius, who had just recently been on everyone's tongue and ears: for the holy are a good odor to God everywhere but also a deadly

odor to the wicked, in the same way that ointment of marjoram gives marvellous pleasure to men even though (as he says) it is also bitter poison to swine. Therefore, just as I think that encomia of certain famous men do not altogether deserve to be condemned so long as there is no human emotion and ambitious rivalry (and I add vanity as well), so I believe that our preachers should be quite sparing when it comes to imitating an example that the ancient bishops derived from a public custom of the heathens. In general, one should instruct the speaker not to dwell on the end that rhetoricians prescribe—that is, for the audience merely to have a high opinion of the person we are commending—but to direct everything toward the goal of stirring them up to imitate right deeds. But enough has been said, at least so far as the present passage is concerned, about the materials that the preacher receives; we shall deal with specific points somewhat more expansively in their own place.

III. (279.702–280.744)

Now we shall survey the orator's specific tasks, but keep in mind that we are training a herald of God's word, not a courtroom advocate. Everybody can reel these off, which are invention, arrangement, expression, memory, and performance. Invention, which supplies things, though really it embraces both expression and order: this is in language what bones are in an animal's body, that which must be firm lest all else collapse. Arrangement or order: this is in language what the sinews are in an animal's body, joining the parts of the speech in the proper manner, inasmuch as order not only makes a speech harmonious but also assists the audience's disposition to learn and the speaker's memory, since we both learn more easily and remember more accurately something that is said in a coherent order than something that is said in a scattered and confused manner (in fact, the place where everything is said is quite important for persuasion, since it is improper to entrust some things to minds without prior preparation). Plus expression, which supplies the words and figures suited to the subject: this is in language what flesh and skin are in the body, and gives a seemly covering to the

bones and sinews. Even the Bible has its own charm and attractiveness, though without a hint of pretense and allurements. "But what corresponds to memory?" you will say: breath, that is, life, in the absence of which everything collapses. Performance, like delivery and movement, is a property of a living creature; without its addition an animal will be just like a statue, and so delivery and movement are like the life of life. Even if we concede that Demosthenes was excessive in assigning first, second, and third place to delivery, it still cannot be denied that a speech pronounced in a single voice and with a single gesture, or rather with none, is something half-dead.

Nor would a preacher receive much help from what is taught about the parts of the work—the exordium, the narration, the division, the confirmation, the refutation, and the conclusion—except that these too will give the wise man a chance to become wiser.

In fact, the very majesty of the scriptures that the preacher is expounding and their uncommon usefulness (since they are about eternal joy) are capable on their own of attracting attention, a disposition to be taught, and kindness, especially among Christians. But if the forensic orator foregoes an exordium whenever the case does not require it and the normal aim of the proem has already been attained, some contemporary men are acting foolishly in never ascending the pulpit unless they have an exordium that is carefully prepared and, most absurdly of all, so very remote from their subject that it is a new speech, not an exordium, and they think that the more remote the exordium is, the better it is: experts, however, commend an exordium that is drawn from the heart of the case and is, as far as possible, proper to the theme or at least appropriate and fitting. There is no need to report examples of a faulty exordium here; they are too commonplace, and anyone who is in the habit of hearing sermons often will supply an abundance of them from memory. I personally have heard someone who used the same exordium to preach every day throughout the whole of Lent. The Virgin Mother was being praised on three accounts—because she was holy, for example, because she was a virgin, because she was prophetic; and every day

had its new set of three, as a result of which he was forced to devise many such sets, and some of these were inevitably frigid and forced. Exalting Christ's mother in praise for adoration was devout, but how was this relevant to a time of penitence?

IV. (304.365–318.773)

We will provide some advice regarding division, a word which can be understood two ways. First, "division" refers to only a single element of a speech which has a twofold function, in that it not only shows the listener where to direct his attention but also promises the topics of the address in a precise quantity and order. Take this for example: "In order to discuss Christian marriage, I shall expound as briefly as I can three things that need to be known. In the first place, I shall instruct you in the methods and rites by which a legitimate marriage should be entered into and the many reasons for which it must be sundered if it has been contracted improperly; in the second place, what a holy thing marriage is and how venerable a sacrament it is in Christ and in the Church; in the third place, what an abominable sin adultery is." But the word "division" has a broader application when it is used in place of "arrangement" or "order"; this occurs regularly throughout all the sections of an oration. We shall deal with the former now, with the latter in its place.

A promise of specific sections, though it imports considerable utility, is still not free of inconvenience. It is very much conducive to the audience's memory and disposition to learn, and it assists the speaker insofar as it involves well-defined steps to which he can return from his digressions. But it can be a hindrance to the extent that, while we are speaking, things sometimes occur to us which it is inappropriate to pass over but which do not fit any of the promised sections; thus it happens that they must be omitted to the detriment of the argument, or must be intruded quite inelegantly and roughly some place or other, not to mention that the memory of some people is so feeble that, as Cicero says (of Curio, if I am not mistaken), after promising three parts they either omit one out of forgetfulness or else

add a fourth. Hence it is safer for those who distrust their memory to present merely the gist of their theme, or at least to have the headings of their sermon at hand written out on paper. Augustine apparently did this for some of the Psalms, and perhaps even for all of them, since he has frequent and remote digressions, often speaking extemporaneously, though he was a man with a prodigiously retentive memory. Of course, someone who is going to speak must prepare an order, but he is not therefore required to promise what he has conceived in his mind. A thought can easily be amended, a promise is not so free, and so the affectation of some subtlety in a division when the material does not inherently offer an opportunity for partition and does not have an adjunct cause which requires dividing not only torments a preacher with useless work but even reduces the speaker's credibility and the sermon's appeal, since we are more willing to believe people whose heart, not their training, supplies their flow of words, and things that are commended by their novelty as recent creations are more pleasing than something promised and anticipated. But when a rather obscure or difficult theme needs to be treated, a suitable and appropriate partition will shed much light on it and will give substantial assistance to the listener's disposition to learn by picking the main points of the subject out of the crowd, so to speak, and laying them out for him to see. Similarly, if the material naturally has distinct sections, and if there is no reason why a partition should be avoided, one should shun a minutely detailed division that carves a subject into digits and pieces rather than into limbs, since a multiplicity of sections should always be avoided as far as possible because it spreads a fog even over a subject that is not naturally obscure; it hinders the audience's memory and disposition to learn, while a partition is ridiculous if it introduces or increases the very inconvenience which it is being applied to eliminate or reduce. The sections of Nicolaus of Lyra are generally like this, as are those of Thomas in expounding canonical scripture and of Jean Gerson in his compositions; in their pursuit of subtlety they sometimes carve up into many pieces subjects that are unified or at least so coherent that they are hard to separate. Many

scholastics continue this custom: they propound a mass of propositions; they draw out conclusions by explaining them; at last they produce their maxims, after obscuring the subject instead of explaining it. This manner of dividing, though it can be granted to the schools because of the subtlety of the subject, definitely does not suit the pulpit, where verbal tricks of this kind are either not to be treated or, if there is some reason why they must be touched upon, one should strive to avoid all display of subtlety and to have the actual subject propounded to the congregation as clearly and unambiguously as possible.

But to make a correct division you must identify the principal props of the argument as a whole. These should be promised in the division—no more than three, in the opinion of some, but this need not be observed if the argument has been demarcated by several sections or if we are replying to someone who has proposed specific parts. It can be observed as long as one promises the fewest possible, but if some of the parts are quite minute, it is unnecessary to promise them in the division—it will suffice to add them to the general ones through subdivision while treating them. For example, to speak a eulogy of any saint, he will be able to partition as follows: "I shall explain to you what he was like toward God, toward himself, toward his neighbor." The first part has many subject parts; for example, devotion toward God is distinguished according to a variety of duties, just as governing one's own body and moderating the appetites can be divided into many parts. The word "neighbor" already embraces parents, spouse, children, teachers, relatives, citizens, friends and foes, and each of these parts has many subdivisions. Similarly, if somebody wanted to exhort toward fasting and mentions explicitly in his division all the benefits that arise from fasting, he will produce confusion, not parts, for they are countless. It will suffice to make the following general proposition: "I shall show that there are many reasons why fasting, which most men dread as something harmful and grim, should be embraced. First, nothing is better than devotion; the soul finds fasting useful for this purpose. Some rank good health first among possessions, and fasting assists this in the most marvellous way. Finally, a good part of the

human race deems the possession of wealth a major part of happiness and dreads poverty; sobriety also assists the faculties that debauchery diminishes." But in your treatment you need to distinguish all the ways in which fasting is conducive to devotion: because it thins the body and renders the mind more suitable for sacred teaching and for praying and for contemplating the heavenly; it increases devotion in the devout, reconciles penitents to God; likewise it produces multiple benefits for our bodies, whether because it protects them from the countless illnesses that debauchery spawns or because it cures or alleviates illnesses that are already attacking, often more effectively than physicians' drugs—for all the most experienced physicians, especially in Italy, prescribe nothing but fasting (they regard it as more useful than what the Germans do, who are quick either to cut a vein or to prescribe hot baths); moreover, it renders more delightful those very pleasures that people seek, for after a fast sleep is sweeter and relaxation more pleasant, and intercourse with one's wife more enjoyable and even more fertile, because drunkenness not only numbs the perception of that pleasure but also renders bodies less suitable for procreation; in fact, even a chat with friends is sweeter on a fast than when burdened with a hangover; finally, since pleasure is perceived through the five external senses, each sense brings the more delight in accordance with its function: the eyes see more clearly, the ears hear more sharply, the tongue stumbles less and distinguishes flavors better, the sense of smell is keener in the nostrils, the faculty of touch is more precise in all the limbs.

So it would be a foolish division if someone desiring to deliver an encomium of St. Francis were to promise that "I shall show sixty virtues in Francis in which he outstripped the other saints" and were to list them explicitly in his division when it is enough to promise that he will show that the saint should be compared or even preferred to the principal saints in many considerable virtues. Or, if he wants to urge a mother not to give her infant to someone else for nursing but to use her own breasts to nourish what she bore, he will not present all the forms of his propositions: "First I shall show that driving an infant from its mother's breasts is against nature, which

has given to every animal the nourishment with which to raise its young. Second, I shall show that it is against the teaching of holy scripture and the examples of the devout. Third, I shall demonstrate that those who refuse to nourish their offspring do not even deserve to be called mother or, if they are mothers, they are barely half-mothers. Fourth, I shall say that it is absurd for a woman who nourished something in her womb not to want to nourish something that is now a human being and crying for its mother's help. Fifth, I shall teach that banishing a newborn infant from oneself is hardly less wicked than expelling an unborn one through an abortion induced by drugs. Sixth, I shall show that the unwillingness to raise what you bore is a kind of exposing; the exposed often survive, but many infants die by the fault of their hired nursemaids. Seventh, I shall show that the vigor and flame of innate devotion, which is the greatest virtue, is largely extinguished between parents and children because of this banishing of infants and is transferred to the nursemaids. Eighth, I shall say that unfamiliar milk often harms the infants' bodies if the woman hired is sickly, or has tainted milk, or if she expresses the liquid of her milk more sparingly than necessary because she is using her breasts to nourish a number of babies. Ninth, I am going to prove that it is improbable that some woman hired for money will take the same care of another's infant as its true mother, who is so stirred to her duty by natural affection that she not only feels no annoyance but even does with pleasure everything that seems bothersome to people who are unrelated. Tenth, I shall teach you that, even disregarding all of the above, it is still impossible for someone else's milk to help an infant's tiny body as much as its mother's: even as adults we are nourished better by what is akin and familiar, but the infant has already become accustomed to his mother's fluid in the uterus, since the liquid that nourishes it in the womb and the one that it draws from its mother's nipples is identical except that the latter is more digested and hence more refined. Eleventh, I shall teach you that hired nursemaids harm not only the infants' tiny bodies but their minds and characters as well, especially when one cannot make a free choice given that not all

women have milk or want to hire out their services, and so one ends up often being forced to employ a woman who is pert, a drinker, or wanton: the infant drinks up the quality of these vices along with the milk itself. Twelfth, I will demonstrate to you that this is how the reverence and obedience of growing children toward their parents come to decrease, for they scarcely recognize women as their mothers if they were not nourished by their milk. In thirteenth place I shall instruct you that child-bearing women risk their own safety in consigning their children to others for feeding because retaining and diverting that liquid often produces serious illnesses, and so a woman who was afraid that her breasts would begin to sag if she fed her children puts her own life at risk, and disease ages her far more than the effort of feeding would have done.” This partition is faulty in two ways: because it is verbose, and because it carves the theme as a whole not into limbs but into pieces. Of course the speaker needs to have all of this planned and arranged, but it is uninspired to pledge every single one in the division. However, if one wanted to use a partition, it would be enough to say “I shall instruct you that the practice of mothers hiring out their children for feeding conflicts with natural and divine law; furthermore, that it is useless for both the health and character of the children; finally, that it is unsafe even for the mother”; everything else could be reduced to these three propositions.

Of course, when a theme inherently has a number of parts, it will be better to promise them in summary form than to enumerate them all, at least in the partition. For example, since heretics have devised various deranged fantasies regarding Christ’s person, it is inappropriate to enumerate the errors of each one in the division; it will be sufficient to present the proposition thus: “So that we may have a firmer grasp of catholic truth, I shall briefly expound the varied errors that have led heretics astray from it.” The Apostles’ Creed was divided into many sections, of which a partition should embrace only the general ones, such as “The first article pertains to God the Father, several to God the Son, one to the Holy Spirit, the final ones to Christ’s spiritual body, the Church.” The specific ones that are included in

these four general ones should be inserted in their own places rather than being promised in a division. And if excessively frequent partitions are likely to cause annoyance, small transitions will keep your speech from becoming confused—“You know how devoted he was toward his parents: now hear how devoted he was toward his children,” and the same goes for other cases.

Some adopt a method of division that has them saying the same things twice and promising what they are going to say while simultaneously saying what they are promising; hence the most eloquent men have been right to teach that a partition ought to be clear and brief, neither wrapped up in obscure words nor loaded down with unnecessary ones. In addition, some criticize the kind of partition that makes a number of promises but adds one that makes the others appear superfluous, for example, “I shall show that this man had no reason to commit the crime; I shall show that he had no desire to do so; I shall show that he did not do it,” since the others can seem pointless if he shows “that he did not do it.” Likewise “I shall demonstrate that there was no reason; I shall demonstrate that no suspicion of that kind clings to this man’s character and nature; I shall show that, even if he had had the desire, he would not have had the opportunity: I shall show that he was in Rome while the murder was being committed in Florence”; since the last argument is compelling, the others seem excessive if it is persuasive. Pliny however says that, since people have different natures, one should try everything when speaking, like farmers who sow seed plentifully to ensure that some at least will grow, but this does not seem so relevant to the preacher. The kind of partition that subordinates a specific form to a type is also criticized—“I shall speak of this man’s virtue, I shall speak of his modesty, of his thoughtfulness, justice and fortitude”—since the general heading “virtue” includes these types. Partitions are also difficult when the parts are not inherently consistent. We hear some making promises like this: “In the first place I shall expound to you a parable from the gospel, in the second I shall propound a theological question, in the third I shall relate the life of St. Christopher, finally I shall add a moral story from the *Gesta Romanorum*” (this is the name

given to a work that was assembled from obvious untruths by someone who was trying, I suspect, to mock the practice of twisting theological allegories to a moral meaning). Occurrences of this sort of thing are more tolerable if the question arises from the gospel passage and if the saint's life fits the gospel passage and is worthy in other respects too of being reported in churches; nowhere should there be room for old wives' tales. But some are mistaken in thinking that this division should always be observed; this superstition often causes the question to be frivolous or more suited to scholastic diatribes than to a sermon, and a life is recounted that is unworthy of the preacher's pulpit.

In addition, finding the correct partition is so difficult that some of Cicero's have been criticized by the uninformed, others questioned, only one praised without exception. In a case, the difficulty lies in devising the major parts and arranging them into the proper order once devised.

This ought to be my next topic before moving on to argumentation, but since the knowledge of *status* is associated with this theme, I have decided to try to make the whole business more intelligible by first touching briefly here on what the rhetoricians teach about the suasorial and encomiastic type, since it is with these that the preacher is especially concerned. We shall add along the way anything that seems to be particular to exhortation, consolation, or rebuke: the person who is exhorting is urging courage, the one who is consoling is urging a more moderate grief, the one who is rebuking is urging the recognition of one's own wrongdoing and coming to one's senses, for this is the only aim of someone who rebukes in a Christian fashion.

The principal maxim for the suasorial type is that the speaker should consider what it is that he is intending to urge and what sort of thing it is, who the people are that are in his care, and who he is himself who is urging it. Even though the preacher urges only what is honorable, we still have different ways of urging what is honorable, to the devout, to the wicked and rebellious, to those corrupted by wrong-headed opinions, to those uncertain: since honorable things are easily urged upon honorable persons, the wicked must be handled like wild horses, the corrupted must

have their error removed, the uncertain must be shown what is best. There is also a certain difference in nationality, since it would be inappropriate to talk before Germans in the same way as before Frenchmen or Italians. One should also not speak the same way before men of outstanding erudition and rank and before an ignorant mob, or before monks or nuns and before people who are married or engaged. In addition, something that would be heard fairly by a bishop or by a man otherwise commended by knowledge, age, and the holiness of his life would not be heard in such a way by a different sort of person.

The one that Quintilian calls the suasorial others call the deliberative, but there is no deliberation where no doubt exists. It is possible to doubt whether there is any use in recalling married people to a vow of continence while they are still young: no one deliberates whether marriage should be honored chastely and sincerely, but one does urge the more eager pursuit of something that everyone agrees should be pursued. Thus it is possible to question whether it is right to profess the life of a monk without the knowledge or even against the will of one's parents, who require the attention of their children, but no one doubts that children owe honor and obedience to their parents. Therefore, whenever we are urging something that is unquestionably devout, we are exhorting rather than persuading—except that there are some who are so ignorant as to doubt even the obvious.

Now for the parts of the suasorial variety, from which one takes the division of the entire speech as well as its propositions. The Stoics, who think that nothing is useful which is not honorable and that whatever is honorable is useful precisely because it is honorable, would contend that there is but a single proposition when one persuades; on the other hand, those who distinguish the useful from the honorable still think that the other parts can be reduced, generically as it were, to the useful. Though we grant that it is possible for both of these opinions to be perceptive and true, it is still more useful to an orator's training to have them separated "with a coarser Minerva," as they say. Nor is the honorable a simple category: it can be understood as what is right in itself, and it can be taken as what is fair

and seemly, and what is naturally right is not automatically seemly for everyone. Many things have a nature that permits their inclusion under the category of “right”: the devout, the just, the fair, the noble, the gentle, virtues of all kinds in short, plus the lawful, i.e., what is prescribed by law and especially by sacred scriptures, commended by the examples of famous men and received by daily custom. But even though an honorable reputation naturally follows an honorable act and a dishonorable one follows a disgraceful act, some virtues are still in general more attractive than others, in the same way that some vices entail more disgrace than others: a thief generally has a worse reputation than an adulterer, though the latter crime is more serious than the former, and clemency is more popular than justice, and devotion to one’s parents brings more splendid acclaim than frugality and sobriety. Some have distinguished the praiseworthy from the honorable on the grounds that most mortals are more readily influenced by praise or disgrace than by the honorable itself or by shame (not because people should be left in this state of mind but because they should be led toward virtue by it as if by a teacher), and the fear of disgrace, which lures many people toward sinning and envy and which dishonors the name of God and the dignity of the Church just as they are glorified through the honorable reputation of the good, is not foreign to Christian devotion.

Therefore, the category of the honorable will include right and wrong, whether something is natural or unnatural, piety and impiety toward God and the saints, toward one’s homeland, toward one’s parents and children, toward one’s teachers and the people whose kindness has saved us, all the categories of the virtues and the vices, which are countless. To these must be added the lawful; this is associated with fairness, which is the tempering of the laws, of custom and of what is approved or not by the authority and examples of respected men (since it seems disgraceful that Christians are doing things that were punished even by the laws of the heathens). Besides, disobeying divine laws is a rebellion against God, for anything done contrary to custom, even if it has no association with vice, still disturbs the public peace through its very nov-

elty. Moreover, the authority of custom is so strong that the laws of popes and emperors very often yield to it. Similarly, people regard as oracles the words and deeds of those men whose memory has seized the human mind with a sort of awe. As I have said, the seemly and praiseworthy are connected with all of these.

The safe and the pleasant are put in the category of the useful, which properly resides in acquiring comforts or repelling discomforts, like money, titles, friendships, leisure and retirement and such things. I do not see how the necessary, the possible, the easy can be put here.

The safe consists in protecting the wellness of oneself and of one’s own, for example in respect to life and health.

Nuisance often deters from the honorable; pleasantness attracts. Many are convinced that people who live soberly and continently for the sake of devotion have a grim and disagreeable life; in this case the preacher will teach that those who cultivate true devotion sincerely have a much more cheerful life than those who seem to have every sort of worldly pleasure in abundance.

The necessary is understood in two ways, sometimes as that to which we are driven by fear of a greater ill, sometimes as that which simply cannot be avoided. For example, if a woman has reached such straits that she must incur either rape or death, rape seems the lesser ill because it is excused on account of necessity, though it is possible to doubt in this case whether it should be incurred in preference; but if the situation has come to such a point that either rape must be incurred or the rapist must be killed, Augustine believes that rape should be incurred in preference. An example of the other necessity will be someone urging us to bear patiently whatever ills God sends us because they must be borne whether we are willing or not, or someone urging a miser to share with the poor the wealth that, like it or not, he will soon surrender completely, or someone persuading a priest that he should be voluntarily what he is because he is unable to be something else (this of course is what they mean by the proverb “making a virtue of necessity”).

Even though the absolutely impossible has no place within the suasorial type, one must still

consider first whether the subject of the deliberation is possible, since some things seem *adynata* [impossible] to some people even though they are not. For example, many consider it impossible for a young person to live continently, but this is not impossible, as is demonstrated by the fact that many young men and maidens have lived quite continently. It is impossible for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God, not in an absolute sense, but if he does not stop putting his faith in money; it is absolutely impossible for someone who has relapsed to wrong-doing after baptism to be restored to innocence through baptism. But people foolishly attempt the impossible and hold on quite zealously to things that cannot be brought back once lost, like youth and the past and the companionship of a departed friend.

Many people are discouraged from cultivating virtue by what everybody says about it, that it entails a difficult effort. Since it is impossible to deny this completely, it has to be mitigated by saying that much of the difficulty can be avoided if we have a wholehearted desire to be good, since nothing is difficult for a lover. Then too, with even a brief familiarity, something that is initially a little annoying first becomes easier, then even enjoyable. Since then there is a mixture of the disagreeable with the agreeable in human life, whoever is persuading will select the agreeable and amplify it through his language; the disagreeable, if it cannot be denied and there is no use in pretending, must be minimized. Whoever is dissuading will do the opposite. Denying consists in showing that the disagreeable is agreeable or the opposite, for example, someone saying that any disgrace that originates from the wicked because of good deeds is not a disgrace but true glory, in the same way that being praised by the low on account of low deeds is not glory but a true disgrace, or that conceding a dispute to an opponent is a gain rather than a loss because peace of mind is worth more than a few coins. Things that are not outstanding or have little weight in persuasion are dissembled; the techniques for each of these will be discussed when we get to amplifications.

But no one should suppose that all of these parts that we have mentioned should always be used, for you could hardly find a topic to which

they would all apply; instead, the case itself will show which ought to be employed. In the division, as was said earlier, either none should be promised or only the important ones. The same procedure should be followed here as in the *loci* of arguments: knock at every one, but pick those that can be useful. For example, somebody who wants to encourage a young person to marry has a variety of parts: first, that it is especially in agreement with nature, so that, while individuals cannot be immortal, the species can become so to the extent possible through the propagation of each person; next, anything that the Creator Himself has founded and Christ has honored is honorable; third, anything that sacred texts approve and that is commemorated by the Church among its sacraments is devout; fourth, it is useful to have a wife as a maidservant to take the bulk of domestic concerns upon herself and to carry them out faithfully, to have children who serve their parent sincerely; fifth, it is a source of pleasure to have someone as the companion of all one's fortunes, to have sweet children in whom a man may, as it were, grow young again and outlive himself; sixth, it is right and fair that a citizen should produce good citizens to increase the state to which he owes the fact of his birth; seventh, it is appropriate for someone young to tend children, while it is less appropriate for the elderly; eighth, something that even the laws of the heathens have honored is lawful, especially if the offspring born demonstrates that the marriage was a true and chaste one; ninth, something that has been approved in both word and deed by the most admired men deserves admiration. The proposition can also be drawn from the safe—because a continent youth exposes himself to the danger of forbidden pleasures; or from necessity—because it is impossible for a young man to live continently for a long time, or because the human race cannot reproduce in any other way. The proposition could also be derived from utility—because a wife brings a dowry, and many friends are acquired through kinship—since the word *utility* has broad application and suggests many propositions, as do pleasantness and the other parts. Nothing will be drawn from the easy and the possible. On the other hand, in dissuading a monk from marriage, no one will resort to

the argument that it is in agreement with nature, unless you twist it so that it is unnatural for someone who is dead to the world to be born to the world. He will take his propositions from the fact that it is illegitimate and conflicts with scripture. He will take them from the seemly and the praiseworthy—though some monk may take a wife, the trumpet of foul repute still follows. He will take them from the impossible—he has no faith to pledge now, having sworn it already to God. It is unnecessary to take anything from the other parts. Similarly, in trying to discourage swearing, someone will say that whatever Christ has expressly forbidden is dishonorable, plus that it is not safe because everyone who swears exposes himself to the risk of perjury, whether because the habit of swearing gradually leads to perjury or because human will is changeable or because you often cannot follow through on your pledge. But enough about the suasorial type, at least as far as this *locus* is concerned.

For the preacher that we are training here, the encomiastic type is generally involved when extolling the praises of God or of the saints, inasmuch as funeral orations are no longer so much the custom among ecclesiastics as they were once; in fact, doxologies are more likely to be sung in the churches today than preached in a sermon. Nevertheless, God's majesty often needs to be exalted: for instance, when we are discouraging from sin, it is appropriate to exaggerate that Majesty which so infinitely surpasses not only the eloquence but the comprehension of all men that it seems a more detestable crime to scorn Him through sin or to prefer any creation to Him, Who is so great that nothing anywhere in Heaven or in earth can be compared to Him even if you imagine creatures far surpassing the Seraphim. He is described as seeing everything, past, present, and future, with a single and absolute gaze so that no one who transgresses in unspoken thought or secretly can hope to hide. He is described as supremely just so that no one can presume freedom from punishment for his wickedness. He is described as possessing infinite mercy so that no one will despair of forgiveness for his sins if he returns to His heart. He is described as supremely truthful so that no one will mistrust His promises. The Greeks call this

type *epideiktikos*, from its "display" of course, but having us understand God's greatness is not the preacher's only aim; he scours everywhere for what is conducive to living well, namely, that we should revere the Supremely Powerful, above all that we should love the Supremely Good. This will be the first part of an encomiastic sermon.

The second part will be about the generosity of the Deity toward the human race, which the Father founded so excellently and for the sake of which He founded the world and whatever is contained in the world, which the Son so mercifully restored from its ruin, which the Holy Spirit props up and sustains with so many gifts and comforts in this wretched life. This gives rise not only to thanksgiving but also to a desire to imitate: "He so loved his enemies; let us love our neighbors. He is kindly toward everyone; let us too strive to serve our neighbors. He freely forgave us all our wrongs; let us too forgive them for our brothers." To be brief, the same goes for the rest. Indeed, Christian prayers also tend to have a doxology combined when they begin "God, from Whom all good things proceed," "God, whose nature is to pity and to spare," then conclude "you Who live and reign," etc.

The third part will be taken up with how God's great power, wisdom, and goodness shine in every creation so that we celebrate the Craftsman in everything wherever we turn our eyes or mind.

The fourth will be how wondrously God has worked in the holy men that He specially selects in order to be glorified in them and through them even among the wicked. This kind of laudatory type is now more common in churches than those earlier ones, and was not uncommon even in antiquity; the panegyric sermons of Basil, the Nazianzen, Chrysostom, Ambrose, and Augustine are the evidence.

Here some of the instructions that the rhetoricians have written will be useful. Praises can be drawn from the past, such as by reporting the oracles, miracles, or prodigies that preceded the Nativity, how Isaac was pledged to Sarah, who had already passed menopause; the oracles as Rebecca felt the twins struggling in the womb and learns from an oracle about those who were being born; John the Baptist made a similar

promise to Zachariah; and Elizabeth sensed the fetus in her womb trying to greet the Virgin; and Bernard's mother was told, "You are going to be the mother of an excellent pup." The present considers the whole sequence of life from birth right up to the end of life except that things that happen to infants are regarded as belonging to the past, and anything outstanding that happens is regarded as more a prediction than a virtue. It is possible to praise character in the young since one can also criticize it. To the future belong the miracles that follow death, and the spring of saving water that leaps out where a martyr's severed head touched the ground, or oil effective for medical treatment that oozes spontaneously from a monument, or demons crushed by martyrs' tombs, which should be regarded as divine witness.

V. (341.372-353.710)

The discussion of *status*, or formulations, which the Greeks call *staseis*, is both verbose and confused in Greek and Latin authors alike; we shall now touch briefly upon only the things that seem likely to be useful for our preacher. A *status* is the essential point of a case or question; the speaker refers everything to it, and the listener keeps his eye on it above all. For example, in court cases one considers especially the factualness of the allegation, its nature, and its identity. The first *status* is called "conjunctural" or "negatory"; the second is the one of character, or "judicial," the third the one of end, or "definitional." In the first, the truth is sought through conjectures; in the second, since there is agreement about what was done, one asks whether it was done legally; in the third, since there is agreement about both of these, the name of the deed is sought through definition. Sometimes, however, a charge is also removed through a change of name. For example, if Milo, who was accused of murder, had denied that he killed Clodius, it would have been a conjunctural *status*; now, because he concedes this, there remains another conjecture as to which ambushed the other, and this includes a *status* of character, since it is conceded that killing someone who attacks by ambush is justified: Thus Orestes does not deny

killing his mother but relies upon a *status* of character in affirming that it was right to kill her. Similarly, if an accused should admit that he took secular money from a sacred place, he would be acknowledging a crime of theft, not one of sacrilege, saying that sacrilege occurs only when a holy object is taken from a holy place; or if someone who had sex with another man's wife in a brothel were to admit illicit intercourse, deny adultery; or if it was a case of whether a woman who gave a potion that created love or hate should be held on a charge of poisoning or one of only injuring. This sip from the rhetorical texts is sufficient to show what a *status* is.

Someone might ask how this is relevant to a herald of the gospel. First, it is useful because, once he considers the theme on which he is to speak, he relates everything to his essential point as if to a target and does not wander from his subject in pointless digressions or stray in his words like a madman, uttering things that are irrelevant or even contradictory. And even though *status* are employed principally in court cases, everyone who is speaking to the people for the purpose of persuading, exhorting, or consoling still sets himself some precise goal which he wishes to accomplish; at all events, it takes the role of the *status*.

Finally, these also turn up frequently in the themes of sermons, more frequently in private conversations or discussions, for example, when wondering about the earthly location of the paradise in which God put Adam and whether purgatory is in the center of the earth or somewhere else, likewise Judas' intention in selling the Lord so cheaply, whether in the hope that He would slip out of their hands as He had done on several other occasions (since it is unlikely that he did this in order to be killed): otherwise he would not have given the denarii back and would not have choked himself with a noose. For example, it is a conjunctural *status* if one asks about Satan's purpose in tempting the Lord so often, likewise if a preacher, urging his congregation to placate God's anger, says that a plague or other calamity has been sent by an angry God because of the wicked life of men, likewise when and through what tokens it was understood that God wanted the rituals of the Jews to be utterly abolished so

that it is now a crime to keep them, plus the intention of Lot's daughters in luring their father into incest, likewise whether the souls of the dead really appear or such things happen through the fakery of demons, also when one inquires the reason for the Law, such as why God in the Law forbade plowing on an ox and an ass or wearing clothing made from wool and linen combined (Augustine calls this aetiology).

A *status* of characteristic can come up anywhere: when doubting whether it is right for clerics or monks to wage war, whether Christians, like Jews, are allowed divorce, whether it is permissible to leave a bride against her will in a lawful but unconsummated marriage because one has professed the monastic life, whether it is right for her to stay unwed until her groom has professed, even if he delays the profession for years by changing monastery or order.

Now, there are countless cases in which one inquires through definition: whether usury has been committed or not, similarly whether someone has committed the crime of forgery by correcting a letter that was written carelessly by a notary in a papal letter of appointment, and whether those who have opposed a prince who is oppressing the liberty of his people through tyranny are guilty of the crime of *lèse majesté*.

In addition, when scripture seems to conflict with scripture, the *status* is from opposing laws, such as when Moses' tablets say, "Honor your parents" and Christ says, "He who does not hate his father and mother is not worthy of me."

When there is an ambiguity or obscurity in the letter, the *status* is from the letter and the spirit, such as when one asks what Paul meant in saying "I wish to become anathema for my brothers in the flesh" and what Francis meant by forbidding his brothers to take money for themselves or for others. Many passages in the canonical scriptures produce ambiguity from the ambiguity of a word or from the arrangement of the words or from a variant reading; but the methods of resolving the contradictions of scripture and of explaining its ambiguity will be stated in the proper place.

Finally, when one questions whether it is more useful to let priests marry by public authority than to tolerate concubines and other indecencies, and whether it is a lesser ill for an unchaste

priest to keep a concubine or to marry contrary to papal law, and whether it is more useful for the Christian religion to have even an unjust peace with the Turks or to fight in a just war.

Also, nothing prevents various *status* occurring in the same theme if it has several parts. For example, in the theme I reported earlier, when we propose that it is unnatural for a mother not to use her own milk to nurture what she has borne, this is a *status* of characteristic. On the other hand, when we propose that the woman who only gives birth and casts it away is not a mother, this is a definitional *status*. When we propose that the character of a wicked nurse passes to the infant through her milk, it will be a conjectural *status*, for it is possible to doubt whether this is true, and someone who disagrees can deny it.

After this brief taste, then, we must get to the invention of parts or propositions, which we started to discuss earlier. In Quintilian's opinion, this is the most difficult of all, and certainly no small part of the difficulty resides here, except that an advocate speaks at greater risk in front of a judge than a preacher in front of a congregation; moreover, as was said above, it is not always necessary for the preacher to state how many parts are to be used and which ones. Moreover, it is rare for a preacher to be involved with the judicial type, but it is not very different from this type when he speaks from his pulpit against the Jews, heretics or schismatics or pagans too. Here the opponents sometimes supply the propositions for the defense. For example, if someone were to propose, "The enemies of the name 'Christian' make three particular charges against us, amongst many others: infanticide, witchcraft, and rebellion against princes and magistrates," there will be three *status* in these three points. When he says, "Nothing is more foreign to Christian morals than infanticide," the *status* will be negatory. On the other hand, if he replies to the second objection that "it is devotion, not rebellion, not to obey princes who give wicked commands," the *status* will concern character or end. If he says to the third that "it is a sacrament, not witchcraft, when we consecrate water, bread, and wine and forgive sins, crush demons with words that are efficacious through Christ's faith; witchcraft is performed with the assistance of

demons," the *status* will be definitional. Or, if someone replying to the slanders that some people make uses the division "Our adversaries accuse us on three points in particular, first because we assign too little to faith, too much to works, then because we go too far in minimizing the force of original sin, lastly because we consider papal decrees equal to God's commands," here the parts are supplied by the opponents instead of being devised, as in the famous division in Cicero's *For Murena*, which is praised without exception: "I understand, jurors, that the parts of the accusation were three in all, and that one of them concerned the criticism of his life, the second a competition for rank, the third charges of corruption." Nothing is more lucid than this partition, and, since it embraces the entire case, nothing is superfluous.

But if the adversaries' charge is confused, the defender will be admired for his talent if he arranges the pile of accusations into distinct columns, distributing the parts in such a way that nothing pertinent to the subject is omitted and nothing is redundant. Moreover, anything that is put separately when it is included in one of the parts is redundant, unless he gives a reason why he has separated things that belong together.

But when an opponent has arranged his speech into parts, it is not always appropriate to cover them in the same order, especially in a division that reaches its peak by steps through supposition. For example, if someone has killed the son of a tyrant whose father, unable to endure the grief, has committed suicide and uses the division "Had I desired and conceived such an outstanding deed only in my mind, would I not be regarded as deserving a reward? Had I only attacked and scaled the tyrant's citadel with this intent, even unsuccessfully, do you think that my reward should be refused? Had I slain even a single attendant, would I not seem to deserve a reward? Had I killed only the son, crueler than his tyrant father and the heir-apparent of his tyranny, would you deny my reward? Now, on top of all this, I have even killed the tyrant himself, more cruelly than if I had slaughtered him with my own hand. But suppose that a different outcome had ensued: a man who has stripped a tyrant of all his henchmen and rendered him

powerless against the liberty of the state—has he not deposed a tyranny? Had I driven the tyrant into exile, would the reward owed to a tyannicide be denied? As an exile he could have waged war against the city; now I have handed over to you in a defenseless state an old man stripped of the son in whom all his hope lay and of all his supporters, so that anyone can kill him with impunity. Had I not foreseen the outcome, would I therefore seem unworthy of a reward because luck supported my courage? In fact I did foresee it, and I spared the tyrant deliberately so that he could perish all the more cruelly, tortured by the death of his son," this arrangement of the parts would not suit someone who was speaking in opposition, and he would not even have to use the same parts, but we shall soon discuss this kind of division. In other cases it will be most convenient to reply in the same order in which the adversary has laid them out unless some particular case suggests a different one. Aeschines praised King Philip of Macedon on three accounts, for his attractive body, for his eloquence, for his ability to handle heavy drinking; Demosthenes mocked these parts by saying that the first compliment was proper to women, not to a king, the second to sophists, the third to sponges, among which the thirstiest is considered best.

Hence we must now discuss how a division is to be invented in themes where it is not supplied from somewhere else or where it is inappropriate to use the same parts but a division is still required by either the difficulty or the variety of the material. The most important instruction that can be given in this regard is that propositions are best invented by considering carefully the parts and circumstances of the whole case. From such a full consideration there will be little trouble in perceiving which are the important ones upon which the whole argument depends. When these have been determined, the next step is to discern the most convenient order of the parts. Moreover, it is most convenient when an earlier part offers and lays a step, as it were, for the one that follows, preparing the audience's minds of course to believe more readily what follows, for example, if one were to divide as follows when speaking against heretics: "First I shall reveal the theater of their life, the falseness and wickedness of their

character; second I shall refute their erroneous dogmas, third their schismatic dogmas, fourth the heretical ones.” Among these the last part is the foremost point of the argument and the others serve it in turn, since an error of understanding is more believable in people whose life is unclean, and the wickedness of schism is more believable in people who have many foul delusions, and schism is in general either connected with heresy or gives rise to it. Thus murder is more believable in the case of a highly impetuous man who has beaten many others, adultery in the case of a licentious one, because the latter deeds are like steps to the former. This is the scheme that St. Jerome uses when mocking Jovinian’s silly and outrageous diction to make it more probable that he is equally mad in his dogmas. It would be highly prejudicial for Vigilantius in his dogmas if the first part of the division should expose a taverner’s occupation in a priest, then the shamelessness of a man who was terrified during an earthquake and leapt naked from his wife into a church still bearing on him some of the traces of his lust, or for the Manichaeans if the abominable secrets of their life are revealed, as also for the Marcionites, in the way that St. Augustine did for the former, Irenaeus for the latter, though in neither case in the context of a partition. On the other hand, if someone has decided to praise the monastic life, the very nature of his theme practically supplies the division since the essence of that institution consists of three things especially, continence, poverty, and obedience; the whole sermon will be taken up with magnifying these. But if it seems that this partition does not embrace all the benefits of that life, another one will be devised from the parts of the suasorial type which I discussed above, to the effect that no other kind of life is more in agreement with evangelical devotion or safer or pleasanter. There is nothing in the benefits of that institution that is not included in these three parts, since many other things are contained in the first proposition besides three vows. It would be harsh to reduce the treatment of the safe to obedience, especially since this is promised to man, not to God. The treatment of the pleasant will never be capable of being related to it; and yet even if these could somehow be related to those three (since safety

has many parts, as pleasantness does likewise), it will be more convenient for them to be separated so that the profusion of particular propositions does not create confusion. By “particular” I mean those that are proper to individual argumentations.

The reader must be alerted to the fact that this word has three meanings in authors who have written about the art of speaking, since “proposition” is sometimes used to mean something at the start that embraces the whole issue of the argument and serves as a title, such as when Ovid begins thus:

If any of this race knows not the art of loving,
Let him read my verse and, having read, love
learnedly.

Some call this an “exposition”; likewise a preacher, “I bring to you the most pure life and most brave death of the blessed Agnes.” This can be single. Sometimes it indicates the outstanding parts and columns, as it were, of the argument that are promised in the division; if a single proposition is put in this, now there is no division. Sometimes “proposition” is used to mean the beginning of any argumentation, and if repeated after the argumentation it is called the conclusion or recapitulation, since anyone approaching an argumentation shows what he has decided to prove, and when his proof is finished he repeats what he has proved and plants it in the minds of his audience. If this is proposed as something doubtful, it is called a “question.” An example will be “It is best for childhood to be imbued immediately with salutary instruction.” This is the proposition—the proof follows: “Because what is impressed upon the untrained minds of children clings most tenaciously, in the same way that a clay pot long retains the scent with which it was first imbued,” in addition, “not only does what is honorable cling more tenaciously: it is also more easily imbibed by minds that are empty and not yet filled with wicked opinions and vices, just as it is easier to write what we want on an empty tablet. Besides, it is more difficult to unteach than to teach.” Here the proposition proved is repeated—now the conclusion: “And so those people are wise who make the effort to have their children instructed right

from infancy with liberal teaching and the precepts of living correctly."

Hence anyone who has given careful consideration to the individual propositions of the argument which will occur in arguing as well as to those which his opponent or the silent reflections of his audience seem likely to object will more easily select from these the general ones that embrace the entire case. Assistance in this will come from knowing *status* and their kin, charge, refutation, motive, affirmation, confirmation, and judgment. These will be most obvious in an example which everyone uses, though with remarkable discrepancies over the words and the deeds alike. The charge is "I accuse Orestes of parricide because he killed his mother," the refutation "He killed her, but rightly." To this is immediately added the motive, "For she had killed Agamemnon, Orestes' father, her own husband; and, not content with this, she took in an adulterer in her victim's place." To this the accuser opposes the affirmation, "But that does not justify a mother being killed by her son without a hearing; she could have been punished by law." To the affirmation the accused opposes the confirmation, "Her attitude toward her children and her whole family was such that there was no one by whom she could be killed more fittingly than by her own children, and Orestes did not do this without authority: he was advised by Apollo's oracle." From these offenses arises the judgment, "Since Clytemnestra killed Agamemnon and brought in an adulterer and was so disposed toward her family, was Orestes right to kill his mother when Apollo advised it?" The only aim of this rhetorical instruction is to make the speaker give careful consideration to what he is doing for himself, what for his opponent or a dissenter, and the judgment is only the final *status* of the case; when it has been found, all that remains is for the judge to pronounce sentence.

Moreover, the reflection of the dissenter during a sermon does the same thing that an adversary does in court. For example, someone who undertakes to praise virginity ought to anticipate mentally what might occur to someone who disagrees or is unsure, say, "Virginity is unnatural," "Virginity does not help the state," "Virginity is exposed to the many dangers of incontinence, so

that having a husband is safer." Likewise, when preaching the praises of fasting, he ought to bear in mind that many of those before him will say that the brain is worn out by fasts, that mental vigor is impaired, that people become disagreeable and irritable, that physical strength is weakened, that countless ailments arise from eating fish, finally that it is useless for the very purpose that it was intended to assist: though intended to make the mind quicker and readier for spiritual exercises, fasting weighs down the mind more with a single meal than if the same amount were consumed in two meals. Other propositions must be devised against these.

A knowledge of the parts that we pointed out in the suasorial, encomiastic, hortatory, and consolatory type will also be conducive to inventing a division. Knowledge of the *loci* which we shall soon discuss will also be conducive, as will that of predicable words and predicates, since it is through them that everything relevant to the nature and quality of each thing is made apparent. The circumstances of things and of persons will also be conducive. Finally, whatever is useful for argumentation can be applied in some way or other to partition. Moreover, skill in many arts, in law, philosophy, and theology, will be conducive. For instance, someone who is speaking against usury will divide this way: "I shall first define usury, then contracts that smack of usury; third, I shall deplore the fact that usury, which even the laws of the heathens ban, is common among Christians; fourth, I shall expose the fraudulent dealings that are worse than any usury." Someone who is experienced in both kinds of law or in philosophy and theology will find it easier to devise these propositions and will produce a better treatment: "Even Aristotle has written that it is unnatural for money to bear money, and the laws of the ancients allowed usury within precise limits, forbade it beyond them. The Jews were permitted to lend to outsiders to the point of usury, though never to their own people, but Christian laws totally condemn usury." In addition, secular and sacred laws alike define which contracts are legitimate, which not, but it is impossible to make a proper comparison between illicit contracts and usury without a knowledge of law and theology. Similarly, if

someone addressing his congregation about marriage were to make the division, "First, I shall state how marriage is contracted legitimately; second, in which cases a marriage not properly contracted should be sundered, in which not; third, the reasons that allow even a legitimately contracted marriage to be sundered; fourth, what is required for a husband to live chastely, peacefully, and pleasantly with a wife," he will hardly be able to discuss this unless he possesses knowledge of the skills that I have mentioned. This is about all the instruction that can be given on the subject of inventing propositions; the rest is a matter of talent and training.

To the above it should be added that there are primary and secondary propositions, of which the former is the principal one, the latter is assumed by supposition and helps the other outside the case as if it were serving as a precedent. Cicero's method of defending Milo is to make his principal proposition "He killed him rightly because he slew him when he attacked in an ambush," the secondary "Even if he had killed a citizen this pestilential in any manner, his courage deserved honor, not punishment." Since it would be unsafe to rely on this proposition, one returns to the other: "He did not kill through ambush, but killed someone who ambushed." But the other is not merely otiose, since a judge becomes better disposed toward the principal defense if he sees that it is also possible to establish the other through some argument.

It's this sort when one reaches the essence of a case by supposition through one or more steps. For example, a preacher urging obedience in a population that is plotting rebellion against their prince would offer this proposition: "Even if a pagan prince of such wickedness had been your lot, scripture still condemns rebellion." This is the step: "Now, since we have a prince who is a Christian and even devout and merciful, consider yourselves how unworthy it is for Christians not to obey him." On the other hand, he will be able to use the proposition against tyrannical princes as follows: "If you were heathens ruling heathens, the law of nature dictates, the edicts of the heathens teach, that princes should exercise their power not in accordance with their own pleasure but in accordance with the good of the state, that

otherwise they will be tyrants, not princes, and the laws of the pagans promise a reward to the tyrannicide. Now, since you are Christians ruling Christians, and a common Lord, a common religion has made them your fellow-slaves rather than your slaves, a common heritage has rendered them your brothers, you have all the more reason to refrain from any semblance of tyranny." Likewise against disobedient children: "If idolatrous and wicked parents had been your lot, you would still offend God if you did not heed them on account of the very fact that they bore and raised you. As it is, you have all the more reason to obey Christian parents who have not only borne you but have also trained you to devotion, with the result that they justifiably seem to have given birth to you twice."

This is only a single step; there could be more. For example, if the subject is whether Pope Julius ought to wage war against the Venetians over some trifling possessions they had seized, the division can have the following steps. "First, I could show through powerful authorities and substantial arguments that no cause makes it right for Christian priests to wage war, since their calling is to war against vices and to battle against airy spirits with spiritual arms." This would be the first step. The second takes it up: "Suppose we grant the propriety of waging war; it is not permissible to do so for the sake of secular possessions which men endowed with ecclesiastical rank should not own inasmuch as they have received a loftier purview, and it is out of harmony with the practice of the Christian religion." The third takes up this one: "Suppose we grant that the propriety exists in the case of other priests; it does not exist for the Roman Pontiff, since he, being the nearer to Christ, Whose role he performs, should be all the purer from everything that Christ scorned and taught should be scorned." The fourth step supports this one: "Though it might befit other popes, it does not befit Julius, who is already old and near death, a man merciful by nature and hitherto peaceful." From here he will jump to the fifth: "But, for the moment, I do not urge this. Let us grant that it is befitting: it is unseemly for the mercy of the highest priest, whose weapons are prayers and tears, to confound the Christian world with

confusion, slaughter, and blood for the sake of some petty earthly wealth; this trivial business could be negotiated through arbiters." From here he will pass to the sixth step: "Though it be permissible, though it be seemly, it is hardly safe; there is the risk that, while trying to claim one or two insignificant possessions through warfare, he might not only lose those that he has but even shake the entire Church with a dangerous schism, for war has a variety of outcomes, and evil is sown from evil. Moreover, the peace of the Church ought to be dearer to its highest shepherd than the possession of a few paltry towns." The seventh step will be "Even discounting all of this, it is still hardly right that, for quite trivial reasons, he should stir up Christian kings against a people who have so often served so excellently not only the Roman See but the whole Christian community as well; had they not driven back the Turks with their own courage, and were they not fending them off even now, perhaps the Pope would not have even Rome as his own." From these steps he will come to his main proposition: "I could say this even if Julius had a just cause for attacking the Venetians. Now I shall demonstrate that, given the nature of the case, Julius should thank the Venetians for rebuilding, enlarging, and enriching the towns, which had declined through papal neglect, rather than harass them in war." Moreover, this proposition includes many particular ones, as do all of those above as well; for example, "The Venetians did not seize the property of others by force of arms but came into property that was neglected as if unoccupied; then what was seized passed by right of demurrer into the control of another; finally, the silence of so many ages is simply a papal assent, since neither force nor secrecy was involved." Along with that, an argument from necessity, that "the Venetians recovered those places into their jurisdiction because they could not protect their own boundaries if they had neighbors who were neglected and ungoverned. It seems a token of remarkable impudence to reclaim as one's own something that has been restored through another's considerable expense when one had not considered it as one's own because it was lifeless." I should like this example to be proposed only as a demonstra-

tion, not in order to make pronouncements about the rights of priests; one could use similar steps to argue on Julius' behalf.

VI. (356.799–358.821)

After the propositions have been devised, then, that leaves the argumentation or proofs; the Greeks call these *pisteis* because they induce belief in something doubtful. On this subject one should say first, in general, what Aristotle indicates, that there are three things that gain a speaker credibility, *phronêsis*, *aretê*, *kai eunoia*, namely, thoughtfulness, virtue, and good will. Without the first, a speaker might unwittingly urge wickedness instead of righteousness. Next, understanding what is useful is inadequate unless he is a good man who does not want to deceive his audience knowingly. Now, even with correct judgment, even with honesty, it will happen without good will that someone may somehow harm knowingly and may thoughtfully urge dangerous counsel; when the devil urged eating the forbidden fruit, he was not unaware of what was best, but those two things, virtue and good will, were absent. Moreover, it is possible for a good man to knowingly urge something harmful as something useful, perhaps for an enemy of his country or for a tyrant who is oppressing the state, but this is irrelevant to the churchman, who should be endowed with such virtue that he bears good will toward his friends and foes alike. Hence the preacher will strive to ensure first that none of these is missing, then that the congregation understands that he is endowed with too much wisdom to be deceived in his judgment, next that he is too good a man to wish to deceive anyone knowingly, finally that his charity is such that he wishes to aid even his enemies.

Having said this, I return to the proofs taught by the rhetoricians. These have a twofold function: to fortify our own position, and to refute the opposing one. The general consensus is that in the division as a whole proofs are divided into *atekhnoi*, which you could call non-technical, and *entekhnoi*, that is, technical. The former kind is comprised of precedents, rumors, the results of torture, documents, an oath, testimonies.

VII. (368.48–374.170)

But even innate intellectual power hardly helps in inventing proofs, since some people perceive logical consequences and contradictions more easily than others. In addition, every confirmation consists either of things that follow or of things that contradict. In addition, some things follow necessarily—for example, that a woman who has given birth has had intercourse with a man, or that someone with an injured heart will die; some follow probably—for example, that a woman who takes pleasure in the revels of young men is unchaste. The same difference applies to things that are contradictory. Breathing and being dead are necessarily contradictory; being a mother and hating one's own son are probably contradictory. Sometimes a proof can be devised from what an opponent has conceded if we demonstrate that something obviously ridiculous follows from it or that it conflicts with an obvious and widely accepted truth, such as when Ctesippus, arguing with Euthydemus in Plato, deduces from what he had conceded that his father is a dog and that the same dog is also the father of all gudgeons, sea-urchins, and piglets and that these are all each other's brothers. The capacity to reason existed before dialectic was promulgated; like all the mathematical disciplines, it belongs to the category of the observed, not with the class of things introduced by human judgment like laws and grammar.

Still, being trained in dialectic from childhood will be of considerable assistance provided that no one, as he says, grows old there as if at the Sirens' rocks and, as Augustine warns, one takes no delight in wrangling. Closely akin to this vice is the thing they today call sophistic, with which innocent youths are immediately tainted in certain quarters; what this teaches is how never to be quiet rather than how to speak. All the books by Aristotle are helpful, his *Logic*, the *Isagoge* (which is in fact Porphyry's work but derived from Aristotle), the *Categories*, *On Interpretation*, the *Prior and Posterior Analytics*, *On Sophistical Refutations*; all of these are still more suitable for judgment or for arguing in the schools than for preaching, where his *Topics* and *Rhetoric* will be more helpful. I am not sure that

a preacher-to-be will be helped by the practice favored by Carneades of speaking on both sides, or the one of treating the discreditable subjects that the Greeks call *adoxoi* [ignoble], the way that Plato's Glaucon maligns justice and one person in my own recollection praised ingratitude, another drunkenness. Since those who have put most of their effort into dialectic or the related field of rhetoric have been trained with the aim of developing this ability, Plato is unwilling to have those who have been chosen for governing his state touch these subjects before the age of thirty. The reason he gives is the desire to prevent them having no firm opinions about the honorable and the dishonorable as a result of habitually arguing both for and against anything at all. Moreover, the ruler of a city ought to have an iron conviction about what deserves to be pursued and what deserves to be shunned and should have the greatest credibility with the people: but this is so much more true for the preacher, who is the real leader of the people. But how will someone make others strong if he is unsteady himself, or who will trust a man who is urging honorable counsel when he knows that he can also argue with equal skill against the counsel he is giving?

Moreover, those who have made dialectic thorny and convoluted with their pointless difficulties—as if that skill had been devised for the display of one's own talent instead of for judging correctly about what is true and false—are impeding judgment. Those who receive too much training in this kind of balderdash tend to experience what regularly happens to people who practice the art of fencing indoors. The whole thing is conducted according to strict rules purely for display, and he has such confidence in his skill that he can use his sword to cut an arrow that has been fired at him from a bow—so long as the person who is to do the shooting stands where he is told to stand and shoots only on command—but they say that nothing is more ridiculous for a serious battle, in a war for example, than this sort of man. Indeed, they often find in their discussions that there is a bloody spectacle any time anger interferes with their exercise of the rules. As to those who have had a life-long training in the schools arguing according to the tenets of Thomas or Scotus, following the path of nominals

or reals, you would call them raw recruits whenever they are invited to give a congregation serious advice or to a serious battle against the Jews or heretics, although there they were unconquerable generals. The sensible study of dialectic assists any natural ability; excessive study interferes with it, in the same way that some devices entail such subtlety and difficulty that preparing the device requires more trouble than it would to carry out the task even without using any device. For example, when a ratiocination is made up of compound propositions, the question can be explained more quickly than an argumentation would be apprehended from the compound propositions, but the artistry is applied as a tool for the same purpose: so that whatever is being questioned can be explained more quickly and more easily through it.

Arguments, then, as has been stated, are sometimes discovered by talent, sometimes derived by artistry, but you can find them more quickly and more easily if you know from your training the *loci* from which arguments are to be drawn. Moreover, every proof is taken from circumstances, the overall division of which is that some derive from the person, some from the case or the matter itself. If someone exhorted toward obedience by saying that "because women are naturally more subject to emotions and are weaker in judgment and reasoning, it is dangerous for them to be left to their own control, but they need to be governed by the guidance of men," likewise that "young people should obey the commands of their elders because inexperience still denies them a wisdom of their own and their tender age makes them somewhat inclined toward vice," here the proof is drawn from the persons of woman and man, youth and elder. Again, if someone says that sobriety and honorable activities are essential for guarding modesty on the grounds that indulgence whets the natural goads like oil poured on a stove and intoxication drives out shame, chastity's principal guardian, and idleness opens a kind of window to lustful thoughts, he is arguing from the thing itself, indulgence, intoxication, and idleness. Hence there will be an advantage in knowing particularly what is proper to each person and what effect each thing produces; a reading of the comic poets

and the historians, a familiarity with philosophy, and the widest possible experience will help with both. These too are called *loci* by the rhetoricians, though they are neither entirely different from those that Aristotle taught nor entirely the same: some are the same, some come down to the same, some differ. The method of instruction differs because rhetoricians are training an advocate, the Philosopher is assisting judgment in general.

Generally speaking, the following are the attributes of persons: family, race, country, sex, age, education or training, physical condition, fortune, rank, personality, occupations, ambition, past words and actions, emotion, counsel, name. Family tells us to consider a person's ancestry (it is appropriate, and a normal occurrence, for children to resemble their ancestors) because this is sometimes the source of influences that lead to living honorably or disgracefully. Race tells us the particular talent or special character of each ethnic group, since a Greek and a Scythian, a Roman and a German, a Frenchman and an Englishman do not share the same nature; likewise every city has its own laws, customs, ability, and character, for a resident of Sybaris and one of Marseilles are substantially different, as are an Athenian and a Theban. Everyone knows the difference of sex. Also, different things suit different ages. Moreover, the teachers that people have had and their teaching methods have more influence than ancestors. Physical condition includes handsomeness or ugliness, strength or weakness; a charge of adultery is more credible against a handsome man than an ugly one, and a violent crime is more credible in a strong man than a weak one. Fortune is a matter of wealth, kin, friends, dependents, rank, honors and their opposites. Rank includes many things: whether someone is renowned or obscure, a magistrate or a private citizen, a father or a son, a citizen or a foreigner, a free man or a slave, married or single, a parent or childless, twice married or once. The human personality shows a manifold variety: some are timid, some brave, some gentle, some forceful, chaste, lustful, boastful, modest, etc. Occupations: the characters of the farmer and the lawyer are different, of the trader and the soldier, the sailor and the physician. They add ambition

to these; whether people are or are not what they wish to seem, the way that each wants to seem is important, such as wealthy or erudite, just or powerful, devout or courtly, cheerful or sombre, a champion of the people or of princes. In a person one examines both past words and past actions because the present and even the future can be judged from the past. Emotion is different from personality in that the latter is constant, the former temporary, so that anger is an emotion, irascibility a personality, and fear is an emotion, fearfulness a personality, intoxication is an emotion, drunkenness or bibulousness a personality, that is, a condition of the mind. To these they add a person's name, but it is seldom a source of arguments in court unless given in accordance with the case (Aristides was called "the Just," Alexander Severus "Mammaea" because he was too deferential to his mother), or unless the name seems to have provided the occasion for committing the crime. For example, because the haruspices¹ had responded from the Sibylline Books that domination was being granted to three Cornelii, Lentulus dared on the basis of this assurance to strive for absolute power because he believed that he was the third Cornelius, being a Cornelius too like them. Quintilian thinks that anything drawn from a name is material for jokes, not for arguments; for example, Cicero makes many jokes on Verres' name, to the effect that this thievish man "converted" everything to his own. He makes similar jokes against a witness as being a Phormio, and Pliny the Elder against an historian who was called "Bibaculus"—and was, he says.²

Now, with your permission, let us review each of these and try to demonstrate how they can be of use to the preacher.

¹The haruspices were priests of the Etruscan religion, especially skilled at the art of divination by reading the entrails of sacrificial animals or, as here, the ancient textual fragments known as the Sibylline Books. They continued to be consulted even after the rise of Rome and Roman religion. The point of the example, inserted here where Erasmus discusses the kinds of arguments that can or cannot be made from a person's name, is that Cornelius Lentulus interpreted one of the haruspices' prophecies as a good omen for him to seek political power on the basis of his name. [Ed.]

²"Thirsty." Perhaps "Boosler" would be an appropriate English parallel. [Tr.]

VIII. (388.530–392.611)

It has been demonstrated that the preacher can derive considerable material for speaking from the accidental characteristics of persons; now it is necessary to indicate what the accidental properties of a thing or case suggest. Quintilian treats these *loci* by combining them with the *loci* that Aristotle included in his eight books of *Topics*, and he puts cause in first place, meaning of course final cause, since as a general rule everything has four causes, the efficient, the material, the formal, and the final, there being nothing but God alone that does not have an author by which it was made. The Son and the Holy Spirit have an author, though they were not made by anyone; therefore God is the universal and the primary cause of everything, the efficient and the final. Likewise there is nothing that does not consist of the two things matter and form, matter being like the receptacle of all the forms, form being what causes it to be what it is instead of something else. For example, a rational soul allows a human body to be a human, and the soul itself, being substance, has its own unnamed form which makes it a soul rather than an angel.

Everything that has been established has been established for a specific end, though nothing forbids a single thing having different ends; for example, nature has given women breasts to feed their young and also to adorn their bodies, just as man was given his tongue for many uses. Nor does anyone of sound mind undertake any business unless he is pursuing something; but nothing is pursued unless it is considered good or advantageous. The adulterer considers pleasure a good thing, and the thief pursues the possession of money as a good thing when he commits murder, even though having money this way is actually wrong and should be avoided. Therefore the end—which is called "final" in the outcome, "first" in the intention—aims at acquiring, increasing, or consolidating advantages, likewise avoiding, diminishing, or averting disadvantages. But in choosing these many people are deceived by a false conviction, and in the delusion of their error they believe that what is impious is pious, for example if someone were led into error to believe that the Arians were right about the Holy Trinity.

Others are duped by a mental disturbance like intoxication and anger, both of which are a sort of insanity, or envy, hostility, unrestrained love.

This *locus*, then, is useful for many purposes: for minimizing or exaggerating a charge, for instance if someone killed a friend while attacking an enemy—he had intended something other than what he did. Again, it is more vicious to kill a man through trickery for the purpose of taking away his wife than if you killed someone by whom you were injured through serious wrongdoing—the provocation mitigates a part of the crime. Peter is not excused from murder if, as is likely, he attacked Malchus to smash his skull, not to cut off his ear, since crimes are judged according to the mind's intention, not by how they turn out. On the other hand, it is mitigated because he was not after loot or any such thing but only wanted to free his most innocent Lord from danger, and was prepared even to die with Him.

The end plays a major role in the suasorial type by presenting the good that should be pursued, the ill that should be avoided. In addition, the end is so important that it alters the name of the action. David is criticized for killing Uriah because what he was after was a crime; but Phineas won praise for killing two men because he did not kill out of hatred, out of envy, or for loot but to deter his people from a shameful example and to reclaim authority for God's law.

Moreover, the end will supply an abundance of material for speaking in admonition and rebuke. "What is the purpose for which man was made? To know, fear, and love his Creator. Whatever man does, then, is to be referred to the glory of God; hence how detestable are they who live as if born for luxury and intoxication and other vices, not to say for the devil. How disgraceful it is that everything else carries out the duties that it was created to perform—the sun shines, clouds send rain, oxen plow, asses carry loads—and man alone does not recognize the reason why he was born." Thus a king must always have his end drilled into him, a bishop his. "What was your reason for becoming a priest? To be available for your sacred duties, not for a luxurious lifestyle or to pile wealth upon wealth." "Why did you become a scholastic? To cultivate your mind with liberal studies, not to give free rein to your frivolity." "Why then should the disciplines be

learned?" In order to live well, of course, and to serve your nation and friends. "Why did you become a monk? To be dead to earthly desires and to be swept along completely toward the heavenly, not to live in luxury and sloth." "Why did you become a judge? To safeguard the innocent, to restrain the wicked, to decide disputes between citizens, not to fill your bookcases." Great happiness would accrue in human existence if everyone kept his eye on his target—not the one that desire has proposed, but the one that God and honorable thought has put before him.

Moreover, the end is so important that everything is judged from it and the success of each endeavour is argued from it. Fasting to attune body to mind for the offices of devotion is a holy work—fasting to be considered holy is hypocrisy. Fasting to increase your wealth is greed—fasting to improve your physical condition, with no aim but good health, is medicine. The same should be said about praying, about giving alms, and about other praiseworthy works.

Those they call secondary ends are judged in the same balance. "You give alms to assist a poor man. Why do you want him to be assisted? For him to thank you and be devoted to you on account of being restored to life? Your work is merely human. To obey Christ and to restore Him in His limbs? You've hit your target. The laws of the heathens that refuse a reward to someone who has killed a tyrant for any reason other than freeing the state also have the same purpose; they too absolve a foreigner who has climbed a wall in defiance of the words of the law and repelled an enemy. In fact, an understanding of laws is gathered from their end; whoever displays it is seen as having fulfilled the law. Moreover, the final end brings a happiness beyond which there is nothing to desire. For example, a sheep has achieved its own happiness when it clothes and feeds someone, since this is the purpose for which the animal was born; if it could talk, a plucked flower delighting someone's eyes and nose would thank its planter because it is happily achieving the end for which it was planted. Hence those who look for happiness in the things that do not satisfy a man's soul and do not bring him tranquility are violently mistaken; anyone wanting a restful soul needs to find rest in God.

Baldesar Castiglione

1478–1529

Baldesar Castiglione was born to an old aristocratic family in Mantua, Italy. His parents provided him with not only an excellent humanist education in Latin and Greek, but also the proper training for a courtier, a role he assumed around 1494 at the court of Ludovico Sforza in Milan. Militarily weak, the Italy of Castiglione's day was divided into small principalities that were prey for surrounding stronger nations, notably Spain and France. When a French invasion drove Ludovico from Milan in 1499, Castiglione's mother introduced him into the service of Francesco Gonzaga, marquis of Mantua, to whom she was related. Castiglione assisted him in several military campaigns and performed diplomatic missions for him. One of these took him to Rome in 1503, where he met Guidobaldo da Montefeltro, duke of Urbino and brother-in-law of the marquis. Castiglione obtained grudging permission from the marquis, who was deeply offended by the request, to enter the duke's service. His principal duties for the duke were diplomatic and included a trip to England to receive the Order of the Garter by proxy for the ailing duke. Castiglione returned from England early in 1507, immediately before Pope Julius II paid a visit to Urbino. Castiglione later commemorated the brilliant conversation of the courtiers assembled for the pope's visit in his most famous work, *The Book of the Courtier* (*Il libro del cortegiano*; 1527; excerpted here).

In 1508 Duke Guidobaldo died, and his designated heir Francesco Maria della Rovere, who had been pressed upon Guidobaldo by the youth's uncle Pope Julius, became duke of Urbino. Castiglione remained in his service, following him in military campaigns and performing diplomatic missions. The latter was his strong suit; although trained in arms and horsemanship, Castiglione probably saw very little action in the field, and his only injury suffered in connection with a military campaign occurred when a mule fell on him behind the lines. In 1513 the duke sent Castiglione as his representative to Rome and rewarded his service by making him count of Novilara. Residing in Rome, Castiglione took part in its vibrant cultural life, developing close friendships with the great artists Raphael, who painted a sensitive portrait of him, and Michelangelo; with papal court officials Pietro Bembo, Jacopo Sadoleto, and Bibbiena (Bernardo Dovizzi); and with Federico Fregoso, then archbishop of Salerno. Several of these personages, those whom Castiglione first met at Urbino, appear as speakers in *The Book of the Courtier*, which he began to write at this time.

In 1516 Francesco Maria della Rovere was stripped of his dukedom by Pope Leo X, who gave it to his nephew Lorenzo de' Medici. The former duke and his wife went into exile in Mantua, and Castiglione followed them there, finally restored to the good graces of Francesco Gonzaga, marquis of Mantua. Castiglione married and continued to work on *The Courtier*, sending a first draft to friends in the fall of 1518. In 1519, when Francesco Gonzaga died, Castiglione continued in the service of his son Federico. In that same year, Lorenzo de' Medici died, and Castiglione returned to Rome to plead for the restoration of della Rovere as duke of Urbino (which did not happen, however, until after Pope Leo died in 1522).

In 1521, his young wife having died in childbirth, Castiglione entered holy orders, a move which facilitated his diplomatic efforts on behalf of the papacy and opened a pathway of advancement for him within the Church. He represented Federico, the new marquis of Mantua, at Rome until 1523, when he obtained the marquis's permission to accept an appointment from Pope Clement VII as his ambassador to the Spanish court of Emperor Charles V, the era's most powerful monarch (he was the son of Philip, the Hapsburg Holy Roman Emperor, and Joanna, the daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain). While in Spain, Castiglione finally completed *The Book of the Courtier*, which had been circulating in several drafts for almost ten years. Scholars believe that he added Book IV only after the death of Duke Guidobaldo's widow, Elisabetta Gonzaga, in 1526. The text finally went to press in Venice in 1527, while Rome was being brutally sacked by Spanish and German troops and Castiglione's patron Pope Clement VII was in prison. Castiglione remained at the court of Charles V and worked to negotiate Clement's release. He died suddenly of a fever at Toledo in 1529 and received a state funeral at which the emperor Charles himself eulogized him as "one of the best caballeros [noble gentlemen, knights] of the world."¹

The Book of the Courtier was one of the most widely read books of the Renaissance, going into more than eighty editions in several languages by 1619. In the original Italian, it was regarded as a model of good style that would enable that vernacular to accomplish as much in literature as the classical languages had. Emperor Charles V was said to keep *The Courtier* on his bedside table with his Bible and a copy of Machiavelli's *The Prince*. The first English translation, widely read and influential in English Renaissance literature, was Sir Thomas Hoby's, published in 1561. The book aroused some controversy for its supposed hedonism and several anticlerical statements; expurgated versions were published before the book was finally placed on the Index of forbidden texts by the Roman Catholic Church in 1590.

Although scholars believe that Castiglione originally conceived his book as a defense of women (a popular medieval and Renaissance genre), *The Book of the Courtier* is now viewed as largely responsible for the modern conception of a male figure, the so-called Renaissance man. One of his modern editors, Burton Milligan, has summarized this figure's traits thus: He is skilled in warfare and also in sports, especially those that require agility and dexterity; he is a wise, honest counselor to his aristocratic master, refusing to obey evil commands; he never brags about his accomplishments; he is well read in Greek and Roman oratory, poetry, and history, and also in vernacular classics (in Italian, these will be Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio); he is skilled in witty conversation, and he can write prose and poetry clearly and without affectation, although he is too modest to show his texts to any but his closest friends; he observes decorum, avoiding lower-class or vulgar behavior of any kind; he chooses friends like himself, who will enhance his reputation; he is not quarrelsome, but moderates his views diplomatically; he is handsome and manly; he is a true and discreet lover who is capable of rising from physical to spiritual love; ideally, though not necessarily, he is of noble birth.

¹Quoted in Robert W. Hanning and David Rosand, eds., *Castiglione: The Ideal and the Real in Renaissance Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), p. xxiv.

As Renaissance scholar Wayne Rebhorn has pointed out (1978), this is a man for whom his own personality is a work of art. In an age of great portrait art, he paints his own portrait, as it were. He wears carefully crafted masks that help him to improve his character. He is always “on stage,” always carefully monitoring how his performance is affecting his audience, the people around him. Above all, he must appear to do everything that he does so wonderfully well without much conscious effort: This is his crowning trait, called in Italian *sprezzatura*. The performance must never appear to be a performance; Rebhorn suggests (1993) that its naturalness testifies to the courtier’s right to be where he is, in contrast to lower-class buffoons who display themselves with vulgarity.

Castiglione himself identified Cicero’s *De Oratore* as the principal influence on *The Courtier*, and modern scholars agree with him. Some passages actually closely paraphrase Cicero in translation, and Castiglione’s ideal courtier shares much with Cicero’s ideal orator, such as a broad humanist education. As Renaissance literary scholar Daniel Javitch has pointed out, however, there are some important differences between Castiglione’s ideal and the orator described in Cicero (and promoted in Italian humanist education). Cicero’s orator is formed for verbal combat, addressing large, socially mixed but largely male audiences and attempting to persuade them to adopt his views on civic questions and to take the action he recommends. In contrast, Castiglione’s courtier must be verbally conciliatory, since he usually addresses small private audiences, often of his social superiors and often including women; he cannot insist on his point of view but must dissemble and attempt to move indirectly, and more often, he is not using his verbal abilities even for this limited political action but is attempting merely to entertain.² It is no coincidence, suggests Javitch (1983), that both *De Oratore* and *The Courtier* were written at a time when democratic freedoms were declining and the political world was increasingly being governed by despots. But whereas Cicero chooses to celebrate a fading ideal in the face of change, Castiglione attempts to fashion one that will be more effective within the new order. Feminist scholar Carla Freccero has suggested that this amounts almost to a feminizing, or emasculating, of the courtier, making the discussion of women and their subjection in Book III central to the text’s political vision.

SUMMARY OF *THE BOOK OF THE COURTIER*

The chief female speakers, of whom only Emilia Pia has many lines, are Elisabetta Gonzaga, wife of Guidobaldo da Montefeltro, duke of Urbino; Lady Emilia Pia, the duchess’s companion and widow of the duke’s half-brother; Margarita Gonzaga, young niece and companion of the duchess; and Costanza Fregoso, young niece of the duke. The chief male speakers, who do most of the talking, are Francesco Maria della Rovere, young nephew and heir of the duke; Federico Fregoso, nephew of the duke, later a cardinal; Ottaviano Fregoso, elder brother of Federico and Costanza, later doge of Genoa; Count Ludovico da Canossa, a kinsman of Castiglione, later bishop of Bayeux; Giuliano de’ Medici, the “Magnifico,” son of Lorenzo the

²Daniel Javitch, *Poetry and Courtliness in Renaissance England* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), pp. 23–49.

Magnificent, close friend of Castiglione, later duke of Nemours; Bernardo Dovizzi (Bibbiena), a Medici follower, later a cardinal; Cesare Gonzaga, kinsman of the duchess, cousin and close friend of Castiglione; Bernardo Accolti, also called Unico Aretino, a courtier-poet; Lord Gaspar Pallavicino; and Pietro Bembo, Venetian scholar and poet, later a cardinal. These are all historical personages, although Castiglione suppresses unsavory details about some of them.

In the Epistle, the narrator Castiglione says that he wrote *The Book of the Courtier* to commemorate the delights of the court of Duke Guidobaldo. He wishes to publish it now both to forestall pirated editions and to commemorate many of the principal players—especially the duchess—who are now dead. He defends his choice to write “as I speak,” in his own Lombard dialect, and says he has imitated authors fully as good as Boccaccio and therefore should not be required to imitate Boccaccio and his antique Tuscan. Castiglione refers the reader to further discussion of this issue in Book I (excerpted here). He also defends his choice to describe the perfect courtier, even if this ideal is unattainable, because it will give people something to aim for.

In Book I, Castiglione tells the book’s dedicatee, Alfonsus Ariosto (brother of the poet), that he will fulfill his request to describe the perfect courtier by recounting a conversation on the subject that took place at the court of the duke of Urbino while Castiglione was serving there (he modestly denies being present, but he sets the discussion at an actual historical moment, following the visit of Pope Julius II, when he was in Urbino). He credits the duchess with the high quality of the conversation.

The scene is an evening gathering of male and female courtiers in the company of the duchess. The duke’s heir, della Rovere, is not present because he is escorting the pope, who has just departed after a visit to the court (and the duke never takes part in the conversation, being secluded because of ill health). The papal visit has attracted many courtiers, so the company is numerous. The duchess makes the Lady Emilia Pia the “master of ceremonies” for the evening, and she commands the men to come up with a new game for the group to play, that is, a new topic of conversation.

Several of the men offer topics that the Lady Emilia Pia receives in silence. Finally she asks Federico Fregoso to make a suggestion, and he proposes describing the perfect courtier. Without explaining why, the Lady Emilia and the duchess immediately approve this topic, and Lady Emilia assigns the task of exposition to Ludovico da Canossa, because, she says, he will make a hash of it and then the rest of them will get a chance to talk by correcting him. Everyone laughs.

Although pleading his inadequacy to the task, Count Ludovico begins by stating that the perfect courtier should be born a gentleman. Noble birth stimulates virtue. It also improves the chances that the courtier will possess traits necessary to his success, namely, intelligence, personal beauty, and a certain grace that makes everything he does attractive. Lord Gaspar protests that these traits may be found among men of low birth, and folly among the noble. The count does not deny this, but says that if we are talking about the perfect courtier, we may as well give him the adornment of noble birth. It predisposes people to think well of him, a very valuable advantage.

The count explains that the courtier's principal profession should be military. It is important that he be known as a brave man, because if his courage is ever called into question, the damage to his reputation will be hard to repair, just as if he were a woman accused of unchastity. Yet he must not attempt to establish his reputation by bragging about his prowess. Let him be fierce in battle and modest and retiring everywhere else. The courtier must know how to let his accomplishments be known discreetly.

According to the count, the perfect courtier's good looks must be manly, not effeminate. He should be of middle size. He should be skilled in arms both in battle and in private quarrels (duels), and must always show himself brave but not rash. He must be a skilled horseman for battle and for games played on horseback. He should be adept at gentlemanly sports such as hunting, but he should avoid physical accomplishments that are mere tricks, such as juggling.

Here Lord Cesare Gonzaga asks the count to say more about the "certain grace" that should adorn the courtier's actions. Tell us how we can acquire this grace, he says. The count replies that he has not set himself up to be a teacher, but only to describe the perfect courtier's traits, though it is true that grace can be increased with effort. A good way to improve is to imitate men who obviously have it. (Our excerpt begins here.)

Grace must avoid preciousness and any appearance of working hard to do something well. Skill must be masked with a certain appearance of carelessness, just as some orators of old always claimed to be unpracticed in the literate arts. Avoid appearing overly concerned with your appearance. Don't spoil the effect of your skill by trying to add one more nice touch and overdoing it. The count gives examples of various gentlemanly accomplishments.

Above all, the count advises, avoid preciousness in speech—use your own native dialect and avoid foreign and archaic words. There follows a debate about whether archaic words may be used in writing, if not in speech, and whether writing and speech should differ in other ways. The question is raised whether the speaker/writer should make clearness and comprehensibility his chief concern or whether he should place more responsibility on the audience to understand him. The count wants speech and writing to be similar and clear.

Why is the Tuscan dialect thought to be the best? Because it has remained closer to the parent Latin than other Italian dialects and is less polluted with invaders' languages, and because great writers have used it (Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio). Nevertheless, we should not now use Tuscan words that are archaic and hard to understand, except very rarely. A man should mainly use the dialect with which he is most familiar.

Words and thought cannot be separated—knowledge is required to speak and write well. One's words must be placed in a good order, with vocabulary that is appropriate to the occasion. The courtier should be able to speak humorously on occasion and also to raise various emotions in his hearers.

The count defends the vernacular passionately and says we need a common Italian tongue that borrows what is good from all dialects and does not attempt to reduce the language to rules but follows the usage of the most learned and the "best"

people. There are many different good styles, as we see can when we compare writing with music or painting. A man should develop the style that comes most naturally to him rather than force himself to follow an uncongenial model, no matter how exalted.

Lady Emilia now insists that the discussion has gone too far afield from its original topic, and she commands the count to return to the task of defining the courtier's special grace. He does so by exploring the example of women who attempt to enhance their beauty with cosmetics: To the extent that the beholders are aware that the woman has used cosmetics, her beauty is diminished, not enhanced. The courtier must similarly eschew any obvious attempt to appear skilled; all must seem natural and offhand.

Knowledge must inform the courtier's discourse. This must be the knowledge of virtue, which is not a very complex thing, since it requires only honesty. The courtier also needs book learning; examples of contemporary learned noblemen and classical examples are rehearsed. What should he read? Let him read of ancient military heroes, in hopes that this will inspire him. He should know Greek as well as Latin and read poets, orators, and historians, and he should practice writing in these languages as well as in the vernacular—this will help him especially with the ladies. Moreover, his studies will equip him to judge the writing and speaking of others, a useful skill. He will be able to speak copiously on any subject at short notice—but he must never pretend to know something he does not know, a fatal error. (Our excerpt ends here.) Pietro Bembo and Count Ludovico go on to argue about whether letters or arms constitute the greater accomplishment for the courtier.

The company now complains that the count is asking the impossible of his courtier. He laughs and says that he is not done yet: The courtier also should be able to sing and play, although without seeming to put much effort into these accomplishments. He should also know something about art, enough to judge the work of others. The company then debates which art is better, painting or sculpture. Contemporary and classical examples of heroes and noblemen who honored artists are adduced. Do painters appreciate female beauty more than ordinary men do? This question is being debated when the company is interrupted by the arrival of Francesco Maria della Rovere, who has been escorting the departing pope on his way. The young man is delighted to learn that the guests are discussing the perfect courtier, and he wants the discussion to continue so that he may learn from it, but the ladies suggest that the hour is too late to continue. Therefore, the company relaxes a bit by listening to music while some of the ladies dance, and then all retire to bed.

Book II begins with the narrator Castiglione's criticism of old men for their habit of denigrating everything contemporary as less good than the things of olden time. Although the present age has its vices, it has no more than earlier ages, and certainly as many virtues as well. The court of Duke Urbino, represented in this book, was second to none. Now the tale moves to a second evening of discussion on the traits of the ideal courtier. His need for modesty is stressed. The attributes given him the previous day are reviewed, with some further debate over details.

The courtier should serve his lord cheerfully, not show off the good opinion and easy access he enjoys from his lord, and he should seldom beg for favors for himself. Should the courtier obey if his lord requires him to do evil? This point is debated at some length as the company considers how evil the deed is and what good may come from it, but overall, the group judges that the courtier should not obey evil commands.

The discussion turns to the importance of making a good appearance. The guests discuss what the courtier should wear. They stress that the courtier should choose friends of good reputation to enhance his own reputation. His reputation will precede him and influence people strongly. He should keep himself clean and not indulge too much in eating or drinking.

Francesco Maria della Rovere, present this evening, commands Federico Fregoso to explain how the courtier should use humor. He and Bibbiena, an acknowledged expert, now share the exposition of this subject, using many examples (drawn from Cicero's *De Oratore*). They condemn bawdy jokes. The discussion of word play ends with examples of verbal tricks that men use to seduce women. Women are berated for allowing themselves to be fooled, and they are urged to look for the signs of true affection. The duchess now orders Giuliano de' Medici, the "Magnifico," to provide a portrait of the ideal female courtier. Since the hour is late, that will be postponed until tomorrow.

Book III begins with Lord Gaspar Pallavicino—who, it will appear, is a misogynist—objecting to the topic. The duchess says he's afraid to hear just how excellent a woman might be. Lord Cesare Gonzaga adds that the presence of accomplished ladies is essential to any court. The Magnifico is allowed to proceed.

He says that the virtues of mind that have been outlined for the male courtier should also belong to the ideal female courtier. She should also possess noble birth, a lack of affectation, and that certain grace that makes all her doings seem effortless. She should be witty, and not envious, argumentative, foolish, or given to slander. She should keep her lady's good will without pushing herself forward. She should be tender and mild, with movements full of womanly sweetness in contrast to the stalwart male. She should be beautiful. She must be very careful to defend herself against any accusations of unchastity.

She should know how to manage her husband's household, but her true profession as a courtier, corresponding to arms for the male, is the art of conversation. She should be able to entertain all kinds of men with conversation appropriate to their station and to the time and place. She must be both witty and good, never listening to bawdy talk or gossip. She must be able to pick out what is important in any issue under discussion and speak to the purpose, but never pretend to know what she does not know. She must never praise herself.

She should not engage in the boisterous sports of men. She should be able to dance, sing, and play a musical instrument, but all sweetly and gently—with no rowdiness. She should dress modestly but in a way that enhances her best points. She should be able to judge men's performances in their sports and know something about literature, drawing, and painting. She should be able to devise "sports and pastimes" suitable to the group in which she finds herself.

She should be wise, steady, brave, and temperate. Here Lord Gaspar breaks in sarcastically and asks if the Magnifico will have her running the government and making laws next. He replies that this would not be a bad thing, citing the authority of Plato and his ideal state, and the examples of modern queens. But these are not the tasks of the female courtier.

Lord Gaspar exclaims that Lord Giuliano insults the ladies present by devising an ideal female courtier who is so clearly unattainable—the ladies will know that he is a mere flatterer! He now rehearses a number of arguments for female inferiority, such as Aristotle's claim that women spring from defective embryos, and the Magnifico handily refutes them all. Why then, asks Lord Gaspar tartly, do so many women wish they were men? Only because they want liberty and to be free of male oppression, says the Magnifico.

Moreover, many famous men have been helped by wives, mothers, and sisters. The Magnifico recounts several long stories of women who displayed exemplary love for their husbands. He names learned women, including Diotima and Aspasia. He depicts many women who helped the state, either by spurring their men to bravery in battle or by their own courage in arms. He attacks the view that unchastity is a worse offense in women than in men, implicating men in women's unchastity. He tells stories of women who protected their chastity heroically.

Federico now asks how the gentlewoman should conduct her profession of conversation where love is concerned. The Magnifico replies that she should doubt glib expressions of love and know that the true lover is tongue-tied. She should seek only one, whom she may marry if she is unwed, or who may be no more than an intellectual companion to her, if she is already married. She should not seek to fascinate many men or give out many love tokens. The discussion suggests that the ideal female courtier should have a courtly lover. He should hint at his feelings and look for encouragement, especially by exchanging glances. If he is accepted as a lover, he should keep his love secret from everyone else. Lord Gaspar breaks in to descant upon the unmotivated cruelty of women to their lovers, and before the Magnifico can defend them, Ottaviano Fregoso interjects that both men depict women incorrectly, either too negatively or too positively, and meanwhile, the group has lost sight of what it should be discussing, namely, the traits of the ideal courtier. Very well, says the duchess, tomorrow you may correct these faults.

Book IV begins with Castiglione's brief praise of the male participants in the conversation; he describes the achievements of those who did not die young and commemorates those who did. He also praises the new duchess of Urbino. The discussion resumes with Ottaviano saying that what is missing is the purpose of the (male) courtier's training, without which this training might lead merely to effeminacy. The courtier should gain his master's confidence so that he can advise him to choose virtuous goals and teach him how to attain them. The courtier's training in entertainments (music, sports, and so on) is designed to make him more attractive to his lord and so more persuasive. His real value is as a spur toward good. Too many princes are ignorant and conceited because their courtiers flatter and lie to them. The courtier must be honest, but he must also remember to be tactful and discreet.

The prince who has already been corrupted by bad advisors must be approached indirectly. In other words, the courtier will convey truth and support good by dissembling.

There follows a long debate on whether virtue may be learned. Most say yes. Temperance is presented as a master virtue because it can even harness vices to good ends; for example, it can permit the judicious use of anger to enhance manly authority.

Next there is much dispute on what form of government is best. Although government by one prince, by the people, and by an elite group are all mentioned, the third alternative tends to drop out and the others are seen as the two alternatives. Different views are expressed, but the consensus seems to be that rule by a single prince is best, if that prince is virtuous. Therefore, once again, the possibilities for instructing the prince in virtue are discussed. He should spend more time overseeing his subjects' activities than acting himself. He should seek peace and prosperity for his land rather than wasting its men and substance in wars to enlarge its boundaries. The courtier can help form this virtuous prince by first guiding his everyday habits; only later should the courtier speak directly of virtue. The prince should appoint councils of noblemen and commoners to debate issues for him. His primary concern should be justice. He should try to prevent extremes of wealth and poverty in his realm.

Lord Cesare Gonzaga argues that, in addition to being virtuous, the prince must appear virtuous. He must appear princely. How? He should show himself manly and brave in arms. He should be gentle and courteous in court. He should present pleasing shows, banquets, and games. He should keep magnificent horses, hawks, and hounds. He should erect large and beautiful buildings. Lord Ottaviano adds that he may make war to overthrow tyrants and to convert infidels.

Now follows an explanation of various objections to the idea that the courtier can teach his lord (or her lady). In the process, Ottaviano notes that Aristotle played the courtier to Alexander and Plato to the kings of Sicily. The consensus remains that most princes are teachable; however, if one finds oneself in the service of a master who is too corrupted by long evil practice to change, one should leave him.

An earlier idea, depicting the courtier as a lover, is disputed. What if the courtier is an older man? Won't he look ridiculous playing the lover? Pietro Bembo takes up this question by defining the nature of love. He contrasts physical and spiritual love. The former, most common among young men, is inferior to the latter because it dissipates when its desire is achieved. Spiritual love, however, which does not require the union of bodies, grows ever deeper, and is quite appropriate to older lovers, who can better appreciate it. Spiritual beauty, the object of spiritual love, appears to consist of harmony among parts, both mental and physical—that is, a beautiful nature in a beautiful body, even though the body is not the primary object of attention. A beautiful person cannot be evil unless corrupted by very unusual circumstances. Chief among its many virtues is the fact that spiritual love of a person can lead to divine love. Bembo talks himself into a rhapsody on this subject, and when he finally ceases, the company discovers that dawn is breaking. Nevertheless, Lord

Gaspar interjects that women are not capable of spiritual love, and the Magnifico leaps to their defense. The duchess gently silences them, promising more discussion of this topic tonight.

Selected Bibliography

The standard translation of *The Book of the Courtier* is Charles S. Singleton's (1959), from which our excerpt is taken. A more recent and very readable translation is George Bull's (1967). Sir Thomas Hoby's famous Elizabethan translation is available in *Three Renaissance Classics: The Prince, Utopia, The Courtier* (ed. Burton A. Milligan, 1953). Milligan's introduction provides helpful information on the cultural context of Castiglione in the Renaissance.

There is no modern scholarly biography of Castiglione. Still respected is Julia Cartwright's *Baldassare Castiglione: The Perfect Courtier* (2 vols.; 1908). J. R. Woodhouse's *Baldesar Castiglione: A Reassessment of "The Courtier"* (1978) begins with a helpful short biographical sketch and adds much information on the literary context of *The Courtier*. Frank Whigham's *Ambition and Privilege: The Social Tropes of Elizabethan Courtesy Theory* (1984) relies on Castiglione throughout and helpfully locates him in the Renaissance sociopolitical milieu.

An important collection of essays, edited by Robert W. Hanning and David Rosand, is *Castiglione: The Ideal and the Real in Renaissance Culture* (1983). Wayne Rebhorn explores Castiglione's social and aesthetic ideas in *Courtly Performance: Masking and Festivity in Castiglione's "Book of the Courtier"* (1978). See also his "Baldesar Castiglione, Thomas Wilson, and the Courtly Body of Renaissance Rhetoric" (*Rhetorica* 11 [summer 1993]: 241-74), which further explores Renaissance social ideas through these two writers' depiction of the courtier's physical body.

Many scholars have explored the political implications of *The Courtier*. Treating it as a response to increasing despotism in the Renaissance is Thomas M. Greene, "Il Cortegiano and the Choice of a Game" (in Hanning and Rosand). Daniel Javitch addresses the same theme in his "Il Cortegiano and the Constraints of Despotism," in the same volume, and in his *Poetry and Courtliness in Renaissance England* (1978). Carla Freccero finds feminist implications in this issue in "Politics and Aesthetics in Castiglione's *Il Cortegiano*: Book III and the Discourse on Women" (in *Creative Imitation: New Essays on Renaissance Literature*, ed. David Quint et alia, 1992).

A number of Renaissance philosophical and aesthetic issues are raised in *The Courtier*. Wayne Rebhorn discusses Castiglione's theory of language in "The Enduring Word: Language, Time, and History in *Il Libro del Cortegiano*" (in Hanning and Rosand). On the relationship of ideas of merit in Castiglione and in the new nominalist theology of his day, see Ullrich Langer, *Divine and Poetic Freedom in the Renaissance* (1990). On Castiglione's Neoplatonism, see Christine Raffini's *Marsilio Ficino, Pietro Bembo, Baldassare Castiglione: Philosophical, Aesthetic, and Political Approaches in Renaissance Platonism* (1998). Ottaviano Fregoso's uses of Plato and Aristotle are also discussed in John D. Bernard's "Castiglione's Gentle Art of Persuasion in Book IV of *The Courtier*" (*Renaissance Papers* [1983]: 1-15).

From *The Book of the Courtier*

“But, having thought many times already about how this grace is acquired (leaving aside those who have it from the stars), I have found quite a universal rule which in this matter seems to me valid above all others, and in all human affairs whether in word or deed: and that is to avoid affectation in every way possible as though it were some very rough and dangerous reef; and (to pronounce a new word perhaps) to practice in all things a certain *sprezzatura* [nonchalance], so as to conceal all art and make whatever is done or said appear to be without effort and almost without any thought about it. And I believe much grace comes of this: because everyone knows the difficulty of things that are rare and well done; wherefore facility in such things causes the greatest wonder; whereas, on the other hand, to labor and, as we say, drag forth by the hair of the head, shows an extreme want of grace, and causes everything, no matter how great it may be, to be held in little account.

“Therefore we may call that art true art which does not seem to be art; nor must one be more careful of anything than of concealing it, because if it is discovered, this robs a man of all credit and causes him to be held in slight esteem. And I remember having read of certain most excellent orators in ancient times who, among the other things they did, tried to make everyone believe that they had no knowledge whatever of letters; and, dissembling their knowledge, they made their orations appear to be composed in the simplest manner and according to the dictates of nature and truth rather than of effort and art; which fact, had it been known, would have inspired in the minds of the people the fear that they could be duped by it.

“So you see how art, or any intent effort, if it is disclosed, deprives everything of grace. Who among you fails to laugh when our messer Pierpaolo dances after his own fashion, with those capers of his, his legs stiff on tiptoe, never moving his head, as if he were a stick of wood, and

all this so studied that he really seems to be counting his steps? What eye is so blind as not to see in this the ungainliness of affectation; and not to see the grace of that cool *disinvoltura* [ease] (for when it is a matter of bodily movements many call it that) in many of the men and women here present, who seem in words, in laughter, in posture not to care; or seem to be thinking more of everything than of that, so as to cause all who are watching them to believe that they are almost incapable of making a mistake?”

Here messer Bernardo Bibbiena said, without waiting: “Now you see that our messer Roberto has at last found someone to praise his style of dancing, as it seems that none of the rest of you esteem it at all. For if this excellence consists in nonchalance, in showing no concern, and in seeming to have one’s thoughts elsewhere rather than on what one is doing, then in dancing messer Roberto has no peer on earth, because to make it quite plain that he is giving no thought to what he is doing, he lets his clothes fall from his back and his slippers from his feet, and goes right on dancing without picking them up.”

Then the Count replied: “Since you are determined that I shall go on talking, I will say something more of our faults. Do you not see that what you are calling nonchalance in messer Roberto is really affectation, because we clearly see him making every effort to show that he takes no thought of what he is about, which means taking too much thought; and because it exceeds certain limits of moderation, such nonchalance is affected, is unbecoming, and results in the opposite of the desired effect, which is to conceal the art. Hence, I do not believe that the vice of affectation is any less present in a nonchalance (in itself a praiseworthy thing) wherein one lets his clothes fall off than a studied concern for one’s personal appearance (also, in itself, a praiseworthy thing), bearing the head so stiff for fear of spoiling one’s coiffure, or carrying a mirror in the fold of one’s cap and a comb in one’s sleeve, and having one’s page follow about through the

Translated by Charles Singleton.

streets with a sponge and brush; because such care for personal appearance and such nonchalance both tend too much to extremes, which is always a fault, and is contrary to that pure and charming simplicity which is so appealing to all. Consider how ungraceful that rider is who tries to sit so very stiff in his saddle (in the Venetian style, as we are wont to say), compared with one who appears to give no thought to the matter and sits his horse as free and easy as if he were on foot. How much more pleasing and how much more praised is a gentleman whose profession is arms, and who is modest, speaking little and boasting little, than another who is forever praising himself, swearing and blustering about as if to defy the whole world—which is simply the affectation of wanting to cut a bold figure. And the same holds true in every practice, indeed in everything that is said or done.”

Then the Magnifico Giuliano said: “It holds true as well in music, wherein it is a great mistake to place two perfect consonances one after the other, for our sense of hearing abhors this, whereas it often enjoys a second or a seventh which in itself is a harsh and unbearable discord. And this is due to the fact that to continue in perfect consonances generates satiety and gives evidence of a too affected harmony, which is avoided when imperfect consonances are mixed in, establishing a kind of comparison, by which our ears are held in greater suspense, and more avidly wait upon and enjoy the perfect consonances, delighting in that discord of the second or seventh as in something that shows nonchalance.”

“So, you see,” replied the Count, “that affectation is detrimental in this as in other things. Moreover, it is said to have been proverbial with certain most excellent painters of antiquity that excessive care is harmful, and Protogenes is said to have been censured by Apelles for not knowing when to take his hands from the board.”

Then messer Cesare said: “It seems to me that our fra Serafino has this same fault of not knowing when to take his hands from the board, at least not before all of the food has been taken from it too.”

The Count laughed and added: “Apelles meant

that Protogenes did not know when to stop in painting, which was nothing if not a kind of reproach for his being affected in his work. Thus, this excellence (which is opposed to affectation, and which, at the moment, we are calling *nonchalance*), besides being the real source from which grace springs, brings with it another adornment which, when it accompanies any human action however small, not only reveals at once how much the person knows who does it, but often causes it to be judged much greater than it actually is, since it impresses upon the minds of the onlookers the opinion that he who performs well with so much facility must possess even greater skill than this, and that, if he were to devote care and effort to what he does, he could do it far better.

“And, to multiply such examples, take a man who is handling weapons and is about to throw a dart or is holding a sword or other weapon in his hand: if immediately he takes a position of readiness, with ease, and without thinking, with such facility that his body and all his members fall into that posture naturally and without any effort, then, even if he does nothing more, he shows himself to be perfectly accomplished in that exercise. Likewise in dancing, a single step, a single movement of the body that is graceful and not forced, reveals at once the skill of the dancer. A singer who utters a single word ending in a group of four notes with a sweet cadence, and with such facility that he appears to do it quite by chance, shows with that touch alone that he can do much more than he is doing. Often too in painting, a single line which is not labored, a single brush stroke made with ease and in such a manner that the hand seems of itself to complete the line desired by the painter, without being directed by care or skill of any kind, clearly reveals that excellence of craftsmanship, which people will then proceed to judge, each by his own lights. And the same happens in almost every other thing.

“Therefore our Courtier will be judged excellent, and will show grace in all things and particularly in his speech, if he avoids affectation: which error is incurred by many and sometimes, more than others, by our Lombards who, if they have been away from home for a year, come back and start right off speaking Roman, or

Spanish, or French, and God knows how! All of which stems from an excessive desire to appear very accomplished, and so they put effort and diligence into acquiring a most odious fault. Certainly it would require no little effort on my part if in these discussions I attempted to use those antique Tuscan words which the Tuscans of today have already dropped from use; moreover, I believe you would all laugh at me.”

Then messer Federico said: “It is true that in discussing among ourselves, as we are now doing, it would be bad perhaps to use those antique Tuscan words, because, as you say, they would be irksome both to the speaker and to the listener, and many would understand them only with difficulty. But if one is writing, then I do believe it would be wrong not to use them, because they give much grace and authority to writing, and result in a diction of more gravity and majesty than is had with modern words.”

“I do not know,” replied the Count, “what grace or authority can be given to writing by words that ought to be avoided, not only in such talk as we are presently engaged in (which you yourself admit) but also in any circumstance whatever that one can imagine. For if any man of good judgment had to deliver an oration on weighty matters before the very senate of Florence, which is the capital of Tuscany, or had to speak privately about important business with some person of rank in that city, or yet about amusing things with some close acquaintance, or about love with ladies or gentlemen, or in jokes or jests at feasts, games, or where you will, whatever the time, place, or matter, I am sure he would take care to avoid using those antique Tuscan words; and if he used them, not only would he bring ridicule upon himself but he would give no little annoyance to anyone hearing him.

“Therefore it strikes me as very strange to use as good words in writing those which are eschewed as bad in whatever sort of speech, and to maintain that what is never proper when spoken should be the most proper usage possible in writing. For it is my opinion that writing is simply a form of speaking which endures even after it is uttered, the image, as it were, or better, the soul of our words. Hence, in speech, which vanishes

as soon as it is uttered, some things are permissible; but not so in writing, because writing preserves the words and submits them to the judgment of the reader, giving him time to consider them at length. Wherefore, in the case of writing it is reasonable that greater care should be taken to make it more polished and correct; not, however, that the written words should be different from the spoken, but that in writing those words should be chosen which are the most beautiful in speech. And if what is not permitted in speaking should be permitted in writing, in my opinion a most unhappy thing would result: namely, more license would be taken in that wherein one should take the most care; and the effort that goes into writing would be detrimental rather than good.

“Therefore it is surely true that what is proper in writing is also proper in speaking; and that manner of speaking is most beautiful which resembles beautiful writing. Furthermore, I deem it far more essential to be understood in writing than in speaking, since those who write are not always present to their readers as those who speak are present to those with whom they speak. But I would praise any man who, besides avoiding many antique Tuscan words, would make certain, whether in speaking or writing, that he uses those words which are in current usage in Tuscany and in other parts of Italy and which have a certain grace when pronounced. And it seems to me that he who imposes upon himself any other rule is not quite sure of avoiding that affectation which is so much condemned and about which we were speaking a moment ago.”

Then messer Federico said: “I cannot deny you, Count, that writing is a kind of speech; but I do say that if spoken words have any obscurity in them, such discourse will not penetrate the mind of the listener, and, since it passes without being understood, is to no purpose; which does not happen in writing, because if the words which a writer uses have in them a little, I will not say difficulty, but subtlety that is hidden, and thus are not so familiar as the words that are commonly used in speaking, they do give a certain greater authority to the writing and cause the reader to proceed with more restraint and concentration, to reflect more, and to enjoy the talent and the

doctrine of the writer; and, by judiciously exerting himself a little, he tastes that pleasure which is had when we achieve difficult things. And if the ignorance of the one who reads is so great that he cannot overcome these difficulties, that is no fault of the writer, nor on this account must such a style be judged to be without beauty.

"Therefore I believe that in writing one should use Tuscan words and those only which have been used by the ancient Tuscans, because that is a great proof, tested by time, that they are good and effective in expressing what they signify. And, besides this, they have the grace and venerableness which great age gives not only to words, but to buildings, statues, pictures, and to everything that is able to take it on; and often by such splendor and dignity they make the diction beautiful, by the power and elegance whereof every subject, no matter how mean it may be, can be adorned so as to deserve the highest praise. But this matter of current usage, by which you set such store, to me seems very risky; and it can often be bad. And if some fault of speech is found to prevail among many ignorant persons, it seems to me that it ought not on this account to be taken as a rule and be followed by other persons. Moreover, usage varies a great deal, nor is there a noble city in Italy without its own manner of speech different from all the others. But since you have not felt bound to declare which speech among these is the best, a man might adopt Bergamasque as well as Florentine, and, according to you, there would be nothing wrong in this.

"It seems to me, therefore, that anyone who wishes to avoid all doubt and feel quite sure must set himself to imitating someone who by common consent is acknowledged to be good, and hold to him as to a guide and shield against any adverse critic. And such a model (in the vernacular, I mean) should be none other than Petrarch and Boccaccio; and whoever strays from these two is groping, like someone walking through the darkness without a light, and he will often lose his way. But we are today so forward that we do not stoop to do what the good writers of old did, namely, to practice imitation, without which I deem it impossible to write well. And it seems to me that a great witness of this is seen in Virgil who, though by his own genius and divine judg-

ment he deprived all posterity of the hope of being able to imitate him well, still chose to imitate Homer."

Then signor Gaspar Pallavicino said: "Certainly, this discussion about writing is well worth listening to; and yet it would be more to our purpose if you would teach us the manner the Courtier should observe in speaking, for I think he has greater need of that, since he has to use speech more often than writing."

The Magnifico replied: "Indeed, there is no doubt that a Courtier so excellent and perfect will need to have knowledge of both the one and the other; and without these two abilities perhaps all the rest would not be deserving of much praise. Therefore, if the Count wishes to perform his duty, he will teach the Courtier not only how to speak well but also how to write well."

Then the Count said: "Signor Magnifico, I would not think of undertaking such a task, for it were great folly on my part to presume to teach others what I do not know myself, and (even if I did know it) to think that I could teach in so few words what very learned men have barely been able to do by so much labor and effort—to whose works I would refer our Courtier if I had to teach him to write and speak."

Messer Cesare said: "The Magnifico means speaking and writing in the vernacular and not in Latin; therefore those works of learned men are not to our purpose. But it is for you to tell us what you know about this, and more than that we shall not expect of you."

"I have already told you that," replied the Count; "but if we are speaking of the Tuscan language, perhaps the Magnifico, more than anyone else, ought to give us his judgment on that."

The Magnifico replied: "I cannot, and in reason should not, gainsay anyone who holds that the Tuscan language is more beautiful than the others. It is true, of course, that one meets with many words in Petrarch and Boccaccio that have now been dropped from usage. And I for one would never use these either in speaking or writing; nor do I think that they themselves would use them any longer if they had lived into our time."

Then messer Federico said: "Nay, but they

would! And you Tuscans ought to renew your language and not allow it to die, as you are doing—so that by now we can say that it is less known in Florence than in many other places in Italy.”

Then messer Bernardo said: “Those words which are no longer used in Florence have remained with the peasants, and are rejected by the gentry as words that have been corrupted and spoiled by age.”

Then the Duchess said: “Let us not stray from our original purpose; but let the Count teach the Courtier how to speak and write well, whether it be Tuscan or whatever.”

“Madam,” the Count replied, “I have already told you what I know about this; and I maintain that the same rules which serve to teach the one thing serve also to teach the other. But since you command me to do so, I will say what I have to say to messer Federico, who differs from me on this. And it may be that I shall have to speak at somewhat greater length than is suitable, but it will be all that I am able to say.

“First I will say that, in my opinion, this language of ours which we call the vulgar tongue is still tender and new, although it has been in use now for quite a long time. For, since Italy has not only been harried and ravaged, but long inhabited, by the barbarians, the Latin language has been corrupted and spoiled by contact with those peoples, and out of that corruption other languages have arisen: and, like the rivers that divide at the crest of the Apennines and flow into the sea on either side, so these languages also have divided, and some that were tinged with Latinity have flowed in various channels and in different directions; and one that was tinged with barbarism remained in Italy. The latter was for a long time disordered and uneven, having no one to take any care of it or to attempt to give it any splendor or grace. Yet finally it was cultivated somewhat more in Tuscany than in other parts of Italy. And for this reason it seems to have flourished there from those early times, because that people more than others have kept gentle accents in their speech and a proper grammatical order, and have had three noble writers who expressed their thoughts ingeniously and in the words and

terms that were current in their time; wherein it fell to Petrarch to do this in amorous subjects with more felicity than the others, in my opinion.

“Then, from time to time, not only in Tuscany but in the rest of Italy, among wellborn men versed in the usages of courts, in arms, and in letters, a concern arose to speak and write more elegantly than in that first rude and uncultivated age when the fires of calamity set by the barbarians were not yet extinguished. Thus, both in the city of Florence itself and in all Tuscany, as well as in the rest of Italy, many words were abandoned, and others were taken up in their stead, thereby bringing about the change which takes place in all things human and has always taken place in other languages as well. For if the earliest writings in ancient Latin had survived until now, we should see that Evander and Turnus and the other Latins of those times spoke differently from the last Kings of Rome or the first consuls. For note that the verses which the Salians sang were hardly understood by later generations; but since they had been so composed by those who first gave them their form, out of a religious reverence they were left unchanged. Thereafter, orators and poets gradually abandoned many words that had been used by their predecessors; thus, Antonius, Crassus, Hortensius, and Cicero avoided many of Cato’s words, and Virgil many of Ennius’; and so did many others. For, although they had reverence for antiquity, they did not hold it in so great esteem as to feel bound by it as you would have us be today. On the contrary, wherever they saw fit, they censured it, as Horace who says that his forebears were foolish in their praise of Plautus, and insists on his right to acquire new words. And Cicero in many places reprehends many of his predecessors, and in censuring Sergius Galba declares that his orations have an antique cast to them; and he says that Ennius himself spurned his predecessors in certain things: so that, if we attempt to imitate the ancients, we shall not be imitating them. And Virgil, who (as you say) imitated Homer, did not imitate him in language.

“Therefore I for my part would always avoid using these antique words, save only in certain places and rarely even there; and it strikes me that one who otherwise uses them errs, no less

than one who, in order to imitate the ancients, would choose to feed on acorns when wheat in quantity was already at hand. And because you say that by their very splendor of antiquity, antique words so greatly adorn every subject, however mean, that they can make it worthy of much praise—I say that I do not set such great store either by these antique words or even by good words as to think that in reason they are to be prized if devoid of the pith of fine thoughts; for to separate thoughts from words is to separate soul from body: in neither case can it be done without destruction.

“So, as I believe, what is most important and necessary to the Courtier in order to speak and write well is knowledge: because one who is ignorant and has nothing in his mind worth listening to can neither speak nor write well.

“Next, what one has to say or write must be given a good order. It must then be well expressed in words, which words (if I am not mistaken) must be proper, select, lustrous, and well formed, but above all be words which are still used by the people. Now it is the words themselves that make the greatness and magnificence of an oration; for if a speaker uses good judgment and care, and understands how to choose those words which best express what he wishes to say; and if he elevates them, and shapes them to his purpose like so much wax, he can give them such a disposition and an order such as to cause them to reveal at a glance their dignity and splendor, like paintings when placed in a good and natural light. And I say this as well of writing as of speaking; except that in speaking some things are required that are not needed in writing: such as a good voice, not too thin or soft as a woman’s, nor yet so stern and rough as to have a boorish quality, but sonorous, clear, gentle, and well constituted, with distinct enunciation and with fitting manner and gestures. The latter, in my opinion, consist in certain movements of the entire body, not affected or violent, but tempered by a seemly expression of the face and a movement of the eyes such as to give grace and be consonant with the words, together with such gestures as shall signify as well as possible the intention and the feeling of the orator. But all this would be empty and of little moment if the thoughts expressed by

the words were not fine, witty, acute, elegant, and solemn, according to the need.”

Then signor Morello said: “If this Courtier of ours speaks with so much elegance and gravity, I fear there may be those among us who will not understand him.”

“Nay,” replied the Count, “all will understand him, because words that are easy to understand can still be elegant. Nor would I have him always speak of grave matters, but of amusing things, of games, jests, and jokes, according to the occasion; but sensibly in everything, with readiness and a lucid fullness; nor must he show vanity or a childish folly in any way. Then, whenever he speaks of anything that is obscure or difficult, I would have him explain his meaning down to a fine point, with precision in both words and thoughts, making every ambiguity clear and plain in a manner that is careful but not tiresome. Likewise, when occasion demands, let him know how to speak with dignity and force, and how to stir up those sentiments which are latent within us, kindling and moving them as the need may be; and speak at other times with such simple candor as to make it seem that nature herself is speaking, to soften such sentiments and inebriate them with sweetness, and all this with such ease as to cause the one who listens to believe that with little effort he too could attain to such excellence—but who, when he tries, discovers that he is very far from it.

“Such is the manner in which I would have our Courtier speak and write; and let him not only choose fine and elegant words from every part of Italy, but I should praise him as well if sometimes he used some of those French or Spanish terms that are already current with us. Thus, should the need arise, I should not be displeased if he used *primor* (excellence); or used *accertare* (to succeed); *avventurare* (to hazard); or *ripassare una persona con ragionamento*, meaning to observe someone and associate with him in order to get to know him well; or *un cavaliere senza rimproccio* (a knight without reproach), *attilato* (elegant), *creato d’un principe* (the dependent of a prince) and other like terms, provided he has reason to think he will be understood. I would have him use certain words

sometimes in a sense they do not usually have, transferring them aptly, and, so to say, grafting them like the scion of a tree on some better trunk, in order to make them more attractive and beautiful and, as it were, put things before our very eyes; and, as we say, make us feel them with our hands, to the delight of the listener or the reader. Nor would I have him be afraid even to coin some new words; and he should use new figures of speech, taking these elegantly from the Latins, even as the Latins themselves once took them from the Greeks.

“Therefore if today, among men of letters of good talent and judgment, some took pains to write in this language (in a manner I have described) things worthy of being read, we should soon see it polished and replete with terms and fine figures, and capable of being used in writing as well as any other; and if this were then not pure old Tuscan, it would be Italian, universal, copious, and varied, and like a delightful garden full of a variety of flowers and fruits. Nor would this be anything new, for out of the four languages of which they were able to avail themselves, Greek writers chose words, expressions, and figures from each as they saw fit, and brought forth another that was called the ‘common’ language; then later all five were called simply Greek. And although Athenian was more elegant, pure, and copious than the others, good writers who were not Athenian by birth did not affect it so much as to be unrecognizable by their style and, as it were, by the savor and essence of their native speech. Yet they were not scorned for this; on the contrary, those who tried to seem too Athenian were blamed for it. Among Latin writers also there were many non-Romans who were much esteemed in their day, even though they were not seen to possess that purity of the Roman tongue which is rarely acquired by men born elsewhere. Certainly Titus Livius was not rejected, although there was one who claimed to find a Paduan flavor in him; nor was Virgil rejected on any charge that he did not speak Roman. Moreover, as you know, many writers of barbarian extraction were read and esteemed at Rome.

“But we, being far more strict than the ancients,

impose upon ourselves certain new laws that are inept; and although we have well-traveled roads before our eyes, we try to proceed along byways, for in our own language—the function of which, as of all other languages, is to express well and clearly what the mind conceives—we take pleasure in what is obscure; and, calling it the ‘vulgar tongue,’ we choose to use words in it which are not only not understood by the vulgar, but not even by noble men of letters, and are no longer in use anywhere, careless of the fact that all good writers among the ancients condemn words that have been rejected by usage. Which usage you do not well understand, in my opinion, because you say that if some fault of speech has become prevalent among the ignorant, it ought not to be called usage for that reason, nor accepted as a rule of speech; and, from what I have heard you state on other occasions, you would have us say *Campidoglio* instead of *Capitolio*; *Girolamo* instead of *Jeronimo*; *aldace* instead of *audace*; *padrone* instead of *patrone*—and other like words which are corrupt and spoiled—because they are so written by some ignorant old Tuscan, and because they are so used by Tuscan peasants today.

“Thus, good usage in speech, as I believe, springs from men who have talent, and who through learning and experience have attained good judgment, and who thereby agree among themselves and consent to adopt those words which to them seem good; which words are recognized by virtue of a certain natural judgment and not by any art of rule. Do you not know that figures of speech, which give so much grace and luster to discourse, are all abuses of grammatical rules, yet are accepted and confirmed by usage, because (it being impossible to give any other reason for this) they please, and seem to offer suavity and sweetness to the ear itself? And this, I believe, is what good usage is, whereof Romans, Neapolitans, Lombards, and the rest can be quite as capable as Tuscans.

“It is indeed true that in all languages some things are always good, such as facility, good order, fullness, fine periods of harmonious clauses; and that, on the contrary, affectation and the other things that are opposed to these are bad.

But among words there are some that remain good for a time, then grow old and lose their grace completely, whereas others gain in strength and come into favor; because, just as the seasons of the year divest the earth of her flowers and fruits, and then clothe her again with others, so time causes those first words to fall, and usage brings others to life, giving them grace and dignity, until they are gradually consumed by the envious jaws of time, when they too go to their death; because, in the end, we and all our things are mortal. Consider that we no longer have any knowledge of the Oscan tongue. Provençal, which we might say was but recently celebrated by noble writers, is not now understood by the inhabitants of that region. Hence, I think, even as the Magnifico has well said, that if Petrarch and Boccaccio were living today, they would not use many of the words we find in their writings: hence, it does not seem good to me that we should imitate them in those words. I do indeed praise highly those who can imitate what is to be imitated; nonetheless, I do not think it at all impossible to write well without imitation; and particularly in this language of ours in which we can be helped by usage—which is something I would not venture to say of Latin.”

Then messer Federico said: “Why would you have usage be more esteemed in the vernacular than in Latin?”

“Indeed,” replied the Count, “I hold that usage is the guide in both the one and the other. But since those to whom Latin was as natural as the vernacular is to us today are no longer among the living, we are obliged to learn from their writings what they learned from usage. Nor does ancient speech mean anything more than ancient usage in speech. And it would be a silly thing to love ancient speech for no other reason than to wish to speak as men used to speak rather than as they speak now.”

“So,” replied messer Federico, “the ancients did not imitate?”

“I believe,” said the Count, “that many of them did imitate, but not in everything. And if Virgil had imitated Hesiod in everything, he would not have surpassed him; nor Cicero, Crassus; nor Ennius, his predecessors. Consider that

Homer is so ancient that many believe him to be the first heroic poet in time as well as in excellence of style: and whom would you say he imitated?”

“Someone,” answered messer Federico, “more ancient than he, of whom we have no knowledge owing to his great antiquity.”

“Then whom,” said the Count, “will you say Petrarch and Boccaccio imitated, who we might say have been in the world but a few days?”

“I do not know,” replied messer Federico, “but we can believe that they too were bent on imitating, even though we do not know whom.”

The Count replied: “It must be thought that the imitated were better than their imitators; and, if they were good, it would be very strange if their name and fame had completely vanished so soon. But I think that their true master was talent and their own native judgment. And at this no one should wonder, for it is almost always possible to advance toward the summit of all excellence by several paths. Nor is there anything that does not comprise in its own kind a multiplicity of things which are different from one another and yet equally deserving of praise among themselves.

“Consider music, the harmonies of which are now solemn and slow, now very fast and novel in mood and manner. And yet all give pleasure, although for different reasons, as is seen in Bidon’s manner of singing which is so skilled, quick, vehement, impassioned, and has such various melodies that the spirits of his listeners are stirred and take fire, and are so entranced that they seem to be uplifted to heaven. Nor does our Marchetto Cara move us less by his singing, but only with a softer harmony. For, in a manner serene and full of plaintive sweetness, he touches and penetrates our souls, gently impressing a delightful sentiment upon them.

“Moreover, different things give equal pleasure to our eyes, so that it is difficult for us to judge which things please them most. Consider that in painting Leonardo da Vinci, Mantegna, Raphael, Michelangelo, and Giorgio da Castelfranco are most excellent; and yet they are all unlike one another in their work: so that in his own manner no one of them appears to lack anything, since we recognize each to be perfect in his own style.

“The same holds true of many Greek and Latin poets who, though different in their writing, are equal in fame. Orators, too, have always shown so much diversity among themselves that nearly every age has produced and prized a certain kind of orator peculiar to its time; and these have been different, not only from their predecessors, but also from one another: as it is written of Isocrates, Lysias, Aeschines, and many others among the Greeks, all excellent, yet each resembling no one but himself. Then, among the Latins, Carbo, Laelius, Scipio Africanus, Galba, Sulpicius, Cotta, Gracchus, Marcus Antonius, Crassus, and so many others that it would take long to name them, all good, yet very different from one another; so that if one were to take thought of all the orators that have ever existed, he would find as many kinds of oratory as orators. I seem to remember too that Cicero somewhere has Marcus Antonius say to Sulpicius that there are many who imitate no one and yet attain to the highest degree of excellence; and he speaks of certain others who had begun a new manner and type of oratory, beautiful, but unusual among orators at that time, in which they imitated no one but themselves. Thus, he affirms also that teachers must consider the nature of their pupils and, taking that as a guide, must direct them and help them in the path toward which their talent and natural disposition inclines them. Hence, my dear messer Federico, I do believe that if someone does not feel congenial to a given author, it is not well to force him to imitate him, because the strength of his talent will be weakened and impeded in being turned from the path which it might profitably have taken, if it had not been denied it.

“Therefore, I do not see how it can be well, in place of enriching our language and giving it spirit, greatness, and luster, to make it poor, thin, humble, and obscure, and to attempt to limit it so narrowly that everyone should be forced to imitate only Petrarch and Boccaccio; and that one may not place trust in Poliziano, Lorenzo de’ Medici, Francesco Diacceto, and some others who are also Tuscans and perchance not inferior in learning and judgment to Petrarch and Boccaccio. And truly it would mean a great poverty to call a halt and not go beyond what some one of

the earliest writers may have achieved, and to lose hope that so many men of such noble talents might ever devise more than one beautiful way of expressing themselves in a language which is proper and natural to them. But there are today certain scrupulous souls who, in a kind of cult of the ineffable mysteries of this their Tuscan language, do frighten all so who listen to them as to inspire in many a noble man of learning so much timidity that he dares not open his mouth, and confesses that he does not know how to speak the very language he learned in swaddling clothes from his nurse. But I think we have said more than enough about this. So let us proceed now with our discussion of the Courtier.”

Then messer Federico replied: “I should like to say a little more: I certainly do not deny that the opinions and the talents of men differ from one another; nor do I think it well that someone who has a vehement and impassioned nature should undertake to write about calm things, or that another who is severe and grave should write jests, for in this matter it seems right to me that everyone should follow his own bent. And Cicero was speaking of this, I believe, when he said that teachers should have regard for the nature of their pupils, in order not to act like bad husbandmen who sometimes sow grain in ground that is productive only for vineyards. But I cannot comprehend why, in the case of a particular language which does not belong to all men as do speaking and thinking and many other functions, but is an invention bound by certain limitations, it is not more reasonable to imitate those who speak well than it is to speak at random; or why, just as in Latin we must try to conform to Virgil’s language and Cicero’s rather than to that of Silius or Cornelius Tacitus, it is not better in the case of the vernacular to imitate the language of Petrarch and Boccaccio rather than another’s, but express one’s own thoughts in it, of course, and by so doing to follow one’s own natural instinct, even as Cicero teaches. And in this way it will be found that the difference which you say exists among good orators lies in sense and not in language.”

Then the Count replied: “I fear that we shall enter on a wide sea and depart from our first

subject of the Courtier. Still I would ask you, in what does the excellence of this language consist?"

Messer Federico replied: "In respecting its proprieties, employing it so, and adopting that style and those harmonies which all who have written well have used."

"I should like to know," said the Count, "whether this style and these harmonies that you speak of arise from the thought or from the words."

"From the words," replied messer Federico.

"Then," said the Count, "do you not think that the words of Silius and of Cornelius Tacitus are the same as those which Virgil and Cicero employ? Are they not used in the same sense?"

"They are indeed the same," replied messer Federico, "but some of them are not preserved well and are used in a different sense."

The Count replied: "And if from a book of Cornelius and from one of Silius all those words were removed that are used in a sense different from that of Virgil or Cicero (which would be very few), then would you not say that Cornelius was the equal of Cicero in language, and Silius the equal of Virgil, and that it were well to imitate their manner of speech?"

Then signora Emilia said: "It seems to me that this debate of yours has now become too long and tiresome; therefore it would be well to postpone it to another time."

Messer Federico was about to reply, even so, but signora Emilia kept interrupting him.

Finally the Count said: "There are many who want to judge of styles and who talk about harmonies and imitation, but they are quite unable to explain to me what style and harmonies are, or in what imitation consists, or why things which are taken from Homer or from someone else are so proper in Virgil as to seem enhanced rather than imitated. Perhaps that is due to my inability to understand such persons. But since it is good evidence that a man knows a thing if he is able to teach it, I fear that they understand it but little and that they praise Virgil and Cicero because they hear many praise them, not because they can recognize the difference between these two and the others; for it is truly not a matter of preserving two or three or ten words in a usage different from that of the others.

"In Sallust, in Caesar, in Varro, and in the other good writers, there are some terms used differently from the way Cicero uses them; and yet both ways are all right, because the excellence and force of a language does not lie in such a trifling matter as that: as Demosthenes well said to Aeschines, who made a thrust at him, asking if certain words which he had used (which were not Attic) were monsters or portents; and Demosthenes laughed and answered that the fortunes of Greece did not depend on that. So I too should care little if some Tuscan reproached me for saying *satisfatto* rather than *sodisfatto*, or *onorevole* rather than *orrevole*, *causa* rather than *cagione*, *populo* rather than *popolo* and the like."

Then messer Federico rose to his feet and said: "Listen to these few words, I beg of you."

"The pain of my displeasure," replied signora Emilia, laughing, "be upon him among you who speaks any more about this matter at this time, for I wish to postpone it to another evening. But do you, Count, continue with this discussion of the Courtier, showing us what a good memory you have; for, if you are able to take it up where you left it, I think you will be doing not a little!"

"Madam," replied the Count, "I think the thread is broken. Still, if I am not mistaken, I believe we were saying that the bane of affectation always produces extreme gracelessness in all things and that, on the other hand, the greatest grace is produced by simplicity and nonchalance: in praise of which, and in blame of affectation, many other things could be said; but I wish to add only one thing more. All women have a great desire to be—and when they cannot be, at least to seem—beautiful. Therefore, wherever nature has failed in this regard, they try to remedy it with artifice: whence that embellishing of the face with so much care and sometimes with pain, that plucking of the eyebrows and the forehead, and the use of all those methods and the enduring of those nuisances which you ladies think are hidden to men, but which are well known."

Here madam Costanza Fregosa laughed and said: "It would be much more courteous of you to go on with your discussion, and tell us what the source of grace is, and speak of Courtiership,

instead of trying to uncover the defects of women, which is not to the purpose.”

“On the contrary, it is much to the purpose,” replied the Count, “for the defects that I am speaking of deprive you ladies of grace, since they are caused by nothing but affectation, through which you openly let everyone know your inordinate desire to be beautiful. Do you not see how much more grace a woman has who paints (if at all) so sparingly and so little that whoever sees her is uncertain whether she is painted or not; than another woman so plastered with it that she seems to have put a mask on her face and dares not laugh so as not to cause it to crack, and never changes color except in the morning when she dresses; and, then, for the rest of the entire day remains motionless like a wooden statue and shows herself only by torchlight, like wily merchants who display their cloth in a dark place. And how much more attractive than all the others is one (not ugly, I mean) who is plainly seen to have nothing on her face, it being neither too white nor too red, but has her own natural color, a bit pale, and tinged at times with an open blush from shame or other cause, with her hair artlessly unadorned and in disarray, with gestures simple and natural, without showing effort or care to be beautiful. Such is that careless purity which is so pleasing to the eyes and minds of men who are ever fearful of being deceived by art.

“Beautiful teeth are very attractive in a woman, for since they do not show as openly as the face, not being visible most of the time, we may believe that less care has been taken to make them beautiful than with the face: and yet whoever laughs without cause and solely to display the teeth would betray his art, and, no matter how beautiful they are, would seem most ungraceful to all, like Catullus’ Egnatius. The same is true of the hands which, if they are delicate and beautiful, and are uncovered at the proper time, when there is need to use them and not merely to make a show of their beauty, leave one with a great desire to see them more and especially when they are covered with gloves again; for whoever covers them seems to have little care or concern whether they are seen or not, and to have beautiful hands more by nature than by any effort or design.

“Have you ever noticed when a woman, in passing along the street to church or elsewhere, unwittingly happens (in play or through whatever cause) to raise just enough of her dress to show her foot and often a little of her leg? Does this not strike you as something full of grace, if she is seen in that moment, charmingly feminine, dressed in velvet shoes and dainty stockings. Certainly to me it is a pleasing sight, as I believe it is to all of you, because everyone thinks that such elegance of dress, when it is where it would be hidden and rarely seen, must be natural and instinctive with the lady rather than calculated, and that she has no thought of gaining any praise thereby.

“In such a way one avoids or hides affectation, and you may now see how opposed the latter is to grace, how it deprives of grace every act of the body and the soul: of which so far we have spoken but little, and yet this is not to be neglected; for, as the soul is far more worthy than the body, it deserves to be more cultivated and adorned. And as to what ought to be done in the case of our Courtier, we will lay aside the precepts of the many wise philosophers who have written on this subject to define the virtues of the soul and who discuss their worth with such subtlety; and, holding to our purpose, we will declare in a few words that it suffices if he is, as we say, a man of honor and integrity: for included in this are prudence, goodness, fortitude, and temperance of soul, and all the other qualities proper to such an honored name. And I maintain that he alone is a true moral philosopher who wishes to be good; and for this he has need of few precepts beyond that wish. Socrates was right, therefore, in saying that all his teachings seemed to him to bear good fruit when anyone was incited by them to wish to know and understand virtue: for those persons who have reached the point of desiring nothing more ardently than to be good manage easily to learn all that is needed for that. Hence, we will discuss this no further.

“But, besides goodness, for everyone the true and principal adornment of the mind is, I think, letters; although the French recognize only the nobility of arms and reckon all the rest as nought;

and thus not only do they not esteem, but they abhor letters, and consider all men of letters to be very base; and they think that it is a great insult to call anyone a clerk.”

Then the Magnifico Giuliano replied: “What you say is true; this error has prevailed among the French for a long time now. But if kind fate will have it that Monseigneur d’Angoulême succeed to the crown, as is hoped, then I think that just as the glory of arms flourishes and shines in France, so must that of letters flourish there also with the greatest splendor. Because, when I was at that court not so long ago, I saw this prince; and, besides the disposition of his body and the beauty of his countenance, he appeared to me to have in his aspect such greatness (yet joined with a certain gracious humanity) that the realm of France must always seem a petty realm to him. Then later, from many gentlemen, both French and Italian, I heard much about his noble manners, the greatness of his spirit, his valor and liberality; and I was told, among other things, how he loved and esteemed letters and how he held all men of letters in the greatest honor; and how he condemned the French themselves for being so hostile to this profession, especially as they have in their midst a university such as that of Paris, frequented by the whole world.”

Then the Count said: “It is a great wonder that, at such a tender age, and solely by natural instinct and against the custom of his country, he should of himself have chosen so worthy a path; and, since subjects always imitate the ways of their superiors, it could be, as you say, that the French will yet come to esteem letters at their true worth: which they can easily be persuaded to do if they will but listen to reason, since nothing is more naturally desired by men or more proper to them than knowledge, and it is great folly to say or believe that knowledge is not always a good thing.

“And if I could speak with them or with others who hold an opinion contrary to mine, I would try to show them how useful and necessary to our life and dignity letters are, being truly bestowed upon men by God as a crowning gift; nor should I lack instances of many excellent commanders in antiquity, who all added the ornament of let-

ters to valor in arms. For, as you know, Alexander venerated Homer so much that he always kept the *Iliad* by his bed. And he gave the greatest attention not only to these studies but to philosophical speculations as well, under Aristotle’s guidance. Alcibiades increased his own good qualities and made them greater through letters and the teachings of Socrates. Also the effort that Caesar devoted to study is witnessed by the surviving works he so divinely wrote. Scipio Africanus, it is said, always kept in his hand the works of Xenophon, wherein, under the name of Cyrus, a perfect king is imagined. I could tell you of Lucullus, Sulla, Pompey, Brutus, and many other Romans and Greeks; but I will only remind you that Hannibal, so excellent a military commander, and yet fierce by nature and a stranger to all humanity, faithless and a despiser of men and the gods—had nonetheless some knowledge of letters and was conversant with Greek. And, if I am not mistaken, I think I once read that he even left a book written by him in Greek.

“But there is no need to tell you this, for I am sure you all know how mistaken the French are in thinking that letters are detrimental to arms. You know that the true stimulus to great and daring deeds in war is glory, and whosoever is moved thereto for gain or any other motive, apart from the fact that he never does anything good, deserves to be called not a gentleman, but a base merchant. And it is true glory that is entrusted to the sacred treasury of letters, as all may understand except those unhappy ones who have never tasted them.

“What soul is so abject, timid, and humble that when he reads of the great deeds of Caesar, Alexander, Scipio, Hannibal, and many others, does not burn with a most ardent desire to resemble them, and does not reckon this transitory life of a few day’s span as less important, in order to win to an almost eternal life of fame which, in spite of death, makes him live on in far greater glory than before. But he who does not taste the sweetness of letters cannot know how great the glory is that letters so long preserve, and measures it only by the life of one or two men, because his own memory extends no further. Hence, he cannot value so brief a glory as he would one that is almost eternal (if, to his mis-

fortune, he were not denied knowledge of it); and since he does not much esteem it, we may with reason think that he will not risk such danger to win it as one would who knows of it.

“But I should not want some objector to cite me instances to the contrary in order to refute my opinion, alleging that for all their knowledge of letters the Italians have shown little worth in arms for some time now—which, alas, is only too true. But it must be said that the fault of a few men has brought not only serious harm but eternal blame upon all the rest, and that they have been the true cause of our ruin and of the prostrate (if not dead) virtue of our spirits. Yet it would be a greater shame if we made this fact public than it is to the French to be ignorant of letters. Hence, it is better to pass over in silence what cannot be remembered without pain: and, leaving this subject, upon which I entered against my will, to return to our Courtier.

“I would have him more than passably learned in letters, at least in those studies which we call the humanities. Let him be conversant not only with the Latin language, but with Greek as well, because of the abundance and variety of things that are so divinely written therein. Let him be versed in the poets, as well as in the orators and historians, and let him be practiced also in writing verse and prose, especially in our own vernacular; for, besides the personal satisfaction he will take in this, in this way he will never want for pleasant entertainment with the ladies, who are usually fond of such things. And if, because of other occupations or lack of study, he does not attain to such a perfection that his writings should merit great praise, let him take care to keep them under cover so that others will not laugh at him, and let him show them only to a friend who can be trusted; because at least they will be of profit to him in that, through such exercise, he will be capable of judging the writing of others. For it very rarely happens that a man who is unpracticed in writing, however learned he may be, can ever wholly understand the toils and industry of writers, or taste the sweetness and excellence of styles, and those intrinsic niceties that are often found in the ancients.

These studies, moreover, will make him fluent, and (as Aristippus said to the tyrant) bold and self-confident in speaking with everyone. However, I would have our Courtier keep one precept firmly in mind, namely, in this as in everything else, to be cautious and reserved rather than forward, and take care not to get the mistaken notion that he knows something he does not know. For we are all by nature more avid of praise than we ought to be and, more than any other sweet song or sound, our ears love the melody of words that praise us; and thus, like Sirens' voices, they are the cause of shipwreck to him who does not stop his ears to such beguiling harmony. This danger was recognized by the ancients, and books were written to show how the true friend is to be distinguished from the flatterer. But to what avail is this, if many, indeed countless persons know full well when they are being flattered, yet love the one who flatters them and hate the one who tells them the truth? And finding him who praises them to be too sparing in his words, they even help him and proceed to say such things of themselves that they make the impudent flatterer himself feel ashamed.

“Let us leave these blind ones to their error, and let us have our Courtier be of such good judgment that he will not let himself be persuaded that black is white, or presume of himself more than he clearly knows to be true; and especially in those points which (if your memory serves you) messer Cesare said we had often used as the means of bringing to light the folly of many persons. Indeed, even if he knows that the praises bestowed upon him are true, let him avoid error by not assenting too openly to them, nor concede them without some protest; but let him rather disclaim them modestly, always showing and really esteeming arms as his chief profession, and the other good accomplishments as ornaments thereto; and do this especially when among soldiers, in order not to act like those who in studies wish to appear as soldiers, and, when in the company of warriors, wish to appear as men of letters. In this way, for the reasons we have stated, he will avoid affectation and even the ordinary things he does will appear to be very great things.”

Peter Ramus

1515–1572

Pierre de la Ramée, usually known by his Latinized academic cognomen Petrus, or Peter, Ramus, was born to impoverished parents in Cuts, Picardy. Evidently the family had some ambition for the boy, since he began the study of Latin in Cuts before going to Paris at about the age of eight. About four years later, at age twelve, he entered the University of Paris. His family was unable to finance his university studies, so Ramus, like many other poor scholars, worked his way through school as a servant to wealthier students. He took his master of arts degree in 1536, successfully defending a thesis that outraged his professors, namely, that the work of Aristotle was useless. While a student, Ramus heard German educator Johanne Sturm lecture on Agricola's *On Dialectical Invention* (*De Inventione Dialecticae*), which he later claimed was decisive in shaping his thought. Upon taking his degree, Ramus began to teach dialectic and rhetoric to the boys in various colleges of the university. Apparently he was a charismatic teacher who soon attracted a large following. In 1543 he published two extremely controversial and influential books: *Remarks on Aristotle* (*Aristotelicae Animadversiones*), which attacked Aristotelian dialectic in its classical and Scholastic versions, and *Training in Dialectic* (*Dialecticae Partitiones*), which advocated a new intellectual method.

These books had the effrontery not only to condemn the argumentative methods in use at the University of Paris since at least the twelfth century but also to argue for replacing them with Ramus's way. Led by professor of medicine Jacques Charpentier, all three graduate faculties of the university—law, medicine, and theology—successfully petitioned the French king Charles I to forbid Ramus to teach from the two books, which were publicly burned. As historian of rhetoric James J. Murphy explains, Ramus, far from being chastened by this censure, mounted a vigorous campaign over the next several years to gain acceptance for his ideas.¹ Between 1543 and 1549, eight books appeared by either Ramus or Omer Talon (Latinized as Audomarus Talaeus), who became Ramus's collaborator in 1544. Ramus also defended himself in several public oral disputations with other professors. The books most pertinent to Ramus's views on rhetoric are his attacks on Cicero, *Brutus's Problems* (*Brutinae Quaestiones* [1547]), and on Quintilian, *Arguments in Rhetoric against Quintilian* (*Rhetoricae Distinctiones in Quintilianum* [1549]; excerpted here), and two books outlining a new program for rhetoric, *Omer Talon's Training in Oratory* (*Audomari Talaei Institutiones Oratoriae* [1545]) and *Omer Talon's Rhetoric* (*Audomari Talaei Rhetorica* [1548]). Murphy agrees with literary scholar Walter Ong, S.J., that Ramus habitually published some of his own work under the name of Talaeus to avoid the royal ban on his ideas.² Hence, in spite of their titles, both rhetoric texts, especially the second one, may be Ramus's.³

¹James J. Murphy, "Introduction," Peter Ramus, *Arguments in Rhetoric against Quintilian*, trans. Carole Newlands, ed. James J. Murphy (De Kalb: University of Northern Illinois Press, 1983), p. 9.

²Murphy, pp. 22–26.

³Murphy has recently argued that *Omer Talon's Rhetoric* is definitely by Ramus. See his essay in *A-tour de Ramus*, ed. Kees Meerhoff and Jean-Claude Moisin (Nuit Blanche Editeur, 1997).

Although there is no modern edition of either in English, a flavor for Ramist rhetoric can be obtained from England, where Ramist rhetoric was very influential. Abraham Fraunce's *Arcadian Rhetoric* (1588) contains modified translations of material from these works.

The restrictions on Ramus's teaching were lifted in 1547, when Henry II became king and Charles of Lorraine, a former college classmate of Ramus's who later became Cardinal Guise, interceded on his behalf. Thereafter, Ramus's career prospered. In 1551 he was appointed a regius professor of the university; Professor of Eloquence and Philosophy was the title he devised for himself. He continued to publish profusely, including revised editions of his early controversial works; French translations of these works; grammars for Latin, Greek, and French; and studies of Cicero's oratory. He continued to fight with other professors. In 1565 he was named dean of the regius professors, a group that later became the Collège de France. Meanwhile, in 1561, Ramus had become a Protestant. Religious violence was increasing in France during this period, but for some time Ramus's highly placed friends were able to protect him. This protection weakened after he formally separated from the Roman Catholic Church and thus alienated Cardinal Guise, and after the partisan Roman Catholic Catherine de' Medici became regent. She ordered the Saint Bartholomew's Day massacre of Protestants in 1572, and Ramus was one of its victims. One story has it that the mob was directed to Ramus's college room by a fellow professor he had bested in debate.

RAMUS'S IDEAS ON RHETORIC

Between 1550 and 1650, as Ong's exhaustive bibliography shows, some 750 editions of works by Ramus (including those published under the name of Talaeus) appeared in Europe.⁴ This sudden and great influence may be attributed in part to Ramus's image as a doughty warrior opposing all stultifying traditions. He attacked Aristotle, and thus Scholasticism, at the University of Paris, Scholasticism's greatest bastion. And since Scholasticism and the Paris faculty were still strongly associated in people's minds with the Roman Catholic Church, Ramus's academic arguments took on overtones of religious reform, which were intensified by his martyr's death. Moreover, in attacking Scholasticism, Ramus departed from the humanist strategy of castigating the Scholastic scholars for burying precious classical thinkers under trivialities. Ramus attacked the classical thinkers as well. He even downplayed the importance of education in the classical languages and elevated the vernacular, publishing many of his own works in French. Those looking for reform in the study of science could claim that Ramus was making a space for them. Finally, the intellectual independence of Ramus's thinking was seen to threaten traditional political hierarchies as well—to be downright seditious in a monarchy.

Ramus's dominant idea was that the ability to reason was innate in normal humans. One did not need to learn it from Aristotle or any other classical source. Thus time spent mastering the classical languages and poring over ancient texts was so

⁴Walter J. Ong, S.J., *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958), p. 5.

much time wasted. It was better, once having learned to reason soundly, to set off on one's own pursuit of knowledge. It is easy to see why Ramus was also attracted to Protestant Christianity, with its emphasis on the individual's ability to take responsibility for his or her relationship with God.

Ramus's positive program calls, as he sometimes said, for the union of philosophy and eloquence, but by this he most emphatically does not mean the Ciceronian ideal. Ramus admires Cicero's powerful eloquence and even proposes him as a model of style, if one avoids imitating his tendency to verbosity, but he argues that Cicero's ideas on rhetorical theory are useless because he muddles together rhetoric and dialectic.

Rather, says Ramus, one must place philosophy and eloquence in a proper relation to each other by strictly separating the spheres of philosophy (which for Ramus consists mainly of dialectic) and rhetoric. This separation assigns what were traditionally rhetorical activities to dialectic—namely, invention, arrangement, and memory—just as Agricola had done. Invention and arrangement thus take on new importance, but rhetoric does not benefit from this change because invention and arrangement are no longer part of its domain. Rhetoric, indeed, is much diminished, consisting only of style and delivery, and the orator becomes simply a person skilled in speaking, with good style and delivery. The development of moral qualities in the orator, or even of sound thinking, is no part of rhetoric, according to Ramus.

Ramus's dialectical invention proceeds by the use of ten topics: causes, effects, subjects, adjuncts, opposites, comparisons, names, divisions, definitions, and witnesses. Ramus culls these from the classical commonplaces, as Agricola had done, and, even more boldly than Agricola, he claims that they are universally applicable. Thus dialectic, which in classical systems was usually relegated to dealing only with probable knowledge, becomes a method for testing truth in any sphere of knowledge. Moreover, its universalizing method is based in rhetorical invention, which traditionally dealt with received wisdom and was of questionable status for generating any new knowledge at all, whether probable or certain.

Arrangement, for Ramus, should follow the structure of the syllogism. This means, he says, starting with the most general principles of the subject under discussion and working down through levels of generality to the most minute particulars. This process typically involves the creation of dichotomies at each level. Ramus may be influenced here by Hermogenes' practice of structuring arguments by division or dichotomy, which he would have encountered in the work of George Trebizond. Any subject, Ramus claims, can be analyzed in this way. Another advantage of such arrangement is that it renders other arts of memory unnecessary; since the arrangement supposedly bodies forth the natural structure of both the world and the human mind, anything organized in this way is retained easily and thoroughly.

Ramus suggests organizing material by drawing up bifurcated tree diagrams that lay out the levels from general to particular. Many editions of his works feature illustrations of these diagrams. Ong has argued that such spatial representations of

knowledge could take hold only in a society that had shifted from an auditory to a visual relationship with language. He maintains that such a shift was caused by literacy, which was becoming more widespread in Europe in this period, and was augmented by mechanical printing. The printed page replaced the *viva voce* discourse as the principal means of transmitting knowledge. Scholar of technical communication Elizabeth Tebeaux has shown how methods of graphic representation that originated with Ramus soon began to affect texts in a wide variety of technical subjects; thus, in her view, he had an important influence on the modern fields of document design and technical writing.

Ramus believed that his versions of invention and arrangement constituted the universally applicable method of inquiry that so many intellectuals of his day were seeking. Evidently, many of them agreed with him. Literary historian Frances Yates places Ramist dichotomous diagrams in the hermetic tradition, according to which certain spatial arrangements of symbols magically control, because they duplicate, the order of the world.⁵ The link with this tradition helps to explain how Ramus could present his method of arrangement as the perfect memory system, aligning the mind and the material to be known so that they match and bond.

The Ramist method simplifies as it universalizes: Material is cut away or conflated to fit the ten-topic invention and bipartite arrangement schemes. Ong sees here an implicit tendency to itemize knowledge, to think of it in bits like individual letters that may be rearranged and combined freely on the visual field of the printed page.⁶ The supposed universal applicability of this approach provides the theoretical justification for Ramus's method of packaging knowledge, but, as Ong emphasizes, Ramus sees a pedagogical justification too. Such predigested material may be taught easily to the young teenagers with whom Ramus mainly worked.

Ramus frequently advertises the usefulness of his dialectical method. Of course, humanists such as Guarino and Vittorino also claimed that the education in classical studies they offered would be supremely useful to young aristocrats and public servants. But unlike the Italians, Ramus does not have a specific profession, such as statecraft, in mind. He claims that his method is useful for any worldly activity a person might undertake. Unlike Erasmus, Ramus is reluctant to claim that his method is spiritually useful, that it conduces to Christian piety. Presumably it can help set religious thoughts in order—as Ramus's Puritan followers would show, both in England and in the American colonies—but exactly what order remains a matter for private conscience, as far as Ramus is concerned.

Hence, historian Anthony Grafton and literary scholar Lisa Jardine have argued that Ramus transformed humanism into the humanities.⁷ By subjecting cultural studies to a supposedly universalizing method, Ramus seemed to strip cultural artifacts of their culture-bound qualities. He had no use for historical knowledge. In practice this meant that one no longer had to be steeped in a particular historical,

⁵Frances Yates, *The Art of Memory* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1966), p. 234.

⁶Ong, pp. 315–18.

⁷Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine, *From Humanism to the Humanities* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986), p. 162.

philosophical, or religious perspective to appreciate the objects of humanist study. The method purported to give rational beings of all ages and conditions access to the great works of the human intellect—now timeless, though once they originated in a particular time and place. People could gain from the humanities whatever they might need for their own individual, private affairs.

The decontextualization of knowledge that Ramist dialectic sought to accomplish had dire consequences for rhetoric. For Ramus, the province of rhetoric was style and delivery alone. Of these, delivery was of very minor importance, an attitude that is not surprising, given the rise of written communication. Style was greatly simplified: Ramus cut the vast number of tropes to four: metonymy, irony, metaphor, and synecdoche. Style for Ramus seems to be a kind of applied psychology, a study of the way to frame sentences so as to force certain reactions from recalcitrant, mentally inferior audiences. One is allowed to multiply tropes and figures for poetic enjoyment, and many Ramist rhetoric texts do just that; however, for serious business a plain style is best. A supposedly unornamented style was elevated further in religion by the Puritans and in academia by proponents of the new science.

ANALYSIS AND SUMMARY OF ARGUMENTS IN *RHETORIC AGAINST QUINTILIAN*

The opening arguments in Ramus's *Arguments in Rhetoric against Quintilian* anticipate the withering of rhetoric. Putting his most damaging attack first, Ramus utterly denies that the orator must be a good man or that moral philosophy has anything to do with rhetoric. Having thus severely limited rhetoric's domain, Ramus is prepared to prove his chief accusation against Quintilian: that his advice on invention and arrangement is useless. Rhetoric without philosophical content cannot, of course, contribute much to invention and arrangement, but this idea serves Ramus's purpose, making it necessary to turn to dialectic (his method) for help with invention, arrangement, and also memory. In addition, Ramus condemns Quintilian for making the study of arousing emotion a part of rhetoric—this, too, belongs to philosophy.

Modern readers may be struck by the arrogance of Ramus's style. Not only does he insult his adversaries, but he does not trouble to make arguments supporting his own position. He assumes that his readers are thoroughly familiar with his other works in which these arguments are developed. He also assumes that the readers know Quintilian. This highly agonistic tone, however, is typical of intellectual disputation in his day. Modern readers might also note the relentlessly pedagogical focus of Ramus's arguments. Time and again, he fails to understand why Quintilian included in his book anything he did not mean to teach to his students. Ramus seems deaf to the idea that rhetorical theorists might want to discuss such questions as how many parts an oration should have. Ramus believes that one should simply find out the single correct answer to such a question and discard all other speculation.

As the excerpt reprinted here—and the book—begin, Ramus dedicates the *Arguments in Rhetoric against Quintilian* to his protector and former classmate, Charles of Lorraine, now Cardinal Guise. Ramus begins his attack on Quintilian with a critique of the concept of the ideal orator. The orator can be defined only by qualities for which his art gives precepts. Rhetoric gives no precepts on virtue; therefore the orator cannot be defined as virtuous. Precepts on virtue are the province of moral philosophy, which is not one of the five parts into which Quintilian divides rhetoric. Moreover, this division is wrong. One should rather begin, as Ramus does, with the “two universal, general gifts” of nature to humankind, “Reason and Speech.” Dialectic deals with reason, and grammar (the study of using language correctly) and rhetoric deal with speech. Since invention and arrangement are rational activities, they belong to dialectic. Rhetoric should then be divided into two parts: embellishment (style) and delivery. Of course, a good oration requires the aid of dialectic and grammar, as well as of rhetoric, but it is absurd, says Ramus, to consider that anything useful to an art or capable of being treated by it is part of that art. Quintilian should have excluded from his book anything preliminary or ancillary to the study of rhetoric.

Ramus now turns to Quintilian’s treatment of invention. Invention, like arrangement and memory, belongs to dialectic, not rhetoric. Quintilian sometimes seems to realize this when he says that the development of “judgment” (which Ramus treats as a synonym for arrangement) comes from the study of dialectic. Quintilian errs, however, in not realizing that the very same method governs judgment, arrangement, and dialectic. If one questions Ramus’s criticism of Quintilian’s precepts on invention and arrangement, Ramus suggests trying to use these precepts to analyze and appreciate one of Cicero’s brilliant orations, and their absurdity will be clear.

In treating language, according to Ramus, “purity of speech” should be the province of grammar; “subtlety and wisdom in reason” of dialectic; “embellishment by means of tropes and figures” of style; and “grace and dignity of voice and gesture” of delivery. Of course, Quintilian entangles style with irrelevancies. Ramus has the correct division: a trope involves a single word; a figure involves a group of words. A trope turns a word from its proper meaning; in a figure, the proper meaning of words is unaffected. There are only four kinds of trope: metonymy, irony, metaphor, and synecdoche. Moreover, Quintilian’s division of extended passages of discourse into the structured and the “loose-knit” is ridiculous. All discourse is structured, and good structure is always simply rhythmical. One masters this structure by listening to excellent speakers, including one’s teacher, and by imitating them. Nothing is to be gained by reading and writing, as Quintilian claims.

In the final sections, Ramus attacks Quintilian’s treatment of decorum, for decorum is not a part of rhetoric. In addition to the universally applicable tests of what is appropriate to learn from dialectic, specific tests of what is fitting for a particular art may be learned from that art. Ramus approves Quintilian’s condemnation of the classical art of memory and recommends his own dichotomies instead. He denounces Quintilian’s advice on delivery because it is presented in so confused a

fashion. Indeed, says Ramus, unless one is interested in the business practices of a Roman lawyer, Quintilian's whole book is so muddled as to be virtually useless.

Selected Bibliography

Only two of Ramus's texts on rhetoric exist in English translation: Peter Ramus, *Arguments in Rhetoric against Quintilian* (trans. Carole Newlands, ed. and intro. James J. Murphy, 1983; excerpted here), and *Peter Ramus's Attack on Cicero*, a translation of the *Brutinae Quaestiones* (trans. Carole Newlands, ed. and intro. James J. Murphy, 1992). Murphy's introductions to both volumes are helpful, and good bibliographies are included. An exhaustive catalog of editions of Agricola's *De Inventione Dialecticae* and works by Ramus and Talaues is by Walter J. Ong, S.J.: *Ramus and Talon Inventory* (1958). Readers who wish to consult Abraham Fraunce's *Ramist Arcadian Rhetoric* can see Ethel Seaton's 1950 edition. For further bibliography on secondary sources, see Peter Sharratt, "Recent Work on Peter Ramus (1970–1986)" (*Rhetorica* 5 [1987]: 7–58).

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From *Arguments in Rhetoric* against *Quintilian*

DEDICATED TO CHARLES OF LORRAINE, CARDINAL GUISE

Most excellent Maecenas, the Greeks have a wise proverb which teaches that each man should practice the art which he knows. Although I have been engaged in the study of rhetoric and dialectic for many years, I should not, like other people, care to boast about them; rather I feel ashamed to look back upon them due to the very meager results they produced. And so do I not seem to have some justification if in my studies of these arts I engage rather frequently in the very same argument? I have a single argument, a single subject matter, that the arts of dialectic and rhetoric have been confused by Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian. I have previously argued against Aristotle and Cicero. What objection then is there against calling Quintilian to the same account?

Aristotle's logic both lacked many virtues and abounded in faults. He left out many definitions and partitions of arguments; instead of one art of invention embracing the ten general topics—causes, effects, subjects, adjuncts, opposites, comparisons, names, divisions, definitions, witnesses—he created unfathomable darkness in his two books of *Posterior Analytics* and eight books of *Topics* with their confused account of predictables, predicaments, enunciations, abundance of propositions, and the invention of the middle term; in his treatment of simple syllogisms he did not collect the rarer ones; he gave no instruction on connections; he was completely silent about method; in a loud sophistic debate over quite useless rules he handed down to us nothing about the use of the art as a universal, but only as a particular. We have added to the art the virtues it lacked; we have uncovered these various faults and, I hope, have abolished them; we have revealed its true use and have shown it to be common to all things. Consequently, we have fought this dialectic

contest over the art and its use with vigor and intelligence.

Our second contest was against Cicero. For he had transferred to rhetoric almost all Aristotle's obscurity concerning invention and arrangement, and indeed also style, confusedly making one art from the two, and then applying it confused in this way to the legal process of civil suits. Some time ago we had taught the virtues of invention and arrangement. By means of a defined, organized, and illustrated classification of subjects, my close colleague Audomarus Talaeus cast light on style and delivery and pointed out their deficiencies. To this extent therefore we have here expelled the darkness.

Yet now Quintilian follows Aristotle's and Cicero's confusion of dialectic and rhetoric. Indeed he makes it worse by fabrications of his own, and by including in his teachings all the disputes concerning all the arts he had read or heard something about—grammar, mathematics, philosophy, drama, wrestling, rhetoric. We shall distinguish the art of rhetoric from the other arts, and make it a single one of the liberal arts, not a confused mixture of all arts; we shall separate its true properties, remove weak and useless subtleties, and point out the things that are missing. Thus, just as I previously attacked the Aristotelian obscurity in Cicero, so now in almost the same way I shall attack it in Quintilian. But since the same subject has already been handled in my attack on Aristotle and Cicero, I shall discuss the numerous points more briefly and less rigorously.

Finally, we shall rely on the supreme help of unwavering reason in our attempt to establish the true description and practice of the arts on which, up to this time, I have placed my energy and enthusiasm. For how many days, indeed how many years and ages do we suppose are wretchedly spent on false conjectures about these disciplines? I wish I had not known the wretchedness of wasting so much of my youth in this way. I wish that the scholars of rhetoric and dialectic

Translated by Carole Newlands. Edited by James J. Murphy.

would heed my advice and would sometimes think of the truth and usefulness of their subjects instead of tenaciously and obstinately quarreling over matters which they have naively accepted at a first hearing, without ever giving them proper consideration. As a result, if the arts were taught with greater conciseness they would certainly be more easily understood, and once the true method for their use was revealed, they would be more easy to practice.

But suppose someone should say, "By almighty God, do you attribute such greatness to yourself that you think you have seen faults or virtues in these arts which have escaped this array of such great men?" Indeed, Maecenas (for I address you and those like you, pure-minded judges unclouded by prejudice), if I were to say that Aristotle was a failure in philosophy, and Cicero and Quintilian each a failure in style, I would seem to be not quite sane. Therefore let us allow Aristotle as sharp an intelligence in various subjects and branches of knowledge as any Aristotelian could imagine, for I admit that that philosopher had an amazing fecundity of talent. Thanks to the generosity of Alexander, he compiled a natural science from the inventions and books of all nationalities; in his logic he questioned all philosophers, physical as well as moral and political; sometimes he showed as much syllogistic reasoning in judgment and as much method in arrangement as could be sought in the best of philosophers.

If you wish, attribute to Cicero these equal ornaments of dialectic, invention, and arrangement. I shall not demur. In fact I shall not only gladly but also perhaps truly admit that of all the men who are, have been, and will in the future be, he was the most eloquent. One could scarcely hope for such excellence of style (which we see in his books) and of delivery (which we learn from stories about him).

I would be acting impudently if I were to admit anything similar about Quintilian. For although he showed a certain shrewdness in the ability to conduct civil suits and although he usefully collected certain examples, nevertheless he differs vastly from Cicero in his style, which is possibly his chief virtue. For in individual words Quintilian does not possess the same purity, ap-

propriateness, or elegance. In consequence there is such a great difference that Cicero seems to have spoken in an age of gold, Quintilian in an age of iron. But nevertheless, compared to the eloquent men of that time, he was without doubt counted among the eloquent. I probably could not be like him, even if I should wish so; but in fact if I could, I would not even wish so. Such then were the qualities of Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian, and such was their stature. However, must those who excel in one or many virtues necessarily excel in them all? And is it necessary to think them not men, but gods in all things?

At present I am not inquiring after the supreme virtues of other kinds, such as those accorded the Apollos or the Jupiters. I am discussing now the precepts of dialectic and rhetoric, which I admit were almost all in fact either first discovered by those men, to the great glory of their names, or certainly were collected from others. Yet I add the observation that if they had applied as many months as I have years to judging these precepts accurately and to arranging them in order, I certainly do not doubt that they would have left us arts that are far truer and more distinct.

But the writings of these scholars reveal that while they indeed collected a lot of material, they did not evaluate it sufficiently, for in some places I look in vain for a syllogism. And they did not arrange it in a sufficiently fitting order, for elsewhere I find a lack of method. I confidently state that I have truly judged and correctly organized this same material in my teachings. Why so? Because the dialectical and rhetorical arts of Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian are fallacious and confused in their treatment of the dialectical and rhetorical usage of reason, and then of speech—the usage, I repeat, which one observes in their books. Mine are truthful and distinct, as both the art and its practice prove when they have been thoroughly investigated. This is the first, the middle, and the final support of my argument. I do not make evil use of the testimonies of men who can lie, but I establish my argument by the truthfulness of unwavering, natural usage, the usage, I repeat, which I have been following for so many years with the greatest effort through daily practice and by experience in the subject.

And so, Maecenas, since I am relying on the very pleasant knowledge of your most just wish, I would be embarrassed if I never wrote what I know about those arts. I shall explain them especially to you since you are not so much my patron as a mutual appreciator of good literature, sent by the grace of God to our France. But we delay too long on the threshold: let us take up the rhetorical controversies.

ARGUMENTS IN RHETORIC AGAINST QUINTILIAN

It will perhaps seem to some people an enormous and very difficult task which I propose to undertake against Quintilian, for I shall undertake to teach that his instructions on oratory were not correctly ordered, organized, described—especially so since he seems to define an orator brilliantly at the start, then to divide elegantly the parts of the subjects covered by the definition and finally to delineate the property and nature of each part with extreme care and accuracy. Thus he seems to have looked at everything with especial thought, to have evaluated all things critically and to have organized them methodically. In this disputation, however, I shall, as far as I may, apply dialectic, the mentor of speaking with truth and constancy, in order that I may evaluate the subject with more incisiveness and wisdom. And so, all you dialecticians—that is, whoever can form a judgment about this question with truth and constancy—come here, pay attention, sharpen your wits, drive far away from you (in case passions of this kind have been ready to seize your minds), drive far away, I say, love, hate, prejudice, levity, fickleness, and rashness. Listen to me with willing and impartial minds to the extent that unwavering reason will convince, to the extent that certain conclusion will establish, finally to the extent that truth itself—which cannot be refuted or disproved—will hold firm.

And so first of all let us put forward the definition in which Quintilian outlined for us his ideal orator, and let us refer to this point of dispute everything relevant from all parts of his *Institutiones*. “I teach,” he says, “that the orator cannot be perfect unless he is a good man. Consequently

I demand from him not only outstanding skill in speaking but all the virtuous qualities of character.” This is the type of orator that Quintilian constructs for us. Afterwards in the twelfth book, where he defines him in similar terms as a good man skilled in speaking well, he identifies those virtuous qualities of character as justice, courage, self-control, prudence, likewise knowledge of the whole of philosophy and of law, a thorough acquaintance with history, and many other attributes worthy of praise.

What then can be said against this definition of an orator? I assert indeed that such a definition of an orator seems to me to be useless and stupid: Why? Because a definition of any artist which covers more than is included in the rules of his art is superfluous and defective. For the artist must be defined according to the rules of his art, so that only as much of the art as the true, proper principles cover—this much is attributed to the artist, and nothing further. For a definition is not only a short, clear explanation of a subject but also it is so appropriate to the subject which is being defined that it perpetually agrees with it and is consistent within itself. The grammarian is defined as skilled in speaking and writing correctly; he is not defined as skilled in speaking, writing, and singing. Why not? Because grammar provides no precepts about the last. The geometrician is not defined as skilled in measurement and medicine. Why not? Because there is no precept in geometry which teaches how to cure illnesses.

Therefore let us hold to our axiom and let us lay down this first proposition of a syllogism:

The definition of an artist which covers more than is included within the limits of the art is faulty.

Then let us add to the first proposition we have put down:

But the definition of the artist of oratory handed down to us by Quintilian covers more than is included within the limits of the art.

For rhetoric is not an art which explains all the virtuous qualities of character. Moral philosophers speculate appropriately and judiciously on the numerous problems involving the moral virtues and the virtues of intelligence and the

mind; mathematicians deal with arithmetic and geometry; men of learning and wisdom, not rhetoricians, discuss separately through their individual studies the remaining important branches of learning including the virtuous qualities of character. I conclude therefore:

Quintilian's definition of the orator is as a result defective.

But suppose Quintilian should say that moral philosophy and the very theory of virtues are proper to rhetoricians, not to philosophers. Then the perfect orator is fashioned who cannot exist unless he has attained all the virtuous qualities of character. However, what if each of these statements is inappropriate and false? Shall we not then confirm the chief point in the conclusion of our syllogism? Accordingly, let us investigate whether instruction in virtues can be considered a part of rhetoric.

Is it because the orator ought to control the state and its citizens that moral training will therefore be a proper part of rhetoric? Undoubtedly it seems this way to Quintilian since he says:

But I would not grant this, that (as certain men have thought) the principles of a good and upright life should be the responsibility of the philosophers since it is that citizen who is fitted for the administration of public and private matters, who can guide cities by his counsels, fortify them with his laws, and correct them with his judgments, who is assuredly none other than the orator. Accordingly, although I admit that I shall make use of certain things which are contained in the books of the philosophers, nevertheless let me argue that these truly and rightly fall within my field and properly belong to the art of oratory.

This is what Quintilian says, and consequently when he wishes to give a name to a human being who is an ideal leader in the republic and is perfect in every virtue and branch of knowledge, he calls him an "orator"—as if to make him a god rather than just a man skilled in a single art. Yet at this point Quintilian has proposed that he should give instructions about one certain art and virtue, not about perfection in every art and virtue. He thinks rhetoric is one of the liberal arts, not in fact a common art, and yet at the same time he deems rhetoric to be an art, a science,

and a virtue. For in these books on oratory he has not described any science of civil skills, any theory of life and its duties, nor finally, in the sections dealing with rhetoric, any instruction in those virtues which he claims are parts of the art of oratory.

Quintilian decrees that there are five parts to the art of rhetoric—I shall talk about these afterwards—invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery. He thinks there are no more and no less. Yet in no one of these parts does he fit in the moral philosophy which he now attributes to rhetoric. In fact this man was sadly lacking in a knowledge of dialectic. If he had learned from it that in every art and branch of knowledge one must seek out the true, proper, and primary causes of the subject, he would have decided that an orator should be defined quite differently, and he would have learned that he should speculate quite differently on the proper qualities of the arts.

There are two universal, general gifts bestowed by nature upon man, Reason and Speech; dialectic is the theory of the former, grammar and rhetoric of the latter. Dialectic therefore should draw on the general strengths of human reason in the consideration and the arrangement of the subject matter, while grammar should analyze purity of speech in etymology, syntax, and prosody for the purpose of speaking correctly, and also in orthography for the purpose of writing correctly. Rhetoric should demonstrate the embellishment of speech first in tropes and figures, second in dignified delivery. Next, from these general, universal so-called instruments other arts have been formed: arithmetic with its numbers, geometry with its diagrams, other arts with their other subjects. If these arts have been kept separate and enclosed within their own proper limits, then certainly what grammar will teach in its rightful province will not be confused with rhetoric, and dialectic will not encroach upon what each of the others has clearly described. In use these should be united, so that the same oration can expound purely, speak ornately, and express thought wisely. However, the precepts of pure diction, ornate delivery, and intelligent treatment must be kept separate and should not be confused.

Therefore, from this dialectical distinction of subjects, Quintilian should have defined rhetoric so that first of all he would grasp as a whole the material belonging strictly to the art and distinct and separate from all other art's material; then, when it was separated into parts, he could explain it. Thus to conclude this line of reasoning, I shall recall again two syllogisms:

If moral philosophy were a part of rhetoric, it would have to be expounded in some part of rhetoric.

But in fact Quintilian does this nowhere, nor should it be done at all.

And therefore it is not a part of rhetoric.

Likewise,

The parts of the material which belong to the art of rhetoric are only two, style and delivery.

However, the parts of the art of rhetoric are the parts of its subject matter and they correspond completely to one another.

Therefore there are only two parts of rhetoric, style and delivery.

But Quintilian will persist, as in fact he does, in the same proposition, and indeed he will urge even more keenly that rhetoric is a virtue—this is in the second chapter of the second book—and that no one can be an orator unless he is a good man (this is in the first chapter of the twelfth book) and for this reason, I believe, he will conclude that instruction in virtue is a part of rhetoric.

Nevertheless, it must be seen that each of these statements of Quintilian's opinion is false. For although I admit that rhetoric is a virtue, it is virtue of the mind and the intelligence, as in all the true liberal arts, whose followers can still be men of the utmost moral depravity. Nor is rhetoric a moral virtue as Quintilian thinks, so that whoever possesses it is incapable of being a wicked man. Yet some Stoic philosophers seem to Quintilian—as he points out in the second book—to come cleverly to the following conclusions:

To be self-consistent as regards what should or should not be done is a virtue, which we name prudence. Consequently, to be self-consistent as regards what should and should not be said will be a

virtue. Likewise if a virtue is something whose rudiments have been provided by nature, rhetoric will be a virtue, because its rudiments are provided by nature.

But each one of these supposedly ingenious conclusions is twisted and false. For prudence is not a moral virtue but a virtue of the intelligence and mind. Therefore rhetoric will not be a moral virtue. Moreover it is absurd to think that these things are moral virtues whose origins are from nature, as if vices instead of virtues did not rather have their origins in nature. Thus these philosophers deceive Quintilian in that they fabricate a fraudulent sophism instead of a sound syllogism.

For all that, Quintilian continues and maintains his own opinion that since dialectic is a virtue, so therefore is rhetoric. Quintilian should turn the whole thing around and should more correctly conclude that since dialectic is not a moral virtue which can shape a good man, so neither is rhetoric.

“An orator,” he then adds, “cannot succeed in panegyric if he is not well versed in the distinctions between what is honorable and what is disgraceful; he cannot succeed in the law courts if he is ignorant of the nature of justice; and he cannot succeed amidst the turbulent threats of the people if he is timid.” What then, O Quintilian? Is he who knows what is honest and just, himself honest and just? How few are the spendthrifts and cutthroats who do not know what is honest and just? If the orator should be fearful in the case of Milo, you say he will not speak well.¹ What then is the result? Will rhetoric therefore mean bravery? Undoubtedly the grammarian will not be able to speak correctly if he is frightened, because when he is upset by fear he will pronounce syllables as long instead of short, or short instead of long. And because of his confused memory he will produce impurities of diction and solecisms. Is grammar therefore a moral virtue? Of what sort will the relationship between

¹Cicero was the orator who was fearful in the case of Milo. When he came into court to speak in defense of Milo, the room was packed with armed partisans of Clodius, the man Milo was accused of killing. Cicero left without speaking, because of fear, as he later said. He published a revised and expanded version of his speech for Milo and it is generally considered to be one of his greatest. [Ed.]

the two be? Indeed it is one thing to be something that is necessary to the other—quite another thing to be a part, a limb of it. I shall not object to your opinion that moral virtue is undoubtedly useful and suitable for the use of all arts, but in no way shall I admit that any art is a moral virtue.

Finally Quintilian scrapes together the most stupid trifles, saying that since virtue exists in beasts, and courage exists in robbers, it is therefore no wonder that eloquence is a moral virtue. But Quintilian no longer seems to be inexperienced and ignorant only of dialectic but rather of the whole of philosophy, especially of that main branch of philosophy, which gives instruction in virtue. O Quintilian, although you say that moral virtue fashions good, respectable, and praiseworthy followers, nevertheless you do not give sufficient thought to what you say when you attribute moral virtue to beasts and robbers. For the future I expect better words than this, or you should think up better advice.

But Quintilian does not let the matter rest, for in the twelfth book he drifts back to that same problem and accumulates similar worthless ideas.

“An evil mind cannot have leisure to devote to rhetoric,” he says. Or again, “The greatest part of rhetoric concerns goodness and justice,” and “Virtue’s authority prevails in persuasion.” Of these the first two are absolutely ridiculous and absurd, while the third is like his statement that a timid orator will not plead well. However, let us pass these things by. Meanwhile let us maintain that moral philosophy is not a part of rhetoric, nor is rhetoric itself a moral virtue at all, as Quintilian thought. . . .

My dispute with Quintilian’s first two books has up until now dealt with the part where grammar in particular is confused. In the next five books the discussion concerns dialectic, specifically invention and arrangement. Therefore we must discuss these parts next, as well as the separate chapters. And so in the first chapter of the third book Quintilian gathers together the discoveries of all the Greek and Latin teachers about this art, and with intense but useless diligence he reviews the teachers themselves by name. For

this list of so many names sheds no light on the theory of rhetoric, no more than if in grammar, through his love of vanity, he were to seek out by name all the writers about grammar; this catalogue, I say, sheds no light on the theory. A lack of judgment and of syllogistic reasoning has caused his vanity to overflow.

The next chapter is the same. Here Quintilian does not separate with sufficient sharpness rhetoric’s cause and origins, its nature, its usefulness, its art, and its practice. What is the problem? Were Plato and Cicero wrong? Or was Quintilian himself wrong when in the fifth chapter of this book he teaches that rhetoric is perfected and completed by three things: nature, art, and practice? How is usefulness different from those three causes and origins? For nothing either conceived by nature, described by art, or handled by practice is futile and without some usefulness. This is a dialectical nicety of division indeed, that what you ought to explain in three parts you expand into four by a new creation.

In the third chapter rhetoric is separated into five parts: invention, arrangement, style, memory, delivery. I am now not at all surprised that Quintilian is so bereft of dialectic in this division, for he was unable to recognize that here he has confused dialectic itself with rhetoric, since invention, arrangement, and memory belong to dialectic and only style and delivery to rhetoric. Indeed, Quintilian’s reason for dividing rhetoric into these five parts derived from the same single source of error as did the causes of the previous confusion. The orator, says Quintilian, cannot be perfected without virtue, without grammar, without mathematics, and without philosophy. Therefore, one must define the nature of the orator from all these subjects. The grammarian, the same man says, cannot be complete without music, astrology, philosophy, rhetoric, and history. Consequently there are two parts of grammar, methodology and literary interpretation. As a result Quintilian now finally reasons that rhetoric cannot exist unless the subject matter is first of all discovered, next arranged, then embellished, and finally committed to memory and delivered. Thus these are the five parts of rhetoric.

This reasoning of Quintilian’s often deceived

and misled him without any need (as some men report). I propose rather—as I have already said—that we should argue and deliberate quite differently the questions concerning the proper nature and the true divisions of the arts. I consider the subject matters of the arts to be distinct and separate. The whole of dialectic concerns the mind and reason, whereas rhetoric and grammar concern language and speech. Therefore dialectic comprises, as proper to it, the arts of invention, arrangement, and memory; this is evident because, as we find among numerous dumb persons and many people who live without any outward speech, they belong completely to the mind and can be practiced inwardly without any help from language or oration. To grammar for the purposes of speaking and writing well belong etymology in interpretation, syntax in connection, prosody in the pronunciation of short and long syllables, and orthography in the correct rules for writing. From the development of language and speech only two proper parts will be left for rhetoric, style, and delivery; rhetoric will possess nothing proper and of its own beyond these.

And here I am not arguing like Quintilian on the basis of the *sine qua non* for the subject, but by a proper, legitimate line of reasoning:

In every art one should teach as many parts as exist in its proper, natural subject matter, and no more.

To the subject matter of the art of dialectic, that is to the natural use of reason, belongs the skill of inventing, arranging, and memorizing.

Therefore it should deal with the same number of parts.

Likewise,

To the subject matter of rhetoric pertains only the ascribed skill of style and delivery.

Therefore it should deal with the same number of parts.

Likewise,

The parts of another art should not be intermingled with the art of rhetoric.

Invention, arrangement, and memory are parts of another discipline, namely dialectic.

Therefore they should not be intermingled with rhetoric.

However, in other places Quintilian shows us with his very own testimony that those parts belong to dialectic. For in the last chapter of the fifth book he speaks as follows about dialecticians: “Those learned men, seeking for truth among men of learning, subject everything to a detailed, scrupulous inquiry, and they thus arrive at the clear, acknowledged truth so that they can claim for themselves the parts of invention and judgment, calling the former *topiké*, the latter *kritiké*.” Here Quintilian says that the dialecticians lay claim to invention and judgment (which contains a large part of arrangement in the conclusions of each argument and in syllogisms). And finally in the second chapter of the eleventh book he says that if memory belongs to any art, then it belongs completely to arrangement and order. Therefore he should say that the dialecticians could rightly claim this part also, because in dialectic that has been rightly described, one should teach the truest theory of order and arrangement according to the precepts of the syllogism and method.

In this chapter Quintilian disproves the various opinions concerning the number of these five parts, but he does this in such a way that he himself makes far worse mistakes than do those whose mistakes he censures. Some men added that judgment is rather different from invention and arrangement. Quintilian correctly censures these men, not however with a correct argument but with one that is very clumsy and ignorant of what true judgment is. Quintilian thinks that judgment is so inextricably mixed in with invention, arrangement, style, and delivery that it cannot be separated from them by theory or precepts; he does not recognize any theory of judgment at all but, as he explains later in the last chapter of the sixth book, he considers that judgment can no more be transmitted by art than can taste or smell.

In this way Quintilian reveals himself to be quite ignorant of dialectic, for he has either not heard or not read anything about the role of judging, and about the many types of syllogisms, both simple and complex. He has not remembered that Cicero said the following about the Stoics, that as long as they labored in only the one part of dialectic, they did not reach the arts of invention,

and yet they did diligently follow the paths of judgment.

Nor indeed should we consider it possible that rhetorical judgment is one thing and dialectical judgment another, since for evaluating whether something is truly useful, suitable, fitting, or has the qualities it seems to have, there is one faculty of judgment which the syllogism alone executes and accomplishes. For something to be understood as true or false by the rule of the syllogism is no different than it would be for a subject of control and debate to be spoken truly or falsely. Why should I say here that Quintilian knew nothing of the theory of judgment or of the teaching of the syllogism when he himself denies that any at all can exist? Why should I now make a case with many arguments that Quintilian has no training in dialectic? For he not only confesses what I argue, but openly declares it. He says that two arts are claimed by the dialecticians—one invention, the other judgment—but he does not believe what he says, because he maintains that there is no art of judgment.

Therefore let us continue, and let us still use the art of judgment against this rhetorician who lacks the art and theory of judgment. Let us refer his opinion about the remaining subjects to the standard of dialectical judgment. His next instructions are indeed wonderfully confused.

In the fourth, fifth, sixth, tenth, and eleventh chapters he discusses the orator's subject matter and its separation into parts. Let us therefore first of all take up the debate over this question. First Quintilian decrees that there are three classes of causes, demonstrative, deliberative, and forensic. He uses Aristotle as the author of this division, the very man who—to repeat what I have already taught in my "Observation against Aristotle"—was virtually the sole author and inventor of all the obscurity in this art, who was the first to mix dialectical invention in with the art of rhetoric, and who organized his inquiries so awkwardly and so ridiculously.

I say first of all that this partition is false, since there are countless questions which are not contained in any part of these classes. Quintilian saw this when he said,

But then a feeble attempt was made, first by certain Greeks, then by Cicero in his books of the *De ora-*

tor, and now almost forcibly by the greatest authority of our times, to prove that there are not only more than these three kinds but also that they are practically countless. For if we place the task of praise and denunciation in the third division, in what kind of oratory shall we seem to be engaged when we complain, console, pacify, excite, terrify, encourage, instruct, explain obscurities, narrate, plead for mercy, give thanks, congratulate, reproach, vilify, describe, command, retract, express our desires and opinions, and so on? As a result I must ask pardon, so to speak, for remaining an adherent of the older view, and I must ask what were the motives which caused earlier writers to confine so closely a subject of such variety.

He recites these things with a certain grandeur, so that he appears to have solved a difficult matter; he does not seem to have understood the force of the argument which he uses against himself but, content with a fallacious, faulty solution, he has ensnared and deceived himself.

Quintilian, however, thinks he meets this objection in the following way: "In the course of a thorough examination of all these things," he says, "the following line of reasoning helped, that the entire task of the orator is either in the law courts, or outside the law courts." Agreed: and so? "The type of the objects of investigation in the law courts is obvious," he says. I admit this; what then? "Those matters which do not come before a judge either deal with past or future time," he says. Why, I ask? Can there not exist any question, any dispute, any occasion for speaking that deals with a contemporary subject? When there is an investigation of this syntax, this square, this star, this wound, this rhetoric, or countless matters of this kind, does the investigation concern a past or future rather than a contemporary matter? Consequently this is false.

But go on, nevertheless. "We praise or denounce past action," he says, "we deliberate about the future." But cannot the opportunity also be offered for investigating, consoling, pacifying, exciting, terrifying and doing countless other things that concern past and future? Thus Quintilian here concludes nothing, solves nothing, but confuses himself.

But another clear proof is added to the one above. "All subjects of speech," he says, "must either be certain or doubtful." What then, O

Quintilian? What will you achieve by this division? “We praise or blame what is certain, according to each person’s inclination,” he says. Yet, like Cicero and Caesar in the Cato debate, we do praise and blame many uncertain things, and of course without either praising or blaming we treat many certain things, such as the almost limitless functions of the subjects covered by the liberal and practical arts. Therefore, part of this division is false.

“In some cases,” he says, “dubious matters require deliberation, in other cases, litigation.” Truly I look in vain here for the same statement as in the previous section, that the things which are doubtful to the ignorant are the countless subjects covered by the arts. Should a man who is ignorant of those arts guide the deliberation of the people or the judgment of the law courts according to Quintilian’s precepts, instead of employing and seeking information from a learned, experienced man? O capricious and artless proposal! By this devious argument has Quintilian refuted the objections thrown against him? Has he in this way opposed the greatest author of his times? Yet his method is not to refute false arguments by true arguments, but rather to confirm true arguments by false sophisms.

Quintilian adds to this last quasi-solution one other. He abridges all those other species into the three kinds, but in a quite insolent manner that is inappropriate for a writer of the art. Indeed he wished to overrule us by the force of his authority, since he can prove nothing true by reason. I look in vain here for dialectical wisdom in his partition. Now I am saying not only that Quintilian errs without the art of judgment but also that he rambles on without any understanding of invention.

Partitions of questions of a similar but far greater uselessness follow in the whole of chapters five, six, and eleven. I have decided not to use up the greater part of my discourse against these by teaching that they are stupid and false, but rather I have decided that I should use one comprehensive refutation for so many foolish statements. I say therefore that the whole partition and division of these questions is clearly futile not only in the art of rhetoric, which is composed truly and appropriately from the parts of style and delivery, but also in this confused art of

Quintilian’s which is thrown together from the parts of invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery. Since we indeed feel this way, let us repeat this line of argument from our “Observations against Aristotle.”

A theory common to the subjects laid before it for treatment seeks no partition of these subjects.

For instance, in grammar there is no division of the subjects laid before grammar for treatment, because grammar is a common art that deals with all aspects of writing and speaking.

Rhetoric, though confused by Quintilian into five parts, is a theory completely common to the subjects laid before it for treatment.

For there is one art common to memory, delivery, and style, and their parts are not variously adapted to various questions—unless I do not know what is taught concerning the quality of style, and about the classification of arguments as either demonstration, deliberation, or adjudications; even then, there is not another art of tropes and figures, but another use. I shall demonstrate my proof concerning invention and judgment in their place.

But indeed I shall instead agree with Quintilian’s opinion that rhetoric is defined as the science of speaking well, not about this or that, but about all subjects.

Rhetoric therefore requires no partition of its areas of investigation.

Here I am not using fallacious or obscure proofs, but I am explaining the first and most important reason for dividing a question. If a question were to be divided in rhetoric, this would happen because some fixed arts are suited to fixed questions; not all parts of those arts as a whole would agree with all questions. But I contend that this is false, and I hold this to be plain and obvious first of all in respect to the three parts, style, memory, and delivery; in respect to the other two parts, invention and arrangement, I hold the same position about those things necessary for speaking.

Indeed the chief point of the whole confusion is in invention alone. The theory of memory and delivery is not repeated very often and is not confused in so many ways; it is dealt with once, and

in one place only. The teaching of style through tropes and figures is not muddled by the same repeated and confused classifications; although Quintilian burdened this part with many unrelated subjects, still he did handle it altogether in a single place over the eighth and ninth books. In various places Quintilian says many things about the teaching of arrangement, proofs, questions, and the parts of a speech; he infers no universal and general (if I may use his word) precept. I say again that the chief point of this rhetorical confusion occurs entirely in invention; the reason for this we can see from reason and from the developments of history.

For I see that the scholars and teachers of this art have spent greater zeal in collecting the instructions of the ancients and in thinking up new instructions than they have used judgment in discriminating among their own and others' discoveries. The purpose of the early rhetoricians before Aristotle was not to record some general theory for speaking eloquently about all subjects, but only to draw up for forensic and civil cases some advice concerning the rules for amplification through tropes and figures. Other writers suggested other things about how to move the audience to anger, pity, envy, indignation, and similar passions, and about the classification of causes (demonstrative, deliberative, and judicial). Later Aristotle collected all their material together with great eagerness and care, and he mixed up these first arts with the universal, common topics of dialectical invention; he also gave some thought to delivery; later memory was added to rhetoric. Thus he entangled the arts of invention in as many ways as we have them now, despite the fact that only one general theory—separated into the ten topics of causes, results, subjects, adjuncts, opposites, comparisons, names, divisions, definitions, and witnesses—could be adapted to make clear most easily and plainly all questions, all parts of a speech, and finally all subjects.

But someone will say that in the classification of causes and the parts of a speech these lesser arts of invention are described for uneducated novices, whereas the more important and more common arts belonging to the universal topics are described for the pupils who have already

made some progress in those studies. I hear them, I say, and I know that this is said in the second book of Cicero's *De oratore*, for there Antony speaks as follows about these topics of invention:

If, however, I should wish that someone quite unskilled should be taught to speak, I would instead hammer with undivided zeal on the same anvil night and day, and I would thrust all the tiniest morsels, everything chewed very small, as the nurses say, down the young pupil's throat. But if he is generously instructed in the theory and already familiar with some usage, and if moreover he seems to be of sharp enough intelligence, I would snatch him away, not to some remote, landlocked rivulet, but to the source of the mighty, universal river. This site, as the home of all proofs, would reveal them to him through brief illustration and verbal definition.

Thus Cicero spoke there in Antony's voice.

Here I wish to lay down a comprehensive rebuttal to Cicero—namely, that in his rhetorical precepts there is almost nothing of Ciceronian judgment or intelligence; rather, he dealt merely with the rules of teachers and rhetoricians whom he had heard or read, Aristotle in particular. Cicero did not become eloquent from these rules, and his eloquence can easily be seen as splendid, not because of his own mixed-up rules but because of our own rules, which we make conform to his achievements. There is yet another point in respect to the authority of Cicero: Do we wish the authority of any man in a debate concerning an art to be superior to the truth of the case? Consider some similar proof in another body of instruction for an art. Suppose the grammarian should define a noun and should expound as a whole all the circumstantial adjuncts of the noun and its accidents. Because this is comprehensive, because it is general, we consider it sufficient for all nouns. We look for no lesser arts, nor could any particular art be more easily explained than that general one. The same proof obviously holds for the theory of invention.

Our instructor teaches that all things which one can say about anything are either causes, effects, subjects, adjuncts, opposites, comparisons, names, divisions, definitions, or witnesses, and he carefully explains these things; indeed he explains the theory of all reasonings and of all argu-

ments. No instruction trimmed so closely could be more appropriate, nor is there any better or easier way taught for deliberating on and discovering what should be said about a subject brought forward for treatment than these many forms of appraisal which Quintilian uses in the areas of investigation and in the parts of a speech.

For this reason there is no way an excuse can be permitted for such a great muddle.

But let us turn to these arts of invention which Quintilian teaches in the classification of causes, in the divisions of a speech, and in the common topics. Let us teach that nothing apart from our ten topics should be included in them, and that nothing better can be shown for teaching and helping youth. For I allege and assure you that these ten topics are the only ones, and that apart from these there is nothing taught in the numerous inventions of Quintilian that can be truly referred to the rationale of theory.

The seventh chapter deals with demonstration. What topics of praise different from ours does Quintilian handle here? None. Instead he makes a muddle of four of ours and does not adopt them as complete in themselves as causes, effects, adjuncts, and witnesses. For he teaches that the source of demonstration derives from parents and ancestors who in our topics are the procreative causes; likewise it derives from discoveries, exploits, words, and deeds, which are effects; likewise it derives from the condition of mind, body, and fortune, which are adjuncts; likewise from divine witnesses; no classification of argument beyond these is of any concern.

Here therefore Quintilian reveals nothing about invention that is not more useful and suitable in our topics, but here is not even made distinct and separate. He adds a few things about arrangement, namely that we should follow either a chronological order or the distribution of various characteristics. We ought to follow the latter in every dispute which proceeds along straight and orderly lines. We can, however, apply the second to the first, and for the sake of clear understanding we ought to do this. Florus did this in his praise of the Roman people in which he follows a chronological order and yet divides the complete work into four parts. Livy had done the same thing in his complete history

composed in gradual stages. And so Quintilian has shown nothing here that is the true property of demonstration, and the things he thinks are separate can best be joined. For this art of universal invention is likewise also suited to demonstration.

In the chapter dealing with deliberation Quintilian fails to write about the topic of invention, or to make clear any method of arrangement; he expands the whole subject with mere trifles. Moreover, Quintilian taught nothing separately about the judicial classification; he referred to its theory in books four and five. However, these things concerning the parts of a speech, and likewise concerning the common, general topics of invention, are generally taught by other rhetoricians. And so let us conclude first of all that Quintilian in his classification of causes does not describe any arts that are proper to invention; as a result there should be a division of classes into questions and causes. Next let us likewise conclude this, that although I admit that arts of invention for praise or deliberation were shown, none was relevant apart from the one species of causes, the results, the adjuncts, and the divine witnesses. Our ten topics explain all these things thoroughly. For if there is a question concerning praise and advice, without doubt our instructions will open all those sources of dialectical wisdom in the classification of causes, in results, in the many parts and manners of subjects, adjuncts, and opposites, and in the abundant and brimming topics for the remaining arguments. A choice of subjects and a method will almost be difficult for you, since such an abundance of material will be offered.

And so what sort of a dialectician do we acknowledge here, one who says that there is no theory of judgment, and who when he decrees that the art of invention is threefold, puts forward such a useless and sterile art of invention as this first one in the classification of causes? The second art of invention which follows is placed by Quintilian among the parts of a speech. Since he argues first about the number of those parts, we must therefore say something about them.

And so in the ninth chapter Quintilian constructs two duties for a judicial case—the bringing and rebutting of charges—and five parts for

a speech—the introduction, the statement of facts, the proof, the refutation, and the peroration—as if in demonstration and deliberation there were not an argument over the interpretation of an action that leads to either some charge or a rebuttal; as if also these five parts of a speech could not be identified in other questions; and as if all these things, whether duties or parts proper to the judicial question, were not common to all questions. . . .

I come now to Quintilian's third form of invention. We have discussed the invention of causes; we have argued over the invention of exordia and statements of fact; there remains one invention that is common to causes, to parts of speech, and generally to everything. However, Quintilian seems to have placed it in the third part of a speech, that is, in the proof, because he thought that there is no place for arguments in the exordium and the statement of facts, but only in the proof. For if he thought otherwise, why does he attribute to one part what he should reckon common to all? Come then, let us tackle this problem.

I propose, however, that his theory of universal invention is just as careless and as useless as the one above, the specialized invention in causes and in the parts of a speech. Quintilian, following Aristotle, divides proofs into two kinds, so that some are "inartistic" and others are "artistic." He calls those inartistic which are outside art and which the litigant receives from outside himself, such as the decisions of previous courts, rumors, evidence from torture, documents, oaths, and witnesses. Quintilian errs in this along with Aristotle. First, since there are countless questions about those subjects and arts which use the evidence of scholars and learned men although they do not come into the forum, in what way can they be called inartistic? Again, how can we call something inartistic which is taught by the precepts of art? Surely the precepts and arts concerning these arguments are well known. In fact, as the matter stands, I would prefer to call these reasons inartistic because they contain no art at all, because they have only the tiniest particle of true proof from all available arguments, and because on the whole one does not believe the evi-

dence but rather trusts in the causes of the evidence. Therefore Quintilian is misled by a false line of reasoning.

Next he divides the artistic proofs in a rather superficial and foolish fashion so that they concern either a thing or a person, and derive from things preceding, subsequent, or opposite, from past, present, and future time, and from something greater, equal, or less; likewise so that some proofs are necessary, some credible, and others not impossible; or so that because one thing is, another thing is not; or because one thing is, another thing is; or because one thing is not, another thing is; or because one thing is not, another thing is not. What can be more idiotic than this whole category of partitions? Granted that he may fashion out of the most trifling details such infinite sections for every subject, what usefulness has this in any case either for recognizing the nature of the arguments or for dealing with actual practice?

"Therefore all artistic proof," says Quintilian, "consists either of signs, arguments, or examples"—as if examples and signs were not arguments! O sharp and dialectical divider! Let us look at the differences between signs and arguments which Quintilian suggests, so that we can see this marvelous distinction between examples and signs, and arguments.

"Signs," he says, "are not discovered by the orator but are brought to him along with the case." But this is false, for what he calls signs are actually the effects or adjuncts that are visible to the eye; the orator probing into every problem can seek and discover them. But if we suppose that the orator does not discover them but that they are brought to him, they are therefore, I say, inartistic, and consequently not parts of artistic proofs, as you, O Quintilian, make them. In this way you fall into a more serious error of syllogistic judgment.

Quintilian sets out another difference between argument and sign, and enfolds it in an amazing double proposition.

"If signs are infallible," he says, "they are not arguments, because where they exist there is no room for question; even if they are doubtful, they are not arguments because they themselves need the support of arguments." But signs, I insist, are

either infallible or doubtful; arguments therefore—if I may conclude for you—are neither. But truly, O Quintilian, the clearer the arguments the more they remove the problem and the more they prove it, so all the more are they arguments. But you yourself a short while later define an argument as infallible; therefore the first part of your double proposition is false. This one place can indeed prove just how sharp was Quintilian’s judgment, for he makes such feeble arguments, he draws such trivial and inconsistent conclusions, and he deliberates contrary to all dialectical reason.

For from this handsome double proposition you should conclude that no proof is an argument, as follows:

If a proof is infallible, it is not an argument because there exists no room for question. If it is doubtful, it is not an argument, because it needs the support of arguments.

And yet a proof is infallible or doubtful.

Therefore no proof is an argument.

This is the dialectic of Quintilian. But let us look at the definition of an argument, for perhaps this will provide a clearer difference. “Argument,” says Quintilian, “is a process of reason providing proof, which enables one thing to be inferred from another and which confirms facts that are uncertain through facts which are certain.” But this definition of an argument suits both sign and example. His entire partition of artistic proof into sign, example, and argument, where two species are placed along with their class as if they were different classes, is clearly both false and stupid. Almost the whole theory of proofs outlined by Quintilian in the fifth book is the same.

However in the general theory of arguments—which we handle completely in our ten topics of causes, effects, subjects, adjuncts, opposites, comparisons, names, divisions, definition, and witnesses—Quintilian confuses and muddles the topics as if they were general (even though he treats them not only as general but separates them into sections). He confuses, I repeat, those topics drawn from person, such as birth, nationality, country, sex, age, education, physical appearance, fortune, condition, natural disposition, virtue, occupation, previous deeds, previous

words, and name. For our teachings cover these many topics and separate them into the two topics of effects and adjuncts.

Next, Quintilian’s greater weakness concerns effects. For he put these forward in the topics of persons, yet here once again he repeats them as if they were now different. He does the same with time, place, and chance event, which belong to adjuncts, and yet once again he puts adjuncts afterwards as if they were different. He does the same with opportunities, instruments, and methods, treating them as if they were not causes or adjuncts. He does the same with definition, class, species, and proper difference, as if a property were different from adjuncts, or difference were not an opposite. However, Quintilian does talk about this later. He does the same with division, as if class or species, indeed mentioned shortly before, were somewhat separated from the topic of division. He does the same with removal, where Quintilian prates quite childishly in thinking that the removal of parts is a class of argument different from division. He does the same with beginning, amplification, and climax, three topics which provide no universal class of argument but are mixed in with the others. He does the same with similarities, differences, opposites, adjuncts, and references, where Quintilian most ignorantly subordinates adjuncts to references. He does the same with causes and results, which however he enumerated previously. And he does the same with conjugate arguments which Quintilian laughs at, because, he says, “There is no need for proof when a man has the common right to send his cattle to graze in a common pasture.” Quintilian shows the same dialectical judgment here as he did when he previously distinguished signs from arguments: there is no need to prove that because an animal is rational, it is a man. Is anything, O Quintilian, further from dialectic than that judgment according to which a definition is not an argument? What could be more bereft of philosophy? The same can be asked about the major and minor terms.

But at last he draws together the countless topics, variously confused, into a sum total of confusion, so that he draws every argument from persons, causes, places, time, opportunities, means, definition, class, species, differences,

properties, removal, division, beginning, amplification, climax, likes, unlikes, contradictions, consequents, efficient, effects, results, conjuncts, and comparison. He adds to these the supposition he calls "hypothesis," which can be drawn from all arguments because there are just as many fictitious species as there are true.

Here Quintilian cannot be called negligent in seeking out so many items from all over, but certainly he can be seen as quite ignorant of dialectic and without experience of the syllogism, for he does not see that this "hypothesis" is the proposition of a connected syllogism according to which nothing can be argued, proved, or concluded unless a minor proposition, either expressed or understood, is joined to it. I repeat, he does not understand that invention is a process which supplies arguments, whereas arrangement is a different process which organizes arguments. But that "hypothesis" is part of a connected syllogism; it arranges the argument along with the question, and it can grasp every type of argument which a syllogism can. A syllogism, however, is not an argument, nor indeed is the proposition of a syllogism an argument. And although Quintilian mixes these falsehoods so unwisely and confusingly with the general, universal topics, he nevertheless alleges that he can write about many more topics of invention. In this he deceives himself, for there is no class of arguments outside the ten topics of causes, effects, subjects, adjuncts, opposites, comparisons, names, divisions, definitions, and witnesses. In our teachings all the things covered here have been very clearly distinguished according to their classes and parts.

There is a similar confusion over examples. "All arguments," says Quintilian, "must either be from things like, unlike, or contrary." A little later, however, he clearly incriminates himself by also adding arguments from greater and lesser things and from historical authorities. What he thinks are examples of contraries, such as Marcellus' restoration to the Syracusan enemies of the works of art which Verres took from them when they were allies, are in fact unlikes, not contraries.

He says a lot of things that are partly false, partly true, about the use of arguments. He also adds some things about arrangement which have nothing to do with syllogism and method since

they concern a certain type of artistic arrangement. Although Quintilian orders that a speech should not descend from its most powerful to its weakest point, afterwards in the first chapter of the seventh book he will say the opposite, for there he will teach that the strongest argument against the accused must be refuted first before the weakest can be dealt with.

In the chapter concerning refutation, there are similar trivialities, with an utter lack of any instruction concerning invention. Finally Quintilian collects many things about the enthymeme and the epicheireme; by this he proves again what was evident in so many previous places—namely that in dialectic he is without doubt a lightweight. His discussion of the syllogism is clearly rather a description of what he has either heard or read from some author. Quintilian here has Aristotle as the source of his mistake. He separates dialecticians from orators not according to practical use but according to the false fabrications of Aristotle, who taught that the former use syllogisms, whereas the latter more freely use loose-knit speech. This man does not realize that, like grammar, dialectic through all its parts of invention and arrangement has common use in every speech; and that dialogues, lectures, debates, poems, and finally speeches—of whatever kind they may be—are all more dialectical than oratorical. Virtually no speech is without reason and argument, or without the organization of reason and argument which belongs to dialectic. But Quintilian, following the vain imaginings of Aristotle, who made a foolish distinction between dialecticians with their scholastic disputes and rhetoricians with their forensic and civil debates, thinks that orators use the syllogism less frequently than dialecticians; as if in fact the reasoning in the dialogues of Plato were not connected to both dialectic and rhetoric, and as if we do not find as many syllogisms in Cicero's forensic cases as in even the thorniest sophisms of Aristotle. If Quintilian had recognized that the arts of invention and arrangement are distinct, and if he had evaluated Cicero's speeches according to their standard, he would have found more frequent syllogisms in Cicero's speeches than could be observed in any philosophical writings. This mistake by Aristotle deceived Quintilian, for he simply followed Aristotle's fabrica-

tion here and never considered whether it was a true statement. For if he had examined it, most obviously he would have discovered the error of those things upon realizing that the books of poets and orators use and handle dialectic as much as those of philosophers. Such are his statements about the invention of arguments in the third, fourth, and fifth books.

The whole of the following sixth book is taken up with the arts for stirring the emotions and causing delight; here nothing is the property of dialectic or of rhetoric. Since rhetoric and dialectic are general arts, they should therefore be explained in a general fashion, the one in respect to style and delivery, the other in respect to invention and arrangement. Many rivulets arise from these universal fountains, but they should not be intermingled with the precepts of these arts. Three arts of invention are taught by Cicero and Quintilian: for the purpose of teaching they describe topics in the classes of causes, in the parts of a speech, and finally, those that are common to all questions. Secondly, they also lay down some instructions for stirring the emotions, and then for causing delight. But in invention one who is teaching should explain only the topics, since arousal and delight do not have any proper arts. However, they are drawn in common from those topics of invention, and likewise from style and delivery. They are especially drawn from moral training, where you learn to recognize what is virtue, what is vice, what things please honest men, what things delight the wicked, and likewise what offends each. Cicero often provides proof of this, for in his writings on oratory he alleges that this part is therefore most necessary of all parts of philosophy for the orator; and Aristotle, who was responsible for this great confusion of dialectic and rhetoric, alleges that rhetoric by reason of the emotions and passions is in a certain sense part of moral philosophy; he refers the whole art of stirring the emotions to that moral philosophy. For this reason Quintilian himself said in his first book that moral philosophy was a part of rhetoric.

In the last chapter of the sixth book Quintilian discusses the difference between common sense and judgment, and he thinks that judgment, as I said before, can no more be transmitted by art than can taste or smell. Here I do not find Quin-

tilian lacking in care in his collection of material, but I long for prudence in his making of judgments. Previously he stated that there are two parts of dialectic, invention and judgment. Now, as if dialectic were not an art, and as if his instructions concerning judgment in syllogisms were inartistic, he says that judgment cannot be transmitted by art. And yet this theory is so full, so wonderful, and so divine that the man who knows all the other arts but does not know this one from precepts or from some observation seems to have understood nothing truly and to have learned nothing surely. And so these matters concerning invention have been confused by Quintilian.

Quintilian seems to wish to explain the theory of arrangement in the next book, the seventh. If he had done this, he would have taught all the modes of the syllogism, and the correct ways of method, theory, and prudence, just as our teachings have explained. But in the beginning Quintilian declares that there is no fixed art of arrangement which can be formulated for all matters; here he is seriously wrong. For there is a fixed theory of syllogism and artistic method, common to everything which can be treated with order and reason. And so how many things must now be said against this man concerning the art of arrangement, for he not only is ignorant of it but believes that none can exist!

Indeed the countless things which Quintilian writes in the whole of this book under the heading of arrangement in fact concern merely the rules for civil cases and for the practice of litigation in the Roman forum in his own times. But all such things, not being very stable or enduring, merely provide instruction for those specific rules of the Roman forum. Moreover he drags back to this place all those sophisms in the third book concerning types of status, conjectural questions, definition, quality, deed, the letter of the law, its intention, opposing laws, syllogism, and ambiguity—in none of which is there any general precept for arrangement. Also he confuses some precepts for invention in conjecture and definition where they concern causes, deeds, and advice, so that one can most truly allege that in five books (the third, the fourth, the fifth, the sixth, and the seventh), Quintilian does not formulate an art of invention and arrangement;

rather he overwhelms the theory of each part with many false, alien, and useless matters.

Therefore now we may conclude this whole debate on invention and arrangement, and we may put our teaching on a footing with Quintilian's teaching, our usage with his usage, so that in the end we can understand more fully and exactly what it is possible to decide about this subject. We ourselves rightly attribute the arts of invention and arrangement to the art of dialectic, as its proper parts. Quintilian falsely subordinates the theory of dialectic to rhetoric. We define a question and give advice about its parts whatever may be relevant to the use of invention and arrangement; Quintilian does not define the question, and he proposes no use for it; rather, he confuses this part of the theory with sophisms of all kinds. We define invention, we separate its classes, we deal with each species and part of the classes, and we illustrate by excellent examples. Quintilian does not illuminate invention, the classes of invention, the species of the classes, or its parts, with any light at all of true definition and partition, but instead of one brilliant invention that is common to all subjects, he accumulates three most inane and disordered arts—the first dealing with the classes of causes, the second with the parts of a speech, and the third with the general topics common to all causes as well as to all parts of a speech.

We have pursued all the virtues of syllogism and of method, that is of universal arrangement; in this case Quintilian did not in any way perceive any fixed and enduring precept. In the clearest and most suitable order for comprehension we have organized the general rules first, and then the particular rules; in what way, with what order, by what rule of dialectical method did Quintilian put together his whole confusion of so many arts? Plato compares a methodically and rationally organized speech to the perfect figure of a fine animal, whose very head rears above, whose feet stab the ground below, and whose chest, belly, and remaining limbs have an orderly arrangement in the places in between.² He believes that a speech, arranged thus by dialectic, covers the universal subjects in the first,

most important place, the particulars in the least important place, and in between the subjects first of all that are subsidiary to the universals, and then the subjects that are more important than the particulars. As a result a debate is guided from its head through its parts to the final, particular details. But indeed what sort of a monster would we think the animal whose feet were raised above, whose head was thrust down below and along with the stomach was swallowed up by one foot as if by some vortex? Such undoubtedly is Quintilian's triplicate organization of invention: the feet are the particular arts of causes which are in the first, most important place; the stomach is the parts of a speech which are common rather than demonstrative arts, and deliberative causes which are less common than the general topics—while the head is the topics common to all questions; but this theory of speech and common topics is confused in one class of judicial cause, that is, in one foot.

Thus, in his whole explanation of the art Quintilian did not only make all too many absurd mistakes in the subjects themselves, but we see how confused and muddled he was in order and arrangement. Yet what do we think will happen if we seek for practical application of such foolish, useless confusion? Like any other discipline, the theory of invention and arrangement must be practiced in two ways: first, in order that by its means we should through external examples learn common sense from argument, judgment from the manner of conclusion, and complete prudence from the method of arrangement and order; secondly, that by means of the same art we should devise similar examples in speech and writing. But suppose we take some speech of Cicero and investigate invention and arrangement according to Quintilian's arts: of what use first of all for this system of practice is that whole technical doctrine of status that deals with whether the question is reasonable or legal, whether it inquires if something is complex or definite, what it is, or of what sort; whether it arises from an ambiguous basis or is of a syllogistic type, whether it involves contradictory laws, the letter or the spirit of the law, or whether it involves transference—what use, I repeat, will these things be to me for the system of invention?

²This comparison can be found in the *Phaedrus*. [Ed.]

None. For the system of arrangement? None. Indeed, which arts of Quintilian shall I now apply to explain Cicero's intention here and the type and probity of the argument he used; I repeat, which arts of invention shall I apply here? Shall I attack again the classes of causes, shall I abolish the countless teachings on the parts of a speech, and shall I refer here the whole system of common topics? For, good God, why should there be such a great, mixed-up confusion, when the whole matter is very clear and easy?

Do you wish to recognize and to evaluate the wisdom in the speech of Cicero that is set before you? Refer its arguments to either part of the question, consider what its arguments are, whether cause or effect, subject or adjunct, opposite, comparison, rule of name, division, definition, or witness, then follow up the results by a short, easy way—something which you can barely do, and not even barely, by the annoying roughness of Quintilian's road. Finally, granting that there is the same danger in Quintilian's arts concerning arrangement, how shall I come to know Cicero's judgment and his method? But Quintilian is so far from teaching any theory of judgment that he alleges that none at all can be formulated. He is so blind to the entire art of

arrangement that he professes there can be no such art common to all subjects. Aristotle's error is almost equal in foolishness to Quintilian's; in his *Topics* the former denies that a common invention can be formulated, but he entwines it in all the many obscurities that I have pointed out in his books. The latter states with truth that judgment is a part of dialectic, and yet the same man, apparently dreaming, says that there is no theory of judgment and no common theory of artistic arrangement. Accordingly, here I shall now once more ask a question: How can the second system of practice be handled according to Quintilian's arts? Neither wisdom nor judgment nor method in set authors can be understood from them; how therefore will we be able through those arts to pursue the same virtues in writing and speaking?

At this point, then, since the art of invention and arrangement is so carelessly and so senselessly laid out by Quintilian, since nothing is perfectly defined, divided, valued, or arranged, since the true use of these parts cannot in any way be elicited from those teachings—it is for you to decide, O dialecticians whom I summoned at the start as judges of my debate—to decide, I repeat, what sort of dialectician you now reckon this rhetorician to be!

Thomas Wilson

ca. 1523–1581

Thomas Wilson was born to a middle-class family in Lincolnshire, England. Perhaps with the aid of aristocratic friends to whom their royalist sentiments endeared them, Wilson's parents were able to send him to Eton and Cambridge, where he was educated in a humanist curriculum influenced by Erasmus. As a young man, Wilson served as tutor in several aristocratic families. He also published the first logic handbook in English, *The Rule of Reason* (1551), and next, *The Arte of Rhetorique* (1553; excerpted here), the first book in English to deal with invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery—all five parts of classical rhetoric. These books were perhaps intended to serve as advertisements of Wilson's verbal abilities, to assist him in gaining the post of tutor or secretary in some royal family. Unfortunately, they also advertised his Protestant religious sympathies, forcing him, as he said later, to leave England in 1553 when the Protestant Edward VI, Henry VIII's young son and heir, died and the Roman Catholic Mary ascended the throne.

Wilson arrived in Padua in 1554 and studied law. While in Italy, he was arrested and tortured by the Roman Inquisition, which claimed that his logic and rhetoric books were heretical. Wilson escaped from prison and returned to England around 1560, shortly after the accession of the Protestant queen, Elizabeth. In 1570 he published a translation of three orations of Demosthenes, and in 1572, the anticapitalist *Discourse on Usury*. During Elizabeth's reign Wilson prospered, rising high above his humble beginnings although never entering the nobility. He held posts as teacher, member of Parliament, ambassador to Portugal and the Netherlands, and, in 1577, secretary of state. He died in this last office.

Wilson's *The Rule of Reason* treats a form of argument much like what Aristotle calls dialectic: a rigorous exchange of views among experts in the subject under discussion. Wilson calls it dialectic or logic. Renaissance scholar Thomas O. Sloane says that Wilson departs from Aristotle by suggesting—at times—that dialectic can achieve certainty, not merely probability.¹ In this, Wilson seems to cling to the medieval view that through reason, people can rectify their fallen state. This view would also place rhetoric in a subordinate position, as merely the method of conveying the truths discovered by logic. Wilson compares logic to a closed fist, driving home its points irresistibly, and rhetoric to an open hand, offering a more conciliatory approach to truth. This popular Renaissance image for logic and rhetoric originated with the ancient Greek philosopher Zeno of Citium, founder of the Stoic school, and was subsequently cited by Cicero and Quintilian.

In *The Arte of Rhetorique*, however, Wilson sometimes speaks as if there is a process of finding and developing arguments, not merely embellishing them, that is proper to rhetoric. He has in mind the “expert” deliberations of lawyers and politicians. The practical rhetorician, moving freely among the strategies offered by in-

¹Thomas O. Sloane, *Donne, Milton, and the End of Humanist Rhetoric* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), pp. 132–34.

vention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery, creates arguments as he shapes his discourse effectively in response to the exigencies of the moment. As Sloane has argued recently,² Wilson fully exploits the Ciceronian practice of exploring all sides of a question in this process. The five-part structure is, of course, drawn from classical rhetoric, but Wilson's work goes further beyond translation and paraphrase than other rhetorics of the period do. He reshapes the classical sources in his own words, for contemporary needs. Moreover, speech-communication scholar Russell H. Wagner suggests that Wilson's emphasis on getting and holding the audience's attention through emotional appeals may be unique. Sloane sees Wilson as trying to promote the ideal of the wise orator, an ideal that can be found in his major sources, Cicero, Quintilian, and Erasmus. But Wilson's logic text suggests that he is not quite as much of a skeptic as Cicero or Erasmus.

As Sloane points out, *ethos* is very important to the Wilsonian rhetorician, as Wilson himself demonstrates amply in the *Rhetorique*, even if he discusses it only scantily.³ But if the term *ethos* does not appear, literary scholar Lois Agnew has argued that Wilson sees style as the way to create an ethical appeal. He is no Ramist, eschewing elaborate ornamentation, but, Agnew contends, his emphasis on aptness and conciseness aims to win the audience's confidence in the speaker's honesty.

Wagner maintains that Wilson's insistence on a five-part structure for rhetoric underlines its usefulness for public oratory, in opposition to Ramist rhetorics that would reduce rhetoric to style and its manifestations largely to print. Wagner's contention is borne out by Renaissance historian Richard J. Schoeck's argument that Wilson addresses the rhetoric to young men like his own tutees, noblemen and gentlemen who are preparing for careers as public servants or lawyers and so will need oral rhetorical skill. The fact that Wilson, in his opening version of a popular classical myth, casts the rhetor who creates civilization as a preacher of God's word also indicates that he may have hoped that his rhetoric would assist pulpit orators. Be it noted, too, that Wilson's decision to write a rhetoric in his own vernacular, English, rather than Latin bespeaks a commitment to its immediate practical use. Nevertheless, most of the examples in the rhetoric are texts meant to be read. In spite of Wilson's allegiance to the humanism of More and Erasmus, which envisaged a powerful public role for rhetoric, he could not entirely resist the pressure of the times to make rhetoric into a written art.

Whether written or oral, however, language was an important force for social mobility in sixteenth-century England. As literary historian Frank Whigham has explained, this was a time of upheaval in which yeomen could become gentlemen and courtiers could fall unless they relied increasingly on language-based diplomatic abilities rather than military prowess to maintain their positions. Whigham suggests that courtesy books, detailing the manners of a gentleman, proliferated in England at this time because they served as how-to manuals for social climbers, who could

²See Thomas O. Sloane, *On the Contrary: The Protocol of Traditional Rhetoric* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University Press, 1997), pp. 193–274.

³Sloane, *Donne, Milton*, p. 136.

take hints from them on constructing aristocratic identities for themselves. Appropriate performance became the hallmark of the true courtier more than noble birth, as shown in the model for these texts, Baldesar Castiglione's *Book of the Courtier* (p. 661). Thus even those born into the upper class might need coaching from such books to maintain their position and not appear perilously vulgar. Wilson's rhetoric book appears to be a related genre because of its advice on managing one's language decorously. Renaissance scholar Wayne Rebhorn has shown how both Castiglione and Wilson emphasize appropriate language use, among other attributes, as an important boundary marker between the upper and lower classes, although in Rebhorn's view Wilson was less obsessed with maintaining the distinction than Castiglione. In his more recent work, Sloane suggests that Wilson actually addresses two audiences in his rhetoric and logic texts: those who, like himself at the beginning of his career, had little familiarity with classical sources and the discourse of power but were ambitious to learn, and also those who had already achieved powerful political positions and could better appreciate the perspicuity and wit of Wilson's advice.

Wilson's rhetoric book went through eight editions and was the most popular rhetoric in English in sixteenth-century England. In a 1560 edition, Wilson dedicates the work to John Dudley, Lord Lisle, Earl of Warwick. This young man, a friend of one of Wilson's tutees and known to be a scholar, was just beginning the kind of diplomatic career to which Wilson's conception of rhetoric might be supposed helpful. He was also a well-placed patron who could be useful to Wilson. Wilson opens with an apt example of rhetoric's diplomatic power: the orator Cineas persuading cities to surrender to King Pyrrhus without bloodshed. He also adds a prologue to this 1560 edition, in which he tells bitterly how the first edition brought on the charge of heresy from the Roman Inquisition. Not wishing to be persecuted again, Wilson now disavows responsibility for any harm the work might cause.

SUMMARY OF *THE ARTE OF RHETORIQUE*

In Book I, Wilson opens by taxonomizing his subject in a series of definitions drawing largely from classical sources. Then he treats invention in detail. He gives "places" to search when inventing demonstrative (epideictic or ceremonial) speeches on a person, on an important action, and on virtue and vice. Next, Wilson gives places for the deliberative (political) speech. Interestingly, although this kind of oration would normally be used in a legislative setting, Wilson's sample oration addresses a single listener, a friend whom he is urging to study the laws of England. His second example is a long letter by Erasmus persuading a young gentleman to marry. Wilson gives additional places for the exhortative type of deliberative speech. Finally, by way of giving places for the judicial speech, Wilson describes stasis theory. He concludes his discussion of judicial oratory with advice on how to handle conflicting or ambiguous laws.

Wilson begins Book II by proposing to detail how to develop the seven parts of an oration (in other words, this book will be devoted to disposition or arrange-

ment). In dealing with part one, the “enteraunce” or beginning, Wilson dwells most on how to get the goodwill of hearers who are disposed against one’s case. Part two, the “narration,” should be “briefe, plaine, and probable.” On part three, “division,” Wilson agrees with Cicero that three main points are best. Part four, the “proposicion,” is a pithy saying or proverb that bears on one’s position. To devise part five, the “confirmacion” or arguments for one’s position, Wilson recommends using “the places of logique” but does not give them here (perhaps assuming that his rhetoric text will be used in conjunction with his logic text). This discussion leads into part six, the “confutacion” of the opponent’s position, because the same places should be used to devise arguments here. Part seven, the “conclusion,” should have two parts: a quick summary of the main arguments for and against one’s position, and an emotional appeal to move the hearers toward one’s position.

Wilson now turns to “the figure amplificacion,” an aid to “copie,” or having enough to say. He describes various kinds of amplification and announces that “the beautie of Amplifying, standeth most in apte moving of the affections.” The event itself and the person concerned both move people’s emotions, and Wilson gives commonplaces from Quintilian for developing appeals based on them. He tells how to arouse pity as well as laughter, and illustrates the latter with an unusually large number of examples.

In Book III, Wilson treats elocution or style, and once again he begins with a taxonomy. He condemns overly elaborate or archaic “ynkehorne” terms, intended to display learning, in a famous passage. “Exornation” consists of figures and tropes. Tropes are necessary to enlarge the communicative capacity of language; a trope can affect a single word or a whole sentence. The first word trope Wilson discusses is metaphor. All tropes alter meaning from that which is normal to that which is not normal. Figures alter not the meaning but the shape of a word, for example, by dropping a syllable (“ope” for “open”). Wilson then turns to the “coloures of rhetorique,” which are, in effect, sentence-length analogues of verbal figures; they do not alter meaning but emphasize it. Wilson says he follows Cicero here, and he gives his own English as well as Latin names for the “coloures.” Next he discusses “figures in sentences, called schemes,” which affect word order. Whereas Wilson earlier seems to distinguish the schemes from the “coloures of rhetorique,” at the end of this section he calls these, too, “coloures,” and there is some overlap with items listed as “coloures.”

Wilson now turns to “memorie,” which is partly natural and partly artificial. He tells the well-known story of how the Greek poet Simonides invented the art of memory by realizing that he could identify the mangled bodies in a banquet hall that had just collapsed by visualizing where each person had sat at the feast. Wilson recommends establishing one’s own memory places by memorizing a building and then distributing through its visualized rooms striking objects that symbolize and will evoke the parts of the discourse one wishes to remember. This is standard classical practice. Wilson turns finally to “pronunciation” or “utterance,” touching very briefly on how to speak in a pleasing tone, gesture well, and pronounce correctly.

Selected Bibliography

The excerpts reprinted here are taken from Thomas Wilson, *Arte of Rhetorique* (ed. Thomas J. Derrick, 1982). For a facsimile edition, see *The Arte of Rhetorique* (ed. R. H. Bowers, 1962). An edition of the companion logic text is *The Rule of Reason Conteynyng the Arte of Logique* (ed. Richard S. Sprague, 1972).

A good introductory biography is Peter Medine's *Thomas Wilson* (1986). Thomas O. Sloane discusses Wilson in *Donne, Milton, and the End of Humanist Rhetoric* (1985), and more recently, in *On the Contrary: The Protocol of Traditional Rhetoric* (1997), in which he details the influence on Wilson of Erasmus's method of rhetorical invention that argues all sides of a question. An excellent overview of English courtesy literature and the historical context of Wilson's work can be found in Frank Whigham's *Ambition and Privilege: The Social Tropes of Elizabethan Courtesy Theory* (1984).

For more on Wilson's relation to classical and Renaissance rhetoric, see Russell H. Wagner, "Wilson and His Sources" (*Quarterly Journal of Speech* 15 [1929]: 530–32). Lois Agnew discusses Wilson's adaptations of Ciceronian notions of ethos in "Rhetorical Style and the Formation of Character: Ciceronian Ethos in Thomas Wilson's *Arte of Rhetorique*" (*Rhetoric Review* 17 [fall 1998]: 93–106). Wayne Rebhorn relates Wilson to Castiglione, particularly as each depicts the physical body of the male courtier, in "Baldesar Castiglione, Thomas Wilson, and the Courtly Body of Renaissance Rhetoric" (*Rhetorica* 11 [summer 1993]: 241–74). For more on Wilson's politics, including the implications of his *Discourse on Usury*, see Albert J. Schmidt, "Thomas Wilson and the Tudor Commonwealth: An Essay in Civic Humanism" (*Huntington Library Quarterly* 23 [1960]: 49–60). For further information on Wilson's relation to the legal profession, see Richard J. Schoeck, "Lawyers and Rhetoric in Sixteenth-Century England" (in *Renaissance Eloquence*, ed. James J. Murphy, 1983). Mark Wildermuth discusses the implications of Wilson's rhetoric for preaching in "The Rhetoric of Wilson's *Arte*: Reclaiming the Classical Heritage for English Protestants" (*Philosophy and Rhetoric* 22 [1989]: 43–58).

From *The Arte of Rhetorique*

[FROM BOOK I]

Eloquence first geven by God, after loste by man, and laste repayed by God agayne.

Man (in whom is poured the breathe of lyfe) was made at hys firste beinge an everlivyng Creature, unto the likeness of God, endued with reason, and appoynted Lorde over all other thinges living. But after the fall of our firste father, Sinne so crepte in, that our knowledge was muche darkened, and by corruption of this oure fleshe, mans reason and entendement were bothe overwhelmed. At what time God beinge sore greved

with the folye of one man, pitied of his mere goodnesse, the whole state and posteritie of mankinde. And therefore (wher as throughe the wicked suggestion of our ghostelye enemye, the joyfull fruition of Goddes glorye was altogether loste:) it pleased our heavenly father to repayre mankynde of hys free mercye, and to graunte an everlivynge enheritaunce unto all suche as woulde by constante fayth seeke earnestlye thereafter. Longe it was ere that man knewe himselfe, beinge destitute of Gods grace, so that all thinges waxed savage, the earth untilled, societie neglected, Goddes will not knowen, man againste manne, one agaynste another, and all agaynste order. Some lived by spoyle, some like

Edited by Thomas J. Derrick.

brute Beastes grased upon the ground, some wente naked, some romed lyke woodoses,¹ none did anye thing by reason, but most did what they could, by manhode. None almoste considered the everlivynge God, but all lived moste communely after their own luste. By death they thoughte that all thinges ended, by life they loked for none other livynge. None remembred the true observation of wedlocke, none tendered the education of their chylde, lawes were not regarded, true dealinge was not once used. For vertue, vyc bare place, for right and equitie, might used auctoritie. And therefore where as man through reason might have used order, manne through folly fell into erreure. And thus for lacke of skill, and for wante of grace, evyll so prevayled, that the Devyll was mooste esteemed, and GOD either almost unknowen emonge them all, or elles nothinge feared emonge so manye. Therefore even now when man was thus paste all hope of amendemente, God still tendering his owne workemanship, stirred up his faythfull and elect, to perswade with reason, all men to societie. And gave his appoynted ministers knowledge bothe to se the natures of men, and also graunted them the gift of utteraunce, that they myghte wyth ease wyne folke at their will, and frame them by reason to all good order.

And therefore, where as Menne lyved Brutyslye in open felde, having neither house to shroude them in, nor attyre to clothe their backes, nor yet anye regarde to seeke their best avayle: these appoynted of God called them together by utteraunce of speache, and perswaded with them what was good, what was badde, and what was gainefull for mankynde. And althoughe at firste, the rude coulde hardelie learne, and either for straungenes of the thing, would not gladly receive the offer, or els for lacke of knoweledge could not perceyve the goodnes: yet being somewhat drawn and delighted with the pleasauntnes of reason, and the swetenes of utteraunce: after a certaine space, thei became through nurture and good advisement, of wilde, sober: of cruel, gentle: of foles, wise: and of beastes, men. Suche force hath the tongue, and such is the power of eloquence and reason, that most men are forced even

¹Wild men of the woods, savages. [T.J.D.]

to yelde in that, whiche most standeth agaynste their will. And therefore the Poetes do feyne² that Hercules being a man of greate wisdom, had all men lincked together by the eares in a chaine, to draw them and leade them even as he lusted. For his witte was so greate, his tongue so eloquente, and his experience suche, that no one man was able to withstand his reason, but everye one was rather driven to do that whiche he woulde, and to wil that whiche he did, agreing to his advise both in word and worke, in all that ever they were able.

Neither can I see that menne coulde have bene broughte by anye other meanes to lyve together in felowshyppe of life, to mayntayne Cities, to deale trulye, and willyngelye to obeye one another, if menne at the firste hadde not by Art and eloquence perswaded that, which they ful oft found out by reason. For what manne I praye you being better able to maintayne him selfe by valeante courage, then by living in base subjection: would not rather loke to rule like a lord, then to lyve lyke an underlynge: if by reason he were not perswaded that it behoveth everye man to lyve in his owne vocation, and not to seke anye hygher rowme, then whereunto he was at the first appoynted? Who woulde digge and delve from morne till evening? Who woulde travaile and toyle with the sweate of his browes? Yea, who woulde for his kynges pleasure adventure and hasarde his life, if witte hadde not so wonne men, that they thought nothing more nedefull in this world, nor anye thing whereunto they were more bounden: then here to live in their duty, and to traine their whole lyfe accordynge to their callinge. Therefore where as menne are in manye thynges weake by Nature and subjecte to much infirmitye: I thinke in this one point they passe all other Creatures livynge, that they have the gift of speache and reason.

And emonge all other, I thinke him most worthy fame, and emongest menne to be taken for

²In the introduction to *Heracles* (1, 65) Lucian remarks upon the peculiar aspects of *Heracles Ogmios*, as depicted by the Celts. This Hercules draws with him an eagerly following crowd of men, tethered through the ears by golden chains linked to his tongue. Lucian explains that the Celts considered Hercules a wiseman who relied exclusively on eloquence to achieve his works. Erasmus refers to this detail in *Luciani Dialogi* (I, 321 F). [T.J.D.]

halfe a God, that therin dothe chiefelye, and above all other excell menne, wherin men doo excell beastes. For he that is emonge the reasonable, of all moste reasonable, and emonge the wittye, of all moste wittye, and emonge the eloquente, of all moste eloquente: him thincke I emonge all menne, not onelye to be taken for a singular manne, but rather to be counted for halfe a God. For in sekynge the excellencye hereof, the soner he draweth to perfection, the nygher he commeth to GOD who is the chiefe wisdome, and therefore called God, because he is most wise, or rather wisdome it selfe.

Nowe then seinge that God geveth his heavenlye grace unto all suche as call unto him with stretched handes, and humble harte, never wantynge to those, that wante not to them selves: I purpose by his grace and especial assistance, to set forthe preceptes of eloquence, and to shewe what observation the wise have used in handling of their matters, that the unlearned by seinge the practise of other, may have some knowledge them selves, and learne by their neyghbours devise, what is necessarye for them selves in their owne case.

What is Rhetorique.

Rhetorique is an art to set furthe by utteraunce of wordes, matter at large, or (as Cicero doeth saie)³ it is a learned, or rather an artificiall declaracion of the mynde, in the handelyng of any cause, called it contencion, that maie through reason largely be discussed.

The matter whereupon an Oratour must speake.

Rhetorique occupied aboute all lawes, concernyng man.

An Orator muste be able to speake fully of all those questions, whiche by lawe and mannes ordinaunce are enacted, and appoynted for the use

³In *De Oratore* (I, ii, 5) Cicero states that eloquence depends on the training of highly artistic men, "prudentissimum hominum artibus eloquentiam," and in *De Inventione* (I, v, 7) the subjects of rhetoric he calls the material of art. [T.J.D.]

and profite of man, suche as are thought apte for the tongue to set forward. Nowe Astronomie is rather learned by demonstracion, then taught by any greate utteraunce. Arithmetique smally nedeth the use of eloquence, seeyng it maie be had wholly by nombryng onely. Geometrie rather asketh a good square, then a cleane flowyng tongue, to set out the arte.

Questions of two sortes.

Therefore an Orators profession, is to speake onely, of all suche matters as maie largely be expounded, for mannes behove, and maie with muche grace be set out, for all men to heare them.

Of Questions.

Every question, or demaunde in thynges, is of two sortes.⁴ Either it is an infinite question, and without ende, or els it is definite, and comprehended within some ende.

Questions infinite.

Those questions are called infinite, whiche generally are propounded, withoute the comprehension of tyme, place, and person, or any suche like: that is to saie, when no certain thyng is named, but only woordes are generally spoken. As thus, whether it be best to marie, or to live single. Whiche is better, a courtiers life, or a scholers life.

Questions definite.

Those questions are called definite, whiche set furthe a matter, with the appoyntment, and namyng of place, time, and persone. As thus. Whether now it be best here in Englande, for a

⁴In Cicero's *De Oratore* (I, xxxi, 138) Crassus observes that the orator treats two kinds of question: (1) infinite questions, "de infinitae rei questione," and (2) questions related to particular persons and times, "de re certis in personis ac temporibus locata." Quintilian in his *Institutio Oratoria* (III, v, 5) names this pair of ideas infinite and definite, "aut infinitas aut finitas," and illustrates the distinction with the example of marriage. [T.J.D.]

Prieste to Marie, or to live single. Whether it were mete for the kynges majestie, that now is, to marie with a straunger, or to mary with one of his awn subjectes.

Questions definite, belong properly to an Orator.

Now the definite question (as the whiche concerneth some one persone) is moste agreyng to the purpose of an Orator consideryng particuler matters in the Lawe, are ever debated betwixte certain persones, the one affirmyng for his parte, and the other denyng, as fast again for his parte.

Questions infinite, proper unto Logicians.

Thynges generally spoken without al circumstances, are more proper unto the Logician, who talketh of thynges universally, without respect of persone, time, or place. And yet notwithstanding, Tullie doeth saie,⁵ that whosoever will talke of a particuler matter, must remember that within thesame also, is comprehended a generall. As for example. If I shall aske this question, whether it be lawfull for Willyam Conqueroure to invade Englande, and wyne it by force of armour, I must also consider this, whether it be lawfull for any man, to usurpe power, or it be not lawfull. That if the greater cannot be borne withall, the lesse cannot be neither. And in this respect, a generall question agreeth well to an Orators profession, and ought well to be knowen, for the better futheraunce of his matter, notwithstanding the particuler question, is ever called in controversie, and the generall onely thereupon considered, to comprehende and compasse thesame, as the whiche is more generall.

The ende of Rhetorique.

Three thynges are required of an Orator.⁶

⁵In *De Oratore* (II, xxx, 133) Cicero remarks that all debates can be classified under the notion and quality of the general kind: "omnes controversias ad universi generis vim et naturam referri." In *De Partitione Oratoria* (XVIII, 61) he expresses the similar idea that the infinite contains the definite: "inest enim infinitum in definito." [T.J.D.]

⁶This commonplace appears in Cicero's *De Oratore* (II, xxviii, 121), "concilientur animi et doceantur et moveantur";

Orators bound to perfourme thre thynges.

To teache.
To delight.
And to perswade.

Plain wordes proper unto an Oratour.

First, therefore an Orator muste labour to tell his tale, that the hearers maie well knowe what he meaneth, and understande him wholly, the whiche he shall with ease do, if he utter his mind in plain wordes, suche as are usually received, and tell it orderly, without goyng aboute the busshe. That if he doe not this, he shall never do the other. For what manne can be delited or yet be perswaded, with the onely hearyng of those thynges, whiche he knoweth not what thei meane. The tongue is ordeined to expresse the mynde, that one mighte understande anothers meanyng: Nowe what availeth to speake, when none can tell, what the speaker meaneth? Therefore Phavorinus the Philosophier (as Gellius telleth the tale)⁷ did hit a yong man over the thumbes, very handsomely for usyng over olde, and over straunge woordes.

A Philosophiers wittie sayyng to a yong manne, that sought to speake darke language.

Sirha (quothe he) when our old great auncesters and groundsires wer alive thei spake plainly in their mothers tongue, and used old language, suche as was spoken then at the building of Rome. But you talke me suche Latin, as though you spake with them even now, that were two or thre thousande yeres ago, and onely because you would have no man, to understand what you saie. Now wer it not better for the a thousand fold (thou foolishe fellowe) in sekyng to have thy desire, to holde thy peace, and speake nothyng at all? for then by that meanes, fewe should knowe

in *Brutus* (XLIX, 185), "doceatur . . . delectetur . . . moveatur"; in *Orator* (XX, 69), "probare . . . delectare . . . flectere." [T.J.D.]

⁷Aulus Gellius in *Noctium Atticarum* (I, x, 1-4) recounts the story of Favorinus' chastisement of a young man very fond of old words, renders the philosopher's words to the *homo inepte*, and records Caesar's comparison of an unfamiliar word with a dangerous rock: "ut tamquam scopulum, sic fugias inauditum atque insolens verbum." [T.J.D.]

what were thy meanyng. But thou saiest, the olde antiquitee doeth like thee best, because it is good, sobre, and modest. Ah, live man as thei did before thee, and speake thy mynde now, as menne do at this daie. And remember that, whiche Cesar saith, beware as long as thou livest, of straunge woordes, as thou wouldest take hede and eschewe greate rockes in the Sea.

Orators must use delightful woordes, and saynges.

The next parte that he hath to plaie, is to chere his gestic, and to make them take pleasure, with hearyng of thynges wittely devised, and pleasantly set furthe. Therefore every Orator should earnestly laboure to file his tongue, that his woordes maie slide with ease, and that in his deliv-erance, he maie have suche grace, as the sound of a lute, or any suche instrument doeth geve. Then his sentencies must be well framed, and his woordes aptly used, throughout the whole dis-course of his Oracion.

Thirdly, suche quicknesse of witte must be shewed, and suche pleasaunt sawes so well applied, that the eares maie finde muche delite, whereof I will speake largely, when I shall entreate of movyng laughter. And assuredly nothyng is more nedefull, then to quicken these heavie loden wittes of ours, and muche to cher- ishe these our lompishe and unweldie natures, for excepte menne finde delight, thei will not long abide: delight them, and wyne them: werie them, and you lose them for ever.

Preachers not so diligently heard as common plaiers.

And that is the reason, that menne commonly tary the ende of a merie plaie, and cannot abide the halfe hearyng of a sower checkyng Sermon.

Prechers must sometymes be of merie, when thei speake to the people.

Therefore, even these auncient preachers, must now and then plaie the fooles in the pulpite, to serve the tickle eares of their fleetyng audience, or els thei are like some tymes to preache to the bare walles, for though the spirite bee apte, and our will prone, yet our fleshe is so heavie, and hu-

mours so overwhelme us, that wee cannot without refreshyng, long abide to heare any one thyng.

Delityng nedefull.

Thus we se, that to delight is nedefull, without the whiche, weightier matters will not be heard at all, and therefore hym cunne⁸ I thanke, that bothe can and will ever, myngle swete, emong the sower, be he Preacher, Lawyer, yea, or Cooke ei-ther hardely, when he dresseth a good dishe of meate:

Scurrilitie odious.

now I nede not tell that scurrilitie, or Alehouse jestyng, would bee thought odious, or grosse mirthe would be deamed madnesse: consideryng that even the meane witted doe knowe that al- ready, and as for other, that have no witte, thei will never learne it, therefore God spede them.

Affeccions must be moved.

Now when these twoo are dooen, he muste per- swade, and move the affeccions of his hearers in such wise, that thei shalbe forced to yelde unto his sayng, wherof (because the matter is large, and maie more aptly bee declared, when I shall speake of Amplificacion) I wil surcease to speake any thyng therof at this tyme.

By what meanes Eloquence is attained.⁹

Firste nedefull it is that he, whiche desireth to ex- cell in this gift of Oratorie, and longeth to prove an eloquent man, must naturally have a wit, and an aptnesse thereunto: then must he to his boke, and learne to be well stored with knowlege, that he maie be able to minister matter, for all causes necessarie. The which when he hath gotte plenti- fully, he muste use muche exercise, both in

⁸Variant of "can." [T.J.D.]

⁹*Ad Herennium* (I, ii, 3) contains a summary of the three means: theory, imitation, and practice, "arte, imitatione, ex- ercitatione." A similar triad appears in *De Inventione* (I, i, 2), "artis sive studi sive exercitationis," and *De Oratore* (I, iv, 14), "ingenio . . . studio . . . usus." Quintilian in *Institutio Or- atorica* (III, v, 1) lists "natura, arte, exercitatione" and adds a fourth element, *imitationis*, subordinated to *arte*. [T.J.D.]

wrytyng, and also in speakyng. For though he have a wit and learnyng together, yet shall thei bothe litle availe without much practise.

Practise maketh all thynges perfect.

What maketh the lawyer to have suche utteraunce? Practise. What maketh the Preacher to speake so roundly? Practise. Yea, what maketh women go so fast awaie with their wordes? Marie practise I warraunt you. Therefore in all faculties, diligent practise, and earnest exercise, are the onely thynges, that make men prove excellent. Many men knowe the arte very well, and be in all poyntes throughly grounded, and acquainted with the preceptes, and yet it is not their hap to prove eloquent.

Rhetorique firste made by wise men, and not wise men firste made by Rhetorique.

And the reason is, that eloquence it self, came not up first by the arte, but the arte rather was gathered upon eloquence. For wise menne seyng by muche observacion, and diligent practise, the compasse of diverse causes, compiled thereupon preceptes and lessons, worthie to bee knowen and learned of all men. Therefore before arte was invented, eloquence was used, and through practise made perfecte, the whiche in all thynges is a soveraigne meane, most highly to excell.

Imitacion or folowyng the waies of wise men, is nedefull.

Now before we use either to write, or speake eloquently we must dedicate our myndes wholly, to folowe the moste wise and learned menne, and seke to fashion, aswell their speache and gesturyng, as their wit or endityng. The whiche when we earnestly mynde to do, we cannot but in time appere somewhat like theim. For if thei that walke muche in the sonne, and thinke not of it, are yet for the moste part sonne burnt,¹⁰ it cannot be but that thei, whiche wittingly and willyngly travaile to counterfecte other, muste nedes take some colour of theim, and be like unto theim, in some one thyng or other, accordyng to the Proverbe, by companyng with the wise, a man shall learne wisdom.

¹⁰Wilson employs the same image in the prologue (1560), 13.15. [T.J.D.]

To what purpose this arte is set furthe.

Rhetorique, to what purpose it serveth.

To this purpose and for this use, is the arte compiled together, by the learned and wise men,¹¹ that those whiche are ignorant, might judge of the lerned, and labour (when tyme should require) to folow their workes accordyngly.

Arte, surer guide, then nature.

Again, the art helpeth well to dispose and order matters of our awne invencion, the whiche we may folowe, aswell in speakyng, as in wrytyng for though many by nature without art, have proved worthie menne, yet is arte a surer guide, then nature, consideryng we se as lively by the art, what we do, as though we red a thyng in writyng, wheras natures doynge are not so open to all men. Again, those that have good wittes, by nature, shall better encrease theim by arte, and the blunte also shalbe whetted through art,¹² that want nature to help them forward.

Five thynges to be considered in an Oratour.¹³

Anyone that will largely handle any matter, muste fasten his mynde, first of all upon these five especial poyntes that folowe, and learne theim every one.

Orators must have five thynges to make them perfect.

- i. Invencion of matter.
- ii. Disposicion of the same.
- iii. Elocucion.
- iiii. Memorie.
- v. Utteraunce.

¹¹Cicero in *De Oratore* (I, xxxii, 146) observes that the virtue of the rules of rhetoric resides not in the reputation gained by orators for obeying the precepts but in the collected sayings of eloquent men, and thus eloquence is not born of art, but art of eloquence: "sic esse non eloquentiam ex artificio, sed artificium ex eloquentia natum." [T.J.D.]

¹²Taverner in *Garden*, sig. F7^v, attributes a similar idea to Isocrates: "Bycause whetstones, quoth he, them selves can not cutte, yet they make knyfes and weapons sharpe and able to cut other thynges." Udall in *Floures*, fol. 176^v, ascribes this saying to Horace. [T.J.D.]

¹³The five faculties of the orator, without significant differences, appear in *Ad Herennium* (I, ii, 3), *De Inventione* (I, vii, 9), and *Institutio* (III, iii, 15). [T.J.D.]

Invencion, what it is.

The findyng out of apte matter, called otherwise Invencion, is a searchyng out of thynges true, or thynges likely, the whiche maie reasonably sette furth a matter, and make it appere probable. The places of Logique, geve good occasion to finde out plentiful matter. And therefore thei that will prove any cause and seke onely to teache thereby the truthe, muste searche out the places of Logique, and no double thei shall finde muche plentie. But what availeth muche treasure and apt matter, if man cannot apply it to his purpose.

Disposicion, what it is.

Therefore in the seconde place is mencioned, the settelyng or orderyng of thynges invented for this purpose, called in Latine, *Dispositio*, the whiche is nothyng else, but an apt bestowyng, and orderly placyng of thynges, declaryng where every argument shalbe sett, and in what maner every reason shalbe applied, for confirmacion of the purpose.

But yet what helpeth it though we can finde good reasons, and knowe howe to place them, if we have not apte wordes, and picked sentences, to commende the whole matter.

Elocucion, what it is.

Therefore this poynt must nedes folowe, to beautifie the cause, the whiche beyng called Elocucion, is an applyng of apte wordes and sentences to the matter, founde out to confirme the cause. When all these are had together, it availeth litle, if manne have no Memorie to containe them.

Memorie, what it is.

The Memorie therefore must be cherished, the whiche is a fast holdyng, both of matter and woordes couched together, to confirme any cause.

Be it now that one have all these .iiii, yet if he want the fift, all the other dooe little profite. For though a manne can finde out good matter, and good woordes, though he canne handsomely set them together, and cary them very well awaie in his mynde, yet it is to no purpose, if he have no

utteraunce, when he should speake his minde, and shewe men what he hath to saie.

Pronunciacion, what it is.

Utteraunce therefore is a framying of the voyce, countenaunce, and gesture, after a comely manner.

Thus we se that every one of these must go together, to make a perfecte Oratoure, and that the lacke of one, is an hynderaunce of the whole, and that aswell all maie be wantyng, as one, if we loke to have an absolute Oratour.

***There are .vii. partes in every Oracion.*¹⁴**

Oracions in generall, consist upon seven partes.

- i. The enteraunce or beginnyng.
- ii. The Narracion.
- iii. The Proposicion.
- iiii. The division or severall partyng of thynges.
- v. The Confirmacion.
- vi. The Confutacion.
- vii. The Conclusion.

Enteraunce, what it is.

The Enteraunce or beginnyng, is the former part of the Oracion, whereby the will of the standers by, or of the Judge is sought for, and required to heare the matter.

Narration.

The Narracion, is a plain and manifest poyntyng of the matter, and an evident setting furthe of all thynges, that belong unto thesame, with a brief rehearsall, grounded upon some reason.

¹⁴Wilson's division is unique. Although the *Ad Herennium* (I, iii, 4) and *De Inventione* (I, xiv, 19) each list six parts and exclude "Proposicion," Quintilian in *Institutio* (III, ix, 1) mentions *propositio* as an additional part of a judicial oration normally composed of five parts: "prooemium, narratio, probatio, refutatio, peroratio." Cox, sig. C5^v, writes concerning the deliberative oration: "In this kynde we use but selden hole narracions/oneles we make our oracion afore them that knowe not the history of the acte or dede whiche we be aboute to praise. But in stede of a narracion we use a proposicion." [T.J.D.]

Proposicion.

The Proposicion is a pithie sentence, comprehending in a smale roume, the some of the whole matter.

Division.

The division is an openyng of thynges, wherein we agree and rest upon, and wherein we sticke, and stande in traverse shewyng what we have to saie, in our awne behalfe.

Confirmacion.

The Confirmacion, is a declaracion of our awne reasons with assured and constaunt profes.

Confutacion.

The Confutacion, is a dissolvynge or wipynge awaie, of all suche reasons as make against us.

Conclusion.

The Conclusion is a clarkely gatheryng of the matter, spoken before, and a lappynge up of it altogether.

Now because in every one of these, greate hede ought to be had, and muche arte must be used, to content and like all parties: I purpose in the second boke to set furthe at large every one of these, that bothe we maie knowe in all partes, what to folowe, and what to eschewe. And first when tyme shalbe to talke of any matter, I would advise every man, to consider the nature of the cause self, that the rather he might frame his whole Oracion thereafter.

Every matter is contened in one of these .iiii.¹⁵

Matters in general, stand in .iiii. poyntes.

Either it is an honest thyng, whereof we speake, or els it is filthy and vile, or else betwixte bothe,

¹⁵In *Ad Herennium* (I, iii, 5) the four kinds of causes are named "honestum, turpe, dubium, humile." Quintilian in *Institutio Oratoria* (IV, i, 40) and Cicero in *De Inventione* (I, xv, 20) lists five kinds by adding respectively *anceps* and *obscurum*. [T.J.D.]

and doubtfull what to bee called, or els it is some triflyng matter, that is of small weight.

i. Matters, honest.

That is called an honest matter, when either wee take in hande suche a cause, that all menne would maintein, or els gainsaie suche a cause, that no man can well like.

ii. Matters, filthie.

Then do we hold and defende a filthy matter, when either wee speake against our conscience in an evill matter, or els withstande an upright truthe.

iii. Matters, doubtful.

The cause then is doubtfull, when the matter is half honest, and halfe dishonest.

iiii. Matters, trifelyng.

Suche are triflyng causes,¹⁶ when there is no weight in them, as if one should phantasy, to praise a Gose, before any other beast livyng (as I knowe who did) or of fruict to commende nuttes chefly, as Ovid did, or the fever quartaine, as Phavorinus did, or the Gnatte, as Virgill did, or the battaill of Frogges as Homere did, or dispraise bearded, or commende shaven heddes.

Good hede to bee taken at the firste, upon the handelyng of any matter in Judgement.

Circumstaunces necessary in al causes to bee noted.

Not onely it is necessarie to knowe, what maner of cause wee have taken in hande, when wee

¹⁶The praise of a goose probably refers to some grammar school or university exercise. Ovid wrote an allegorical lament of the nut tree, *Nux Elegia*, and Virgil was thought to have written *Culex*, a poetic dialogue between the soul of a gnat and the shepherd who killed him. Aulus Gellius records in *Noctium Atticarum* (XVII, xii) that Favorinus composed a clever eulogy on the quartan fever (a disease supposedly recurring every fourth day). The battle of frogs refers to a parody of Homer, *BATPAXOMYOMAXIA*, previously attributed

firste enter upon any matter, but also it is wisdom to consider¹⁷ the tyme, the place, the man for whome we speake, the man against whom we speake, the matter whereof we speake, and the judges before whom we speake, the reasons that best serve to further our cause, and those reasons also, that maie seme somewhat to hynder our cause, and in no wise to use any suche at all, or els warely to mitigate by protestacion, the evill that is in them, and alwaies to use whatsoever can bee saied, to wynne the chief hearers good willes, and perswade them to our purpose.

Favoure wynnyng, and affections movyng, when they are moste necessarie.

If the cause go by favour, and that reason cannot so muche availe, as good wil shalbe able to do: or els if movyng affections can do more good, then bryngyng in of good reasons, it is meete alwaies to use that waie, whereby we maie by good helpe, get the over hand.

Adversaries reasons, when they shuld best be confuted.

That if mine adversaries reasons, by me beyng confuted, serve better to help forward my cause, then mine awn reasons confirmed, can be able to doe good: I should wholly bestowe my tyme, and travaill to weaken and make slender, all that ever he bringeth with hym.

Argumentes when they shuld chiefly be used.

But if I can with more ease, prove myne awne saynges, either with witnesses, or with wordes, then be able to confute his with reason, I must labour to withdrawe mennes myndes, from myne adversaries foundation, and require them wholly to herken unto that whiche I have to saie, beyng

to Homer himself (see *Homerica*, collected with Hesiod in the Loeb Classical Library). A commendation of baldness was composed by Synesius, to whom Erasmus refers in *Moriae Encomium* (IV, 402) along with reference to all the rest of Wilson's examples, except the goose. Cf. *Arte*, 92.18. [T.J.D.]

¹⁷Wilson's list of considerations for "any matter in Judgement" resembles the analysis of the *exordium* in *Ad Herennium* (I, vi-vii) and *De Inventione* (I, xvi-xvii). [T.J.D.]

of it self so just and so reasonable, that none can rightly speake against it, and shewe them that greate pitie it were, for lacke of the onely hearyng, that a true matter, should want true dealyng. Over and besides all these, there remain twoo lessons, the whiche wisemenne have alwaies observed, and therefore ought of all men, assuredly to be learned.

Matters, hard to avoide, shuld alwaies bee past over, as though we saw them not at al.

The one is, that if any matter be laied against us, whiche by reason can hardely bee avoyded, or the whiche is so open, that none almoste can deny, it were wisdom in confutyng all the other reasons, to passe over this one, as though we sawe it not, and therefore speake never a worde of it.

Good to bee bolde in moste daungier, if otherwise wee cannot escape.

Or els if necessitie shall force a man to saie some what, he may make an outward bragge, as though there wer no matter in it, ever so speakyng of it, as though he would stande to the triall, makyng men to beleve, he would fight in the cause, when better it were (if necessitie so required) to run clene awaie. And herein though a man do flie and geve place, evermore the gladder, the lesse ravyng there is or stirryng in this matter: yet he flieth wisely, and for this ende, that beyng sensed otherwise, and strongly appoynced, he maie take his adversary at the best advauntage, or at the least, werie hym with muche linyng, and make hym with oft such flyng, to forsake his chief defence.

Better not to hurte a good matter by evil speach, then to further it by good talke.

The other lesson is, that whereas we purpose alwaies to have the victorie, wee should so speake, that we maie labour rather not to hynder, or hurt our cause, then to seke meanes to further it. And yet I speake not this, but that bothe these are right necessarie, and every one that will doo good, muste take peines in them bothe, but yet notwithstanding, it is a fouler faulte a greate

deale, for an Orator to be founde hurting his awne cause, then it should turne to his rebuke, if he had not furthered his whole entent.

Warenesse in speakyng, and forbearyng to speake.

Therefore not onely is it wisdome, to speake so muche as is nedeful, but also it is good reason, to leave unspoken so muche as is nedelesse, the whiche although the wisest can do, and nede no teachyng, yet these common wittes offende muche nowe and then, in this behalfe.

The person before whom we speake, must be well marked.

Some man beyng stirred, shall hurt more our cause then twentie other. Tauntyng wordes before some menne, will not be borne at all. Sharpe rebukyng of our adversary or frumpes geven before some persones: cannot be sufferd at all.

Tyme must be observed.

Yea, sometymes a man must not speake all that he knoweth, for if he doo, he is like to finde small favour, although he have just cause to speake, and maie with reason declare his mynde at large. And albeit that witlesse folke, can soner rebuke that, whiche is fondly spoken, then redely praise that whiche is wisely kept close, yet the necessitie of the matter, must rather be marked, then the fonde judgement of the people esteemed. What a sore sayng were this? When a lawyer should take in hande a matter, concernyng life and death, and another should aske how he hath sped, to hearetel that the lawyer, hath not onely cast awaie his client, but undoen hymself also, in speakyng thynges inconsideratly, as no doubt it often happeneth, that wise men, and those also that bee none evill men neither, maie unwares speake thynges, which afterward thei sore repent, and would cal backe again with losse of a greate somme. Now what a foly it is, not to remember the tyme and the men. Or who will speake that which he knoweth will not be liked, if he purpose to finde favour at their handes, before whom he speaketh, what man of reason will praise that before the Judges, (before whom he knoweth the determinacion of his cause resteth) whiche the

Judges self cannot abide to heare spoken at all? Or doeth not he muche hinder his awne matter, that without al curtesie or preface made, will largely speake evil of those men, whom the hearers of his cause, tenderly doo favour? Or be it that there be some notable faulte in thyne adversary, with whiche the Judges also are infected, were it not foly for thee, to charge thyne adversary with thesame. Consideryng the Judges thereby maie thynke, thou speakest against them also, and so thou maiest perhappes, lose their favour in sekyng suche defence, made without all discrecion. And in framing reasons, to confirme the purpose, if any be spoken plainly false, or els contrary to that, whiche was spoken before, dooeth it not muche hynder a good matter? Therefore in all causes, this good hede ought to bee had, that alwaies we labour to do some good, in furtheryng of our cause, or if we cannot so do, at the least that we doo no harme at all.

***There are three kyndes of causes, or Oracions, which serve for every matter.*¹⁸**

Oracions, or causes of three kyndes.

Nothyng can be handled by this arte, but thesame is contened, within one of these .iii. causes. Either the matter consisteth in praise, or dispraise of a thyng, or els in consultancy, whether the cause be profitable, or unprofitable, or lastly, whether the matter be right, or wrong. And yet this one thyng is to be learned that in every one of these three causes,¹⁹ these three severall endes, maie every of them be contened, in any one of them. And therefore he that shall have cause, to praise any one body, shall have juste cause to speake of justice, to entreate of profite, and joyntly to talke of one thyng with another. But because these three causes, are commonly and for the moste part, severally parted, I will

¹⁸The commonplace division of the occasions of oratory appears in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* (I, iii, 1), *Ad Herennium* (I, ii, 2), and *De Inventione* (I, v, 7). [T.J.D.]

¹⁹The emendation from "four causes," the reading of 53 and 60, to "three causes," the reading of 60 (*err.*) and 62–85, is supported by the existence of only three causes in the text. See the headnote (41.19), the gloss (41.22), and the discussion (41.23). [T.J.D.]

speake of them, one after another, as thei are sette furthe by wise mennes judgements, and particularly declare their properties, all in order.

Oracion Demonstrative.

The Oracion demonstrative, standeth either in praise, or dispraise of some one man, or of some one thyng, or of some one deede doen.

The kynde Demonstrative, wherein chiefly it is occupied.

There are diverse thynges, whiche are praised, and dispraised, as menne, Countreis, Citees, Places, Beastes, Hilles, Rivers, Houses, Castles, dedes doen by worthy menne, and pollicies invented by greate warriers, but moste commonly men are praised, for diverse respectes, before any of the other thynges are taken in hande.

Noble personages, howe thei should be praised.

Nowe in praisyng a noble personage, and in setting furthe at large his worthinesse, Quintilian geveth warnyng,²⁰ to use this threfolded order.

To observe thynges.

- Before his life.
- In his life.
- After his death.

Before a mannes life, are considered these places.

- The Realme.
- The Shire.
- The Toune.
- The Parentes.
- The Auncestours.

In a mannes life, praise muste be parted threfolde. That is to saie, into the gifts of good thyngs of the mynde, the body, and of fortune. Now the giftes of the body, and of fortune, are

²⁰In *Institutio* (III, vii, 10–17) Quintilian discusses the three topics of a demonstrative oration in praise of a man. He divides the first topic, prenatal history, into nationality, parentage, and ancestry; he divides the second topic, deeds, into character, physique, and external matters. [T.J.D.]

not praise worthy, of their awne nature: but even as thei are used, either to, or fro, so thei are either praised, or dispraised. Giftes of the mynde, deserve the whole trumpe and sound commendacion above all other, wherein wee maie use the rehearsall of vertues, as thei are in order, and beginning at his infancie, tell all his doynges, till his laste age.

*The places whereof, are these.*²¹

The birthe, and infancie.	Whether the person be a man, or a woman.
The childhode.	The bringyng up, the nurturyng, and the behaviour of his life.
The stripelyng age, or spryng tide.	To what study he taketh hymself unto, what company he useth, how he liveth.

Whereunto are referred these.

The mannes state.	Prowesses doen, either abrode, or at home.
The olde age.	His pollicies and wittie devises in behove of the publique wele.
The tyme of his departure, or deth.	Thynges that have happened aboute his death.

Of an Oracion demonstrative, for some deede doen.

Oracion Demonstrative of a deede.

The kynd demonstrative of some thyng doen is this, when a man is commended or dispraised, for any acte committed in his life.

²¹Quintilian in *Institutio* (III, vii, 15) suggests either a chronological or a thematic arrangement of topics for the praise of mind (*animus*). Wilson's immediate source is Cox, sig. B6^v: "The persones byrthe. His chyldhode. His adolescencie. His mannes state. His olde age. His dethe and what foloweth after." [T.J.D.]

*The places to confirm this cause, when any one is commended, are sixe in number.*²²

The places of Confirmation.

- i. It is honest.
- ii. It is possible
- iii. Easie to be doen,
- iiii. hard to be doen.
- v. Possible to be doen,
- vi. Impossible to be doen.

Seven circumstaunces, whiche are to bee considered in diverse matters.²³

The circumstaunces.

- i. Who did the deede.
- ii. What was doen.
- iii. Where it was doen.
- iiii. What helpe had he to it.
- v. Wherefore he did it.
- vi. How he did it.
- vii. At what tyme he did it.

Of the Oracion demonstrative, where thynges are sette furthe, and matters commended.

The kynde demonstrative of thynges, is a meane whereby we do praise, or dispraise thynges, as vertue, vice, tounes, citees, castles, woddes, waters, hilles, and mountaines.

*Places to confirme thynges are .iiii.*²⁴

Places of confirmacion.

- i. Thynges honest.
- ii. Profitable.
- iii. Easy to be doen.
- iv. Hard to be doen.

Many learned, will have recourse to the places of Logique in stede of these .iiii. places, when they

²²In *De Partitione Oratoria* (XIX, 66) Cicero only treats honesty, utility, and equity. Wilson's list more closely resembles Cox's division of this topic into three parts. [T.J.D.]

²³Wilson's source for part of this list is Cox's *Arte or Crafte*, sig. C6^r: "what was done/who dyd it/whan/where it was done/amonge whom/by whose helpe." [T.J.D.]

²⁴Wilson takes his topics from Cox, sig. C5^v: "honesty, perfite, lyghtnes or hardines of dede." See Commentary, 54.12. [T.J.D.]

take in hand to commende any suche matter. The whiche places if they make them serve rather to commende the matter, then onely to teache men the truth of it, it were wel done and Oratourlike.²⁵ for seying a man wholly bestoweth his wit to plaie the Oratour, he shoulde chefely seke to compasse that whiche he entendeth, and not do that onely which he but half mynded. for by plaine teachyng, the Logician shewes hymselfe, by large amplification and beautifying of his cause, the Rhetorician is alwaies knowne.

*The places of Logique are these.*²⁶

Definition.
Causes.
Partes.
Effectes.
Thynges adjoynyng.
Contraries.

Logique must be learned for confirmacion of causes.

I do not se otherwise but that these places of Logique are confounded with thother .iiii. of confirmacion, or rather I thinke these of Logique must first be mynded ere thother can well be had. For what is he that can cal a thyng honest and by reason prove it, except he first knowe what the thyng is, the whiche he can not better doe, then by definyng the nature of the thyng. Againe how shal I know whether myne attempte be easie, or hard, if I know not the efficient cause, or be assured how it maie be doen. In affirmyng it to be possible, I shall not better knowe it, then by searchyng thende, and learnyng by Logique what is the final cause of every thyng. . . .

*An Oration deliberative.*²⁷

An Oration deliberative is a meane, wherby we do perswade, or disswade, entreate, or rebuke, exhorte, or dehorte, commende, or comferte any man. In this

²⁵Wilson uses a period as if it were a modern semi-colon: to join parallel sentences or clauses. [T.J.D.]

²⁶Wilson selects all six places from the discussion in his *Rule of Reason* (1551), sig. E4^v–E6^r. [T.J.D.]

²⁷Wilson follows the general definitions of the deliberative mode expressed by Aristotle, *Rhetoric* (I, iii, 3), and *Ad*

kynd of Oration we doe not purpose wholly to praise any body, nor yet to determine any matter in controversie, but the whole compasse of this cause is, either to advise our neighbour to that thyng, whiche we thynke most nedeful for hym or els to cal him backe from that folie, which hindereth mucche his estimacion. As for example, if I would counseil my frende to travaile²⁸ beyond the Seas for knowlege of the tongues, and experience in forein countries: I might resorte to this kinde of Oration, and finde matter to confirme my cause plentifully. And the reasons which are commonly used to enlarge suche matters, are these that folowe.²⁹

The thyng is	Saufe.
honest.	Easie.
Profitable.	Harde.
Pleasaunt.	

Lawful and meete.
Praise worthe.
Necessarie.

Honestie comprehendeth al vertues.

Now in speakyng of honestie, I may by devision of the vertues make a large walke. Againe loke what lawes, what customes, what worthe dedes, or saynges have bene used heretofore, all these might serve wel for the confirmacion of this matter. Lastly where honestie is called in, to establish a cause: there is nature and God hym selfe present from whome commeth al goodnesse.

Profite howe largely it extendeth.

In the seconde place where I spake of profite, this is to be learned, that under the same is comprehended the gettingyng of gaine, and the eschewyng of harme.

Herennium (III, ii, 2). But to the extent that Wilson emphasizes that deliberative speech is directed towards the giving of moral advice ("either to advise our neighbour . . . or els to cal him backe"), he relies on Erasmus in *De Conscribendis Epistolis* (I, 402 A–403 D) from which Wilson extracts the nine places, their subdivisions, and definitions (76. 20–25). [T.J.D.]

²⁸To travel. [T.J.D.]

²⁹Erasmus, *De Conscribendis Epistolis* (I, 402 C): "honesto, utili, tuto, jocundo, facili, necessario. Honestum autem dividitur in rectum et laudabile." Cf. *Ad Herennium* (III, ii, 3). [T.J.D.]

Profite beareth the name of goodnes, whiche is thre folded.

Againe, concernyng profite (which also beareth the name of goodnesse) it partely pertaineth to the bodie, as beautie, strength, and healthe, partely to the mynde, as the encrease of witte, the gettingyng of experience, and heaping together of mucche learnyng; and partely to fortune (as Philosophers take it) whereby bothe wealth, honor, and frendes are gotten. Thus he that divideth profite, can not want matter.

Pleasures, largely sette out.

Thirdely in declaring it is pleasaunt, I might heape together the varietie of pleasures, whiche comme by travaile, firste the swetnesse of the tongue, the holsomnesse of the ayer in other countries, the goodly wittes of the jentlemen, the straunge and auncient buildynges, the wonderful monumentes, the great learned Clerckes in al faculties, with diverse other like, and almost infinite pleasures.

Easeness of travaile.

The easines of travaile may thus be perswaded, if we shew that freepassage is by wholsom lawes appointed, for al straungers, and waie fairers. And seying this life is none other thyng but a travaile, and we as pilgrymes wander from place to place, mucche fondeness it were to thinke that hard, which nature hath made easie, yea and pleasaunt also. None are more healthful, none more lusty, none more mery, none more strong of body, then suche as have travailed countries.

Travaile unto whom it is harde.

Mary unto them that had rather sleape al day, then wake one houre, chosyng for honest labour sleuthful ydlennesse: thinking this life to be none other thyng but a continual restyng place, unto suche pardy, it shal seme painfull to abide any labour. To learne Logique, to learne the Lawe, to some it semeth so harde, that nothyng can enter into their heddes, and the reason is, that thei want a will, and an earnest mynde to do their endeavour.

Good wil makes great burdeines light.

For unto a willyng harte, nothyng can bee harde, laie lode on such a mannes backe, and his good harte maie soner make his backe to ake, then his good will, can graunt to yelde and refuse the weichte. And now where the sweet hath his sower joynd with hym, it shalbee wisdom to speake somewhat of it, to mitigate the sowness thereof, as muche as maie be possible.

Lawfull.

That is lawfull and praise worthy, whiche lawes dooe graunt, good men do allowe, experience commendeth, and men in all ages have moste used.

Necessary two waies taken.

A thyng is necessary twoo maner of waies. Firste, when either we must do some one thyng, or els do worse. As if one should threaten a woman, to kill her, if she would not lie with him, wherin appereth a forcible necessitie. As touchyng travaile we might saie, either a man must be ignoraunt, of many good thinges, and want greate experience, or els he must travaill. Now to be ignoraunt, is a greate shame, therefore to travaill is moste nedefull, if we will avoyde shame. The other kynde of necessitie is, when we perswade men to beare those crosses patiently, whiche God doeth sende us, consideryng will we, or nill we, nedes must we abide them.

*To advise one, to study the lawes of Englande.*³⁰

Again, when we se our frende, enclined to any kynde of learnyng, wee muste counsaill hym to take that waie still, and by reason perswade hym, that it wer the metest waie for hym, to dooe his cuntrye moste good.

Lawes of Englande.

As if he geve his mynde, to the Lawes of the

³⁰Elyot treats the advantages of legal study in *The Governour* (1531), III, i. [T.J.D.]

realme, and finde an aptnes thereunto, we maie advise hym, to continue in his good entent, and by reason perswade hym, that it were moste mete for him so to do. And first we might shew hym, that the study is honest and godly, consideryng it onely foloweth Justice, and is grounded wholly upon naturall reason. Wherein we mighte take a large scope, if we would fully speake of all thynges, that are comprehended under honestie. For he that will knowe what honestie is, must have an understandyng, of all the vertues together.

Vertues especiall and chief foure in number.

And because the knowlege of them is moste necessary, I will briefly set them furth. There are foure especial and chief vertues, under whom all other are comprehended.³¹

Prudence, or wisdom.
Justice.
Manhode.
Temperance.

Prudence what it is.

Prudence or wisdom (for I will here take them bothe for one) is a vertue that is occupied evermore, in searchyng out the truthe. Nowe wee all love knowlege, and have a desire to passe other therin, and thinke it shame to be ignoraunt: and by studyng the lawe, the truth is gotten out, by knowyng the truth, wisdom is attained. Wherefore, in perswadyng one to studie the Lawe, you maie shewe hym that he shall get wisdom thereby. Under this vertue are comprehended.

Partes of Prudence.

Memorie.
Understandyng.
Foresight.

The memorie calleth to accompte those thynges, that wer doen heretofore, and by a

³¹Erasmus in *De Conscribendis Epistolis* (I, 402, C) lists the following division of the virtues: *prudencia, justitia, fortitudo, temperantia*. He divides *prudencia* into *intelligentiam, memoriam, and providentiam*. [T.J.D.]

former remembrance, getteth an after witte, and learneth to avoyde deceit.

Understanding seeth thynges presently dooen, and perceiveth what is in them, waiyng and debatyng them, untill his mynde be fully contented.

Foresight, is a gatheryng by conjectures, what shall happen, and an evident perceivng of thynges to come, before thei do come.

Justice

Justice, what it is.

Justice is a vertue, gathered by long space, gevng every one his awne, myndng in all thynges, the common profite of our countrey, whereunto man is moste bounde, and oweth his full obedience.

Now, nature firste taught manne, to take this waie, and would every one so to do unto another, as he would be doen unto hymself. For whereas Rain watereth all in like, the Sonne shineth indifferently over all,³² the fruct of the yerth encreaseth egually, God warneth us to bestowe our good wil after thesame sort, doyng as duetie byndeth us, and as necessitie shall best require. Yea, God graunteth his giftes diversly emong men, because he would man should knowe, and fele, that man is borne for man, and that one hath nede of another. And therefore, though nature hath not stirred some, yet through the experience that man hath, concernyng his commoditie: many have turned the lawe of nature, into an ordinary custome, and folowed thesame, as though thei were bounde to it by a Lawe. Afterwarde, the wisdom of Princes, and the feare of Goddes threate, whiche was uttered by his woorde, forced men by a lawe, bothe to allowe thynges confirmed by nature, and to beare with old custome or els thei should not onely suffer in the body, temporal punishment, but also lose their soules for ever.

³²Matthew 5:45: "for he maketh his sonne to aryse on the evell, and on the good, and sendeth rayne on the just and on the unjust." [T.J.D.]

Nature, what it is.

Nature is a righte,³³ that phantasie hath not framed, but God hath graffed, and geven man power thereunto, wherof these are derived.³⁴

Religion and acknowlegyng of God.
Naturall love to our children, and other.
Thankfulnesse to all men.
Stoutnesse bothe to withstande and revenge.
Reverence to the superiour.
Assured and constaunt truthe in thynges.

Religion.

Religion is an humble worshippng of God, acknowlegyng hym to be the creatour of creatures, and the onely gever of al good thynges.

Naturall love.

Naturall love is an inward good will, that we beare to our parentes, wife, children, or any other that bee nighe of kynne unto us, stirred thereunto not onely by our fleshe, thinkyng that like as we wold love our selves, so we shuld love them but also by a likenesse of mynde: and therefore generally we love all, because all bee like unto us, but yet we love them moste, that bothe in body and mynd, be moste like unto us. And hereby it cometh that often we are liberal, and bestowe our goodes upon the nedy, remembryng that thei are all one fleshe with us, and should not wante, when we have it, without our greate rebuke, and token of our moste unkynde dealyng.

Thankfulnes.

Thankfulnesse is a requityng of love, for love, and wil, for will, shewyng to our frendes, the like goodnesse that we finde in them, yea, strivyng to passe them in kyndenesse, losyng neither tyme nor tide, to do them good.

³³Cf. Erasmus, *De Conscribendis Epistolis* (I, 402 E): "Natura jus est, quod nobis non opinio, sed quaedam vis innata insevit." [T.J.D.]

³⁴Wilson derives his ideas of these natural rights or powers of human beings from Erasmus. [Ed.]

Stoutnesse.

Stoutnes to withstand and revenge evil, is then used when either we are like to have harme, and do withstand it, or els when we have suffred evill for the truthsake, and therupon do revenge it, or rather punishe the evill, whiche is in the man.

Reverence.

Reverence, is an humblenesse in outward behavior, when we do our dutie to them, that are our betters, or unto suche as are called to serve the kyng, in some greate vocacion.

Assured and constant truth.

Assured and constant truthe is, when we doo beleve that those thynges, whiche are or have been, or hereafter are aboute to be, cannot otherwise be, by any meanes possible.

Right by custome.

Custome without natures grounde, ungodly.

That is right by custome, whiche long tyme hath confirmed, beyng partly grounded upon nature, and partly upon reason, as where we are taught by nature, to knowe the ever livyng God, and to worship him in spirite, we turnyng natures light, into blynde custome, without Goddes will, have used at lengthe to beleve, that he was really with us here in yearthe, and worshipped hym not in spirite, but in Copes, in Candlestickes, in Belles, in Tapers, and in Censers, in Crosses, in Banners, in shaven Crounes and long gounes, and many good morowes els, devised onely by the phantasie of manne, without the expresse will of God. The whiche childishe toyes, tyme hath so long confirmed, that the truthe is scant able to trie them out, our hartes bee so harde, and our wittes be so farre to seke.

Again wher we se by nature, that every one should deale truely, custome encreaseth natures will, and maketh by auncient demeane, thynges to bee justly observed, whiche nature hath appoynced.

As

Bargainyng.

Commons, or equalitee.

Judgement given.

Bargainyng is, when twoo have agreed, for the sale of some one thyng, the one will make his felowe to stande to the bargain, though it be to his neighbors undoyng, restyng upon this poyncte, that a bargain is a bargain, and must stand without all excepcion, although nature requireth to have thynges dooen by conscience, and would that bargainyng should bee builded upon Justice, whereby an upright dealyng, and a charitable love is uttered amongest all men.

Commons.

Communes or equalitee, is when the people by long time have a ground, or any suche thyng among them, the whiche some of them will kepe still, for custome sake, and not suffer it to be sensed, and so turned to pasture, though thei mighte gain ten tymes the value: but such stubbornesse in kepyng of Commons for custome sake, is not standyng with Justice, because it is holden against all right.

Judgement geven.

Judgement geven, is when a matter is confirmed by a Parleme, or a Lawe, determined by a Judge, unto the whiche many hed strong men, wil stande to dye for it, without sufferance of any alteracion, not remembryng the circumstance of thynges, and that tyme altereth good actes.

Right by Lawe.

That is righte by a Lawe, when the truthe is uttered in writyng, and commaunded to bee kepte, even as it is sette furthe unto them.

Fortitude or manhode.

Manhode.

Fortitude is a considerate hassardyng upon daunger, and a willyng harte to take paines in

behalf of the right. Now when can stoutnes be better used, then in just maintenaunce of the lawe, and constaunt tryng of the truthe? Of this vertue there are foure braunches.

Honourableness.
Stoutnesse.
Sufferaunce.
Continuance.

Honorableness.

Honorableness, is a noble orderyng of weightie matters, with a lustie harte, and a liberall using of his wealthe, to the encrease of honour.

Stoutnesse.

Stoutnesse is an assured trust in hymself, when he myndeth the compasse of moste weightie matters, and a couragious defendyng of his cause.

Sufferaunce.

Sufferaunce is a willyng and a long bearyng of trouble and takyng of paines, for the maintenaunce of vertue, and the wealthe of his countrey.

Continuance.

Continuance is a stedfast and constant abidyng, in a purposed and well advised matter, not yeldyng to any manne in querrell of the right.

Temperaunce.

Temperaunce.

Temperaunce is a mesauryng of affeccions, accordyng to the will of reason, and a subduyng of luste unto the Square of honestie. Yea, and what one thyng doth soner mitigate the immoderate passions of our nature, then the perfect knowlledge of right and wrong and the juste execucion appoynted by a lawe, for asswagyng the wilfull? Of this vertue there are three partes.

Sobrietie.
Jentlenesse.
Modestie.

Sobrietie.

Sobrietie is a bridelyng by discrecion the wilfulness of desire.

Jentlenesse.

Jentlenesse is a caulmyng of heate, when wee begin to rage, and a lowly behavior in all our body.

Modestie.

Modestie is an honest shamefastnesse, whereby we kepe a constant loke, and appere sober in all our outward doynge. Now even as we should desire the use of all these vertues, so should we eschewe not onely the contraries herunto, but also avoyde all suche evilles, as by any meanes dooe withdrawe us from well doying.

It is profitable.

After we have perswaded our frend, that the lawe is honest, drawyng our argumentes from the heape of vertues, we must go further with hym, and bryng hym in good beleve, that it is very gainfull.

Hope of rewarde maketh men take paines.

For many one seke not the knowlege of learnyng for the goodnesse sake, but rather take paines for the gain, which thei se doth arise by it. Take awaie the hope of lucre, and you shall se fewe take any paines: No, not in the vineyard of the lorde. For although none should folowe any trade of life, for the gain sake, but even as he seeth it is moste necessary, for theadvancement of Gods glory, and not passe in what estimacion thynges are had in this worlde: yet because we are all so weake of wit, in our tender yeres, that we cannot weigh with our selves what is best, and our body so neshe,³⁵ that it loketh ever to bee cherished, wee take that, whiche is moste gainfull for us, and forsake that altogether, which we oughte

³⁵Tender, delicate, weak. Cf. 46.7. [T.J.D.]

moste to folowe. So that for lacke of honest meanes, and for want of good order, the best waie is not used, neither is Goddes honor in our first yerres remembred. I had rather (saide one) make my child a cobler then a preacher, a tankerd bearer, then a scholer. For what shall my sonne seke for learnyng, when he shall never gette therby any livyng? Set my sonne to that, whereby he maie get somewhat? Do ye not se how every one catcheth and pulleth from the church what thei can? I feare me one day thei will plucke doune church and all. Call you this the Gospell, when men seke onely to provide for their belies, and care not a grote though their soules go to helle? A patrone of a benefice will have a poore yngrame³⁶ soule, to beare the name of a persone³⁷ for .xx. marke, or .x.li: and the patrone hymself, wil take up for his snapshare,³⁸ as good as an .c. marke. Thus God is robbed, learnyng decayed, England dishonored, and honestie not regarded.

The Romaynes lawes for Church dignitees.

Thold Romaines not yet knowyng Christ, and yet beyng led by a reverent feare towards God, made this lawe. *Sacrum sacrove commendatum qui clepserit, rapseritue, parricida est.* He that shall closely steale, or forcibly take awaie that thyng, whiche is holy, or geven to the holy place: is a murderer of his countrey. But what have I said? I have a greater matter in hand, then wherof I was aware, my penne hath run over farre, when my leasure serveth not, nor yet my witte is able to talke this case in suche wise, as it should bee, and as the largenesse therof requireth. Therefore to my lawyer again, whom I doubte not to perswade, but that he shall have the devill and all, if he learne a pase,³⁹ and dooe as some have dooen before hym. Therefore I will shewe howe largely this profite extendeth, that I may have him the soner, to take this matter in hand.

³⁶Ignorant. [T.J.D.]

³⁷Parson. In Elizabethan pronounciation the words were homonyms. [T.J.D.]

³⁸A share or portion obtained as an extra emolument. [T.J.D.]

³⁹Apace, quickly. [T.J.D.]

Lawe, profitable to the purse.

The lawe therefore not onely bryngeth muche gain with it, but also avaunceth men bothe to worshippe, renoume, and honour. All men shall seke his favour, for his learnyng sake: the best shall like his company, for his callyng: and his welth with his skill shalbe suche, that none shalbe able to woorke hym any wrong. Some consider profite, by these circumstaunces, folowyng.

To whom.

When.

Where.

Wherefore.

Circumstaunces, in observyng profite.

Neither can I use a better order, then these circumstaunces minister unto me. To whom therefore is the Lawe profitable? Marie to them that bee best learned, that have redy wittes, and will take paines. When is the lawe profitable? Assuredly both now and evermore, but especially in this age, where all men go together by the eares for this matter, and that matter. Suche alteracion hath been heretofore, that hereafter nedes muste ensue muche altercacion. And where is all this a do? Even in litle Englande, or in Westminster hall, where never yet wanted busines, nor yet ever shall. Wherefore is the lawe profitable? Undoubtedly because no manne could hold his awne, if there were not an order to staie us, and a Lawe to restrain us. And I praie you who getteth the money? The lawyers no doubt. And were not lande sometymes cheaper bought, then got by the triall of a lawe? Do not men commonly for trifles fall out?

Foly in many, that go to the Lawe.

Some for lopping of a tree, spendes al that ever thei have, another for a Gose, that graseth upon his ground, tries the lawe so hard, that he proves him self a Gander. Now when men bee so mad, is it not easie to gette money among them.

Lawyers, never dy beggers.

Undoubtedly the lawyer never dieth a begger. And no marvaill. For an .c. begges for hym, and makes awaie all that thei have, to get that of hym, the whiche the oftener he bestoweth, the more still he getteth. So that he gaineth alwaies, aswell by encrease of lernyng as by storyng his purse with money, wheras the other get a warme sonne often tymes, and a slappe with a foxe taile for al that ever thei have spent. And why woulde they? Tushe, if it were to do againe, thei would do it: therefore the lawyer can never want a livyng, til the yearth want men, and al be voyde.

The lawe easie to many, and harde to some.

I doubt not, but my lawyer is perswaded that the law is profitable: now must I beare him in hand that it is an easie matter to become a lawier. the whiche if I shalbe able to prove, I doubt not, but he will prove a good lawier, and that right shortly. The law is grounded upon reason. And what hardenesse is it for a man by reason to fynde out reason. That can not be straung unto him, the grounde wherof, is graffed in his brest. What, though the lawe be in a straunge tongue, the wordes may be gotte with out any paine, when the matter selfe is compast with ease. Tushe, a little lawe will make a greate showe, and therefore though it be mucche to become excellent, yet it is easie, to get a taist. And surely for getting of money, a litle wil do asmucche good oftentymes, as a great deale. There is not a word in the law, but it is a grote in the lawiers purse. I have knowne diverse that by familiar talkyng, and moutyng together have comme to right good learning without any great booke skil, or mucche beating of their braine by any close studie, or secrete musyng in their chamber. But where some say the lawe is very harde, and discourage young men from the studie therof, it is to be understande of suche as wil take no paines at al, nor yet mynde the knowledge therof. For what is not hard to man, when he wanteth wil to do his best. As good slepe, and saie it is harde: as wake, and take no paines.

The lawe.

Godly.
Juste.
Necessarie.
Pleasaunt.

What nedeth me to prove the lawe to be Godly, just, or necessarie, seeyng it is grounded upon Goddes wil, and all lawes are made for the maintenaunce of justice. If we will not beleve that it is necessarie, let us have rebelles againe to disturbe the Realme. Our nature is so fonde that we knowe not the necessitie of a thyng, til wee fynde some lacke of the same. Bowes are not esteemed as they have bene emong us Englishmen, but if we were ones well beaten by our enemies wee shoulde soone knowe the wante, and with feelyng the smarte lament mucche our folie.

Lawes mainteine lyfe.

Take awaie the lawe, and take awaie our lifes, for nothyng mainteineth our wealthe, our health, and the savegard of our bodies, but the lawe of a Realme, whereby the wicked are condempned, and the godly are defended. . . .

Of Exhortation.

Exhortyng.

The places of exhortyng and dehortyng, are the same whiche wee use in perswadyng and disuadyng, savyng that he whiche useth perswasion, seeketh by argumentes to compasse his devise: he that laboures to exhorte, doeth stirre affections.

Erasmus sheweth these to be the most especial places that do pertaine unto exhortation.

Praise, or Commendacion.
Expectation of al men.
Hope of victorie.
Hope of renowme.
Feare of shame.
Greatnesse of rewarde.
Rehersall of examples, in all ages, and especially of thynges lately doen.

Praisynge a deede.

Praisynge is either of the man, or of some deede doen. We shall exhorte men to doe the thyng, if we shewe them that is a worthy attempte, a Godly enterprise, and suche as fewe men hetherto have adventured.

Praisynge a man, the rather to encourage him.

In praisynge a man, we shal exhorte hym to go forwarde, consideryng it agreeth with his wounted manhode, and that hetherto he hath not slacked to hasarde boldely upon the best and worthiest deedes, requiryng hym to make this ende aunswereable to his moost worthie begynnynge, that he maye ende with honour, whiche hath so long continued in suche renowme. For it were a foule shame to lose honour through folie, whiche hath been gotte through virtue, and to appere more slacke in keyng it, than he semed carefull at the first to atteine it.

Againe whose name is renowmed, his doynges from time to tyme wil be thought more wonderfull, and greater promises wil men make unto them selves of suche mens adventures in any commune affaires, than of others, whose vertues are not yet knowne. A notable Master of fence is marveilouse to beholde, and men looke earnestly to see hym doe some wonder, howe muche more will they looke when they heare tel that a noble Captaine, and an adventurouse Prince shal take upon hym the defence, and savegarde of his countrie against the ragyng attemptes of his enemies?

Expectacion of al men.

Therefore a noble man can not but go forwarde with most earnest wil, seyng al men have suche hope in hym, and count hym to bee their onely comforte, their fortresse, and defense.

Hope of victorie.

And the rather to encourage suche right worthie, we may put them in good hope to compasse their attempte, yf wee shewe them that God is an as-

sured guide unto all those, that in an honest quarell adventure them selves, and shewe their manly stomake. Sathan hym selfe the greatest adversarie that man hath, yeldeth lyke a captive, when GOD dothe take our parte, muche sooner shal al other be subjecte unto hym, and crye *Peccavi*.⁴⁰ for if God be with hym, what matereth who be against hym?⁴¹

Fame foloweth worthy feactes.

Nowe when victorie is got, what honour doeth ensewe? here openeth a large fielde to speak of renowme, fame, and endles honour. In all ages the worthiest men have alwaies adventured their carcasses for the savegarde of their countrie, thynkyng it better to dye with honor, than to live with shame.

Shame foloweth fearfulnesse, when manhode is thought nedeful.

Againe the ruine of our Realme shoulde put us to more shame, than the losse of our bodies should turne us to smarte. For our honestie beyng stained, the paine is endles, but our bodies beyng gored, either the wounde maie sone be healed, or elles our paine beyng sone ended, the glory endureth for ever.

Heaven, the rewarde of hault Capiteines.

Lastely he that helpeth the nedelesse, defendeth his poore neighbours, and in the favour of his countrie, bestoweth his lyfe: wil not God besides al these, place hym where he shall lyve for ever, especially seeyng he hath doen all these enterprises in faith and for Christes sake?

Nowe in al ages to reckon suche as have bene right soverayne, and victoriouse, what name gotte the worthie Scipio that withstood the rage of Annibal? what Brute hath Cesar for his most worthie conquestes? What triumphe of glory

⁴⁰“I have sinned.” The expression occurs frequently in the Vulgate, e.g., Exodus 10:16, 2 Kings 12:13, Job 33:27, Matthew 27:4, Luke 15:18. [T.J.D.]

⁴¹Romans 8:31: “Yf God be on oure syde, who can be agaynst us?” [T.J.D.]

doth sounde in al mennes eares upon the onely namyng of mightie Alexander, and his father Kyng Philippe? And now to come home, what head can expresse the renowned Henry the fifte Kyng of Englande of that name after the conquest? What witte can sette out the wonderful wysedom of Henry the seventh, and his greate foresight to espie mischiefe like to ensewe, and his politique devises to escape daungers, to subdewe rebelles, and mainteyne peace?

Of movyng pitie, and stirryng men to shewe mercie.

Movyng of pitie.

Likewise we may exhorte men to take pitie of the fatherlesse, the widowe, and the oppressed innocent, if we set before their iyes the lamentable afflictions, the tyrannouse wronges, and the miserable calamities, whiche these poore wretches do susteine. For if fleshe and bloude move us to love our children, our wyfes, and our kynsfolke: muche more shoulde the spirite of God and Christes goodnes towards man stirre us to love our neighbours moste entirely. These exhortacions the preachers of God may most aptely use, when they open his Gospell to the people, and have just cause to speake of suche matters.

Of Commendyng.

The maner of commendyng.

In commendyng a man, wee use the reporte of his witte, honestie, faithfull service, painefull labour, and carefull nature to do his maisters will, or any suche lyke, as in the Epistles of Tullie there are examples infinite.

Of Comfortyng.

The maner of comfortyng.

Now after al these, the weake would be comforted and the soroufull would be cherished that there grief might bee aswaged, and the passions of man brought under the obedience of reason. The use hereof is great, aswell in private troubles, as in commune miseries. As in losse of gooddes, in

lacke of frendes, in sicknes, in darthe, and in death. In all whiche losses, the wyse use so to comforte the weake, that they geve them not just cause even at the firste to refuse all comforte.

Comfortyng two waies used.

And therefore they use two waies of chereshyng the troubled mindes. The one is when wee showe that in some cases and for some causes either they shoulde not lament at all, or elles bee sory very litle: the other is when we graunt that they have just cause to bee sadde, and therefore wee are sad also in their behalfe, and woulde remedie the matter, if it coulde be, and thus enteryng into felowshippe of sorowe, wee seeke by litle and litle to mitigate their grief. For all extreme heavynesse, and vehement sorowes, cannot abyde comforte, but rather seeke a mourner that woulde take parte with them.

Therefore muche warenesse ought to be used, when wee happen upon suche excedyng sorowfull, leaste wee rather purchase hatred, than aswage grief.

Those harmes shoulde bee moderatly borne, whiche muste needes happen to every one, that have chaunced to any one. As deathe, whiche spareth none, neither Kyng, nor Cayser, neither poore, nor riche. Therefore to bee impacient for the losse of our frendes, is to fall out with God, because he made us men, and not Aungelles. But the Godly (I truste) will alwaies remitte thorder of thynges to the wil of God, and force their passions to obey necessitie.

Sweatyng disease.

When God lately visited this Realme with the sweatyng disease, and received the two worthie gentlemen Henry Duke of Suffolke, and his brother Lorde Charles: I seeyng my Ladies grace their mother takyng their deathe most greavously could not otherwise for the duetie whiche I then did, and ever shall owe unto her, but comforte her in that her heavynesse, the whiche undoubtedly at that tyme muche weakened her bodie. And because it may serve for an example of comforte, I have been boulded to set it forthe as it foloweth hereafter. . . .

Of an Oration judicial.

The whole burdeine of weightie matters, and the earnest trial of al controversies, rest onely upon judgement. Therefore when matters concernyng lande, gooddes, or life, or any suche thyng of lyke weight are called in Question, we must ever have recourse to this kynde of Oration, and after just examynyng of our causes by the places therof: loke for judgement accordyng to the law.

Oration Judicial what it is.

Oration Judicial is, an earnest debatyng in open assemblie of some weightie matter before a judge, where the complainant commenseth his action, and the defendaut thereupon aunswereth at his peril to al suche thynges as are laied to his charge.

Of the foundacion, or rather principall pointe in every debated matter, called of the Rhetoricians the State, or constitution of the Cause.

Not onely is it nedefull in causes of judgement to conside the scope whereunto wee must leavell our reasons, and directe our invencion: but also we ought in every cause to have a respect unto some one especial pointe, and chief article: that the rather the whole drift of our doynge may seeme to agree with our firste devised purpose. For, by this meanes our judgement shalbe framed to speake with discretion, and the ignoraunt shall learne to perceive with profite, whatsoever is said for his enstruction. But they that take upon them to talke in open audience, and make not their accompte before, what thei wil speake after: shal neither be well liked for their invencion, nor allowed for their witte, nor esteemed for their learnyng. For, what other thyng do they, that boult out their wordes in suche sorte, and without al advisement utter out matter: but showe themselves to plaie as young boyes, or scarre crowes do, whiche showte in the open and plaine felde at all adventures hittie missie.⁴²

⁴²Hit and miss, i.e., randomly. [T.J.D.]

Definition of a thyng must first be knowen ere we speake our mynd at large.

The learned therfore and suche as love to be coumpted Clerkes of understandyng, and men of good circumspection and judgement: doe warely scanne what they chefely mynd to speake, and by definition seke what that is whereunto they purpose to directe their whole doynge. For, by suche advised warenesse, and good iye castyng: they shall alwaies be able both to knowe what to say, and to speake what they ought. As for example if I shal have occasion to speake in open audience of the obedience due to our sovereigne kyng I ought first to learne what is obedience, and after knowelege attained, to direct my reasons to the onely prove of this purpose, and wholly to seke confirmation of the same, and not turne my tale to talke of Robbyn Hoode, and to showe what a goodly archer was he, or to speake wounders of the man in the Mone, suche as are most nedelesse and farthest from the purpose.

Rovyng with out reason.

For then, the hearer lookyng to be taught his obedience, and hearing in the meane season mad tales of archerie, and great mervailles of the man in the Mone: beyng half astonied at his so great straing wil perhappes say to himself: Now, whether the devill wilt thou,⁴³ come in man againe for very shame, and tel me no bytailes, such as are to no purpose but show me that whiche thou diddest promise both to teache and perswade at thy first entrie. Assuredly suche fonde felowes there have been, yea even emong Preachers, that talking of faith, thei have fetcht their ful race from the .xii. signes in the Zodiake.⁴⁴ An other talking of the general resurrection hath made a large matter of our blessed Lady, praisyng her to be so jentle, so courtise, and so kynd, that it were better a thousandfould to make sute to her alone then to Christ her

⁴³Where in the devil are you going? [T.J.D.]

⁴⁴Wilson perhaps has in mind a phrase from Chaloner's *The Praise of Folie*, sig. N3^r. Concerning preachers Folly says, "Or disputyng of fastyng, they fetche theyr race from the .xii. signes of the Zodiake." [T.J.D.]

sonne. And what needed (I pray you) any suche rehearsal beyng both ungodly, and nothyng at all to the purpose? for, what maketh the praise of our lady to the confirmacion of the general dowme? Would not a man think him mad that havynge an earnest errand from London to Dover, would take it the next way to ride first into Northfolke, next into Essex, and last into Kent? And yet assuredly many an unlearned and wittlesse man hath strayed in his talke much farther a great deale, yea truely as farre, as hence to Rome gates.

Plinies counsel for handeling of causes.

Therefore wise are thei that folow Plinies advise,⁴⁵ who would that all men both in writing and speakyng at large upon any matter, should ever have an eye to the chief title and principal ground of their whole entent, never swarving from their purpose, but rather bringyng all thinges together to confirme their cause so much as they can possible. Yea, the wise and experte men will aske of themselves, how hangeth this to the purpose? to what end do I speake it? what maketh this for confirmacion of my cause? and so by oft questionyng either chide their owne folie, if they speake amisse: or els be assured thei speake to good purpose.

A State generally what it is.

A State⁴⁶ therfore generally is the chief ground of a matter, and the princypal pointe whereunto both he that speaketh shoulde referre his whole wit, and thei that heare should chefely marke. A Preacher taketh in hande to showe what praier is, and how nedeful for man, to call upon God: Now, he shoulde ever remembre this his matter, applieng his reasons wholly and fully to this end that the hearers may both knowe the nature of praier, and the nedefulnesse of praier. The

⁴⁵This source is unknown. [T.J.D.]

⁴⁶In *Ad Herennium* (I, xi, 18) the idea of the conflict between accuser and accused occurs in the definition of *constitutio*. Wilson may have taken the term *state* from Quintilian's *statu*, in *Institutio* (III, vi, 1). [T.J.D.]

whiche when he hath doen, his promise is fulfilled, his time wel bestowed, and the hearers wel instructed.

A State, or constitution what it is in matters of Judgement.

In all other causes the state is gathered without contention, and severally handled upon good advisement, as he shall thinke best that professeth to speake. But in matters criminall, where judgement is required: there are two persons at the least, whiche must through contrariety, stande and reste upon some issue. As for example: A serving man is apprehended by a lawyer for felonie upon suspicion. The lawier saith to the serving man: Thou hast done this robbery. Nay, (saith he) I have not doen it. Upon this conflicte and matchyng together, ariseth this State, whether this serving man hath done this robbery, or no? Upon whiche pointe the lawyer must stande, and seeke to prove it to the uttermost of his power.

State in Judgement what it is.

A State therfore in matters of judgement is that thyng, whiche doeth arise upon the first demaunde and denial made betwixt men, whereof the one part is the accuser, and the other part the person, or persons accused.

State, why it is so called.

It is called a State because we doe stande and reste upon some one pointe, the whiche must wholly and onely be proved of the one side, and denied of the other. I cannot better terme it in Englishe than by the name of an issue, the whiche not onely ariseth upon muche debatyng and long traverse used, whereupon all matters are said to come to an issue: but also elsewhere an issue is said to be then and so often as bothe parties stande upon one point, the whiche doth aswell happen at the first begynnyng before any probacions are used, as it doth at the latter endyng after the matter hath at large been discussed.

*The division of States, or issues.*⁴⁷

Now that we knowe what an Issue is, it is nexte most nedeful to showe how many thei are in numbre. The wisest and best learned have agreed upon thre onely, and no lesse, the whiche are these folowyng.

The State.

- i. Conjecturall.
- ii. Legall.
- iii. Juridiciall.

And for the more playne understandyng of these darcke wordes, these three questions folowyng, expounde their meaninge altogether.

- i. Whether the thinge bee, or no.
- ii. What it is.
- iii. What maner of thinge it is.

In the fyrst we consider upon rehearsal of a matter whether anye suche thinge bee, or no. As if one shoulde be accused of Murther, good it were to knowe, whether anye murther were committed at all, or no, if it be not perfectly knowne before: and after to go further, and examine whether suche a man that is accused, have done the dede or no.

In the seconde place, we doubt not upon the thinge done, but we stande in doubt what to call it. Sometimes a man is accused of felonye, and yet he proveth his offence to be but a trespase, wherupon he escapeth the daunger of death. An other beyng accused for killyng a man, confeseth his faulte to be manslaughter, and denieth it utterlye to be any murder, wherupon he maketh frendes to purchase his Pardon. Nowe the lawyers by their learninge muste judge the doubt of this debate, and tell what name he deserveth to have that hath thus offended.

In the thyrde place, not onely the dede is confessed, but the manner of doynge is defended. As if one were accused for killyng a man, to confesse the deede, and also to stande in it that he myght justly so do, because he did it in his owne defence: wherupon ariseth this Question, whether

⁴⁷Wilson derives his categories from *Ad Herennium* (I, xi, 18): "conjecturalis, legitima, juridicalis." [T.J.D.]

his doing be ryght or wrong. And to make these matters more plaine, I will adde an example for every state, severally.

Of the state Conjecturall.

The Assertion. ⁴⁸	Thou hast killed this manne.
The Aunswere.	I have not killed him.
The State or Issue.	Whether he hath killed this man or no. Thus we see upon the avouchinge and deniall, the matter standeth upon an issue.

Of the state Legall.

Assertion.	Thou has committed treason in this facte.
Aunswere.	I denye it to be treason.
State or issue.	Whether his offence done maye be called treason or no. Here is denied that anye suche thinge is in the dede done, as is by word reported, and saide to bee.

Of the state Juridiciall.

Assertion.	Thou hast kylled this manne.
Aunswere.	I graunte it, but I have doone it lawfullye, because I killed him in mine owne defence.
State or issue.	Whether a man may kill one in his owne defence, or no, and whether this man did so, or no.

⁴⁸In *Ad Herennium* (I, xvii, 27) occurs the same form and substance of a typical conjectural state except that Ajax is identified as the victim. Earlier in the same work (I, xii, 21), treason is used as an example of the legal issue and perhaps prompted Wilson's example (191.20–192.3). [T.J.D.]

The Oration conjectural, what it is.

The Oration conjectural is, when matters be examined and tryed out by suspicions gathered, and some likelihode of thinge appearinge. A Souldiour is accused for killinge a Farmar. The Souldioure denieth it utterly, and sayth he did not kyll him. Hereupon riseth the question, whether the Souldioure killed the Farmar or no, who is well knowen to be slayne. Nowe to prove this question, we muste have suche places of confirmation, as hereafter do folowe.

*Places of confirmation, to prove thinges by conjecture.*⁴⁹

- i. Will, to do evill.
- ii. Power, to do evil.

i. In the will⁵⁰ muste be considered the qualite of the man, whether he were like to do suche a dede or no, and what shoulde move him to attempte suche an enterpryse, whether he did the murther upon anye displeasure before conceived, or of a sodayne anger, or els for that he loked by his death to receyve some commoditie, either lande, or office, money, or money worth, or anye other gainefull thinge.

ii. Some are knowen to want no will to kill a manne, because they have bene flesht heretofore, passing as little upon the deathe of a man, as a Bocher dothe passe for killinge of an Oxe, beyng heretofore either accused before a Judge of manslaughter, or els quitte by some general pardon. Now, when the names of such menne are knowen, they make wise men ever after to have them in suspection.⁵¹

iii. The countrey where the man was borne declares sometime his natural inclination, as if he wer borne or brought up among the Tindale, and

⁴⁹Wilson takes from Quintilian's *Institutio* (VII, ii, 27) the division into will and power, *voluerit* and *potuerit*. Melanchthon makes a similar distinction in *Elementorum Rhetorices* (1542), sig. C3^v, between *impulsio* and *ratiocinatio*, but Wilson's terms are derived from Quintilian's. [T.J.D.]

⁵⁰Wilson's ten categories are loosely patterned on the discussion of "motive" and "manner of life," the subdivision of probability listed in *Ad Herennium* (II, ii, 3-iii, 5). [T.J.D.]

⁵¹Suspicion. [T.J.D.]

Riddesdale menne,⁵² he may the soner be suspected.

iiii. Of what trade he is, by what occupation he liveth.

v. Whether he be a gamester, an alehouse haunter, or a panion emong Ruffians.

vi. Of what wealthe he is, and how he came by that whiche he hath, if he have anye.

vii. What apparell he weareth, and whether he loveth to go gaye, or no.

viii. Of what nature he is, whether he be hastye, headye, or readye to pike quarels.

ix. What shifte he hath made from time to tyme.

x. What moved him to do suche an haynous dede.

*Places of Confirmation to prove whether he had power to do suche a dede, or no.*⁵³

i. The grounde where the man was slaine, whether it was in the hygh waye, in a woode, or betwixt two hylles, or els where, nighe to an hedge or secrete place.

ii. The tyme, whether it was earlye in the mornyng, or late at nyght.

iii. Whether he was there about that time or no.

iiii. Whether he ranne away after the dede done, or had anye bloude aboute him, or trembled, or stakerde, or was contrarie in tellyng of his tale, and how he kept his countenance.

v. Hope to kepe his dede secrete, bi reason of the place, time, and secrete maner of doynge.

vi. Witnesses examined of his beyng, either in this or that place.

vii. By comparinge of the strengthe of the murtherer wyth the other mans weakenes, armoure with nakednes, and stoutnes with simplicitie.

viii. His Confession. . . .

⁵²These were traditionally rebellious villages in Northumberland. See 197.6. [T.J.D.]

⁵³Wilson draws on the six topics of "signs" listed in *Ad Herennium* (II, iv, 7): *locum, tempus, spatium, occasionem, spem perficiendi, spem celandi*. In his *Rule of Reason* (1551), sig. Mr^v, Wilson comments that rhetoricians use the places "where" and "when" more commonly than logicians and cites a similar example of a man arrested on suspicion of murder. [T.J.D.]

The interpretation of a lawe, otherwise called the State legall.

In boultynge out the true meaninge of a lawe, we must use to search out the nature of the same, by defining some one worde, or comparing one law wyth an other, judging upon good triall, what is right, and what is wronge.

*The partes.*⁵⁴

- i. Definition.
- ii. Contrarye lawes.
- iii. Lawes made, and thende of the law maker.
- iiii. Ambiguitye, or doubtfulnes.
- v. Probation by thinges like.
- vi. Chalengynge or refusinge.

Definition what it is.

Then we use to define a matter, when wee can not agree upon the nature of some word, the which we learne to know by askyng the question what it is. As for example. Where one is apprehended for killing a man, we laye murder to his charge: wherupon the accused person when he graunteth the killing, and yet denieth it to be murder: we must straight after have recourse to the definition, and aske, what is murder, by defininge whereof, and comparing the nature of the word, with his dede done: we shall sone know whether he committed murder or manslaughter.

Contrarye lawes.

It often happeneth that lawes seme to have a certaine repugnancie, wherof emong many riseth much contencion, wher as if both the lawes wer wel weied and considered according to their circumstances, thei wold appeare nothing contrari in matter, though in wordes they seme to dissent. Christ geveth warning, and chargeth his disciples in the .x.

⁵⁴Wilson develops his topics from the discussion of the legal issue in *Ad Herennium* (II, ix–xii). [T.J.D.]

of Math.⁵⁵ that they preach not the glad tidings of his comming into the world to the Gentils, but to the Jewes only, unto whom he was sent by his father. And yet after his resurrection we do read in the last of Mat.⁵⁶ that he commaunded his disciples to go into all the whole world, and preach the glad tidings of his passion, and raunsome, paied for al creatures living. Now though these .ii. lawes seme contrary, yet it is nothing so. For if the Jewes would have received Christ, and acknowledged him their savioure, undoubtedly they had bene the onely children of God, unto whom the promise and covenaut was made from the beginnige. But because they refused their Saviour, and crucified the Lord of glory: Christ made the lawe generall, and called all men to life that woulde repent, promisinge salvation to all suche as beveled and were baptised. So that the particuler law, beyng nowe abrogated, muste nades geve place to the superioure.

Foure lessons to be observed, where contrarye lawes are called in question.

- i. The inferioure law must geve place to the superiour.
- ii. The lawe generall muste yelde to the speciall.
- iii. Mans lawe, to Gods lawe.
- iiii. An olde lawe, to a newe lawe.

There be Lawes utterde by Christes owne mouthe, the whiche if they be taken accordinge as they are spoken, seme to conteyne great absurditie in them. And therefore the mind of the lawe maker muste rather be observed, then the bare wordes taken onely, as they are spoken. Christ sayth in the .v. of Mathew.⁵⁷ If thy right eye be an offence unto thee, plucke him out, and cast him away from thee. If one geve the a blowe of

⁵⁵Matt. 10:6: "But goo rather to the lost shepe of the house of Israell." [T.J.D.]

⁵⁶Matt. 28.19: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nacions . . . Teachinge them to observe all thinges." [T.J.D.]

⁵⁷Matt. 5:29: "Yf thy ryght eye hynder the, plucke hym out, and cast hym from the." 5:39: "whosoever geve the a blowe on the ryght cheke, turne to hym the other also." [T.J.D.]

thy ryghte cheke, turne to him agayne thy lefte checke (Math.v.). There be some Eunuches, that have gelded themselves for the kyngdome of heaven. Go, and sell all that thou hast, and geve it to the poore (Math.xix.).⁵⁸ He that doeth not take up his crosse and folowe me, is not worthy of me (Math.xvi.)⁵⁹ In all whiche sentences there is no suche meanyng, as the bare wordes uttered seme to yelde. Pluckyng out of the iye, declares an avoydyng of all evill occasions: receivynge a blowe upon the lefte cheke, commendes unto us, modestie and pacience in adversitie. Geldyng, signifieth a subduying of affections, and tamyng the foule luste of pleasure, unto the will of reason. Go and sell all; declares we should be liberal, and glad to part with our gooddes to the poore and neady. Bearyng the Crosse, betokeneth sufferance of all sorowes, and miseries in this worlde. Now to prove that the will of the lawe maker, is none other then I have saied: I maie use the testimonies of other places in the Scripture, and compare them with these sentences, and so, judge by juste examinacion, and diligent searche, the true meanyng of the lawe maker.

Ambiguitee.

Sometymes a doubt is made, upon some woordes or sentence, when it signifieth diverse thynges, or maie diversly be taken, wherupon ful oft ariseth mucche contencion. The lawyers lacke no cases, to fil this parte full of examples.

Lawyers.

For, rather than faile, thei will make doubtles often tymes, where no doubt should be at all. Is his Lease long enough (quoth one): yea sir, it is very long, saied a poore husbände man. Then (quoth he) let me alone with it, I will finde a hole in it, I warrant thee. In all this talke, I excepte alwaies the good lawyers, and I maie well spare them, for thei are but a fewe.

⁵⁸Matt. 19:12: "And ther be chaste, which have made them selves chaste for the kyngdome of hevens sake." 19:21: "go and sell (all) that thou hast, and geve to the poore." [T.J.D.]

⁵⁹"If eny man wil folowe me, let him forsake him selfe and take up his crosse, and folowe me." [T.J.D.]

Probacion by thynges like.

When there is no certain lawe by expresse wordes uttered for some heinous offender, we maie judge the offence worthy deathe, by rehersall of some other Lawe, that soundeth mucche that waie. As thus. The civil lawe⁶⁰ appoyncteth that he shalbe put in a sacke, and cast in the Sea, that killeth his father: well, then he that killeth his mother, should by all reason, in like sort be ordered. It is lawfull to have a Magistrate, therefore it is lawfull to plead matters before an officer. And thus, though the last cannot be proved by expresse wordes, yet thesame is found lawfull, by rehersall of the first.

Chalengyng, or refusyng.

We use this order, when wee remove our sewtes, from one Courte to another, as if a manne should appele from the Common place,⁶¹ to the Chauncerie. Or if one should bee called by a wrong name, not to answeere unto it. Or if one should refuse to answeere in the spirituall court, and appele to the lorde Chauncellor.

The Oracion of right or wrong, called otherwise the state Juridicall.

After a deede is well knowen to be doen, by some one persone, we go to the next, and searche whether it be right, or wrong. And that is, when the maner of doying is examined, and the matter tried through reasonyng, and mucche debatyng, whether it be wrongfully doen or otherwise.

The division.

This state of right or wrong, is twoo waies divided, wherof the one is, when the matter by the awne nature, is defended to bee righte, without any further sekyng, called of the Rhetoricians, the state absolute.

The other (usyng little force, or strengthe to maintein the matter) is, when outward help is

⁶⁰This statute is cited in *Ad Herennium* (1, xiii, 23) as an example of a controversy based on analogy. [T.J.D.]

⁶¹Court of Common Pleas. [T.J.D.]

sought, and bywaies used to purchase favour, called otherwise the state assumptive.

*Places of confirmacion for the first kynd, are seven.*⁶²

- i. Nature it self.
- ii. Goddes lawe, and mannes lawe.
- iii. Custome.
- iiii. Aequitie.
- v. True dealyng.
- vi. Auncient examples.
- vii. Covenantes and deedes autentique.

Tullie in his moste worthy Oracion, made in behalfe of Milo,⁶³ declareth that Milo slewe Clodius moste lawfully, whom Clodius sought to have slain moste wickedly. For (quod Tullie) if nature have graffed this in man, if lawe have confirmed it, if necessitie have taught it, if custome have kept it, if aequitie have mainteined it, if true dealyng hath allowed it, if all common weales have used it, if deedes auncient have sealed this up, that every creature livyng should sense it self, against outward violence: no man can thinke that Milo hath dooen wrong, in killyng of Clodius, except you thinke, that when menne mete with theves, either thei must be slain of them, or els condempned of you.

*Places of confirmacion for the second kynde, are foure.*⁶⁴

- Grauntyng of the faulte committed.
- Blamyng evill companie for it.
- Comparyng thee fault, and declaryng that either they must have doen that, or els have doen worse.
- Shiftyng it from us, and shewyng that wee did it upon commaundement.

⁶²Wilson relies on the topics of the “absolute juridical issue” in *Ad Herennium* (II, xiii, 19): *natura, lege, consuetudine, iudicatio, aequo et bono, pacto*. [T.J.D.]

⁶³In *Pro T. Annio Milone Oratio* (IV, 10) Cicero defends his client’s killing of Publius Clodius on the grounds that nature provides a law of self-defense. The passage does not contain a construction based on “if,” as Wilson uses in 206.6–10. [T.J.D.]

⁶⁴Wilson culls his topics from *Ad Herennium* (II, xv–xvii). [T.J.D.]

Confessyng, what it is.

Confessyng of the faulte, is when the accused person graunteth his crime, and craveth pardon therupon, leavyng to aske justice, and leanyng wholly unto mercie.

Confession of the faulte, used two maner of waies.

The division.

The first is, when one excuseth hymself, that he did it not willyngly, but unwares, and by chauce.

The second is, when he asketh pardone, for the fault doen, consideryng his service to the common weale, and his worthy deeds heretofore dooen, promisyng amendement of his former evill deede: the whiche wordes, would not be used before a Judge, but before a kyng, or generall of an armie. For the Judges muste geve sentence, accordyng to the Lawe: the Kyng maie forgeve, as beyng aucthour of the lawe, and havyng power in his hande, maie do as he shall thinke best.

Blamyng other, how it is saied.

Blamyng other for the faulte doen, is when wee saie that the accused persone, would never have doen suche a deede, if other against whom also, this accusacion is intended, had not been evill men, and geven just cause, of suche a wicked dede.

Comparyng the faulte.

Comparyng the faulte is when we saie, that by slayng an evill man, we have doen a good dede, cuttyng awaie the corrupte and rotten member, for preservacion of the whole body. Or thus: some sette a whole toune on fire, because their enemies should have none advauntage by it.

Saguntines.

The Saguntynes⁶⁵ beeyng tributarie to the Romaines, slewe their awne children, burnte their

⁶⁵Valerius Maximus in *Factorum* (VI, vi) recounts the Saguntines’ defeat. [T.J.D.]

goodes, and fired their bodies, because they would not be subjecte to that cruell Haniball, and lose their allegiaunce, due to the Romaines.

Shiftyng the fault from us.

Shiftyng it from us, is when we saie, that if other had not set us on, wee would never have attempted suche an enterprise. As often tymes the souldiour saieth, his Capitaines bidding, was his enforcement: the servaunt thynketh his Maisters commaundemente, to bee a sufficient defence for his discharge. . . .

[FROM BOOK III]

The third boke. Of apte chusyng and framing of wordes and sentences together, called Elocucion.

And now we are come to that parte of Rhetorique, the whiche above al other is most beautifull, wherby not onely wordes are aptly used, but also sentences are in right order framed. For whereas Invencion, helpeth to finde matter, the Disposicion serveth to place argumentes: Elocucion getteth wordes to set furthe invencion, and with suche beautie commendeth the matter, that reason semeth to bee clad in purple, walkyng afore, bothe bare and naked. Therefore Tullie saieth well,⁶⁶ to finde out reason, and aptly to frame it, is the part of a wise man, but to commend it by wordes, and with gorgious talke to tell our concepte, that is onely propre to an Orator. Many are wise, but fewe have the gift to set furthe their wisdom. Many can tell their mynde in Englishe, but fewe can use mete termes, and apt order: suche as all men should have, and wise men will use: suche as nedes must be had, when matters should be uttered. Now then what is he, at whom all men wonder, and stande in a mase, at the viewe of his wit?

⁶⁶Wilson's discussion of elocution depends generally on the third book of *De Oratore*. For example, his distinction between the wise man and the orator (323.14) is derived from III, xxvi, 104, where the ability of a common speaker to find and arrange matter is contrasted with the orator's superior talent to amplify by means of ornament: "Summa autem laus eloquentiae est amplificare rem ornando." [T.J.D.]

Eloquent men moste esteemed.

Whose doynge are best esteemed? Whom do we moste reverence, and compte half a God emong men? Even suche a one assuredly, that can plainly, distinctly, plentifully, and aptly utter bothe wordes and matter, and in his talke can use suche composicion, that he maie appere to kepe an uniformitie, and (as I might saie) a number in the uttering of his sentence. Now an eloquent man beyng smally learned, can do muche more good in perswading, by shift of wordes, and mete placyng of matter: then a greate learned clerke shalbe able with great store of learnyng, wantyng wordes to set furth his meanyng. Wherefore I muche marvaile that so many seke the only knowlege of thynge, without any mynd to commend or set furthe their entendement: seyng none can knowe either what they are, or what they have, without the gift of utterance. Yea, bryng them to speake their mynde, and enter in talke with suche as are said to be learned, and you shal finde in them suche lacke of utterance, that if you judge them by their tongue, and expressyng of their mynde: you must nedes saie they have no learnyng. Wherin me thinkes they do, like some riche snudges, that havyng great wealth, go with their hose out at heeles, their shoes out at toes, and their cotes out at bothe elbowes. For who can tell, if suche men are worth a grote, when their apparel is so homely, and al their behavior so base? I can call them by none other name, but slovens, that maie have good geare, and nether can, nor yet will ones weare it clenly.

Barbarous clerkes, no better than slovens.

What is a good thyng to a manne, if he neither knowe thuse of it, nor yet (though he knowe it) is able at all to use it? If we thinke it comelinesse, and honestie to set furthe the body with handsome apparell, and thynke them worthie to have money, that bothe can and will use it accordyngly: I cannot otherwise se, but that this part deserveth praise, whiche standeth wholly in setting furthe matter by apte wordes and sentences together, and beautifieth the tongue with greate change of colours, and varietie of figures.

*Foure partes belongyng to Elocucion.*⁶⁷

- i. Plainnesse.
- ii. Aptenesse.
- iii. Composicion.
- iiii. Exornacion.

Plaines what it is.

Emong al other lessons, this should first be learned, that we never affect any straunge ynkehorne termes, but so speake as is commonly received: neither sekyng to be over fine, nor yet livyng over carelesse, usyng our speache as most men do, and ordryng our wittes, as the fewest have doen. Some seke so farre for outlandishe Englishe, that thei forget altogether their mothers language. And I dare swere this, if some of their mothers were alive, thei were not able to tell, what thei say, and yet these fine Englishe clerkes, wil saie thei speake in their mother tongue, if a man should charge them for counterfeityng the kynges English. Somme farre jorneid gentlemen at their returne home, like as thei love to go in forrein apparell, so thei wil poudere their talke with oversea language. He that cometh lately out of France, wil talke Frenche English, and never blushe at the matter. Another choppes in with Englishe Italianated, and applieth the Italian phrase, to our Englishe speaking, the whiche is, as if an Oratour that professeth to utter his minde in plaine Latine, would needes speake Poetrie, and farre fetched colours of straunge antiquitie.⁶⁸ The lawyer wil store his stomack with the

⁶⁷Wilson takes these topics from *De Oratore* (III, x, 37): “ut Latine, ut plane, ut ornate, ut . . . apte,” which correspond to his “Composicion,” “Plainnesse,” “Exornacion,” and “Aptnesse.” Wilson reiterates these four topics in 332.5. [T.J.D.]

⁶⁸Wilson’s complaints about foolish Latinists are inspired by Erasmus’ comments on the affected use of Greek terms, in *Moriae Encomium* (IV, 409 A), as translated by Chaloner, *The Praise of Folie*, sig. A3r: “the Rhetoriciens of these daies, who plainely thynke them selves demygods, if lyke horsleches thei can shew two tongues, I meane to mingle their writings with words sought out of strange langages, as if it were a lovely thyng for them to poudere theyr bokes with ynkehorne termes, although perchance as unaptly applied, as a gold ryng in a sowes nose. That and if they want suche farre-fetched vocables, than serche they out of some rotten Pamphlet four of fyve disused words of antiquitee, therewith to darken unto the reader.” [T.J.D.]

pratyng of Pedlers. The Auditour in makyng his accompt and rekenyng, cometh in with sise sould, and cater denere, for vi.s. iiii.d. The fine Courtier wil talke nothyng but Chaucer. The misticall wise menne, and Poeticall Clerkes, will speake nothyng but quaint proverbes, and blynd allegories, delityng muche in their awne darkenesse, especially, when none can tell what thei dooe saie. The unlearned or foolish phantasticall, that smelles but of learnyng (suche felowes as have seen learned men in their daies) will so latine their tongues, that the simple cannot but wonder at their talke, and thynke surely thei speake by some Revelacion. I knowe them that thynke Rhetorique, to stande wholly upon darke woordes, and he that can catche an ynkehorne terme by the taile, hym thei compt to bee a fine Englishe man, and a good Rhetorician. And the rather to set out this folie, I will adde here suche a letter, as Willyam Sommer himself,⁶⁹ could not make a better for that purpose. Somme will thinke and swere it to, that there was never any suche thyng written, well I wil not force any man to beleve it, but I will saie thus muche, and abide by it to, the like have been made heretofore, and praised above the Monne.

A letter divided by a Lincolneshire man,⁷⁰ for a voide benefice, to a gentelman that then waited upon the lorde Chauncellour, for the tyme beyng.⁷¹

An ynkehorne letter.

Pondering, expendyng, and revolutyng with my self your ingent affabilitee, and ingenious capacitee, for mundane affaires: I cannot but celebrate and extolle your magnificall dexteritee, above all

⁶⁹William Sommers (d. 1560) served as court fool to Henry VIII from 1525 until the king’s death. [T.J.D.]

⁷⁰The source of the ynkehorne letter is disputed. Note that Wilson himself was born in Lincolnshire. [Ed.]

⁷¹H. H. S. Croft, editor of Elyot’s *Governour* (London, 1883), II, 441, note b, cites a dozen instances from the vocabulary of the inkhorn letter that he thinks Wilson drew from Elyot. Of these, some are common words like “Pondering,” “compendious,” “intelligence,” “fortresse,” and “Amen”; others, like the term that begins Croft’s note, “revolutyng,” appear in a different form in Elyot: “revolvinge.” Thus, *The Governour* is not such a likely source for Wilson’s satire as Croft suggests. [T.J.D.]

other. For how could you have adepted suche illustrate prerogative, and dominicall superioritee, if the fecunditee of your ingenie had not been so fertile, and wounderfull pregraunt. Now therfore beeyng accerfited, to suche splendent renoume, and dignitee splendidious: I doubt not but you will adiuuate suche poore adnichilate orphanes, as whilome ware condisciples with you, and of antique familiaritie in Lincolne shire. Emong whom I beeyng a Scholasticall panion, obtestate your sublimitie to extoll myne infirmitie. There is a sacerdotall dignitee in my native countrey, contiguate to me, where I now contemplate: whiche your worshipfull benignitee, could some impetrate for me, if it would like you to extend your scedules, and collaude me in them to the right honorable lorde Chauncellor, or rather Archigrammacion of Englande. You knowe my literature, you knowe the pastorall promocion, I obtestate your clemencie, to invigilate thus mucche for me, accordyng to my confidence, and as you know my condigne merites, for suche a compendious livyng. But now I relinquishe to fatigate your intelligence with any more frivolous verbotie, and therefore he that rules the climates be evermore your beautreux, your fortresse, and your bulwarke. Amen.

Dated at my Dome, or rather Mansion place, in Lincolnshire, the penulte of moneth sextile. *Anno Millimo, quillimo, trillimo. Per me Johannes Octo.*

What wise man readyng this letter, will not take him for a very Caulfe, that made it in good earnest, and thought by his ynkepot terms, to get a good personage. Doeth wit reste in straunge wordes, or els standeth it in wholsome matter, and apt declaryng of a mannes mynd? Do we not speake, because we would have other to understand us, or is not the tongue geven for this ende, that one might know what another meaneth? And what unlearned man can tell, what half this letter signifieth? Therefore, either we must make a difference of Englishe, and saie some is learned Englishe, and other some is rude Englishe, or the one is courte talke, the other is countrey speache, or els we must of necessitie, banishe al suche affected Rhetorique, and use altogether one maner of language. When I was in Cambrige, and student in the kynges College, there came a man out of the toune, with a pinte of wine in a pottle pot, to

welcome the provost of that house,⁷² that lately came from the court. And because he would bestow his present like a clerke, dwellyng emong the schoolers: he made humbly his thre curtesies, and said in this maner. Cha good even my good lord, and well might your lordship vare: Understanding that your lordeship was come, and knowyng that you are a worshipfull Pilate, and kepes a bominable house: I thought it my duetie to come incantivantee, and bryng you a potell a wine, the whiche I beseche your lordeship take in good worthe. Here the simple man beyng desirous to amende his mothers tongue, shewed hymself not to bee the wisest manne, that ever spake with tongue.

Another good felowe in the countrey, beyng an officer, and Maiour of a toune, and desirous to speake like a fine learned man, havyng just occasion to rebuke a runnegate felow,⁷³ said after this wise in a great heate.

*Roperipe chidyng.*⁷⁴

Thou yngram and vacacion knave, if I take thee any more within the circumcicion of my dampnacion: I will so corrupte thee, that all vacacion knaves shall take ilsample by thee.

Another standyng in mucche nede of money, and desirous to have some helpe at a jentlemanns hand, made his complaint in this wise. I praie you sir be so good unto me, as forbear this halfe yeres rent. For so helpe me God and halidrome, we are so taken on with contrary Bishoppes,⁷⁵ with revives,⁷⁶ and with Southsides⁷⁷ to the kyng, that al our money is cleane gone. These wordes he spake for contribucion, relief, and subsidie. And thus we see that poore simple men are mucche troubled, and talke oftentymes, thei knowe not what, for lacke of wit and want of Latine and Frenche, wherof many of our straunge woordes full often are derived.

⁷²John Cheke was elected Provost on April 1, 1548, while still at court. In his new capacity, he first returned to King's in May 1549. [T.J.D.]

⁷³Renegade, fugitive. [T.J.D.]

⁷⁴Ripe for hanging, i.e., scurrilous. [T.J.D.]

⁷⁵Nonsensical form of "contributions" (see 330.22). [T.J.D.]

⁷⁶Nonsensical form of "relief," based on "revives," i.e., "brings to life" (?). [T.J.D.]

⁷⁷This nonsensical form of "subsidy" is the intended reading in this parody. [T.J.D.]

Those therefore that will eschue this folly, and acquaint themselves with the best kynd of speache, muste seke from tyme to tyme, suche wordes as are commonly received, and suche as properly maie expresse in plain maner, the whole conceipt of their mynde. And looke what woordes wee best understande, and know what thei meane: thesame should sonest be spoken, and firste applied to the utteraunce of our purpose.

Now whereas wordes be received, aswell Greke as Latine, to set furthe our meanyng in thenglishe tongue, either for lacke of store, or els because wee would enriche the language: it is well doen to use them, and no man therin can be charged for any affectacion, when all other are agreed to folowe thesame waie. There is no man agreved, when he heareth (letters patentes) and yet patentes is latine, and signifieth open to all men. The Communion is a felowship, or a commyng together, rather Latine then Englishe: the Kynges prerogative, declareth his power royall above all other, and yet I knowe no man greved for these termes, beeyng used in their place, nor yet any one suspected for affectacion, when suche generall wordes are spoken. The folie is espied, when either we will use suche wordes, as fewe man doo use, or use them out of place, when another might serve muche better. Therefore, to avoyde suche folie, we maie learne of that most excellent Orator Tullie, who in his thirde booke, where he speaketh of a perfect Oratoure, declareth under the name of Crassus, that for the choise of wordes, foure thinges should chiefly be observed.

Foure thinges observed, for choise of wordes.

First, that suche wordes as we use, shuld be proper unto the tongue, wherein wee speake, again, that thei be plain for all men to perceive: thirdly, that thei be apt and mete, moste properly to sette out the matter. Fourthly, that woordes translated from one significacion to another, (called of the Grecians, Tropes) bee used to beautifie the sentence, as precious stones are set in a ryng, to commende the golde.

Aptnesse what it is.

Suche are thought apt wordes, that properly agre unto that thyng, whiche thei signifie, and plainly expresse the nature of thesame. Therefore thei that

have regard of their estimacion, do warely speake, and with choise, utter woordes moste apte for their purpose.

Aptnes.

In weightie causes, grave wordes are thought moste nedefull, that the greatnesse of the matter, maie the rather appere in the vehemencie of their talke. So likewise of other, like order muste be taken. Albeit some, not onely do not observe this kynde of aptnes, but also thei fall into muche fondnesse, by usyng wordes out of place, and applying them to diverse matters without all discrecion. As thus.⁷⁸

Unapte usyng of apt wordes.

An ignorant felowe comyng to a jentlemannes place, and seyng a greate flocke of shepe in his pastour, saied to the owner of them, now by my truthe sir, here is as goodly an audience of shepe, as ever I saw in al my life. Who will not take this felowe meter to talke with shepe, then to speake emong menne? Another likewise seeyng a house faire buylded, saied to his felowe thus: good lorde, what a handsome phrase of buildyng is this? Thus are good wordes evil used, when thei are not well applied, and spoken to good purpose. Therefore I wishe that suche untoward speakyng, maie geve us a good lesson, to use our tongue warely, that our wordes and matter maie still agree together.

Of Composicion.

When we have learned usuall and accustomable wordes to set furthe in our meanyng, we ought to joyne them together in apt order, that the eare maie delite, in hearyng the harmonie. I knowe some English men, that in this poynt have suche a gift in the Englishe, as fewe in Latine have the like, and therefore, delite the wise and lerned so muche, with the pleasaunt composicion: that many rejoyce, when thei maie heare suche, and thynke much learnyng is gotte, when thei maie talke with suche.

⁷⁸Wilson takes the two examples of ignorant remarks from Sherry's *Treatise*, sig. C2r: "also if wee shuld saye: a phrase of building, or an audience of shepe, as a certen homey felow dyd." [T.J.D.]

Composicion what it is.

Composicion therefore,⁷⁹ is an apte joynyng together of wordes in suche order, that neither the eare shal espie any jerre,⁸⁰ nor yet any man shalbe dilled with overlong drawing out of a sentence, nor yet muche confounded with myngelyng of clauses, suche as are nedelesse, beyng heaped together without reason, and used without number. For, by suche meanes that hearers will be forced, to forgette full oft, what was saied first, before the sentence be halfe ended: or els bee blynded with confoundyng of many thynges together.

Faultes in composicion.

Some again will bee so shorte, and in suche wise curtall their Sentences, that thei had nede to make a commentarie immediatly of their meanyng, or els the moste that heare them, shalbe forced to kepe counsaill.

Some will speake oracles, that a man cannot tell, whiche waie to take them, some will be so fine, and so Poeticall with all, that to their semyng, there shall not stande one heire amisse, and yet every body els shall thinke them meter for a ladies chamber, then for an earnest matter, in any open assemblee.

Some wil rove so muche, and bable so farre without order, that a manne would thynke, thei had a greate love, to heare themselves speake.

Some repeate one woorde so often, that if suche woordes could be eaten, and chopte in so ofte, as thei are uttered out, thei would choke the widest throte in all England. As thus. If a man knewe, what a mans life wer, no man for any mannes sake, would kill any man, but one man would rather help another man, considryng man is borne for man, to help man, and not to hate man. What man would not be choked, if he chopt all these men at ones into his mouth, and never dronke after it? Some use overmuch repetition of some one letter, as pitiful povertie praieth for a peny, but puffed presumpcion, passeth not a

⁷⁹Wilson borrows the first part of his definition from Sherry's *Treatise*, sig. C3^v: "Composicion is an apte settinge together with wordes, whych causeth all the partes of an oracion to be trymmed alyke." [T.J.D.]

⁸⁰Jar, different sound. [T.J.D.]

poynt, pamperying his panche, with pestilent pleasure, procuring his passe porte to poste it to Hell pytte, there to be punished with paines perpetuall. Some will so sette their wordes that they muste be fayne to gape after everye worde spoken, endinge one worde with a vowell, and beginninge the next wyth an other, whyche undoubtedlye maketh the talke to seme mooste unpleasaunte. As thus. Equitie assuredlye everye injurye avoydeth. Some will set the carte before the horse, as thus. My mother and my father are both at home, even as thoughe the good man of the house ware no breaches, or that the graye Mare were the better Horse. And what thoughe it often so happeneth (God wotte the more pitye) yet in speakinge at the leaste, let us kepe a natural order, and set the man before the woman for maners sake.

An other cominge home in haste after a long journey, sayeth to hys manne: Come hither sir knave, helpe me of with my bootes and my spurres.⁸¹ I praye you sir geve him leave firste to plucke of youre spurres, ere he meddle wyth your bootes, or els your man is like to have a madde pluckinge. Who is so folyshe as to saye the counsayle and the kyng, but rather the Kinge and his counsayle, the father and the sonne, and not contrary. And so likewise in al other, as they are in degree firste, evermore to set them formost.

The wise therfore talkinge of divers worthy menne together, will firste name the worthiest, and kepe a decent order in reportyng of their tale. Some ende their sentences all alike, makyng their talke rather to appeare rimed meter then to seme playne speache, the whiche as it muche deliteth beyng measurablye used, so it muche offendeth when no meane is regarded. I hearde a preacher delityng much in thys kynd of composition, who used so often to ende his sentence with wordes like unto that whiche wente before, that in my judgemente, there was not a dosen sentences in hys whole sermon, but they ended all in ryme for the most part. Some not best disposed, wished the Preacher a Lute, that with his rimed sermon he myght use some pleasaunt melodye, and so the people myghte take pleasure divers wayes, and daunce if they liste. Certes there is a

⁸¹Wilson copies this example from Sherry's *Treatise*, sig. B8^r: "plucke of [i.e. off] my bootes and spurres." [T.J.D.]

meane, and no reason to use any one thinge at all times, seyng nothings deliteth (be it never so good) that is alwayes used.

Quintilian likeneth the coloures of Rhetorique to a mannes eye sighte.⁸² And nowe (quod he) I woulde not have all the bodye to be full of eyes, or nothings but eyes: for then the other partes shoulde wante their due place and proporcion. Some overthwartelye sette their woordes, placynge some one a myle frome his felowes, not contented with a playne and easye composition, but seke to sette wordes they can not tell howe, and therefore one not likynge to be called and by printe published Doctoure of Phisike, would needes be named of Phisike Doctour, wherin appeared a wonderfull composition (as he thought) straunge undoubtedlye, but whether wise or no, lette the learned sitte in judgement upon that matter.

An other. As I rose in the mornynge (quod one) I mette a carte full of stonnes emptye. Belike the manne was fastinge, when the carte was full, and yet we see that throughe straunge composition this sentence appeareth darke.

Some will tell one thinge .xx. times, nowe in, nowe out, and when a man would thinke they had almost ended, they are ready to beginne againe as freshe as ever they were. Such vayne repetitions declare both wante of witte, and lacke of learninge. Some are so homely in all their doynges, and so grosse for their invention, that they use altogether one maner of trade, and seke no varietie to eschewe tediousnes.

Some burden their talke with nedelesse cople, and will seme plentifull, when they should be shorte. An other is so curious and so fine of his tongue, that he can not tell in all the worlde what to speake. Everie sentence semeth commune, and everye worde generallye used, is thought to be folyshe, in his wise judgemente. Some use so manye interpositions bothe in their talke and in their writinge, that they make their saynges as darke as hell. Thus when faultes be knowen, they may be avoyded: and vertue the soner may take place, when vice is forsene, and eschewed as evill.

⁸²*Institutio* (VIII, v, 34) . . . [T.J.D.]

Of Exornation.

When wee have learned apte woordes and usuall Phrases to sette forthe oure meanyng, and can orderlye place them without offence to the eare, we maye boldelye commende and beautifie our talke wyth divers goodlye coloures, and delitefull translations, that oure speache maye seme as bryghte and precious, as a ryche stone is fayre and orient.

Exornation.

Exornation is a gorgiouse beautifyng of the tongue with borrowed woordes, and chaung of sentence or speache, with muche variete. Firste therefore (as Tullie saythe)⁸³ an Oration is made to seme ryghte excellent by the kinde selfe, by the colour and juice of speache.

Thre maner of stiles or enditinges.

Ther are .iii. maner of styles or enditinges, the great or mighty kind, when we use great woordes, or vehement figures:

The smal kinde, when we moderate our heate by meaner woordes, and use not the most stirring sentences.

The lowe kinde, when we use no Metaphores, nor translated woordes, nor yet use any amplifications, but go plainelye to worke, and speake altogether in commune woordes. Nowe in all these three kindes, the Oration is muche commended, and appeareth notable, when wee kepe us styll to that style, whiche wee firste professed, and use suche woordes as seme for that kinde of writinge most convenient.

⁸³*De Oratore* (III, lii, 199). Wilson derives his metaphor, "colour and juice of speache," from Cicero's phrase, "sanguine diffusus debet color." The triple division of style appears here and in *Ad Herennium* (IV, viii, 11): *gravis, mediocris, adtenuata*. Wilson's translation and order follow Sherry's in *Treatise*, sig. B3^v: (1) "The great, the noble, the mightye, and the full kynde. . . . And they that use thys kynde, bee vehement, various, copious, grave"; (2) "The small kynde"; (3) "The mean and temperate kynd of indyghting standeth of the lower, and yet not of the loweste, and most comen woordes and sentences." [T.J.D.]

Francis Bacon

1561–1626

Francis Bacon was the youngest child of Sir Nicholas Bacon, a statesman in the service of Queen Elizabeth. His mother, Lady Bacon, who possessed a good humanist education and devout Puritan beliefs, tutored her sickly but precocious son at home and then sent him to Cambridge at age twelve. When Bacon was eighteen, his father died, leaving debts that did not permit much support for a younger son. Bacon became a lawyer, trading on family connections at court to launch a career in politics. In 1584, at age twenty-three, he won a seat in the House of Commons. He gradually rose in Elizabeth's favor, and under her successor, James I, he became Lord Chancellor. In 1621, he entered the nobility as Lord Verulam, Viscount St. Albans.

Bacon was noted among his contemporaries for his knowledge of law and the pithy eloquence of his speeches on legal and political matters. He supported greater power for the legislative branch of government, although he also held out for the rights of the monarchy. As a practical politician, Bacon negotiated the conflicts and compromises of his career in ways that may sometimes strike us today as unethical. He seemed to believe that one might go along with convention if it was necessary for self-preservation, even if in private one saw its limitations or errors. This attitude may help to explain Bacon's involvement in some distasteful political dealings. Although championed in his early career by the Earl of Essex, Bacon acquiesced to Elizabeth's demand that he prepare the legal prosecution of her former favorite, by which Essex was brought to the scaffold. Bacon's behavior in this case is mitigated, perhaps, by the fact that Essex did indeed seem to be guilty of treason. But there were other spots on Bacon's reputation. He never denied, for example, that he accepted presents—or bribes—from favor seekers. He was convicted of doing so and turned out of office in disgrace in 1621. He then devoted renewed attention to the private philosophical and scientific studies that had always occupied him, even in the midst of his public career. After his death, Bacon's family was left with a mountain of debt, a result of the extravagant manner of living that he had justified as necessary to his political career.

Bacon wrote and published a number of important works: the *Essays* (1597, revised and expanded 1625), *The Advancement of Learning* (1605; excerpted here), *Novum Organum* (1620; excerpted here), *De Augumentis Scientiarum* (an expanded version of *The Advancement of Learning*), and the utopian *New Atlantis* (published posthumously in 1627). His works include a large number of speeches, letters, and collections of aphorisms from the commonplace books that he diligently kept, believing that to do so was essential for the serious orator. In the *Essays*, Bacon tests common wisdom about moral and civic virtue against actual experience, using a concise, aphoristic style in preference to the copious style popular with his contemporaries. In his philosophical works, Bacon seeks to survey and comment on the methods of inquiry and the present state of knowledge in every branch of learning. He argues that “natural philosophy” has made little progress since ancient times and has even deteriorated in some ways. Philosophy should, he claims, reject hollow

Scholasticism, which relies on received wisdom and the tautologies of syllogism and so can discover nothing new. His preferred model is the practice of successful scientists, which combines careful observation, experimentation, and classification with an inductive logic that advances learning by revealing natural laws. In *New Atlantis*, Bacon describes the research institute that would be necessary for the large-scale pursuit of knowledge he proposed. He tried, unsuccessfully, to persuade James I to establish such institutes at Cambridge and Oxford.

Bacon divided knowledge into two branches, theology and philosophy, and then subdivided the latter into theoretical inquiry, which investigates causes, and practical inquiry, which seeks effects. He further subdivided the theoretical into physics and metaphysics, and the scheme brachiates through all the sciences. Bacon used the device of binary opposition popularized by Ramus (p. 674) insofar as it suited his purposes, but he was no advocate of Ramism. Indeed, he regarded Ramist dialectic as no more than a version of Scholasticism, dependent on syllogistic disputation. Moreover, as we shall see, Bacon does not subscribe to the Ramist separation between dialectic and rhetoric.

Bacon hoped that his taxonomy of philosophy and science would foster vigorous empirical study, but he warned against narrow empiricism or what would later be called positivism, an uncritical acceptance of the idea that sense perceptions constitute reality. He urged instead a critical epistemology, which he developed in several ways. First, he separated the mind into faculties—reason, memory, and imagination. Reason is the ability to see regularities, to analyze, and to generalize; philosophy is the branch of learning that develops and appeals to this faculty. Memory, the second faculty, is the storehouse of experienced events and material facts; history is its special genre. Imagination is the faculty that appreciates fiction; hence poesy is its genre. Bacon regarded appetite and will as faculties of a slightly different kind, forces that move us to acquire and act. This description of the psyche dominated psychology for almost three hundred years.

Bacon's second contribution to epistemology is his observation that perception is not infallible, nor are mental operations neutral. In his analysis of the false ideas that he calls "Idols" (reprinted here from *Novum Organum*), he maintains that reason and the senses are warped by common preconceptions, personal predilections, the ambiguities of language, and the misrepresentations of philosophical systems. There may be objective truth in the world, but knowing is subjective. Bacon proposes no strict method for overcoming the perversions of the Idols (as Descartes would do some years later). He relies instead on the strength of observation, experiment, and induction to dispel the mists of prejudice and complacency that hinder learning.

Bacon divides the operation of the intellect into four intellectual arts or, as he calls them in *De Augmentis*, "the branches of logic": (1) inquiry and invention, (2) judgment, (3) memory, and (4) delivery. These arts, which resemble the five parts of classical rhetoric, serve both logic and rhetoric. Bacon would not credit Ramus's fanatical distinctions between the disciplines, distinctions that limited rhetoric to style. Bacon acknowledges practical differences between invention and judgment in philosophy and in rhetoric, but those very differences argue for the

need to allow the two disciplines to overlap. Invention, for example, he wishes to redefine in the modern sense of finding or making something new, at least as it applies to science. In rhetoric, this means recall or recovery and relies on commonplaces of wisdom and knowledge produced by science. Judgment is an extension of invention, the evaluation of knowledge. Here syllogistic logic may be used to guard against fallacious generalization in both logic and rhetoric. In discussing memory, Bacon suggests that mental representations are counters or signs for experiences and information. Finally, he treats the art of communication (delivery) as the means by which knowledge is used and incorporated into social institutions, which are maintained by memory. The parts of Bacon's various schemes do not necessarily match up perfectly, nor need they do so. The Idols appear to develop as an extension of Bacon's reflections on fallacious conclusions in the art of judgment. But it is not clear how the three faculties match up with the four intellectual arts. If anything brings these schemes together, if indeed anything links Bacon's passion for knowledge with his passion for politics, it is rhetoric.

Rhetoric, in Bacon's famous definition, applies reason to the imagination to move the will. Bacon concurs with the ancient Greek philosopher Zeno's popular characterization of dialectic as a fist and rhetoric as an open hand—that is, the idea that scientific discourse is a technical treatment of truth, whereas rhetoric links knowledge to social concerns. Such a distinction, especially in the context of Bacon's high regard for scientific inquiry, suggests a split between thought and speech. For Descartes, this split is decisive. But Bacon will not deride rhetoric, even if he distances it from inquiry. He refutes Plato's argument that rhetoric is a distortion of truth, and in the Idol of the Marketplace the villain is not rhetoric but the ambiguity of words—their inevitable shifts in denotation and connotation. Merely ornamental rhetoric may contribute to such confusions, but that is reason to reform the art on sound psychological principles, not to condemn it. Rhetoric is a serious art and a great responsibility, for it brings knowledge into play in the world. It links morality with reason, although Bacon notes that this is not sufficient in and of itself to enforce ethical behavior.

Certainly Bacon did oppose what he perceived as the excessive ornamentation of the Ciceronian prose of the day, chastising those who “hunt more after words than matter.” But he did not embrace its alternative, the self-proclaimed plainness of the anti-Ciceronians or Senecans. His style has its own particular complexities, though the common view for many years was that his supposed plainness was deliberately suited to the development of science. Scientific style, as we now freely admit, is hardly nonrhetorical, and so Bacon need not be seen as rhetoric's enemy. Bacon's apothegms and aphorisms are not plain but cryptic (as historian of science James Stephens argues), impressing the images of scientific knowledge only upon those superior minds that can penetrate the code.¹ Moreover, framing thought in aphoristic sentences is not just a way of conveying the ideas effectively to the target audience; it actually affects the content of the ideas. Literary historian Lisa Jardine

¹James Stephens, *Francis Bacon and the Style of Science* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975).

maintains that Bacon recognizes the heuristic quality of the writing process itself.² Bacon's many collections of "colors and antitheses," "apothegms," "formulae," "sentences," and other commonplaces are intended not for mere decoration but as a means of investigating how our knowledge can be formulated in effective language, in discourse that shapes our beliefs and actions.

Selected Bibliography

The standard edition is *The Works of Francis Bacon*, edited by J. Spedding, R. L. Ellis, and D. D. Heath (1859; rpt. 1961). The 1955 Modern Library edition, edited by Hugh G. Dick, follows Spedding et al. The selections printed here are taken from this edition. It contains all of the *Essays*, *The Advancement of Learning*, *The New Organon*, and *New Atlantis*. The full title of *The Advancement of Learning* is *The Twoo Bookes of the Proficiency and Advancement of Learning*, which may help to distinguish it from the nine-book version written eighteen years later, called in Latin *De Augmentis Scientiarum* and in English *Of the Dignity and Advancement of Learning*. There are several editions of this expanded work, in Spedding et al. and elsewhere, which contains Bacon's fullest treatment of rhetoric.

A good introduction to Bacon's life and work is Karl Wallace's *Francis Bacon on Communication and Rhetoric* (1946). For a thorough account of Bacon's political milieu, see Christopher Hill, *The Intellectual Origins of the English Revolution* (1965), and Robert Hanna, "Francis Bacon: The Political Orator" (in *Studies in Rhetoric and Public Speaking in Honor of James Albert Winans*, ed. Drummond, 1962). Paolo Rossi provides more information on Bacon's intellectual setting, relating him to Ramism, Wilson, and Vico, in *Francis Bacon: From Magic to Science* (1968).

For a broad selection of scholarship that considers Bacon as a lawyer and historian as well as a scientist and rhetorical stylist, see Brian Vickers's collection, *Essential Articles for the Study of Francis Bacon* (1968), which also provides further bibliography. Much debate has focused on Bacon's contribution to the development of English prose style and the relationship of style to the rise of modern science. In *The Rise of Modern Prose Style* (1968), Robert Adolf provides a helpful summary of earlier discussions by Croll and Jones (see the bibliography in the introduction to Part Three) and supports Jones's argument that Bacon was neither Ciceronian nor strictly anti-Ciceronian; see also Brian Vickers, *Francis Bacon and Renaissance Prose* (1968). James Stephens, in *Francis Bacon and the Style of Science* (1975), has argued that Bacon's aphoristic style was intentionally cryptic; see also Lisa Jardine, *Francis Bacon: Discovery and the Art of Discourse* (1974). An interesting discussion of "The Most Significant Passage on Rhetoric in the Works of Francis Bacon" by six scholars will be found in *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 26.3 (summer 1996).

²Lisa Jardine, *Francis Bacon: Discovery and the Art of Discourse* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974).

From *The Advancement of Learning*

From *Book II*

The Arts Intellectual are four in number; divided according to the ends whereunto they are referred: for man's labour is to *invent* that which is *sought* or *propounded*; or to *judge* that which is *invented*; or to *retain* that which is *judged*; or to *deliver over* that which is *retained*. So as the arts must be four; Art of Inquiry or Invention; Art of Examination or Judgment; Art of Custody or Memory; and Art of Elocution or Tradition.

Invention is of two kinds, much differing; the one, of Arts and Sciences; and the other, of Speech and Arguments. . . .

The invention of speech or argument is not properly an invention: for to invent is to discover that we know not, and not to recover or resummon that which we already know; and the use of this invention is no other but *out of the knowledge whereof our mind is already possessed, to draw forth or call before us that which may be pertinent to the purpose which we take into our consideration*. So as, to speak truly, it is no *Invention*, but a *Remembrance* or *Suggestion*, with an application; which is the cause why the schools do place it after judgment, as subsequent and not precedent. Nevertheless, because we do account it a Chase as well of deer in an inclosed park as in a forest at large, and that it hath already obtained the name, let it be called invention: so as it be perceived and discerned, that the scope and end of this invention is readiness and present use of our knowledge, and not addition or amplification thereof.

To procure this ready use of knowledge there are two courses, Preparation and Suggestion. The former of these seemeth scarcely a part of Knowledge, consisting rather of diligence than of any artificial erudition. And herein Aristotle wittily, but hurtfully, doth deride the sophists near his time, saying, *they did as if one that professed the art of shoe-making should not teach how to make up a shoe, but only exhibit in a readiness a number of shoes of all fashions and sizes*. But yet

a man might reply, that if a shoemaker should have no shoes in his shop, but only work as he is bespoke, he should be weakly customed. But our Saviour, speaking of Divine Knowledge, saith, *that the kingdom of heaven is like a good householder, that bringeth forth both new and old store*; and we see the ancient writers of rhetoric do give it in precept, that pleaders should have the Places¹ whereof they have most continual use ready handled in all the variety that may be; as that, to speak for the literal interpretation of the law against equity, and contrary; and to speak for presumptions and inferences against testimony, and contrary. And Cicero himself, being broken unto it by great experience, delivereth it plainly, that whatsoever a man shall have occasion to speak of, (if he will take the pains) he may have it in effect premeditate, and handled *in thesi*,² so that when he cometh to a particular, he shall have nothing to do but to put to names and times and places, and such other circumstances of individuals. We see likewise the exact diligence of Demosthenes; who, in regard of the great force that the entrance and access into causes hath to make a good impression, had ready framed a number of prefaces for orations and speeches. All which authorities and precedents may outweigh Aristotle's opinion, that would have us change a rich wardrobe for a pair of shears.

But the nature of the collection of this provision or preparatory store, though it be common both to logic and rhetoric, yet having made an entry of it here, where it came first to be spoken of, I think fit to refer over the further handling of it to rhetoric.

The other part of Invention, which I term Suggestion, doth assign and direct us to certain *marks* or *places*, which may excite our mind to return and produce such knowledge as it hath for-

¹The classical *topoi* or *loci*. Bacon makes further distinctions as he goes on between the common and special topics and collections of "commonplaces." [Ed.]

²In general form, like a "thesis." [Ed.]

merly collected, to the end we may make use thereof. Neither is this use (truly taken) only to furnish argument to dispute probably with others, but likewise to minister unto our judgment to conclude aright within ourselves. Neither may these Places serve only to apprompt our invention, but also to direct our inquiry. For a faculty of wise interrogating is half a knowledge. For as Plato saith, *Whosoever seeketh, knoweth that which he seeketh for in a general notion; else how shall he know it when he hath found it?* And therefore the larger your Anticipation is, the more direct and compendious is your search. But the same Places which will help us what to produce of that which we know already, will also help us, if a man of experience were before us, what questions to ask; or if we have books and authors to instruct us, what points to search and revolve: so as I cannot report that this part of invention, which is that which the schools call Topics, is deficient.

Nevertheless Topics are of two sorts, *general* and *special*. The general we have spoken to; but the particular hath been touched by some, but rejected generally as inartificial and variable. But leaving the humour which hath reigned too much in the schools, (which is to be vainly subtle in a few things which are within their command, and to reject the rest,) I do receive particular Topics, that is places or directions of invention and inquiry in every particular knowledge, as things of great use; being mixtures of Logic with the matter of sciences; for in these it holdeth, *Ars inveniendi adolescit cum inventis*,³ for as in going of a way we do not only gain that part of the way which is passed, but we gain the better sight of that part of the way which remaineth; so every degree of proceeding in a science giveth a light to that which followeth; which light if we strengthen, by drawing it forth into questions or places of inquiry, we do greatly advance our pursuit.

Now we pass unto the arts of Judgment, which handle the natures of Proofs and Demonstrations; which as to Induction hath a coincidence with Invention; *for in all inductions, whether in good or vicious form, the same action of the mind which*

inventeth, judgeth; all one as in the sense; but otherwise it is in proof by syllogism; for the proof being not immediate but by mean, the invention of the mean is one thing, and the judgment of the consequence is another; the one exciting only, the other examining. Therefore for the real and exact form of judgment we refer ourselves to that which we have spoken of Interpretation of Nature.

For the other judgment by Syllogism, as it is a thing most agreeable to the mind of man, so it hath been vehemently and excellently laboured. For the nature of man doth extremely covet to have somewhat in his understanding fixed and immoveable, and as a rest and support of the mind. And therefore as Aristotle endeavoureth to prove that in all motion there is some point quiescent; and as he elegantly expoundeth the ancient fable of Atlas (that stood fixed and bare up the heaven from falling) to be meant of the poles or axle-tree of heaven, whereupon the conversion is accomplished; so assuredly men have a desire to have an Atlas or axle-tree within to keep them from fluctuation, which is like to a perpetual peril of falling; therefore men did hasten to set down some Principles about which the variety of their disputations might turn. . . .

The custody or retaining of knowledge is either in Writing or Memory; whereof Writing hath two parts, the nature of the *character*, and the order of the *entry*. For the art of *characters*, or other visible notes of words or things, it hath nearest conjugation with grammar, and therefore I refer it to the due place. For the *disposition* and *collocation* of that knowledge which we preserve in writing, it consisteth in a good digest of commonplaces; wherein I am not ignorant of the prejudice imputed to the use of commonplace books, as causing a retardation of reading, and some sloth or relaxation of memory. But because it is but a counterfeit thing in knowledge to be forward and pregnant, except a man be deep and full, I hold the entry of commonplaces to be a matter of great use and essence in studying; as that which assureth copie⁴ of invention, and contracteth judgment to a strength. But this is true,

³"The art of invention grows with inventions." [Ed.]

⁴Abundance. [Ed.]

that of the *methods* of commonplaces that I have seen, there is none of any sufficient worth; all of them carrying merely the face of a *school*, and not of a *world*; and referring to vulgar matters and pedantical divisions without all life or respect to action.

For the other principal part of the custody of knowledge, which is Memory, I find that faculty in my judgment weakly enquired of. An art there is extant of it; but it seemeth to me that there are better precepts than that art, and better practices of that art than those received. It is certain the art (as it is) may be raised to points of ostentation prodigious: but in use (as it is now managed) it is barren; not burdensome nor dangerous to natural memory, as is imagined, but barren; that is, not dexterous to be applied to the serious use of business and occasions. And therefore I make no more estimation of repeating a great number of names or words upon once hearing, or the pouring forth of a number of verses or rhymes *ex tempore*, or the making of a satirical simile of every thing, or the turning of every thing to a jest, or the falsifying or contradicting of every thing by cavil, or the like, (whereof in the faculties of the mind there is great copie, and such as by device and practice may be exalted to an extreme degree of wonder,) than I do of the tricks of tumblers, funambuloes, baladines;⁵ the one being the same in the mind that the other is in the body; matters of strangeness without worthiness.

This art of Memory is but built upon two intentions; the one Prenotion, the other Emblem. Prenotion dischargeth the indefinite seeking of that we would remember, and directeth us to seek in a narrow compass; that is, somewhat that hath congruity with our *place of memory*. Emblem reduceth conceits intellectual to images sensible, which strike the memory more; out of which axioms may be drawn much better pratique⁶ than that in use; and besides which axioms, there are divers moe⁷ touching help of memory, not inferior to them. But I did in the beginning distinguish, not to report those things deficient, which are but only ill managed.

⁵Funambuloes are rope-dancers; baladines are theatrical dancers. [Ed.]

⁶Practice. [Ed.]

⁷Many others. [Ed.]

There remaineth the fourth kind of Rational Knowledge, which is transitive, concerning the expressing or transferring our knowledge to others; which I will term by the general name of Tradition or Delivery. Tradition hath three parts: the first concerning the *organ* of tradition; the second concerning the *method* of tradition; and the third concerning the *illustration* of tradition.

For the organ of tradition, it is either Speech or Writing; for Aristotle saith well, *Words are the images of cogitations, and letters are the images of words*; but yet it is not of necessity that cogitations be expressed by the medium of words. For *whatsoever is capable of sufficient differences, and those perceptible by the sense, is in nature competent to express cogitations*. And therefore we see in the commerce of barbarous people that understand not one another's language, and in the practice of divers that are dumb and deaf, that men's minds are expressed in gestures, though not exactly, yet to serve the turn. And we understand further that it is the use of China and the kingdoms of the high Levant to write in Characters Real, which express neither letters nor words in gross, but Things or Notions; insomuch as countries and provinces, which understand not one another's language, can nevertheless read one another's writings, because the characters are accepted more generally than the languages do extend; and therefore they have a vast multitude of characters; as many, I suppose, as radical words. . . .

Now we descend to that part which concerneth the Illustration of Tradition, comprehended in that science which we call Rhetoric, or Art of Eloquence; a science excellent, and excellently well laboured. For although in true value it is inferior to wisdom, as it is said by God to Moses, when he disabled himself for want of this faculty, *Aaron shall be thy speaker, and thou shalt be to him as God*; yet with people it is the more mighty: for so Salomon saith, *Sapiens corde appellabitur prudens, sed dulcis eloquio majora reperiet*,⁸ signifying that profoundness of wisdom will help a man to a name of admiration, but

⁸"The wise-hearted is called discerning, but one whose speech is sweet gains wisdom" (Proverbs 16:21). [Ed.]

that it is eloquence that prevaileth in an active life. And as to the labouring of it, the emulation of Aristotle with the rhetoricians of his time, and the experience of Cicero, hath made them in their works of Rhetorics exceed themselves. Again, the excellency of examples of eloquence in the orations of Demosthenes and Cicero, added to the perfection of the precepts of eloquence, hath doubled the progression in this art; and therefore the deficiencies which I shall note will rather be in some collections which may as handmaids attend the art, than in the rules or use of the art itself.

Notwithstanding, to stir the earth a little about the roots of this science, as we have done of the rest: The duty and office of Rhetoric is *to apply Reason to Imagination* for the better moving of the will. For we see Reason is disturbed in the administration thereof by three means; by Illaqueation or Sophism, which pertains to Logic; by Imagination or Impression, which pertains to Rhetoric; and by Passion or Affection, which pertains to Morality. And as in negotiation with others men are wrought by cunning, by importunity, and by vehemency; so in this negotiation within ourselves men are undermined by Inconsequences, solicited and importuned by Impressions or Observations, and transported by Passions. Neither is the nature of man so unfortunately built, as that those powers and arts should have force to disturb reason, and not to establish and advance it: for the end of Logic is to teach a form of argument to secure reason, and not to entrap it; the end of Morality is to procure the affections to obey reason, and not to invade it; the end of Rhetoric is to fill the imagination to second reason, and not to oppress it: for these abuses of arts come in but *ex obliquo*,⁹ for caution.

And therefore it was great injustice in Plato, though springing out of a just hatred of the rhetoricians of his time, to esteem of Rhetoric but as a voluptuary art, resembling it to cookery, that did mar wholesome meats, and help unwholesome by variety of sauces to the pleasure of the taste. For we see that speech is much more conversant in adorning that which is good than in colouring that which is evil; for there is no man

⁹“Indirectly.” [Ed.]

but speaketh more honestly than he can do or think: and it was excellently noted by Thucydides in Cleon,¹⁰ that because he used to hold on the bad side in causes of estate, therefore he was ever inveighing against eloquence and good speech; knowing that no man can speak fair of courses sordid and base. And therefore as Plato said elegantly, *That virtue, if she could be seen, would move great love and affection*; so seeing that she cannot be shewed to the Sense by corporal shape, the next degree is to shew her to the Imagination in lively representation: for to shew her to Reason only in subtilty of argument, was a thing ever derided in Chrysippus and many of the Stoicks; who thought to thrust virtue upon men by sharp disputations and conclusions, which have no sympathy with the will of man.

Again, if the affections in themselves were pliant and obedient to reason, it were true there should be no great use of persuasions and insinuations to the will, more than of naked proposition and proofs; but in regard of the continual mutinies and seditions of the affections,

Video meliora, proboque;
Deteriora sequor:¹¹

reason would become captive and servile, if Eloquence of Persuasions did not practise and win the Imagination from the Affection’s part, and contract a confederacy between the Reason and Imagination against the Affections. For the affections themselves carry ever an appetite to good, as reason doth; the difference is, that *the affection beholdeth merely the present; reason beholdeth the future and sum of time*; and therefore the present filling the imagination more, reason is commonly vanquished; but after that force of eloquence and persuasion hath made things future and remote appear as present, then upon the revolt of the imagination reason prevaileth.

We conclude therefore, that Rhetoric can be no more charged with the colouring of the worse part, than Logic with Sophistry, or Morality with Vice. For we know the doctrines of contraries are the same, though the use be opposite. It appeareth

¹⁰In *The Peloponnesian War*, III, 9. [Ed.]

¹¹“I see and approve the better things, but follow the worse” (Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, VII, 20). [Ed.]

also that Logic differeth from Rhetoric, not only as the fist from the palm, the one close the other at large; but much more in this, that Logic handleth reason exact and in truth, and Rhetoric handleth it as it is planted in popular opinions and manners. And therefore Aristotle doth wisely place Rhetoric as between Logic on the one side and moral or civil knowledge on the other, as participating of both: for the proofs and demonstrations of Logic are toward all men indifferent and the same; but the proofs and persuasions of Rhetoric ought to differ according to the auditors:

Orpheus in sylvis, inter delphinas Arion:¹²

which application, in perfection of idea, ought to extend so far, that if a man should speak of the same thing to several persons, he should speak to them all respectively and several ways: though this *politic part of eloquence in private speech* [*de prudentia sermonis privati*] it is easy for the greatest orators to want, whilst by the observing their well-graced forms of speech they leese¹³ the volubility of application: and therefore it shall not be amiss to recommend this to better inquiry; not being curious whether we place it here, or in that part which concerneth policy.

Now therefore will I descend to the deficiencies, which (as I said) are but attendances: and first, I do not find the wisdom and diligence of Aristotle well pursued, who began to make a collection of *the popular signs and colours of good and evil, both simple and comparative*, [*colores boni et mali, simplicis et comparati*] which are as the Sophisms of Rhetoric (as I touched before). For example:

SOPHISMA

Quod laudatur, bonum: quod vituperatur, malum.¹⁴

REDARGUTIO

Laudet venales qui vult extrudere merces.
Malum est, malum est, inquit emptor: sed cum recesserit, tum gloriabitur.¹⁵

¹²“As Orpheus in the woods, as Arion with the dolphins” (Virgil, *Eclogues*, VIII, 56). [Ed.]

¹³Lose. [Ed.]

¹⁴“SOPHISM / What is praised is good; what is censured, evil.” [Ed.]

¹⁵“REFUTATION / He who praises his wares wishes to sell them” (Horace, *Epistles*, II, 2). “‘It’s no good, it’s no good,’

The defects in the labour of Aristotle are three: one, that there be but a few of many; another, that their Elenches are not annexed:¹⁶ and the third, that he conceived but a part of the use of them: for their use is not only in probation, but much more in impression.¹⁷ For many forms are equal in signification which are differing in impression; as the difference is great in the piercing of that which is sharp and that which is flat, though the strength of the percussion be the same; for there is no man but will be a little more raised by hearing it said, *Your enemies will be glad of this*:

Hoc Ithacus velit, et magno mercentur Atridæ.¹⁸

than by hearing it said only, *This is evil for you*.

Secondly, I do resume also that which I mentioned before touching Provision or Preparatory store for the furniture of speech and readiness of invention; which appeareth to be of two sorts; the one in resemblance to a shop of pieces unmade up, the other to a shop of things ready made up; both to be applied to that which is frequent and most in request: the former of these I will call *Antitheta*, and the latter *Formulae*.

Antitheta are Theses argued *pro et contra*; wherein men may be more large and laborious: but (in such as are able to do it) to avoid prolixity of entry, I wish the seeds of the several arguments to be cast up into some brief and acute sentences; not to be cited, but to be as skeins or bottoms of thread, to be unwinded at large when they come to be used; supplying authorities and examples by reference.

PRO VERBIS LEGIS

Non est interpretatio, sed divinatio, quæ recedit a literâ.

Cum receditur a literâ, judex transit in legislatorem.¹⁹

says the buyer; but after he goes, he exults in his bargain.” [Ed.]

¹⁶That is, Aristotle has not attached (*annexed*) the logical refutations (*Elenches*) to his examples (*colours* or *sophisms*). [Ed.]

¹⁷That is, the colors are valuable for emotional appeal as well as logical demonstration. [Ed.]

¹⁸“This the Ithacan desires, and for it the sons of Atreus would pay much” (*Aeneid*, II, 104). [Ed.]

¹⁹“FOR THE LETTER OF THE LAW / It is not interpretation but

Ex omnibus verbis est eliciendus sensus qui interpretatur singula.²⁰

divination to depart from the letter of the law. / If the letter of the law is left behind, the judge becomes the legislator." [Ed.]

²⁰"FOR THE SPIRIT OF THE LAW / The meaning of each word depends upon the interpretation of the whole statement." [Ed.]

Formulae are but decent and apt passages or conveyances of speech, which may serve indifferently for differing subjects; as of preface, conclusion, digression, transition, excusation, &c. For as in buildings there is great pleasure and use in the well-casting of the staircases, entries, doors, windows, and the like; so in speech the conveyances and passages are of special ornament and effect. So may we redeem the faults passed, and prevent the inconveniences future.

From *Novum Organum*

From *Book I*

XXXVIII

The idols and false notions which are now in possession of the human understanding, and have taken deep root therein, not only so beset men's minds that truth can hardly find entrance, but even after entrance obtained, they will again in the very instauration of the sciences meet and trouble us, unless men being forewarned of the danger fortify themselves as far as may be against their assaults.

XXXIX

There are four classes of Idols which beset men's minds. To these for distinction's sake I have assigned names — calling the first class *Idols of the Tribe*; the second, *Idols of the Cave*; the third, *Idols of the Market-place*; the fourth, *Idols of the Theatre*.

XL

The formation of ideas and axioms by true induction is no doubt the proper remedy to be applied for the keeping off and clearing away of idols. To point them out, however, is of great use; for the doctrine of Idols is to the Interpretation of Nature what the doctrine of the refutation of Sophisms is to common Logic.

XLI

The Idols of the Tribe have their foundation in human nature itself, and in the tribe or race of men. For it is a false assertion that the sense of man is the measure of things.¹ On the contrary, all perceptions as well of the sense as of the mind are according to the measure of the individual and not according to the measure of the universe. And the human understanding is like a false mirror, which, receiving rays irregularly, distorts and discolours the nature of things by mingling its own nature with it.

XLII

The Idols of the Cave are the idols of the individual man. For every one (besides the errors common to human nature in general) has a cave or den of his own, which refracts and discolours the light of nature; owing either to his own proper and peculiar nature; or to his education and conversation with others; or to the reading of books, and the authority of those whom he esteems and admires; or to the differences of impressions, accordingly as they take place in a mind preoccupied and predisposed or in a mind indifferent and settled; or the like. So that the spirit of man (according as it is meted out to different individuals)

¹Asserted by Protagoras: See the introduction to Part One of this volume. [Ed.]

is in fact a thing variable and full of perturbation, and governed as it were by chance. Whence it was well observed by Heraclitus that men look for sciences in their own lesser worlds, and not in the greater or common world.

XLIII

There are also Idols formed by the intercourse and association of men with each other, which I call Idols of the Market-place, on account of the commerce and consort of men there. For it is by discourse that men associate; and words are imposed according to the apprehension of the vulgar. And therefore the ill and unfit choice of words wonderfully obstructs the understanding. Nor do the definitions or explanations wherewith in some things learned men are wont to guard and defend themselves, by any means set the matter right. But words plainly force and overrule the understanding, and throw all into confusion, and lead men away into numberless empty controversies and idle fancies.

XLIV

Lastly, there are Idols which have immigrated into men's minds from the various dogmas of philosophies, and also from wrong laws of demonstration. These I call Idols of the Theatre; because in my judgment all the received systems are but so many stage-plays, representing worlds of their own creation after an unreal and scenic fashion. Nor is it only of the systems now in vogue, or only of the ancient sects and philosophies, that I speak; for many more plays of the same kind may yet be composed and in like artificial manner set forth; seeing that errors the most widely different have nevertheless causes for the most part alike. Neither again do I mean this only of entire systems, but also of many principles and axioms in science, which by tradition, credulity, and negligence have come to be received.

But of these several kinds of Idols I must speak more largely and exactly, that the understanding may be duly cautioned. . . .

LIX

But the *Idols of the Market-place* are the most troublesome of all: idols which have crept into the understanding through the alliances of words and names. For men believe that their reason governs words; but it is also true that words react on the understanding; and this it is that has rendered philosophy and the sciences sophisticated and inactive. Now words, being commonly framed and applied according to the capacity of the vulgar, follow those lines of division which are most obvious to the vulgar understanding. And whenever an understanding of greater acuteness or a more diligent observation would alter those lines to suit the true divisions of nature, words stand in the way and resist the change. Whence it comes to pass that the high and formal discussions of learned men end oftentimes in disputes about words and names; with which (according to the use and wisdom of the mathematicians) it would be more prudent to begin, and so by means of definitions reduce them to order. Yet even definitions cannot cure this evil in dealing with natural and material things; since the definitions themselves consist of words, and those words beget others: so that it is necessary to recur to individual instances, and those in due series and order; as I shall say presently when I come to the method and scheme for the formation of notions and axioms.

LX

The idols imposed by words on the understanding are of two kinds. They are either names of things which do not exist (for as there are things left unnamed through lack of observation, so likewise are there names which result from fantastic suppositions and to which nothing in reality corresponds), or they are names of things which exist, but yet confused and ill-defined, and hastily and irregularly derived from realities. Of the former kind are Fortune, the Prime Mover, Planetary Orbits, Element of Fire, and like fictions which owe their origin to false and idle theories. And this class of idols is more easily ex-

pelled, because to get rid of them it is only necessary that all theories should be steadily rejected and dismissed as obsolete.

But the other class, which springs out of a faulty and unskilful abstraction, is intricate and deeply rooted. Let us take for example such a word as *humid*; and see how far the several things which the word is used to signify agree with each other; and we shall find the word *humid* to be nothing else than a mark loosely and confusedly applied to denote a variety of actions which will not bear to be reduced to any constant meaning. For it both signifies that which easily spreads itself round any other body; and that which in itself is indeterminate and cannot solidise; and that which readily yields in every direction; and that which easily divides and scatters itself; and that which easily unites and collects itself; and that which readily flows and is put in motion; and that which readily clings to another body and wets it; and that which is easily reduced

to a liquid, or being solid easily melts. Accordingly when you come to apply the word,—if you take it in one sense, flame is humid; if in another, air is not humid; if in another, fine dust is humid; if in another, glass is humid. So that it is easy to see that the notion is taken by abstraction only from water and common and ordinary liquids, without any due verification.

There are however in words certain degrees of distortion and error. One of the least faulty kinds is that of names of substances, especially of lowest species and well-deduced (for the notion of *chalk* and of *mud* is good, or *earth* bad); a more faulty kind is that of actions, as *to generate*, *to corrupt*, *to alter*; the most faulty is of qualities (except such as are the immediate objects of the sense) as *heavy*, *light*, *rare*, *dense*, and the like. Yet in all these cases some notions are of necessity a little better than others, in proportion to the greater variety of subjects that fall within the range of the human sense.

Margaret Fell

1614–1702

Historian Margaret L. King has argued that “something changed [for the better] during the Renaissance in women’s sense of themselves, even if very little changed or changed for the better in their social condition.”¹ Women’s legal and religious disabilities actually increased during the period, causing them to be more strictly subject to men’s authority, but women also seemed to find new ways of evading control and new courage to express themselves.

One factor in this change was increased opportunity for women to be educated and to use their education. Some women, mostly from the upper social classes, had gained early access to Italian humanist education (see introduction to Part Three). Although their education sometimes acquainted them with rhetoric, these women had few opportunities to use their rhetorical knowledge in public; however, there were exceptions—young women who were celebrated by their cities as prodigies, such as Cassandra Fedele, and women who became sovereigns, such as Elizabeth I. Although these exceptional women were few, their presence on the cultural and political scene seems to have made an impact beyond their numbers, providing influential role models for other women. The period was unusually well stocked with powerful female political leaders: not only Elizabeth I, but also her father Henry VIII’s wives Catherine of Aragon and Anne Boleyn, the French regent Catherine de’ Medici, and Mary Queen of Scots, among others.

Moreover, the spread of Protestant Christianity was followed by increasing initiatives to educate young women. In Germany, Scandinavia, and England, schools specifically for girls multiplied, as well as schools where they could be educated with boys. For both sexes, this education often taught little but the most elementary reading and writing, but even such minimal literacy was invested with great religious seriousness, because the effort to educate was justified by the doctrinal need for all Protestant Christians, regardless of gender, to read the Bible for themselves and to write texts of spiritual self-examination.

Certainly women were not encouraged to use this education to question their subordinate status. On the contrary, women’s education was usually defended on grounds that it made them better Christians and more docile daughters and wives. Furthermore, even these new but circumscribed educational opportunities did not result in widespread female literacy. According to social historian David Cressy, no more than 20 percent of English women were sufficiently literate to sign their names by the seventeenth century,² and historian Harvey Graff has shown that the number did not rise to more than 50 percent even by the end of the eighteenth century.³ Such figures must be taken into account when considering the fact that the

¹Margaret L. King, *Women of the Renaissance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), p. 238.

²David Cressy, *Literacy and the Social Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), pp. 106–07.

³Harvey J. Graff, *The Legacies of Literacy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), pp. 231–32, 250.

historical record preserves very few female-authored texts of any description, rhetorical or otherwise, and few descriptions of female orators, before 1600.

Women were almost completely excluded from university education, where the most advanced education in rhetoric took place, until well into the nineteenth century. As many education theorists declared, women did not need rhetorical education because they were barred from the professions of lawyer and minister where eloquence was practiced.

Nevertheless, as King has suggested, Renaissance women felt more empowered, and this feeling grew not from education alone, but also “[had] its roots in the spiritual experience of women.”⁴ Women began to feel that they answered to a higher authority, even if men censured them. They flocked in disproportionate numbers to the new Protestant sects of Christianity, which were less hierarchical and patriarchal than the established Church. As historian of rhetoric Elizabeth Mazzola has pointed out, Protestant martyr Anne Askew resisted men’s attempts to dictate what she should say about her religious experience, even under torture. In spite of legal prosecution and printed attacks, women joined the ranks of itinerant Protestant preachers who exhorted crowds extemporaneously, using deliberately colloquial, earthy, moving language. Some Protestant sects also encouraged social action on behalf of the poor, prostitutes, slaves, and other abused groups. Given this social action agenda, preaching sometimes shaded over into political oratory. Women who addressed political issues, however, typically retained a religious orientation. The social evils they attacked were, they claimed, so offensive to God that pious Christian women must speak out, even at risk of social condemnation. But in this way women began to discover that, just as religious duty had justified increased educational opportunities for them, so too could it justify increased opportunities to use that education in public as eloquent speakers and writers for social justice.

Quaker women were among the first to speak in public on social issues, and the number of Quakers among women social-activist orators was, and is, high in proportion to the number of Quakers in the population, as historian Margaret Hope Bacon demonstrates. More than virtually any other Christian denomination, the Society of Friends has advocated and practiced sexual equality. Moreover, Quakerism is perhaps the most antihierarchical and individualistic of Protestant denominations. The Quaker emphasis on each person’s right and duty to conduct his or her own life by an “inner light” of spirituality provides a philosophical as well as a theological support for women’s rejection of social constraints as they attempt to act on behalf of social justice. Thus it is not surprising that the English Society of Friends produced Margaret Fell, an important Renaissance thinker on women’s right to speak in public.

Margaret Fell (1614–1702), née Askew, was born in Lancashire to upper-middle-class parents. In 1631, at the age of eighteen, she married Thomas Fell, a man almost twice her age. Thomas was a member of the landed gentry, a judge, and vice-chancellor of the duchy of Lancashire. Within ten years, they had five children; they had nine altogether, of whom eight, seven of them girls, survived to

⁴King, p. 238.

adulthood. Margaret Fell's early married life was unremarkable for a woman of her social class. She did, perhaps, have more domestic authority than usual because her husband was frequently absent riding the circuit court and left her to manage their estates. In this way she began to develop the administrative and leadership abilities that she would later use as a Quaker leader.

Margaret Fell was already inclined toward radical Protestantism when she met George Fox, founder of the Society of Friends, in 1652. She quickly converted to his religious views and helped Fox convince her children and servants and some of her neighbors of the value of his approach to spirituality, the "inner light." Judge Fell did not share his wife's conviction but was sympathetic to it, and he attempted to protect her from legal sanctions as she opened their home, Swarthmoor Hall, to Quaker meetings and made the estate a sustaining center for Quaker activity throughout England. Fox and other Quakers traveled the country preaching the new religion. Margaret Fell managed her large household, supported the itinerants and their families financially, made her estate a center for communication, and herself traveled to London to seek political protection for the Society of Friends.

Margaret Fell was also a prolific writer, foremost among the cadre of early Quaker women who preached and published on behalf of the faith, and one of the most prolific woman writers of the century. Her husband, although tolerant of her religious views, had attempted to discourage her public advocacy of the faith while he lived, even blocking publication of some of her works, but after he died in 1658, she became an even more active supporter of the Society. Without her husband's protection, however, she suffered legal persecution for her activities. Her persecutors threatened to strip her of her estate, and she was jailed several times. She was arrested in 1664 for holding Quaker meetings at Swarthmoor and was imprisoned under grim conditions in Lancashire Castle from 1664 to 1668 (her four youngest daughters, ranging in age from twenty-six to fifteen, managed the estate in her absence). While there she wrote her most famous work, the tract included here: *Women's Speaking Justified, Proved, and Allowed by the Scriptures*. It was first published in 1666, and to the second edition of 1667 she added "A Further Addition" and a "Postscript."

Fell married George Fox in 1669, when she was fifty-five and he was forty-five. From the first, they resolved to have an egalitarian marriage. Fox formally renounced all claim to her property, which as her husband he would have legally controlled. Fell brushed off the criticism of her only son (educated away from the family, he was not a Quaker), who disapproved of her marriage to a man much below her in social position. She also fended off his attempts to gain legal rights to the family estate now that she had remarried. After they married, Fell and Fox continued their separate ministries, seldom living together, as Fox traveled widely in England, Europe, and America.

Historian Bonnelyn Young Kunze believes that Margaret Fell should be regarded as a major architect of the Quaker faith. Although earlier scholarship depicts her somewhat sentimentally as merely a nurturing mother of the nascent denomination, who sustained the destitute out of her family wealth, Fell was also an active controversialist who helped shape the Society's views on a range of issues. She was not

merely an influence on George Fox, but an intellectual leader of the movement in her own right. Moreover, she was uninhibited by her lack of university training, which had prepared the legal authorities and Anglican leaders against whom she argued. Fell deemed that she needed no formal training in rhetoric because she was preaching the truth of God: "The holy Apostles off Xt [Christ] went nott to the university for Xt endued them with his Holy Spirit. . . . By his spiritt he endued them with more knowledge than they could have gotten at the universitys, and soe they need not go thither."⁵

One important part of Margaret Fell's leadership was developing women's egalitarian position in the Society of Friends. For one thing, she raised up more activist women like herself. Of her seven daughters, all but one married late, remaining at Swarthmoor with her and forming a formidable band of devoted women, active supporters of Quakerism. All eventually married Quakers, and the family remained close and united in activism throughout Fell's long life. In 1671 Fell also began the first Quaker meeting exclusively for women that was to convene outside London. A major purpose was to organize support for indigent Quakers, particularly elderly widows and women with small children, who had been impoverished or deprived of male support by the severe persecution periodically visited on their sect. This meeting was notable for ignoring social barriers and admitting women of all social classes to equal fellowship. Taking an aggressive role in controversy within the Society of Friends over the appropriateness of women's meetings, Fell argued that they were necessary to make possible women's spiritual development free from men's inhibiting presence. Evidently she was well aware that, unlike herself, many of her female contemporaries were afraid to speak out for fear of male censure.

Moreover, Fell did not justify her own speaking merely on the grounds that she was possessed by God, prophesying in the grip of a holy vision. Many Protestant women adopted the posture of prophet to justify their public speaking, but this was an inherently humble role, implying that the woman herself did not speak but that God spoke through her, and that she would subside when the divine spirit left her. Fell, in contrast, behaved like a full-scale leader of the Society of Friends throughout her life. She was never silent on any controversy within the Society, and she also used her elevated social position to gain access to the English king in order to plead for increased tolerance toward Quakers and freedom for jailed leaders. A very public speaker and writer, she describes her political activism in her autobiography:

I spake often with the King, and writ many Letters and Papers unto him, and many Books were given by our Friends to Parliament. . . . And I writ and gave Papers and Letters to everyone of the Family several times . . . to the Duke of York, to the Duke of Gloucester . . . the Queen Mother . . . the Prince of Orange, and to the Queen of Bohemia. [I] did lay our Principles and Doctrines before them, and desired that they would let us have Discourse with their Priests, Preachers and Teachers, and if they would prove us Erroneous, then let them manifest it; But if our Principles and Doctrines be found according to the Doctrine of Christ, and the Apostles and Saintes in the Primitive Times, then let us have our Liberty.⁶

⁵Quoted in Bonnelyn Young Kunze, *Margaret Fell and the Rise of Quakerism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), p. 201.

⁶Quoted in Kunze, p. 17.

This account shows Fell engaging in the kind of public argument that had hitherto been largely a male preserve. She was the first Quaker leader to address the restored Charles II, and in 1674 she persuaded him to release Fox, who was again in prison. In 1684 she delivered petitions that contributed to James II's declarations of tolerance for religious dissent. In 1697 she encouraged William II to continue his protection of Quakers. Even the few Italian humanist women who gave public orations addressed ceremonial topics, not issues of current and intense political interest. Fell thus resembles Elizabeth I more than Cassandra Fedele in her rhetorical practice, but with the important difference that she was not protected by a crown.

Selected Bibliography

Margaret Fell's *Women's Speaking Justified, Proved, and Allowed by the Scriptures* exists in a facsimile edition published by the Augustan Reprint Society (1979). David J. Latt's introduction provides biographical information. The text printed here is taken from that edition and from the excerpt in *Womanhood in Radical Protestantism, 1525–1675*, ed. Joyce L. Irwin (1979), a collection of primary texts on the roles of women in the Bible, in marriage, and in the Christian faith. Most of these pieces are by men, and they reflect some of the opposition against which Fell protested, as well as Protestant liberalism concerning women. In addition to a transcription of the first part of Fell's pamphlet, the book includes a confirming statement issued by George Fox. Irwin's headnotes and bibliography are helpful.

On literacy and women's education in the period, see David Cressy, *Literacy and the Social Order* (1980), Harvey J. Graff, *The Legacies of Literacy* (1987), and Margaret L. King, *Women of the Renaissance* (1991).

Cheryl Glenn discusses the rhetorical practice of Elizabeth I and Anne Askew, among others, in *Rhetoric Retold: Regendering the Tradition from Antiquity through the Renaissance* (1997). Elizabeth Mazzola's "Expert Witnesses and Secret Subjects: Anne Askew's Examinations and Renaissance Self-Incrimination" can be found in a collection edited by Carole Levin and Patricia A. Sullivan, *Political Rhetoric, Power, and Renaissance Women* (1995), which also contains essays on Elizabeth, other female rulers, playwright Aphra Behn, and other rhetorically active women of the period.

For a discussion of how Renaissance women's language-using practices may be construed as rhetoric, see Glenn, and Jane Donawerth's "The Politics of Renaissance Rhetorical Theory by Women" (in Levin and Sullivan). Judith Kegan Gardiner discusses Fell's development of a strikingly self-confident, maternally inflected rhetoric in "Re-Gendering Individualism: Margaret Fell Fox and Quaker Rhetoric" (in *Privileging Gender in Early Modern England*, ed. Jean R. Brink, 1993).

The standard biography of Margaret Fell is *Margaret Fell: Mother of Quakerism* (1949), by her descendent Isabel Ross. Bonnelyn Young Kunze's *Margaret Fell and the Rise of Quakerism* (1994) provides a helpful reappraisal of Fell's role in the development of the Society of Friends and a wealth of detail about her seventeenth-century social setting, as well as a helpful bibliography. Margaret Hope Bacon's *Mothers of Feminism* (1986) discusses the contributions of Quaker women from Fell to the present day.

Women's Speaking Justified, Proved, and Allowed by the Scriptures

Whereas it hath been an objection in the minds of many, and several times hath been objected by the clergy, or ministers, and others, against womens speaking in the Church; and so consequently may be taken, that they are condemned for meddling in the things of God; the ground of which objection, is taken from the Apostles¹ words, which he writ in his first Epistle to the *Corinthians*, chap. 14. vers. 34, 35. And also what he writ to *Timothy* in the first Epistle, chap. 2, vers. 11, 12. But how far they wrong the Apostles intentions in these Scriptures, we shall shew clearly when we come to them in their course and order. But first let me lay down how God himself hath manifested his Will and Mind concerning women, and unto women.

And first, when *God created Man in his own image; in the image of God created he them, male and female: and God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply: And God said, Behold, I have given you of every herb, etc., Gen. 1.* Here God joins them together in his own image, and makes no such distinctions and differences as men do; for though they be weak, he is strong; and as he said to the Apostle, *His grace is sufficient, and his strength is made manifest in weakness, 2 Cor. 12.9.* And such hath the Lord chosen, even *the weak things of the world, to confound the things which are mighty: and things which are despised, hath God chosen, to bring to nought things that are, 1 Cor. 1.* And God hath put no such difference between the male and female as men would make.

It is true, *The serpent that was more subtle than any other beast of the field, came unto the woman, with his temptations, and with a lie; his subtilty discerning her to be more inclinable to hearken to him; when he said, If ye eat, your eyes shall be opened: and the woman saw that the fruit was good to make one wise, there the temptation got into her, and she did eat, and gave to*

her husband, and he did eat also, and so they were both tempted into the transgression and disobedience; and therefore God said unto Adam, when that he hid himself when he heard his voice, Hast thou eaten of the tree which I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And Adam said, The woman which thou gavest me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the Lord said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? and the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. Here the woman spoke the truth unto the Lord. See what the Lord saith, vers. 15, after he had pronounced sentence on the serpent: *I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel, Gen. 3.*

Let this word of the Lord, which was from the beginning, stop the mouths of all that oppose womens speaking in the power of the Lord; for he hath put enmity between the woman and the serpent; and if the seed of the woman speak not, the seed of the serpent speaks; for God hath put enmity between the two seeds, and it is manifest, that those that speak against the woman and her seeds speaking, speak out of the enmity of the old serpents seed; and God hath fulfilled his word and his promise, *When the fulness of time was come, he hath sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons, Gal. 4.4, 5. . . .*

Thus we see that Jesus owned the love and grace that appeared in women, and did not despise it, and by what is recorded in the Scriptures, he received as much love, kindness, compassion, and tender dealing towards him from women, as he did from any others, both in his life time, and also after they had exercised their cruelty upon him, for *Mary Magdalene, and Mary the Mother of Joseph, beheld where he was laid: And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the Mother of James, and Salome, had brought sweet spices that they might anoint him.*

¹The Apostle is Paul. [Ed.]

And very early in the morning, the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun, And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre? And when they looked, the stone was rolled away for it was very great, Mark 16.1, 2, 3, 4. Luke 24.1, 2. and they went down into the sepulchre, and as Matthew saith, The angel rolled away the stone, and he said unto the women, Fear not, I know whom ye seek, Jesus which was crucified: he is not here, he is risen, Mat. 28. Now Luke saith thus, That there stood two men by them in shining apparel, and as they were perplexed and afraid, the men said unto them, he is not here; remember how he said unto you when he was in Galilee, that the *Son of Man* must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again, and they remembered his words, and returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things to the eleven,² and to all the rest.

It was *Mary Magdalene*, and *Joanna*, and *Mary the Mother of James*, and the other women that were with them, which told these things to the Apostles, *And their words seemed unto them as idle tales, and they believed them not.* Mark this, ye despisers of the weakness of women, and look upon your selves to be so wise: but Christ Jesus doth not so, for he makes use of the weak: for when he met the women after he was risen, he said unto them, *All hail*, and they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him, then said Jesus unto them, *Be not afraid, go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there they shall see me*, Mat. 28.10; Mark 16.9. And *John* saith, when *Mary* was weeping at the sepulchre, that Jesus said unto her, *Woman, why weepest thou? what seekest thou? And when she supposed him to be the Gardener, Jesus saith unto her, Mary; she turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni, which is to say master; Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father, but go to my brethren, and say unto them I ascend unto my Father, and to my God, and your God*, John 20.16, 17.

²The eleven are the men Jesus chose to be his disciples, without Judas who left them after he betrayed Jesus to the Romans. [Ed.]

Mark this, you that despise and oppose the message of the Lord God that he sends by women, what had become of the redemption of the whole body of mankind, if they had not believed the message that the Lord Jesus sent by these women, of and concerning his resurrection? And if these women had not thus, out of their tenderness and bowels of love, who had received mercy, and grace, and forgiveness of sins, and virtue, and healing from him, which many men also had received the like, if their hearts had not been so united, and knit unto him in love, that they could not depart as the men did, but sat watching, and waiting, and weeping about the sepulchre until the time of his resurrection, and so were ready to carry his message, as is manifested, else how should his Disciples have known, who were not there?

Oh! blessed and glorified be the glorious Lord, for this may all the whole body of mankind say, though the wisdom of man, that never knew God, is always ready to except against the weak; but the weakness of God is stronger than men, and the foolishness of God is wiser than men.

And in *Act. 18* you may read how *Aquila* and *Priscilla* took unto them *Apollos*, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly; who was an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures: yet we do not read that he despised what *Priscilla* said, because she was a woman, as many now do.

And now to the Apostles words, which is the ground of the great objection against womens speaking. And first, *1 Cor. 14.* let the reader seriously read that chapter, and see the end and drift of the Apostle in speaking these words: for the Apostle is there exhorting the Corinthians unto charity, and to desire spiritual gifts, and not to speak in an unknown tongue, and not to be children in understanding, but to be children in malice, but in understanding to be men; and that the spirits of the prophets should be subject to the prophets, for God is not the author of confusion, but of peace: And then he saith, *Let your women keep silence in the Church*, etc.

Where it doth plainly appear that the women, as well as others, that were among them, were in confusion, for he saith, *How is it brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm*,

hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation? let all things be done to edifying. Here was no edifying, but all was in confusion speaking together. Therefore he saith, *If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at most by three, and that by course, and let one interpret, but if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the Church.* Here the man is commanded to keep silence as well as the woman, when they are in confusion and out of order.

But the Apostle saith further, *They are commanded to be in obedience,* as also saith the Law; and *if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home, for it is a shame for a woman to speak in the Church.*

Here the Apostle clearly manifests his intent; for he speaks of women that were under the Law,³ and in that transgression as *Eve* was, and such as were to learn, and not to speak publicly, but they must first ask their husbands at home, and it was a shame for such to speak in the Church. And it appears clearly, that such women were speaking among the *Corinthians*, by the Apostles exhorting them from malice and strife, and confusion, and he preacheth the Law unto them, and he saith, in the Law it is written, *With men of other tongues, and other lips, will I speak unto this people,* vers. 2. 21.

And what is all this to women speaking? that have the everlasting Gospel to preach, and upon whom the promise of the Lord is fulfilled, and his Spirit poured upon them according to his word, *Acts* 2. 16, 17, 18. And if the Apostle would have stopped such as had the Spirit of the Lord poured upon them, why did he say just before, *If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace? and you may all prophesy one by one.* Here he did not say that such women should not prophesy as had the revelation and Spirit of God poured upon them, but their women that were under the Law, and in the transgression, and were in strife, confusion and malice

³Women under the Law were those who, because they had not yet accepted Jesus and the new dispensation he offered, were still subject to Jewish law, or what Christians would call the law of the Old Testament. Fell regards such women as morally inferior to converts and deserving of sterner controls. [Ed.]

in their speaking, for if he had stopped womens praying or prophesying, why doth he say: *Every man praying or prophesying having his head covered, dishonoureth his head; but every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered, dishonoureth her head? Judge in yourselves, Is it comely that a woman pray or prophesy uncovered? For the woman is not without the man, neither is the man without the woman, in the Lord,* 1 Cor. 11.3, 4, 13.

Also that other Scripture, in 1 Tim. 2., where he is exhorting that prayer and supplication be made everywhere, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting; he saith in the like manner also, that *Women must adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefastness and sobriety, not with broidered hair, or gold, or pearl, or costly array.* He saith, *Let women learn in silence with all subjection, but I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence; for Adam was first formed, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.*

Here the Apostle speaks particularly to a woman in relation to her husband, to be in subjection to him, and not to teach, nor usurp authority over him, and therefore he mentions *Adam* and *Eve*. But let it be strained to the utmost, as the opposers of women's speaking would have it, that is, that they should not preach nor speak in the Church, of which there is nothing here. Yet the Apostle is speaking to such as he is teaching to wear their apparel, what to wear, and what not to wear; such as were not come to wear modest apparel, and such as were not come to shamefastness and sobriety, but he was exhorting them from broidered hair, gold, and pearls, and costly array; and such are not to usurp authority over the man, but to learn in silence with all subjection, as it becometh women professing godliness with good works.

And what is all this to such as have the power and spirit of the Lord Jesus poured upon them, and have the message of the Lord Jesus given unto them? must not they speak the Word of the Lord because of these undecent and unreverent women that the Apostle speaks of, and to, in these two Scriptures? And how are the men of this generation blinded, that bring these Scriptures,

and pervert the Apostles words, and corrupt his intent in speaking of them? and by these Scriptures, endeavour to stop the message and Word of the Lord God in women, by condemning and despising of them. If the Apostle would have had womens speaking stopped, and did not allow of them, why did he entreat his true yokefellow to help those women who laboured with him in the Gospel? *Phil.* 4.3. And why did the Apostles join together in prayer and supplication with the women, and *Mary the Mother of Jesus*, and with his brethren, *Acts* 1.14, if they had not allowed, and had union and fellowship with the Spirit of God, wherever it was revealed in women as well as others? But all this opposing and gain-saying of womens speaking, hath risen out of the bottomless pit, and spirit of darkness that hath spoken for these many hundred years together in this night of apostacy, since the revelations have ceased and been hid, and so that spirit hath limited and bound all up within its bond and compass, and so would suffer none to speak, but such as that spirit of darkness, approved of, man or woman. . . .

And so here hath been the misery of these last Ages past, in the time of the Reign of the Beast, that John saw when he stood upon the Sand of the Sea, rising out of the Sea, and out of the Earth, having seven Heads and ten Horns, *Rev.* 13. In this great city of *Babylon*, which is the woman that hath sitteth so long upon the Scarlet-coloured Beast, full of names of Blasphemy, having seven Heads and ten Horns; and this Woman hath been arrayed and decked with gold, and pearls, and precious stones; and she hath had a golden Cup in her hand, full of Abominations, and hath made all Nations drunk with the Cup of her Fornication; and all the world hath wondred after the Beast, and hath worshipped the dragon that gave power to the Beast; and this woman hath been drunk with the blood of the Saints, and with the blood of the Martyrs of Jesus; and this hath been the woman that hath been speaking and usurping authority for many hundred years together: And let the times and ages past testify how many have been murdered and slain, in Ages and Generations past; every Religion and Profession (as it hath been called) killing and

murdering one another, that would not join one with another: And thus the Spirit of Truth, and the Power of the Lord Jesus Christ hath been quite lost among them that have done this; and this mother of Harlots hath sitten as a Queen, and said, *She should see no sorrow*, but though her days have been long, even many hundred of years, for there was power, given unto the Beast, to continue forty and two months, and to make war with the Saints, and to overcome them; and all that have dwelt upon the earth have worshipped him, whose names are not written in the Book of the Life of the Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world.

But blessed be the Lord, his time is over, which was above twelve hundred Years, and the darkness is past, and the night of Apostacy draws to an end, and the true light now shines, the morning-Light the bright morning Star, the Root and Off-spring of *David*, he is risen, he is risen, glory to the highest for evermore; and the joy of the morning is come, and the Bride, the Lambs *Wife*, is making her self ready, as a Bride that is adorning for her Husband, and to her is granted that she shall be arrayed in fine linnen, clean and white, and the fine linnen is the Righteousness of the Saints: The *Holy Jerusalem* is descending out of Heaven from God, having the Glory of God, and her light is like a Jasper stone, clear as Christal.

And this is that free Woman that all the Children of the Promise are born of; not the Children of the bond-woman, which is *Hagar*, which genders to strife and to bondage, and which answers to *Jerusalem* which is in bondage with her Children; but this is *the Jerusalem which is free, which is the Mother of us all*; And to this bond-woman and her children, that are born after the flesh, have persecuted them that are born after the Spirit, even untill now; but now the bond-woman and her Seed is to be cast out, that hath kept so long in bondage and in slavery, and under limits; this bond-woman and her brood is to be cast out, and our Holy City, the *New Jerusalem*, is coming down from heaven, and her Light will shine throughout the whole earth, even as a *Jasper stone, clear as Christal*, which brings freedom and liberty, and perfect Redemption to her whole Seed; and this is that woman and

Image of the Eternal God, that God hath owned, and doth own, and will own for evermore.

More might be added to this purpose, both out of the Old Testament and New, where it is evident that God made no difference, but gave his good spirit, as it pleased him both to Man and Woman, as *Deborah, Huldah, and Sarah*. The Lord calls by his prophet *Isaiah: Hearken, unto me, ye that follow after Righteousness, ye that seek the Lord, look unto the Rock from whence ye were hewn, and to the hole of the Pit from whence ye were digged, look unto Abraham your Father, and to Sarah that bare you, for the Lord will comfort Sion, etc.* Isa. 5. And *Anna the Prophetess, who was a widow of fourscore and four years of age, which departed not from the Temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day, she coming in at that instant* (when old *Simeon* took the Child Jesus in his arms, and) *she gave thanks unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them who looked for Redemption in Jerusalem, Luke 2.36, 37. 38.* And *Philip* the Evangelist, into whose house the Apostle *Paul* entered, who was one of the Seven, *Acts 6.3.* He had four Daughters which were Virgins, that did prophesy, *Acts 21.*

And so let this serve to stop that opposing Spirit that would limit the Power and Spirit of the Lord Jesus, whose Spirit is poured upon all flesh, both Sons and Daughters, now in his Resurrection; and since that the Lord God in the Creation, when he made man in his own Image, he made them *male and female*; and since that Christ Jesus, as the Apostle saith, was made of a Woman, and the power of the Highest overshadowed her, and the holy Ghost came upon her, and the holy thing that was born of her, was called *the Son of God*, and when he was upon the Earth, he manifested his *love, and his will, and his mind*, both to the Woman of *Samaria, and Martha, and Mary* her Sister, and several others, as hath been shewed; and after his Resurrection also manifested himself unto them first of all, even before he ascended unto his Father. *Now when Jesus was risen, the first day of the week, he appeared first unto Mary Magdalene, Mark 16.9.* And thus the Lord Jesus hath manifested himself and his Power, without respect of Persons; and so let all mouths be stopt that would limit him, whose

Power and Spirit is infinite, that is pouring it upon all flesh.

And thus much in answer to these *two* Scriptures, which have been such a stumbling block, that the ministers of Darkness have made such a mountain of; But the Lord is removing all this, and taking it out of the way.

A further Addition in Answer to the Objection concerning Women keeping silent in the Church; For it is not permitted for them to speak, but to be under obedience; as also saith the Law, If they will learn any thing, let them ask their Husbands at home, for it is a shame for a Woman to speak in the Church: *Now this as Paul writeth in 1 Cor. 14.34. is one with that of 1 Tim. 2.11. Let Women learn in silence, with all subjection.*

To which I say, If you tie this to all outward Women, then there were many Women that were Widows which had no Husbands to learn of, and many were Virgins which had no Husbands; and *Philip* had four Daughters that were Prophets; such would be despised, which the Apostle did not forbid: And if it were to all Women, that no Woman might speak, then *Paul* would have contradicted himself; but they were such Women that the Apostle mentions in *Timothy*, That *grew wanton, and were busie-bodies, and tattlers, and kicked against Christ:* For Christ in the Male and in the Female is one, and he is the Husband, and his Wife is the Church, and God hath said, that his *Daughters* should Prophesie as well as his *Sons*: And where he hath poured forth his Spirit upon them, they must prophesie, though blind Priests say to the contrary, and will not permit holy Women to speak.

And whereas it is said, *I permit not a Woman to speak, as saith the Law:* but where Women are led by the Spirit of God, they are not under the Law, for Christ in the Male and in the Female is one; and where he is made manifest in Male and Female, he may speak, for *he is the end of the Law for Righteousness to all them that believe.* So here you ought to make a distinction what sort of Women are forbidden to speak, such as were under the Law, who were not come to Christ, nor to the Spirit of Prophesie: For *Hulda, Miriam, and Hanna*, were Prophets, who were not forbidden in the time of the Law, for they all prophesied in the

time of the Law: as you may read, in 2 Kings 22. what *Hulda* said unto the Priest, and to the Ambassadors that were sent to her from the King, *Go, saith she, and tell the Man that sent you to me, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and on the Inhabitants thereof, even all the words of the Book which the King of Judah hath read, because they have forsaken me, and have burnt Incense to other Gods, to anger me with all the works of their hands: Therefore my wrath shall be kindled against this place, and shall not be quenched. But to the King of Judah that sent you to me to ask counsel of the Lord, so shall you say to him, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, because thy heart did melt, and thou humblest thyself before the Lord, when thou heardest what I spake against this place, and against the Inhabitants of the same, how they should be destroyed; Behold I will receive thee to thy Father, and thou shalt be put into thy Grave in peace, and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place.* Now let us see if any of you blind Priests can speak after this manner, and see if it be not a better Sermon than any of you can make, who are against Womens speaking? And *Isaiah*, that went to the Prophetess, did not forbid her Speaking or Prophesying, *Isa. 8.* And was it not prophesied in *Joel 2.* that *Hand-maids* should Prophesie? And are not *Hand-maids* Women? Consider this, ye that are against Womens Speaking, how in the *Acts* the Spirit of the Lord was poured forth upon Daughters as well as Sons. In the time of the Gospel, when *Mary* came to salute *Elizabeth* in the Hill Country in Judea, and when *Elizabeth* heard the salutation of *Mary*, the Babe leaped in her Womb, and she was filled with the Holy Spirit; and *Elizabeth* spake with a loud voice, *Blessed art thou amongst Women, blessed is the fruit of thy Womb; whence is this to me, that the Mother of my Lord should come to me for lo, as soon as thy Salutation came to my ear, the Babe leaped in my Womb for joy, for blessed is she that believes, for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.* And this was *Elizabeths* Sermon concerning Christ, which at this day stands upon Record: And then *Mary* said, *My soul doth magnifie the Lord, and my Spirit rejoiceth in God my saviour,*

for he hath regarded the low estate of his Hand-maid: for behold, from henceforth all Generations shall call me blessed; for he that is mighty, hath done to me great things, and holy is his Name; and his Mercy is on them that fear him, from Generation to Generation; he hath shewed strength with his Arms; he hath scattered the proud in the imaginations of their own hearts; he hath put down the mighty from their Seats, and exalted them of low degree; he hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away: He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, as he spake to his Father, to Abraham, and to his Seed forever. Are you not here beholding to the Woman for her Sermon, to use her words to put into your Common Prayer?⁴ and yet you forbid Womens Speaking. Now here you may see how these two women prophesied of Christ, and Preached better than all the blind Priests did in that Age, and better then this Age also, who are beholding to women to make use of their words. And see in the Book of *Ruth*, how the women blessed her in the Gate of the City, of whose stock came Christ. *The Lord make the woman that is come into thy House like Rachel and Leah, which built the house of Israel; and that thou mayest do worthily in Ephrata, and be famous in Bethlehem; let thy house be like the house of Pharez, whom Tamar bare unto Judah, of the Seed which the Lord shall give thee of this young woman. And blessed be the Lord, which hath not left thee this day without a Kinsman, and his Name shall be continued in Israel.* And also see in the first Chapter of *Samuel*, how *Hannah* prayed and spake in the Temple of the Lord, *Oh Lord of Hosts, if thou wilt look on the trouble of thy Hand-maid, and remember me, and not forget thy Hand-maid.* And read in the second Chapter of *Samuel*, How she rejoyced in God, and said, *My heart rejoyceth in the Lord; My Horn is exalted in the Lord and my mouth is enlarged over my enemies, because I rejoyce in thy Salvation; there is none holy as the Lord, yea, there is none besides thee; and there is no God like our God: Speak no more*

⁴Common Prayer: that is, the Anglican Book of Common Prayer, read aloud by the priest during the worship service, in which these words of *Mary's* are quoted. [Ed.]

presumptuously, let not arrogancy come out of your mouth, for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him enterprises are established; the Bow, and the mighty Men are broken, and the weak hath girded to themselves strength; they that were full, are hired forth for bread, and the hungry are no more hired; so that the barren hath born seven and she that had many Children, is feeble; the Lord killeth, and maketh alive; bringeth down to the Grave, and raiseth up: the Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich, bringeth low and exalteth, he raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the Beggars from the dunghil to set them among Princes, to make them inherit the seat of Glory; for the Pillars of the earth are the Lords, and he hath set the world upon them; he will keep the feet of his Saints, and the wicked shall keep silence in darkness, for in his own might shall no man be strong; the Lords Adversaries shall be destroyed, and out of Heaven shall be thunder upon them; the Lord shall judge the ends of the World, and shall give power to his King; and exalt the Horn of his Anointed. Thus you may see what a woman hath said, when old Ely the Priest thought she had been drunk, and see if any of you blind Priests that speak against Womens Speaking, can Preach after this manner? who cannot make such a Sermon as this woman did, and yet will make a trade of this Woman and other womens words. And did not the Queen of Sheba speak, that came to Solomon, and received the Law of God, and preached it in her own Kingdom, and blessed the Lord God that loved Solomon, and set him on the throne of Israel, because the Lord loved Israel for ever; and made the King to do Equity and Righteousness? And this was the language of the Queen of Sheba. And see what glorious expressions Queen Hester used to comfort the People of God, which was the Church of God; as you may read in the book of Hester which caused joy and gladness of heart among the Jews, who prayed and worshipped the Lord in all places, who jeopardd her life contrary to the Kings command, went and spoke to the King, in the wisdom and fear of the Lord, by which means she saved the lives of the People of God; and righteous Mordecai did not forbid her speaking, but said, *If she held her peace, her and her Fathers house should be destroyed; and*

herein you blind Priests are contrary to Righteous Mordecai.

Likewise you may read how *Judith* spoke, and what noble acts she did, and how she spoke to the Elders of *Israel*, and said, *Dear Brethren, seeing ye are the honorable and elders of the People of God, call to remembrance how our Fathers in time past were tempted, that they might be proved if they would worship God aright; they ought also to remember how our Father Abraham, being tryed through manifold tribulations, was found a friend of God, so was Isaac, Jacob, and Moses, and all they pleased God, and were stedfast in Faith through manifold troubles.* And read also her prayer in the Book of *Judith*, and how the Elders commended her, and said, *All that thou speakest is true, and no man can reprove thy words, pray therefore for us, for thou art an holy Woman, and fearest God.* So these elders of *Israel* did not forbid her speaking, as you blind Priests do; yet you will make a Trade of Womens words to get money by, and take Texts, and Preach Sermons upon Womens words; and still cry out, Women must not speak, Women must be silent; so you are far from the minds of the Elders of *Israel*, who praised God for a Womans speaking. But the *Jezebel*, and the Woman, the false Church, the great Whore, and tatling women, and busie-bodies, which are forbidden to Preach, which have a long time spoke and tatted, which are forbidden to speak by the True Church, which Christ is the Head of; such Women as were in transgression under the Law, which are called a Woman in the *Revelations*. And see further how the wife Woman cried to *Joab* over the Wall, and saved the city of *Abel*, as you may read, *2 Sam. 20.* how in her wisdom she spoke to *Joab*, saying, *I am one of them that are peaceable and faithful in Israel, and thou goest about to destroy a City and Mother in Israel; Why wilt thou destroy the Inheritance of the Lord? Then went the woman to the people in her wisdom, and smote off the head of Sheba, that rose up against David, the Lords Anointed: Then Joab blew the Trumpet, and all the People departed in peace.* And this deliverance was by the means of a Womans Speaking; but tatlers, and busie-bodies, are forbidden to preach by the True Woman, whom Christ is the Husband to the

Woman as well as the Man, all being comprehended to be the Church; and so in this True Church, Sons and Daughters do Prophesie, Women labour in the Gospel; but the Apostle permits not tatlers, busie-bodies, and such as usurp authority over the Man would not have Christ Reign, nor speak neither in the Male nor Female; Such the Law permits not to speak, such must learn of their Husbands: But what Husbands have Widows to learn of, but Christ? And was not Christ the Husband of *Philips* four Daughters? And may not they that learn of their Husbands speak then? But *Jezebel*, and Tatlers, and the Whore that denies Revelation and Prophesie, are not permitted, which will not learn of Christ; and they that be out of the Spirit and Power of Christ, that the Prophets were in, who are in the Transgression, are ignorant of the Scriptures; and such are against Womens Speaking, and Mens too, who Preach that which they have received of the Lord God; but that which they have preached, and do preach, will come over all your heads, yea, over the head of the false Church, the Pope; for the Pope is the Head of the False Church, and the False Church is the Popes Wife: and so he and they that be of him, and come from him, are against Womens Speaking in the True Church, when both he and the false Church are called *Woman*, in *Rev. 17.* and so are in the Transgression that would usurp authority over the Man Christ Jesus, and his Wife too, and would not have him to Reign; but the Judgment of the great Whore is come. But Christ, who is the Head of the Church, the True Woman which is his Wife, in it do Daughters Prophesie, who are above the Pope and his Wife and a top of them; And here Christ is the Head of the Male and Female, who may speak; and the Church is called *a Royal Priesthood*; so the Woman must offer as well as the Man, *Rev. 22. 17. The Spirit saith, Come, and the Bride saith, Come:* and so is not the Bride the Church? and doth the Church only consist of Men? you that deny Womens speaking, answer: Doth it not consist of Women as well as men? Is not the Bride compared to the whole Church? And doth not the Bride say, *Come?* Doth not the Woman speak then? the Husband Christ Jesus, the *Amen*, and doth not the false Church go about to stop the Brides Mouth? But it is not possible for the Bride-

groom is with his Bride, and he opens her Mouth. Christ Jesus, who goes on Conquering, and to Conquer, who kill and slayes with the Sword, which is the words of his Mouth; the Lamb and the Saints shall have the Victory, the true Speakers of Men and Women over the false Speaker.

POSTSCRIPT

And you dark Priests, that are so mad against Womens Speaking and it's so greivous to you, did not God say to Abraham, Let it not be greivous in thy sight, because of the Lad, and because of thy bond-woman? In all that Sarah hath said to thee, hearken to her voice (Mark here) the Husband must learn of the Woman and Abraham did so, and this was concerning the things of God for he saith in Isaac shall thy seed be called, and so Abraham did obey the voice of Sarah, as you may read in Genesis 21. and so he did not squench the good that was in his wife, for that which he spoke to Abraham was concerning the Church.

And you may read Deborah and Barack, and so how a Woman Preacht and sung Judges 5. what glorious triumphing expressions there was from a Woman, beyond all the Priests Servants, whom Barack did not bid be silent, for she Sung and Praised God, and declared to the Church of Israel, which now the hungry Priests that denyes Womens Speaking makes a trade of her words for a livelihood.

And in Judges 13. There you may see, how the Angel appeared to a Woman, and how the Woman came to her Husband and told him, saying, a man of God came to me, whose countenance was like the Countenance of a Man of God, and said that she should Conceive and bare a Son, and again the Angel of the Lord appeared to the Woman, and she made haste and ran, and shewed her Husband and said unto him, behold, he hath appeared unto me that came unto me the other day, and when the Angel of the Lord was gon, the Womans Husband said, we should surely dye because we had seen God, and then you may read how the woman comforted her Husband again, and said, if the Lord were pleased to kill us he would not have shewed us all these things, nor would this time have told us such things as these, and this was a Woman that taught.

Madeleine de Scudéry

1607–1701

Madeleine de Scudéry was born in Le Havre, France, to an old aristocratic family in reduced financial circumstances. In 1613 her parents died, and she was raised in Rouen by an uncle. She received an education typical of upper-class girls of her day, learning basic literacy, dancing, and drawing. Evidently Madeleine was not satisfied with these basics, for she polished her French and later exhorted women to write fluently and correctly. Since her published works are full of classical allusions, she must also have read classical literature in translation, although she did not learn Latin or Greek.

In 1620 she went to live with her brother Georges (b. 1601), and in 1637 they moved to Paris, where they settled in a fashionable suburb called the Marais. Georges had pursued a military career, like his father, but he was also a writer, and by the time they moved to Paris he was a well-known playwright and man of letters. He introduced his sister to the salon of Catherine de Rambouillet, where she made many influential friends.

Madame de Rambouillet had invented the “salon” as a new venue of social interaction for the aristocracy and wealthy bourgeoisie because she wished to reproduce the refinement of court life in her native Italy. She invited her friends to meet at her home, which was a more private space than the royal court but far from secluded. The purpose of these gatherings was amusement. The participants played practical jokes on each other, proposed excursions to a favorite pastry shop or an outlying estate, engaged in literary disputes, poetry contests, and other word games, and above all, conversed wittily on the affairs of the day, current literature, and topics both morally serious and utterly frivolous. The term *précieuse* was originally coined as a reproach for women who frequented the salons. It was meant to imply that they were overly concerned with verbal niceties, but it was adopted as a literary label for all the “Précieux,” male and female, who enjoyed salon society and who also produced some significant literary works—as did Scudéry.

To enter salon society, one should be able to behave like a salon denizen and be witty, imaginative, urbane, and above all, verbally adept in both writing and speech. One’s French had to be refined, fluent, correct but not hypercorrect, and similarly easy and natural whether written or spoken. One must not monopolize the conversation—indeed, no faux pas was worse than insisting on one’s own point of view to the exclusion of all others’—but also, one must never be at a loss for words. Madeleine de Scudéry won instant acceptance in this milieu.

In 1641 Scudéry published her first novel, *Ibrahim*, under her brother’s name. Until Georges died in 1667, everything Madeleine de Scudéry wrote was published under his name. Scholars agree that she was the principal or sole author of the works now attributed to her, although Georges may have contributed to the descriptions of battle scenes in the novels, and brother and sister did weigh plot options together; once they were arrested for treason when a servant at a country inn overheard them discussing killing the king. They were quickly released when they identified

the king in question as a fictional creation. Initially, Scudéry may have wanted her work to appear under her brother's name in hopes that it would sell better, since he already had an established literary reputation. Once the first novel gained great acclaim, however, and everyone quickly figured out who had written it, his name was no longer necessary. It is likely that she continued the pretense of concealing her authorship, publishing anonymously after Georges' death, because to court publicity by putting one's name on published works would be considered a crude breach of etiquette for a *précieuse*.

Ibrahim, a long, involved tale of military heroism and thwarted love set in an exotic locale, launched Scudéry's extremely successful literary career. In her own time, she was best known for her novels, especially the ten-volume *Artamène, ou Le Grande Cyrus*, published from 1649 to 1653, and *Clélie*, another ten-volume work published from 1654 to 1661, which became the best-selling book of the century in France. These complicated stories were packed with plots and subplots and populated by classically named characters among whom Scudéry's friends found themselves portrayed, to their delight. The novels also contained long conversations on moral subjects, especially on love, some of which Scudéry would excerpt for her later volumes of *Conversations*.

Most of the important writers of her day were Scudéry's admirers, including the playwright Molière, fabulists La Fontaine and La Bruyère, women of letters Madame de Lafayette and Madame de Sévigné, and the philosopher Blaise Pascal. Scudéry's biographer Nicole Aronson denies that she was a butt of Molière's satire on salon life, *Les Précieuses ridicules* (1659).¹ The *précieuse* becomes ridiculous only when her sophisticated performance becomes visible as a performance—that is, appears as affectation, and apparently this was a social crime that Scudéry never committed. Scudéry's novels were immediately translated into German, Italian, and English, and they attracted a large following. The English intellectual Mary Astell (p. 841), writing at the end of the seventeenth century, would recommend Scudéry's works for the curriculum of a woman's college she proposed.

In 1642 Scudéry's influential friend Madame de Rambouillet procured a valuable military appointment for Georges de Scudéry at Marseilles, and the brother and sister moved there, a dismal exile for Madeleine de Scudéry from the Paris salon society she loved. In that same year she published *Les Femmes illustres ou Les Harangues héroïques* (English edition, *The Heroick Harangues of the Illustrious Women*, 1681), again under Georges' name. Such catalogues of famous women were a regular feature of the "querelle des femmes," an ongoing literary argument about the worth of women that Christine de Pizan (p. 540) and others had initiated in the fourteenth century. One of Scudéry's imaginary conversations among women in antiquity depicts the Greek poet Sapho (usually spelled "Sappho") exhorting a younger woman, Erinna, to develop all her intellectual powers and to immortalize herself through her literary works rather than waiting for some man to write poems

¹Nicole Aronson, *Mademoiselle de Scudéry*, trans. Stuart R. Aronson (Boston: G. K. Hall/Twayne, 1978), p. 47.

about her. Scudéry expressed her own ambition here, the more clearly since she was known in salon society as Sapho.

In 1647 the Scudérys, although perennially short of money because of Georges' extravagance, were able to return to Paris. In 1643, while they were in Marseilles, Louis XIV had taken the throne at the age of five. Government was in the hands of his powerful minister, Cardinal Jules Mazarin, and shortly after the Scudérys returned to Paris a group of nobles rebelled against his harsh rule. This uprising, known as the Fronde, continued until 1653. Although the Scudérys did not participate in this rebellion, they remained the loyal friends of the Condé family, who did; Madeleine dedicated *Artamène* to Condé's sister, Madame de Longueville, and later visited the Duc de Condé when he was imprisoned after the revolt failed. Thus compromised, Georges fled to a town near Le Havre in 1654 to escape arrest, but Madeleine stayed in Paris, moved to a new house, and began to hold her own salon gatherings, which were soon famed for displaying the highest art of conversation. She also began to publish *Clélie*, and she reached the height of her fame and influence.

Madeleine de Scudéry never married, and she expressed reservations about marriage in her writing. Apparently she deplored the loss of freedom married women incurred. She found even life with her brother constraining. After his marriage in Le Havre, brother and sister never lived together again, although he proposed it when he and his young wife returned to Paris in 1660. In her writing Madeleine celebrated spiritual love between two committed friends who have no need of a physical relationship, and she found her own soul mate in fellow salon habitué Paul Pellisson. He too had influential friends, among them the royal finance administrator Nicolas Fouquet, from whom he won a pension for Scudéry.

In 1661 Fouquet abruptly fell from royal favor, and he and Pellisson were imprisoned. As she had done during the Fronde, Scudéry remained loyal to politically dangerous friends, visiting Pellisson at the Bastille and using all her influence to get the two men reinstated with the king. She failed on Fouquet's behalf, but Pellisson was finally released in 1666 and became Louis XIV's secretary. Far from punishing Scudéry for her partisanship, Louis awarded her a more generous pension and received her graciously at Versailles when she came to thank him.

Scudéry continued to publish novels and other writings. In 1671 she won the first literary prize offered by the newly formed Académie française, and she was even considered for membership in this elite literary group, an unprecedented honor for a woman. In 1680 she published the two volumes of *Conversations sur divers sujets* (English edition, *Conversations upon Several Subjects*, 1683, excerpted here); by 1692 there would be a total of ten volumes in the *Conversations* series, all published anonymously and dedicated to Louis XIV. Like her later novels, these volumes addressed the reading public's new preference for works much shorter than *Clélie*, while at the same time excerpting some of the conversations from this and other earlier works. The *Conversations* fell into the familiar and popular seventeenth-century genre of moralizing literature and also into an overlapping genre, the conduct book. They provided model conversations for those who wanted to know how to behave in salon society.

Scudéry continued to write and to participate in salon society well into old age, although she began to go deaf in the 1660s. She was eighty-five years old when the last volumes of the *Conversations* were published in 1692. Noted from her earliest years for cheerfulness and patience (especially with her boastful, stubborn, and extravagant brother), she continued to enjoy life, as her letters suggest, up to the end, even though she mourned the death of Pellisson in 1693. Her final illness was brief. When she died in 1701 at the age of ninety-four, her books were still in print and popular, and they remained so for another hundred years. Voltaire praised her poetry; after 1800, readers tended to prefer the *Conversations*.

THE RHETORIC OF THE SALON

The rhetoric of the salon is a development of the courtly rhetoric most famously exemplified in Baldesar Castiglione's *The Book of the Courtier* (1527; p. 661), a Renaissance best-seller that was well known in Scudéry's France. In the Italy of Castiglione's day, sovereignty was beginning to concentrate in the hands of a few powerful rulers, a process that would culminate in reigns such as that of Louis XIV. Castiglione saw that, in this political climate, public political oratory of the sort promoted by Italian humanist education and based on classical models was increasingly constrained. Rather, eloquence had to be employed in the more circumscribed and intimate but still politically charged arena of the ruler's court. Castiglione realized that the courtier needed a different set of rhetorical skills than the classical political agent. Moreover, he saw that noble birth was no longer a prerequisite to political power. Anyone who possessed these newly important verbal abilities could gain influence at court.

As Castiglione characterizes it, courtly rhetoric requires a broad humanist education, which confers the ability to converse wittily and to write poetry and prose clearly and without affectation. The male courtier must be able to make love to his mistress eloquently but discreetly, and must respond to her guidance in elevating their relationship to a spiritual plane. Courtiers of both sexes must be verbally conciliatory, since they usually address small, private audiences, often of their social superiors and often including both sexes. They cannot insist on their point of view but must dissemble and attempt to persuade indirectly. Often, persuasion is so indirect that it involves, first, the use of verbal abilities merely to entertain the ruler so that he or she will be disposed to listen to serious advice later. Above all, the courtiers' facility must be exercised with apparent naturalness, as if requiring little conscious effort—a quality Castiglione calls *sprezzatura*.

The salon was a sort of adjunct to the French court, or the place to which courtly conversation of the sort described by Castiglione migrated under Louis XIV, in whose presence even the most circumspect and complaisant speech might be dangerous. Louis had been shaken by the Fronde, and to prevent further rebellions he deliberately tried to weaken the aristocracy. He made his court the only important place of influence. At court, he occupied the aristocrats with gambling and other dissipations, which weakened them financially, and he imposed on them an increasingly elaborate code of etiquette, breaches of which could result in charges of trea-

son. He also admitted newcomers to their ranks, whether through ennoblement or simply high preferment, whenever these social climbers had the money to pay their way. This practice clearly devalued the exclusivity of the old aristocracy's titles, diluted their class solidarity, and thus strengthened the hand of the king.

Salon society offered a brief respite from the scorching spotlight of the king's regard, since it was more informal and at least slightly removed from the king's presence. At the same time, the salons were themselves governed by a code of behavior. In France, as for Castiglione's courtiers, noble birth was not a requirement for entry into salon society. The only requirement was the ability to adhere to the salon's code of behavior (of course, birth into at least the upper middle classes facilitated the acquisition of the skills necessary to this behavior). Thus, too, the salon provided the newly elevated with a way to integrate themselves into upper-class society. As with Castiglione, performance—the ability to behave as if one belonged—becomes of the utmost importance. Indeed, the competition among performers for position and influence was perhaps more intense in the France of Louis XIV than elsewhere because social life was dominated by the one royal court—if one fell from favor there, one had nowhere else to go (unlike Castiglione, whose own fortunes moved him among Mantua, Urbino, and Rome).

The kind of behavior required in the salon was very similar to that described by Castiglione, and its most important aspect was verbal. Scudéry scoffed at the notion that rules could be given for courtly conversation, but she nevertheless illustrated its regularities in her *Conversations*, as well as spelling out some criteria in “Of Conversation,” “Of Speaking too much, or too little. And how we ought Speak” (both included here), “Of Complaisance,” and “Of Rallery” (raillery).

For Scudéry, conversation must draw generously from each participant—no one should remain silent. Each participant's contribution should be roughly equal, and no one should monopolize the discussion. One should carefully choose one's style and content with an eye to the occasion, the company, and one's own character. Moreover, one must disguise differences of opinion and, above all, power imbalances. Harmony among conflicting viewpoints, not the victory of one of them, should be the ultimate goal (and the topics discussed in Scudéry's conversations are usually left unresolved for that reason). “Complaisance” is a valued virtue because it enables its possessor to remain affable while managing and containing disruptive people—those who are too gloomy or too argumentative, for example. Individuality must be expressed very delicately and indirectly, so as not to challenge the illusion of group unity (thus the characters in Scudéry's conversations are scarcely differentiated as to personality, although they may take different positions on the topic under discussion). One's language should not call attention to oneself by neologisms, vulgarities, or any other oddities. Everything should appear natural, effortless—Castiglione's quality of *sprezzatura*, here represented by the French *esprit*.

Women are not only full participants in Scudéry's conversations, but their verbal behavior differs only slightly from men's (in the oaths they may use, for example). Contrasting with Castiglione, in Scudéry the women talk just as much as the men and often lead discussions and defend positions against all comers, as the assertive Melinta, mistress of the art of verbal teasing, does in “Of Rallery.” Women are

often presented as models of verbal behavior; an example is Valeria, who in “Of Conversation” exemplifies all that is excellent in the spoken art. Women’s accomplishments in literature and the other arts, and in the art of conversation itself, are far more important than marriage and children (of which we hear next to nothing in the *Conversations*—though at one point, talking about one’s children is condemned as wearisome). As in Castiglione, the topic of love enters Scudéry’s conversations, and the women are presumed to be helping their lovers refine themselves and ascend to spiritual affection like that celebrated in the Neoplatonic paean at the end of *The Courtier*, but love speeches take up very little space in Scudéry. Mostly, her interlocutors discuss topics of general interest.

In her earlier *Les Femmes illustres*, Scudéry had cast a glow of classical antiquity over eloquent women. Renaissance scholar Jane Donawerth has argued (in a 1997 essay) that Scudéry deliberately manipulated the classical allusions in order to play upon her contemporaries’ nostalgia for the earlier Renaissance revival of classical learning, implying that if classical models of eloquence were good for men in earlier Renaissance years, they will be good for women now. This effort is facilitated by, and perhaps also inspired by, the salon custom of taking classical sobriquets (as noted earlier, Scudéry’s was “Sapho”), and Scudéry gives the participants in her *Conversations* classical names as well. In the *Conversations*, Donawerth points out, salon conversation, led by women, is a civilizing force because it encourages virtue. Thus it is at least equal in civic utility to traditional rhetoric, or perhaps more useful, since most forms of public speech described by traditional rhetoric are impolitic under an autocratic prince. Donawerth has also held that “compliments and graciousness, as well as intelligence and patriotism, move one toward a position of power” through one’s influence in salon society.² In this way, women’s use of language in the semiprivate space of the salon has very public consequences.

Scudéry thus theorizes a new kind of rhetoric, what might be called private discourse with public implications. Under the political pressure of increasingly autocratic rule in fifteenth-century Italy, this rhetoric had first emerged in the work of Castiglione. Scudéry not only elaborates women’s place in it, but also claims it as a rhetorical field in which women can lead.

Selected Bibliography

There is no modern English version of Scudéry’s *Conversations*. Our text is taken from Ferrand Spence’s 1683 translation, which is available on microfilm. Also on microfilm is James Innes’s 1681 translation of *Les Femmes illustres*. In her good introductory biography, *Mademoiselle de Scudéry* (1978), Nicole Aronson lists no English translations of any of Scudéry’s works after the seventeenth century. Aronson’s book also contains plot summaries of the novels and some account of the critical reception of Scudéry’s work from her own time to the present.

Placing special emphasis on Scudéry’s contributions to rhetorical theory is Jane Donawerth’s essay, “‘As Becomes a Rational Woman to Speak’: Madeleine de Scudéry’s Rhetoric

²Jane Donawerth, “Conversation and the Boundaries of Public Discourse in Rhetorical Theory by Renaissance Women,” *Rhetorica* 16.2 (spring 1998), p. 188.

of Conversation” (in *Listening to their Voices: The Rhetorical Activities of Historical Women*, ed. Molly Meijer Wertheimer, 1997). Donawerth locates Scudéry in the context of other Renaissance women rhetorical theorists in “Conversation and the Boundaries of Public Discourse in Rhetorical Theory by Renaissance Women” (*Rhetorica* 16.2 [spring 1998]: 181–99).

For more on Scudéry and the salon milieu, see Carolyn C. Lougee, *Le Paradis des Femmes: Women, Salons, and Social Stratification in Seventeenth-Century France* (1976), and Elizabeth C. Goldsmith, “Exclusive Conversations”: *The Art of Interaction in Seventeenth-Century France* (1988). On the larger concept of elitist performance, see Domna C. Stanton, *The Aristocrat as Art: A Study of the Honnête Homme and the Dandy in Seventeenth- and Nineteenth-Century French Literature* (1980), which discusses Scudéry; Wayne Rebhorn, *Courtly Performance: Masking and Festivity in Castiglione’s “Book of the Courtier”* (1978); and Frank Whigham, *Ambition and Privilege: The Social Tropes of Elizabethan Courtesy Theory* (1984).

Of Conversation

As Conversation is the bond of all humane Society, the greatest pleasure of well-bred People; and the most ordinary means of introducing into the World, not only Politeness, but also the purest Morals, and the love of Glory and Vertue: Methinks, the Company cannot entertain themselves more profitably, nor more agreeably, said *Cilenia*, than in examining what it is People call Conversation. For when Men only speak strictly according to the exigency of their Affairs, it cannot be so termed. The truth is, said *Amilcar*, a Lawyer pleading a Cause at the Barr; a Merchant negotiating with another; a General of an Army giving Orders; a King speaking of Affairs of State in His Council: all this is not what ought to be stiled Conversation. All those People may discourse well of their Interests, and Affairs: and yet not have that agreeable talent of Conversation, which is the sweetest charm of Life, and perhaps more rare than is believed. For my part I do not doubt of it at all, replied *Cilenia*, but methinks, before it can be well defined, wherein principally consists the Charm and Beauty of Conversation, ’tis requisite that all the persons who compose this company, should remember the tedious Conversations which have most troubled them.

Translated by Ferrand Spence.

You are in the right, said *Cerinta*, for by remarking all that is tiresome, we may the better know what is diverting: and to shew you an example of it, added she, I gave Yesterday a Family-Visit, which made me do such Pennance, that it almost weayed me to death. Do but imagine me in the midst of ten or twelve Women, who spoke of nothing else than of all their little Domestic cares, of the faults of their servants, of the good Qualities or Vices of their Children; and there was one Woman amongst the rest who spent above an hour in relating from syllable to syllable the first tatlings of a Son of hers, but of three years old. You may now judge if I did not spend my time after a lamentable manner. I assure you, replied *Nicano*, that I spent mine little better than your self, since I happened to be engaged against my will among a company of Women you may easily guess at, who spent the whole day only in speaking well or ill of their Cloths, and in lying continually as to the price, they cost them. For some out of vanity, said much more than was right, as I was informed by the least silly of them all; and others, to be thought cunning and skilful, said much less. In-somuch that I spent the whole day in hearing such dull and pitiful impertinencies, that it makes me still something out of humor. As for my part,

said the lovely *Athis*, I happened fifteen days ago to be with some Ladies, who though they have Wit enough, did strangely importune me. For in short, to speak the truth, it was with those Women who are professedly gallant, have but one intrigue, and an intrigue that so possesses them, that they think of nothing else. So that when you are not a Confident of their Amours, and happen into their Company, you are uneasie your self, and render them so likewise. And indeed, so long as I was with those I speak of, I heard them always talking without understanding what they said. For there was one on my right hand, telling another who sate by her, that she knew from very good hands, that such a Spark was broke off with such a Lady, and was re-engaged with such an other. And another on my left, who, speaking passionately to a Lady, a friend of hers, entertain'd her with the silliest insipid things you ever heard. After all, said she, in a fret, the Lady, you know, ought not to boast that she has depriv'd me of a Gallant, since her Conquest consists only in a person I had discarded. But if the fancy takes me to recall him, I will do it so effectually she shall never have him again while she lives. On another side, I heard some giving an account of a Collation they were treated at; affecting to say with as much earnestness, that it was mean and sordid: as if they thought to have diminished the Beauty of the Lady on whom it was bestowed, by saying that her Lover was not magnificent enough. In short, I must confess, that in my life I never had so much impatience as I had that day. For my part, replied *Cilena*, if I had been in your place, I would have found the invention of diverting my self at the expence of those who would have made me done Pennance; but I could not hinder being uneasie three days ago, with a Man and a Woman, whose Conversations are always upon two sorts of things; that is to say, of the entire Genealogies of the Families of *Mytelene*; and all the circumstances of their Estates. For in a word, without it be on certain particular occasions, what divertisement is it to hear for a whole day together, *Xenocrates* was the Son of *Tryphon*, *Clidemus* was the Offspring of *Zenophanes*; *Zenophanes* was the Issue of *Tyrtæus*, and so of the rest? And what divertisement is there likewise to hear that

such a House wherein you have no interest, wherein you never was, and whether you'll never go as long as you live, was built by this Man, bought by that, exchanged by another, and that it is at present in the possession of a Man you never knew? This is not very agreeable, without doubt, replied *Alcæus*, but neither is it so mortifying, as to meet with those People who are engaged in some troublesome business, and can speak of nothing else. And in truth, I found a while ago a Sea-Captain, who pretends *Pittacus* ought to recompence him for a Ship. He held me three hours, not only in relating the reasons he pretended to have for the being re-imbursed; but likewise what might be answered him, and what he could reply. And to make me the better apprehend his losses, he fell to telling me the particulars of what his Ship cost him. For that purpose, he told me the names of those who built it, and specify'd to me all the parts of his Ship, one after the other, without any necessity, for the making me understand it was one of the best and dearest, and he had a great deal of injustice done him. I must allow, said *Amithone*, it is a great persecution to meet with those sort of People, but to tell you the truth, those grave and serious Conversations wherein no mirth is allowed of, have something so pestering and heavy, that I never happen into them without being taken with the Headach; for the discourse is always upon the same note; they never laugh, and all is as precise and formal, as if you were at Church.

I agree with you in what you say, said *Athis*, but I must say, to the shame of our Sex, that the Men have a great advantage over us, as to Conversation; and to prove it, I need only tell the Company, that going to *Lycidices* House, I found her in her Mothers Chamber, where was so great a number of Women, there was hardly room for me, but there was not one Man. I cannot tell you after what manner all those Ladies had their Wits turned that day, though some of them were very ingenious. But I am constrained to avow, that the Conversation was not very diverting: for in short, the discourse was only of nauseous trifles; and I may say, that in my life I never heard so many words, and so little sense. But happening to be near *Lycidice*, I could easily perceive how highly she resented it. I must confess, I observed it with

delight, since it made her say a hundred pleasant things. As she was very much wearied with this tumultuous Conversation, which so much grated upon her humour, there came in a Gentleman a Kinman of hers. And this is remarkable, that though this Man is none of those elevated Wits that are so rare to be found, and that he was but of the order of common well-bred People, the Conversation changed on a sudden, and became more regular, more ingenious, and more agreeable, though there was no other change in the company, than the coming in of a Man, who contributed but very little to the discourse. But in short, without being able to tell you the true reason, they fell to talk of other things; they talked much better; and those very persons who tyred me as well as *Lycidice*, diverted me extreamly. However the Company being gone, I stayed alone with *Lycidice*. She no sooner saw her self at liberty, then making her Melancholly give way to Joy; Well, *Athis*, said she to me, will you still condemn me for preferring the Conversation of Men before that of Women? and are you not constrained to allow, that who should write what fifteen or twenty Women say together, would make the worst Book that ever was. I confess, said I to her, laughing, that if all was written in order that I have heard spoke today, it would be a fantastical discourse. For my part, said she, there are some days that I am so incensed against my Sex that I am grieved to the very heart I am a Woman, principally when I happen into one of those Conversations composed all of Dresses, Moveables, Jewels, and such like things. Not that, said she, I am against their being made a subject of discourse; for in short, I am sometimes well enough dress'd to be glad to have it told I am so: and my Cloths are sometimes fine enough, and well enough made, to take delight in hearing 'em commended; but I would not have the Discourse dwell upon these kind of things, but that they be spoken of galantly, and as by the by, without transports and application; and not as some Women do of my acquaintance, who spend all their life in such like talk, and think of nothing else, and whose thoughts of those things are likewise so full of irresolutions, that I am of opinion, that at the end of their days they will not have determined in their minds, whether Carnation be-

comes them better than Blew, or if Yellow is more advantagious to them than Green. I must confess that *Lycidices* discourse made me laugh; and I found it so much the more pleasant, in that 'tis true, that there is a Lady of my acquaintance, who employs all her Wit only in such things; never talks of any thing else, and makes her greatest glory consist in what surrounds her only; that is to say, in the guilding of her Palace, in the Magnificence of her Furniture, in the beauty of her Cloths, and in the richness of her Jewels.

After having laughed at what *Lycidice* said, I would have defended Women in general; and told her, I was perswaded there are as many Men as Ladies, whose Conversation is disagreeable. There are many of 'em without doubt, replied she, whose company is insupportable; but with this advantage, that we can easier get rid of 'em, and we are not obliged to treat them with so exact a Civility. But *Athis*, this is not the thing in dispute, for what I tell you is, that the most amiable Women in the World, when they are a great number together, do hardly say any thing that is to be valued, and are more tired than if they were alone. But as for such Men as are civil and well bred, 'tis not the same with them, their Conversation is not, without doubt, attended with so much mirth when there are no Ladies, as when there are. But commonly, though it be more serious, yet it is more rational; and in short, they can easier be without us, than we without them. In the mean while this vexes me more than I can tell you. For my part, replied I, methinks I could live without thinking the time tedious, though I should never see any but my Female friends, provided they were all of the same stamp with *Lycidice*. I'll tell you, if you please, replied she, in answer to your civility, I should think the time as little tedious as your self, if all mine were like my dear *Athis*; but it is requisite at least to add, provided I might see them but one, two, or three at the most together; for to see twelve of 'em at a time, I should rather choose to see no body. Yes, pursued she, with the most pleasing disdain imaginable, though there were twelve *Athises* in the World, I would not see them daily all together, unless they were accompanied with two or three Men. For though you never say any thing but what is to the purpose, I am certain if there

were twelve of you, you would lash out into extravagancies; or at least, like the rest, you would talk of such kind of things which signifie nothing, and make the Conversation so tedious, and languishing. In fine, said she, what would you have me say more than that, unless you are a great Hypocrite, you will be constrained to allow, there is I know not what, which I am not capable of expressing, that makes a well-bred Man rejoice and divert a company of Ladies more than the loveliest Woman upon Earth can do? Nay, I'll say more, added she, for I maintain that when there are but two Women together, if they are not in friendship with one another, they will divert themselves less, than if each of 'em talk'd with a Man of Sense, though they had never seen him before. Judge you now if I have not reason to murmur against my Sex in general.

Those Conversations are without doubt very vexatious, replied *Amilcar*, but there are of another stamp which do likewise strangely importune me. For I happened to be one day at *Syracuse*, with five or six Women, and two or three Men, who have got a fancy that for the rendring the Conversation agreeable, 'tis requisite to laugh eternally. Insomuch that as long as those persons are together, they do nothing but laugh at all they say to one another, though it be not so over pleasant. And they make so great a noise, that they are no longer able to understand what is spoken in the company: and then they only laugh because the rest laugh, without knowing any other reason. However, they do it as heartily, as if they knew the occasion, and there had been some great jest. But this is strange, their laughing is really sometimes so contagious, one cannot hinder the being taken with their Malady: and happening to be one day with those perpetual laughers, I was so excessively inspired with their laughter, that I laughed almost till I cry'd, without knowing why I did so. But to speak the truth, I was so much ashamed of it within a Quarter of an Hour after, that it turn'd in a moment all my joy into vexation. Though there is a great deal of folly in laughing without reason, said *Valeria*, yet I should not be so uneasie in the company of such sort of People, as to be with those persons, all whose Conversation consists in long, sad, and lamentable stories, extremly tedious. For in a

word, I am acquainted with a Woman who knows all the tragical adventures, whose daily discourse is a Book of Martyrs, and who spends all her time in deploring the misfortunes of life, and in relating lamentable things with a sad and doleful voice, as if she was paid for the bewailing all the Calamities of the World.

Let us not pass over so quickly, said *Plotina*, the fault of too long relations, since in my Opinion, care ought to be taken not to accustome ones self to a perpetual telling of Stories, as I know some who never speak but of what is past; and are always telling what they have seen, without saying any thing of what they see. The truth is, said *Amilcar*, that sometimes those eternal story-tellers, are very much to be dreaded: some of them are confused, others too long, some are so pettish that they will never be interrupted; others, on the contrary, interrupt 'emselves, and at the end, neither know what they have said, nor what they would say. But those who tell things that are indifferent to the Company, and which of themselves are not very agreeable, are the most troublesome of all the tale-telling tribe. I know likewise a Family, replied *Cerinta*, where the Conversation is very importunate; for you never meet with any there, but the little Occurrences of the Neighborhood, which the Courtiers that come thither by chance, have nothing to do with, and which they neither understand, nor are affected withal; and I remember very well, I heard them there talk of a hundred little intrigues, which did not touch me at all, and the noise whereof extended no farther than the Street where they happened; and which besides were so little diverting, that I thought 'em very tedious. It is also a great Mortification, said *Nicanor*, to fall into a great Company where everyone has a secret, principally when you have none, and you have nothing more to do than to listen to the murmur which those make who discourse and whisper in one anothers ears and yet, if they were real secrets, added she, I should have patience; but it very often happens, that those things which are said with so much mystery, are things of no account. I know likewise other People, added *Alceus*, who, in my mind, have something very troublesome, though they have likewise something very agreeable. For in short, they have got such a fancy in

their head to great transactions, that they never speak without it be of giving Battels, or some Siege of a considerable Town, or of some other great Revolution in the World; and you would say to hear them, that the Gods only change the face of the Universe to furnish matter to their Conversation; for unless it be of such great and important Occurrences, they never speak, and cannot bear with any thing of another kind. Inso-much as without knowing at least, to sift Policy to the bottom, and without being well vers'd in History, a person is not to argue with them upon any subject whatsoever. The truth is, replied *Nicanor*, that what you say is not always agreeable. But those other People who without caring for the general affairs of the World, will only listen to particular News, have likewise something very troublesome; for you see them always as busie as if they had a thousand Cares, though they have none of any other nature, than that of knowing all those of others, to go repeat them from House to House, as Publick Spies, who are no more this than that Man's, according as an occasion is offer'd, without having any prospect of advantage from all this bustle. Thus they do not so aim at knowing things for the knowing them, as for the rehearsing them to others.

'Tis also a great imperfection for one, said *Cerinta*, to affect to show all his Wit, and I know a Man who in the very first visits he makes in places where he would render himself acceptable, passes continually from one subject to another, without examining any to the bottom; and I may affirm without exaggeration, that in an hours time I have heard him Speak of all the things that fall under Discourse, since he told not only all that passed at Court, but likewise all that passed in the City. Then he told all that he had done that day; he also related what was said in the places where he had that day been, and asked *Arpasia* what she had done. Afterward he rallied *Melinta* for her silence, and then fell to talk of Musick and Painting. He made several proposals of going abroad, and said so many different things, that a Man in the company taking notice of this great diversity, made others likewise observe it with intention to commend him, for in short, said he, after having caus'd it to be remark'd, there is nothing more tiresome than to

fall into Converse with those sort of People who apply themselves to the first thing that is started, and do so canvas it, that in a whole Afternoon they never change discourse. For as Conversation ought to be free and natural, and that all those who compose the Company have equally right to change it as they think fit, it is an importunate thing to meet with those opinionative People, who leave nothing to be said upon a Subject, and who are ever harping upon it, what care soever is taken to interrupt 'em.

For my part, said *Cilenia*, I am very much concerned to hear you all talk at the rate you do, for in short, if it is not fitting to be always like *Damophilus*, talking of Sciences; if it be tedious to discourse of all the little cares of a Family; if it be not convenient to speak often of Cloths; if it is a want of judgement to discourse only of intrigues of Gallantry; if there is but little diversion in speaking of Genealogies; if it is too mean to discourse of Lands sold or exchange'd; if it be likewise forbidden to speak too much of our own Affairs; if too great a gravity is not diverting in Conversation; if there is folly in laughing too often, and in laughing without reason; if the relations of fatal and extraordinary Accidents are not acceptable, if the little Transactions of the Neighborhood are tedious to those who live not thereabouts; if those Conversations of little things that are whispered in the ear, are importunate; if those People are to blame who only discourse of Great Occurrences; if those eternal seekers of Cabinet Counsels are not in the right, what must we then talk of? and of what must the Conversation be compos'd to render it both rational and pleasing?

It must be of all that we have found fault with, *Valeria* reply'd, agreeably and smiling; in short, though all those People we have mentioned are incommodious, I however boldly maintain, that we cannot Speak but of what they do; and the same subjects may furnish matter agreeably to discourse on, notwithstanding they prove so mortifying in those Peoples management. I easily apprehend what *Valeria* says is true, reply'd *Amilcar*, though it did not seem so to me at first; for I am so perswaded, all sort of things are proper for Conversations, that I do not except any. And indeed, added *Valeria*, it is not in any wise to be imagined, that there are things that are not fit for

Discourse; for 'tis true that there are certain encounters wherein such things might be very properly spoken, that would be ridiculous on any other Occasion. For my part, said *Amithone*, I confess, I could wish there were rules for Conversation, as there are for many other things. The principal rule, replied *Valeria*, is never to say any thing that contradicts the Judgment. But still, added *Nicanor*, I would willingly know more precisely, how you conceive the Conversation ought to be. I conceive, replied she, that to Speak in general, it ought oftner to be of common and gallant things, than of great Transactions; but however, I conceive that nothing is forbidden; that it ought to be free and diversified, according to the times, places and persons with whom we are, and the Secret is of Speaking always nobly of mean things, very plainly of high things; and very gallantly of gallant things, without transport and affectation. Thus the Conversation ought ever to be equally natural and rational; yet I must say, that on some occasions, the Sciences themselves may be brought in with a good grace, and that agreeable follies may likewise have their place, provided they be ingenious, modest and gallant. Insomuch as to Speak with reason, we may for certain affirm, that there is nothing but may be said in Conversation, in case it be manag'd with Wit and Judgement, and the Party considers well where he is, to whom he Speaks, and who he is himself. Notwithstanding though Judgement be absolutely necessary for the never saying any thing but what is to the purpose; yet, the Conversation must appear so free, as to make it seem we don't reject any of our thoughts, and all is said, that comes into the fancy, without any affected design of speaking rather of one thing or another. For there is no thing more ridiculous than those People, who have Subjects on which they talk Wonders; and in such cases, can say nothing but impertinencies. So I would never have it known, what it is we are to say, and yet that we always know well what it is we say. For if this course be taken, Women will not impertinently pretend to be knowing, nor be ignorant to excess, and everyone will say what he ought to say for the rendring the Conversation agreeable. But what is most necessary to make it soft and diverting is, that it must be influenced, with a certain spirit of Politeness, which absolutely ban-

ishes all bitter Raileries, as well as all those, which may in any wise offend Modesty; and in short, 'tis likewise requisite to know the art of turning things so handsomely, that a Gallantry may be told to the severest Woman in the world; that a little Foppery may be related to grave and serious People; that you may speak properly of the Sciences to the ignorant, if you be forced to it, and in sum, that you may change your wit according to the things that are spoken of, and according to the People you discourse with. But besides all I have now said, I would have it likewise governed with a certain spirit of joy, which without having the least taint of those eternal laughers who make so great a noise for so small a matter; do however inspire a disposition into the hearts of all the company, to make every thing contribute to their diversion, and to weary themselves with nothing; and I would have both mean and lofty things said, in case they be spoke well and to the purpose, and yet without being under any constraint of never having anything spoken but what is necessary to be said.

In short, added *Amilcar*, without giving you the trouble of speaking any more upon Conversation, or to make Laws for it, there needs no more than to admire yours, and to do as you do, to merit the admiration of all the earth, for I assure you, that no body will reprehend me though I should affirm, that I never heard you say any thing but what was agreeable, gentile and judicious; and never anybody had to that perfection as you have, the Art of pleasing, charming and diverting. I could wish, reply'd she, blushing, all you say was true, and I might believe you sooner than my self. But to shew you I cannot give you credit, and that I know I am often in the wrong, I declare ingenuously, that I am very sensible I have now said too much, and instead of speaking of all that I conceive of Conversation, I ought to have contented myself with telling all the Company what you have newly said of me.

After this all there present opposing each in his turn the modesty of *Valeria*, We gave her so many Praises, that we had like to have put her out of Humour; and afterwards we made so gallant and chearful a Conversation that it almost lasted until Evening, when this charming Company withdrew to their several Apartments.

Of Speaking too much, or too little. And how we ought Speak

Amilcar seeing four Rivals at a time all round his Mistress, was not without employment. Yet he behaved himself much better than another could have done in so intricate a Juncture, which contributed to the rendring the Conversation much more pleasant than was usual. For one of *Plotina's* Lovers, *Acrisias* by name, was given more to talking, than ever any Man was. *Sicinius* hardly spoke at all. *Telanus* discours'd agreeably upon all Subjects, and *Damon* was much inclin'd to talk of his own Sect. Insomuch that when *Amilcar* found all his Rivals with *Plotina*, there was not one of 'em but whose Conversation was diverting, at the rate *Amilcar* manag'd it: and when they were absent, yet he made 'em furnish Arguments for his Diversion; sometimes by counterfeiting the silence of the one; otherwise, by talking too much as the other; and sometimes by examining pleasantly the new Sect of *Pythagoras*. So that by this course he prejudic'd his Rivals, diverted his Mistress, and was never tired himself.

One day amongst others, *Acrisias* spoke so much, and said so many impertinent things, and *Sicinius* spoke so little, that they were both importunate. For as they had been after one another at *Plotina's* House, she complain'd thereof agreeably to *Amilcar*, in a Visit he made to her after they were gone. Let me make you this request said she to him, as soon as he came into her Room; You would promise me two things; the one is, you'll not talk so much, but that I may bring in a word, when I've a mind so to do; and the other, that I may not be obliged to speak all, but that you would sometimes interrupt my discourse. For I have seen two Men to day, one of whom would not let me say a word, and the other did not say four to me. I easily divine, replied *Amilcar*, that *Acrisias* and *Sicinius* have been to see you. But lovely *Plotina* added he, since you disapprove those two sorts of failures, tell me which is the most insupportable, that I may know which I ought most to avoid.

I assure you, replied she, that they have importun'd me both extreemly. For it is very troublesome to see the Conversation expiring every moment. For my part, added she laughing, I had rather have the care of looking to the Sacred Fire of the *Vestalls*, than to have discourse with those People, who furnish nothing to Conversation; whom you must always be telling News to; who are enemies of long Narratives; who hardly ever say any thing but Yes and No; and who, even sometimes to spare themselves the trouble of uttering a Syllable, give a gracious Nod to shew they understand you. In good earnest, pursued *Plotina*, I know nothing more tedious than that kind of profound silence, which two persons fall into every moment, when one of them speaks too little. Silence on any other occasion has something grateful. But in this it is importunate; and there is no noise, however troublesome soever it be, but pleases me more.

Seriously, reply'd *Amilcar*, the noise of those who talk too much is full as grating, as the silence of those who talk but little, is distasteful; and if you would take it into consideration, you would find it at least as incommodious. For in short, is there any greater mortification, than to hear that vast number of false and impertinent things, which all great talkers say? For I boldly presuppose, that those who talk much, tell Romances, and things that are to no purpose. And what is most incommodious is, that they who make long and unnecessary Relations, hinder others from saying things, which the Company would be glad to know. And indeed, added *Amilcar*, *Acrisias*, *Sicinius*, *Telanus* and my self, were yesterday together, upon the Banks of the Tiber; and as *Telanus*, who is inquisitive, asked me precisely, in what place the Founders of Rome, had markd out the first Compass of their City; when I would have made him an answer, and began to speak, in saying *Romulus*—*Acrisias* interrupted me, and seven times together, as the best Scholar in the World, I began again to speak, saying *Romulus*, without being able to finish my answer

Translated by Ferrand Spence.

to *Telanus*, who could not forbear laughing at my patience and perseverance. But at length I was forced to yield to *Acrisias*, and resolve to listen to him, tho he said a hundred impertinencies, and which one might be content never to hear. For besides as I have already said, those who speak too much as subject to tell Lies, or frivolous things, they likewise tell such as are disagreeable. And how is it possible to be otherwise, when they have not Judgement enough either to let the company speak or know, that Society ought to be free; that there ought to be no Tyranny in Conversation; that each one has his share therein, and a right to speak in his turn; and that in short, this can never be, unless by the attention of those who hear; that those who speak well, have a right to speak more than others.

Valeria and *Caesonia* came in a moment after *Amilcar* had said these words, and were followed by *Æmilius*, *Horace* and *Zenocrates*. So that *Plotina* feeling so many persons capable of judging of the Subject of her Conversation with *Amilcar*, told them the Penance she had done, in having had the company of *Acrisias*, who spoke too much, and *Sicinius* who spoke too little; desiring 'em thereupon to give their Opinions upon those two imperfections. For my part, being lazy, said *Valeria*, I fancy I should rather choose to speak too little than too much. You have reason, added *Caesonia*; for the Women are accused in general, of loving to speak too much, I find a Woman, who talks much, is more importunate than a Man. And indeed, when Women speak too much, commonly their Conversation is only a torrent of impertinencies, and superfluous words, that tire out those who have any Wit or Reason. For my part, return'd *Amilcar*, smiling, I am not of your Opinion. For when a great Talkative Woman is young and beautiful, makes no grimaces in her Discourses, but on the contrary, shews her delicate white Teeth, and Cherry Lips; I listen to her with less pain, than to one of those great talking Men, whose audacious and insolent mien is as ungrateful to the eyes, as their Discourse is to the ears, For my share, said *Æmilius*, being no great Enemy to saying nothing, I confess I would not be a great Talker. But in others, I should better bear with a Man, who

was always talking much, than with a Man to whom one must be always saying much.

I assure you, said *Horace*, that tho all the World speak, yet few People know the Art of speaking. You are undoubtedly in the right, reply'd *Æmilius*, and I also maintain, that there is hardly any thing wherein all Men agree, unless it be that health is a blessing. Beauty it self is not without contest. Riches are sometimes look'd upon, as things injurious. The Sciences are placed by some in the rank of things doubtful. And Physick, the object whereof is only Health and Prolongation of Life, is however considered by some People, as a dangerous Art, which does more hurt than good. So certain is that great uncertainty in the minds of Men. Some approve of what others condemn; and there is hardly any thing which is commended by one Man, without being blamed by another. Thus some believe speaking little is a defect; others that speaking a great deal is a perfection; some, that speaking eloquently is saying great words; others, that speaking well, is speaking naturally and exact; some that Choice Words are requisite; others that we are to speak negligently to avoid affectation, without thinking that affected negligence is the worst of all. There are those likewise who are of Opinion, that to speak well we are to speak Bookishly; and there are those who to avoid this defect, which is without doubt, a very great one, speak as grossly as the *Mobile*, without considering that all Excess is equally bad; and that if it is dangerous to speak too well, 'tis likewise so to speak too ill. But in my Opinion, there is one thing in Language blamed by all the World, which is Impropriety and Obscurity; since it is true, that whoever gives attention, is willing to understand what is told him, and that whosoever speaks is obliged to make himself understood. *Æmilius* has unquestionably reason on his side, said *Zenocrates*, when he says, that they whose Discourse is full of far-fetch'd, ill-digested, or ill-apply'd expressions are condemned by all the World. Indeed there are a great many of 'em, reply'd *Plotina*; but what does most amaze me, is, that I know several sorts of Persons, who are guilty of that Crime, some of whom I know also, cannot be said to be absolutely without Wit.

'Tis undoubtedly true, answered *Æmilius*, and

the reason of it is, there are several sorts of Improperities. But can you tell me clearly, said *Plotina*, why People who have some sort of Wit, do not explain 'emselves neatly and without confusion? They are such People, without Question, reply'd *Æmilius*, who sometimes think pretty near, what is proper to be thought; but whose words so embroil their thoughts, that People cannot guess what they would have understood. Others there are, said *Zenocrates*, who only explain themselves ill, because they do not understand 'emselves; thus they seek not only for the words, they would say, but also for the things they would think. 'Tis therefore evident, reply'd *Æmilius*, that I have reason to maintain, there are Improperities of several kinds. And indeed, those People of whom I spoke first, are only obscure in their Discourse, because they did not choose the words well which might express their thoughts: and the second, of whom *Zenocrates* has now spoken, are so, for that their thoughts being confused, there are no expressions which suit with them, nor can make 'em understood. There are several sorts of Men who speak obscure things, of whom some may be amended. And indeed, I know such persons, who to shew they have a quick and ready fancy, don't give them time, with whom they are in Discourse to finish what they have to say. So that undertaking impertinently to divine their meaning, they interrupt those that are speaking: and speaking 'emselves hastily, we may say they answer before any thing has been propos'd to 'em. For, to speak rationally, a person who has not done speaking, has not yet said any thing, that a proper answer can be grounded upon; in regard, very often the last words of a Discourse do confute the beginning. Thus it almost ever happens, that they, who so inconsiderately interrupt others, and would unseasonably search into their meaning, say things without any sence, and make a strange medley of impertinency; tho otherwise they are well enough stock'd with Wit. For my part, said *Valeria*, I know speakers of obscure things, who are only guilty of that Crime, because their minds are diverted elsewhere; and not listning well to what is said to 'em, and yet out of Custom, making answer, they do it for the most part very improperly. Some persons moreover are guilty of impro-

prieties, said *Horace*, out of a desire to be thought witty and knowing, imagining to gain that Reputation, they must never speak intelligibly. For my part, said *Amilcar*, I know there are Men and women, who are sometimes heard to say nonsensical things, only because they would be the first to make use of those words that have newly got some vogue which Chance introduces, and the caprice of the World gives reception to, and which time and use do sometimes authorize. For these People not knowing their true signification, place 'em improperly, and very often say the contrary to what they mean. There are likewise others, said *Æmilius*, who know not what they say. For that being resolv'd to speak boldly of all, tho they know nothing, they venture with a very mean Wit, to speak of certain things, which can hardly ever be well discours'd on, unless by those who have study'd 'em. And yet there is much more shame in pretending to what we are not capable of, than to be judiciously silent, and in owning we know nothing of the things that are spoke of.

For Heavens sake, said then *Plotina*, let us leave those impertinent talkers, unworthy of busying the Heads of so many persons who speak intelligibly; and let us only speak I beseech you, of those who talk too much or too little. Now I must confess, it is my Opinion, that the latter do so tire 'emselves in tiring others, that I should rather choose to speak too much, than too little. Since at least importuning my friends, I should divert my self. Tho I do not think, reply'd *Æmilius*, one can be of a contrary Opinion to yours without being in the wrong: Yet I must once more say, that I should rather love to speak too little than too much; and yet sometimes should better love the Conversation of a great talker, than that of a Man who hardly speaks at all. And truly it may frequently happen that a Man who speaks but little has good sence; but it can hardly ever happen that a Man who speaks too much has Judgment. You are in the right, reply'd *Amilcar*, But does it not also often happen, that they who hardly speak at all have a great deal of Wit; and it pretty often happens too, that those who speak too much, are very well stock'd. Now for my share, I am perswaded, that Wit is like fire, and that it must absolutely shew it self after some

manner or other, when there is any of it. Yet Great Men have there been, reply'd *Horace*, who did not love to speak. You say true, return'd *Æmilius*. But they made their Wit appear by their Writings, or their Actions, tho they did not shew it by their words. For I am really perswaded, as well as *Amilcar*, Wit cannot be absolutely concealed, and must necessarily shew it self. Yet we may find great Princes, great Philosophers, great Poets, great Painters, and excellent Artificers who speak little. But their Actions or their Works will speak for 'em, and will demonstrate their silence is not an effect of Stupidity. 'Tis not so with those People whose Wit is only in Words, and never employ 'emselves but in speaking: Since I am sure their actions commonly say nothing to their advantage. But, reply'd *Zenocrates*, all People of Judgment are not such great friends to silence. I do not say, answered *Æmilius*, that all who speak a great deal have no Judgment: For I should do injustice to too many ingenious persons; but only that they who speak too much cannot have any. Take my word, reply'd *Plotina*, that between speaking a great deal, and speaking too much, there is often little difference to be made. Liberality and Prodigality are in some sort very near Neighbors, answered *Æmilius*, yet 'tis very well distinguished, that the one is a Vice, and the other a Vertue. Thus we may easily distinguish him, who speaks a great deal and well, from him who talks too much, and talks ill, or at least improperly. But resum'd *Valeria*, are there not some, who speak too much and yet speak well? There are such undoubtedly, answered *Amilcar*; and I know a *Greek* in *Sicily*, who spoke with all the *Attique* purity, and yet was very troublesome, in speaking more than he ought. For to define a Man who speaks too much, 'tis principally by the small number of things, and the great number of words he says, that he is to be known. 'Tis thro the little necessity there is of his speaking perpetually. 'Tis by his eagerness to tell his Opinion, on all occasions, interrupting all People, draining a Subject he speaks of, speaking always, without taking notice sometimes, whether the Company hearken to him, and of not being able to hold his peace, though he be with persons of greater Quality, and more capacity than himself. Not but that I believe, those,

who speak a great deal, are sometimes expos'd tho they speak well, to be importunate to People, who love speaking as well as 'emselves. But as that does not always happen, we must not, for the conveniency of a small number of Persons, condemn People, who speak a great deal and well, and whose Conversation affords a thousand pleasures; because they never say any thing but what is necessary or agreeable.

And indeed, when a Man loves to have all the discourse to himself, because that Nature has gifted him, with an easiness of expression, a copious wit, a quick Fancy, that his Memory is fill'd with a thousand choice and rational things, that his Judgment is Master of his Fancy; and that his Conversation has the true Air of a Courtier; he may unquestionably speak a great deal without speaking too much; and I am sure, if this Man be so as I describe him, he will know how to be silent as often as he thinks convenient; will suffer all those to speak who are desirous so to do; and will not do like a great talker I met with at my Arrival at *Syracuse*, to whom I would have begun to relate a great danger I had run at Sea by a Tempest that arose, and whereof he had desired me to tell him the particulars. For I had hardly began to tell him that the Sea grew rough all of a sudden, than taking me up; This puts me in mind, said he since that in a Voyage once at Sea, I was under the like circumstances. And do you imagine, added he, without remembering what he had requested of me, that after having imbarqued at *Tarentum*, in a very good Ship, whereof the Pilot belongs to *Cumae*, and which was laden with several Merchandizes, because *Tarentum* is a rich and powerful City, where there is a great Commerce of all sorts of things: the Wind changing all on a sudden, the Ship was constrained to stay fifteen days longer in the Haven of *Tarentum*, where there happened to me a good pleasant Adventure. For you must know when I went on Board, I had taken my leave of a very pretty Woman, whom I had Courted for some time, and who in consideration of me, had banished from her House a Lover she had before she received my Vows. But she thought I was gone the Night before, so that when I Landed the next day, and went to her House to let her know I should have still the pleasure of seeing her for some days; I

found her laughing very heartily with my old Rival, tho she took not her leave of me without tears in her eyes. Insomuch as falling into a fury, I quarrelled both with my Rival and my Mistress. My anger cured me of my Passion; and at my coming from that Visit I made another, wherein I fell in Love with a very pretty young Lady, with whom I ingag'd in a Gallantry, and for whom I had so much love, that I let the Ship go, wherein I was embarqued with an intention to depart. But I said to him, interrupting him in my turn, when you interrupted me, I thought it was to represent to me some Tempest, which resembled that which you would have had me given you the description of; and yet, tho you have been embarqued, I see you again on Land engaged in making Love. Have patience said he to me, we are not yet come to that. And indeed, I had great need of it. For thro that prodigious desire he had of speaking always, and of suffering no body to speak, he related to me all that had happened to him most remarkable in his new Amour; he shewed me his Mistresses Letters; he recited to me Songs, and made a Voyage without a Tempest, before he proceeded to tell me of that, wherein he had really like to have been cast away. So this Man, who had had a design to know, how I had like to have been cast away, knew nothing of it, and told me a thousand things that did not at all concern me. Yet he spoke well, and supposed it had been at that time proper to have acquainted me with all he did. One might have said that the Man spoke with an admirable deal of Wit. But as all he said to me was nothing then to the purpose, and I had yet but once or twice told the danger I had run; and as it is pretty natural for all People to love relating a Tempest they have newly escaped from: I suffered more than you can well imagine: and his Eloquence did so turmoile me, that if I had not taken the course of ridiculing him in secret, while he was speaking, his Discourse would have mortified me extreamly.

You have told this story so pleasantly, resum'd *Plotina* laughing, that I should have been sorry, there had never been Persons who had talked too much. And what I find good in it, added she, railing, is, that in counterfeiting a Man that speaks a great deal you do not constrain

yourself so much as another. True as it is, reply'd *Amilcar*, with a smile, that sometimes I am inclinable enough to talk. But to prove to all the Company, that I know how to be silent, when I have a mind; I need only tell 'em, that I have lov'd you above Eight days without making you an Amorous Declaration, tho I had every moment a desire to't. Pray, said *Plotina*, let us not so soon change Discourse; nor amuse our selves in speaking impertinencies, which are as unnecessary to the Company, as your *Greek's* Recital of his Adventures was to you. For as I am no hater of speaking too much, and it is one of the things which is most commonly done in the World; I should not be sorry to learn, how 'tis necessary to speak, for to speak well.

First of all, said *Amilcar*, smiling, a Person must be well stor'd with Wit, have a pretty good Memory, and a great deal of Judgment. Then he must speak the Language of the well-bred People of the Country he is in; and equally avoid that of the Common People and, that of the silly Wits; and that which certain Persons have, who holding a little of the Court, a little of the Mad Vulgar, something of the Past Age, something of the Present, and a great deal of the City, is the most fantastic of all. But still, said *Plotina*, I do not yet find this to be sufficient. For you say well, how we are not to speak; but you do not say precisely, how we are to speak well. I assure you, reply'd *Horace*, there needs no more than to speak as you do, to speak exactly and agreeably. And indeed, added *Æmilius*, the charming *Plotina* speaks as becomes a rational Woman to speak, for the speaking agreeably; for all her expressions are Noble and Natural at the same time; she studys not for what she is to say; there is no constraint in her words; her Discourse is clear and easie; there is a gentile turn in her ways of speaking; no affectation in the sound of her Voice; a great deal of freedom in her actions; and a wonderful coherence betwixt her eyes and her words, which contribute highly to the rendring Speech the more agreeable. But how can all you say be in me, reply'd *Plotina*, who hardly ever think of what I speak? If you thought of it more attentively, reply'd *Zenocrates*, you could not speak so agreeably as you do. For they, who think so much of what they are to say, never say any thing of any value.

But, interrupted *Caesonia*, still would I fain know, what ought to be the difference, there must necessarily be between a Man that speaks well, and a Woman that speaks well. For tho I know for a certainty, that there ought to be a distinction, I know not accurately wherein it consists. They make use of the same words; they speak sometimes of the same things; and they have likewise pretty often thoughts in the same Livery. Yet, as I have already said, a civil Woman must not always speak like a civil Man and there are certain expressions, which the one may properly make use of, yet would be very unbecoming in the other. And indeed, said *Plotina*, there are some things that are altogether fanciful in the Mouth of a Woman, which are not surprising in that of a Man. As for example, if I should Swear by the Sacred Fire, or by *Jupiter*, I should startle those I spoke to. If I should undertake to judge decisively of any difficult Question, I should pass for ridiculous. If I only affirmed what I say with too boyst'rous and confident a tone, People would doubt, if I deserv'd the name of a Maid. If I spoke of War, like a Military Tribune, I should be laugh'd at by all my Friends. However, 'tis necessary to speak well; and 'tis likewise necessary to be cautious of falling into another defect, which is that of speaking with a certain affected simplicity, which favours of a Child, and is very unbecoming. Neither must we speak inconsiderately, and at random; much less listen to our own words, as certain Women do; who really listen to the sound of all the words they utter; as they would do to that of a Harp, they would put in tune; and who with an affected tone of Gravity, speak often very insignificant things in very florid words.

What the amiable *Plotina* says, reply'd *Amilcar*, is admirably well said. But to speak of a defect equally agreeing to Men and Women, is, that we must carefully keep from a certain Popular Accent, which renders the finest things disagreeable. For I'll maintain it is without comparison better, I have a little *African* Accent, in speaking the *Roman* Language, than if I had a fantastical Accent, which is particular to the vilest Artificers. And indeed, I hold there is no place in the World where there is not a difference betwixt the Accent of well-bred Persons, and that of the

Common People; and I must add, that a Stranger is not blameable for keeping that of his own Country; and a Man or Woman of Quality do ill, if they speak like their Slaves. And for my part, who am very nice in all things, I am sensibly toucht with the Sound of the Voice, a soft and pure Accent, and I know not what that's noble which I find in the Pronunciation of certain persons of my Acquaintance, and principally in that of the Charming *Plotina*.

But pray you, said then *Caesonia*, tell me what those can do who do not speak like *Plotina*, for the acquiring of what she has that's good, and losing of what they have that's ill. Frequent the Company of well-bred People, reply'd *Æmilius*, and see few others. For after all, to Books it does not belong to teach speaking; and those who content 'emselves with reading, to be fit for Conversation, are strangely mistaken, and know not what reading is good for. 'Tis without doubt necessary to adorn the Mind, regulate Manners, and inform the Judgment. It may also serve to teach a Language; but for the sweetness of Language, Conversation alone is capable of affording it. And yet 'tis necessary, it be a Conversation of Gentry and well-bred People, and wherein the Women have the greatest share. Otherwise there would be some thing too elevated, too knowing, too insipid, rude or affected in those, who should regulate their ways of speaking by what they read. For as commonly Books do not speak, as People speak in Conversation, neither must we speak in Conversation like Books.

In good earnest, said *Plotina*, I am amazed, that all the World don't learn to speak well, since, methinks, there is nothing more easie to be done, than to be always with well-bred People. But as for all others, 'tis not the like, when People have a mind to learn 'em. On the other side, 'tis sometimes troublesome enough to entertain them, who teach singing, painting or dancing. But since to speak well, there needs no more than the frequenting the Company of Gentile People, and Persons who speak agreeably; I make a Vow to learn all my life to speak, and never to see any others willingly. 'Tis rather for others to court your Company, reply'd *Zenocrates*, than for you to seek for that of others. You say right, said *Amilcar*; but there is another sort of thing which

the lovely *Plotina* has need to learn, which is to listen a little more favourably to what I sometimes say to her. As for that, reply'd she, that is but too soon learnt. But there is another, which I would willingly have those learn, who know it not; which is to think of what is said to 'em, and not fall unseasonably a dreaming in Company. As for a short diversion of thoughts, added she, I pardon it. But as to the succession of continual Dreamings, which certain People have, that are never, where they are seen, and that are not indeed any where, I think 'tis best to correct 'em-selves. And when we have so many things to consider, which are more worth than what we hear spoken, we ought to stay in our Closets, and keep our selves company; since without question, 'tis an incivility not to hearken to what is said where we are, and to slight all the rest of the Company we are engaged in. For my part, I am perswaded, that nothing but the murmur of a River, and the noise of a Fountain, we can

civilly listen to in thinking. Notwithstanding all you can, reply'd *Amilcar*, the liberty of thinking is a sweet thing, and if you would take notice of it, there are every where certain Houses, that are found much more agreeable than others, for this only, that those who are Masters of 'em, don't constrain any Body there. And indeed, one may there be pensive, speak, laugh, sing, and Discourse with whom he has a mind to, may go in and out without saying a word; and enjoy there a freedom which has something so sweet that they are prefer'd before many others. Be it as it will, said *Plotina*, I stick to what *Æmilius* has said. For without learning so many things, it would be much more commodious for me to converse only with well-bred persons. And really, I am resolved to see no other if possible. You did well, to add those last words, reply'd *Amilcar*, since considering the current of the words, 'tis pretty difficult to see only such People as merit to be so termed.

Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz

1648 or 1651–1695

Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz was born Juana Ramirez y Asbaje in Nepantla, Mexico (then called New Spain), a country town near Mexico City. Although local records indicate that she was baptized in 1648, she later gave her birth date as 1651. Her parents, who were *criollos*, that is, people of Spanish descent born in Mexico, were not married, and after two more children were born, the father left the family. Juana spent her early childhood on her maternal grandfather's large ranch in Nepantla, which her mother, though illiterate, helped to manage. Her grandfather was a well-educated man with a large library, and after Juana learned to read in a local dame school, she devoured his books. She learned Latin, too, at an early age, and began writing poetry as a young teenager.

In 1661, Juana was sent to live with relatives in Mexico City, where her position as an illegitimate girl without a dowry was precarious. Her personal charm and beauty, however, as well as her precocious learning, attracted the attention of the Viceroy the Marquis of Mancera and his wife, and she entered their court as a lady-in-waiting in 1664. The viceroy was the head of the colonial government of Mexico. He represented the Spanish king and thus had great political influence in Spain. To attract his and his wife's attention, as Juana did, was to acquire very powerful patrons. So impressed by her was the viceroy that in 1668 he organized a public demonstration of her learning in which she successfully responded to questions by several learned men.

Juana also attracted the attention of the viceroy's confessor, the powerful Jesuit priest Antonio Núñez de Miranda. He interested himself in the problem of what Juana was to do with her life, a pressing issue now that the beautiful young woman was in her late teens. A suitable marriage would have been difficult to arrange for an illegitimate child with no dowry, and in any case, Juana showed no inclination to marry. She was devoted to her studies and her poetry. But there was no place in colonial Mexican society for an unmarried woman to engage in such work, especially a woman without a personal fortune. Núñez encouraged Juana to enter religious life. In the convent, he promised her, she would be able to continue her studies. Although fraught with misgivings, since she did not feel any vocation to become a nun, Juana took the veil at the convent of San Jeronimo in 1669. Father Núñez found a patron to provide the substantial donation required for entry into this convent, which was established for upper-class *criollas*.

Life as a Hieronymite nun at first appeared congenial to Juana's literary and scholarly interests. The order was not ascetic, and each nun had a small suite of rooms and personal servants to attend her; Juana entered the convent with a mulatta slave woman who had come with her from her grandfather's estate. Though cloistered, she could receive visitors. She was able to collect books and musical and scientific instruments, and she amassed a library that was eventually the largest in New Spain. Sor Juana produced a large body of poems on religious, political, and romantic themes, many of them commissioned by her viceregal patrons. She also wrote

plays, some of them domestic comedies and others on religious topics. Although Father Núñez had promised Sor Juana the freedom to write and study in the convent, he soon became dismayed by the scope of her work and the notice it attracted, and increasingly he urged her to stop writing and to spend more time on the duties of religious life.

In 1680 the Marquis de la Laguna assumed the position of viceroy, and he and his wife, the Marquise de la Laguna and Countess de Paredes, quickly became Sor Juana's patrons as well, visiting her frequently at the convent. Perhaps feeling protected by their patronage, around 1681 Sor Juana dismissed Father Núñez as her confessor (a right possessed by every nun) to escape his increasingly strident censures against her writing. The Countess de Paredes became an especially close friend of Sor Juana, and when she and her husband returned to Spain, she arranged for the publication of a collection of Sor Juana's poetry in 1689. The volume was widely acclaimed in Spain and throughout Spain's colonial possessions.

In Mexico, however, this fame only intensified criticism of her behavior by her former confessor and his ally, the powerful archbishop of Mexico, Francisco Aguiar y Seijas, a virulent misogynist. Sor Juana was condemned for departing from what they deemed to be the proper role of a woman, especially a nun. The bishop of Puebla, Manuel Fernandez de Santa Cruz, who had been a good friend to Sor Juana, could not divert this stream of criticism. Sor Juana's position was rendered additionally perilous by the fact that the new viceroy, though friendly to her, exercised much less influence in Mexico than had his predecessors. Natural disasters and civic unrest plagued the colony, and in these circumstances, which seemed to betoken the wrath of God, the archbishop's influence grew.

Then, in 1690, the bishop of Puebla asked Sor Juana to write him a letter detailing her theological criticisms of a famous sermon by the Jesuit Antonio Vieira, which the bishop had apparently heard her discuss at the convent. Without Sor Juana's consent, he published this letter under the title *Carta atenagórica*, or *Letter Worthy of Athena*. Identifying its author, he prefaced the work with a letter of his own, published under the feminine pen name (such as priests often adopted when writing advice to nuns) "Sor Filotea de la Cruz." The letter, while praising Sor Juana's brilliance, cautioned her against secular study and writing of any kind, and against further pursuit of the masculine field of theology.

The publication of the *Letter Worthy of Athena* caused the gathering storm of criticism to break with fury. Although the Countess de Paredes arranged for it to be published in Spain accompanied by testimonials from several clergymen (including two Jesuits), and although this publication brought renewed praise for Sor Juana in Spain and other Spanish-speaking colonies, in Mexico the attacks were unrelenting and nearly unanimous. Faced with this firestorm, in 1691 Sor Juana sent to the bishop of Puebla the text excerpted here, *La Respuesta de la poetisa a la muy illustre Sor Filotea de la Cruz*, or *The Poet's Answer to the Most Illustrious Sister Filotea de la Cruz*. It is a defense of her own life as a writer and scholar, and an impassioned plea for all women's rights to intellectual development. The bishop did not publish it nor, so far as is known, respond to it in any way.

Sor Juana attempted to keep writing. The second volume of her collected works

was published in Spain in 1692; a third volume, including *La Respuesta*, would appear in 1700. But soon she apparently felt that she had to negotiate with her persecutors in Mexico. She was now isolated there, and in his biography of her, Mexican poet Octavio Paz speculates that perhaps the repeated threats of damnation had finally made her fear for her soul. At any rate, late in 1692 Sor Juana gave her library to the archbishop, to be sold for charity, and in 1693 she recalled Father Núñez as her confessor. He required a rigid regimen of penance, and at his insistence she signed a confession renouncing her past life (although never, explicitly, her studies). Shortly thereafter, in 1695, she died during an epidemic.

Sor Juana's literary reputation was not diminished by her humbled last years. She is now regarded as the most important poet of colonial Mexico and the most important woman writer of colonial Spanish America. Moreover, literary scholar Stephanie Merrim locates Sor Juana as a central influence in early modern women's struggle for greater rights. Merrim argues that Sor Juana's writing typifies proto-feminist themes found in the writing of other seventeenth-century European women working to enlarge women's sphere.

SUMMARY OF *LA RESPUESTA*

Excerpted here is that part of *La Respuesta* that has the most to say about women's intellect, learning, and language use. A précis of the entire text follows.

Sor Juana begins *La Respuesta* with lavish expressions of humility and gratitude to "Sor Filotea." Even though she is inadequate to the task, she says, she must speak even if only to name her silence—which she compares to the silence of a mystic rapt by a holy vision. She promises to obey Sor Filotea's direction to apply herself more diligently to sacred studies, noting that she has avoided them out of fear of giving offense to the Inquisition.

Sor Juana asserts that she has written and studied because she was compelled by her nature to do so. She supports this assertion with a review of her life, detailing her efforts from a young age to become educated, which include a girlhood scheme to attend the University of Mexico dressed as a man. Although she admits that she entered the convent primarily to find peace and quiet for her studies, she argues that all secular subjects are necessary to a better knowledge of God.

By way of attesting to the strength of her compulsion to study, Sor Juana emphasizes the obstacles she has overcome. These include her own incapacity, the interruptions of religious life, the distractions of fame, and attacks motivated by jealousy—here comparing herself to Christ persecuted by the envious Pharisees. She notes how she has continued to seek knowledge under the most adverse circumstances, as when, denied books by a particularly assiduous abbess, she carried on her scientific studies by careful observations while gardening and cooking.

Here begins our excerpt, with a catalogue of learned women, both classical and Christian. Sor Juana argues that learned women are particularly useful as instructors to other women and that this activity is clearly permitted if one interprets Saint Paul correctly in historical context. After our excerpt ends, Sor Juana mentions two

learned nuns of her own day who memorized and translated the works of men; Sor Juana regards them as having wasted their talents.

Sor Juana next launches into a defense of her poetry. Here, again, she explains that she has been compelled by her nature to write, verse coming naturally to her from a very early age. Moreover, she argues, poetry cannot be intrinsically evil, for there is much valuable sacred poetry. Poetry should be condemned only if it is aesthetically or morally flawed—but if it is not, why may it not be written by women as well as by men? Faults in Sor Juana's own poetry, she avers, arise from the modesty of her abilities coupled with the haste in which she had to produce many compositions for aristocratic patrons. No doubt haste also marred her critique of Vieira, which she did not intend to be published.

Sor Juana concludes by promising to follow Sor Filotea's advice to restrict her writing and studying. She forgives her detractors and thanks them for helping her to maintain her humility. She encloses with this letter a few copies of two of her religious publications, all the other copies having been already requested by the nuns and her secular friends. She promises to submit any further writings to Filotea's judgment and takes leave of "her" in terms that hint at Sor Filotea's true identity as a male ecclesiastical authority.

Selected Bibliography

Electa Arenal and Amanda Powell have provided an excellent modern edition, *The Answer/La Respuesta, Including a Selection of Poems* (1994). Spanish and English texts are presented on facing pages, with extensive notes on Sor Juana's literary, religious, and political contexts, a helpful introductory biography, and a lengthy bibliography.

Octavio Paz's biography, *Sor Juana, or, The Traps of Faith* (1981; trans. Margaret Sayers Peden, 1988) provides a detailed picture of Sor Juana's cultural and historical contexts, as well as a poet's analysis of her literary work.

In *Early Modern Women's Writing and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz* (1999), Stephanie Merrim locates Sor Juana as a central figure in a European cultural context in which seventeenth-century women worked against new Renaissance restrictions imposed on them by adapting the vocabulary of the querelle des femmes, begun by Christine de Pizan (p. 540); Merrim discusses French, Spanish, and English writers, including Margaret Fell (p. 748) and Mary Astell (p. 841). Other critical studies in English include two essays by Nina Scott that focus on the passage excerpted here, "'La gran turba de las que merecieron nombres': Sor Juana's Foremothers in *La Respuesta a Sor Filotea*" (in *Coded Encounters: Race, Gender, and Ethnicity in Colonial Latin America*, ed. Francisco Javier Cevallos-Candau, Jeffrey A. Cole, Nina M. Scott, and Nicomedes Suárez-Araúz, 1994), which identifies the women whom Sor Juana cites as her intellectual foremothers and analyzes her selective use of their biographies to support her case; and "Sor Juana de la Cruz: 'Let Your Women Keep Silence in the Churches'" (*Women's Studies International Forum* 8 [1985]: 511–19), which similarly analyzes Sor Juana's uses of Saint Paul and Saint Jerome. For a contemporary collection of essays that discuss Sor Juana's life and her work in various genres, see *Feminist Perspectives on Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz*, ed. Stephanie Merrim (1991).

From *The Poet's Answer to the Most Illustrious Sister Filotea de la Cruz*

If studies, my Lady, be merits (for indeed I see them extolled as such in men), in me they are no such thing: I study because I must. If they be a failing, I believe for the same reason that the fault is none of mine. Yet withal, I live always so wary of myself that neither in this nor in anything else do I trust my own judgment. And so I entrust the decision to your supreme skill and straightway submit to whatever sentence you may pass, posing no objection or reluctance, for this has been no more than a simple account of my inclination to letters.

I confess also that, while in truth this inclination has been such that, as I said before, I had no need of exemplars, nevertheless the many books that I have read have not failed to help me, both in sacred as well as secular letters. For there I see a Deborah issuing laws, military as well as political, and governing the people among whom there were so many learned men. I see the exceedingly knowledgeable Queen of Sheba, so learned she dares to test the wisdom of the wisest of all wise men with riddles, without being rebuked for it; indeed, on this very account she is to become judge of the unbelievers. I see so many and such significant women: some adorned with the gift of prophecy, like an Abigail; others, of persuasion, like Esther; others, of piety, like Rahab; others, of perseverance, like Anna [Hannah] the mother of Samuel; and others, infinitely more, with other kinds of qualities and virtues.

If I consider the Gentiles, the first I meet are the Sibyls, chosen by God to prophesy the essential mysteries of our Faith in such learned and elegant verses that they stupefy the imagination. I see a woman such as Minerva, daughter of great Jupiter and mistress of all the wisdom of Athens, adored as goddess of the sciences. I see one Polla Argentaria, who helped Lucan, her husband, to write the *Battle of Pharsalia*. I see the daughter of the divine Tiresias, more learned still than her

father. I see, too, such a woman as Zenobia, queen of the Palmyrians, as wise as she was courageous. Again, I see an Arete, daughter of Aristippus, most learned. A Nicostrata, inventor of Latin letters and most erudite in the Greek. An Aspasia Miletia, who taught philosophy and rhetoric and was the teacher of the philosopher Pericles. An Hypatia, who taught astrology and lectured for many years in Alexandria. A Leontium, who won over the philosopher Theophrastus and proved him wrong. A Julia, a Corinna, a Cornelia; and, in sum, the vast throng of women who merited titles and earned renown: now as Greeks, again as Muses, and yet again as Pythonesses. For what were they all but learned women, who were considered, celebrated, and indeed venerated as such in Antiquity? Without mentioning still others, of whom the books are full; for I see the Egyptian Catherine, lecturing and refuting all the learning of the most learned men of Egypt. I see a Gertrude read, write, and teach. And seeking no more examples far from home, I see my own most holy mother Paula, learned in the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin tongues and most expert in the interpretation of the Scriptures. What wonder then can it be that, though her chronicler was no less than the unequaled Jerome, the Saint found himself scarcely worthy of the task, for with that lively gravity and energetic effectiveness with which only he can express himself, he says: "If all the parts of my body were tongues, they would not suffice to proclaim the learning and virtues of Paula." Blessilla, a widow, earned the same praises, as did the luminous virgin Eustochium, both of them daughters of the Saint herself [Paula]; and indeed Eustochium was such that for her knowledge she was hailed as a World Prodigy. Fabiola, also a Roman, was another most learned in Holy Scripture. Proba Falconia, a Roman woman, wrote an elegant book of centos, joining together verses from Virgil, on the mysteries of our holy Faith. Our Queen Isabella, wife of Alfonso X, is known to have written on astrology—without mentioning

Translated by Electa Arenal and Amanda Powell.

others, whom I omit so as not merely to copy what others have said (which is a vice I have always detested): Well then, in our own day there thrive the great Christina Alexandra, Queen of Sweden, as learned as she is brave and generous; and too those most excellent ladies, the Duchess of Aveyro and the Countess of Villaumbrosa.

The venerable Dr. Arce (worthy professor of Scripture, known for his virtue and learning), in his *For the Scholar of the Bible*, raises this question: “*Is it permissible for women to apply themselves to the study, and indeed the interpretation, of the Holy Bible?*” And in opposition he presents the verdicts passed by many saints, particularly the words of [Paul] the Apostle: “*Let women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted them to speak,*” etc. Arce then presents differing verdicts, including this passage addressed to Titus, again spoken by the Apostle: “*The aged women, in like manner, in holy attire [. . .] teaching well*”; and he gives other interpretations from the Fathers of the Church. Arce at last resolves, in his prudent way, that women are not allowed to lecture publicly in the universities or to preach from the pulpits, but that studying, writing, and teaching privately is not only permitted but most beneficial and useful to them. Clearly, of course, he does not mean by this that all women should do so, but only those whom God may have seen fit to endow with special virtue and prudence, and who are very mature and erudite and possess the necessary talents and requirements for such a sacred occupation. And so just is this distinction that not only women, who are held to be so incompetent, but also men, who simply because they are men think themselves wise, are to be prohibited from the interpretation of the Sacred Word, save when they are most learned, virtuous, of amenable intellect and inclined to the good. For when the reverse is true, I believe, numerous sectarians are produced, and this has given rise to numerous heresies. For there are many who study only to become ignorant, especially those of arrogant, restless, and prideful spirits, fond of innovations in the Law (the very thing that rejects all innovation). And so they are not content until, for the sake of saying what no one before them has said, they speak heresy. Of such men as these the Holy Spirit says: “*For wisdom will not enter into a malicious soul.*” For

them, more harm is worked by knowledge than by ignorance. A wit once observed that he who knows no Latin is not an utter fool, but he who does know it has met the prerequisites. And I might add that he is made a perfect fool (if foolishness can attain perfection) by having studied his bit of philosophy and theology and by knowing something of languages. For with that he can be foolish in several sciences and tongues; a great fool cannot be contained in his mother tongue alone.

To such men, I repeat, study does harm, because it is like putting a sword in the hands of a madman: though the sword be the noblest of instruments for defense, in his hands it becomes his own death and that of many others. This is what the Divine Letters became in the hands of that wicked Pelagius and of the perverse Arius, of that wicked Luther, and all the other heretics, like our own Dr. Cazalla (who was never either our own nor a doctor). Learning harmed them all, though it can be the best nourishment and life for the soul. For just as an infirm stomach, suffering from diminished heat, produces more bitter, putrid, and perverse humors the better the food that it is given, so too these evil persons give rise to worse opinions the more they study. Their understanding is obstructed by the very thing that should nourish it, and the fact is they study a great deal and digest very little, failing to measure their efforts to the narrow vessel of their understanding. In this regard the Apostle has said: “*For I say, by the grace that is given me, to all that are among you, not to be more wise than it behoveth to be wise, but to be wise unto sobriety, and according as God hath divided to every one the measure of faith.*” And in truth the Apostle said this not to women but to men, and the “*Let [them] keep silence*” was meant not only for women, but for all those who are not very competent. If I wish to know as much as or more than Aristotle or St. Augustine, but I lack the ability of a St. Augustine or an Aristotle, then I may study more than both of them together, but I shall not only fail to reach my goal: I shall weaken and stupefy the workings of my feeble understanding with such a disproportionate aim.

Oh, that all men—and I, who am but an ignorant woman, first of all—might take the measure

of our abilities before setting out to study and, what is worse, to write, in our jealous aspiration to equal and even surpass others. How little boldness would we summon, how many errors might we avoid, and how many distorted interpretations now noised abroad should be noised no further! And I place my own before all others, for if I knew all that I ought, I would not so much as write these words. Yet I protest that I do so only to obey you; and with such misgiving that you owe me more for taking up my pen with all this fear than you would owe me were I to present you with the most perfect works. But withal, it is well that this goes to meet with your correction: erase it, tear it up, and chastise me, for I shall value that more than all the vain applause others could give me. *"The just man shall correct me in mercy, and shall reprove me: but let not the oil of the sinner fatten my head."*

And returning to our own Arce, I observe that in support of his views he presents these words of my father St. Jerome (in the letter *To Leta, on the Education of Her Daughter*), where he says: *"[Her] childish tongue must be imbued with the sweet music of the Psalms. [. . .] The very words from which she will get into the way of forming sentences should not be taken at haphazard but be definitely chosen and arranged on purpose. For example, let her have the names of the prophets and the apostles, and the whole list of patriarchs from Adam downwards, as Matthew and Luke give it. She will then be doing two things at the same time, and will remember them afterwards. [. . .] Let her every day repeat to you a portion of the Scriptures as her fixed task."* Very well, if the Saint wished a little girl, scarcely beginning to speak, to be instructed thus, what must he desire for his nuns and spiritual daughters? We see this most clearly in the women already mentioned—Eustochium and Fabiola—and also in Marcella, the latter's sister; in Pacatula, and in other women whom the Saint honors in his epistles, urging them on in this holy exercise. This appears in the letter already cited, where I noted the words *"let her repeat to you . . ."* which serve to reclaim and confirm St. Paul's description, "teaching well." For the *"let her repeat the task to you"* of my great Father

makes clear that the little girl's teacher must be Leta herself, the girl's mother.

Oh, how many abuses would be avoided in our land if the older women were as well instructed as Leta and knew how to teach as is commanded by St. Paul and my father St. Jerome! Instead, for lack of such learning and through the extreme feebleness in which they are determined to maintain our poor women, if any parents then wish to give their daughters more extensive Christian instruction than is usual, necessity and the lack of learned older women oblige them to employ men as instructors to teach reading and writing, numbers and music, and other skills. This leads to considerable harm, which occurs every day in doleful instances of these unsuitable associations. For the immediacy of such contact and the passage of time all too frequently allow what seemed impossible to be accomplished quite easily. For this reason, many parents prefer to let their daughters remain uncivilized and untutored, rather than risk exposing them to such notorious peril as this familiarity with men. Yet all this could be avoided if there were old women of sound education, as St. Paul desires, so that instruction could be passed from the old to the young just as is done with sewing and all the customary skills.

For what impropriety can there be if an older woman, learned in letters and holy conversation and customs, should have in her charge the education of young maids? Better so than to let these young girls go to perdition, either for lack of any Christian teaching or because one tries to impart it through such dangerous means as male teachers. For if there were no greater risk than the simple indecency of seating a completely unknown man at the side of a bashful woman (who blushes if her own father should look her straight in the face), allowing him to address her with household familiarity and to speak to her with intimate authority, even so the modesty demanded in interchange with men and in conversation with them gives sufficient cause to forbid this. Indeed, I do not see how the custom of men as teachers of women can be without its dangers, save only in the strict tribunal of the confessional, or the distant teachings of the pulpit, or the remote wis-

dom of books; but never in the repeated handling that occurs in such immediate and tarnishing contact. And everyone knows this to be true. Nevertheless, it is permitted for no better reason than the lack of learned older women; therefore, it does great harm not to have them. This point should be taken into account by those who, tied to the “*Let women keep silence in the churches,*” curse the idea that women should acquire knowledge and teach, as if it were not the Apostle himself who described them “*teaching well.*” Furthermore, that prohibition applied to the case related by Eusebius: to wit, that in the early Church, women were set to teaching each other Christian doctrine in the temples. The murmur of their voices caused confusion when the apostles were preaching, and that is why they were told to be silent. Just so, we see today that when the preacher is preaching, no one prays aloud.

There can be no doubt that in order to understand many passages, one must know a great deal of the history, customs, rituals, proverbs, and even the habits of speech of the times in which they were written, in order to know what is indicated and what alluded to by certain sayings in divine letters. “*Rend your hearts, and not your garments*”—is that not an allusion to the Hebrews’ ritual of tearing their clothing as a sign of grief, as was done by the evil high priest when he said that Christ had blasphemed? Do not many passages by the Apostle [Paul], on the aid and comfort of widows, refer to the customs of his times? Or that passage concerning the strong woman, “*Her husband is honourable in the gates,*” does it not allude to the custom of placing the judges’ tribunals at the city gates? The saying “*Give land to God,*” does it not stand for making some vow? Was not the term *hiemantes* used for public sinners, because they made their penance out of doors, unlike others who did penance in a doorway? The complaint of Christ to the Pharisee who failed to greet Him with the kiss of peace or the washing of feet, is that not based on the Jewish custom of doing these things? And so it is with infinitely many more passages, not only in divine but in humane letters as well, which are met at every turn, like the phrase “*Honor the purple,*” which meant “Obey

the king”; or the phrase “*to put a hand to him,*” which meant “to emancipate,” referring to the custom and ritual of giving a slave a slap to set him at liberty. Again, Virgil’s “*The heavens thundered,*” alluding to the augury of thunder toward the west, which was thought a good omen. There is Martial’s “*You never ate hare,*” which shows not only the wordplay in *leporem* (which means both “hare” and “jest”), but also a reference to a quality the hare was said to possess. There is the proverb, “*To sail the shores of Malia is to forget all the things of home,*” which refers to the great peril of the promontory of Laconia. The response of the chaste matron to an unwanted suitor, “*No doorframes shall be anointed on my account, nor shall the torches burn,*” to say that she would not marry, alludes to the ritual of anointing the doorways with oil and lighting nuptial torches at weddings; just so, we might say today, “On my account shall no dowry coins be spent, nor shall the priest give his blessing.” And in this vein, much commentary can be made on Virgil and Homer and all the poets and orators. Very well, and in addition to all this, what difficulties do we not find in sacred texts, even in matters of grammar—putting the plural in place of the singular, or moving from second to third person, like the passage in the Song of Songs: “*Let him kiss me with the kiss of his mouth: for thy breasts are better than wine*”? Or putting the adjectives in the genitive case, instead of the accusative, as in “*I will take the chalice of salvation*”? Or again, putting the feminine in place of the masculine; or, on the contrary, calling every sin adultery?

All this requires more study than is supposed by certain men who, as mere grammarians or, at most, armed with four terms from the principles of logic, wish to interpret the Scriptures and cling to the “*Let women keep silence in the churches,*” without knowing how to understand it rightly. So it is with another passage, “*Let the woman learn in silence*”; for this passage is more in favor of than against women, as it says that they *should* learn, and while they are learning, obviously, they must needs keep quiet. And it is also written, “*Hear, O Israel, and be silent,*” where the whole congregation of men and women are addressed,

and all are told to be quiet, for whoever listens and learns has good reason to take heed and keep still. If this be not so, I would like these interpreters and expounders of St. Paul to explain to me how they understand the passage, "*Let women keep silence in the churches.*" For they must understand it either materially, to mean the pulpit and the lecture hall, or formally, to mean the community of all believers, which is to say the Church. If they understand it in the first sense (which is to my way of thinking its true sense, for we can see that indeed it is not permitted by the Church for women to read publicly or to preach), why then do they rebuke those women who study in private? And if they understand it in the second sense and wish to extend the Apostle's prohibition to all instances without exception, so that not even in private may women write or study, then how is it that we see the Church has allowed a Gertrude, a Teresa, a Brigid, the nun of Agreda, and many other women to write? And if they tell me that these women all were saintly, true enough, but that in no way hinders my argument. First, because St. Paul's proposition is absolute and includes all women with no exception made for saints; for saintly, too, in their own day were Martha and Mary, and Marcella, and Mary the mother of Jacob, and Salome, and many other women who took part in the zeal of the early Church, yet Paul makes no exception for them. And in our own time we see that the Church permits writing by women saints and those who are not saints alike; for the nun of Agreda and María de la Antigua are not canonized, yet their writings go from hand to hand. Nor when Sts. Teresa and the others were writing, had they yet been canonized. Therefore, St. Paul's prohibition applied only to public speech from the pulpit; for if the Apostle were to prohibit all writing, then the Church could not permit it. Very well now, I am not so bold as to teach, which would be most unsuitably presumptuous of me; and to write requires more talent than is mine and the greatest deliberation. So says St. Cyprian: "*That which we write requires solemn deliberation.*" All that I have desired has been to study, so as to become less ignorant. For according to St. Augustine,

some things are learned so as to act on them, and others simply for the sake of knowing them: "*We learn certain things in order to know them; others in order to do them.*" Then where is my transgression, if I refrain even from that which is permissible for women—to teach by writing—because I know myself to lack the abundant talent needed for it, following Quintilian's counsel: "*Let each one learn, not so much by the precepts of others, as by following the counsel of his own nature*"?

If my crime lies in the "Letter Worthy of Athena," was that anything more than a simple report of my opinion, with all the indulgences granted me by our Holy Mother Church? For if She, with her most holy authority, does not forbid my writing, why must others forbid it? Is it bold of me to oppose Vieira, yet not so for that Reverend Father to oppose the three holy Fathers of the Church? Is my mind, such as it is, less free than his, though it derives from the same source? Is his opinion to be taken as one of the principles of the Holy Faith made manifest, that we must believe it blindly? Besides which, I have not in the slightest way fallen short of that respect owed such a great man, as his defender has done in this instance, forgetting the observation of Titus Lucius, "*Respect befits the arts.*" Nor did I so much as graze the hem of the blessed Society. Nor did I write for anyone other than the person who suggested it to me; and according to Pliny, "*The situation of one who publishes a thing is different from that of one who speaks it by name.*" For had I thought the letter was to be published, it would not have appeared as unkempt as it was. If it is heretical, as the critic says, why does he not denounce it? Thus he would find revenge and I contentment, for I more greatly value, as I ought, the name of Catholic and obedient daughter of my Holy Mother Church than any praise that might befall me as a scholar. If the letter be crude—as he rightly says it is—then let him laugh at it, though he laugh falsely with what they call rabbit's laughter. I do not say that he should praise me, for just as I was free to disagree with Vieira, any person shall be free to disagree with my judgment.

Part Four

**ENLIGHTENMENT
RHETORIC**

Introduction

The period in European history from the seventeenth through the eighteenth centuries—the period known as the Enlightenment—is marked by revolutions in science, philosophy, and politics. These revolutions altered long-cherished notions about the physical world, knowledge and truth, human nature, and society. Scientists shifted to the experimental method and sought to name the innumerable parts that make up our universe and to discover the common features that linked these parts together. Philosophers reconsidered the source and status of knowledge, paying particular attention to the psychological processes of perception, reflection, and communication in an attempt to determine how it was possible to discover the truths within the physical world that were so important to science’s progress. The philosophers’ search for the universals of human nature led political reformers to argue that if all people had the same perceptions and the same capacity for thought and knowledge, then inequalities in social standing went against nature and reason. Democracy therefore seemed to be the natural form of social organization, which meant that the old order should be torn down and replaced. These vast social and intellectual changes inevitably affected the ways that language, communication, and rhetoric were understood during this crucial period.

RHETORIC IN THE ENLIGHTENMENT: AN OVERVIEW

The scientific and philosophical revolutions of the seventeenth century affected rhetoric in a number of ways. The first effect was indirect, resulting from a change in the conception of logic, a branch of knowledge to which rhetoric was closely allied. The Ramistic doctrines that dominated rhetoric at the beginning of the seventeenth century limited rhetoric to style and delivery, arguing that invention and arrangement were really the concern of logic because logic was the discipline that sought truth (see the introduction to Part Three). But as experimental science and inductive reasoning replaced deductive logic as the standard of inquiry, the

Ramistic distinction became moot. The Ciceronian conception of rhetoric, which included all five classical canons (invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery), became once again the foundation of rhetorical study and remained so through the seventeenth and well into the eighteenth century.

Toward the end of the seventeenth century, traditional rhetoric came to be closely associated with the genres of history, poetry, and literary criticism, the so-called *belles lettres*. The belletrists revered the great classical writers and orators and applied the rules of classical rhetoric to literary judgment. Critics of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries held that literature was purposeful, intended to please and instruct the reader. The art of persuasion was thus perfectly consonant with the art of poetry. Moreover, the new theories of psychology and human nature seemed to confirm the idea that reasoning and imagination were the key mental faculties, especially in persuasion. Thus, during the eighteenth century, rhetoric became closely identified with literary criticism, a connection that persisted well into the nineteenth century.

Before the end of the seventeenth century, however, traditional rhetoric came under attack by adherents of the new science, who claimed that rhetoric obscured the truth by encouraging the use of ornamented rather than plain, direct language. Many philosophers called for broad language reforms in an attempt to purify communication, at least for science and philosophy. The call for a plain style, taken up by church leaders and influential writers, made *perspicuity*, or clarity, a watchword in discussions of ideal style during the ensuing centuries.

An even more profound and direct influence on rhetoric at the beginning of the seventeenth century was Francis Bacon's theory of psychology (see Part Three, p. 736), which divides the mind into productive and receptive operations or "faculties" (hence, "faculty psychology"). It was not until the middle of the eighteenth century, however, that a complete psychological or epistemological theory of rhetoric arose, one that focused on appealing to the mental faculties in order to persuade. This approach proved to be powerful and durable, for it linked rhetoric with the most advanced ideas in philosophy and psychology and offered an attractive alternative to classical rhetoric.

The elocution movement, which focused on delivery, began early in the eighteenth century and lasted through the nineteenth. Elocution offered instruction in correct pronunciation in an era obsessed with correctness. Moreover, elocution found support in psychology, for it analyzed the hitherto neglected area of nonverbal appeals to the emotions, an avenue of persuasion newly restored to legitimacy.

In the eighteenth century, then, rhetoric could offer a link to the classical period, an analysis of taste and literary judgment, instruction in correct and effective speaking, and a respectable scientific theory of psychological persuasion.

As this brief overview suggests, the rhetorical theories of the Enlightenment are intimately linked to the intellectual and social developments that shaped the modern world. What follows is a more detailed look at the richness and complexity of rhetoric in this remarkable period.

SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY RHETORIC

Philosophy and Rhetoric in the Seventeenth Century

Bacon's prophetic efforts to reform science and advance learning (see Part Three) begin with a reordering of the canons of knowledge and an investigation of the processes of knowing. Bacon divides the human intellect into the "faculties" of memory, imagination, and reason. To these faculties he adds two others of a slightly different kind, the will and the appetite. Bacon's notion of psychology as a function of different faculties or mental operations was to dominate psychology until well into the nineteenth century. As for rhetoric, Bacon's now-familiar formulation is that rhetoric applies *reason* to the *imagination* to move the *will*. It was all too clear to Bacon that reasoning was not enough to achieve persuasion; to teach people or move them to action, one had to address all the faculties. Thus, though he advocates a plain style and has some harsh words for the rhetoric of tropes and figures, Bacon by no means rejects the art of eloquence.

Bacon's reasonable view counters, in several ways, the Ramistic doctrine that dominated the theory and teaching of rhetoric through the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Bacon dismisses the Ramists' severe division of logic and rhetoric, which put invention and disposition into the former discipline and restricted the latter to style and delivery. Like the neo-Ciceronians, who persistently defended classical rhetoric from Ramistic assault, Bacon restores invention to rhetoric. He draws a distinction, though, between investigation, which is the job of logic, and invention, which is the recovery of pertinent information for argument or teaching. Moreover, Bacon scorns the use of deductive logic (the logic of the Ramists) as a form of inquiry. The syllogism might guard against faulty reasoning, he says, but only inductive thinking can produce new knowledge. In this way, he moves toward a conception of logic that would equate it with reasoning and separate it from communication. The communication of knowledge to all audiences, learned or popular, would then be rhetoric's job—whereas for the Ramists, logic governed dialectical communication (that is, the disputations directed to learned audiences), while rhetoric was for popular discourse only. Bacon hints at the doctrine of investigation versus communication but never makes it explicit. René Descartes, however, would articulate it definitively.

The method of Descartes owes nothing to argument and everything to solitary mental analysis. Even more than Bacon, Descartes rejects the Scholastic logic of disputation. The Cartesian method begins with the self and its thought, taking as true only that which the mind cannot find reason to doubt. Scholarly dispute, says Descartes, turns on the desire to win an argument, not the desire to find the truth. For Descartes, experiment is thus clearly preferable to dispute for scholarly investigation. It follows, too, that logic must be reconstituted as a means of investigation rather than of mere proof. Because syllogism relies on established premises, it can convey knowledge but not produce it; hence Descartes thrusts the syllogism and the commonplaces into the realm of rhetoric and defines the investigative method as a process of building on self-evident truths by careful division, sequential addition,

and the search for causal connection. The commonplaces have no more role in this method than the syllogism does, for they are founded on probability, not indisputable truth. Truth is thus distinguished from mere probability and, of course, from persuasion.

Descartes's ideas were popularized by the *Port-Royal Logic* (1662), which puts them in an orderly pedagogical package. In the *Logic*, authors Antoine Arnauld and Pierre Nicole identify four mental operations: conceiving, judging, reasoning, and ordering. Conceiving means forming ideas and attaching words to them. Judging connects and compares ideas and formulates propositions about them. Reasoning corrects for fallacies and prejudice, using the syllogism as an aid. And ordering organizes ideas for presentation. The Port-Royal scheme clearly distinguishes discovery from presentation. Discovery or analysis is guided by the method of Descartes; it is not to be confused with dialectical disputation or its old-style logic. Presentation appears at the end of the discovery process, where ideas become available for instruction or persuasion. Here, where analysis ends and synthesis begins, it is necessary to recognize that persuasion is a matter not just of correct thinking but of psychology. The Port-Royalists' associate, philosopher Blaise Pascal, argues that the proofs provided by scientific demonstration appeal to the understanding only, and so one must also consider the desires and the will in successful persuasion.

Traditional Rhetoric and the Problem of Style

These new ideas did not revolutionize rhetoric in the seventeenth century, though their influence was considerable. Traditional rhetoric remained strong in schools, courts, parliaments, and pulpits. Ciceronian rhetoricians held to the five canons in opposition to the Ramists, while both Ciceronians and Ramists preserved the syllogism and commonplaces and emphasized the tropes and figures. Ornate style continued to be regarded as beautiful and impressive, and *impressive* was synonymous with *effective*, for the striking phrase would capture the attention of the reader or auditor.

The proper degree of ornateness or plainness of style was a subject of much debate. Bacon was not the first to complain about the excesses of Ciceronian prose. The so-called Senecan style had arisen as an alternative to the Ciceronian and became popular during the seventeenth century. But the Senecan style is "plain" because it avoids stylistic display for its own sake, not because it rejects all verbal ornament and ingenuity. It favors long sentences, less symmetrical than the Ciceronian periods but still carefully structured; it resists Latin borrowings but does not avoid them altogether; and it certainly employs tropes, although it leans toward the less flamboyant of them. Bacon had reservations about this style, too, warning that it often strained after wit and weight that was not earned by the thought expressed.

Pulpit oratory was a frequent target of complaints about stylistic excess. A number of writers decry the state of pulpit oratory, among them François de Salignac de la Mothe Fénelon, archbishop of Cambrai. In his *Dialogues on Eloquence* (written ca. 1679), Fénelon attacks empty, ornamental sermonizing and cites the need for "natural" delivery and gesture, "natural" organization, real knowledge of the subject

matter, and real conviction. These concerns suggest his debt to the emerging epistemology of Descartes and Port-Royal, and his use of the Platonic and Ciceronian dialogue form clearly joins him to the classical tradition, a pattern that we shall see again. Another critic is Bishop John Wilkins, who, in a discourse on preaching (1646), explicitly tries to link preaching with the new philosophy, anticipating the Port-Royalists, who would similarly pair inquiry with teaching as the requisite arts for the successful preacher. “The greatest learning is to be seen in the greatest plainness,” says Wilkins, and he cautions preachers against giving “a starched speech full of a puerile worded Rhetorick.”¹

The Attack on Rhetoric

Some took the opposition of Bacon and Descartes to Ramist views of logic and rhetoric as opposition to rhetoric itself, for plainness was called for and rhetoric seemed to be an art of obfuscation. Rhetoric appeared in some ways to be cut off from both the old logic and the new science. The place of rhetoric in the curriculum of European schools, however, was not threatened. Indeed, it was the new science that was excluded from the schools. The well-established and anti-Cartesian Jesuit schools relied on the classical curriculum, and the newly established Protestant schools, which might have responded to the new science, were simply too poor to hire instructors who could teach it. The *Port-Royal Logic* is largely the result of a short-lived anti-Jesuit experimental school that attempted to create a Cartesian curriculum combining religion, mathematics, science, history, and French. The last item was the most radical. The classics were to be read in French translation, and the students were to learn French composition before Latin. The composition assignments were based on the students’ own experience or their responses to reading. But the small Port-Royal school was soon suppressed. Only private tutors could provide education along Cartesian lines. The aristocratic consumers of such education were interested in Latin education as a gentlemanly acquisition, but some welcomed more practical studies in geography, law, and politics in place of Latin and the classical curriculum. These efforts at reform were very slight ripples on the surface of education. Well into the eighteenth century, until the French Revolution, the educational system in Europe resisted calls to include empirical studies. And rhetorical education continued to focus on style, responding very slowly to the call for reform. The philosophers of the new science sought a plain style for which there seemed to be little sympathy.

The members of the British Royal Society, founded in 1660, envisioned a world without rhetoric, a world where people would speak of things as they really were, without the colorings of style, in plain language as clear as glass—so many words for so many things. Their spokesman, clergyman Thomas Sprat, makes a point of saying this in his *History of the Royal Society* (1667). Sprat first explains that the Society meant to use the experimental method and inductive reasoning to advance

¹John Wilkins, *Ecclesiastes, or, A Discourse Concerning the Gift of Preaching As it falls under the Rules of Art*, 3rd ed. (London, 1651), p. 129; quoted in W. S. Howell, *Eighteenth-Century British Logic and Rhetoric* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), p. 456.

knowledge, in contradistinction to the outmoded Scholastic philosophy of syllogistic deduction and disputation. The experimenters furthermore resolved, Sprat says, to be wary of their language, for

unless they had been very watchful to keep [it] in due temper, the whole spirit and vigour of their Design, had soon been eaten out, by the luxury and redundance of speech. The ill effects of this superfluity of talking, have already overwhelm'd most other Arts and Professions; insomuch, that when I consider the means of happy living, and the causes of their corruption, I can hardly forbear . . . concluding, that eloquence ought to be banish'd out of all civil Societies, as a thing fatal to Peace and good Manners.²

Sprat forbears because, as Plato (see Part One) and others had pointed out before him, it would not do to leave the power of eloquence only in the hands of the wicked. Rhetoric nonetheless was a source of error. "Who can behold," Sprat writes, "without indignation, how many mists and uncertainties, these specious Tropes and Figures have brought on our Knowledg?" He continues:

For now I am warm'd with this just Anger, I cannot withhold my self, from betraying the shallowness of all these seeming Mysteries upon which, we Writers, and Speakers, look so bigg. And, in few words, I dare say; that of all the Studies of men, nothing may be sooner obtain'd, than this vicious abundance of Phrase, this trick of Metaphors, this volubility of Tongue, which makes so great a noise in the world. But I spend words in vain; for the evil is now so inveterate, that it is hard to know whom to blame, or where to begin to reform. We all value one another so much, upon this beautiful deceit and; labour so long after it, in the years of our education: that we cannot but ever think kinder of it, than it deserves.³

Sprat is certainly correct in pointing to education as the source of rhetorical practices and admiration. What we labor to learn, as Sprat elegantly says, we use and admire, but not all stylists are so elegant as Sprat. As to the problem itself, the Royal Society meant to address it by "a constant Resolution, to reject all the amplifications, digressions, and swellings of style: to return back to the primitive purity, and shortness, when men deliver'd so many things, almost in an equal number of words."⁴

Sprat crosses a modest goal with a mighty one. To prune the excesses of style is one thing; "to return back to the primitive purity" of language, even supposing that there ever was such a thing, is quite another. In 1668, Bishop Wilkins, critic of the ornamental sermon and a founder of the Royal Society, proposed a linguistic reform intended, it would seem, to eradicate rhetoric altogether. Wilkins's *Essay Towards a Real Character and a Philosophic Language* sets forth a new symbol system for linking words with things and dispensing with metaphor and connotation. The symbols of the "real character" language would bear a mathematical relationship to what they represented. Wilkins did not, however, have anything like the symbol

²Thomas Sprat, *The History of the Royal-Society of London for the Improving of Natural Knowledge* (London, 1667; rpt. ed. by I. Cope and H. W. Jones, St. Louis: Washington University Press, 1958), p. 111.

³Sprat, p. 112.

⁴Sprat, p. 113.

system of modern logic in mind. His scheme follows the suggestion made by Bacon, who had taken Chinese for a model. Chinese, says Bacon, is written “in Characters Real, which express neither letters nor words . . . but things or notions; insomuch as countries and provinces, which understand not one another’s language, can nevertheless read one another’s writing.”⁵ European languages were defective in this regard, said the Royal Society thinkers. Words had too many different uses, changed too much from dialect to dialect, and had too many connotations. And the extravagances of style practiced by many writers simply aggravated matters. Wilkins proposed the rudiments of the “real character” language, with simple, regular roots and modifying particles not unlike Hebrew, along with a simple syntactic structure. The symbols were arbitrary and nonalphabetic but had phonetic value so that they could be pronounced.

Though his announced intention was to create a logical language for scientific purposes, Wilkins plainly sought a more sweeping language reform. Needless to say, the constructed language he projected was unsuitable for either goal, and he did not pursue it beyond the outlines of the initial essay. His project is preserved unflatteringly in Book III of *Gulliver’s Travels*, wherein Jonathan Swift describes several experiments under way in the Grand Academy of Lagado. In one, a professor experiments with a large mechanical random-character generator, hoping to produce unexpected insights. Another professor tries “to shorten discourse by cutting polysyllables into one, and leaving out verbs and participles, because in reality all things imaginable are but nouns.” There is a scheme “for entirely abolishing all words whatsoever” and to speak instead with *things*:

Many of the most learned and wise adhere to the new scheme of expressing themselves by things, which hath this inconvenience attending it, that if a man’s business be very great, and of various kinds, he must be obliged in proportion to carry a great bundle of things upon his back, unless he can afford one or two strong servants to attend him.⁶

Rhetoric and Belles Lettres

While rhetoric was being attacked by the English, the French were reconceiving rhetoric’s long-standing connection with literature. In a development that would have a decisive effect on rhetoric in the succeeding two centuries, French critics linked rhetoric to the genres of history and literary criticism, or *belles lettres*. Under the long reign of Louis XIV, French cultural nationalism flourished. The court supported the arts, including eloquence, and created a cult of French artists and writers. Molière, La Fontaine, Racine, and Corneille were praised as the equals of the classical masters. Madeleine de Scudéry (see Part Three, p. 761) adapted rhetoric to the conversations of the salon, which took place in a private venue but had strong public influence. The French Academy was founded to promote and regulate the native language. Such an environment nurtured a rhetoric that could apply classical theories

⁵See Part Three, p. 742.

⁶Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver’s Travels*, ed. Robert Greenberg (1726; rpt. New York: Norton, 1970), pp. 155–58.

to contemporary eloquence and, coincidentally, avoid contact with the problems of scientific inquiry. Associated with belles lettres, rhetoric conveniently did not challenge the remnants of Ramism or the strictures of Cartesian method. History and poetry did not infringe on logic, however it was defined. This connection with belles lettres seemed a perfect application of classical education in rhetoric. At the same time, this rhetoric incorporated the increasingly popular interest in psychology under the rubric of “human nature.” Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian (see Part One) are, for the belletrists, unimpeachable authorities on the construction of effective orations because they are superb observers of human nature. Thus, to use the rules of eloquence to make critical judgments in matters of taste was not to employ highly refined aristocratic sensibilities (so the argument goes) but to appeal to human nature—those universal characteristics, desires, and sensibilities common to all people in all ages and places. The effects of this movement in the next century were to be far-reaching, providing, oddly enough, an opening for the rapprochement between rhetoric and science.

John Locke and the Idea of Human Nature

The conceptual link between belles lettres and science was the idea of human nature. Human nature, increasingly regarded as the basis of critical judgment, was still being defined. And as epistemology—the study of human knowledge—became an essential part of the search for truth, common ground was cleared. After Bacon, psychology was the central problem of philosophy. In his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690; p. 817) John Locke (1632–1704) gave this problem the shape it would have for much of the succeeding century.

Like Bacon, Locke divides the mind into two general faculties, the understanding and the will. The understanding reflects upon perceptions and produces ideas that are then related by association. All general terms, Locke argues, must stand for ideas, not things, since the categories to which such terms refer do not have a concrete external existence. These ideas come into being by reflection upon sensation, which Locke takes to be universal—the same, that is, for all people. *Tree* refers not to a particular tree but to the idea we retain from reflecting upon many instances of seeing particular trees and abstracting their common features. Words refer to ideas, not things, and Locke regards simple or primary ideas, those which result from elemental perceptions, as universal, just as sensation is universal. More complex or secondary ideas may be not universal but culture-bound, communal, or even individual. Thus there is a delicate balance between word and idea that can be easily upset by either incomplete knowledge or unclear communication.

Locke emphasizes (somewhat perversely, a modern reader might think) that our primary ideas are identical and that only words are ambiguous. In this sense Locke attacks rhetoric for increasing obscurity rather than diminishing it. Locke introduces no scheme of “real characters” but, like Wilkins and Sprat, deplors the superfluity of language that thrives on uncertainty, a rhetoric that takes advantage of the faculty of will by befuddling the understanding. Less tolerant than Bacon, Locke will not accept human frailty as an excuse for the existence of rhetoric when it interferes

with human understanding. He allows, reluctantly, that rhetoric may be acceptable in popular discourse but is never appropriate for instructing or informing.

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY RHETORIC

Epistemology, Semantics, and Linguistics

Swift, somewhat unfairly, accuses the British Royal Society of believing that everything is a noun. The accusation points to the underlying dilemma of semantics and epistemology: What is the relationship between language and knowledge? Locke argues that all ideas are mental combinations of sense perceptions and that words refer not directly to things but to mental phenomena, the ideas we retain and build from sense impressions. The key for Locke is to guarantee that words are used consistently, for then they will bear a simple relationship to ideas. The eighteenth-century passion for “fixing” the language, that is, for preventing further change through dictionaries and prescriptive grammar, may have been fed by Locke’s conclusion. A surprising number of philosophers following Locke proposed ways to purify language for philosophy.

The seventeenth-century German philosopher Gottfried Leibniz, for example, projected an artificially constructed logical language, the “universal characteristic,” whose symbols would bear a “natural” relationship to what they signified. Leibniz restricted his notion of a “real” language to formal, logical propositions. Unlike Wilkins, he did not hope to bring human communication in general under such a scheme. Bishop Berkeley, in *A Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge* (1710), wonders what to make of all the language that does not, in anyone’s philosophy, refer to things, ideas, or abstract relations. Many statements are not propositions at all, he argues, but rather are attempts to affect someone’s actions, raise emotions, or create dispositions. Berkeley concludes that the affective power of language is detrimental to philosophy and recommends that philosophers try to reason with ideas stripped of language.

Locke’s ideas about language had a profound effect on Étienne Bonnot de Condillac, who also incorporated some of Berkeley’s insights in his philosophy of language. In his *Essai sur l’origine des connaissances humaines* (1746), Condillac imagines an innate language that is triggered by sensation, an automatic response that is not communicative until it is socially reinforced. This language is the source of our first primitive ideas; the rest of language develops by analogy. Language, for Condillac, is clearly a condition of knowledge. Furthermore, the analysis of knowledge is the primary function of language, since communication can come only after we have shown our ideas to ourselves in internal discourse. But Condillac does not turn from these insights to speculate on the rhetorical quality of external or internal speech. Instead, he looks back to the prevailing concern about perfecting a language for science. If language analyzes and produces knowledge, then we reason well or badly only because our language is well or badly made. In his *Grammaire* (1775), Condillac endorses the search for a universal grammar, believing that such a grammar will represent the relationships of human thought.

The search for a universal grammar stimulated the scientific study of language and led to the founding discoveries of modern linguistics. The *Port-Royal Grammar* of 1660 attempts to examine the common elements of all languages, distinguishing *langues* (particular languages) from *langage* (the universal phenomenon of language). In the *Encyclopédie* of Diderot and D'Alembert (1750–1772), the articles on grammar—some of them by Voltaire, Diderot, and Dumarsais—assume that general grammar is coincident with metaphysics, the fundamental order of language being the same as the fundamental order of thought. In 1801, Destutt de Tracy could define philosophy itself as the combination of ideology (the analysis of sensations and ideas, the content of philosophy), universal grammar (the method of philosophy), and logic (or correct reasoning, the goal of philosophy). So well accepted was this idea in France that in 1795 university chairs of logic and metaphysics were replaced by chairs of universal grammar—though eight years later, the status quo was restored.

Giambattista Vico (1668–1744; p. 862), professor of rhetoric at the University of Naples from 1699 to 1741, uses the language of universal grammar and human nature, but he is no Cartesian. Vico vigorously opposes Descartes's epistemology and its implications for rhetoric. For Descartes, the only true knowledge is that about which there can be no doubt. But Vico argues in "On the Study Methods of Our Time" (1709; p. 865) that too much of human knowledge is contingent to be left outside the purview of philosophy, where the Cartesian commitment to certainty would leave it. Vico also argues that knowledge cannot be separated from language, as Descartes and most other philosophers seemed to desire. An adequate philosophy, for Vico, must recognize that knowledge is bound up in human reason, passion, and imagination; that human beings function in social groups and are limited by historical circumstances; and that all these conditions are expressed in their language. Rhetoric, with its concern for probabilities and language, is better suited than the Cartesian method to investigating human knowledge. Vico goes further, attacking even the supposed certainty of physics and mathematics, which is ultimately a matter of belief, he says, not of such actual knowledge of the world as only God can have. As an educator, Vico is also troubled by the potentially disabling effects of a purely Cartesian education: If the merely probable is left out, what happens to law, ethics, politics, history, and even medicine? The Cartesian method is appropriate for science, with its linear causality, says Vico, but the world of human affairs, with its multiple circumstances and relative causality, must be left to rhetoric.

In *The New Science* (1725), Vico asserts that knowledge of human affairs is the only "certain" knowledge, since we can know what we ourselves have made but not what God has made—the world of nature. Thus Vico searches for the origins of history in the origins of human nature, including the universal language from which all languages spring. He posits three stages to this origin-based history, stages that link society, psychology, and language. In the first stage, the poetic, knowledge develops through metaphor: Words suggest associations that become human knowledge and basic social institutions, such as the family. The next stage, the heroic, is marked by the subordination of the individual to the nation through the creation of laws for civil society. The final stage, the human, is more self-conscious, democratic, and individualistic. Inevitably, this stage must lead to the dissolution of social

bonds, a return to a primitive state, and a repetition of the cycle of stages. Vico's notion of stages and cycles in history, easy enough to criticize or dismiss in itself, serves as a kind of heuristic for thinking broadly about culture, language, and society. His influence outside Italy during his own time, however, was negligible; the work of assimilating Bacon, Descartes, and Locke was not nearly done, and for a long time Vico was seen as a mere reactionary, opposing Cartesian progress in the name of a long-dead Italian humanism.

The Cartesian principle of scientific language study was enshrined in the academies of France and Italy and in the Royal Society in Britain. By the end of the seventeenth century, all had proposed the compilation of dictionaries and grammars for the express purpose of settling and correcting their languages. Indeed, the French and Italian academies had produced their dictionaries by the end of the century, rousing the envy of John Dryden, Daniel Defoe, and Jonathan Swift, who advocated "fixing" the language—that is, establishing by law the definitions of words and their proper usage through the ministrations of an academy akin to or part of the British Royal Society. Several incomplete dictionaries (usually focusing on "hard words") and some haphazard grammars preceded Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary*. Johnson, too, set out to settle once and for all the proper usage of the language, but came to realize that the language could not be fixed, controlled, or replaced deliberately with a more logical system. Johnson's descriptivism was not well accepted. Indeed, we need only remember the furor over *Webster's Third (New International Dictionary, Unabridged)*, or read the fulminations of the Sunday-paper language pundits to see that the controversy over whether the dictionary prescribes or describes is still with us today. Grammar, too, was conceived of as prescriptive, and so the new grammar books were full of rules, proper models, and errors to be corrected. The polymath Joseph Priestley went against the tide in declaring that rules did not determine correct usage: "The prevailing custom . . . can be the only standard for the time it prevails."⁷ And it is the Scottish rhetorician George Campbell whose formulation stands as the modern grammarian's motto: "Good usage," Campbell writes, "is national and reputable and present."⁸

These investigations into language, national and universal, were crowned by the brilliant linguist Sir William Jones's announcement in 1786 that there were fundamental similarities among Latin, Greek, and Sanskrit that could not possibly have been produced by accident. "No philologer could examine them all three," he says, "without believing them to have sprung from some common source, which, perhaps, no longer exists."⁹ The refinement of Jones's search for the original Indo-European language led to the comparative study of modern languages, the scientific study of phonology, the acceptance of the principle that language changes, and the study of dialects—in short, all of modern linguistics.

⁷Joseph Priestley, *A Course of Lectures on the Theory of Language, and Universal Grammar* (Warrington, 1762), p. 184.

⁸George Campbell, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (1776; rpt. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1963), p. 142.

⁹Paper read to the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1786, published in *Asiatic Researches* 1 (1799), pp. 421–23.

Not all of these developments found their way into eighteenth-century rhetoric, conditioned as it was by the persistence of the Latin curriculum and separated from philosophy by the philosophers' antipathy. But because of their role in education and the promulgation of language standards, rhetoricians did incorporate into their theories the study of grammar, speculation about the history of language, investigation into the relationship between language and knowledge, and a practical and influential interest in dialectal differences.

The Elocution Movement

The eighteenth-century fetish of correctness in language was not restricted to diction and usage but extended to pronunciation. Contrary to insistent popular fancy, correctness in pronunciation, as in diction and usage, is not an absolute. Language standards are the property of the ruling class; thus the diction, usage, and pronunciation of the power centers of capital cities tend to be the standards for a national language. Linguistic discrimination is a staple of human interaction—it was once quite deadly to mispronounce *shibboleth*. And in the eighteenth century, it could be worth one's favor at court, success on the stage, appointment at the university, or preferment in the church to speak a dialect regarded as low, rustic, comical, or even altogether incomprehensible. This circumstance was felt with some force by the cultural and intellectual leaders of the British Empire's subject nations in the eighteenth century. Many Scots and Irish (and some Americans) who sought a role in the great world for themselves or their sons chose London for their education. Those who remained at home became a ravenous market for the spate of pronouncing dictionaries, hard-word dictionaries, error-hunting grammars, and tracts on elocution produced during this linguistic century. But some leaders went further and attempted educational reforms that would make "proper" English part of the curriculum.

The champion of the elocution movement, Irish actor Thomas Sheridan (1719–1788; p. 879), claimed to be reviving the subject of delivery and restoring it to its proper stature in rhetorical study. The need for greater attention to delivery had been raised in the previous century. Wilkins in 1646 and Fénelon in the dialogues composed around 1679 had complained bitterly about the quality of pulpit oratory. Others offered advice on delivery for preachers and lawyers, with discussions of acting, facial expression, posture, movement, gesture, projection, tone, pace, and modulation. Criticism of preaching persisted in the eighteenth century, with Richard Steele, in a 1711 issue of the *Spectator*, calling for improvement in the clergy's reading of the Common Prayer. Also previous to Sheridan's efforts was the phenomenon of John Henley, always referred to as Orator Henley, who in 1726 opened a school in London where he taught elocution. Belying widespread criticism of his stagy performances, Henley's pronouncements concerned propriety in delivery and argued for restoring the force of conviction to the church service.

But the story of elocution begins in earnest with Sheridan's proposals for the reform of Irish education and the parallel attempts by the Scottish Select Society to do the same in Scotland. In *British Education* (1756), Sheridan argues that the revival

of oratory, by which he means the detailed study and appreciation of oral performance, ought to be the first priority of Britons, for such a revival would, he believed, bring vast improvements to religion, morality, government, and the arts. He extols the classical authors and claims that Britain need only restore eloquence to its ancient stature to match the greatness of Rome. This argument Sheridan would repeat in a number of works on elocution, education, and reading, as well as in the introduction to his well-received pronouncing dictionary.

Sheridan also presented his views in lectures delivered in Dublin and elsewhere from 1756 to 1762, when they were published as *A Course of Lectures on Elocution* (p. 881). Among the many remarkable arguments to be found in the lectures is a complaint about the dominance of writing over speaking. English spelling, Sheridan correctly points out, does not indicate pronunciation; one cannot learn pronunciation through reading. Moreover, punctuation does not indicate sentence emphasis and so does not help in reading aloud. Not content with these practical arguments, Sheridan says that writing is inferior to speech, for speech is a gift from God, whereas writing is an invention of mortals. In a separate lecture to a Dublin audience about the special danger of reading for dialect speakers like the Irish, Sheridan also says that what is needed is a better curriculum in Irish elementary schools, one that would include instruction in English, by which he means the polite London dialect. Irish universities, too, should incorporate study of the liberal arts, including oratory, to introduce the Irish to high culture. Through these reforms, Sheridan hoped to keep at least some Irish intellectuals from going to London for education and to create in Ireland an educational center for all those from the empire's margins.

The *Lectures* discuss what is now standard speech-text material on oral interpretation, vocal expressiveness, and gestures. Words, Sheridan argues, are not the only constituent of language. Expressions and gestures also communicate. Indeed, they are more primitive than words, more natural where words are artificial, more universal where words are national, and more expressive of emotion than is the sophisticated language of words. Locke acknowledged the existence of the passions, says Sheridan, but his researches were limited to the faculty of reason. Sheridan contends that gesture and expression, "the natural language of the passions," may be the key to a complete account of psychology. Sheridan is clearly using philosophy to support his argument rather than trying to advance philosophy. Nonetheless, he suggests an important link between rhetoric and the new science.

Not long before Sheridan published *British Education* and began his lecture series, a group of Edinburgh intellectuals embarked on a mission to reform Scottish education along similar lines, including the introduction of composition in English and practice in English speech delivery to replace Latin declamation. This group, the Select Society, included such luminaries as David Hume, Hugh Blair, Adam Smith, and Lord Kames. Since Smith had spent six years at Oxford and had acquired the proper accent and learning, Lord Kames prevailed on him, in 1748, to present a course of lectures in Edinburgh on correctness in language, taste, and the arts. The Society clearly had "correct" pronunciation as a goal as well (Sheridan was brought in by the Society for two sets of lectures in 1761), although Smith

apparently devoted only one lecture explicitly to correctness and proper pronunciation. But Smith's own "corrected" pronunciation and style may have contributed, as much as anything else, to the popularity of his lectures. Smith focused on the cultural elevation of the Scots through rhetoric and belles lettres; this focus was strongly seasoned with a scientific attitude toward language study and communication. Smith was succeeded in his role by Hugh Blair and George Campbell, both of whom turned Smith's interests into the key components of rhetoric for the following century.

Elocution as a separate subject by no means disappeared because of these developments. Indeed, courses in delivery or elocution became a standard part of the U.S. college curriculum (as they still are in many places), and a large number of treatises and textbooks on proper delivery were published throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The most notable of these works is Gilbert Austin's *Chironomia* (1896). In this work Austin, an Irish clergyman, develops an elaborate system of notation for posture, gesture, facial expression, and movement. This system should, he says, make it possible to record and study the actions of successful orators, without which amplification the mere record of their words is incomplete. Moreover, speeches can be choreographed with these notations so that students can be taught proper action. The drawings that Austin published in *Chironomia* are reproduced here (pp. 893–96), along with one example of a speech marked with his notation system. Although the system proved too cumbersome for practical use, analyzing nonverbal performance (using film and videotape) and choreographing speeches are standard practice today.

In London, the center of culture, debate became an important part of speech education. While debating also appeared in the speech curriculum in Dublin, Edinburgh, and Boston, the quest for correctness helped to keep declamation the dominant concern. Thus, in a number of ways, the elocution movement helped to shape the fields of speech communication and English composition that were to emerge in the nineteenth century.

Rhetoric and Belles Lettres

Thomas Sheridan's appeal to the classical authors and the ancient ideal of eloquence allied him with the influential Augustan writers of the early eighteenth century—among them Sheridan's godfather Jonathan Swift. Indeed, the Augustans—chiefly Swift and Pope—saw themselves as rhetoricians. The popular Romantic image of the solitary poet overflowing with spontaneous feelings would come in a few years, spurred by the revival of Longinus's *On the Sublime* (see Part One). But at the beginning of the century, the Augustans held sway. These writers emphasized public matters, taking the study of "man," as Pope and his classical forebear Horace put it, to be the proper activity of the poet. This study relied on the idea that human nature was permanent, that reason was the quintessential human characteristic, and that true knowledge about people came from examining recurrent experiences. It was wrong to spin out one's particular feelings or to dwell on isolated bits of data, on the merely local or personal, however much such activity seemed to be sanc-

tioned by the rising philosophy of empiricism. Swift pictured modern writers—those who felt that experience alone could reveal true knowledge—as spiders spinning filthy webs out of their own guts. Instead, the Augustans wrote to inspire national pride, to improve religion and morality, and to satirize inept government. They were social beings, proud of good conversation, given to writing essays in prose and verse, and much less interested in confessions, lyrics, and ballads than their Romantic successors would be. Seeking to affect their readers and to instruct by pleasing, they employed the tropes and schemes of Aristotelian rhetoric—for persuasion, ideally, and not for show—and were inspired by Cicero and Quintilian’s orator, the good man who fosters goodness in others.

The Augustans were quite familiar with Ciceronian rhetoric, which had, as always, its contemporary advocates. John Ward, who lectured on rhetoric from 1720 to 1755 at Gresham College, defended the Ciceronian model against all the attacks on invention, disposition, *topoi*, and style launched by the philosophers. But such an aggressive classicism, virtually untouched by modern ideas, was increasingly rare. John Lawson’s popular *Lectures Concerning Oratory* (1758), delivered at the University of Dublin, provides an interesting contrast to Ward’s classicism. It is both a standard classical rhetoric and a veritable handbook of Augustan ideas. Lawson gives a history of classical literature, a summary of Aristotle, an explanation of *imitation* in its Augustan sense of describing human nature by adopting classical models, and an outline of classical rhetoric focusing on the figures and tropes and illustrating them with verses. But Lawson downplays invention, justifies the use of rhetoric by citing Bacon on the need to persuade people to accept the truth, and urges speakers to be judicious in the use of tropes, which should express real feelings and convey them to the audience.

Locke’s argument for the uniformity of perception and elementary ideas contributed to the search for the common elements of human nature. For this reason, the Augustans regarded Locke as a humanist. His psychology seemed to point to general laws and common experience and to put a premium on effective communication, correctness, and order. Later, these same ideas would suggest quite different notions, those of equality, democracy, and individuality. Still, in the neoclassical age, empiricism could be seen (as it was by Locke) as the search not for data and details but for the essential truths of human experience.

In France, too, classicism and rationalism were reconciled. As we have already seen, toward the end of the seventeenth century classical rhetoric provided a method for making critical judgments about literature. In 1671 the critic René Rapin, for example, notes that the classical authors excelled not only in oratory but in what he christened the *belles lettres*: poetry, history, and philosophy. Like oratory, the other genres can be judged, he says, on the effectiveness of their appeals to *logos*, *pathos*, and *ethos*. And in discussing the appeals, he uses the language of psychology, noting that *logos* is an appeal to the faculty of understanding and *pathos* to the faculties of affection and will. Whereas some defenders of the ancients rejected modern philosophy altogether (and vice versa), several critics looked for connections between the two. For such critics (notably Nicolas Boileau and Jean de la Bruyère), rationalism was a call to reexamine classical standards of critical judgment in light of their

actual effectiveness. The rules of classical composition were thus tempered, on the one hand, by the sense that there was not always a good explanation for why something worked and, on the other, by the recognition that merely following the rules did not necessarily produce the desired result.

In declaring the genres of poetry, history, philosophy, and later of science writing, to be proper objects of rhetorical analysis, the French critics were also responding to the Cartesian imputation that investigation is a mental rather than a discursive phenomenon and that hence all communication, even of philosophical and scientific knowledge, was outside the province of philosophy. Rhetoric sought not to make original inquiries but to judge whether literary or oratorical performances conformed to such standards of “human nature” as orderliness, clarity, correctness, and good sense.

When Adam Smith gave his lectures in 1748, no argument was necessary for connecting rhetoric and *belles lettres* or for reconciling classicism with empiricism. For example, Smith could dismiss the tropes and figures as “silly” because they did not contribute to clear and effective communication. Rhetoric was not tied to the tropes, after all, but was concerned with the transfer of ideas. Persuasion is a kind of communication, Smith says, and so should conform to contemporary taste. Indeed, taste changes and rhetorical conventions change along with it. Echoing Joseph Priestley, Smith notes that the type of discourse determines the proper form—that is, the nature of science affects scientific writing, just as the legal system affects the form of pleading. All the forms of discourse are rhetorical; rhetoric has simply ceased to be identical to the classical model of composition and style. Rhetoric is now the study of correct grammar and syntax, appropriate style and diction for types of discourse or occasions for speaking, taste or standards of literary and moral judgment, and the means of effective communication in general.

In his lectures on rhetoric and *belles lettres*, delivered at the University of Glasgow during the 1750s and 1760s, Smith searches for a rational origin for language and supposes that there is a universal grammar corresponding to the structure of thought. He treats logic as a guide for reasoning, a corrective to the mind’s natural imperfection. And he describes a rhetoric geared to the mind’s operations. The first goal of rhetoric is to promote “perspicuity” in language—that is, to seek a kind of transparency in conveying ideas, combined with strength of expression. Perspicuity depends on thorough knowledge of the subject and “natural” arrangement (suggested by the subject and not by artificial schemes). Perspicuity does not rule out sentiment and passion, for these faculties of the mind require communication as well, especially in persuasive discourse. Indeed, style conveys the personality of the speaker or writer. This last point is of great significance to Smith.

Smith illustrates his observations on rhetoric with literary examples, which more than explicit argument establish the continuity of rhetoric and literary criticism. His critical method is to treat style as an expression of the author’s character. He describes authors as “accurate” or “affecting,” for example, and treats these characteristics as qualities of mind as well as of style. Reports by his students indicate that Smith was an energetic critic, most in his element when discussing literature and the criteria of taste, though his remarks about authors may seem pedestrian to the twentieth-century

reader. Smith judges authors both ancient and modern. Although he is no stranger to the classics, he seeks to convey their content while limiting their influence. “Antiquity is necessary,” he says cynically, “to give any thing a very high reputation as a matter of deep knowledge. One who reads a number of modern books altho they be excellent will not get thereby the character of a learned man. The acquaintance of the ancients will alone procure him that name.”¹⁰ Among the moderns, the best author is Swift, who writes clearly, shows deep knowledge of his subject, and reveals his personality in his style rather than covering it over with the affected elegance of figurative language—as, Smith complains, Lord Shaftesbury continually does.

Under the banner of rhetoric and belles lettres, Smith brings together many apparently incompatible trends. He accepts the critiques of older rhetoric offered by Locke and the Royal Society, rejecting tropes and classical arrangement and embracing instead “natural” expression and organization. He uses the scientific study of language to support correctness and propriety in style. “Correction” of dialect differences is a matter of improving communication, another Lockean idea brought under rhetoric’s charge in the service of provincial education. And he disengages the study of rhetoric from veneration of the classics while exploiting the neoclassical virtue of propriety as a standard for communication. From Smith’s perspective, rhetoric’s appeal to the passions is not a threat to reason and understanding but a natural part of communication. Literature is an example of the natural tendency to link instruction and entertainment: All that separates history and poetry, says Smith, is that one is prose and the other is verse. Smith does not present his rhetoric as a systematic theory. His lectures—preserved only in a student’s verbatim notes—use repetition and example rather than orderly analysis, and treat the method as common sense rather than as revolutionary theory.

George Campbell and Epistemological Rhetoric

George Campbell (1719–1796), a Scottish clergyman and academic, brings a great deal of order and system to much the same set of ideas in his *Philosophy of Rhetoric* (1776; p. 902), which he began in 1750 and completed as part of his contribution to a philosophical study circle that he helped to found. Thus Campbell is well placed to synthesize the key concerns of rhetoric at the time: the relationship of rhetoric to contemporary philosophy, the practical concern for improving pulpit eloquence, the popular interest in elocution (by which name he identifies two of the three sections of his book), the connection of rhetoric with literature and criticism, and the long-standing claims of classical rhetoric.

Campbell says that his purpose is to give a “sketch of the human mind; and, aided by the lights which the Poet and Orator so amply furnish, to disclose its secret movements, tracing its principal channels of perception and action, as near as possible, to their source.” He will use “the science of human nature” to determine the principles of rhetoric that “operate on the soul of the hearer, in the way of informing,

¹⁰Adam Smith, *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*, ed. J. C. Bryce (Indianapolis: University of Indiana Press, 1985), p. 182.

convincing, pleasing, moving, or persuading.” Arts as well as sciences must seek their first principles in scientific psychology. Logic is based on the faculty of understanding and ethics upon the will, Campbell says, “but there is no art whatever that hath so close a connexion with all the faculties and powers of the mind, as eloquence. . . . It is indeed the grand art of communication, not of ideas only, but of sentiments, passions, dispositions, and purposes.”¹¹ Campbell seeks not only to ground rhetoric in the science of human nature but to make rhetoric an essential element of that science. For each mental faculty, Campbell identifies a corresponding form of communication and its proper style. For example, one addresses the understanding in seeking to inform or convince. Perspicuity is the proper stylistic quality for informing, as argument is for convincing. The fine arts please the faculty of imagination through the quality of beauty. Similarly, *pathos* moves the passions, and vehemence persuades the will to action. Following Bacon, Campbell argues that persuasion is the culmination of the sequence just outlined: informing, convincing, pleasing, moving, and then persuading. Logic alone will not suffice to persuade, though it is needed to convince. Only rhetoric combines appeals to all the faculties, connecting ideas with aesthetic images and emotional desires to produce an action of will.

In his discussion of reasoning, Campbell must refute the arguments of philosopher David Hume (1711–1776), whose empiricism rejects the claim that true knowledge can come from any source except experience and reflection. In Hume’s system, revelation is a fantasy and testimony is unreliable. (Hume’s views were opposed to religion, an additional spur to Campbell’s desire for rebuttal.) To address the dilemma posed by Hume, Campbell distinguishes demonstration from “moral evidence.” The former belongs to the empirical sciences and the latter to rhetoric. In disputes about ethics, law, and religion, there is usually good evidence on both sides of a question. In these areas, science has little to do, and rhetoric much. It is pointless, Campbell argues, to expect moral reasoning to resemble mathematical demonstration. But reasoning is not therefore limited to demonstration. To convince, which is the first step in the process of persuasion, one must appeal to reason; therefore, the rhetorician working in the realm of human affairs must know the “logic” of moral evidence. The types of moral evidence are experience, analogy, testimony, and probability. Campbell shows how much of human knowledge depends on these forms of evidence and sets out the limits of each in contributing to knowledge and belief.

But Campbell then goes one step further; he notes that scientific proof relies on precisely the same basic mental operation as moral reasoning, namely, a belief that we have an accurate memory of a past fact or demonstration or a belief that others have been correct in their proofs. Here, then, is the link between philosophy and rhetoric: The rhetorician appeals to the understanding just as the logician does; moral knowledge and scientific knowledge rest on the same mental operations; the difference between moral and scientific knowledge is a question not of certainty versus probability but of the degree of probability; and the real differences therefore lie only in subject matter. With this firm base in reason, rhetoric can confidently proceed through the steps toward persuasion. Campbell discusses audience, ethical and pathetic appeals, types of discourse, and style. Though not as striking as the

¹¹Campbell, p. xlix.

presentation of his underlying theory, his observations on these topics touch on virtually all the major issues affecting rhetoric in the eighteenth century. Campbell rejects universal grammar and, with it, prescriptive grammar. The only correct usage, he asserts, is that which is “reputable, national, and present” — that is, that which is generally regarded as acceptable at a particular time and place. Standards change, and no effective speaker can pretend otherwise; similarly, style is culturally relative. Nonetheless, Campbell castigates flaws in grammar and diction, excesses of style, and all types of imprecision as needlessly impeding comprehension.

Hugh Blair’s Synthesis: Epistemology and Belles Lettres

Campbell’s *Philosophy of Rhetoric* was reprinted more than twenty times during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and was occasionally adopted as a college rhetoric textbook. But the most popular rhetoric book of the period was Hugh Blair’s *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* (1783; p. 950). Blair (1718–1800), a member of Kames’s Select Society, heard Smith’s Edinburgh lectures and, at Kames’s urging, began his own lectures on the subject in 1759, when Smith was at Glasgow and Sheridan was in the midst of his successful lecture tour. In 1760, Blair’s lectures were incorporated into the curriculum of the University of Edinburgh, and in 1762 Blair became Regius Professor of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres. More than Campbell, Blair feeds the popular desire for rules of taste, guidelines for writing and speaking, and well-digested, if not predigested, samples of proper literature. Blair’s own style is clear and lively; he presents his principles in neat aphorisms (“true rhetoric and sound logic are very nearly allied”); he is straightforward about the value of his subject (critical acuity is necessary “to support a proper rank in social life”); he strikes a middle ground between philosophy and politics (culture is relative, but there are a right and a wrong, too); and hardly a page goes by without a judiciously chosen literary illustration, chiefly from contemporary authors.¹²

Blair defines taste as the power of getting pleasure from beautiful things, a natural propensity that may be corrupted by prejudice or enhanced by reason. In his approach to taste, Blair is much influenced by David Hume, whose essay “Of the Standard of Taste” (p. 830) seeks to use two kinds of empirical standards: touchstones of literature and oratory and the judgments of a discriminating critic. Blair’s *Lectures* seem like the ideal fulfillment of Hume’s proposal. The basis of criticism, says Blair, is precisely the practice of carefully observing the sources of aesthetic pleasure and deriving rules of judgment from the best performances. Beauty is a psychological phenomenon for Blair: Something about an object (it is vain to try to specify the “something”) raises pleasing sensations in the mind, whether through the physiological structure of the sense organs or through the association of ideas. Eloquence and poetry can raise these sensations through imitation and description and so have the greatest range and power of all sources of aesthetic pleasure. As part of his discussion of taste and criticism, Blair devotes several lectures to style, figurative language, and sample analyses of literary works.

Rhetoric combines criticism and persuasion, then, because both activities

¹²See pp. 952 and 953 in this book.

concern the way language is used for reasoning and moving. Like Campbell, Blair separates conviction and persuasion. Conviction comes from reason and argument, whereas persuasion combines conviction with techniques for stimulating the feelings that move the will. These techniques are method (or organization), *ethos*, style (aesthetic and pathetic appeals), and delivery. Here Blair draws on classical categories, mixing the familiar rules with modern definitions. Method turns out to be a combination of classical disposition—introduction, narration, argument, and so on—and the Cartesian practice (that is, “method”) of dividing the subject into parts. Argument comprises invention, arrangement, and expression. Invention means knowledge of the subject—not *topoi*—and the subject itself determines the appropriate arrangement and manner of expression. The standard of *ethos* is that of Cicero and Quintilian: a person of good character who is known for being virtuous. Under style, Blair distinguishes between using figurative language for ornament and using it to extend one’s range of expression through metaphor and repetition. He also treats delivery seriously as a part of persuasion and not as mere decoration. Blair’s practical advice on nonverbal expression is barely distinguishable from that in twentieth-century speech textbooks.

Finally, Blair provides a handbook of grammar, usage, and style, prefacing it with a history of language, including a history of writing. The need for such a comprehensive and elegant presentation of the arts of composition, speech, and criticism is attested by the sixty-two editions, fifty-one abridgments, and ten translations of the *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* during the century after its publication. It combined all the features that by the end of that century were split into the separate fields of English, composition, and speech.

Smith, Campbell, and Blair were not alone in bringing to rhetoric the doctrines of epistemology and the combination of rhetoric with criticism. Lord Kames, in his *Elements of Criticism* (1762), sought to discover the basic psychological principles of aesthetic response and included eloquence among the arts. And Joseph Priestley, in his *Lectures on Oratory and Criticism* (given during the 1760s and published in 1777), combined classical rhetoric with modern psychology. Kames’s influence in the intellectual community was considerable, and his effort to ground criticism and the arts in scientific psychology provided support for including the emotions, as well as reason and the understanding, in the study of human nature. Priestley, like Blair, retained the outlines of classical composition transformed into memory (the “natural” form of invention), method (arrangement according to the dictates of the subject itself), style (or effectiveness), and elocution. Priestley’s rhetoric is neither as complete nor as elegant as Blair’s, but Priestley’s prestige as a scientist lent considerable weight to the arguments for seeing the new rhetoric as a legitimate companion to philosophy, rather than as a sentimental holdover from the past.

Education and Society in an Era of Reform

Great cultural and political changes occurred in the eighteenth century. Voltaire’s *Candide* was published in 1759, Rousseau’s *Social Contract* in 1762 (the same year as Kames’s *Elements of Criticism*), and Campbell’s *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* and Adam Smith’s *Wealth of Nations* in 1776, the year of the American Revolution.

Locke's philosophy, positing as it did the universality of sensation and ideas, had not only suggested that knowledge was based on human nature but had also reinforced the belief that human nature in fact existed. In a fundamental sense, it appeared, all people were the same.

Advancing those universalizing hints in another way in his *Two Treatises of Government* (1690), Locke had argued that government is the result of a social contract, tacit or explicit, to protect the fundamental rights to "life, liberty, and estate." Revolution may be necessary, Locke said, to remove despotic governments that do not preserve these natural rights. The revolution in philosophy seemed to call for inquiry into the natural basis for equality, authority, liberty, and individuality. Tradition could no longer be relied on to reveal truth and right action. A scientific attitude demanded a study of the human condition, and that study inevitably suggested reforms in government and education.

Furthermore, in 1681, Archbishop Fénelon, author of the *Dialogues on Eloquence*, had penned a treatise, *On the Education of Girls* (published in 1687), that was remarkable for at least two reasons. First, it took up the problem of education for women, an area neglected since the short-lived innovations of the Renaissance. Although Fénelon did not advocate great learning for women, he argued that ignorance favors frivolity and presented a basic curriculum of reading, writing, arithmetic, and household economy. Second, Fénelon's treatise gave attention to early childhood education, an endeavor that should, he said, encourage natural development. His treatise contributed to the vigorous eighteenth-century discussions of both issues.

In the eighteenth century, many more upper-class women were educated, and a great many women of the middle and serving classes became literate. Although Fénelon's girls' school had not survived, Louis XIV founded the academy of St. Cyr, whose headmistress, Mme. de Maintenon, carried on the fight for more and better education for women. Mary Astell (p. 841), although not able to realize her ambitious plans for a women's college, ended her career as the principal of a school for girls, one of many that sprang up in England in the early eighteenth century. Women made up a large part of the new reading public, and more women became writers of published fiction and poetry. However, few engaged in public discourse, and few seem to have studied rhetoric. No doubt some did—Queen Anne received elocution lessons from the actress Mrs. Barry, for example—but generally, because education was geared to one's "station," women were seldom trained in fields relating to business or public affairs. As for speaking in church, women were barred from participating in Roman Catholic and Anglican services, although several Dissenting churches did allow some participation by women. The Society of Friends, for example, was notable for its sexual egalitarianism even at the time of its founding in the mid-seventeenth century. In 1666, Margaret Fell (see Part Three, p. 748), a vigorous proselytizer for the new faith, had written *Women's Speaking Justified, Proved, and Allowed by the Scriptures* (p. 753), a book that helped cement the Quakers' liberal position on equality. Women's opportunities for higher education and public rhetoric would expand even more in the next century.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the dominant figure in the development of the new political philosophies of the later eighteenth century, proposed a system of education

based on natural principles and, seconded as he was by the cultural leaders of the time, decisively turned education toward a study of the psychology of learning. The psychological approach meant training the faculties, first through the sensations and then through simple ideas. Classical education, argued Rousseau, was too complex and quite unnatural for a child; the vernacular, not Latin, was clearly the appropriate language for study. Moreover, education should promote the individual's growth as well as the common good. Rousseau advocated national responsibility for education and universal education for children, but he despaired of all these reforms unless society itself could be reformed first.

The French Revolution in 1789 did not bring the reforms Rousseau had envisioned. Still, educational projects begun before the Revolution proceeded. Despite the violent conservative reaction to the Revolution, which threatened all democratic efforts in Europe, education was nationalized in France and in Germany by the end of the eighteenth century and in England by the end of the nineteenth. Teaching was professionalized, child psychology led to modern primary school practices, and the curriculum at all levels was revised to reflect both liberal ideals of individual development and the needs of modern society.

These movements, accelerated by the Industrial Revolution, continued through the eighteenth and into the nineteenth centuries, making education more widely available and consequently pressuring education to be more attuned to a wider audience. The rhetorics of Blair and Campbell, with their emphasis on science and psychology and their extensive use of vernacular literature, were remarkably appropriate to the new educational environment. For all the battering it had received in the previous century, rhetoric remained central to the curriculum and to preparation for public life.

The great ideas of the Enlightenment—empiricism, rationalism, and psychology—all found a place within rhetoric. Locke's rejection of rhetoric did not succeed in killing it off, nor did Swift's attack on the moderns generate any sustained anti-scientific reaction among the rhetoricians. In dividing conviction and persuasion, rhetorical theorists made room for a psychology of emotion as well as of reason. The influence of classical rhetoric was diminished but did not disappear; indeed, the appeal to *pathos* and the canon of delivery seemed more important than ever. The association of ideas, facilitated by a memory well stocked with both images and knowledge of the subject at hand, not only created arguments and a natural arrangement but spontaneously served up figures of speech. Rhetoricians formulated rules for natural composition and speech and also for judging literary works. Within a hundred years of Sprat's strictures, rhetoric's estate was considerably improved.

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John Locke

1632–1704

Though not a rhetorical theorist, John Locke powerfully affected the direction of rhetoric, and every other intellectual endeavor as well, in the eighteenth century. He assimilated and extended the epistemological ideas of Bacon and Descartes, presented these ideas in accessible language, and explained them in terms of common experience and common sense. Locke's persuasive account of the mental processes of perception, thinking, and using language, combined with his popular treatises on civil government and the rationality of religion, made him a celebrated public figure and a dominant force in the development of modern philosophy.

At Westminster School, Locke studied the classics as well as Hebrew and Arabic. He went on to Oxford and took his degrees in philosophy, which at that time was still the study and practice of Scholastic disputation. Dissatisfied with this curriculum and increasingly interested in experimental science, Locke studied medicine (influenced in this decision by Robert Boyle) and set up an amateur practice in 1666. That same year, he became personal physician and adviser to Lord Ashley, first Earl of Shaftesbury, who vigorously opposed the succession of the Catholic James II and, in 1682, was forced to flee to Holland. Locke, also under suspicion of conspiracy against the Crown, followed in 1683. For the next six years, he studied and wrote under the protection of William of Orange. When he returned to England after the Glorious Revolution of 1688, Locke published in quick succession his *Two Treatises of Government* (1690), arguing for personal liberty; *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690; excerpted here), his great work of philosophy; *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693); and *The Reasonableness of Christianity* (1695).

Locke's philosophy, which follows Bacon and the experimental scientists, searches for truth in the physical world and attempts to understand knowledge as a psychological phenomenon. This perspective stands opposed to the traditional doctrines of received truth, innate ideas, and the presumption that direct knowledge is available through revelation or perception. Like Bacon, Locke believes that there is a real external world and that knowledge of it is possible, but only if we understand the processes by which we come to such knowledge. We have direct knowledge only of our own ideas, says Locke. We have direct sensations, of course, but we know only the ideas of these sensations; all other ideas are formed by reflecting upon the primary ideas caused by sensory perception. *Reflection* is the act of relating our ideas to one another, forming mental associations, and examining the mental processes of which we are aware: thinking, doubting, believing, and so on. These operations of the faculty of understanding are the source of all our knowledge. In this connection, Locke notes the uselessness of the syllogism for discovering truth, for the syllogism neither describes nor conforms to this process of achieving knowledge. Locke's epistemological approach raises the question of whether it is possible to know the real essences of things. What we know is, after all, only our ideas and

their relationships to one another. Ideas, says Locke, are the signs of real things. From this semiotic position, Locke finds himself led—against his original intention, he admits—to reflections upon language, for our words are but the signs of our ideas.

Words are also the source of many of our ideas. In Book III of the *Essay*, Locke reviews his theory: Sensation, a universal human phenomenon, generates simple ideas, which are also universally the same. To these ideas we give arbitrary signs: words. But clearly we may learn, through words, of something we ourselves have not perceived. Thus it is possible to have an incomplete or inaccurate idea associated with those words. It is even possible to have an incomplete idea of something within our experience, for a word may designate, for some people, certain features of the thing signified and, for others, different features. Moreover, complex ideas are formed by the connections among simple ideas; words are attached to these complex ideas to keep the connections from being merely personal and ephemeral and to allow us to communicate them to others. Complex ideas are not universal, as we can see by the difficulties of translating from one language to another. Many words name relationships, institutions, and cultural phenomena that do not exist elsewhere and therefore have no exact equivalent in another language. Words, too, may carry cultural connotations—or even personal ones—that complicate the relationship between communicated word and signified idea. These reflections lead Locke to insist on the need for clarity, especially in discussing knowledge. He attacks Scholastic philosophy for creating obscurities through disputation, and he attacks rhetoric for increasing ambiguities through excessive ornamentation. In the excerpts printed here, Locke looks at the inherent properties of language and at the typical problems of communication that contribute to those obscurities and ambiguities. Language is imperfect, he concludes (and philosophers will echo him through our own time); therefore, one task of philosophy is to improve language.

In Book IV, Locke attempts to set forth a method for examining the internal coherence of propositions, on the assumption that verbal propositions stand for mental ones and that mental ones stand for real external phenomena. Locke adheres to a nonrelativistic view of knowledge. Consequently, he bemoans the fact that language is intractably ambiguous and frequently misused, making it, at best, an imprecise means of conveying knowledge. Knowledge itself is independent of language. “We should cast off all the artifice and fallacy of words, which makes so great a part of the business and skill of the disputers of this world,” Locke says, in a memorandum on the abuses of Scholasticism; “pretending to the knowledge of things, [we] hinder as much as we can the discovery of truth, by perplexing one another all we can by a perverse use of those signs which we make use of to convey truth to one another.”¹

Rhetoricians responded strongly to Locke’s critique, first in emphasizing perspicuity (that is, clarity) as the most important quality of a good style, and second in developing a psychological theory of persuasion and taste. Virtually all the major

¹John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. Alexander Campbell Fraser (1884; rpt. London and New York: Routledge, 1959), 2: p. 131n.

works on rhetoric in the eighteenth century imitated Locke in combining grammatical analysis and speculation about the origins of language as part of the program of promoting perspicuity. Vico, Sheridan, and Campbell, as well as a number of philosophers, pursued Locke's suggestive but incomplete account of the relationship of language and knowledge, though never far enough to link rhetoric explicitly with the process of creating "true" knowledge. These ideas, as we shall see, become significant much later, in the twentieth century.

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Our excerpt is from John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, in two volumes, ed. Alexander Campbell Fraser (1894; rpt. 1959). The standard biography is Maurice Cranston's *John Locke: A Biography* (1957). John W. Yolton's *John Locke and the Way of Ideas* (1956) places Locke in historical context. John Richetti focuses on Locke's style and the way that it shapes his thought, in *Philosophical Writing: Locke, Berkeley, Hume* (1983).

E. P. J. Corbett reviews the scholarly recognition of Locke's influence on rhetoric in "John Locke's Contributions to Rhetoric" (in *The Rhetorical Tradition and Modern Writing*, ed. J. J. Murphy, 1982). Corbett notes that although Locke's importance is well recognized, little work has been done on Locke beyond W. S. Howell's article, "John Locke and the New Rhetoric" (*Quarterly Journal of Speech* 53 [1967]: 319–33), and its expansion in *Eighteenth-Century British Logic and Rhetoric* (1971). Corbett's call has had some recent answers. Jules David Law, in *The Rhetoric of Empiricism: Language and Perception from Locke to I. A. Richards* (1993), examines the visual metaphor of "perception" and the way it shapes empiricism's view of language. Law traces this connection from Locke and shows its implications for rhetoric. Peter Walmsley probes Locke's aversion to disputation and consequent preference for a conversational style of rhetoric in "Dispute and Conversation: Probability and the Rhetoric of Natural Philosophy in Locke's *Essay*," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 54 (July 1993), 381–94. Leigh H. Holmes argues in "John Locke's Rhetoric: Response to the Nominal Quandaries of Legitimate Communities" (*Philosophy and Rhetoric* 29 [1996], 33–50) that, in contradistinction to readings of Locke that emphasize the mental (such as this headnote), rhetoricians should attend more to Locke's views of community and consensus, with their links to understanding and language use.

From An Essay Concerning Human Understanding

From Book III

CHAPTER IX

Of the Imperfection of Words

Words are used for recording and communicating our thoughts.

I. From what has been said in the foregoing chapters, it is easy to perceive what imperfection there is in language, and how the very nature of words makes it almost unavoidable for many of them to be doubtful and uncertain in their significations. To examine the perfection or imperfection of words, it is necessary first to consider their use and end: for as they are more or less fitted to attain that, so they are more or less perfect. We have, in the former part of this discourse often, upon occasion, mentioned a double use of words.

First, One for the recording of our own thoughts.

Secondly, The other for the communicating of our thoughts to others.

Any words will serve for recording.

2. As to the first of these, *for the recording our own thoughts for the help of our own memories*, whereby, as it were, we talk to ourselves, any words will serve the turn. For since sounds are voluntary and indifferent signs of any ideas, a man may use what words he pleases to signify his own ideas to himself: and there will be no imperfection in them, if he constantly use the same sign for the same idea: for then he cannot fail of having his meaning understood, wherein consists the right use and perfection of language.

Communication by words either for civil or philosophical purposes.

3. Secondly, As to *communication by words*, that too has a double use.

I. *Civil.*

II. *Philosophical.*

First, By their *civil* use, I mean such a communication of thoughts and ideas by words, as may serve for the upholding common conversation and commerce, about the ordinary affairs and conveniences of civil life, in the societies of men, one amongst another.

Secondly, By the *philosophical* use of words, I mean such a use of them as may serve to convey the precise notions of things, and to express in general propositions certain and undoubted truths, which the mind may rest upon and be satisfied with in its search after true knowledge. These two uses are very distinct; and a great deal less exactness will serve in the one than in the other, as we shall see in what follows.

The imperfection of words is the doubtfulness or ambiguity of their signification, which is caused by the sort of ideas they stand for.

4. The chief end of language in communication being to be understood, words serve not well for that end, neither in civil nor philosophical discourse, when any word does not excite in the hearer the same idea which it stands for in the mind of the speaker. Now, since sounds have no natural connection with our ideas, but have all their signification from the arbitrary imposition of men, the doubtfulness and uncertainty of their signification, which is the imperfection we here are speaking of, has its cause more in the ideas they stand for than in any incapacity there is in one sound more than in another to signify any idea: for in that regard they are all equally perfect.

That then which makes doubtfulness and uncertainty in the signification of some more than other words, is the difference of ideas they stand for.

Natural causes of their imperfection, especially in those that stand for mixed modes, and for our ideas of substances.

5. Words having naturally no signification, the idea which each stands for must be learned and retained, by those who would exchange thoughts, and hold intelligible discourse with others, in any language. But this is the hardest to be done where,

First, The ideas they stand for are very complex, and made up of a great number of ideas put together.

Secondly, Where the ideas they stand for have no certain connection in nature; and so no settled standard anywhere in nature existing, to rectify and adjust them by.

Thirdly, When the signification of the word is referred to a standard, which standard is not easy to be known.

Fourthly, Where the signification of the word and the real essence of the thing are not exactly the same.

These are difficulties that attend the signification of several words that are intelligible. Those which are not intelligible at all, such as names standing for any simple ideas which another has not organs of faculties to attain; as the names of colours to a blind man, or sounds to a deaf man, need not here be mentioned.

In all these cases we shall find an imperfection in words; which I shall more at large explain, in their particular application to our several sorts of ideas: for if we examine them, we shall find that *the names of mixed modes are most liable to doubtfulness and imperfection, for the two first of these reasons; and the names of substances chiefly for the two latter.*

The names of mixed modes doubtful. First, because the ideas they stand for are so complex.

6. First, The names of *mixed modes* are, many of them, liable to great uncertainty and obscurity in their signification.

I. Because of that *great composition* these complex ideas are often made up of. To make words serviceable to the end of communication, it is necessary, as has been said, that they excite

in the hearer exactly the same idea they stand for in the mind of the speaker. Without this, men fill one another's heads with noise and sounds; but convey not thereby their thoughts, and lay not before one another their ideas, which is the end of discourse and language. But when a word stands for a very complex idea that is compounded and decomposed, it is not easy for men to form and retain that idea so exactly, as to make the name in common use stand for the same precise idea, without any the least variation. Hence it comes to pass that men's names of very compound ideas, such as for the most part are moral words, have seldom in two different men the same precise signification; since one man's complex idea seldom agrees with another's, and often differs from his own—from that which he had yesterday, or will have tomorrow.

Secondly, because they have no standards in nature.

7. Because the names of mixed modes for the most part *want standards in nature*, whereby men may rectify and adjust their significations; therefore they are very various and doubtful. They are assemblages of ideas put together at the pleasure of the mind, pursuing its own ends of discourse, and suited to its own notions; whereby it designs not to copy anything really existing, but to denominate and rank things as they come to agree with those archetypes or forms it has made. He that first brought the word *sham*, or *wheedle*, or *banter*, in use, put together as he thought fit those ideas he made it stand for; and as it is with any new names of modes that are now brought into any language, so it was with the old ones when they were first made use of. Names, therefore, that stand for collections of ideas which the mind makes at pleasure must needs be of doubtful signification, when such collections are nowhere to be found constantly united in nature, nor any patterns to be shown whereby men may adjust them. What the word *murder*, or *sacrilege*, &c., signifies can never be known from things themselves: there be many of the parts of those complex ideas which are not visible in the action itself; the intention of the mind, or the relation of holy things, which make

a part of murder or sacrilege, have no necessary connection with the outward and visible action of him that commits either: and the pulling the trigger of the gun with which the murder is committed, and is all the action that perhaps is visible, has no natural connection with those other ideas that make up the complex one named murder. They have their union and combination only from the understanding which unites them under one name: but, uniting them without any rule or pattern, it cannot be but for such voluntary collections should be often various in the minds of different men, who have scarce any standing rule to regulate themselves and their notions by, in such arbitrary ideas.

Common use, or propriety not a sufficient remedy.

8. It is true, common use, that is, the rule of propriety may be supposed here to afford some aid, to settle the signification of language; and it cannot be denied but that in some measure it does. Common use regulates the meaning of words pretty well for common conversation; but nobody having an authority to establish the precise signification of words, nor determine to what ideas any one shall annex them, common use is not sufficient to adjust them to Philosophical Discourses; there being scarce any name of any very complex idea (to say nothing of others) which, in common use, has not a great latitude, and which, keeping within the bounds of propriety, may not be made the sign of far different ideas. Besides, the rule and measure of propriety itself being nowhere established, it is often matter of dispute, whether this or that way of using a word be propriety of speech or no. From all which it is evident, that the names of such kind of very complex ideas are naturally liable to this imperfection, to be of doubtful and uncertain signification; and even in men that have a mind to understand one another, do not always stand for the same idea in speaker and hearer. Though the names *glory* and *gratitude* be the same in every man's mouth through a whole country, yet the complex collective idea which every one thinks on or intends by that name, is apparently very different in men using the same language.

The way of learning these names contributes also to their doubtfulness.

9. The way also wherein the names of mixed modes are ordinarily learned, does not a little contribute to the doubtfulness of their signification. For if we will observe how children learn languages, we shall find that, to make them understand what the names of simple ideas or substances stand for, people ordinarily show them the thing whereof they would have them have the idea; and then repeat to them the name that stands for it; as *white, sweet, milk, sugar, cat, dog*. But as for mixed modes, especially the most material of them, *moral words*, the sounds are usually learned first; and then, to know what complex ideas they stand for, they are either beholden to the explication of others, or (which happens for the most part) are left to their own observation and industry; which being little laid out in the search of the true and precise meaning of names, these moral words are in most men's mouths little more than bare sounds; or when they have any, it is for the most part but a very loose and undetermined, and, consequently, obscure and confused signification. And even those themselves who have with more attention settled their notions, do yet hardly avoid the inconvenience to have them stand for complex ideas different from those which other, even intelligent and studious men, make them the signs of. Where shall one find any, either controversial debate, or familiar discourse, concerning honour, faith, grace, religion, church, &c., wherein it is not easy to observe the different notions men have of them? Which is nothing but this, that they are not agreed in the signification of those words, nor have in their minds the same complex ideas which they make them stand for, and so all the contests that follow thereupon are only about the meaning of a sound. And hence we see that, in the interpretation of laws, whether divine or human, there is no end; comments beget comments, and explications make new matter for explications; and of limiting, distinguishing, varying the signification of these moral words there is no end. These ideas of men's making are, by men still having the same power, multiplied *in infinitum*. Many a man who was pretty well satisfied

of the meaning of a text of Scripture, or clause in the code, at first reading, has, by consulting commentators, quite lost the sense of it, and by these elucidations given rise or increase to his doubts, and drawn obscurity upon the place. I say not this that I think commentaries needless; but to show how uncertain the names of mixed modes naturally are, even in the mouths of those who had both the intention and the faculty of speaking as clearly as language was capable to express their thoughts.

Hence unavoidable obscurity in ancient authors.

10. What obscurity this has unavoidably brought upon the writings of men who have lived in remote ages, and different countries, it will be needless to take notice. Since the numerous volumes of learned men, employing their thoughts that way, are proofs more than enough, to show what attention, study, sagacity, and reasoning are required to find out the true meaning of ancient authors. But, there being no writings we have any great concernment to be very solicitous about the meaning of, but those that contain either truths we are required to believe, or laws we are to obey, and draw inconveniences on us when we mistake or transgress, we may be less anxious about the sense of other authors; who, writing but their own opinions, we are under no greater necessity to know them, than they to know ours. Our good or evil depending not on their decrees, we may safely be ignorant of their notions: and therefore in the reading of them, if they do not use their words with a due clearness and perspicuity, we may lay them aside, and without any injury done them, resolve thus with ourselves.

*Si non vis intelligi, debes negligi.*¹

Names of substances of doubtful signification, because the ideas they stand for relate to the reality of things.

11. If the signification of the names of mixed modes be uncertain, because there be no real standards existing in nature to which those ideas are referred, and by which they may be adjusted, the names of *substances* are of a doubtful signifi-

¹"If it doesn't make sense, it may be disregarded." [Ed.]

cation, for a contrary reason, viz. because the ideas they stand for are supposed conformable to the reality of things, and are referred to as standards made by Nature. In our ideas of substances we have not the liberty, as in mixed modes, to frame what combinations we think fit, to be the characteristic notes to rank and denominate things by. In these we must follow Nature, suit our complex ideas to real existences, and regulate the signification of their names by the things themselves, if we will have our names to be signs of them, and stand for them. Here, it is true, we have patterns to follow; but patterns that will make the signification of their names very uncertain: for names must be of a very unsteady and various meaning, if the ideas they stand for be referred to standards without us, that either cannot be known at all, or can be known but imperfectly and uncertainly.

Names of substances referred, 1. To real essences that cannot be known.

12. The names of substances have, as has been shown, a double reference in their ordinary use.

First, Sometimes they are made to stand for, and so their signification is supposed to agree to, *the real constitution of things*, from which all their properties flow, and in which they all centre. But this real constitution, or (as it is apt to be called) essence, being utterly unknown to us, any sound that is put to stand for it must be very uncertain in its application; and it will be impossible to know what things are or ought to be called a *horse*, or *antimony*, when those words are put for real essences that we have no ideas of at all. And therefore in this supposition, the names of substances being referred to standards that cannot be known, their significations can never be adjusted and established by those standards.

Secondly, to coexisting qualities, which are known but imperfectly.

13. Secondly, The simple ideas that are *found to coexist in substances* being that which their names immediately signify, these, as united in the several sorts of things, are the proper standards to which their names are referred, and by

which their significations may be best rectified. But neither will these archetypes so well serve to this purpose as to leave these names without very various and uncertain significations. Because these simple ideas that coexist, and are united in the same subject, being very numerous, and having all an equal right to go into the complex specific idea which the specific name is to stand for, men, though they propose to themselves the very same subject to consider, yet frame very different ideas about it; and so the name they use for it unavoidably comes to have, in several men, very different significations. The simple qualities which make up the complex ideas, being most of them powers, in relation to changes which they are apt to make in, or receive from other bodies, are almost infinite. He that shall but observe what a great variety of alterations any one of the baser metals is apt to receive, from the different application only of fire; and how much a greater number of changes any of them will receive in the hands of a chymist, by the application of other bodies, will not think it strange that I count the properties of any sort of bodies not easy to be collected, and completely known, by the ways of inquiry which our faculties are capable of. They being therefore at least so many, that no man can know the precise and definite number, they are differently discovered by different men, according to their various skill, attention, and ways of handling; who therefore cannot choose but have different ideas of the same substance, and therefore make the signification of its common name very various and uncertain. For the complex ideas of substances, being made up of such simple ones as are supposed to coexist in nature, every one has a right to put into his complex idea those qualities he has found to be united together. For, though in the substance of gold one satisfies himself with colour and weight, yet another thinks solubility in *aqua regia* as necessary to be joined with that colour in his idea of gold, as any one does its fusibility; solubility in *aqua regia* being a quality as constantly joined with its colour and weight as fusibility or any other; others put into it ductility or fixedness, &c., as they have been taught by tradition or experience. Who of all these has established the right signification of the word, gold? Or who shall be the judge to

determine? Each has his standard in nature, which he appeals to, and with reason thinks he has the same right to put into his complex idea signified by the word gold, those qualities, which, upon trial, he has found united; as another who has not so well examined has to leave them out; or a third, who has made other trials, has to put in others. For the union in nature of these qualities being the true ground of their union in one complex idea, who can say one of them has more reason to be put in or left out than another? From hence it will unavoidably follow, that the complex ideas of substances in men using the same names for them, will be very various, and so the significations of those names very uncertain.

Thirdly, to coexisting qualities which are known but imperfectly.

14. Besides, there is scarce any particular thing existing, which, in some of its simple ideas, does not communicate with a greater, and in others a less number of particular beings: who shall determine in this case which are those that are to make up the precise collection that is to be signified by the specific name? or can with any just authority prescribe, which obvious or common qualities are to be left out; or which more secret, or more particular, are to be put into the signification of the name of any substance? All which together, seldom or never fail to produce that various and doubtful signification in the names of substances, which causes such uncertainty, disputes, or mistakes, when we come to a philosophical use of them.

With this imperfection, they may serve for civil, but not well for philosophical use.

15. It is true, as to civil and common conversation, the general names of substances, regulated in their ordinary signification by some obvious qualities, (as by the shape and figure in things of known seminal propagation, and in other substances, for the most part by colour, joined with some other sensible qualities,) do well enough to design the things men would be understood to speak of: and so they usually conceive well

enough the substances meant by the word gold or apple, to distinguish the one from the other. But in *philosophical* inquiries and debates, where general truths are to be established, and consequences drawn from positions laid down, there the precise signification of the names of substances will be found not only not to be well established, but also very hard to be so. For example: he that shall make malleability, or a certain degree of fixedness, a part of his complex idea of gold, may make propositions concerning gold, and draw consequences from them, that will truly and clearly follow from gold, taken in such signification: but yet such as another man can never be forced to admit, nor be convinced of their truth, who makes not malleableness, or the same degree of fixedness, part of that complex idea that the name gold, in his use of it, stands for.

Instance, liquor.

16. This is a natural and almost unavoidable imperfection in almost all the names of substances, in all languages whatsoever, which men will easily find when, once passing from confused or loose notions, they come to more strict and close inquiries. For then they will be convinced how doubtful and obscure those words are in their signification, which in ordinary use appeared very clear and determined. I was once in a meeting of very learned and ingenious physicians, where by chance there arose a question, whether any liquor passed through the filaments of the nerves. The debate having been managed a good while, by variety of arguments on both sides, I (who had been used to suspect, that the greatest part of disputes were more about the signification of words than a real difference in the conception of things) desired, that, before they went any further on in this dispute, they would first examine and establish amongst them, what the word *liquor* signified. They at first were a little surprised at the proposal; and had they been persons less ingenious, they might perhaps have taken it for a very frivolous or extravagant one: since there was no one there that thought not himself to understand very perfectly what the word liquor stood for; which I think, too, none of the most perplexed names of substances. However, they were

pleased to comply with my motion; and upon examination found that the signification of that word was not so settled or certain as they had all imagined; but that each of them made it a sign of a different complex idea. This made them perceive that the main of their dispute was about the signification of that term; and that they differed very little in their opinions concerning *some* fluid and subtle matter, passing through the conduits of the nerves; though it was not so easy to agree whether it was to be called *liquor* or no, a thing, which, when considered, they thought it not worth the contending about.

Instance, gold.

17. How much this is the case in the greatest part of disputes that men are engaged so hotly in, I shall perhaps have an occasion in another place to take notice. Let us only here consider a little more exactly the fore-mentioned instance of the word *gold*, and we shall see how hard it is precisely to determine its signification. I think all agree to make it stand for a body of a certain yellow shining colour; which being the idea to which children have annexed that name, the shining yellow part of a peacock's tail is properly to them gold. Others finding fusibility joined with that yellow colour in certain parcels of matter, make of that combination a complex idea to which they give the name gold, to denote a sort of substances; and so exclude from being gold all such yellow shining bodies as by fire will be reduced to ashes; and admit to be of that species, or to be comprehended under that name gold, only such substances as, having that shining yellow colour, will by fire be reduced to fusion, and not to ashes. Another, by the same reason, adds the weight, which, being a quality as straightly joined with that colour as its fusibility, he thinks has the same reason to be joined in its idea, and to be signified by its name: and therefore the other made up of body, of such a colour and fusibility, to be imperfect; and so on of all the rest: wherein no one can show a reason why some of the inseparable qualities, that are always united in nature, should be put into the nominal essence, and others left out: or why the word gold, signifying that sort of body the ring on his

finger is made of, should determine that sort rather by its colour, weight, and fusibility, than by its colour, weight, and solubility in *aqua regia*: since the dissolving it by that liquor is as inseparable from it as the fusion by fire; and they are both of them nothing but the relation which that substance has to two other bodies, which have a power to operate differently upon it. For by what right is it that fusibility comes to be a part of the essence signified by the word gold, and solubility but a property of it? Or why is its colour part of the essence, and its malleableness but a property? That which I mean is this, That these being all but properties, depending on its real constitution, and nothing but powers, either active or passive, in reference to other bodies, no one has authority to determine the signification of the word gold (as referred to such a body existing in nature) more to one collection of ideas to be found in that body than to another: whereby the signification of that name must unavoidably be very uncertain. Since, as has been said, several people observe several properties in the same substance; and I think I may say nobody all. And therefore we have but very imperfect descriptions of things, and words have very uncertain significations.

The names of simple ideas the least doubtful.

18. From what has been said, it is easy to observe what has been before remarked, viz. that the *names of simple ideas* are, of all others, the least liable to mistakes, and that for these reasons. First, Because the ideas they stand for, being each but one single perception, are much easier got, and more clearly retained, than the more complex ones, and therefore are not liable to the uncertainty which usually attends those compounded ones of substances and mixed modes, in which the precise number of simple ideas that make them up are not easily agreed, so readily kept in mind. And, Secondly, Because they are never referred to any other essence, but barely that perception they immediately signify: which reference is that which renders the signification of the names of substances naturally so perplexed, and gives occasion to so many disputes. Men that do not perversely use their words, or on

purpose set themselves to cavil, seldom mistake, in any language which they are acquainted with, the use and signification of the name of simple ideas. *White* and *sweet*, *yellow* and *bitter*, carry a very obvious meaning with them, which every one precisely comprehends, or easily perceives he is ignorant of, and seeks to be informed. But what precise collection of simple ideas *modesty* or *frugality* stand for, in another's use, is not so certainly known. And however we are apt to think we well enough know what is meant by *gold* or *iron*; yet the precise complex idea others make them the signs of is not so certain: and I believe it is very seldom that, in speaker and hearer, they stand for exactly the same collection. Which must needs produce mistakes and disputes, when they are made use of in discourses, wherein men have to do with universal propositions, and would settle in their minds universal truths, and consider the consequences that follow from them.

And next to them, simple modes.

19. By the same rule, the names of *simple modes* are, next to those of simple ideas, least liable to doubt and uncertainty; especially those of figure and number, of which men have so clear and distinct ideas. Who ever that had a mind to understand them mistook the ordinary meaning of *seven*, or a *triangle*? And in general the least compounded ideas in every kind have the least dubious names.

The most doubtful are the names of very compounded mixed modes and substances.

20. Mixed modes, therefore, that are made up but of a few and obvious simple ideas, have usually names of no very uncertain signification. But the names of mixed modes which comprehend a great number of simple ideas, are commonly of a very doubtful and undetermined meaning, as has been shown. The names of substances, being annexed to ideas that are neither the real essences, nor exact representations of the patterns they are referred to, are liable to yet greater imperfection and uncertainty, especially when we come to a philosophical use of them.

Why this imperfection charged upon words.

21. The great disorder that happens in our names of substances, proceeding, for the most part, from our want of knowledge, and inability to penetrate into their real constitutions, it may probably be wondered why I charge this as an imperfection rather upon our words than understandings. This exception has so much appearance of justice, that I think myself obliged to give a reason why I have followed this method. I must confess, then, that, when I first began this Discourse of the Understanding, and a good while after, I had not the least thought that any consideration of words was at all necessary to it. But when, having passed over the original and composition of our ideas, I began to examine the extent and certainty of our knowledge, I found it had so near a connection with words, that, unless their force and manner of signification were first well observed, there could be very little said clearly and pertinently concerning knowledge: which being conversant about truth, had constantly to do with propositions. And though it terminated in things, yet it was for the most part so much by the intervention of words, that they seemed scarce separable from our general knowledge. At least they interpose themselves so much between our understandings, and the truth which it would contemplate and apprehend, that, like the medium through which visible objects pass, the obscurity and disorder do not seldom cast a mist before our eyes, and impose upon our understandings. If we consider, in the fallacies men put upon themselves, as well as others, and the mistakes in men's disputes and notions, how great a part is owing to words, and their uncertain or mistaken significations, we shall have reason to think this no small obstacle in the way to knowledge; which I conclude we are the more carefully to be warned of, because it has been so far from being taken notice of as an inconvenience, that the arts of improving it have been made the business of men's study, and obtained the reputation of learning and subtilty, as we shall see in the following chapter. But I am apt to imagine, that, were the imperfections of language, as the instrument of knowledge, more thoroughly weighed, a great many of the controversies that make such a noise in the world,

would of themselves cease; and the way to knowledge, and perhaps peace too, lie a great deal opener than it does.

This should teach us moderation in imposing our own sense of old authors.

22. Sure I am that the signification of words in all languages, depending very much on the thoughts, notions, and ideas of him that uses them, must unavoidably be of great uncertainty to men of the same language and country. This is so evident in the Greek authors, that he that shall peruse their writings will find in almost every one of them, a distinct language, though the same words. But when to this natural difficulty in every country, there shall be added different countries and remote ages, wherein the speakers and writers had very different notions, tempers, customs, ornaments, and figures of speech, &c., every one of which influenced the signification of their words then, though to us now they are lost and unknown; it would become us to be charitable one to another in our interpretations or misunderstandings of those ancient writings; which, though of great concernment to be understood, are liable to the unavoidable difficulties of speech, which (if we except the names of simple ideas, and some very obvious things) is not capable, without a constant defining the terms, of conveying the sense and intention of the speaker, without any manner of doubt and uncertainty to the hearer. And in discourses of religion, law, and morality, as they are matters of the highest concernment, so there will be the greatest difficulty.

Especially of the Old and New Testament Scriptures.

23. The volumes of interpreters and commentators on the Old and New Testament are but too manifest proofs of this. Though everything said in the text be infallibly true, yet the reader may be, nay, cannot choose but be, very fallible in the understanding of it. Nor is it to be wondered, that the will of God, when clothed in words, should be liable to that doubt and uncertainty which unavoidably attends that sort of conveyance, when even his Son, whilst clothed in flesh, was subject

to all the frailties and inconveniences of human nature, sin excepted. And we ought to magnify his goodness, that he hath spread before all the world such legible characters of his works and providence, and given all mankind so sufficient a light of reason, that they to whom this written word never came, could not (whenever they set themselves to search) either doubt of the being of a God, or of the obedience due to him. Since then the precepts of Natural Religion are plain, and very intelligible to all mankind, and seldom come to be controverted; and other revealed truths, which are conveyed to us by books and languages, are liable to the common and natural obscurities and difficulties incident to words; methinks it would become us to be more careful and diligent in observing the former, and less magisterial, positive, and imperious, in imposing our own sense and interpretations of the latter. . . .

CHAPTER X

Of the Abuse of Words

The ends of language: First, to convey our ideas.

23. To conclude this consideration of the imperfection and abuse of language. The ends of language in our discourse with others being chiefly these three: First, to make known one man's thoughts or ideas to another; Secondly, to do it with as much ease and quickness as possible; and, Thirdly, thereby to convey the knowledge of things: language is either abused or deficient, when it fails of any of these three.

First, Words fail in the first of these ends, and lay not open one man's ideas to another's view: 1. When men have names in their mouths without any determinate ideas in their minds, whereof they are the signs: or, 2. When they apply the common received names of any language to ideas, to which the common use of that language does not apply them: or, 3. When they apply them very unsteadily, making them stand, now for one, and by and by for another idea.

Secondly, to do it with quickness.

24. Secondly, Men fail of conveying their thoughts with all the quickness and ease that may

be, when they have complex ideas without having any distinct names for them. This is sometimes the fault of the language itself, which has not in it a sound yet applied to such a signification; and sometimes the fault of the man, who has not yet learned the name for that idea he would show another.

Thirdly, therewith to convey the knowledge of things.

25. Thirdly, There is no knowledge of things conveyed by men's words, when their ideas agree not to the reality of things. Though it be a defect that has its original in our ideas, which are not conformable to the nature of things as attention, study, and application might make them, yet it fails not to extend itself to our words too, when we use them as signs of real beings, which yet never had any reality or existence.

How men's words fail in all these: First, when used without any ideas.

26. First, He that hath words of any language, without distinct ideas in his mind to which he applies them, does, so far as he uses them in discourse, only make a noise without any sense or signification; and how learned soever he may seem, by the use of hard words or learned terms, is not much more advanced thereby in knowledge, than he would be in learning, who had nothing in his study but the bare titles of books, without possessing the contents of them. For all such words, however put into discourse, according to the construction of grammatical rules, or the harmony of well-turned periods, do yet amount to nothing but bare sounds, and nothing else.

Secondly, when complex ideas are without names annexed to them.

27. Secondly, He that has complex ideas, without particular names for them, would be in no better case than a bookseller, who had in his warehouse volumes that lay there unbound, and without titles, which he could therefore make known to others only by showing the loose sheets, and communicate them only by tale. This man is hindered in his discourse, for want of words to

communicate his complex ideas, which he is therefore forced to make known by an enumeration of the simple ones that compose them; and so is fain often to use twenty words, to express what another man signifies in one.

Thirdly, when the same sign is not put for the same idea.

28. Thirdly, He that puts not constantly the same sign for the same idea, but uses the same words sometimes in one and sometimes in another signification, ought to pass in the schools and conversation for as fair a man, as he does in the market and exchange, who sells several things under the same name.

Fourthly, when words are diverted from their common use.

29. Fourthly, He that applies the words of any language to ideas different from those to which the common use of that country applies them, however his own understanding may be filled with truth and light, will not by such words be able to convey much of it to others, without defining his terms. For however the sounds are such as are familiarly known, and easily enter the ears of those who are accustomed to them; yet standing for other ideas than those they usually are annexed to, and are wont to excite in the mind of the hearers, they cannot make known the thoughts of him who thus uses them.

Fifthly, when they are names of fantastical imaginations.

30. Fifthly, He that imagined to himself substances such as never have been, and filled his head with ideas which have not any correspondence with the real nature of things, to which yet he gives settled and defined names, may fill his discourse, and perhaps another man's head, with the fantastical imaginations of his own brain, but will be very far from advancing thereby one jot in real and true knowledge.

Summary.

31. He that hath names without ideas, wants meaning in his words, and speaks only empty

sounds. He that hath complex ideas without names for them, wants liberty and dispatch in his expressions, and is necessitated to use periphrases. He that uses his words loosely and unsteadily will either be not minded or not understood. He that applies his names to ideas different from their common use, wants propriety in his language, and speaks gibberish. And he that hath the ideas of substances disagreeing with the real existence of things, so far wants the materials of true knowledge in his understanding, and hath instead thereof chimeras.

How men's words fail when they stand for substances.

32. In our notions concerning Substances, we are liable to all the former inconveniences: v.g. he that uses the word *tarantula*, without having any imagination or idea of what it stands for, pronounces a good word; but so long means nothing at all by it. 2. He that, in a newly-discovered country, shall see several sorts of animals and vegetables, unknown to him before, may have as true ideas of them, as of a horse or a stag; but can speak of them only by a description, till he shall either take the names the natives call them by, or give them names himself. 3. He that uses the word *body* sometimes for pure extension, and sometimes for extension and solidity together, will talk very fallaciously. 4. He that gives the name *horse* to that idea which common usage calls *mule*, talks improperly, and will not be understood. 5. He that thinks the name *centaur* stands for some real being, imposes on himself, and mistakes words for things.

How when they stand for Modes and Relations.

33. In Modes and Relations generally, we are liable only to the four first of these inconveniences; viz. 1. I may have in my memory the names of modes, as *gratitude* or *charity*, and yet not have any precise ideas annexed in my thoughts to those names. 2. I may have ideas, and not know the names that belong to them: v.g. I may have the idea of a man's drinking till his colour and humour be altered, till his tongue trips, and his eyes look red, and his feet fail him; and yet not know that it is to be called *drunken-*

ness. 3. I may have the ideas of virtues or vices, and names also, but apply them amiss: v.g. when I apply the name *frugality* to that idea which others call and signify by this sound, *covetousness*. 4. I may use any of those names with inconsistency. 5. But, in modes and relations, I cannot have ideas disagreeing to the existence of things: for modes being complex ideas, made by the mind of pleasure, and relation being but by way of considering or comparing two things together, and so also an idea of my own making, these ideas can scarce be found to disagree with anything existing; since they are not in the mind as the copies of things regularly made by nature, nor as properties inseparably flowing from the internal constitution or essence of any substance; but, as it were, patterns lodged in my memory, with names annexed to them, to denominate actions and relations by, as they come to exist. But the mistake is commonly in my giving a wrong name to my conceptions; and so using words in a different sense from other people: I am not understood, but am thought to have wrong ideas of them, when I give wrong names to them. Only if I put in my ideas of mixed modes or relations any inconsistent ideas together, I fill my head also with chimeras; since such ideas, if well examined, cannot so much as exist in the mind, much less any real being ever be denominated from them.

Seventhly, language is often abused by figurative speech.

34. Since wit and fancy find easier entertainment in the world than dry truth and real knowledge, figurative speeches and allusion in language will hardly be admitted as an imperfection or abuse of

it. I confess, in discourses where we seek rather pleasure and delight than information and improvement, such ornaments as are borrowed from them can scarce pass for faults. But yet if we would speak of things as they are, we must allow that all the art of rhetoric, besides order and clearness; all the artificial and figurative application of words eloquence hath invented, are for nothing else but to insinuate wrong ideas, move the passions, and thereby mislead the judgment; and so indeed are perfect cheats: and therefore, however laudable or allowable oratory may render them in harangues and popular addresses, they are certainly, in all discourses that pretend to inform or instruct, wholly to be avoided; and where truth and knowledge are concerned, cannot but be thought a great fault, either of the language or person that makes use of them. What and how various they are, will be superfluous here to take notice; the books of rhetoric which abound in the world, will instruct those who want to be informed: only I cannot but observe how little the preservation and improvement of truth and knowledge is the care and concern of mankind; since the arts of fallacy are endowed and preferred. It is evident how much men love to deceive and be deceived, since rhetoric, that powerful instrument of error and deceit, has its established professors, is publicly taught, and has always been had in great reputation: and I doubt not but it will be thought great boldness, if not brutality, in me to have said thus much against it. Eloquence, like the fair sex, has too prevailing beauties in it to suffer itself ever to be spoken against. And it is in vain to find fault with those arts of deceiving, wherein men find pleasure to be deceived.

David Hume

1711–1776

David Hume, the most important and influential British philosopher of his day, was born in Edinburgh, Scotland. Shunning the law, for which he had begun to study, Hume pursued his own course of reading (he cites Cicero and Virgil as favorites), which led in 1739 to the publication of *A Treatise of Human Nature*. In this work, Hume sought to combine Lockean empiricism and Newtonian experimentalism in a new and thoroughgoing study of the operations of the human mind. He held to Locke's principle that our ideas come only from sense impressions and our mental operations upon them. He further argued that genuine knowledge can come only by this path and not from pure reasoning, testimony, or revelation.

The *Treatise* sold poorly and was generally reviewed negatively. Disappointed by its poor reception, Hume sought a wider public by publishing an abstract and then several revised versions. The revisions developed ultimately into separate works, the *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (1748) and the *Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* (1751). These efforts, too, met with little success. However, Hume derived real satisfaction from writing and publishing a series of essays that were quite well received. In his brief autobiography, "My Own Life" (composed shortly before his death and published the next year, 1777), Hume delights in his role as a man of letters, writing that "almost all my life has been spent in literary pursuits and occupations" and that "love of literary fame" was "my ruling passion."¹ Except among other philosophers—such as Thomas Reid, James Beattie, and George Campbell, who counted Hume their favorite adversary—Hume was well known for his essays and his *History of England*, not for his philosophical works.

Hume's famous opposition to religion is based upon his rejection of knowledge derived from either testimony or revelation. His book *The Natural History of Religion* (1758), and a chapter on miracles in the *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (arguing that testimony about a breach of nature was far more likely to be false than true), made him a target of religious pamphleteers. Hume steadfastly refused to reply to such attacks, which had the happy side effect of increasing the sales of his books. Upon his deathbed, Hume was visited by Boswell, who wished to see if the famous atheist had changed his views as he contemplated his demise. Boswell was disappointed. Hume looked terrible but cheerfully maintained his unbelief in the face of Boswell's importuning. Boswell observes, interestingly, that upon his visit Hume was reading Campbell's just-published *Philosophy of Rhetoric*.

Two of Hume's essays address rhetorical concerns. "Of Eloquence" (1742) is a rather slight piece that laments the British public's tolerance for poor oratory. The absence of good models (rather than a positive preference for poor speaking) is the cause. Hume recommends the ancient orators, particularly Cicero and Demosthenes, as models. He also urges greater use of pathetic appeals and of histrionic gesture.

¹"My Own Life," in *David Hume, Essays: Moral, Political, and Literary*, ed. Eugene F. Miller (Indianapolis: Liberty Classics, 1985), pp. xxxi, xl.

“Of the Standard of Taste” (1757) takes up an issue of abiding concern to both rhetoricians and philosophers in this period and of considerable consequence for Hume’s philosophy. Taste, for Hume and many of his contemporaries, is no mere matter of preference concerning purely personal matters. Rather, taste is the basis of judgments not only about what is beautiful (or personally pleasing) but also about what is virtuous. Taste, in this way of thinking, supersedes reasoning in aesthetics and morals and is therefore of profound importance, especially to someone like Hume who seeks to understand the operations of mind. Hume begins the essay by noting the diversity of taste, even within a single society. Furthermore, though all people use terms equivalent to *virtuous* or *elegant*, they do not mean the same things by them (as Locke had claimed), so careful definition does not reduce the diversity. Hume considers the possibility that there is, indeed, complete relativism in this matter. But his purpose is to find ways to reduce or eliminate disagreement, to set a standard.

Rules or standards of art are attempts to specify what is good or beautiful. As Jonathan Friday helpfully points out, eighteenth-century neoclassicism held firmly to rules, following the newly revived Aristotle. But Hume, like Samuel Johnson and others at midcentury (moving, Friday says, toward the also-revived Longinus), rejects this view, noting that rigid adherence to rules does not guarantee favorable response and that deviating from rules often produces wonderful results. Though Hume discards the rule standard, he seems to favor two other positions that reduce relativism. One is that some works of art are clearly better than others, a judgment about which nobody would disagree. These works can serve as touchstones. The other is that although taste is personal, clearly some people have better taste than others, people who are more sensitive and knowledgeable, and who therefore can make superior decisions regarding matters of taste in their areas of expertise. Such people can provide us with the standards for criticism.

These two theories—touchstones and ideal critics—are fundamentally empirical, based on experience rather than a priori ideals or abstract rules. They appealed deeply to the public sensibility. In particular, they impressed Hugh Blair, Hume’s contemporary and one of his chief defenders from clerical attack. Blair’s *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* (published in 1783, but first composed in 1758, the year Hume’s essay was first published) focus on the importance of taste and carry out Hume’s program in a remarkable way (see Blair, p. 947). For Blair links the receptive art of criticism with the productive arts of rhetoric—both of which thus depend on good taste—precisely by providing many touchstones of oratory and literature and by demonstrating his own superior taste in his commentaries. Moreover, Blair enacts Hume’s argument that good taste, based as it is on experience, can be learned.

Selected Bibliography

“Of the Standard of Taste” first appeared in *Four Dissertations* (1757), which was included in the 1758 edition of *Essays and Treatises*. Our text is from *David Hume, Essays: Moral, Political, and Literary*, ed. Eugene F. Miller (1985). Modern editions of Hume’s other major

works are *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge (1978); *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. Charles Hendel (1955); *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, ed. J. B. Schneewind (1983); and *The Natural History of Religion*, ed. H. E. Root (1957).

Adam Potkay, in *The Fate of Eloquence in the Age of Hume* (1994), uses “Of Eloquence” as the running anchor for his perceptive analysis of the political fortunes of eloquence in the eighteenth century. To Potkay, Hume is in the midst of a conflict between ancient eloquence and modern politeness as standards of style. Potkay also devotes a substantial chapter to the sources of Hume’s views in *A Treatise of Human Nature* and to Hume’s theory of the polis in his *Natural History of Religion*. Barbara Warnick discusses the main elements of belletristic rhetoric—taste, propriety, and the sublime—in *The Sixth Canon: Belletristic Rhetorical Theory and Its French Antecedents* (1993). Warnick covers Hume’s essay and discusses its influence on Blair and other contemporaries in some detail. John Richetti, in *Philosophical Writing: Locke, Berkeley, Hume*, looks at philosophy as a form of rhetoric.

A lively critical debate focuses on the apparent circularity of Hume’s argument for identifying the ideal critic by his sensitivity to good art while recognizing good art through the offices of the ideal critic. Peter Kivy describes the problem and offers some solutions in “Hume’s Standard of Taste: Breaking the Circle” in the *British Journal of Aesthetics* 7:1 (1967), pp. 1–57. James R. Shelley summarizes and comments on a related debate over the standard of the judge and the problem of the key in the wine in “Hume and the Nature of Taste,” *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 56 (winter 1998): 29–38. David Marshall explains the key-in-the-wine story as the metaphor that drives Hume’s argument for an analogy between aesthetic taste and physiological taste, in “Arguing by Analogy: Hume’s Standard of Taste,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 28.3 (1995): 323–43. Jonathan Friday teases out the four standards of taste (not, as Hume claims, one) in “Hume’s Sceptical Standard of Taste,” *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 36.4 (October 1998): 545–66.

See also the bibliography on Campbell (p. 901) for a number of works that treat Hume’s influence on Campbell.

Of the Standard of Taste

The great variety of Taste, as well as of opinion, which prevails in the world, is too obvious not to have fallen under every one’s observation. Men of the most confined knowledge are able to remark a difference of taste in the narrow circle of their acquaintance, even where the persons have been educated under the same government, and have early imbibed the same prejudices. But those, who can enlarge their view to contemplate distant nations and remote ages, are still more surprized at the great inconsistency and contrariety. We are apt to call *barbarous* whatever departs widely from our own taste and apprehension: But soon find the epithet of reproach

retorted on us. And the highest arrogance and self-conceit is at last startled, on observing an equal assurance on all sides, and scruples, amidst such a contest of sentiment, to pronounce positively in its own favour.

As this variety of taste is obvious to the most careless enquirer; so will it be found, on examination, to be still greater in reality than in appearance. The sentiments of men often differ with regard to beauty and deformity of all kinds, even while their general discourse is the same. There are certain terms in every language, which import blame, and others praise; and all men, who use the same tongue, must agree in their application

of them. Every voice is united in applauding elegance, propriety, simplicity, spirit in writing; and in blaming fustian, affectation, coldness, and a false brilliancy: But when critics come to particulars, this seeming unanimity vanishes; and it is found, that they had affixed a very different meaning to their expressions. In all matters of opinion and science, the case is opposite: The difference among men is there oftener found to lie in generals than in particulars; and to be less in reality than in appearance. An explanation of the terms commonly ends the controversy; and the disputants are surprized to find, that they had been quarrelling, while at bottom they agreed in their judgment.

Those who found morality on sentiment, more than on reason, are inclined to comprehend ethics under the former observation, and to maintain, that, in all questions, which regard conduct and manners, the difference among men is really greater than at first sight it appears. It is indeed obvious, that writers of all nations and all ages concur in applauding justice, humanity, magnanimity, prudence, veracity; and in blaming the opposite qualities. Even poets and other authors, whose compositions are chiefly calculated to please the imagination, are yet found from HOMER down to FENELON, to inculcate the same moral precepts, and to bestow their applause and blame on the same virtues and vices. This great unanimity is usually ascribed to the influence of plain reason; which, in all these cases, maintains similar sentiments in all men, and prevents those controversies, to which the abstract sciences are so much exposed. So far as the unanimity is real, this account may be admitted as satisfactory: But we must also allow that some part of the seeming harmony in morals may be accounted for from the very nature of language. The word *virtue*, with its equivalent in every tongue, implies praise; as that of *vice* does blame: And no one, without the most obvious and grossest impropriety, could affix reproach to a term, which in general acceptance is understood in a good sense; or bestow applause, where the idiom requires disapprobation. HOMER'S general precepts, where he delivers any such, will never be controverted; but it is obvious, that, when he draws particular pictures of manners, and represents heroism in

ACHILLES and prudence in ULYSSES, he intermixes a much greater degree of ferocity in the former, and of cunning and fraud in the latter, than FENELON would admit of. The sage ULYSSES in the GREEK poet seems to delight in lies and fictions, and often employs them without any necessity or even advantage: But his more scrupulous son, in the FRENCH epic writer, exposes himself to the most imminent perils, rather than depart from the most exact line of truth and veracity.

The admirers and followers of the ALCORAN insist on the excellent moral precepts interspersed throughout that wild and absurd performance. But it is to be supposed, that the ARABIC words, which correspond to the ENGLISH, equity, justice, temperance, meekness, charity, were such as, from the constant use of that tongue, must always be taken in a good sense; and it would have argued the greatest ignorance, not of morals, but of language, to have mentioned them with any epithets, besides those of applause and approbation. But would we know, whether the pretended prophet had really attained a just sentiment of morals? Let us attend to his narration; and we shall soon find, that he bestows praise on such instances of treachery, inhumanity, cruelty, revenge, bigotry, as are utterly incompatible with civilized society. No steady rule of right seems there to be attended to; and every action is blamed or praised, so far only as it is beneficial or hurtful to the true believers.

The merit of delivering true general precepts in ethics is indeed very small. Whoever recommends any moral virtues, really does no more than is implied in the terms themselves. That people, who invented the word *charity*, and used it in a good sense, inculcated more clearly and much more efficaciously, the precept, *be charitable*, than any pretended legislator or prophet, who should insert such a *maxim* in his writings. Of all expressions, those, which, together with their other meaning, imply a degree either of blame or approbation, are the least liable to be perverted or mistaken.

It is natural for us to seek a *Standard of Taste*; a rule, by which the various sentiments of men may be reconciled; at least, a decision, afforded, confirming one sentiment, and condemning another.

There is a species of philosophy, which cuts off all hopes of success in such an attempt, and represents the impossibility of ever attaining any standard of taste. The difference, it is said, is very wide between judgment and sentiment. All sentiment is right; because sentiment has a reference to nothing beyond itself, and is always real, wherever a man is conscious of it. But all determinations of the understanding are not right; because they have a reference to something beyond themselves, to wit, real matter of fact; and are not always conformable to that standard. Among a thousand different opinions which different men may entertain of the same subject, there is one, and but one, that is just and true; and the only difficulty is to fix and ascertain it. On the contrary, a thousand different sentiments, excited by the same object, are all right: Because no sentiment represents what is really in the object. It only marks a certain conformity or relation between the object and the organs or faculties of the mind; and if that conformity did not really exist, the sentiment could never possibly have being. Beauty is no quality in things themselves: It exists merely in the mind which contemplates them; and each mind perceives a different beauty. One person may even perceive deformity, where another is sensible of beauty; and every individual ought to acquiesce in his own sentiment, without pretending to regulate those of others. To seek the real beauty, or real deformity, is as fruitless an enquiry, as to pretend to ascertain the real sweet or real bitter. According to the disposition of the organs, the same object may be both sweet and bitter; and the proverb has justly determined it to be fruitless to dispute concerning tastes. It is very natural, and even quite necessary, to extend this axiom to mental, as well as bodily taste; and thus common sense, which is so often at variance with philosophy, especially with the sceptical kind, is found, in one instance at least, to agree in pronouncing the same decision.

But though this axiom, by passing into a proverb, seems to have attained the sanction of common sense; there is certainly a species of common sense which opposes it, at least serves to modify and restrain it. Whoever would assert an equality of genius and elegance between

OGILBY and MILTON, or BUNYAN and ADDISON, would be thought to defend no less an extravagance, than if he had maintained a mole-hill to be as high as TENERIFFE, or a pond as extensive as the ocean. Though there may be found persons, who give the preference to the former authors; no one pays attention to such a taste; and we pronounce without scruple the sentiment of these pretended critics to be absurd and ridiculous. The principle of the natural equality of tastes is then totally forgot, and while we admit it on some occasions, where the objects seem near an equality, it appears an extravagant paradox, or rather a palpable absurdity, where objects so disproportioned are compared together.

It is evident that none of the rules of composition are fixed by reasonings *a priori*, or can be esteemed abstract conclusions of the understanding, from comparing those habitudes and relations of ideas, which are eternal and immutable. Their foundation is the same with that of all the practical sciences, experience; nor are they any thing but general observations, concerning what has been universally found to please in all countries and in all ages. Many of the beauties of poetry and even of eloquence are founded on falsehood and fiction, on hyperboles, metaphors, and an abuse or perversion of terms from their natural meaning. To check the sallies of the imagination, and to reduce every expression to geometrical truth and exactness, would be the most contrary to the laws of criticism; because it would produce a work, which, by universal experience, has been found the most insipid and disagreeable. But though poetry can never submit to exact truth, it must be confined by rules of art, discovered to the author either by genius or observation. If some negligent or irregular writers have pleased, they have not pleased by their transgressions of rule or order, but in spite of these transgressions: They have possessed other beauties, which were conformable to just criticism; and the force of these beauties has been able to overpower censure, and give the mind a satisfaction superior to the disgust arising from the blemishes. ARIOSTO pleases; but not by his monstrous and improbable fictions, by his bizarre mixture of the serious and comic styles, by the want of coherence in his stories, or by the continual interruptions of his nar-

ration. He charms by the force and clearness of his expression, by the readiness and variety of his inventions, and by his natural pictures of the passions, especially those of the gay and amorous kind: And however his faults may diminish our satisfaction, they are not able entirely to destroy it. Did our pleasure really arise from those parts of his poem, which we denominate faults, this would be no objection to criticism in general: It would only be an objection to those particular rules of criticism, which would establish such circumstances to be faults, and would represent them as universally blameable. If they are found to please, they cannot be faults; let the pleasure, which they produce, be ever so unexpected and unaccountable.

But though all the general rules of art are founded only on experience and on the observation of the common sentiments of human nature, we must not imagine, that, on every occasion, the feelings of men will be conformable to these rules. Those finer emotions of the mind are of a very tender and delicate nature, and require the concurrence of many favourable circumstances to make them play with facility and exactness, according to their general and established principles. The least exterior hindrance to such small springs, or the least internal disorder, disturbs their motion, and confounds the operation of the whole machine. When we would make an experiment of this nature, and would try the force of any beauty or deformity, we must choose with care a proper time and place, and bring the fancy to a suitable situation and disposition. A perfect serenity of mind, a recollection of thought, a due attention to the object; if any of these circumstances be wanting, our experiment will be fallacious, and we shall be unable to judge of the catholic and universal beauty. The relation, which nature has placed between the form and the sentiment, will at least be more obscure; and it will require greater accuracy to trace and discern it. We shall be able to ascertain its influence not so much from the operation of each particular beauty, as from the durable admiration, which attends those works, that have survived all the caprices of mode and fashion, all the mistakes of ignorance and envy.

The same HOMER, who pleased at ATHENS and

ROME two thousand years ago, is still admired at PARIS and at LONDON. All the changes of climate, government, religion, and language, have not been able to obscure his glory. Authority or prejudice may give a temporary vogue to a bad poet or orator; but his reputation will never be durable or general. When his compositions are examined by posterity or by foreigners, the enchantment is dissipated, and his faults appear in their true colours. On the contrary, a real genius, the longer his works endure, and the more wide they are spread, the more sincere is the admiration which he meets with. Envy and jealousy have too much place in a narrow circle; and even familiar acquaintance with his person may diminish the applause due to his performances: But when these obstructions are removed, the beauties, which are naturally fitted to excite agreeable sentiments, immediately display their energy; and while the world endures, they maintain their authority over the minds of men.

It appears then, that, amidst all the variety and caprice of taste, there are certain general principles of approbation or blame, whose influence a careful eye may trace in all operations of the mind. Some particular forms or qualities, from the original structure of the internal fabric, are calculated to please, and others to displease; and if they fail of their effect in any particular instance, it is from some apparent defect or imperfection in the organ. A man in a fever would not insist on his palate as able to decide concerning flavours; nor would one, affected with the jaundice, pretend to give a verdict with regard to colours. In each creature, there is a sound and a defective state; and the former alone can be supposed to afford us a true standard of taste and sentiment. If, in the sound state of the organ, there be an entire or a considerable uniformity of sentiment among men, we may thence derive an idea of the perfect beauty; in like manner as the appearance of objects in day-light, to the eye of a man in health, is denominated their true and real colour, even while colour is allowed to be merely a phantasm of the senses.

Many and frequent are the defects in the internal organs, which prevent or weaken the influence of those general principles, on which depends our sentiment of beauty or deformity.

Though some objects, by the structure of the mind, be naturally calculated to give pleasure, it is not to be expected, that in every individual the pleasure will be equally felt. Particular incidents and situations occur, which either throw a false light on the objects, or hinder the true from conveying to the imagination the proper sentiment and perception.

One obvious cause, why many feel not the proper sentiment of beauty, is the want of that *delicacy* of imagination, which is requisite to convey a sensibility of those finer emotions. This delicacy every one pretends to: Every one talks of it; and would reduce every kind of taste or sentiment to its standard. But as our intention in this essay is to mingle some light of the understanding with the feelings of sentiment, it will be proper to give a more accurate definition of delicacy, than has hitherto been attempted. And not to draw our philosophy from too profound a source, we shall have recourse to a noted story in DON QUIXOTE.

It is with good reason, says SANCHO to the squire with the great nose, that I pretend to have a judgment in wine: This is a quality hereditary in our family. Two of my kinsmen were once called to give their opinion of a hogshead, which was supposed to be excellent, being old and of a good vintage. One of them tastes it; considers it; and after mature reflection pronounces the wine to be good, were it not for a small taste of leather, which he perceived in it. The other, after using the same precautions, gives also his verdict in favour of the wine; but with the reserve of a taste of iron, which he could easily distinguish. You cannot imagine how much they were both ridiculed for their judgment. But who laughed in the end? On emptying the hogshead, there was found at the bottom, an old key with a leathern thong tied to it.

The great resemblance between mental and bodily taste will easily teach us to apply this story. Though it be certain, that beauty and deformity, more than sweet and bitter, are not qualities in objects, but belong entirely to the sentiment, internal or external; it must be allowed, that there are certain qualities in objects, which are fitted by nature to produce those particular feelings. Now as these qualities may be found in a small

degree, or may be mixed and confounded with each other, it often happens, that the taste is not affected with such minute qualities, or is not able to distinguish all the particular flavours, amidst the disorder, in which they are presented. Where the organs are so fine, as to allow nothing to escape them; and at the same time so exact as to perceive every ingredient in the composition: This we call delicacy of taste, whether we employ these terms in the literal or metaphorical sense. Here then the general rules of beauty are of use; being drawn from established models, and from the observation of what pleases or displeases, when presented singly and in a high degree: And if the same qualities, in a continued composition and in a smaller degree, affect not the organs with a sensible delight or uneasiness, we exclude the person from all pretensions to this delicacy. To produce these general rules or avowed patterns of composition is like finding the key with the leathern thong; which justified the verdict of SANCHO'S kinsmen, and confounded those pretended judges who had condemned them. Though the hogshead had never been emptied, the taste of the one was still equally delicate, and that of the other equally dull and languid: But it would have been more difficult to have proved the superiority of the former, to the conviction of every by-stander. In like manner, though the beauties of writing had never been methodized, or reduced to general principles; though no excellent models had ever been acknowledged; the different degrees of taste would still have subsisted, and the judgment of one man been preferable to that of another; but it would not have been so easy to silence the bad critic, who might always insist upon his particular sentiment, and refuse to submit to his antagonist. But when we show him an avowed principle of art; when we illustrate this principle by examples, whose operation, from his own particular taste, he acknowledges to be conformable to the principle; when we prove, that the same principle may be applied to the present case, where he did not perceive or feel its influence: He must conclude, upon the whole, that the fault lies in himself, and that he wants the delicacy, which is requisite to make him sensible of every beauty and every blemish, in any composition or discourse.

It is acknowledged to be the perfection of every sense or faculty, to perceive with exactness its most minute objects, and allow nothing to escape its notice and observation. The smaller the objects are, which become sensible to the eye, the finer is that organ, and the more elaborate its make and composition. A good palate is not tried by strong flavours; but by a mixture of small ingredients, where we are still sensible of each part, notwithstanding its minuteness and its confusion with the rest. In like manner, a quick and acute perception of beauty and deformity must be the perfection of our mental taste; nor can a man be satisfied with himself while he suspects, that any excellence or blemish in a discourse has passed him unobserved. In this case, the perfection of the man, and the perfection of the sense or feeling, are found to be united. A very delicate palate, on many occasions, may be a great inconvenience both to a man himself and to his friends: But a delicate taste of wit or beauty must always be a desirable quality; because it is the source of all the finest and most innocent enjoyments, of which human nature is susceptible. In this decision the sentiments of all mankind are agreed. Wherever you can ascertain a delicacy of taste, it is sure to meet with approbation; and the best way of ascertaining it is to appeal to those models and principles, which have been established by the uniform consent and experience of nations and ages.

But though there be naturally a wide difference in point of delicacy between one person and another, nothing tends further to encrease and improve this talent, than *practice* in a particular art, and the frequent survey or contemplation of a particular species of beauty. When objects of any kind are first presented to the eye of imagination, the sentiment, which attends them, is obscure and confused; and the mind is, in a great measure, incapable of pronouncing concerning their merits or defects. The taste cannot perceive the several excellencies of the performance; much less distinguish the particular character of each excellency, and ascertain its quality and degree. If it pronounce the whole in general to be beautiful or deformed, it is the utmost that can be expected; and even this judgment, a person, so unpractised, will be apt to deliver with great hesitation and re-

serve. But allow him to acquire experience in those objects, his feeling becomes more exact and nice: He not only perceives the beauties and defects of each part, but marks the distinguishing species of each quality, and assigns it suitable praise or blame. A clear and distinct sentiment attends him through the whole survey of the objects; and he discerns that very degree and kind of approbation or displeasure, which each part is naturally fitted to produce. The mist dissipates, which seemed formerly to hang over the object: The organ acquires greater perfection in its operations; and can pronounce, without danger of mistake, concerning the merits of every performance. In a word, the same address and dexterity, which practice gives to the execution of any work, is also acquired by the same means, in the judging of it.

So advantageous is practice to the discernment of beauty, that, before we can give judgment on any work of importance, it will even be requisite, that that very individual performance be more than once perused by us, and be surveyed in different lights with attention and deliberation. There is a flutter or hurry of thought which attends the first perusal of any piece, and which confounds the genuine sentiment of beauty. The relation of the parts is not discerned: The true characters of style are little distinguished: The several perfections and defects seem wrapped up in a species of confusion, and present themselves indistinctly to the imagination. Not to mention, that there is a species of beauty, which, as it is florid and superficial, pleases at first; but being found incompatible with a just expression either of reason or passion, soon palls upon the taste, and is then rejected with disdain, at least rated at a much lower value.

It is impossible to continue in the practice of contemplating any order of beauty, without being frequently obliged to form *comparisons* between the several species and degrees of excellence, and estimating their proportion to each other. A man, who has had no opportunity of comparing the different kinds of beauty, is indeed totally unqualified to pronounce an opinion with regard to any object presented to him. By comparison alone we fix the epithets of praise or blame, and learn how to assign the due degree of each. The

coarsest daubing contains a certain lustre of colours and exactness of imitation, which are so far beauties, and would affect the mind of a peasant or Indian with the highest admiration. The most vulgar ballads are not entirely destitute of harmony or nature; and none but a person, familiarized to superior beauties, would pronounce their numbers harsh, or narration uninteresting. A great inferiority of beauty gives pain to a person conversant in the highest excellence of the kind, and is for that reason pronounced a deformity: As the most finished object, with which we are acquainted, is naturally supposed to have reached the pinnacle of perfection, and to be entitled to the highest applause. One accustomed to see, and examine, and weigh the several performances, admired in different ages and nations, can alone rate the merits of a work exhibited to his view, and assign its proper rank among the productions of genius.

But to enable a critic the more fully to execute this undertaking, he must preserve his mind free from all *prejudice*, and allow nothing to enter into his consideration, but the very object which is submitted to his examination. We may observe, that every work of art, in order to produce its due effect on the mind, must be surveyed in a certain point of view, and cannot be fully relished by persons, whose situation, real or imaginary, is not conformable to that which is required by the performance. An orator addresses himself to a particular audience, and must have a regard to their particular genius, interests, opinions, passions, and prejudices; otherwise he hopes in vain to govern their resolutions, and inflame their affections. Should they even have entertained some prepossessions against him, however unreasonable, he must not overlook this disadvantage; but, before he enters upon the subject, must endeavour to conciliate their affection, and acquire their good graces. A critic of a different age or nation, who should peruse this discourse, must have all these circumstances in his eye, and must place himself in the same situation as the audience, in order to form a true judgment of the oration. In like manner, when any work is addressed to the public, though I should have a friendship or enmity with the author, I must depart from this situation; and considering myself as a man in gen-

eral, forget, if possible, my individual being and my peculiar circumstances. A person influenced by prejudice, complies not with this condition; but obstinately maintains his natural position, without placing himself in that point of view, which the performance supposes. If the work be addressed to persons of a different age or nation, he makes no allowance for their peculiar views and prejudices; but, full of the manners of his own age and country, rashly condemns what seemed admirable in the eyes of those for whom alone the discourse was calculated. If the work be executed for the public, he never sufficiently enlarges his comprehension, or forgets his interest as a friend or enemy, as a rival or commentator. By this means, his sentiments are perverted; nor have the same beauties and blemishes the same influence upon him, as if he had imposed a proper violence on his imagination, and had forgotten himself for a moment. So far his taste evidently departs from the true standard; and of consequence loses all credit and authority.

It is well known, that in all questions, submitted to the understanding, prejudice is destructive of sound judgment, and perverts all operations of the intellectual faculties: It is no less contrary to good taste; nor has it less influence to corrupt our sentiment of beauty. It belongs to *good sense* to check its influence in both cases; and in this respect, as well as in many others, reason, if not an essential part of taste, is at least requisite to the operations of this latter faculty. In all the nobler productions of genius, there is a mutual relation and correspondence of parts; nor can either the beauties or blemishes be perceived by him, whose thought is not capacious enough to comprehend all those parts, and compare them with each other, in order to perceive the consistence and uniformity of the whole. Every work of art has also a certain end or purpose, for which it is calculated; and is to be deemed more or less perfect, or it is more or less fitted to attain this end. The object of eloquence is to persuade, of history to instruct, of poetry to please by means of the passions and the imagination. These ends we must carry constantly in our view, when we peruse any performance; and we must be able to judge how far the means employed are adapted to their respective purposes. Besides, every kind of

composition, even the most poetical, is nothing but a chain of propositions and reasonings; not always, indeed, the justest and most exact, but still plausible and specious, however disguised by the colouring of the imagination. The persons introduced in tragedy and epic poetry, must be represented as reasoning, and thinking, and concluding, and acting, suitably to their character and circumstances; and without judgment, as well as taste and invention, a poet can never hope to succeed in so delicate an undertaking. Not to mention, that the same excellence of faculties which contributes to the improvement of reason, the same clearness of conception, the same exactness of distinction, the same vivacity of apprehension, are essential to the operations of true taste, and are its infallible concomitants. It seldom, or never happens, that a man of sense, who has experience in any art, cannot judge of its beauty; and it is no less rare to meet with a man who has a just taste without a sound understanding.

Thus, though the principles of taste be universal, and nearly, if not entirely the same in all men; yet few are qualified to give judgment on any work of art, or establish their own sentiment as the standard of beauty. The organs of internal sensation are seldom so perfect as to allow the general principles their full play, and produce a feeling correspondent to those principles. They either labour under some defect, or are vitiated by some disorder; and by that means, excite a sentiment, which may be pronounced erroneous. When the critic has no delicacy, he judges without any distinction, and is only affected by the grosser and more palpable qualities of the object: The finer touches pass unnoticed and disregarded. Where he is not aided by practice, his verdict is attended with confusion and hesitation. Where no comparison has been employed, the most frivolous beauties, such as rather merit the name of defects, are the object of his admiration. Where he lies under the influence of prejudice, all his natural sentiments are perverted. Where good sense is wanting, he is not qualified to discern the beauties of design and reasoning, which are the highest and most excellent. Under some or other of these imperfections, the generality of men labour; and hence a true judge in the finer

arts is observed, even during the most polished ages, to be so rare a character: Strong sense, united to delicate sentiment, improved by practice, perfected by comparison, and cleared of all prejudice, can alone entitle critics to this valuable character; and the joint verdict of such, wherever they are to be found, is the true standard of taste and beauty.

But where are such critics to be found? By what marks are they to be known? How distinguish them from pretenders? These questions are embarrassing; and seem to throw us back into the same uncertainty, from which, during the course of this essay, we have endeavoured to extricate ourselves.

But if we consider the matter aright, these are questions of fact, not of sentiment. Whether any particular person be endowed with good sense and a delicate imagination, free from prejudice, may often be the subject of dispute, and be liable to great discussion and enquiry: But that such a character is valuable and estimable will be agreed in by all mankind. Where these doubts occur, men can do no more than in other disputable questions, which are submitted to the understanding: They must produce the best arguments, that their invention suggests to them; they must acknowledge a true and decisive standard to exist somewhere, to wit, real existence and matter of fact; and they must have indulgence to such as differ from them in their appeals to this standard. It is sufficient for our present purpose, if we have proved, that the taste of all individuals is not upon an equal footing, and that some men in general, however difficult to be particularly pitched upon, will be acknowledged by universal sentiment to have a preference above others.

But in reality the difficulty of finding, even in particulars, the standard of taste, is not so great as it is represented. Though in speculation, we may readily avow a certain criterion in science and deny it in sentiment, the matter is found in practice to be much more hard to ascertain in the former case than in the latter. Theories of abstract philosophy, systems of profound theology, have prevailed during one age: In a successive period, these have been universally exploded: Their absurdity has been detected: Other theories and systems have supplied their place, which again gave

place to their successors: And nothing has been experienced more liable to the revolutions of chance and fashion than these pretended decisions of science. The case is not the same with the beauties of eloquence and poetry. Just expressions of passion and nature are sure, after a little time, to gain public applause, which they maintain for ever. ARISTOTLE, and PLATO, and EPICURUS, and DESCARTES, may successively yield to each other: But TERENCE and VIRGIL maintain an universal, undisputed empire over the minds of men. The abstract philosophy of CICERO has lost its credit: The vehemence of his oratory is still the object of our admiration.

Though men of delicate taste be rare, they are easily to be distinguished in society, by the soundness of their understanding and the superiority of their faculties above the rest of mankind. The ascendant, which they acquire, gives a prevalence to that lively approbation, with which they receive any productions of genius, and renders it generally predominant. Many men, when left to themselves, have but a faint and dubious perception of beauty, who yet are capable of relishing any fine stroke, which is pointed out to them. Every convert to the admiration of the real poet or orator is the cause of some new conversion. And though prejudices may prevail for a time, they never unite in celebrating any rival to the true genius, but yield at last to the force of nature and just sentiment. Thus, though a civilized nation may easily be mistaken in the choice of their admired philosopher, they never have been found long to err, in their affection for a favourite epic or tragic author.

But notwithstanding all our endeavours to fix a standard of taste, and reconcile the discordant apprehensions of men, there still remain two sources of variation, which are not sufficient indeed to confound all the boundaries of beauty and deformity, but will often serve to produce a difference in the degrees of our approbation or blame. The one is the different humours of particular men; the other, the particular manners and opinions of our age and country. The general principles of taste are uniform in human nature: Where men vary in their judgments, some defect or perversion in the faculties may commonly be remarked; proceeding either from prejudice,

from want of practice, or want of delicacy; and there is just reason for approving one taste, and condemning another. But where there is such a diversity in the internal frame or external situation as is entirely blameless on both sides, and leaves no room to give one the preference above the other; in that case a certain degree of diversity in judgment is unavoidable, and we seek in vain for a standard, by which we can reconcile the contrary sentiments.

A young man, whose passions are warm, will be more sensibly touched with amorous and tender images, than a man more advanced in years, who takes pleasure in wise, philosophical reflections concerning the conduct of life and moderation of the passions. At twenty, OVID may be the favourite author; HORACE at forty; and perhaps TACITUS at fifty. Vainly would we, in such cases, endeavour to enter into the sentiments of others, and divest ourselves of those propensities, which are natural to us. We choose our favourite author as we do our friend, from a conformity of humour and disposition. Mirth or passion, sentiment or reflection; whichever of these most predominates in our temper, it gives us a peculiar sympathy with the writer who resembles us.

One person is more pleased with the sublime; another with the tender; a third with raillery. One has a strong sensibility to blemishes, and is extremely studious of correctness: Another has a more lively feeling of beauties, and pardons twenty absurdities and defects for one elevated or pathetic stroke. The ear of this man is entirely turned towards conciseness and energy; that man is delighted with a copious, rich, and harmonious expression. Simplicity is affected by one; ornament by another. Comedy, tragedy, satire, odes, have each its partizans, who prefer that particular species of writing to all others. It is plainly an error in a critic, to confine his approbation to one species or style of writing, and condemn all the rest. But it is almost impossible not to feel a predilection for that which suits our particular turn and disposition. Such preferences are innocent and unavoidable, and can never reasonably be the object of dispute, because there is no standard, by which they can be decided.

For a like reason, we are more pleased, in the course of our reading, with pictures and charac-

ters, that resemble objects which are found in our own age or country, than with those which describe a different set of customs. It is not without some effort, that we reconcile ourselves to the simplicity of ancient manners, and behold princesses carrying water from the spring, and kings and heroes dressing their own victuals. We may allow in general, that the representation of such manners is no fault in the author, nor deformity in the piece; but we are not so sensibly touched with them. For this reason, comedy is not easily transferred from one age or nation to another. A FRENCHMAN or ENGLISHMAN is not pleased with the ANDRIA of TERENCE, or CLITIA of MACHIAVEL; where the fine lady, upon whom all the play turns, never once appears to the spectators, but is always kept behind the scenes, suitably to the reserved humour of the ancient GREEKS and modern ITALIANS. A man of learning and reflection can make allowance for these peculiarities of manners; but a common audience can never divest themselves so far of their usual ideas and sentiments, as to relish pictures which no wise resemble them.

But here there occurs a reflection, which may, perhaps, be useful in examining the celebrated controversy concerning ancient and modern learning; where we often find the one side excusing any seeming absurdity in the ancients from the manners of the age, and the other refusing to admit this excuse, or at least, admitting it only as an apology for the author, not for the performance. In my opinion, the proper boundaries in this subject have seldom been fixed between the contending parties. Where any innocent peculiarities of manners are represented, such as those above mentioned, they ought certainly to be admitted; and a man, who is shocked with them, gives an evident proof of false delicacy and refinement. The poet's *monument more durable than brass*, must fall to the ground like common brick or clay, were men to make no allowance for the continual revolutions of manners and customs, and would admit of nothing but what was suitable to the prevailing fashion. Must we throw aside the pictures of our ancestors, because of their ruffs and fardingales? But where the ideas of morality and decency alter from one age to another, and where vicious manners are described,

without being marked with the proper characters of blame and disapprobation; this must be allowed to disfigure the poem, and to be a real deformity. I cannot, nor is it proper I should, enter into such sentiments; and however I may excuse the poet, on account of the manners of his age, I never can relish the composition. The want of humanity and of decency, so conspicuous in the characters drawn by several of the ancient poets, even sometimes by HOMER and the GREEK tragedians, diminishes considerably the merit of their noble performances, and gives modern authors an advantage over them. We are not interested in the fortunes and sentiments of such rough heroes: We are displeased to find the limits of vice and virtue so much confounded: And whatever indulgence we may give to the writer on account of his prejudices, we cannot prevail on ourselves to enter into his sentiments, or bear an affection to characters, which we plainly discover to be blameable.

The case is not the same with moral principles, as with speculative opinions of any kind. These are in continual flux and revolution. The son embraces a different system from the father. Nay, there scarcely is any man, who can boast of great constancy and uniformity in this particular. Whatever speculative errors may be found in the polite writings of any age or country, they detract but little from the value of those compositions. There needs but a certain turn of thought or imagination to make us enter into all the opinions, which then prevailed, and relish the sentiments or conclusions derived from them. But a very violent effort is requisite to change our judgment of manners, and excite sentiments of approbation or blame, love or hatred, different from those to which the mind from long custom has been familiarized. And where a man is confident of the rectitude of that moral standard, by which he judges, he is justly jealous of it, and will not pervert the sentiments of his heart for a moment, in complaisance to any writer whatsoever.

Of all speculative errors, those, which regard religion, are the most excusable in compositions of genius; nor is it ever permitted to judge of the civility or wisdom of any people, or even of single persons, by the grossness or refinement of

their theological principles. The same good sense, that directs men in the ordinary occurrences of life, is not hearkened to in religious matters, which are supposed to be placed altogether above the cognizance of human reason. On this account, all the absurdities of the pagan system of theology must be overlooked by every critic, who would pretend to form a just notion of ancient poetry; and our posterity, in their turn, must have the same indulgence to their forefathers. No religious principles can ever be imputed as a fault to any poet, while they remain merely principles, and take not such strong possession of his heart, as to lay him under the imputation of *bigotry* or *superstition*. Where that happens, they confound the sentiments of morality, and alter the natural boundaries of vice and virtue. They are therefore eternal blemishes, according to the principle abovementioned; nor are the prejudices and false opinions of the age sufficient to justify them.

It is essential to the ROMAN catholic religion to inspire a violent hatred of every other worship, and to represent all pagans, mahometans, and heretics as the objects of divine wrath and vengeance. Such sentiments, though they are in reality very blameable, are considered as virtues by the zealots of that communion, and are represented in their tragedies and epic poems as a kind of divine heroism. This bigotry has disfigured two very fine tragedies of the FRENCH theatre, POLIEUCTE and ATHALIA; where an intemperate zeal for particular modes of worship is set off

with all the pomp imaginable, and forms the predominant character of the heroes. "What is this," says the sublime JOAD to JOSABET, finding her in discourse with MATHAN, the priest of BAAL, "Does the daughter of DAVID speak to this traitor? Are you not afraid, lest the earth should open and pour forth flames to devour you both? Or lest these holy walls should fall and crush you together? What is his purpose? Why comes the enemy of God hither to poison the air, which we breathe, with his horrid presence?" Such sentiments are received with great applause on the theatre of PARIS; but at LONDON the spectators would be full as much pleased to hear ACHILLES tell AGAMEMNON, that he was a dog in his forehead, and a deer in his heart, or JUPITER threaten JUNO with a sound drubbing, if she will not be quiet.

RELIGIOUS principles are also a blemish in any polite composition, when they rise up to superstition, and intrude themselves into every sentiment, however remote from any connection with religion. It is no excuse for the poet, that the customs of his country had burthened life with so many religious ceremonies and observances, that no part of it was exempt from that yoke. It must for ever be ridiculous in PETRARCH to compare his mistress, LAURA, to JESUS CHRIST. Nor is it less ridiculous in that agreeable libertine, BOC-CACE, very seriously to give thanks to GOD ALMIGHTY and the ladies, for their assistance in defending him against his enemies.

Mary Astell

1666–1731

Mary Astell was born in 1666 in Newcastle, England. Her upper-middle-class family possessed a comfortable income from her father's position as an official in the local coal industry. The entire family, including Mary, was staunchly Royalist and Anglican. Mary's uncle Ralph Astell, an Anglican clergyman suspended from his post for alcoholism, tutored her brother Peter, and Mary, a precocious student, was included in these lessons. Although she did not learn Latin and Greek, Mary read some classics in translation and also studied history, philosophy, mathematics, theology, and probably French.

When Mary was thirteen, her family situation suddenly changed. Her uncle and father died within a year of each other, and the family finances were found to be unsound. What little money remained was dedicated to furthering Peter's education, while Mary lived with her mother and aunt in reduced circumstances. No dowry could be provided for Mary, and she never married. Rhetoric scholar Christine Mason Sutherland has suggested that Mary, pious and learned, might have made a very successful career for herself in the Anglican Church—if only she had been male.¹ Without this recourse, Astell went to London in 1688 to try her fortunes as a writer and educator after her mother and aunt had also died.

Astell had expected help from relatives in London, but they soon abandoned her. Desperate, she appealed to the notably charitable archbishop of Canterbury, William Sancroft, and he introduced her to his well-educated and devout aristocratic female friends and to a London bookseller, Rich Wilkin, who would promote her work. She settled in Chelsea, then a suburb of London and home to several girls' schools. From the archbishop's circle, Astell gained a patron, Lady Elizabeth Hastings, and also became acquainted with other female intellectual leaders such as Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and Lady Catherine Jones. Astell's new friends respected her learning and intelligence and encouraged her to publish her views.

Astell's first book was *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies for the Advancement of Their True and Greatest Interest* (1694), published anonymously but with the author's gender identified ("A Lover of her Sex"). What Astell proposed was the foundation of a women's college or, as she called it, a "Protestant Nunnery," where young women could receive a serious secular education as well as instruction in Anglican Christianity. The institution would be governed by the inmates collectively, without a supervisory hierarchy either male or female. Women might leave this institution to marry and thus benefit their families with their piety and learning, or they might stay on, helping to educate the younger women and finding charitable activities to perform for the larger community. Astell now knew firsthand how desperate the financial situation of an unemployable young woman could be without male supporters and protectors, no matter what her social class, and how empty the

¹Christine Mason Sutherland, "Mary Astell: Reclaiming Rhetorica in the Seventeenth Century," in *Reclaiming Rhetorica*, ed. Andrea A. Lunsford (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1995), p. 95.

lives of aristocratic women could be without intellectual pursuits to engage them, even if they faced no financial worries. Better education for women could enable them all to use their time to serve God whatever their circumstances and to support themselves through teaching if that became necessary.

Astell's book was an immediate success and had four subsequent printings by 1701. Clearly it met a felt need for new ideas concerning the education of women, since the convents where some had been educated had been disbanded long ago by Henry VIII, and the custom of providing private tutors at least for women of the upper classes had fallen out of favor with the accession of the Stuarts. Astell was not the first seventeenth-century woman to advocate improved education for women; Bathsua Makin had published *An Essay to Revive the Antient Education of Gentlewomen* in 1673, but her proposal was not as extensive as Astell's and claimed only to better fit women for marriage. Astell's *Proposal* established her reputation for wisdom and eloquence well beyond her immediate circle (it is said that Samuel Richardson admired it tremendously and used its ideas in conceiving his heroine Clarissa), and it even attracted an aristocratic sponsor, probably Princess Anne, who contemplated donating £10,000 to establish the school Astell proposed. This donor was eventually discouraged by Gilbert Burnet, bishop of Salisbury, who thought that the nunnery idea sounded a bit too "popish." Even though Protestant women's institutions had been tried before, most notably at Little Giddings in the 1630s, they were always suspected of having Roman Catholic leanings, which were dangerous in a century of violent religious opinions (James II had been deposed in 1688 after he converted to Roman Catholicism).

To argue further for her proposal, in 1697 Astell published *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies, Part II, Wherein a Method Is Offer'd for the Improvement of Their Minds* (excerpted here), which detailed the curriculum for the college. Although Astell recommended that women study virtually every subject that men studied except for classical languages, she did not advocate extensive reading. She wanted her program to be within the reach of every woman—she frequently deprecated any compliments that identified her as "exceptional"—and the heart of her educational scheme was to be a method of thinking that could be applied in any area. Having developed one's rational powers, one could then read as extensively (or not) as one wished. Among the readings in French, Astell recommended René Descartes, from whom she derived her intellectual method (see below), and educational reformer and salon intellectual Madeleine de Scudéry (see p. 761). This book, too, attracted wide notice, though not a donor, even though it was dedicated to Princess Anne.

Between 1694 and 1709 Astell published nine books. Along with the two devoted to women's education, she published five on religious issues, one on politics, and her best-known work after the two volumes of *Serious Proposal*—*Some Reflections upon Marriage* (1700), which indicted abusive husbands. She became a well-known figure in the intellectual controversies of the day. In addition to defending the Anglican Church against dissenters, Astell was a political conservative who attacked philosopher John Locke's arguments that reason endows individuals with the right to overthrow tyrants (a hot issue in a century in which two English kings had been forcibly removed from the throne, and one executed). She found these argu-

ments too individualistic, devoid of the community feeling that should bind Christians together. Her proof that such thinkers would really not keep their fellow beings' best interests at heart was that they always refused, however illogically, to extend their arguments to domestic tyranny and to address the rights of women. Astell felt that the best protection for women lay in a hierarchical social order in which all relationships were infused with a spirit of Christian love.

These books won much praise for Astell, as well as a pension from Anne when she became queen. But they also made her the butt of satire from misogynists of the day, both on the stage and in print; for example, Jonathan Swift lampooned the *Serious Proposal* in *The Tatler* in 1709, supposedly depicting Astell in a ridiculous bluestocking figure, "Madonella."² Eventually, too, after the Hanover line took the throne upon Anne's death, Astell was in disfavor for her continued support of the Stuarts. These pressures may have contributed to her decision to publish no new works after 1709, although she did continue to bring out revised editions of earlier works.

Astell also had a new and consuming interest to draw her away from writing: In 1709 she became the headmistress of a girls' charity school in Chelsea. The charity school movement was spreading rapidly in England at this time. Supported largely by private benefactions, these schools gave poor children rudimentary literacy and numeracy, inculcated high-church Anglicanism and Tory political views, and trained children for jobs as skilled laborers or house servants. Women were especially active in the charity school movement, and Astell's school was no exception. It was supported entirely by donations from her aristocratic female friends; in fact, Astell specified in the charter of the school that it should always be directed by women. Although it had considerably more modest goals than her proposed women's college, this school educated several hundred girls before Astell retired from active teaching in 1724, and it continued in existence until 1862.

In her later years, Astell's health began to fail and she accepted the offer of a home with her friend Lady Catherine Jones. She continued to oversee the curriculum at the Chelsea school and to revise her publications. She died of breast cancer in 1731.

Although neglected in the decades immediately following her death, Astell's work has recently attracted scholarly attention, and has won for her the sobriquet of "first English feminist."³ The title is somewhat misleading given that Astell, a political conservative, never questioned patriarchal hierarchies, whether in the Church, the state, or the family. She supported the aristocracy, from whom she benefited, and this is one of several ways in which her career parallels that of Christine de Pizan (see p. 540). Astell, however, trenchantly criticized the behavior of her contemporaries when it fell short of her Christian ideal. She also insisted that men and women were intellectually equal and were responsible only to God for how they conducted their lives. Women must, then, be as well educated as men so that they

²D. N. DeLuna, "Mary Astell: England's First Feminist Literary Critic," *Women's Studies* 222 (1993): p. 233.

³See, for example, Bridget Hill, ed., *The First English Feminist: Reflections on Marriage and Other Writings by Mary Astell* (New York: St. Martin's, 1986).

can discharge this responsibility to the fullest, albeit in more private venues than those open to men. Astell opposed women's preaching or speaking at the bar or political rostrum, but she advocated a wide sphere of action for women in education and community charitable work. She clearly presented a vision of women as a group who suffered because of their gender and who needed to band together to help each other.

Sutherland has argued that Astell was influenced by several powerful intellectual currents of her day. Perhaps the earliest influence was the so-called Cambridge Platonism, which her uncle Ralph Astell had imbibed as a student and passed on to her. This view of Christianity emphasized that humans had inborn conceptions of the true and the good that naturally attracted them to these qualities when they were encountered in the world. Additionally, innate human reason could identify and explore religious truths. But there was a point of Divine mystery past which human powers could not go. Ultimately the essential truths of religion had to be accepted on faith. Piety, therefore, could not securely survive if nourished by the individual's mental powers alone. It needed the support of religious institutions and rituals, and might wither amid the individualistic practices of the more austere Protestant sects. This may be why Astell always firmly clung to high Anglicanism.

Especially helpful to Astell were the arguments of Descartes that extensive classical learning, from which women had been largely excluded, was not necessary to a vibrant intellectual life: All people were innately capable of reason, the key mental activity (a view which had arisen earlier in the thinking of Ramus; see p. 674). Astell probably knew François Poulain de la Barre's *De l'égalité des deux sexes* (1673; English edition, *The Woman as Good as the Man*, 1677), which applied Descartes's ideas to women, but Astell added a Christian justification for women's equality and exhorted them directly to better themselves. She was also influenced by *L'Art de penser* (1662; English edition, *The Art of Thinking*, 1674), the logic text of the Port Royalists Antoine Arnauld and Pierre Nicole, and *De l'art de parler* (1675; English edition, *The Art of Speaking*, 1676), the rhetoric text of Bernard Lamy, an Oratorian monk. Themselves influenced by Ramus and Descartes, these thinkers assigned invention to the province of logic and focused rhetoric on style. Astell cites both these works in *A Serious Proposal, Part II*. She agrees with Lamy that rhetorical ability is mainly a natural endowment and that one should strive for clarity to accommodate one's audience, while also arousing their interest with a few unusual expressions. Also showing Lamy's influence is Astell's view that one needs little stylistic ornament because people are naturally attracted to truth if they can see it clearly. But Astell goes much further than Lamy in insisting that Christian piety is an aid to rhetoric because it induces the proper charitable attitude toward one's audience and also the proper virtuous behavior in the rhetor's life to inspire confidence. Here Astell seems closer to Augustine, one of Lamy's frequently cited sources, than to Lamy himself.

The theory of rhetoric that Astell developed initially shows the influence of sources that tend to restrict rhetoric's domain and to view it negatively. In *A Serious Proposal, Part II*, she devotes less than half as much space to rhetoric as she does to

logic. She asserts that nature is the best teacher of eloquence. Rules help only a little, and only if they have been derived from nature. Although this view might seem to downplay the importance of rhetoric, it also supports the idea that women can be rhetors if, after all, the primary requirements for eloquence are innate rather than acquired via schooling, to which women may not have access.

In Astell's scheme, invention or the "Method of Thinking" belongs to logic, not rhetoric, a diminution that can be traced back through the Port Royalists to Ramus. Astell does not discuss memory under the domain of rhetoric either. One reason might be that her sources, following Ramus, place memory, too, under logic: If one's content is logical, it will be easy to remember. Or possibly Astell is imagining that women will use rhetoric in situations where memory is not needed, either in written texts or in face-to-face conversations that do not offer the opportunity for long speeches that would need to be memorized.

Astell does give some attention to arrangement (though she does not use that term), even though Ramist rhetoricians would relegate this, too, to logic. She briefly mentions delivery, calling it "Pronunciation" and claiming that women have an advantage over men here, in that their voices are naturally more pleasing and better suited to the mostly private occasions on which Astell imagines women will speak.

Most of Astell's discussion of rhetoric is devoted to style, but this is not for her a matter of cataloging figures and tropes. First, women's language must be correct, but Astell believes that one can pick up the grammar and spelling of one's native language mostly from reading good books. Above all, one's style should be clear. Obscurity, verbosity, and pretentiousness are to be avoided; unusual words are to be used only when they aid clarity and prevent the aforementioned faults. For Astell, women's rhetoric should focus on the art of conversation, as both Sutherland and Renaissance scholar Jane Donawerth have argued. This is women's proper rhetorical sphere, different from but in no way inferior to the public sphere in which men use oratory. Astell also advances the position, unusual for her day, that a woman should write as she speaks—print does not call for an inflated style, and again, clarity should be the primary consideration. Astell argues, however, that it is appropriate to attract the audience's attention with an unusually striking expression here and there, to arouse admiration for the way the woman rhetor uses language.

The guiding principle for the woman rhetor should be to accommodate her audience. Astell derives this principle from Christianity, and she argues that Christian piety actually conduces to eloquence by encouraging a proper attitude toward audiences. An idea unique to Astell is that Christianity helps extirpate vices that lead to bad style: For example, vanity or the desire to deceive can lead to an obscure or verbose style that would confuse the audience. Moreover, Christianity adjures love and charity toward one's readers or interlocutors. The rhetor should not seek to humiliate or triumph over her audience. Rather her goal should be to get them to see the truth, and Astell notes that progress to truth is often impeded for people who do not want to admit that they were wrong. Don't wring such an admission from them, she advises, or make them feel that they are submitting by agreeing with you, and you will move them to truth more quickly. Astell goes well beyond her sources in arguing

for a nondisputatious model of communication; Sutherland suggests that this model evokes the twentieth-century ethic of caring that bespeaks women's values, as feminists have argued.⁴

Ethos is a crucial consideration of this approach. Audiences must believe that the speaker has their best interests at heart. Astell suggests that the woman rhetor can best gain this favorable *ethos* by leading a life that demonstrates her sincere commitment to Christianity, advice which Astell certainly tried to follow herself. Her biographer Ruth Perry testifies that Astell's writings are filled with a genuine love of women and concern for their welfare, both in personal terms, since she was a devoted friend, and in terms of the whole sex. She helped give European women a consciousness of themselves as a distinct group, defined by gender, that needed to unite to improve their situation. In this sense, Mary Astell truly was one of the first feminists.

Selected Bibliography

Modern editions of *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies, Parts I and II* have appeared, one from the Source Book Press (1970), and another edited by Patricia Springborg (1997; our excerpt is taken from this edition). Springborg has also edited a collection of other work, *Astell: Political Writings* (1996). See also Bridget Hill's, *The First English Feminist: Reflections on Marriage and Other Writings by Mary Astell* (1986), a good collection that does not include *A Serious Proposal*.

The standard biography is Ruth Perry, *The Celebrated Mary Astell* (1986). Perry summarizes Astell's thinking in all her areas of interest. Margaret L. King relates her to earlier figures such as Christine de Pizan in *Women of the Renaissance* (1991). Hilda L. Smith places her in the history of feminism in *Reason's Disciples: Seventeenth-Century English Feminists* (1982). A good short introduction that focuses on Astell's contributions to rhetoric is Christine Mason Sutherland's "Mary Astell: Reclaiming Rhetorica in the Seventeenth Century" (in *Reclaiming Rhetorica*, ed. Andrea A. Lunsford, 1995). Sutherland also helpfully discusses the difficulties inherent in reading Astell through a twentieth-century feminist lens in "Women in the History of Rhetoric: The Past and the Future" (in *The Changing Tradition: Women in the History of Rhetoric*, ed. Christine Mason Sutherland and Rebecca Sutcliffe, 1999).

Jane Donawerth discusses Astell's commitment to a conversational model of rhetoric and helpfully relates her to other women rhetoricians of the period, in "Conversation and the Boundaries of Public Discourse in Rhetorical Theory by Renaissance Women" (*Rhetorica* 16.2 [spring 1998]: 181–99). D. N. DeLuna locates Astell in her contemporary context of misogynist satire and the ladies' conduct books that combated it in "Mary Astell: England's First Feminist Literary Critic" (*Women's Studies* 22.2 (1993): 231–42). Christine Mason Sutherland gives more information on sources of Astell's thought in "Outside the Rhetorical Tradition: Mary Astell's Advice to Women in Seventeenth-Century England" (*Rhetorica* 9.2 [spring 1991]: 147–63). For more on Astell's political and social thought, see Ruth Perry, "Mary Astell and the Feminist Critique of Possessive Individualism" (*Eighteenth-Century Studies* 23.4 [1990]: 444–57).

⁴Sutherland, in *Reclaiming Rhetorica*, pp. 113–15.

From *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies, Part II*

The Introduction Containing a farther Perswasive to the Ladies To endeavour the Improvement of their Minds

Did the Author of the former Essay towards th' Improvement of the Ladies consult her own Reputation only, she wou'd not hazard it once more, by treating on so nice a Subject in a Curious and Censorious Age, but content herself with the favourable reception which the good natur'd part of the World were pleased to afford to her first Essay.¹ It is not unusual she knows for Writers to mind no more than their own Credit, to be pleas'd if they can make a handsom flourish, get a Name amongst the Authors, come off with but a little Censure and some Commendations. Or if there are a few generous Souls who are got above the Hope or Fear of vulgar breath, who don't much regard that Applause which is dispenc'd more commonly by Fancy or Passion than by Judgment; they rest satisfied however in a good Intention, and comfort themselves that they've endeavour'd the Reformation of the Age, let those look to't who will not follow their Advices. But give her leave to profess, that as she is very indifferent what the Critics say, if the Ladies receive any Advantage by her attempts to serve them, so it will give her the greatest uneasiness if having prov'd that they are capable of the best things, she can't perswade to a pursuit of them. It were more to her satisfaction to find her Project condemn'd as foolish and impertinent, than to find it receiv'd with some Approbation, and yet no body endeavouring to put it in Practice. Since the former wou'd only reproach her own Understanding, but the latter is a shame to Mankind, as being a plain sign that 'tho they discern and commend what is Good, they have not the Vertue and Courage to Act accordingly.

And can you Ladies deny her so cheap a Reward for all the Good will she bears you, as the

Pleasure of seeing you Wise and Happy? Can you envy her the Joy of assisting you at *Your* Triumphs? for if ever she contend for Laurels it shall be only to lay them at the Ladies feet. Why won't you begin to think, and no longer dream away your Time in a wretched incogitancy?² Why does not a generous Emulation fire your hearts and inspire you with Noble and Becoming Resentments? The Men of Equity are so just as to confess the errors which the Proud and Inconsiderate had imbib'd to your prejudice, and that if you allow them the preference in Ingenuity, it is not because you *must* but because you *will*. Can you be in Love with servitude and folly? Can you dote on a mean, ignorant and ignoble Life? An Ingenious Woman is no Prodigy to be star'd on, for you have it in your power to inform the World, that you can every one of you be so, if you please your selves. It is not enough to wish and to would it, or t'afford a faint Encomium upon what you pretend is beyond your Power; Imitation is the heartiest Praise you can give, and is a Debt which Justice requires to be paid to every worthy Action. What Sentiments were fit to be rais'd in you to day ought to remain to morrow, and the best Commendation you can bestow on a Book is immediately to put it in Practice; otherwise you become self-condemn'd, your Judgment reproaches your Actions, and you live a contradiction to your selves. If you *approve*, Why don't you *follow*? And if you *Wish*, Why shou'd you not *Endeavour*? especially since that wou'd reduce your Wishes to Act, and make you of Well-wishers to Vertue and Good sense, become glorious Examples of them.

And pray what is't that hinders you? The singularity of the Matter? Are you afraid of being out of the ordinary way and therefore admir'd and gaz'd at? Admiration does not use to be uneasy to our Sex; a great many Vanities might be spar'd if we consulted only our own conveniency and not other peoples Eyes and Sentiments: And

Edited by Patricia Springborg.

¹Clearly the reception of the first part of *A Serious Proposal* was not entirely good natured. [P.S.]

²Want of thought or reflection (*OED*). [P.S.]

why shou'd that which usually recommends a trifling Dress, deter us from a real Ornament? Is't not as fine to be first in this as well as any other Fashion? Singularity is indeed to be avoided except in matters of importance, in such a case Why shou'd not we assert our Liberty, and not suffer every Trifler to impose a Yoke of Impertinent Customs on us? She who forsakes the Path to which Reason directs is much to blame, but she shall never do any thing Praise-worthy and excellent who is not got above unjust Censures, and too steady and well resolv'd to be sham'd from her Duty by the empty Laughter of such as have nothing but airy Noise and Confidence to recommend them. Firmness and strength of Mind will carry us thro all these little persecutions, which may create us some uneasiness for a while, but will afterwards end in our Glory and Triumph.

Is it the difficulty of attaining the Bravery of the Mind, the Labour and Cost that keeps you from making a purchase of it? Certainly they who spare neither Money nor Pains t'obtain a gay outside and make a splendid appearance, who can get over so many difficulties, rack their brains, lay out their time and thoughts in contriving, stretch their Relations Purses in procuring, nay and rob the very Poor, to whom the Overplus of a full Estate, after the owners Necessaries and decent Conveniences according to her Quality are supplied, is certainly due, they who can surmount so many difficulties, cannot have the face to pretend any here. Labour is sweet when there's hope of success, and the thing labour'd after is Beautiful and Desireable: And if Wisdom be not so I know not what is; if it is not worth while to procure such a temper of mind as will make us happy in all Conditions, there's nothing worth our Thoughts and Care, 'tis best to fold our hands with *Solomon's* Sluggard and sleep away the remainder of a useless wretched Life.³ And that success will not be wanting to our Endeavours if we heartily use them, was design'd to be evinc'd in the former Essay, and I hope I have

³Probably a reference to Solomon's exhortations against idleness in Proverbs 6: 9; "How long wilt thou sleepe, O sluggard?" [P.S.]

not lost my Point, but that the Theory is sufficiently establish'd; and were there but a General Attempt, the Practice wou'd be so visible that I suppose there wou'd remain no more place to dispute it. But this is your Province Ladies: For tho I desire your improvement never so passionately, tho I shou'd have prov'd it feasible with the clearest Demonstration, and most proper for you to set about; yet if you *will* believe it impossible, and upon that or any other prejudice forbear t'attempt it, I'me like to go without my Wishes; my Arguments what ever they may be in themselves, are weak and impertinent to you, because you make them useless and defeat them of the End they aim at. But I hope better things of you; I dare say you understand your own interest too well to neglect it so grossly and have a greater share of sense, whatever some Men affirm, than to be content to be kept any longer under their Tyranny in Ignorance and Folly, since it is in your Power to regain your Freedom, if you please but t'endeavour it. I'me unwilling to believe there are any among you who are obstinately bent against what is praise-worthy in themselves, and Envy or Detract from it in others; who won't allow any of their Sex a capacity to write Sense, because they want it, or exert their Spleen where they ought to shew their Kindness or Generous Emulation; who sicken at their Neighbours Vertues, or think anothers Praises a lessening of their Character; or meanly satisfie ill-nature by a dull Malicious Jest at what deserves to be approv'd and imitated. No Ladies, Your Souls are certainly of a better Make and Nobler temper, your Industry is never exerted to pull down others but to rise above them, the only Resentment that arises at your Neighbours Commendations is a harmless blush for your own Idleness in letting them so far outstrip you, and a generous Resolution to repair your former neglects by future diligence; One need not fear offending you by commending an other Lady in your Presence, or that it shou'd be thought an affront or defect in good breeding to give them their lawful Eulogies: You have too just a Sentiment of your own Merit to envy or detract from others, for no Body's addicted to these little Vices but they who are diffident of their own

worth; You know very well 'tis infinitely better to *be* good than to *seem* so,⁴ and that true Vertue has Beauty enough in her self t'attract our hearts and engage us in her service, tho she were neglected and despis'd by all the World. 'Tis this therefore you endeavour after, 'tis the approbation of GOD and your own Consciences you mainly esteem, which you find most ascertain'd by an humble Charity, and that you never merit Praise so much, because you never make so great a progress in what is truly praise-worthy, as when your own defects are often in your eyes t'excite you to watch against and amend them, and other peoples Vertues continually represented before you in their brightest lustre, to the end you may aspire to equal or surpass them.

I suppose then that you're fill'd with a laudable Ambition to brighten and enlarge your Souls, that the Beauty of your Bodies is but a secondary care, your Dress grows unconcerning, and your Glass is ne're consulted but in such little intervals of time as hang loose between those hours that are destin'd to nobler Employments, you now begin to throw off your old Prejudices and smile on 'em as antiquated Garbs; false Reasoning won't down with you, and glittering Nonsense tho address'd to your selves in the specious appearance of Respect and Kindness, has lost its *haut goust*;⁵ Wisdom is thought as better recommendation than Wit, and Piety than a *Bon-mien*;⁶ you esteem a Man only as he is an admirer of Vertue, and not barely for that he is yours; Books are now become the finest Ornaments of your Closets and Contemplation the most agreeable Entertainment of your leisure hours; your Friendships are not cemented by Intrigues nor spent in vain Diversions, but in the search of Knowledge, and acquisition of Vertuous Habits, a mutual Love to which was the Origin of 'em; nor are any Friends so acceptable as those who tell you faithfully of your faults and take the properest method

⁴Astell appeals to the Socratic dictum, "Be what you wish to appear." [P.S.]

⁵A 17th-century form of *bon gout*, "high flavour" (*OED*). [P.S.]

⁶"*Mien*," the English poetic form of French "*mine*," expression, aspect of countenance, look, appearance (*OED*), so "good appearance." [P.S.]

to amend 'em. How much better are you entertain'd now your Conversations are pertinent and ingenious, and that Wisdom never fails to make one in your Visits? Solitude is no more insupportable; you've conquered that silly dread of being afraid to be alone, since Innocence is the safest Guard, and no Company can be so desirable as GOD's and his holy Angels conversing with an upright mind; your Devotion is a Rational service, not the repetition of a Set of good words at a certain season; you read and you delight in it, because it informs your Judgments, and furnishes Materials for your thoughts to work on; and you love your Religion and make it your Choice because you understand it; the only Conquest you now design and lay out your care to obtain is over Vice and Prophaness; you study to engage men in the love of true Peity and Goodness, and no farther to be Lovers of your selves than as you are the most amiable and illustrious examples of 'em; you find your Wit has lost nothing of its salt and agreeableness by being employ'd about its proper business, the exposing Folly; your Raillery⁷ is not a whit less pleasant for being more Charitable, and you can render Vice as ridiculous as you please, without exposing those unhappy Persons who're guilty of it; your Humour abates not of its innocent gaity now that it is more upon the Guard, for you know very well that true Joy is a sedate and solid thing, a tranquility of mind, not a boisterous and empty flash: Instead of Creditors your doors are fill'd with indigent Petitioners who don't so often go without your Bounty as the other us'd to do without their just demands; nor are you unjust to some under colour of being Charitable to others, and when you give Liberally, give no more than what is lawfully your own. You disdain the base ungenerous Practice of pretending Kindness where you really mean none; and of making a poor Country Lady less instructed in the formalities of the Town than your selves, pay sufficiently for your seeming Civility and kind Entertainment by becoming the Subject of your mirth and diversion as soon as she is gone; but one may now pretty securely rely on your Sincerity, for

⁷Mockery. [P.S.]

when this lower sort of Treachery is abhorr'd, there can certainly be no place for that more abominable one of betraying and seducing unwary Innocence. I do not question Ladies but that this is the Practice of the greatest number of you, and would be of all the rest were it not for some little discouragements they meet with, which really are not so great as their own modesty and diffidence of themselves represent 'em. They think they've been bred up in Idleness and Impertinence, and study will be irksome to them, who have never employ'd their mind to any good purpose, and now when they wou'd they want the method of doing it; they know not how to look into their Souls, or if they do, they find so many disorders to be rectified, so many wants to be supplied, that frighted with the difficulty of the work they lay aside the thoughts of undertaking it. They have been barbarously us'd, their Education and greatest Concerns neglected, and Guardians were busied in managing their Fortunes and regulating their Mien; who so their Purse was full and their outside plausible⁸ matter'd not much the poverty and narrowness of their minds, have taught them perhaps to repeat their Catechism and a few good Sentences, to read a Chapter and say their Prayers, tho perhaps with as little Understanding as a Parrot, and fancied that this was Charm enough to secure them against the temptations of the present world and to waft them to a better; and so thro want of use and by misapplying their Thoughts to trifles and impertinences, they've perhaps almost lost those excellent Capacities which probably were afforded them by nature for the highest things. For such as these I've a world to Kindness and Compassion, I regret their misfortune as much as they can themselves, and suppose they're willing to repair it and very desirous to inform themselves were't not for the shame of confessing their ignorance. But let me intreat them to consider that there's no Ignorance so shameful, no Folly so absurd as that which refuses Instruction, be it upon what account it may. All good Persons will pity not upbraid⁹ their former unhappiness,

⁸Deserving of applause or approval (obsolete) (*OED*). Astell invariably uses the word in this sense. [P.S.]

⁹Allege as a ground for censure (rare); reproach (*OED*). [P.S.]

as not being their own but other Peoples fault; whereas they themselves are responsible if they continue it, since that's an Evidence that they are silly and despicable, not because they *cou'd* not, but because they *wou'd* not be better Informed. But where is the shame of being taught? for who is there that does not need it? Alas, Human Knowledge is at best defective, and always progressive, so that she who knows the most has only this advantage, that she has made a little more speed than her Neighbours. And what's the Natural Inference from hence? Not to give out, but to double our diligence; perhaps we may outstrip 'em, as the Penitent often does him who needs no Repentance. The worst that can be is the perishing in a glorious attempt, and tho we shou'd happen to prove successful, 'tis yet worth our while to've had such a noble design. But there's no fear of ill success if we are not wanting to our selves, an honest and laborious mind may perform all things. Indeed an affected Ignorance, a humorous delicacy and niceness which will not speculate a notion for fear of spoiling a look, nor think a serious thought lest she shou'd damp the gaiety of her humour; she who is so top full of her outward excellencies, so careful that every look, every motion, every thing about her shou'd appear in Form, as she employs her Thoughts to a very pitiful use, so is she almost past hopes of recovery, at least so long as she continues this humour, and does not grow a little less concern'd for her Body that she may attend her Mind. Our directions are thrown away upon such a temper, 'tis to no purpose to harp to an Ass, or to chant forth our Charms in the Ears of a deaf Adder;¹⁰ but I hope there are none so utterly lost in folly and impertinence: If there are, we can only afford them our Pity for our Advice will do no good.

As for those who are desirous to improve and only want to be assisted and put into the best method of doing it, somewhat was attempted in order to do them that service in the former Essay, in which they may please to remember that hav-

¹⁰Possibly a reference to Psalm 58: 4-5, which exclaims of the wicked that "Their poison is like the poyson of a serpent; they are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her eare: which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely." [P.S.]

ing so mov'd that groundless prejudice against an ingenious Education of the Women, which is founded upon supposition of the impossibility or uselessness of it, and having assign'd the reasons why they are so little improv'd, since they are so capable of improvement, and since tis so necessary that others as well as themselves shou'd endeavour it; which reasons are chiefly Ill-nurture, Custom, loss of time, the want of Retirement, or of knowing how to use it, so that by the disuse of our Faculties we seem to have lost them if we ever had any are sunk into an Animal life wholly taken up with sensible objects; either have no Ideas of the most necessary things or very *false* ones; and run into all those mischiefs which are the natural Consequences of such mismanagements; we then proceeded to propose a Remedy for these Evils, which we affirm'd cou'd hardly be rectified but by erecting a Seminary where Ladies might be duly Educated, and we hope our Proposition was such that all impartial Readers are convinc'd it wou'd answer the Design, that is, tend very much to the real advantage and improvement of the Ladies. In order to which it was in general propos'd to acquaint them with Judicious Authors, give them opportunity of Retirement and Recollection and put them in a way of Ingenious Conversation, whereby they might enlarge their prospect, rectify their false Ideas, form in their Minds adequate conceptions of the End and Dignity of their Natures, not only have the Name and common Principles of Religion floating in their Heads and sometimes running out at their Mouths, but understand the design and meaning of it, and have a just apprehension, a lively sentiment of its Beauties and Excellencies; know wherein the Nature of a true Christian consists; and not only feel Passions, but be able to direct and regulate their Motions; have a true Notion of the Nothingness of Material things and of the reality and substantialness of immaterial, and consequently contemn this present World as it deserves, fixing all their Hopes upon and exerting all their Endeavours to obtain the Glories of the next. But because this was only propos'd in general, and the particular method of effecting it left to the Discretion of those who shou'd Govern and Manage the Seminary, without which we are still of Opinion that the Interest of the Ladies

can't be duly serv'd [yet]¹¹ in the mean time till that can be erected and that nothing in our power may be wanting to do them service, we shall attempt to lay down in this second part some more minute Directions, and such as we hope if attended to may be of use to them. . . .

CHAPTER III

[IV. A Natural Logic]

. . . Now what can be more provoking than the Idea we have of a Designing Person? of one who thinks his own Intellectuals so strong and ours so weak, that he can make us swallow any thing, and lead us where he pleases? such an one seems to have an Intention to reduce us to the vilest Slavery,¹² the Captivation of our Understandings, which we justly reckon to be the highest Insolence. And since every one puts in for a share of Sense, and thinks he has no reason to complain of the distribution of it, whoever supposes that another has an over-weaning Opinion of his own, must needs think that he undervalues his Neighbours Understanding, and will certainly repay him in his own Coin, and deny him those advantages he seems to arrogate.¹³

The most we can say for our selves when the weakness of our Arguments comes to be discover'd, is that we were mistaken thro Rashness or Ignorance, which tho more pardonable than the former, are no recommending Qualities. If we argue falsly and know not that we do so, we shall be more pittied than when we do, but either way disappointed. And if we have added Rash Censures of those who are not of our Mind, Pride or

¹¹"Yet" should be deleted according to Errata list (1697 edn), p. 298. [P.S.]

¹²Astell introduces the rhetoric of slavery, for which *Reflections upon Marriage* (1700) and the 1706 Preface are so famous. [P.S.]

¹³Astell's argument against Locke as an opportunist takes a new twist. Locke, assistant to the Earl of Shaftesbury in the 1670's and '80's, during the period of his commercial involvement in the slave-owning American colonies, had argued strongly against slavery in the second of the *Two Treatises of Government*, bk 2, §149; (Laslett edn, 1988, p. 367). But Astell convicts him of impugning the capacity of human understanding in the *Essay*, in order to enslave people to his opinions. [P.S.]

Positiveness¹⁴ to our Errors as we cannot so handsomely Retreat so neither will so fair a Quarter be allow'd as those who Argue with Meekness, Modesty and Charity may well expect. So that when we have cast up our Account and estimated the Present Advantages that false Arguings bring us, I fear what we have got by a Pretence to Truth, won't be found to countervail the loss we shall sustain by the Discovery that it was no more. Which may induce us (if other Considerations will not) to be wary in receiving any Proposition our selves, and restrain us from being forward to impose our Sentiments on others.

After all, 'tis a melancholy reflection that a great part of Mankind stand in need of arguments drawn from so low a Motive as Worldly Interest, to persuade them to that to which they have much greater inducements. It is strange that we shou'd need any other considerations besides the bare performance of our Duty, and those unspeakable advantages laid up for all such as do it sincerely, hereafter. When we have the Approbation of GOD and the infinite Rewards he has propos'd to those who study to recommend themselves to him, for our Encouragement, how low are we sunk if the Applause of Men and the little Trifles which they can bestow weigh any thing with us! I am therefore almost asham'd of proposing so mean a consideration, but the degeneracy of the Age requir'd it, and they who perhaps at first follow Truth as the Jews did once, for the Loaves only,¹⁵ may at last be attracted by its own Native Beauties.

[V. *Rhetoric propos'd*]

As Nature teaches us Logic, so does it instruct us in Rhetoric much better than Rules of Art, which if they are good ones are nothing else but those Judicious Observations which Men of Sense

¹⁴Subjective certainty, confidence, assurance (*OED*). [P.S.]

¹⁵Astell's phraseology suggests an Old Testament parable, probably 1 Samuel 10: 3-4; 17: 17; 21: 3; 25: 18 or 2 Samuel 16: 1. But she could have the New Testament parable of the loaves and fishes in mind from Matthew 14: 17 to 15: 36; Mark 6: 38 to 8: 19; Luke 9: 13 to 11: 5; or John 6: 9-26. [P.S.]

have drawn from Nature, and which all who reflect on the Operations of their own Minds will find out 'em selves. The common Precepts of Rhetoric may teach us how to reduce Ingenious ways of speaking to a certain Rule, but they do not teach us how to Invent them, this is Natures work and she does it best; there is as much difference between Natural and Artificial Eloquence as there is between Paint and True Beauty. So that as a good Author well observes [*L'art de penser*, p. 22], all that's useful in this Art, "is the avoiding certain evil ways of Writing and Speaking, and above all an Artificial and Rhetorical Stile Compos'd of false Thoughts, Hyperboles and forc'd Figures which is the greatest fault in Rhetoric."¹⁶

I shall not therefore recommend under the name of Rhetoric an Art of speaking floridly on all subjects, and of dressing up Error and Impertinence in a quaint and taking garb; any more than I did that Wrangling which goes by the name of Logic, and which teaches to dispute *for* and *against* all Propositions indefinitely whether they are True or False. It is an abuse both of Reason and Address to press 'em into the Service of a Trifle or an Untruth; and a mistake to think that any Argument can be rightly made, or any Discourse truly Eloquent that does not illustrate and inforce Truth. For the design of Rhetoric is to remove those Prejudices that lie in the way of Truth, to Reduce the Passions to the Government of Reasons; to place our Subject in a Right Light, and excite our Hearers to a due consideration of it. And I know not what exactness of Method, pure and proper Language, Figures,¹⁷ insinuating ways of Address and the like signify, any farther than as they contribute to the Service of Truth by rendering our Discourse Intelligible, Agreeable and Convincing. They are indeed very serviceable to it when they are duly managed, for Good

¹⁶Astell quotes in fact from the introductory Second Discourse of the English edn of the *Port Royal Logic* (1693 edn), pp. 24-5, . . . [P.S.]

¹⁷*The Art of Speaking*, by Bernard Lamy (1640-1715), followed the programme of the *Port Royal Logic* on rhetoric, devoting part 4 to "Figures," defined by him as "Rhetorical Figments, invented for ornaments of discourse" (1676 edn), p. 99. [P.S.]

sense loses much of its efficacy by being ill express'd, and an ill stile is nothing else but the neglect of some of these, or over doing others of 'em.

Obscurity, one of the greatest faults in Writing, does commonly proceed from a want of Meditation, for when we pretend to teach others what we do not understand our selves, no wonder that we do it at a sorry rate. Tis true, Obscurity is sometimes design'd, to conceal an erroneous opinion which an Author dares not openly own, or which if it be discover'd he has a mind to evade. And sometimes even an honest and good Writer who studies to avoid may insensibly fall into it, by reason that his Ideas being become familiar to himself by frequent Meditation, a long train of 'em are readily excited in his mind, by a word or two which he's us'd to annex to them; but it is not so with his Readers who are perhaps strangers to his Meditations, and yet ought to have the very same Idea rais'd in theirs that was in the Authors mind, or else they cannot understand him. If therefore we desire to be intelligible to every body, our Expressions must be more plain and explicit than they needed to be if we writ only for our selves, or for those to whom frequent Discourse has made our Ideas familiar.

Not that it is necessary to express at length all the Process our Mind goes thro in resolving a Question, this wou'd spin out our Discourse to an unprofitable tediousness, the Operations of the Mind being much more speedy than those of the Tongue or Pen. But we shou'd fold up our Thoughts so closely and neatly, expressing them in such significant tho few words, as that the Readers Mind may easily open and enlarge them. And if this can be done with facility we are Perspicuous¹⁸ as well as Strong, if with difficulty or not at all, we're then perplext and Obscure Writers.

Scarce any thing conduces more to Clearness, the great Beauty of writing, than Exactness of Method; nor perhaps to Persuasion, for by putting every thing in its proper place with due Order and Connexion, the Readers Mind is gently led where the Writer wou'd have it. Such a Stile is Easy without Softness; Copious as that

signifies the omission of nothing necessary, yet not Wordy and Tedious; nor stuff with Nauseous Repetitions, which they who do not Think before they Write and dispose their Matter duly, can scarce avoid. The Method of Thinking has been already shewn, and the same is to be observ'd in Writing, which if it be what it ought, is nothing else but the communicating to others the result of our frequent and deep Meditations, in such a manner as we judge most effectual to convince them of those Truths which we believe. Always remembring that the most natural Order is ever best that we must first prepare their minds by removing those Prejudices and Passions which are in our way, and then propose our Reasons with all the Clearness and Force, with all the Tenderness and Good-Nature we can.

And since the Clearness and Connexion as well as the Emphasis and Beauty of a Discourse depends in the great measure on a right use of the Particles, whoever wou'd Write well ought to inform themselves nicely in their Proprieties. a[n]¹⁹ And, a The, a But, a For, Etc. do very much perplex the Sense when they are misplac'd, and make the Reader take it many times quite otherwise than the Writer meant it. But this is not a place to say all that this Subject deserves; they who wou'd have much in a little, may consult an Ingenious Author who has touch'd upon't [**Lock of Hum. Und. B. 3, Ch. 7*],²⁰ and from thence take hints to observe how these little words are applied in good Authors, and how themselves may best use them to express the several Postures of their own Minds.

In a word, I know not a more compendious way to good Speaking and Writing, than to chuse out the most excellent in either as a Model on which to form our selves. Or rather to imitate the Perfections of all, and avoid their mistakes; for few are so perfect as to be without fault, and few so bad as to have nothing good in them. A true Judgment distinguishes, and neither rejects the

¹⁹an, as per Errata list, p. 298. [P.S.]

²⁰Astell's marginal note is to Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, bk 3, ch. 7, "Of Particles" (1690 edn), pp. 265–6, in which he discusses the uses of the definite and indefinite articles, conjunctions, etc. This is a topic discussed at length in Lamy's *Art of Speaking*, Part I, chs 1 and 2. [P.S.]

¹⁸Clearly understood, lucid (*OED*). [P.S.]

Good for the sake of the Bad, nor admits the Bad because of the Good that is mingled with it. No sort of Style but has its excellency and is liable to defect: If care be not taken the Sublime which subdues us with Nobleness of Thought and Grandeur of Expression, will fly out of sight and by being Empty and Bombast become contemptible. The Plain and Simple will grow Dull and Object; the Severe dry and Rugged, the Florid vain and impertinent. The Strong instead of rousing the Mind will distract and entangle it by being Obscure; even the Easy and Perspicuous if it be too diffuse, or over delicate tires us instead of pleasing. Good Sense is the principal thing without which all our polishing is of little Worth, and yet if Ornament be wholly neglected very few will regard us. Studied and artificial periods²¹ are not natural enough to please, they shew too much solicitude about what does not deserve it, and a loose and careless Style declares too much contempt of the Public. Neither Reason nor Wit entertain us if they are driven beyond a certain pitch, and Pleasure it self is offensive if it be not judiciously dispenc'd.

Every Author almost has some beauty or blemish remarkable in his Style from whence it takes its name; and every Reader has a peculiar tast of Books as well as Meats. One wou'd have the Subject exhausted, another is not pleas'd if somewhat be not left to enlarge on in his own Meditations. This affects a Grave that a Florid Style; One is for Easiness, a second for Plainness, a third for Strength, and a fourth for Politeness. And perhaps the great secret of Writing is the mixing all these in so just a proportion that every one may tast what he likes without being disgusted by its contrary. And may find at once that by the Solidity of the Reason, the purity and propriety of Expression, and insinuating agreeableness of Address, his Understanding is Enlightned, his Affections subdued and his Will duly regulated.

This is indeed the true End of Writing, and it wou'd not be hard for every one to judge how well they had answer'd it, wou'd they but lay aside Self-Love,²² so much of it at least, as

makes them partial to their own Productions. Did we consider our own with the same Severity, or but Indifferency that we do anothers Writing, we might pass a due Censure on it, might discern what Thought was Crude or ill exprest, what Reasoning weak, what passages superfluous, where we were flat and dull, where extravagant and vain, and by Criticizing on our selves does greater kindness to the World than we can in making our Remarques on others. Nor shou'd we be at a loss, if we were Impartial, in finding out Methods to Inform, Persuade and Please; for Human Nature is for the most part much alike in all, and that which has a good effect on us, will generally speaking have the same on others. So that to guess what success we are like to have, we need only suppose our selves in the place of those we Address to, and consider how such a Discourse wou'd operate on us, if we had their Infirmities and Thoughts about us.

And if we do so I believe we shall find, there's nothing more improper than Pride and Positiveness, nor any thing more prevalent than an innocent compliance with their weakness: Such as pretends not to dictate to their Ignorance, but only to explain and illustrate what they did or might have known before if they had consider'd it, and supposes that their Minds being employ'd about some other things was the reason why they did not discern it as well as we. For Human Nature is not willing to own its Ignorance; Truth is so very attractive, there's such a natural agreement between our Minds and it, that we care not to be thought so dull as not to be able to find out by our selves such obvious matters. We shou'd therefore be careful that nothing pass from us which upbraids our Neighbours Ignorance, but study to remove't without appearing to take notice of it, and permit 'em to fancy if they please, that we believe them as Wise and Good as we endeavour to make them. By this we gain their Affections which is the hardest part of our Work, excite their Industry and infuse a new Life into all Generous Tempers, who conclude there's

²¹Concluding sentences, perorations (archaic). [P.S.]

²²Astell compares the negative form of self-love, *amour*

propre, compared with the positive, *amour-de-soi*, as discussed in the multi-volume *Moral Essays* of Pierre Nicole. . . . [P.S.]

great hopes they may with a little pains attain what others think they Know already, and are asham'd to fall short of the good Opinion we have entertain'd of 'em.

And since many wou'd yeild to the Clear Light of Truth were't not for the shame of being overcome, we shou'd Convince but not Triumph, and rather Conceal our Conquest than Publish it. We doubly oblige our Neighbours when we reduce them into the Right Way, and keep it from being taken notice of that they were once in the Wrong, which is certainly a much greater satisfaction than that blaze of Glory which is quickly out, that noise of Applause which will soon be over. For the gaining of our Neighbour, at least the having honestly endeavour'd it, and the leading our own Vanity in Triumph are Real Goods and such as we shall always have the Comfort of. It is to be wish'd that such Propositions as are not attended with the Clearest Evidence were deliver'd only by way of Enquiry, since even the brightest Truth when Dogmatically dictated is apt to offend our Readers, and make them imagine their Liberty's impos'd on, so far is Positiveness from bringing any body over to our Sentiments. And besides, we're all of us liable to mistake, and few have Humility enough to confess themselves Deceiv'd in what they have confidently asserted, but think they're obliged in Honour to maintain an Opinion they've once been Zealous for, how desirous soever they may be to get rid on't, cou'd they do it handsomely. Now a Modest way of delivering our Sentiments assists us in this, and leaves us at liberty to take either side of the Question as Reason and Riper Considerations shall determine.

In short, as Thinking conformably to the Nature of Things is True Knowledge, so th' expressing our Thoughts in such a way, as more readily, and with the greatest Clearness and Life, excites in others the very same Idea that was in us, is the best Eloquence. For if our Idea be conformable to the Nature of the thing it represents, and in Relations duly stated, this is the most effectual way both to Inform and Perswade, since Truth being always amiable, cannot fail or attracting when she's plac'd in a Right Light, and those to whom we offer her, are made Able and Willing to discern her Beauties. If therefore we

thoroughly understand our Subject and are Zealously affected with it, we shall neither want suitable word to explain, nor perswasive Methods to recommend it.

And since Piety and Vertue should in spite of the mistaken Customs of the Age be the principal Theme of a Christians Conversation; that which those who bear that Sacred Name ought always to regard some way or other, even when it might be unseasonable to speak of it directly, the way to be good Orators is to be good Christians, the Practice of Religion will both instruct us in the Theory, and most powerfully inforce what we say of it. Did we truly relish the Delights of GOD'S Service, we cou'd neither refrain from talking of the Pleasure, nor be so ill-natur'd as not to strive to Communicate it; and were we duly warm'd with a Zeal for his Glory and concern for our Neighbours Soul, no Figures of Rhetoric, no Art of Perswasion wou'd be wanting to us. We shou'd diligently watch for Opportunities, and carefully improve them, accommodating our Discourse to the Understanding and Genius of all we cou'd hope to do good to.

Besides, by being True Christians we have Really that Love for others which all who desire to perswade must pretend to; we've that *Probity* and *Prudence*, that *Civility* and *Modesty* which the Masters of this Art say a good Orator must be endow'd with; and have pluck'd up those Vicious Inclinations from whence the most distastful faults of Writing proceed. For why do we chuse to be Obscure but because we intend to Deceive, or wou'd be thought to see much farther than our Neighbours? One sort of Vanity prompts us to be Rugged and Severe, and so possess'd with the imagin'd Worth and Solidity of our Discourse, that we think it beneath us to Polish it: Another disposes us to Elaborate and Affected ways of Writing, to Pompous and improper Ornaments; and why are we tediously Copious but that we fancy every Thought of ours is extraordinary? Contradiction is indeed for our advantage as tending to make us wiser, yet our Pride makes us impatient under it, because it seems to Lessen that Esteem and Deference we desire shou'd be paid us. Whence come those sharp Reflections,²³

²³Ditto. [P.S.]

those imagin'd strains of Wit, not to be endur'd amongst Christians, and which serve not to Convince but to Provoke, whence come they but from Ill-nature or Revenge, from a Contempt of others and a desire to set forth our own Wit? Did we write less for our selves we should sooner gain our Readers, who are many times disgusted at a well writ Discourse if it carries a tange of Ostentation: And were our Temper as Christian as it ought to be, our Zeal wou'd be spent on the most Weighty things, not on little differences of Opinions.

I have made no distinction in what has been said between Speaking and Writing, because tho they are talents which do not always meet, yet there is no material difference between 'em. They Write best per haps who do't with the gentle and easy air of Conversation; and they Talk best who mingle Solidity of Thought with th' agreeableness of a ready Wit. As for *Pronunciation*, tho it takes more with some *Auditors* many times than Good Sense, there needs little be said of it here, since Women have no business with the Pulpit, the Bar or *St. Stephens Chapel*;²⁴ And Nature does for the most part furnish 'em with such a Musical Tone, Perswasive Air and winning Address as renders their Discourse sufficiently agreeable in Private Conversation. And as to spelling which they're said to be defective in, if they don't believe as they're usually told, that its fit for 'em to be so, and that to write exactly is too Pedantic, they may soon correct that fault, by Pronouncing their words aright and Spelling 'em accordingly. I know this Rule won't always hold because of an Imperfection in our Language which has been oft complain'd of but is not yet amended; But in this case a little Observation or recourse to Books will assist us; and if at any time we happen to mistake by Spelling as we

²⁴St Stephen's Chapel, built by King Stephen, became the meeting place for the House of Commons from 1547, once it had moved venues from the chapter house of Westminster Abbey (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, vol. 28, p. 551). Astell later uses St Stephen's Chapel to refer metonymically to the Houses of Parliament in *A Fair Way with the Dissenters* (1704), p. 21. Her remarks here may echo the famous epithet of Fénelon in *De l'Education des filles* (1687), (1933 edn, p. 18), that women "ought neither to govern the state, nor make war, nor enter into the sacred ministry." [P.S.]

Pronounce, the fault will be very Venial,²⁵ and Custom rather to blame than we.

I've said nothing of *Grammar* tho we can't Write properly if we transgress its Rules, supposing that Custom and the reading of English Books are sufficient to teach us the Grammar of our own Tongue, If we do but in any measure attend to them. And tho Women are generally accus'd of Writing false English, if I may speak my own Experience, their Mistakes are not so common as is pretended, nor are they the only Persons guilty. What they most commonly fail in is the Particles and Connexion, and that generally thro a Briskness of temper which make them forget, or Hast which will not suffer 'em to read over again what went before. And indeed, those who Speak true Grammar unless they're very Careless cannot write false, since they need only peruse what they've Writ, and consider whether they wou'd express 'emselves thus in Conversation.²⁶

But for this and for Figures Etc. and indeed for all that relates to this Subject, I must refer you to an Ingenious Treatise [**Art of speaking*]²⁷ which handles it fully, and to which I'me oblig'd in great measure for what little skill I have. Observing only, that whatever it is we Treat of, our Stile shou'd be such as may keep our Readers Attent, and induce them to go to the End. Now Attention is usually fixt by Admiration, which is excited by somewhat uncommon either in the Thought or way of Expression. We fall asleep over an Author who tells us in an ordinary manner no more than we knew before: He who wou'd Take²⁸ must be Sublime in his Sense, and must cloath it after a Noble way. His Thoughts must not be superficial, such as every one may fall into at the first glance, but the very Spirits and Essence of Thinking, the sum of many hours Meditation folded up in one handsome and comprehensive Period, whose Language is Intelli-

²⁵Worthy of forgiveness, pardonable (*OED*). [P.S.]

²⁶*The Ladies Library* ch. 13 on "Ignorance" (1714 edn), pp. 438–534, reproduced from Astell's text with only minor changes, concludes at this point. [P.S.]

²⁷Astell's marginal note to Lamy's *The Art of Speaking* (1696), a theory of rhetoric derived, as Lamy's title states, from the *Port Royal Logic*. [P.S.]

²⁸Be effective. [P.S.]

gible and Easy that the Readers may not lose the pleasure of the Kernel, by the pain they find in cracking the Shell. The most difficult Subject must be made easy by his way of handling it; tho his Matter may deserve a Meditation, yet his Expressions must be so Clear that he needs not be read twice to be Understood; *these* are to be Natural and Familiar, condescending to the meanest Capacity, whilst his Thoughts are Great enough to entertain the highest. He Discourses always on a Useful Subject in a manner agreeable to it, and Pleases that he may Instruct; Nothing seems Studied in his whole Composition, yet every thing is Extraordinary, a Beautiful Harmony shining thro all its parts. No Sentence is Doubtful, no word Equivocal, his Arguments are Clear and his Images Lively; all the Ideas he excites in your Mind, as nearly resemble the thing they represent as Words can make them. Whilst th' exactness of his Method, and Force of his Reason Enlighten and Convince the Mind; the Vivacity of his Imagination and insinuating Address, gain the Affections and Conquer the Will. By the weight and closeness of the former you wou'd take him for an Angel, and the tender and affable sweetness of the last bespeaks him a Friend. He considers that as mere Florish and Rhetorick are good for nothing, so neither will bare Reason dull and heavily express'd perform any great matter, at least not on those who need it most, whose Palates being deprav'd their Medicines must be administred in a pleasing Vehicle. Since Mankind are averse to their Real Happiness, he does not only tell 'em their Duty but Interesses them in it; and thinking it not enough to run 'em down with the strength of Reason, he draws 'em over to a Voluntary Submission by th' attractives of his Eloquence. For he has a peculiar Turn and Air which animates every Period, so that the very same Truth which was dry and Unaffecting in a vulgar Authors words, Charms and Subdues you when cloath'd in his. He shews no more warmth than may convince his Readers that he's heartily persuaded of the Truths he offers them; and if it is necessary at any time to make use of Figures to give a more Lively Representation than plain Expressions cou'd, to describe his own Passions and excite the same in others upon a just occasion, in a word to awaken a Stupid and Clear the Mind of

A Prejudic'd Reader, his Figures are duly chosen and discreetly us'd. For he knows that scarce any thing speaks a greater want of Judgment than the shewing concern where there needs none, or is a worse fault in Oratory than the polishing a Wrong or a Trifling Thought, the neatness of whose dress may strike with Admiration perhaps at first sight, but upon a review it will certainly appear Contemptible. And therefore as he does not abound in Superfluous Ornaments, so neither does he reject anything that can promote his End, which is not his own Reputation but the Glory of his GOD and his Neighbours Edification. He considers the narrowness of the Humane Mind, and says all that is necessary but no more; Understands it so well as to know what will move and Please, and has so much command of himself as to give over when he has done enough. Yet he can exhaust the most fruitful Subject without making the Reader weary; for when he enlarges it is in Things not Words, and he mingles Variety without Confusion. All the diverse excellencies of different Stiles meet in his to make up a perfect one, Strength and Ease, Solidity and Liveliness, the Sublime and the Plain. He's neither so Lofty as to fly out of Sight, nor so humble as to become Creeping and Contemptible. His Strength does not make him Rugged and Perplexed nor his Smoothness Weak and Nice; tho every thing is Neat, there's not a grain of Affectation; he is gratefull to the Ear, but far remov'd from jingling Cadence. Brief when there is occasion without Dryness or Obscurity, and Florid enough to entertain th' Imagination without Distracting the Mind. There's not an Antiquated or Barbarous Word to be found in him, all is Decent, Just and Natural; no peculiar or Affected Phrases, whether Courtly or Clownish, Grave or Burlesque. For Plain and Significant Language is ever best, we have a mistaken Idea of Learning if we think to pretend to't by sending our Reader every minute to the Dictionary. Words out of the common way are only allowable when they express our Sense with greater Force than Ordinary ones cou'd, or when they are so significant as to ease us of Circumlocutions, a hard word which I cou'd not avoid without using half a dozen words.

After all, it may not be amiss to take notice

that Ornaments are common to Falshood and Truth, but Clearness and strength of Reasoning are not. They who wou'd propagate Error usually disguise it in Equivocal Terms and Obscure Phrases; they strive to engage our Passions, rather than to Convince our Reason, and carry us away in the torrent of a warm Imagination. They endeavour to refute, or if they can't do that, to Ridicule the contrary opinion, and think this Sufficient to establish their own. Being much better skill'd in pulling down former Systems than in building new ones, for it requires no great skill to Object, and there are many Truths which we're very Certain of, and yet not able to answer every Impertinent Enquiry concerning 'em. Their greatest Art is in confounding things, in giving a probable Air to what they write, in pretending to Demonstration where the nature of the Truth does not require't, and in evading it where it does. An Immoral or Heretical Discourse therefore may be *Cunningly* but not *well* writ, for we can never plead for Error and Vice with true Eloquence. We may trick 'em up in a handsom Garb, adorn 'em with quaint Expressions, and give them such a plausible turn as may enable them to do very much Mischief; but this is only a fulsom Carcass, the substance and Life are not there if Vertue and Truth are wanting.

[VI. *The Application and Use of our Knowledge*]

For it is to little purpose to Think well and speak well, unless we *Live well*, this is our Great Affair and truest Excellency, the other are no further to be regarded than as they may assist us in this. She who does not draw this Inference from her Studies has Thought in vain, her notions are Erroneous and Mistaken. And all her Eloquence is but an empty noise, who employs it in any other design than in gaining Proselytes to Heaven. I am therefore far from designing to put Women on a vain pursuit after unnecessary and useless Learning, nor wou'd by any means persuade them to endeavour after Knowledge cou'd I be convinc'd that it is improper for 'em. Because I know every well that tho a thing be never so excellent in it self, it has but an ill grace if it be not suitable to the Person and Condition it is apply'd to. Fine

Cloaths and Equipage do not become a Beggar, and a Mechanic who must work for daily bread for his Family, wou'd be wickedly Employ'd shou'd he suffer 'em to starve whilst he's solving Mathematical Problems. If therefore Women have another Duty incumbent on 'em, and such as is inconsistent with what we here advise, we do ill to take them from it: But to affirm this is to beg the Question, and is what I will never grant till it be better prov'd than as yet it appears to be. For if the Grand Business that Women as well as Men have to do in this World be to prepare for the next, ought not all their Care and Industry to Centre here? and since the matter is of Infinite Consequence is it equitable to deny 'em the use of any help? If therefore Knowledge were but any ways Instrumental, tho at the remotest distance, to the Salvation of our Souls, it were fit to apply our selves to it; and how much more when it is so necessary, that without it we can't do any thing that's Excellent, or Practise Vertue in the most Perfect manner. For unless we Understand our Duty and the Principles of Religion, we don't perform a Rational Service, it is but by Chance that we are Good or so much as Christians. We are their Property into whose hands we fall, and are led by those who with greatest Confidence impose their Opinions on us; Are as moveable as the different Circumstances that befall us; or if we happen to be Constant in our first way, it is not Reason but Obstinacy that makes us so. A great deal of Good will be omitted, and very much Evil, or Imperfection at least, stick to us, if we are not thoroughly acquainted with the Law of God and the secret springs and windings of our Hearts, which is scarce to be obtain'd without much Meditation and the helps that study affords.

And as when a rash young Traveller is about to run into dangerous places beset with Theives and full of Precipices,²⁹ if you have any hearty

²⁹This complex passage alludes both to the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10: 33), and possibly to the famous examples of the "highway-man" employed by Hobbes in *Leviathan* (1991 edn, ch. 14, p. 98) and Locke in the second *Treatise of Government* (1988 edn, §119, pp. 347-8; §176, p. 385; §182, p. 390; §186, p. 393; §202, p. 401; §207, pp. 403-4). If Astell already knows the provenance of Locke's *Two Treatises of Government*, which she clearly does by *Reflections upon Marriage* of 1700, then this strengthens my

concern for his safety, you'l not think it enough barely to shew him his way, or even to tell him of the Danger, especially if the entrance seems fair and inviting and treacherous Companions are upon the watch to decoy him into it: But you'l expose it in all its frightful Circumstances, endeavour to quicken his vigilance and excite his Passions, and all little enough for his Security. So it cannot be thought sufficient that Women shou'd but just know whats Commanded and what Forbid, without being inform'd of the Reasons why, since this is not like to secure them in their Duty. For we find a Natural Liberty within us which checks at an Injunction that has nothing but Authority to back it; And tho Religion is indeed supported by the Strongest Reasons, and inforc'd by the most powerful Motives, yet if we are not acquainted with 'em, tis all one to us as if it were not. But having spoke of this in the first part we shall not farther enlarge on it here.

Perhaps it will be objected that we've said *the great Truths of Religion carry a force and Evidence suited to the very Vulgar, and that GOD has not design'd All for Philosophers.*³⁰ And therefore if the way to the most necessary Knowledge be so very plain, and all Capacities are not fitted for higher attainments, what needs this ado about th' Improvement of our minds? the only thing necessary is to be good Christians, and we may be that without being Philosophers. Suppose we may: This will Justify such as want Time and Capacity, but can never excuse the Sloth and Stupidity of those who have both.

For unless we have very strange Notions of the Divine Wisdom we must needs allow that every one is placed in such a Station as they are fitted for. And if the necessity of the world requires that some Person shou'd Labour for oth-

case for her importance as the first systematic critic of that work. . . . To the 3rd edn of *Reflections upon Marriage* in 1706, Astell had added a cautionary homily on the pitfalls of marriage, invoking the image of the highway-man to characterize the rogue government of husbands: "And if mere Power gives a Right to Rule, there can be no such thing as Usurpation; but a Highway-Man so long as he has strength to force, has also a Right to require our Obedience" (*Reflections upon Marriage* (1706 edn), p. x). [P.S.]

³⁰The thesis of much of the devotional literature to which Astell refers. . . . [P.S.]

ers, it likewise requires that others shou'd Think for them. Our Powers and Faculties were not given us for nothing, and the only advantage one Woman has above another, is the being allotted to the more noble employment. Nobody is plac'd without their own fault, in such unhappy Circumstances as to be incapable of Salvation, but some are plac'd in such happy ones as to be capable of attaining much greater degrees of Happiness than others if they do not neglect them: And shou'd these last do no more than the very utmost that is expected from the former, I know not how they wou'd acquit themselves, or what account they cou'd give of their great Advantages. And therefore tho no body shall be condemn'd because they *Cou'd* not, yet we have reason to fear if our Case be such as that we *Might* but *Wou'd* not receive Instruction. She then who makes this Objection must not take it amiss if we Judge of her in other Cases according to what she Pleads in this: She must never set up for a Wit, or a censorer of her Neighbours, must not pretend to be a fine Lady or any thing extraordinary: but be content to herd amongst the Drudges of the World who eat Their Bread in the Sweat of their Brows, if she says she wants Leisure; or in a less acceptable rank amongst the Fools and Idiots, or but one degree above them, if she says she wants Capacity for this Employment. It is one thing to be content with Ignorance, or rather with a less degree of Knowledge, on account of the Station that GOD has plac'd us in, and Another to Chuse and Delight in't thro a Stupid Carelessness, a fear of Trouble, or an Inordinate pursuit of the Cares and Pleasures of this Mortal Life. This last only shews our Disesteem of our Souls, our Contempt of GOD and the Talents he has given us, and exposes us to all the dreadful consequences of such a neglect; to Punishments to which not only those who misemploy their Lord's Talent, but even they who don't employ it at all, are Obnoxious.

And indeed as unnecessary as it is thought for Women to have Knowledge, she who is truly good finds very great use of it, not only in the Conduct of her own Soul but in the management of her Family, in the Conversation of her Neighbours and in all the Concerns of Life. Education of Children is a most necessary Employment, perhaps the chief of those who have any; But

it is as Difficult as it is Excellent when well perform'd; and I question not but that the mistakes which are made in it, are a principal Cause of that Folly and Vice, which is so much complain'd of and so little mended. Now this, at least the foundation of it, on which in a great measure the success of all depends, shou'd be laid by the Mother, for Fathers find other Business, they will not be confin'd to such a laborious work, they have not such opportunities of observing a Childs Temper, nor are the greatest part of 'em like to do much good, since Precepts contradicted by Example seldom prove effectual. Neither are Strangers so proper for it, because hardly any thing besides Paternal Affection can sufficiently quicken the Care of performing, and sweeten the labour of such a task. But Tenderness alone will never discharge it well, she who wou'd do it to purpose must throughly understand Human nature, know how to manage different Tempers Prudently, be Mistress of her own, and able to bear with all the little humours and follies of Youth, neither Severity nor Lenity are to be always us'd, it wou'd ruin some to be treated in that manner which is fit for others. An Mildness makes some ungovernable and as there is a stupor in many from which nothing but Terrors can rouse them, so sharp Reproofs and Solemn Lectures serve to no purpose but to harden others, in faults from which they might be won by an agreeable Address and tender application. GOD Himself waits to be gracious and administers his Medicines in the most proper season, and Parents shou'd imitate him in this, for the want of observing it, and of accomodating their Methods to the several Dispositions they have to deal with, is perhaps the reason that many Pious Persons lose the fruit of their Pains and Care.

Nor will Knowledge lie dead upon their hands who have no Children to Instruct; the whole World is a single Lady's Family, her opportunities of doing good are not lessen'd but encreas'd by her being unconfin'd. Particular Obligations do not contract her Mind, but her Beneficence moves in the largest Sphere. And perhaps the Glory of Reforming this Prophane and Profligate Age is reserv'd for you Ladies, and that the natural and unprejudic'd Sentiments of your Minds being handsomly express'd, may carry a more

strong conviction than the Elaborate Arguments of the Learned. Such as fence themselves against the Cannon they bring down, may lie open to an Ambuscade³¹ from you. And whilst the strong arguings of the Schools like the Wind in the Fable,³² seems but to harden these Sturdy Sinners, your Persuasions like the Suns mild and powerful rays, may oblige them to cast off that Cloak of Maliciousness in which they are so much intangled. And surely it is worth your while to fit your selves for this: Tis a Godlike thing to relieve even the Temporal wants of our Fellow Creatures, to keep a *Body* from perishing, but it, is much more Divine, to *Save a Soul from Death!* A Soul which in his estimate who best knows the value of it is worth more than all the World. They who are thus *wise shall shine as the brightness of the Firmament, and they who turn many to Righteousness as the Stars for ever;*³³ which is a Glory we may honestly Contend for, a Beauty we may lawfully Covet; O that we had but Ambition enough to aspire after it! O that we had but so much at least as we see daily thrown away on a poor transitory Earthly Diadem, which sets uneasy on his head who wears it, and which a longer arm may wrest from his Brows! But alas it was in our fore-fathers days that the Kingdom of Heav'n was took by violence; they thought nothing, and we think every thing too much to Do or Suffer to obtain it! Nor but that it is still as bright and glorious, as truly attractive, but we are dull and stupid we shut our eyes and won't behold its Charms. Were we but duly sensible of this we shou'd think no Posterity so desireable as the Offspring of our Minds, nor any state so great as the carrying a large Train of Followers with us to the Court of Heaven! So much Knowledge therefore as is necessary to engage and keep us firm in our Christian Course, to fit us to help others in theirs, to stir us up to pursue, and direct us in our endeavours after one of the brightest Crowns of Glory, does very well become us and more than this I do not contend for, being far

³¹Ambush (obsolete except as a formal military term) (*OED*). [P.S.]

³²Possibly the book of Job which, extremely old and elemental, is full of wind, see esp. Job 8: 2, where the words "of thy mouth be like a strong wind." [P.S.]

³³Daniel 12: 3. [P.S.]

from desiring that any one shou'd neglect her Necessary Affairs to amuse her self with nice Speculations. No, She who has a Family is discharging part of her Christian Calling whilst She's taking care for it's Support and Government, and wou'd be very much out, if she lock'd her self in her Study, when her Domesticks had need of her direction. But there are few of those to whom I write, who have not a good deal of time to spare, if you reckon whats thrown away on fantastic Impertinencies, and tis this I wou'd have better employ'd: Were not a Morning more

advantageously spent at a Book than at a Looking Glass, and an Evening in Meditation than in Gaming? were not Pertinent and Ingenious Discourse more becoming in a visit, than Idle twattle and uncharitable Remarks? than a Nauseous repetition of a set of fine words which no body believes or cares for? And is not the fitting our selves to do Real Services to our Neighbours, a better expression of our Civility than the formal performance of a thousand ridiculous Ceremonies, which every one condemns and yet none has the Courage to break thro?

Giambattista Vico

1668–1744

Giambattista Vico was born in Naples, the son of a bookseller. Although he attended a Jesuit college, his education came chiefly from reading in his father's shop. He characterizes himself in his autobiography as an autodidact, one who is both self-taught and free from academic prejudice. Vico was appointed professor of rhetoric at the University of Naples in 1699 and served until 1741. The professorship of rhetoric was a minor post, and Vico hoped—though in vain—to be appointed to the much more prestigious chair of civil law. Although a growing number of scholars now see Vico as a major figure in the development of a rhetoric with a culturally based epistemology, in his own time he was regarded as a reactionary because of his opposition to Descartes.

In his major works, Vico criticizes the philosophy of Descartes for stressing that mathematics and science are the only legitimate sources of knowledge and treating other branches of human inquiry—such as law, history, and the arts—as inconsequential. Vico argues that rhetoric provides a superior philosophy of knowledge, for all knowledge, even the scientific, is based on argument and conviction. The excerpts here from “On the Study Methods of Our Time” (1709), originally a scholarly address that opened the school year at the University of Naples, include Vico's argument against the Cartesian method, which he refers to as “modern philosophical critique,” and his defense of rhetoric as a modern method of study.

In “On the Study Methods of Our Time,” Vico seeks to reconcile humanism (the wisdom of the ancients) with a modern but non-Cartesian science. He objects to Descartes's insensitivity to the function of language in producing knowledge. Without language, says Vico, the human knower is lost. Language reveals the processes of reason, passion, and imagination, as well as the social conventions and historical circumstances that shape our concerns. The etymology of the national language reveals our social history; similarly, language socializes each individual. Therefore, the university's curricular philosophy or “study methods” will have a profound effect on both the individual and society. What kind of person, what kind of society, will be fostered by Cartesian disdain for the probabilistic knowledge of law, ethics, politics, and medicine? The Cartesian method is useful, Vico concedes, but it cannot be allowed to overpower the kind of *sensus communis* or common sense that the study of eloquence stimulates with its appeals to imagination and memory and its practice in the commonplaces of argument.

Not only is Cartesianism ill suited to the kinds of knowledge that affect the affairs of society, says Vico, but it is not even well founded in the science it so prizes. Mathematical proof is ultimately based on our acceptance of the system of axioms created by human beings: We can point to no demonstration of the applicability of our axioms to the world itself. The world is created by God, not human beings, and cannot be directly known. Moreover, the Cartesian method of division focuses ideally on isolated particles of knowledge, stifling the kind of analogic thinking that generates so many insights. Vico also objects to the Cartesian model of the isolated

inquirer, for dialogue fertilizes thought. As a teaching approach, the Cartesian method fails to encourage independent discovery, proceeding instead on a plodding course from axiom to proof. Such a method oppresses rather than inspires students. Thus, if the educational system accepts Cartesianism, it will unduly privilege natural science and mathematics while devaluing other kinds of knowledge, and it will do so to the detriment of society, which will eventually lack leaders educated in public affairs. Vico recommends balance: The method of Descartes is useful for abstract knowledge that finds elemental causes for multiple effects, whereas eloquence finds many possible causes for single events, revealing the complexity of “merely” probable causes. To expect the Cartesian method to cover both kinds of knowledge, he reiterates, is to ignore the essential differences in their character and provenance.

Vico devotes a long section of his speech to the legal system of ancient Rome. Though the system was designed to support the privilege of the patricians, it encouraged eloquence in defense of equity and justice. Arguments produced under these conditions eventually led to a democratization of the courts and to a more equitable legal philosophy. But, Vico claims, the exceptional eloquence of the old courts was no longer necessary, with the result that, on the one hand, eloquence lost respect and, on the other, legal philosophy languished for want of inspired oratory. Finally, Vico proposes a curriculum that concludes with the study of eloquence, a study which he sees as interdisciplinary and (in modern terms) meta-theoretical, a way to link the other disciplines and bring them to bear on important public issues.

In *The New Science* (first edition, 1725; much-revised third edition, 1744), Vico elaborates the argument begun in “Study Methods” about the relationship between truth and human methods of producing knowledge. If, as the argument proposes, we can truly know only what we have made, then true knowledge is of the Cartesian kind, touching created systems of mathematics and science. Observation and experience (“consciousness,” as opposed to science) produce uncertain, probabilistic judgments. Vico now proposes a link between these two kinds of knowledge: It is possible, according to this argument, to reach true knowledge in the vast realm of human affairs, in a world that is, after all, created by humans and not “natural.” In other words, though history is not a formal system, it is nonetheless made by people, and the appropriate method of study should produce certain knowledge of it. To establish this method, Vico seeks the origins of history in human nature and in an original common language. Through history, human nature and language give shape to social relations and institutions, reflecting historical circumstances and local developments.

Vico posits three stages through which human history evolves: the poetic, the heroic, and the human. In the poetic stage, knowledge is generated by metaphor. Just as young children learn by comparison, Vico argues, humankind in its infancy must have done likewise. In the heroic stage, nations develop, promulgating rigid systems of law to preserve the organization of society. And in the human stage, the self-conscious study of human knowledge leads to greater equity in law and democracy in politics. Here, too, individualism grows, and with it a disdain for communal and national imperatives. As a result, this last stage is fragile, threatened

by revolutions that will fragment society. Once society is shattered, however, the process begins anew.

Vico maintains that historical circumstances determine the characteristics and purposes of social institutions and individual actions. Historians are therefore in error when they try to evaluate earlier periods using the standards of their own time. To understand history, it is necessary to reconstruct the consciousness of the time and place to be studied, using the myths and language of the time. Etymology is invaluable in determining not only the conditions of life in an earlier age but also the psychological responses to them. Speech and thought are inseparable, in Vico's view: They evolve together. Thus, what are for us casual or embedded metaphors can reveal the mental processes and perception of the world of those who first employed them. A persistently metaphoric view of the world will be different, too, from a view in which phenomena are identified by abstractions.

In elaborating and illustrating this view of historical analysis, Vico brought together the study of language and literature, social institutions and law, ideology and class structure, and personal psychology and human nature. His cyclical theory of history is easy enough to criticize, and for too long it obscured his contribution to historiography: the combination of a sympathetic perspective and a broad range of intercontextual knowledge. Moreover, in his theory of rhetoric, as John D. Schaeffer has argued, Vico unites ethics and eloquence through his concept of *sensus communis*, a "common sense" that is both epistemological in function and culturally based. Thus Vico forges a link between rhetoric and philosophy that contemporary thinkers are still exploring.

Selected Bibliography

We take our excerpt from Giambattista Vico, "On the Study Methods of Our Time," ed. and trans. Elio Gianturco (1965). Gianturco's introduction is helpful. Thomas Bergin and Max Fisch have translated *The New Science of Giambattista Vico* (1948) and have included a long and useful introduction. Bergin and Fisch also translated *The Autobiography of Giambattista Vico* (1944).

Twentieth-century interest in Vico has produced a good deal of fascinating scholarly and critical work. Since 1983, the Institute for Vico Studies has been publishing *New Vico Studies* with articles, reviews, and bibliographies, making it an invaluable reference. Molly Black Verene's *Vico: A Bibliography of Works in English 1884–1994* (1994) is not annotated, but it cites reviews of book-length studies.

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Richard A. Lanham, and others. Taking a more negative view, Brian Vickers traces the decline of rhetoric as a discipline from Vico in "The Atrophy of Modern Rhetoric: Vico to de Man" (*Rhetorica* 6 [winter 1988]: 21–56; extracted from Vickers's *In Defense of Rhetoric*, 1988).

From *On the Study Methods of Our Time*

I

In his small but priceless treatise entitled *De Dignitate et de Augmentis Scientiarum*,¹ Francis Bacon undertakes to point out what new arts and sciences should be added to those we already possess, and suggests how we may enlarge our stock of knowledge, [as far as necessary,] so that human wisdom may be brought to complete perfection.

But, while he discovers a new cosmos of sciences, the great Chancellor proves to be rather the pioneer of a completely new universe than a prospector of this world of ours. His vast demands so exceed the utmost extent of man's effort that he seems to have indicated how we fall short of achieving an absolutely complete system of sciences rather than how we may remedy our cultural gaps.

This was so, I believe, because those who occupy the heights of power yearn for the immense and the infinite. Thus Bacon acted in the intellectual field like the potentates of mighty empires, who, having gained supremacy in human affairs, squander immense wealth in attempts against the order of Nature herself, by paving the seas with stones, mastering mountains with sail, and other vain exploits forbidden by nature.

No doubt all that man is given to know is, like man himself, limited and imperfect. Therefore, if we compare our times with those of the Ancients—if we weigh, on both sides, the advantages and deficiencies of learning—our achievements and those of Antiquity would, by and large, balance.

Translated by Elio Gianturco.

¹*Of the Dignity and Advancement of Learning*. (See Bacon in Part Three.) [Ed.]

We, the men of the modern age, have discovered many things of which the Ancients were entirely ignorant; the Ancients, on the other hand, knew much still unknown to us. We enjoy many techniques which enable us to make progress in some branch of intellectual or practical activity; they likewise had talents for progress in other fields. They devoted all their activity to certain arts which we almost totally neglect; we pursue some others which they apparently scorned. Many disciplines conveniently unified by the Ancients have been partitioned by us; a certain number which they inconveniently kept separate, we treat as unified. Finally, not a few sectors of culture have changed both appearance and name.

The foregoing provides the theme of the present discourse: Which study method is finer and better, ours or the Ancients? In developing this topic I shall illustrate by examples the advantages and drawbacks of the respective methods. I shall specify which of the drawbacks of our procedures may be avoided, and how; and whether those which cannot be eliminated have their counterparts in particular shortcomings by which the Ancients were handicapped.

Unless I am mistaken, this theme is new; but the knowledge of it is so important, that I am amazed it has not been treated yet. In the hope of escaping censure, I ask you to give thought to the fact that my purpose is not to criticize the drawbacks of the study methods of our age or of those of antiquity, but rather to compare the advantages afforded by the study methods of the two epochs.

This matter is of direct concern to you: even if you know more than the Ancients in some fields, you should not accept knowing less in others. You should make use of a method by which you can acquire, on the whole, more knowledge

than the Ancients, and, being aware of the shortcomings of ancient methods of study, you may endure the unavoidable inconveniences of our own.

The better to grasp the subject I am proposing to you, you should distinctly realize that in the present discourse I do not intend to draw parallels between individual branches of knowledge, single fields of sciences or arts of ancient and modern times.

My goal, instead, is to indicate in what respect our study methods are superior to those of the Ancients; to discover in what they are inferior, and how we may remedy this inferiority.

For our purpose we must, if not separate, at least set up a distinction between new arts, sciences, and inventions on one hand, and new *instruments* and aids to knowledge on the other. The former are the constituent material of learning; the latter are the way and the means, precisely the subject of our discourse.

Every study method may be said to be made up of three things: instruments, complementary aids, and the aim envisaged. The instruments presuppose and include a systematic, orderly manner of proceeding; the apprentice who, after suitable training, undertakes the task of mastering a certain art or science, should approach it in an appropriate and well-ordered fashion. Instruments are antecedent to the task of learning; complementary aids and procedures are concomitant with that task. As for the aim envisaged, although its attainment is subsequent to the process of learning, it should never be lost sight of by the learner, neither at the beginning nor during the entire learning process.

We shall arrange our discourse in corresponding order, and discuss first the instruments, then the aids to our method of study. As for the aim, it should circulate, like a blood-stream, through the entire body of the learning process. Consequently, just as the blood's pulsation may best be studied at the spot where the arterial beat is most perceptible, so the aim of our study methods shall be treated at the point where it assumes the greatest prominence.

Some of the new instruments of science are, themselves, sciences; others are arts; still others, products of either art or nature. Modern philosophical "critique" is the common instrument of

all our sciences and arts.² The instrument of geometry is "analysis"; that of physics, geometry, plus the geometrical method (and, in a certain sense, modern mechanics). The instrument of medicine is chemistry and its offshoot, pharmacological chemistry. The instrument of anatomy is the microscope; that of astronomy, the telescope; that of geography, the mariner's needle.

As for "complementary aids," I include among them the orderly reduction of systematic rules, of a number of subjects which the Ancients were wont to entrust to practical common sense. Complementary aids are also works of literature and of the fine arts whose excellence designates them as patterns of perfection; the types used in the printing; and universities as institutions of learning.

In view of the easy accessibility, usefulness, and value of the complementary aids, our study methods seem, beyond any doubt, to be better and more correct than those of the Ancients, whether in regard to facility, or to utility, or to merit.

As for the aim of all kinds of intellectual pursuits: one only is kept in view, one is pursued, one is honored by all: Truth.

II

Modern philosophical critique supplies us with a fundamental verity of which we can be certain even when assailed by doubt. That critique could rout the skepticism even of the New Academy.³

In addition "analysis" (i.e., analytical geometry) empowers us to puzzle out with astonishing ease geometrical problems which the Ancients found impossible to solve.

Like us, the Ancients utilized geometry and mechanics as instrument of research in physics, but not as a constant practice. We apply them consistently, and in better form.

Let us leave aside the question whether geometry has undergone greater development by

²The critique is Descartes's method. (See the introduction to Part Four.) [Ed.]

³The New Academy is the Second Platonic Academy of the third and second centuries B.C.E., noted for radical skepticism. [Ed.]

means of “*analysis*,” and whether modern mechanics constitutes something new. What cannot be denied is the fact that leading investigators have available to them a science enriched by a number of new and extremely ingenious discoveries. Modern scientists, seeking for guidance in their exploration of the dark pathways of nature, have introduced the geometrical method into physics. Holding to this method as to Ariadne’s thread, they can reach the end of their appointed journey. Do not consider them as groping practitioners of physics: they are to be viewed, instead, as the grand architects of this limitless fabric of the world: able to give a detailed account of the ensemble of principles according to which God has built this admirable structure of the cosmos.

Chemistry, of which the Ancients were totally ignorant, has made outstanding contributions to medicine. Having observed the similarity which exists between the various phenomena of the human body and those of chemistry, the healing art has been able, not only to hazard guesses concerning many physiological functions and disorders, but to make these plainly discernible to the human eye.

Pharmacology, of course, a derivate of chemistry, was among the ancients merely a desideratum. Nowadays, we have converted that desideratum into a reality. Some of our researchers have applied chemistry to physics; others, mechanics to medicine. Our physical chemistry can faithfully, and, so to speak, *manually*, reproduce a number of meteors and other physical phenomena. Mechanical medicine can describe, by inferences drawn from the motions of machines, the diseases of the human body, and can treat them successfully. And anatomy clearly reveals not only the circulation of the blood, but the nerve-roots, countless humors, vessels, and ducts of the human body (notice that such descriptions already constitute notable advances over ancient medicine), and moreover—thanks to the microscope—the nature of miliary glands, of the most minute internal organs, of plants, of silkworms, and of insects. To modern anatomy, furthermore, we are indebted for an insight into the process of generation, as demonstrated by the growth of the incubated egg. All these things were entirely outside of the narrow range of sight of the science of

the Ancients; modern science throws a flood of light upon them.

As for astronomy, the modern telescope has brought within our ken a multitude of new stars, the variability of sun-spots, and phases of the planets. These discoveries have made us aware of several defects in the cosmological system of Ptolemy.

In the domain of geographical exploration, the Ancients guessed vaguely, in a prophetic sort of way, at the existence of transoceanic lands. By the use of the mariner’s compass, the modern age has actually discovered them. As a result, a wonderful luster has been bestowed upon geography.

It seems almost unbelievable that in our days men should not only be able to circumnavigate the globe along with the sun, but to outreach the sun’s march and to negotiate its full course in less time than it takes that planet to complete it.

From geometry and physics, taught by the present method, the science of mechanics has received major impulses and has rendered possible a great number of outstanding and marvelous inventions, which have vastly enriched human society. It may be said that it is from these three sciences that our technique of warfare derives. Our art of war is so immeasurably superior to that of the Ancients, that, compared with our technique of fortifying and attacking cities, Minerva would contemn her own Athenian citadel and Jupiter would scorn his three-pronged lightning as a blunt and cumbersome weapon.

Such are the “instruments” employed by our modern sciences; let us now turn to the complementary aids employed in the various sectors of our culture.

Systematic treatments (*artes*) have been set up of certain subjects which the Ancients left to unaided common sense. Among these subjects is the law, which the Ancients, balked by the difficulty of the task, gave up hope of organizing into a systematically arranged, methodical body of theory.

In the fields of poetry, oratory, painting, sculpture, and other fine arts, based on the imitation of nature, we possess a wealth of supremely accomplished productions, on which the admiration of posterity has conferred the prestige of the archetypal exemplarity. Thanks to the guidance

offered by these masterworks, we are able to imitate, correctly and easily, Nature at her best. The invention of printing places at our disposal an enormous number of books. Hence, our scholars are not compelled to restrict their competence to the knowledge of one or another author, but can master a multiple, diversified, almost boundless domain of culture.

Finally, we have great institutions of learning, i.e., universities, which are the repositories of all our sciences and arts, and where the intellectual, spiritual, and linguistic abilities of men may be brought to perfection. Almost all of these spheres of mental activity have as their single goal the inquiry after truth. Were I to set out to extol this inquiry, I would arouse wonder at my eulogizing something that no one ever thought of disparaging.

Let us now scrutinize these advantages of our study methods, and try to ascertain whether these methods lack some of the good qualities possessed by those of antiquity: or whether, instead, they are impaired by faults from which ancient methods were exempt. Let us examine whether we can avoid our deficiencies and appropriate the good points of the ancient methods, and by what means this may be done; and let us see whether those among our deficiencies which are unavoidable may be offset by the shortcomings of antiquity.

III

Let us begin with the *instruments* with which modern sciences operate.

Philosophical criticism is the subject which we compel our youths to take up first. Now, such speculative criticism, the main purpose of which is to cleanse its fundamental truths not only of all falsity, but also of the mere suspicion of error, places upon the same plane of falsity not only false thinking, but also those secondary verities and ideas which are based on probability alone, and commands us to clear our minds of them. Such an approach is distinctly harmful, since training in common sense is essential to the education of adolescents, so that that faculty should be developed as early as possible; else they break into odd or arrogant behavior when adulthood is

reached. It is a positive fact that, just as knowledge originates in truth and error in falsity, so common sense arises from perceptions based on verisimilitude. Probabilities stand, so to speak, midway between truth and falsity, since things which most of the time are true, are only very seldom false.

Consequently, since young people are to be educated in common sense, we should be careful to avoid that the growth of common sense be stifled in them by a habit of advanced speculative criticism. I may add that common sense, besides being the criterion of practical judgment, is also the guiding standard of eloquence. It frequently occurs, in fact, that orators in a law court have greater difficulty with a case which is based on truth, but does not seem so, than with a case that is false but plausible. There is a danger that instruction in advanced philosophical criticism may lead to an abnormal growth of abstract intellectualism, and render young people unfit for the practice of eloquence.

Our modern advocates of advanced criticism rank the unadulterated essence of "pure," primary truth before, outside, above the gross semblances of physical bodies. But this study of primal philosophical truths takes place at the same time when young minds are too immature, too unsure, to derive benefit from it.

Just as old age is powerful in reason, so is adolescence in imagination. Since imagination has always been esteemed a most favorable omen of future development, it should in no way be dulled. Furthermore, the teacher should give the greatest care to the cultivation of the pupil's memory, which, though not exactly the same as imagination, is almost identical with it. In adolescence, memory outstrips in vigor all other faculties, and should be intensely trained. Youth's natural inclination to the arts in which imagination or memory (or a combination of both) is prevalent (such as painting, poetry, oratory, jurisprudence) should by no means be blunted. Nor should advanced philosophical criticism, the common instrument today of all arts and sciences, be an impediment to any of them. The Ancients knew how to avoid this drawback. In almost all their schools for youths, the role of logic was fulfilled by geometry. Following the

example of medical practitioners, who concentrate their efforts on seconding the bent of Nature, the Ancients required their youths to learn the science of geometry which cannot be grasped without a vivid capacity to form images. Thus, without doing violence to nature, but gradually and gently and in step with the mental capacities of their age, the Ancients nurtured the reasoning powers of their young men.

In our days, instead, philosophical criticism alone is honored. The art of "topics," far from being given first place in the curriculum, is utterly disregarded. Again I say, this is harmful, since the invention of arguments is by nature prior to the judgment of their validity, so that, in teaching, that invention should be given priority over philosophical criticism. In our days, we keep away from the art of inventing arguments, and think that this skill is of no use. We hear people affirming that, if individuals are critically endowed, it is sufficient to teach them a certain subject, and they will have the capacity to discover whether there is any truth in that subject. It is claimed that, without any previous training in the *ars topica*, any person will be able to discern the probabilities which surround any ordinary topic, and to evaluate them by *the same standard employed in the sifting of truth*. But who can be sure that he has taken into consideration every feature of the subject on hand? The most eulogizing epithet that can be given to a speech is that it is "comprehensive": praise is due to the speaker who has left nothing untouched, and has omitted nothing from the argument, nothing which may be missed by his listeners.

Nature and life are full of incertitude; the foremost, indeed, the only aim of our "arts" is to assure us that we have acted rightly. Criticism is the art of true speech; "*ars topica*," of eloquence. Traditional "topics" is the art of finding "the *medium*," i.e., the middle term: in the conventional language of scholasticism, "medium" indicates what the Latins call *argumentum*. Those who know all the *loci*, i.e., the lines of argument to be used, are able (by an operation not unlike reading the printed characters on a page) to grasp extemporaneously the elements of persuasion inherent in any question or case. Individuals who have not achieved this ability hardly deserve the

name of orators. In pressing, urgent affairs, which do not admit of delay or postponement, as most frequently occurs in our law courts—especially when it is a question of criminal cases, which offer to the eloquent orator the greatest opportunity for the display of his powers—it is the orator's business to give *immediate* assistance to the accused, who is usually granted only a few hours in which to plead his defense. Our experts in philosophical criticism, instead, whenever they are confronted with some dubious point, are wont to say: "Give me some time to think it over!"

I may add that in the art of oratory the relationship between speaker and listeners is of the essence. It is in tune with the opinions of the audience that we have to arrange our speech. It often happens that people unmoved by forceful and compelling reasons can be jolted from their apathy, and made to change their minds by means of some trifling line of argument. Consequently, in order to be sure of having touched all the soul-strings of his listeners, the orator, then, should run through the complete set of the *loci* which schematize the evidence. It is quite unfair to blame Cicero for having insisted on many a point of little weight. It was exactly by those points of little weight that he was able to dominate the law courts, the Senate, and (most important of all) the Assemblies of the people. It was by that method that he became the speaker most worthy of being considered a representative of Rome's imperial greatness. Is it not significant that it is precisely the orator whose only concern is the bare truth who gets stranded in cases in which a different speaker succeeds in extricating himself, by paying attention to credibility as well as the facts? The contrast of opinion between Marcus Brutus and Cicero, regarding the manner in which each of them thought that the defense of Milo should be conducted, provides an instructive case for reflection.

Marcus Brutus, who had been trained in a kind of philosophical, rationalistic criticism closely akin to ours (for he was a Stoic), thought that Milo⁴ should be defended by throwing his case upon the judges' mercy, and that he should

⁴The tribune Milo was brought to trial for the murder of Clodius in 52 B.C.E. [Ed.]

seek acquittal on the ground of the distinguished services he had performed for the Republic, and on the ground of having rid Rome of Clodius, a noxious criminal.

Cicero, instead, an expert in the *ars topica*, deemed it unsafe to throw such a defendant upon the judges' indulgence, considering the conditions prevalent at that time. As a consequence, he based his defense speech entirely on conjectural reasons. Had he been given the chance of delivering that speech in court, he would certainly have brought about Milo's acquittal, as Milo himself declared.

Nevertheless, Antoine Arnauld,⁵ a man of commanding scholarship, scorns the *ars topica*, and considers it of absolutely no use.

Whom shall we believe? Arnauld, who rejects the *ars topica*, or Cicero, who asserts that his own eloquence is chiefly due to the art of skillfully arraying a set of effective lines of argument? Let others decide; as for me, I am unwilling to award to the one what I would have to take away from the other: I shall limit myself to stating that a severely intellectualistic criticism enables us to achieve truth, while *ars topica* makes us eloquent. In antiquity, the Stoics devoted themselves entirely to philosophical criticism, while the Academics cultivated topics. Similarly, today the jejune and aridly deductive reasoning in which the Stoics specialized is followed by the moderns, whereas the Aristotelians of the recent past are characterized by the varied and multi-form style of their utterance. . . .

It is significant that the representatives of the schools of ancient philosophy became the more eloquent in proportion as they were less inclined to a strictly philosophical criticism. The advocates of Stoicism (for whom, as for our *moderni*, pure reason is the regulative standard of truth), were the thinnest and leanest of all philosophers. The Epicureans, according to whom the regulative standard of truth resides in sense-perception, were simple in expression, and unfolded their doctrines in more detail. The ancient Academics instead, being disciples of Socrates who con-

tended that he knew nothing but his own ignorance, were masters of an overflowing and lavishly embellished expression. As for the neo-Academics, who admitted that they did not even know that they did not know anything, they overwhelmed their listeners with torrential outbursts and snowdrifts of oratory.

Both Stoics and Epicureans came out in support of only one side of the argument: Plato inclined towards one or the other side, depending on which appeared to him more probable; Carneades,⁶ instead, was wont to embrace both of the sides of any given controversy. He would, for instance, affirm one day that justice exists, another day, that it does not, bringing forth equally compelling arguments for both positions and displaying an unbelievable power of argumentation. This was due to the fact that whereas truth is *one*, probabilities are many, and falsehoods numberless.

Each procedure, then, has its defects. The specialists in topics fall in with falsehood; the philosophical critics disdain any traffic with probability.

To avoid both defects, I think, young men should be taught the totality of sciences and arts, and their intellectual powers should be developed to the full; thus they will become familiar with the art of argument, drawn from the *ars topica*. At the very outset, their common sense should be strengthened so that they can grow in prudence and eloquence. Let their imagination and memory be fortified so that they may be effective in those arts in which fantasy and the mnemonic faculty are predominant. At a later stage let them learn criticism, so that they can apply the fullness of their personal judgment to what they have been taught. And let them develop skill in debating on either side of any proposed argument.

Were this done, young students, I think, would become exact in science, clever in practical matters, fluent in eloquence, imaginative in understanding poetry or painting, and strong in memorizing what they have learned in their legal studies.

They would not feel the impulse to step rashly

⁵Coauthor (with Pierre Nicole) of the 1662 *Port-Royal Logic*. (See the introduction to Part Four.) [Ed.]

⁶A skeptical philosopher of the second century B.C.E. [Ed.]

into discussions while they are still in process of learning; nor would they, with pedestrian slavishness, refuse to accept any viewpoint unless it has been sanctioned by a teacher. In this sphere, the Ancients seem to me to be superior to us.

A five-year period of silence was enjoined upon all of Pythagoras' students. After that time, they were allowed to maintain what they had learned, but had to ground their reasons only upon the authority of their master. "He said it," was their motto. The chief duty of a student of philosophy was to listen. Most appropriately were they called "auditors."

Arnauld himself, although his words seem to spurn this procedure, actually confirms and professes what I am stating. His treatise on *Logic* is replete with far-fetched and involved illustrations, with difficult examples drawn from the deep storehouses of each discipline. Naturally, these illustrations and examples prove to be unintelligible to the young student, unless he is already more than proficient in those arts and sciences from which those supporting materials are taken, and unless his teacher devotes great efforts and a great deal of eloquent skill to the explanation of them. If logic is studied at the terminal stage of the school curriculum, these deficiencies, besides those I have mentioned before, are avoided. What Arnauld presents, though he provides useful examples, is hardly to be understood; the materials offered by the Aristotelians, instead, though perfectly intelligible, are of no use whatever. . . .

VII

But the greatest drawback of our educational methods is that we pay an excessive amount of attention to the natural sciences and not enough to ethics. Our chief fault is that we disregard that part of ethics which treats of human character, of its dispositions, its passions, and of the manner of adjusting these factors to public life and eloquence. We neglect that discipline which deals with the differential features of the virtues and vices, with good and bad behavior-patterns, with the typical characteristics of the various ages of man, of the two sexes, of social and economic class, race, and nation, and with the art of seemly

conduct in life, the most difficult of all arts. As a consequence of this neglect, a noble and important branch of studies, i.e., the science of politics, lies almost abandoned and untended.

Since, in our time, the only target of our intellectual endeavors is truth, we devote all our efforts to the investigation of physical phenomena, because their nature seems unambiguous; but we fail to inquire into human nature which, because of the freedom of man's will, is difficult to determine. A serious drawback arises from the uncontrasted preponderance of our interest in the natural sciences.

Our young men, because of their training, which is focused on these studies, are unable to engage in the life of the community, to conduct themselves with sufficient wisdom and prudence; nor can they infuse into their speech a familiarity with human psychology or permeate their utterances with passion. When it comes to the matter of prudential behavior in life, it is well for us to keep in mind that human events are dominated by Chance and Choice, which are extremely subject to change and which are strongly influenced by simulation and dissimulation (both preeminently deceptive things). As a consequence, those whose only concern is abstract truth experience great difficulty in achieving their means, and greater difficulty in attaining their ends. Frustrated in their own plans, deceived by the plans of others, they often throw up the game. Since, then, the course of action in life must consider the importance of the single events and their circumstances, it may happen that many of these circumstances are extraneous and trivial, some of them bad, some even contrary to one's goal. It is therefore impossible to assess human affairs by the inflexible standard of abstract right; we must rather gauge them by the pliant Lesbian rule, which does not conform bodies to itself, but adjusts itself to their contours.

The difference, therefore, between abstract knowledge and prudence is this: in science, the outstanding intellect is that which succeeds in reducing a large multitude of physical effects to a single cause; in the domain of prudence, excellence is accorded to those who ferret out the greatest possible number of causes which may have produced a single event, and who are able

to conjecture which of all these causes is the true one. Abstract knowledge—science—is concerned with the highest verity; common sense, instead, with the lowliest. On the basis of this, the distinguished features of the various types of men should be marked out: the fool, the astute ignoramus, the learned man destitute of prudence, and the sage. In the conduct of life the fool, for instance, pays no attention to the highest or the meanest truths; the astute ignoramus notices the meanest but is unable to perceive the highest; the man who is learned but destitute of prudence, deduces the lowest truths from the highest; the sage, instead, derives the highest truths from the unimportant ones. Abstract, or general truths are eternal; concrete or specific ones change momentarily from truths or untruths. Eternal truths stand above nature; in nature, instead, everything is unstable, mutable. But congruity exists between goodness and truth; they partake of the same essence, of the same qualities. Accordingly, the fool, who is ignorant of both general and particular truths, constantly suffers prompt penalties for his arrogance. The astute ignoramus, who is able to grasp particular truths but incapable of conceiving a general truth, finds that cleverness, which is useful to him today, may be harmful to him tomorrow. The learned but imprudent individual, traveling in a straight line from general truths to particular ones, bulls his way through the tortuous paths of life. But the sage who, through all the obliquities and uncertainties of human actions and events, keeps his eye steadily focused on eternal truth, manages to follow a roundabout way whenever he cannot travel in a straight line, and makes decisions, in the field of action, which, in the course of time, prove to be as profitable as the nature of things permits.

Therefore, it is an error to apply to the prudent conduct of life the abstract criterion of reasoning that obtains in the domain of science. A correct judgment deems that men—who are, for the most part, but fools—are ruled, not by forethought, but by whim or chance. The doctrinaires judge human actions as they *ought* to be, not as they actually are (i.e., performed more or less at random). Satisfied with abstract truth alone, and not being gifted with common sense, unused to following probability, those doctrinaires do not

bother to find out whether their opinion is held by the generality and whether the things that are truths to them are also such to other people.

This failure to concern themselves with the opinions of others has not only been a source of blame, but has proved to be extremely prejudicial, not only to private persons but to eminent leaders and great rulers as well. Let an example which is right to the point be quoted here: While the assembly of the French Estates was in session, Henry III, King of France, ordered Duke Henry de Guise, a very popular member of the French aristocracy, to be put to death, in spite of the fact that the Duke was under the protection of a safe conduct. Although just cause underlay that order of the king, such cause was not made manifest. The case having been brought up in Rome, Cardinal Ludovico Madrucci, a man of great judgment in public affairs, commented: "Rulers should see to it not only that their actions are true and in conformity with justice, but that they also *seem* to be so."

Madrucci's statement was proved true by the calamities which overtook France shortly after.

The Romans, who were great experts in political matters, paid particular attention to appearances. Both their judges and their senators, on giving out an opinion, were always wont to say: "It seems."

To summarize: It was because of their knowledge of the greatest affairs that philosophers were, by the Greeks, called "politici," i.e., experts in matters bearing on the total life of the body politic. Subsequently, philosophers were called Peripatetics and Academics, these names being derived from two small sections of the town of Athens, where their schools stood. Among the Ancients, the teaching of rational, physical, and ethical doctrines was entrusted to philosophers who took good care to adjust those doctrines to the practical common sense that should govern human behavior.

Today, on the contrary, we seem to have reverted to the type of physical research which was typical of pre-Socratic times.

There was an epoch when the "fourfold philosophy" (i.e., logic, physics, metaphysics, and ethics) was handed down by its teachers in a manner fitted to foster eloquence: i.e., the attempt

was made to fuse philosophy with eloquence. Demosthenes was a product of the Lyceum; Cicero, of the Academy: there is no doubt that they were the two foremost speakers of the two most splendid of languages. Today, those branches of philosophical theory are taught by such a method as to dry up every fount of convincing expression, of copious, penetrating, embellished, lucid, developed, psychologically effective, and impassionate utterance. The listeners' minds undergo a process of constriction, so as to assume the shape of those young virgins.

. . . whom their mothers compel to bend their shoulders, to stoop, to bind their bosom in order to achieve slimness; if one of the girls is fleshier, they call her "the boxer" and stint her on food; if by nature she is healthy, they reduce her, by a special cure, to the slenderness of a reed.

[Terence, *The Eunuch* II.iii.23-26]

Here some learned pundit might object that, in the conduct of life, I would have our young students become courtiers, and not philosophers; pay little attention to truth and follow not reality but appearances; and cast down morality and put on a deceitful "front" of virtue.

I have no such intention. Instead, I should like to have them act as philosophers, even at court; to care for truth that both is and has the appearance of truth, and to follow that which is morally good and which everybody approves.

As for eloquence, the same men assert that the modern study methods, far from being detrimental, are most useful to it. "How much preferable it is," they say, "to induce persuasion by solid arguments based on truth, to produce such an effect on the mind that, once that truth coalesces with reason, it can never again be separated from it, rather than to coerce the listener's soul by meretriciously eloquent allurements, but blazes of oratorical fire which, as soon as they are extinguished, cause him to revert to his original disposition!"

The answer is that eloquence does not address itself to the rational part of our nature, but almost entirely to our passions. The rational part in us

may be taken captive by a net woven of purely intellectual reasonings, but the passional side of our nature can never be swayed and overcome unless this is done by more sensuous and materialistic means. The role of eloquence is to persuade; an orator is persuasive when he calls forth in his hearers the mood which he desires. Wise men induce this condition in themselves by an act of volition. This volition, in perfect obedience, follows the dictates of their intellect; consequently, it is enough for the speaker to point their duty to such wise men, and they do it. But the multitude, the *vulgus*, are overpowered and carried along by their appetite, which is tumultuous and turbulent; their soul is tainted, having contracted a contagion from the body, so that it follows the nature of the body, and is not moved except by bodily things. Therefore, the soul must be enticed by corporeal images and impelled to love; for once it loves, it is easily taught to believe; once it believes and loves, the fire of passion must be infused into it so as to break its inertia and force it to *will*. Unless the speaker can compass these three things, he has not achieved the effect of persuasion; he has been powerless to convince.

Two things only are capable of turning to good use the agitations of the soul, those evils of the inward man which spring from a single source: desire. One is philosophy, which acts to mitigate passions in the soul of the sage, so that those passions are transformed into virtues; the other is eloquence, which kindles these passions in the common sort, so that they perform the duties of virtue.

It may be objected that the form of government under which we live at present no longer allows eloquence to exercise its control over free peoples. To which I answer that we ought to be thankful to our monarchs for governing us not by fist but by laws. However, even under the republican form of government, orators have gained distinction by their fluent, broad, impassioned style of delivery in the law courts, the assemblies, and the religious convocations, to the greatest advantage of the state, and to the signal enrichment of our language.

But let us approach what may be a basic point. The French language is abundantly endowed

with words designating abstract ideas. Now, abstraction is in itself but a dull and inert thing, and does not allow the comparative degree. This makes it impossible for the French to impart an ardently emotional tone to their ideas, inasmuch as such an effect can only be achieved by setting thought in motion, and a vehement motion at that; nor can they amplify or elevate their discourse. Nor can they invert the order of words: the conceptual abstraction being the most general category, it does not supply us with that "middle term" where the extreme points of a metaphor are able to meet and unite. It is therefore impossible in French for a single noun to be the vehicle of a metaphor; and metaphors composed of two nouns are, as a rule, somewhat stilted. Furthermore, when the French writers attempt the periodic style, they are unable to get very far, on account of the shortness of the sentence segments. Nor can French poets compose lines of greater breadth than those which are called "alexandrines"; and these alexandrines, besides consisting of two symmetrical portions, are more dragging and spindly than the Latin elegiac lines. (Each verse contains a simple thought, and they rhyme in pairs; the first feature reduces their scope, the second impairs their gravity.) French words have only two kinds of stress; they are accented on the ultima and on the penult, whereas Italian stresses the antepenult. In French the accent shifts to the penult, which results in a somewhat tenuous and thin sound. For these reasons, French is not fit for stately prose, nor for sublime verse. But though the French language cannot rise to any great sublimity or splendor, it is admirably suited to the subtle style. Rich in substantives, especially those denoting what the Scholastics call abstract essences, the French language can always condense into a small compass the essentials of things. Since arts and sciences are mostly concerned with general notions, French is therefore splendidly suited to the didactic genre. While we Italians praise our orators for fluency, lucidity, and eloquence, the French praise theirs for reasoning truly. Whenever the French wish to designate the mental faculty by which we rapidly, aptly, and felicitously couple things which stand apart, they call it *esprit*, and are inclined to view as a naive, simple trick what

we consider as forceful power of combination; their minds, characterized by exceeding penetration, do not excel in synthetic power, but in piercing subtlety of reasoning. Consequently, if there is any truth in this statement, which is the theme of a famous debate, "genius is a product of language, not language of genius," we must recognize that the French are the only people who, thanks to the subtlety of their language, were able to invent the new philosophical criticism which seems so thoroughly intellectualistic, and analytical geometry, by which the subject matter of mathematics is, as far as possible, stripped of all concrete, figural elements, and reduced to pure rationality. The French are in the habit of praising the kind of eloquence which characterizes their language, i.e., an eloquence characterized by great fidelity to truth and subtlety, as well as by its notable deductive order. We Italians, instead, are endowed with a language which constantly evokes images. We stand far above other nations by our achievements in the fields of painting, sculpture, architecture, and music. Our language, thanks to its perpetual dynamism, forces the attention of the listeners by means of metaphorical expressions, and prompts it to move back and forth between ideas which are far apart. In the keenness of their perception, the Italians are second only to the Spaniards. Theirs is a language which, in the rich and elevated style (i.e., that of Herodotus, Livy, and Cicero), possesses a Guicciardini; in the grand and vehement style of Thucydides, Demosthenes, and Sallust, it has others; in Attic elegance, it has Boccaccio; in the new lyric style, Petrarch. Ariosto, in the grandeur of his plots and the ease of his diction, puts one in mind of Homer; while a poet like Tasso, by the enchantingly musical sublimity of his rhyme, comes fully up to Virgil. Shall we then not cultivate a language possessing such felicitous qualities?

In conclusion: whosoever intends to devote his efforts, not to physics or mechanics, but to a political career, whether as a civil servant or as a member of the legal profession or of the judiciary, a political speaker or a pulpit orator, should not waste too much time, in his adolescence, on those subjects which are taught by abstract geometry. Let him, instead, cultivate his mind with an inge-

nious method; let him study topics, and defend both sides of a controversy, be it on nature, man, or politics, in a freer and brighter style of expression. Let him not spurn reasons that wear a semblance of probability and verisimilitude. Let our efforts not be directed towards achieving superiority over the Ancients merely in the field of science, while they surpass us in wisdom; let us not be merely more exact and more true than the Ancients, while allowing them to be more eloquent than we are; let us equal the Ancients in the fields of wisdom and eloquence as we excel them in the domain of science. . . .

XIV

As for universities, the amazing fact is that, whereas the Ancients possessed, so to speak, universities for the body, i.e., baths and athletic fields, where young men could develop their strength and agility by exercises such as racing, jumping, boxing, javelin- and discus-throwing, swimming and bathing, they never thought of establishing universities where young minds could be cultivated and strengthened.

In Greece, a single philosopher synthesized in himself a whole university. The Greek language, so fertile in potential developments that it was admirably fitted to express not only all the occurrences of common, everyday life, but the most recondite and abstruse ideas of all sciences and arts in apt terms, the beauty of which terms was commensurate with their appropriateness and felicity; the Greek genius for lawmaking, which was so exceptional that other nations came to borrow laws from Greece while Greece had no necessity to borrow from them—these fostered among the Hellenes the conviction of their immense superiority over other nations. They were wont to ask a question, acutely symptomatic of national conceit: “Art thou a Greek or a barbarian?” as if they esteemed themselves to be worth as much as half of the world, and to be the better part of it.

Things being so, since the Greeks devoted intense, undivided attention to the cultivation of philosophy, the mother, midwife, and nursling of all sciences and arts; since they did not, in the philosophical domain, rely on authority, but dis-

cussed all problems on no other merits but the intrinsic ones, each Greek philosopher was capable of achieving a mastery of all learning, both secular and religious, and it was from him alone that students learned thoroughly whatever it was necessary for them to know in the field of public affairs.

With the Romans, the case was different. Although their speech was not autochthonous but derived from other tongues, they proudly sprung all effort to prove that a Roman word derived from other languages. In the case of the words,

... which fall from Grecian well-spring, but slightly changed,

[Horace, *Ars Poetica* 53]

they preferred the frivolous, erroneous, foolish interpretation, rather than admit that one of their terms had non-native origins. Although their laws had largely been borrowed from Greece, they expended great ingenuity in grafting those enactments onto their own political system, so that they seemed to spring spontaneously from their soil. In respect to both language and law, the Romans equaled the Greeks. The need for universities was felt by the Romans even less than by the Greeks, since, as I have pointed out, they thought that wisdom consisted in the art and practice of law, and learned to master it in the everyday experience of political affairs. Since the patricians kept law-lore concealed, as if it were an *arcanum* of state, far from feeling any need for universities, the Romans had no interest whatever in establishing them.

But with the transformation of republic into principate, it being in the interest of the emperors that the science of law should be propagated as legal doctrine, this discipline gradually attained greater range and compass through the multitude of writers and their division into doctrinal schools. Regular institutions of teaching were recognized, and the “Academies” of Rome, Constantinople, and Beirut were founded.

Our need for universities is considerably greater. We must have a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures and, in addition, of Eastern languages and of the canons of the ecclesiastic Councils, some of which were held in Asia, some in Europe, some in Africa, in different countries

and cities, from apostolic to modern times. We must familiarize ourselves with the laws of Romans and Lombards, with feudal law, the theories of Greeks, Latins, and Arabs, which were introduced into our customary public law. We must guard against scribal garblings, plagiarisms, forgeries, interpolations of alien hands through which it is difficult for us to recognize the originals, and to grasp the author's true meaning. What we need to know is contained in so many books in languages that are extinct, composed by authors belonging to nations long since vanished. These books contain allusions to custom often unknown, in corrupted codices; therefore the attainment of any science or art has become so difficult for us, that at the present time no person can master even a single subject. This has made the establishment of universities necessary. In these universities, all branches of knowledge are taught by a number of scholars, each of whom is outstanding in his particular field. But this advantage is offset by a drawback. Arts and sciences, all of which in the past were embraced by philosophy and animated by it with a unitary spirit, are, in our day, unnaturally separated and disjointed. In antiquity, philosophers were remarkable for their coherence; their conduct was in full accord not only with the theories they professed but with their method of expounding them as well. Socrates, who maintained that "he knew nothing," never brought up any subject for discussion on his own initiative, but pretended to feel a desire to learn from the Sophists. His habit was to confine himself to advancing a series of minute questions, from the replies to which he drew his own inferences. The Stoics, instead, whose main principle was that the mind is the standard of all things, and that the sage should not entertain "mere opinions" about anything, established, in conformity with their requirements, a number of unquestionable truths, linking them, by continuous concatenation, through secondary propositions, to doubtful conclusions; and employed as their instrument of argumentation the figure of the *sorites*.⁷ Aristotle, who thought that in the at-

⁷A *sorites* is a chain of syllogisms in which the conclusion or implied conclusion of each one is the premise, major or minor, of another one. [Ed.]

tainment of truth the senses and the mind should co-operate, made use of the syllogism, by which he posited some universal propositions, so as to be able, in concrete cases, to eliminate dubiousness and to reach truth. Epicurus, for whom sense perception was the only avenue of approach to knowledge, neither granted any proposition to his opponents, nor allowed them to grant any to him, but explained phenomena in the simplest and most unadorned language.

Today, students who may be trained in the art of discourse by an Aristotelian, are taught physics by an Epicurean, metaphysics by a Cartesian. They may learn the theory of medicine from a Galenist, its practice from a chemist; they may receive instruction in the Institutes of Justinian from a disciple of Accursius, be trained in the Pandects by a follower of Antoine Favre, in the *Codex* by a pupil of Alciati.⁸ Students' education is so warped and perverted as a consequence, that, although they may become extremely learned in some respects, their culture on the whole (and the whole is really the flower of wisdom) is incoherent. To avoid this serious drawback, I would suggest that our professors should so co-ordinate all disciplines into a single system so as to harmonize them with our religion and with the spirit of the political form under which we live. In this way, a coherent body of learning having been established, it will be possible to teach it according to the genius of our public polity.

XV

I have now set forth the remarks suggested to me by the comparison of the study methods of our time with those of antiquity, and by a confrontation of their respective advantages and disadvantages, so that our methods may be more correct and finer in every respect.

If my ideas are true, I shall have reaped the supreme fruit of my existence. It has been my

⁸The Institutes of Justinian (sixth century C.E.) codify Roman law. The Pandects are a digest of that law. The *Codex* is the code of canon law of the Roman Catholic church. Vico's point is that related branches of a subject may be taught by adherents of conflicting theories or approaches. [Ed.]

constant effort, within the very limited range of my powers, to be useful to human society. But if my remarks should be considered false or lacking in practicality, my unquestionably honorable ambition and my earnest efforts towards a grand goal shall earn me a pardon.

It may be objected that, whereas facing danger when necessary is a sign of courage, undertaking a risk when there is no need of doing so is a sign of foolhardiness. "Why should you have undertaken to treat this subject which involves a knowledge of all sciences?"—some one will ask.

In answer, I will say: As G. B. Vico, I have no concern; but as a professor of eloquence, great concern in this undertaking. Our ancestors, the founders of this University, clearly showed, by assigning the professor of eloquence the task of delivering every year a speech exhorting our students to the study of the principles of various sciences and arts, that they felt he should be well versed in all fields of knowledge. Nor was it without reason that the great man, Bacon, when called upon to give advice to James, King of England, concerning the organization of a university, insisted that young scholars should not be admitted to the study of eloquence unless they had previously studied their way through the whole curriculum of learning.

What is eloquence, in effect, but wisdom, orately and copiously delivered in words appropriate to the common opinion of mankind? Shall the professor of eloquence, to whom no student may have access unless previously trained in all sciences and arts, be ignorant of those subjects which are required by his teaching duties? The man who is deputed to exhort young students to grapple with all kinds of disciplines, and to discourse about their advantages and disadvantages, so that they may attain those and escape these, should he not be competent to expound his opinions on such knowledge?

For these reasons, teachers willing to bear this burden (a burden, I fear, vastly surpassing the strength of my shoulders) deserve to be likened, I feel, to C. Cilnius Maecenas, Crispus Sallustius, and other *equites illustres*, who, though possessed of financial means superior to those which the law prescribed for admission to senatorial

rank, insisted on their wish to remain within the equestrian order.⁹ It was, therefore, not my duty alone as professor of eloquence, but my right as well to take up the subject of this discourse. What determined me was by no means the desire to diminish the prestige of a colleague or to place myself in the spotlight.

As you saw, whenever drawbacks had to be pointed out, I passed individual authors in silence; and whenever it was necessary to mention these authors, I did it with the utmost respect, since it was not for an unimportant man like me to censure persons so eminently great. As for the drawbacks, I sedulously set them forth as unobtrusively as possible.

From childhood, I have imposed on myself this rule (which the weakness of my fellow men has made a sacred one), to be as indulgent to the shortcomings of others as I would like others to be indulgent to my own, especially since others may have done many important things well, and failed only in a few cases, whereas I may have been guilty of countless errors in matters requiring but little ability.

In the present discourse, I have carefully refrained from any boasting; though my speech could have been pompously entitled "On the reconciliation of the study methods of antiquity with those of our time," I have preferred a more modest and usual designation. My purpose has been

not to draw smoke from the brightness of light, but to bring out light from smokey murk.

[Horace, *Ars Poetica* 143]

I chose not to clothe my thought in high-sounding words, lest I should offend the intelligence of this assembly of listeners, every member of which knows how to reason with his own head and is fully conscious of his right to judge any author as he thinks best.

But, someone will object, "You were certainly bragging when you said that your theme was new." Not in the least. The fact that a theme is new is not automatically a recommendation; monstrous and ridiculous things may also be

⁹These illustrious members of the wealthy (but not patrician) equestrian class chose public service without the honor of official rank and title. [Ed.]

novelties. But to bring forward new things and to treat them in the right manner is unquestionably worthy of praise. Whether I did so, or not, I shall leave to the judgment of my listeners and to the common judgment of scholars, from whom, I vow, I shall never depart. In my life I have always had the greatest apprehension of being alone in wisdom; this kind of solitude exposes one to the danger of becoming either a god or a fool.

But, it will be urged, you have shown yourself thoroughly presumptuous in choosing a subject where you had to show a mastery of all learned disciplines and where you had to pass peremptory and pretentious judgment on them, as if you had been fully and deeply familiar with every one of them. To fend off the objection, I beg whosoever wants to press it to reflect on the kinds of judgments I have passed. Let him observe that a certain doctrine may be either beneficial or prejudicial to some persons; let him ascertain how the harm that such doctrine is likely to cause may be avoided. He will find out that judgment cannot be passed except by a man who has studied all of these matters, but

of all these things, no one more deeply than all others,
yet all of them indeed, in moderation.

[Terence, *The Lady of Andros* 58–59]

It is a common experience to see an individual who has concentrated all of his efforts on a single branch of study, and who has spent all his life on it, think that this field is, by far, more important than all others, and to see him inclined to make application of its specialty to matters wholly foreign to it. This may be due to the weakness of our nature, which prompts us to take an inordinate delight in ourselves and in our own pursuits.

Though I am afraid of delivering false judgments on all subjects, I am particularly afraid of advancing erroneous views on eloquence, since I profess it.

After stating this in defense of my assignment and of the way I have discharged it, permit me to say that I shall be greatly indebted to any one who wishes to criticize with pertinence and with concrete reference to their intrinsic purport, the points that I have brought up, so as to free me from eventual errors. He will be certain to enlist my gratitude by his mere intent to do so.

Thomas Sheridan

1719–1788

Thomas Sheridan received a classical education from his father, the schoolmaster Dr. Thomas Sheridan, and in 1743 received an M.A. from Trinity College, Dublin. He began a career as a stage actor and became known as quite a good one, appearing in 1744 with the popular actor David Garrick, with whom he was favorably compared. Sheridan's son, Richard Brinsley Sheridan, became the now-famous playwright.

Thomas Sheridan was the godson of Jonathan Swift, to whose influence he attributed much of his passion for the English language, as well as his Augustan attitude toward the ancients. Like Swift, Sheridan endorsed the idea of “ascertaining” the language by establishing fixed rules for usage.

It was Sheridan's consuming interest in correcting the language that led him to forgo his acting career and become a proselytizer for elocution, although he continued to act on occasion and to manage theater companies for many years. His chief activity from 1756 to 1762 was giving his very successful lecture course, an endeavor repeated intermittently until as late as 1785. The *Lectures on Elocution* (excerpted here) were published in 1762; in later years, Sheridan published *A Plan of Education* (1769), *Lectures on the Art of Reading* (1775), and *A General Dictionary of the English Language* (1780). All these works reiterated in some form the argument that Sheridan had first made in 1756, in a work called *British Education: Or, The Source of the Disorders of Great Britain. Being an Essay towards proving, that the Immorality, Ignorance, and false Taste, which so generally prevail, are the natural and necessary Consequences of the present defective System of Education. With an attempt to shew, that a revival of the Art of Speaking, and the Study of Our Own Language, might contribute, in a great measure, to the Cure of those Evils*. The subtitle goes on to indicate that the revival of oratory and its elevation to the status it held in ancient Athens and Rome would improve religion, morality, and the fine arts and support the British constitution. The connection made here between “Immorality, Ignorance, and false Taste” is typically Augustan: From a knowledge and proper appreciation of classical culture (beginning, for Sheridan, with oratory), it follows as the night the day that one's moral values will rise to the corresponding level. Sheridan notes that the British, because of their superior religion and form of government, can rise even higher than the ancients. Oratory is the cornerstone of this enterprise precisely because it combines the arts with practical political use.

Sheridan thus found an ideal forum for his own talents and interests, and he was encouraged by the contemporary desire for linguistic self-improvement and educational reform (see the introduction to Part Four). He argues, too, that just as language is the medium of reason, so voice and gesture are “the natural language of the passions.” John Locke (p. 814) had demonstrated the former connection, but the latter, says Sheridan, needs further philosophical investigation. Sheridan's lectures appeal to science, reverence for the ancients, linguistic anxiety (the popular passion

for speaking correctly), and morality, bringing to bear every possible argument for the importance of elocution. The very excess of this insistent overvaluation of elocution led to criticism and undervaluation of Sheridan's project. But his arguments are not without substance, and his principles for public speaking are familiar and reasonable. His practical instruction consists primarily of advice to be natural, to treat public speaking as a form of conversation, to adhere to correct grammar and usage, and to practice, for reasons of social expediency, the refined dialect of the educated English. He cautions against reading-pronunciation (e.g., pronouncing "often" with the "t") and urges speakers to attend to the meaning of sentences to determine the placement of emphasis and pauses. Gestures should also be natural. But, he notes, the meaning of gestures is conventional; they are actions attached to ideas: *Natural* therefore means "not mechanical," rather than "springing from human nature."

The short extract included here contains Sheridan's argument about the relationship between verbal and nonverbal communication. It is a good example of both the sophistication and the peculiarity of Sheridan's approach. Though Sheridan's own fame diminished, his work spawned many imitators, and the substance of his lectures was abstracted into many textbooks, most notably Hugh Blair's popular and long-lived *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*. The elocution courses, often required, that appeared in colleges in Britain and the United States from Sheridan's time to ours show the power of the ideas that Thomas Sheridan so decisively formulated.

Selected Bibliography

Our excerpt is from the facsimile, reprinted without notes or introduction in 1968, of the first edition of 1762, entitled *A Course of Lectures on Elocution*. It is bound with several shorter works on language, a plan for a grammar, and an article on teaching English as a second language. The Augustan Reprint Society has published a facsimile of Sheridan's 1759 *A Discourse Being Introductory to His Course of Lectures on Elocution and the English Language* with a brief but helpful introduction by G. P. Mohrmann (1969).

Though often dismissed as a crank, Sheridan is treated positively in William Benzie's biography, *The Dublin Orator: Thomas Sheridan's Influence on Eighteenth-Century Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* (Leeds, 1972), and in Wallace Bacon's "The Elocutionary Career of Thomas Sheridan (1719–1788)" (*Speech Monographs* 31 [March 1964]: 1–53). In *Things, Thought, Words and Actions: The Problem of Language in Late Eighteenth-Century British Rhetorical Theory* (1994), H. Lewis Ulman places Sheridan in the context of eighteenth-century rhetoric, relating him especially to Campbell and Blair, and praises his conceptualization of words as actions and language as performance. W. S. Howell discusses Sheridan's work sympathetically in *Eighteenth-Century British Logic and Rhetoric* (1971).

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A Course of Lectures on Elocution

Lecture VI

TONES

Thus far, I have considered the several points, that are fundamentally, and essentially necessary, to every public speaker; without which he will be so far from making any impression on his hearers, that he will not be able to command their attention, nor, in many cases, even make himself understood.

Yet so low is the state of elocution amongst us, that a man who is master even of these rudiments of rhetoric, is comparatively considered, as one of an excellent delivery. This very circumstance therefore, is a sufficient inducement, to apply closely, at least to the mastery of these points.

But when a man has got so far, as I can see no reason that he should stop there, or that he should not farther endeavour, to make himself master of every thing, which can add grace, or force to his delivery; I shall now attempt to lay open the principles, that may serve as guides to him, in the use of the two remaining articles, tones, and gesture: upon which, all that is pleasurable, or affecting in elocution, chiefly depend.

Before I enter upon the subject of tones, it will be necessary to fix, the precise meaning, of the term language; to know what it comprehends, and what are its bounds.

I dare say there are few, who would not think it an affront offered to their understandings, if they were asked, "what they mean by the term language?" as being a thing, which every rational creature, is supposed necessarily to know. And I fancy, upon such a question's being proposed, the first thought that would occur to every one, who had not properly considered the point, is, that language is composed of words. And yet, this is so far from being an adequate idea of language, that the point in which most men think its very essence to consist, is not even a necessary property of language. For language, in its full extent, means, any way or method whatsoever, by which all that passes in the mind of one man,

may be manifested to another. And as this is chiefly done by an agreement in the use of certain signs, it is no matter what those signs are; there being little or no natural connection, between any verbal signs and our ideas, which is sufficiently evinced, by the variety of languages that are spoken, in the different countries of the world.

It is true, the facility with which the communication is carried on, by means of the organs of speech, preferably to any other method; together with some other reasons, which need not here be enumerated, have made mankind in general agree, in making articulate sounds or words, the symbols of their ideas; but we have ample proof, that this did not arise from a principle of necessity, but conveniency. For they who are born deaf, can make themselves understood by visible signs; and we have it on the best authority, that the Mimes of the Ancients, were perfectly intelligible, without the use of words. But why need I mention these, when every one who can read knows, that our thoughts may be communicated by visible marks, as well as by articulate sounds?

I am aware it will be said, that written language is only a copy of that which is spoken, and has a constant reference to articulation; the characters upon paper, being only symbols of articulate sounds.

But tho' all who are blest with the gift of speech, by constantly associating the ideas of articulate sounds, to those characters which they see on paper, come to imagine that there is a necessary connection between them, and that the one, is merely a symbol of the other; yet, that it is in itself, a manner of communication entirely different, and utterly independent of the other, we have ample demonstration from this; that it can be perfectly understood by those, who never had, nor ever could have, the least idea of an articulate sound. This has been fully proved, in the case of many persons born deaf, who yet could read, and understand written language perfectly well, and write their thoughts with accuracy.

It may at first view be thought, that I am labouring a point, of little or no consequence,

farther than speculation; but as I think I shall be able to shew, that this fundamental error with regard to our general idea of language, in confining it to such narrow bounds, has had a remarkable effect upon our practice; and that some of its noblest uses have been lost to us, thro' the want of a just notion of its comprehension; it must be granted, that before I proceed, it will be necessary, in the fullest manner, to clear up that point. The allowed utility of any measure, must be the first inducement, to enter on the pursuit of it; and the reasonableness of it must be shewn, before its utility will be allowed.

In civilized countries, possessed of the collected wisdom of ages in books, the learned think they know, or have it in their power to know every thing that it is possible for the human mind to be acquainted with. In vain have several new and important discoveries, made in latter ages, as well as in our own times, shewn how ill founded this opinion is. Learned vanity, which exceeds that of every other kind, still takes up arms against any thing that is offered as new. And even amongst the most candid, on account of the many pretensions that have been made to new discoveries, which have ended in smoke, the understanding is exceedingly on its guard, on such occasions; doubts of every thing that is offered to it, which does not carry conviction; and will scarcely admit of any conclusion, that does not amount to demonstration. This is the case even in subjects that are in themselves new, and which therefore have no prejudices to encounter: But when the subject happens to be of that kind which is open to all the world; which has not only been an object of enquiry and examination, in theory, but is also to be viewed in universal practice; and therefore is of that sort, about which all mankind have formed certain opinions, or judgements; it is evident, that the prepossessions to be encountered in that case, must be much stronger; and that nothing is likely to remove them, but necessary conclusions, drawn from self-evident premises.

Of this nature, is the subject of language; which being used by all mankind is of all others, the subject which mankind in general, think themselves best acquainted with, and that, of which they have the clearest and fullest compre-

hension. And yet it is of all others, that of which the most erroneous opinions are entertained, and with whose true nature, mankind in general are least acquainted. The reason of this might be clearly shewn, were there time now for such an enquiry; but it ought to make the most knowing and learned of men, doubtful of their judgements in this article, when it is considered with what candour, the clear-sighted and judicious Locke, has acknowledged his error in that point; and his ignorance of the true state of language, till the precision, necessary to his subject, compelled him to strict scrutiny into its nature: in consequence of which, he was divested of the prejudices, that he had imbibed from custom and education. With what ingenuous modesty has he confessed, that consciousness of error, first gave rise to those new and important discoveries, laid open in the third book of his Essay, in which he treats of words! Where he says, "I must confess that when I first began this discourse of the understanding, and a good while after, I had not the least thought, that any consideration of words, was at all necessary to it." And yet this great man found, that he could not proceed himself with any certainty, or manifest his thoughts to others with any clearness, till he had first written an entire book upon that point, which he acknowledges he had before thought, utterly unnecessary; and till he had set himself right, as well as the rest of the world, in the mistaken notions entertained of language.

What a pity is it, that this penetrating writer, did not carry his enquiries farther into this important subject, as he seems in one place to promise. We might then have had, as accurate a knowledge, of the whole of language, as we now have, of that part of it which he had laid open to us. But he confined himself entirely to that branch of language, which related to his subject, as enquiry into the human understanding; his only object was, to examine the nature of words, as symbols of our ideas: whilst the nobler branch of language, which consists of the signs of internal emotions, was untouched by him as foreign to his purpose. And however we may be indebted to him, for the new lights which he has given us into the subject, so far as he has gone; yet it is to be feared, that by stopping there, he has not a

little contributed, to the confined view which we have of language, in considering it, as made up wholly of words.

Our pains with respect to language, are at present limited, to the narrow conception which we have of it; and therefore are wholly confined to the knowledge and use of words: and I think I may venture to appeal to my hearers, whether this is not the generally received opinion? and whether he, who perfectly understands the meaning of the words, and has the right use of them at command, is not thought to be a master of language? Yet, if it can be shewn that this is only a part of language; if it can be shewn that it has other parts, absolutely necessary to the communication of what passes in our minds, which can not possibly be done by mere words; and that too in order to answer some of the noblest, and most important ends, of such social communication; it must be allowed, that our pains ought not to be confined, to that part only; but should proportionally be extended to those other parts, which are equally necessary, and in their consequences of more importance.

I have already shewn, that words are in their own nature, no essential part of language, and are only considered so thro' custom. I shall now proceed to shew, that when by custom they are made a necessary part, they are still only a part; that they can not possibly effect all the purposes of social communication; and that there are other parts, essentially necessary, to answer its noblest and best ends.

Words are, by compact, the marks or symbols of our ideas; and this is the utmost extent of their power. Did nothing pass in the mind of man, but ideas; were he a different kind of being from what he is; were he like the Houyhnhms of Swift,¹ always directed by a cool, invariable, and as I may say instinctive reason; to make known the ideas of such a mind, and its internal operations, would not be beyond the power of words: and a language composed of words only, provided there were a sufficient number of them, so that each idea, and each operation, might have its dis-

¹The Houyhnhms (as Swift spelled the name) are the exquisitely rational and passionless horses that Gulliver meets in the fourth part of *Gulliver's Travels* (1726). [Ed.]

tinct mark, would sufficiently answer the end. For this we find effected amongst us, in all matters where simple reason, and mere speculation is concerned, as in the investigations of mathematical truths.

But as there are other things which pass in the mind of man, beside ideas; as he is not wholly made up of intellect, but on the contrary, the passions, and the fancy, compose great part of his complicated frame; as the operations of these are attended with an infinite variety of emotions in the mind, both in kind and degree; it is clear, that unless there be some means found, of manifesting those emotions, all that passes in the mind of one man can not be communicated to another. Now, as in order to know what another knows, and in the same manner that he knows it, an exact transcript of the ideas which pass in the mind of one man, must be made by sensible marks, in the mind of another; so in order to feel what another feels, the emotions which are in the mind of one man, must also be communicated to that of another, by sensible marks.

That the sensible marks necessary to answer this purpose, can not possibly be mere words, might fully be proved by a philosophical disquisition into their nature, were it proper at present to enter into such an enquiry: but this point may be made sufficiently clear to answer my present design, in a shorter way. It is certain that we have given names to many of these emotions, at least to such as are of the strongest, and most remarkable kind, tho' much the greater part of them, and the different degrees of all, remain without names. But the use of these names, is not to stand as types of the emotions themselves, but only as signs, of the simple or complex ideas, which are formed of those emotions; that we may be enabled, by the help of those names, to distinguish them in the understanding, and treat of their several natures, in the same cool manner as we do with regard to other ideas, that have no connection with any emotions of the mind.

Every one will at once acknowledge that the terms anger, fear, love, hatred, pity, grief, will not excite in him the sensations of those passions, and make him angry or afraid, compassionate or grieved; nor, should a man declare himself to be under the influence of any of those

passions, in the most explicit and strong words that the language can afford, would he in the least affect us, or gain any credit, if he used no other signs but words. If any one should say in the same tone of voice that he uses in delivering indifferent propositions from a cool understanding, "Sure never any mortal was so overwhelmed with grief as I am at this present." Or "My rage is roused to a pitch of frenzy, I can not command it: Avoid me, be gone this moment, or I shall tear you to pieces:" Sure no one would feel any pity for the distress of the former, or any fear from the threats of the latter. We should either believe that he jested, or if he would be thought serious, we should be moved to laughter at his absurdity. And why is this? But because he makes use of words only, as the signs of emotions, which it is impossible they can represent; and omits the use of the true signs of the passions, which are, tones, looks, and gestures.

This will serve to shew us that the language, or sensible marks, by which the emotions of the mind are discovered, and communicated from man to man, are entirely different from words, and independent of them. Nor was this kind of language left to the invention of man, or to the chance of such arbitrary marks, as he should think proper to affix to the passions, in order to characterize them: no, it was necessary to society, and to the state of human nature in general, that the language of the animal passions of man at least, should be fixed, self-evident, and universally intelligible; and it has accordingly been impressed, by the unerring hand of nature, on the human frame. The improvement and exercise of the intellectual faculties, to any eminent degree, could fall to the lot of but a small portion of mankind; as even the necessaries for the support of life, can not be acquired by much the greater part, but by such constant labour and industry as will afford no time for contemplative studies. But tho' it be not necessary to society, that all men should know much; it is necessary that they should feel much, and have a mutual sympathy, in whatsoever affects their fellow creatures. All our affections therefore and emotions, belonging to man in his animal state, are so distinctly characterized, by certain marks, that they can not be mistaken; and this language of

the passions, carries with it the stamp of its almighty Artificer; utterly unlike the poor workmanship of imperfect man, as it is not only understood by all the different nations of the world, without pains or study; but excites also similar emotions, or corresponding effects in all minds alike.

Thus, the tones expressive of sorrow, lamentation, mirth, joy, hatred, anger, love, pity &c. are the same in all nations, and consequently can excite emotions in us analogous to those passions, when accompanying words which we do not understand: nay the very tones themselves, independent of words, will produce the same effects, as has been amply proved by the power of musical imitations. And tho' these tones, are usually accompanied with words, in order that the understanding may at the same time perceive the cause of these emotions, by a communication of the particular ideas which excite them; yet that the whole energy, or power of exciting analogous emotions in others, lies in the tones themselves, may be known from this; that whenever the force of these passions is extreme, words give place to inarticulate sounds: sighs, murmurings, in love; sobs, groans, and cries in grief; half choaked sounds in rage; and shrieks in terour, are then the only language heard. And the experience of mankind may be appealed to, whether these have not more power in exciting sympathy, than any thing that can be done by mere words.

Nor has this language of the passions been confined to man only; for in that respect, he seems to be included in the general law, given to all animals that are not mute, or wholly incapable of uttering any sound; as they also express their passions by certain tones, which striking the auditory nerves of those of the same species, always produce correspondent effects; inasmuch as their kindred organs, are invariably tuned by the hand of nature, in unison to those sounds.

But it is to be observed, that each species of animals, seem to have a language of their own, not at all understood, or felt by the rest. The lowing of the cow affects not the lamb; nor does the calf regard the bleating of the sheep. The neighing of the steed, calls up all the attention of the horse-kind; they gaze towards the place from whence the sound comes, and answer it, or run

that way, if the steed be not in view; whilst the cows and sheep raise not their heads from the ground, but continue to feed, utterly unmoved. The organs of hearing in each species, are tuned only to the sounds of their own; and whilst the roaring of the lioness, makes the forest tremble, it is the sweetest music to the ears of her young. This shews us, that the auditory nerves of animals, are constructed in such a way, as to be affected only with such sounds, as immediately regard the two chief ends of their being; the propagation, and preservation of their species: all other sounds therefore, excepting such as excite sympathy or antipathy, are indifferent to them. Sympathy, with those of their own kind; antipathy, against such as are their natural enemies, or destructive of their species. Those which excite sympathy, may be supposed to be all in concord; those which rouse antipathy, to be discords; which by creating an uneasy sensation, immediately dispose them to flight, to avoid the enemy. Thus the cry of dogs, warns the hare of his danger: and the howlings of the wolf, alarm the flock. The different species of animals, may therefore be considered, as so many different nations speaking different languages, that have no commerce with each other; each of which consequently understands none but their own; excepting only those who are in a state of warfare; by whom the language of the enemy is sufficiently understood, for the purpose of self preservation.

As the passions and emotions of the several kinds of animals, are very different, according to their different natures, so is there an equal diversity of tones, by which these several passions and emotions are expressed: from the horrible roarings of the lion, to the gentle bleatings of the lamb: from the loud bellowings of the wild bull, to the low purring of the domestic cat. But as there is no passion or emotion whatsoever, in the whole animal world, which is not to be found in man, so equally comprehensive is the language of his passions, which are all manifested by suitable tones. The roaring of the lion, is not more terrible than the voice of his anger; nor the cooings of the pigeon, more soft, than the murmurs of his love. The crowing of the morning cock, is not so clear and sprightly as the notes of his joy; nor the melancholy mournings of the turtle, so

plaintive as those of his woe. The organs of hearing therefore in man, are so constructed, as not to be indifferent to any kind of tone, either in his own species, or in the animal world, that is expressive of emotion or passion: from all they receive either pleasure or pain, as they are affected with sympathy or antipathy. It is true that like the several tribes of animals, man is most affected, or has the strongest sympathy excited, by such tones as are uttered by those of his own species; and in proportion also by those which most nearly resemble them in others. We are moved most by the distressful cries of those animals, that have any similitude to the human voice, such as the fawn, and the hare, when seized in pursuit by dogs. But still we both feel and understand the nature of all others. Nor can any animal utter any sound which we cannot explain, or tell from what emotion, or passion it proceeds. This distinguishing faculty was necessary to man as master of the animal race, that by understanding their several languages, he might relieve their distresses, and supply their wants. And indeed we find, that the tones of all domestic animals, expressive of their wants or distresses, have a wonderful power over the human heart, and mechanically rouse us to their relief.

Thus extensive as are the powers of the human ear, those of the human voice, do not fall short of them; but are exactly suited to them in degree and comprehension; there is no tone which the ear can distinguish, that the voice, by pains and practice, is not capable of uttering. Hence it comes to pass, that as man understands the language of the different tribes of animals, so he can make himself understood by them. The horse rejoices in the applauding tones of his rider's voice, and trembles when he changes them to those of anger. What blandishments do we see in the dog when his master soothes him in kind notes; what fear, and even shame, when he changes them to those of chiding? By those the waggoner directs his team, and the herdsman his flock. Even animals of the most savage nature, are not proof against collective powers of the human voice; and shouts of multitudes will put wild beasts to flight, who can hear without emotion the roarings of the thunder.

But that man should be furnished with such an

extensive power in these points, even in his animal state, will appear reasonable, when we consider that his nature, is an abstract of all animal nature; and that in his tribe are to be found, all the emotions and passions, that belong to all the several tribes: consequently all the marks expressive of those emotions, or such as are similar to them, should belong to that tribe. If man is capable of being the most social, the most tender and affectionate to those of his own species, of any animal; he is at the same time, capable of becoming a greater enemy, and of having a stronger hatred and detestation of them, than is to be found, even amongst the different tribes of animals, that are born in a natural state of enmity. All the natural language therefore of sympathy, and antipathy, should be given to him in a higher degree, for the same reason that it is in a more limited state assigned to the several tribes of animals.

Thus far we find, that man, in his animal capacity, is furnished, like all other animals, by nature herself, with a language which requires neither study, art, nor imitation; which spontaneously breaks out in the exactest expressions, nicely proportioned to the degrees of his inward emotions; and which is not only universally understood, but felt by those of the same species, as also in certain degrees by the rest of the animal world. That animals should come perfect from the hand of nature, in this respect, as well as in every thing else, seems reasonable from this consideration; that they are utterly incapable of improving themselves; or of making any alteration in their frames by their own care or pains; their several faculties by an invariable law, growing to perfection, and decaying with their bodies, with as little assistance from themselves, as vegetation in herbs or trees if performed, in the insensitive world. As the first of animals, nature has not been less provident with regard to man; on the contrary this, as well as all his other animal faculties; is bestowed on him in a degree suitable to the superiority of his rank. But as man is something greater than the first of animals; as he is the link between animal and spiritual beings, and partakes of both their natures; other faculties, and other principles, belonging to his nobler, spiritual part, disclose themselves; of which there are no traces in the animal world.

The first great distinction between the human and animal species, and which seems to mark their boundaries, is this: that it is in the power of man, by his own pains and industry, to forward the perfection of his nature. And what the nobler part of his nature is, is clearly pointed out by that distinction; because it is that nobler part only, or such of his animal faculties, as are necessary to forward the perfection of that nobler part, which are capable of improvement by such pains. All the organs and faculties of his body necessary to his animal life, are so fashioned by the hand of nature, that they grow of course to perfection; but the organs (if I may be allowed the expression) and faculties of his mind, necessary to his rational life, are only in embryo; and it depends wholly upon the assistance of others, together with his own care, to give them birth, and bring them to maturity.

Hence arises the necessity of a social state to man both for the unfolding, and exerting of his nobler faculties. For this purpose, a power of opening a communication between mind and mind, was furnished in the most easy way, by bestowing on him the organs of speech. But still we are to observe, that nature did no more than furnish the power and means; she did not give the language, as in the case of the passions, but left it to the industry of men, to find out, and agree upon such articulate sounds, as they should chuse to make the symbols of their ideas. And she seems to have laid down the same general law, with respect to every thing which regarded the nobler part of man; to furnish nothing but what was absolutely necessary, and leave the rest to his own industry: from the exertion of which, his merit was to arise, and his pretensions to stand a candidate for his admission, into a higher, and happier order of beings. Accordingly as she did not furnish the words, which were to be the symbols of his ideas; neither did she furnish the tones, which were to manifest, and communicate by their own virtue, the internal exertions and emotions, of such of his nobler faculties, as chiefly distinguish him from the brute species; but left them also, like words, to the care and invention of man; contenting herself with supplying him with an instrument, of such a compass as would furnish a sufficient variety of tones, to an-

swer all the variety of emotions, exertions, and energies of all his faculties, if sought for, and settled by agreement, to be their marks. Nor has art found those which are of her invention to be of less efficacy, or less capable of exciting correspondent emotions, than those even of nature, when established by custom; in this case justly called second nature. The only difference between them lying in this, that the tones of the animal passions, of themselves excite analogous emotions, without the intervention of any thing else; they are understood, by being felt. But the tones resulting from the emotions and exertions of our nobler faculties, tho' they excite feeling, as it is in the nature of all tones to do so, yet it is only of a vague and indeterminate nature; not corresponding to the energies in the mind of the speaker, unless they are associated with words, or the symbols of the ideas, which give rise to those energies and emotions; their nature and degree then become fixed, and the hearer both feels and understands them. When any tones therefore are affixed to certain modes of expression, and adopted into general use; those tones, tho' they have no natural connection with the sentiment, no more than words have with ideas; yet by such association, become equally intelligible, and equally affecting with those that have, and are made part of the language; insomuch, that were those expressions to be uttered, without those tones, they would not convey their full meaning.

Thus far I have considered tones, chiefly in contradistinction to words, as the types and language of the passions, and all internal emotions, in the same way as articulate sounds, are the types and language of ideas, independent of any such emotions. But when we come to examine the powers of each in their full extent, we shall find, that tho' words are limited to their peculiar office, and never can supply the place of tones; yet tones, on the other hand, are not confined to their province, but often supply the place of words, as marks of ideas. And tho' the ease and distinctness with which our ideas are marked by articulate sounds, has made all mankind agree to use them in discourse, yet that tones are capable in a great measure of supplying their place, is clear from this; that the Chinese language is chiefly made up of tones, and the same individual

word shall have sixty different meanings, according to the different tones in which it is pronounced. Here then it is clear, that fifty-nine of the sixty ideas, are marked by tones; for the same individual word, pronounced exactly in the same manner, can not possibly by itself, be a clear and distinct mark, for more than one idea. This indeed has prodigiously increased the difficulty of their language, so that it is scarcely possible for strangers to acquire it; and it is the labour of a man's life, even among the natives, to make himself fully master of it. Such a use of the tones therefore, in equal extent, has not been adopted by any other nation. But there are none which have it not in some degree. It is true these tones amongst us, are not annexed to words in their separate state, but only when they are ranged in sentences; and he must be very ignorant of speech, who does not know, that the same individual words in a sentence, shall have several very different meanings according to the tones which accompany the emphasis. To the use of these tones is owing in a great measure conciseness of discourse; and the necessity of multiplying words in language, to a degree that might make them burthensome to the memory, is removed. Nor are these the only advantages arising to language from tones; for by thus setting off words by tones, and making them determine their meaning, an agreeable variety may be introduced, into the most abstracted and philosophical discourses, in which there is no room for the language of the passions and emotions; and which consequently must occasion disgust, and soon weary attention, if delivered by the use of mere words, in one dull uniform tone. On the same account it is fortunate also that tones have been made the marks of the several pauses; and the links which unite together, the several members of sentences and periods.

But beside the use of tones, in the exertion of his animal, and intellectual faculties; there is another part of man's nature which seems to be the link that joins that other two, a great part of whose exertions, have their very essence, so far as they are communicated by the voice, in tones; I mean the fancy. — To one branch of this part of his frame, Nature herself has furnished matter for a language, different in its kind from all other,

and peculiar to man; I mean, risibility; and this matter, according to the exertions of fancy, is to be modified into an infinity of shapes. There is a laugh of joy, and a laugh of ridicule; there is a laugh of anger, and a laugh of contempt. Nay there are few of our passions, to which fancy can not adapt, and associate this language. And should we trace it thro all its several modifications and degrees, from the loud burst of joy, to the tones belonging to the dry sneer of contempt; we should find, that an extensive, and expressive language, independent of words, belongs to this faculty alone. Let any one who has been present at a well-acted comedy, only reflect, how very different the sentiments, characters, and humour have appeared, in the representation, from what was conveyed to him by the mere perusal of the words in his closet, and he will need no other proof to shew him how necessary, and how extensive a part, the tones make, of the language of fancy.

From what has been said, it will sufficiently appear, how grossly they are mistaken, who think that nothing is essentially necessary to language, but words: and that it is no matter, in what tones their sentiments are uttered, or whether there be any used, so that the words are but distinctly pronounced, and with such force of voice as to be clearly heard. Since it must be allowed, that the use of language is not merely to communicate ideas, but also all the internal operations, emotions, and exertions, of the intellectual, sensitive, and imaginative faculties of man: since it must be allowed, that from the frame of our language, our

very ideas can not be communicated, nor consequently our meaning understood, without the right use of tones; as many of our ideas are marked and distinguished from each other by tones, and not words: and since it must be allowed that the connection or repugnance of our ideas, their relationship or disagreement, and various dependence on each other in sentences, are chiefly pointed out by tones belonging to the several pauses.

When therefore we reflect, that not only every thing which is pleasurable, every thing which is forcible and affecting in utterance, but also the most material points necessary to a full and distinct comprehension, even of the sense of what is uttered, depends upon tones; it may well astonish us to think, that so essential a part of language, should in a civilized country be wholly neglected. Nay worse, that our youth should not only be uninstructed in the true use of these, but in the little art that is used, they should be early perverted by false rules, utterly repugnant to those which nature has clearly pointed out to us. In consequence of which, all the noble ends which might be answered in a free state, by a clear, lively, and affecting public elocution, are in a great measure lost to us. And how can it be otherwise, when we have given up the vivifying, energetic language, stamped by God himself upon our natures, for that which is the cold, lifeless work of art, and invention of man? and bartered that which can penetrate the inmost recesses of the heart, for one which dies in the ear, or fades on the sight.

Gilbert Austin

1753–1837

Like Thomas Sheridan, Gilbert Austin was an Irishman and a graduate of Trinity College, and he also devoted himself to elocution. But unlike Sheridan, Austin distrusted the natural, conversational approach to public speaking. Though the vast bulk of *Chironomia* (1806; excerpted here), his treatise on elocution, presents the views of ancient and modern rhetoricians on the subject, the work is best known for the mechanical system of notation that Austin proposed for recording and choreographing speech performances. Austin was the headmaster of a school for upper-class boys in Dublin, and *Chironomia* was intended as a textbook both for them and for adult professionals, such as lawyers, ministers, and politicians, who needed to use eloquence in their work.

Austin had a number of admirers and imitators, and his book encouraged closer attention to the details of nonverbal communication. Austin is himself following the lead of John Bulwer, whose two treatises on gestures—*Chirologia: or the Natural Language of the Hand* and *Chironomia: or the Art of Manual Rhetoric*, both published in 1644—deal with natural gestures and histrionics in oratory. David Hume, too, had advocated the use of histrionic gesture in public speaking in his essay “On Eloquence” in 1742. But it was Austin’s work that gained public notice. Austin was a member of the Royal Irish Academy (similar to the British Royal Society), and as rhetoric scholar Philippa Spoel has shown, his categorization of gestures in *Chironomia* parallels the era’s other attempts to systematize knowledge scientifically. But Richard Whately articulated the reigning view in 1828, in *Elements of Rhetoric*: “Probably not a single instance could be found of any one who has attained, by the study of any system of instruction that has hitherto appeared, a really good Delivery; but there are many—probably nearly as many as have fully tried the experiment,—who have by this means been totally spoiled.”¹ Whately praises Sheridan and advocates the “natural” method.

Reprinted here are one of a number of examples in *Chironomia* showing how symbols can be used to indicate the delivery of a speech, four of eleven plates of illustrations, and a summary of Austin’s notation system.

Selected Bibliography

Our excerpt is from the facsimile of the first edition of Austin’s *Chironomia; or, A Treatise on Rhetorical Delivery*. First published in 1806, the facsimile is edited by Mary Margaret Robb and Lester Thonssen (Carbondale, 1966). The editors’ introduction provides useful information about Austin, the history of the elocution movement, and the development of the elocution curriculum in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

John Bulwer’s *Chirologia: or the Natural Language of the Hand* and *Chironomia: or the Art of Manual Rhetoric* (1644) have been published together in a corrected edition in the Southern Illinois University Press Landmarks series, edited by James W. Cleary (1974).

¹Richard Whately, *Elements of Rhetoric* (1828: rpt., ed. Douglas Ehninger, Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1963), pp. 339–40.

Little scholarship is devoted specifically to Austin, though he figures prominently in discussions of the history of elocution. G. P. Mohrmann, one of the few exceptions, defends Austin against complaints that he is merely mechanical, in "The Real *Chironomia*" (*Southern Speech Journal* 34 [fall 1968]: 17-27). Philippa Spoel uses Michel Foucault's work on eighteenth-century science to interpret Austin's project in "The Science of Bodily Rhetoric in Gilbert Austin's *Chironomia*" (*Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 28 [fall 1998]: 5-27); she sees a tension in Austin's work between representing the body as a mechanism and emphasizing the importance of persuasion conveyed by emotionally laden gestures. For general studies of elocution, see the headnote on Thomas Sheridan.

From *Chironomia*

SYMBOLS FOR NOTING THE FORCE AND RAPIDITY OR INTERRUPTION OF THE VOICE IN DELIVERY

The symbols are to be marked in the margin near the commencement of the passage which they are to influence.

	Symbols
Piano -----	====
Uniform loudness, or forte -----	〰〰〰
Crescendo (as in music) -----	∨
Diminuendo (as in music) -----	∧
Rapid -----	• • •
Slow -----	---
Suspension of the voice, the break or dash after a word } -----	—
Long pause, or new paragraph -----	
Whisper or monotone -----	——
<i>Compound Symbols</i>	
Piano and slow -----	====
Piano and quick -----	•••
Loud and slow -----	〰〰〰
Loud and quick -----	〰〰〰
Monotonous or whisper slow -----	---
Monotone or whisper quick -----	•••

Compare with page 24 of Steele's *Prosodia Rationalis*.

It is requested to be understood that the various passages, which are marked with the notation, are intended merely to illustrate the foregoing system: and that among the innumerable methods of possible delivery, that which is chosen and represented is to be considered as one method only, how far soever removed from the best. It is one property of this system of notation, that whilst it furnishes the means of recording each person's ideas of gesture, it does not presume to dictate. It is a language, which may be used to express every variety of opinion.

In the portion of Gay's fable of the Miser and Plutus, which is doubly illustrated both by engraved figures¹ and by notation, it has been found necessary to omit in the notation some circumstances, in order to express nothing more than what is seen in the figures, and in others for the same reason to be redundant. Thus the retired hand and also the feet are sometimes noted oftener than absolutely necessary, and some transitions are of necessity omitted. It is hoped, however, that the great pains and attention bestowed upon these illustrations will suffice for the purpose of conveying to the reader a tolerably accurate knowledge of the manner of using the notation.

¹Austin seems to have intended to illustrate some of the positions with drawings, but none accompany the text he refers to here. [Ed.]

For the greater convenience and precision each figure is numbered in the Plate, and referred to accordingly in the following notation.

The perpendicular line—divides the portions of writing which refer to each numeral and figure.

THE MISER AND PLUTUS

Gay²

1. 2. The wind was high, | the window shakes;
R Bvhf r— q. | peq n—pdq
a.R.2. |
3. With sudden start | the miser wakes!
veq c—vhx c |
sRix |
4. Along the silent room he stalks;
F | pdb ad— phq—
aR2 |
5. 6. Looks back, | and trembles as he walks!
B vhx—vhq c | Bvhf tr
sRix |
7. Each lock and ev'ry bolt he tries,
vhq— —vhx c |
aL2 |
8. In ev'ry creek and corner pries;
shq o— . . . —shc i |
aR2 |
9. Then opes his chest with treasure stor'd,
Bqdq | —n |
10. And stands in rapture o'er his hoard:
D | Bseq
Ra |
11. But now with sudden qualms possess,
Bvhf c |
rR1 |
12. He wrings his hands, he beats his breast.
Bfl. hf— a— Bfl.br. |
13. By conscience stung he wildly stares;
g.br— —veq |
14. And thus his guilty soul declares.
Bshf sh. |
15. Had the deep earth her stores confin'd,
Bdf d— n |
aR2 |

16. This heart had known sweet peace of mind,
br—R
R1 |
17. 18. But virtue's sold! | Good Gods! what price
vhf—vhx | U Bsef sp— a
aR2 |
19. Can recompense the pangs of vice?
F—R |
20. O bane of good! seducing cheat!
D Bsd f d— n |
rR1 |
21. 22. Can man, weak man, | thy power defeat?
Bvhf—vcf | shf st—sdq
aR2 |
23. Gold banish'd honour from the mind,
scb sw—sdq
rL1 |
24. And only left the name behind;
br—R |
25. Gold sow'd the world with ev'ry ill;
Bphc— x |
26. Gold taught the murd'rer's sword to kill:
ceb sh—cdq
Lix |
27. 'T was gold instructed coward hearts
shf sh—sdq
aR2x |
28. In treach'ry's more pernicious arts.
Bvhf rj
rR1 |
29. Who can recount the mischiefs o'er?
scq—sdq
R2 |
30. Virtue resides on earth no more!
Bpdf d |

Observations on the Notation

No. I. The direction of motion expressed by the 4th small letter *r*, means that from the position in which both hands are presented *vhf*, they should move both towards the right and stop at the position *oblique* as noted by *q*, connected by a dash to the position mentioned.

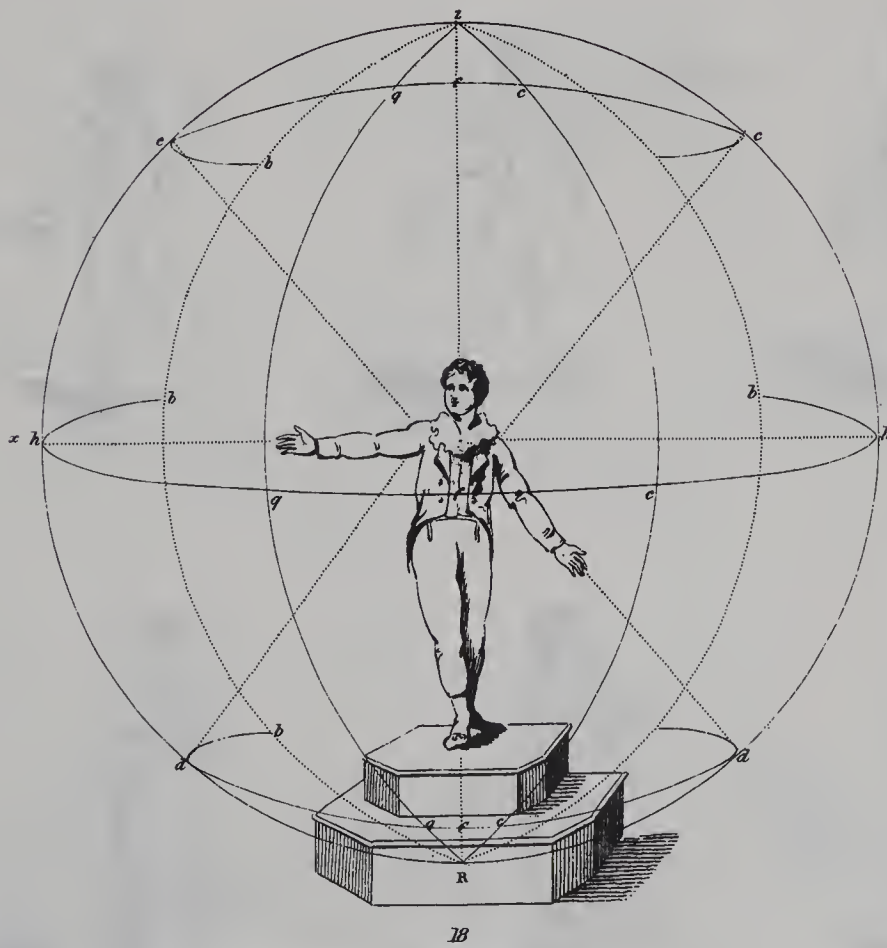
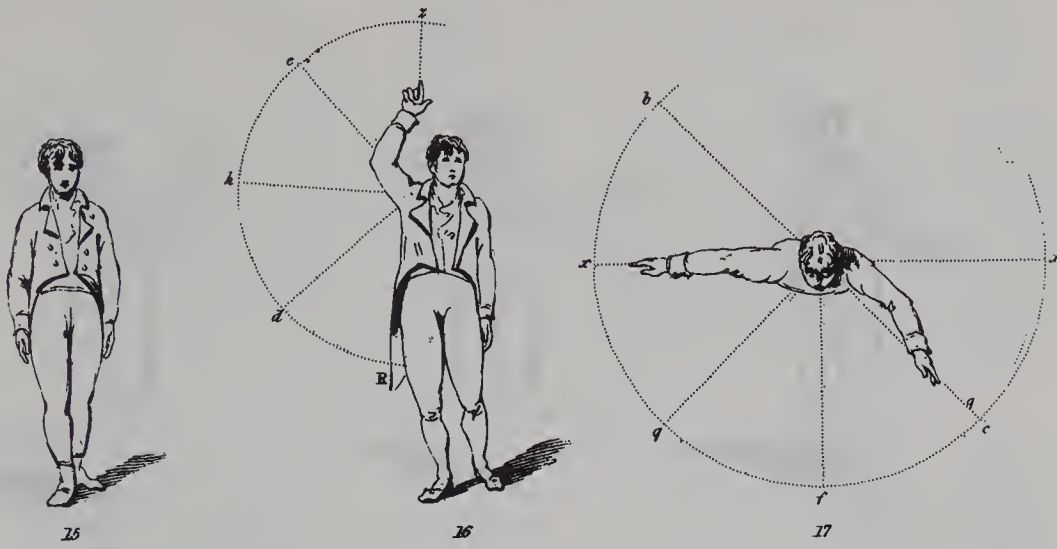
No. II. The 4th small letter *n* signifies noting. See manner of motion in the synoptical table, and Chap. XIII. . . .

²John Gay (1685–1732), English poet. [Ed.]

No. XII. The position of the hands at first is, *both folded horizontal forwards* as expressed in the notation *Bfl. hf.* At the *a* connected by the dash, which signifies *ascending*, the hands are raised up, and at the next notation *Bfl. br.* they are forcibly withdrawn back on the breast.

No. XXI. This position begins *horizontal* as first noted *Bvhf*, and ends *elevated* as in the figure; *Bvhf*, but the *B* is omitted over the word *weak*, being understood by the connect-dash.

No. XXV. The *third small letter* relating to the transverse direction of the arm is often placed alone, but connected by a dash with a preceding set of letters, as already observed No. I. In such case it is to be understood that the position of the hands remains as before, and that the transverse direction only of the arm is changed. Here each arm passes through the whole semicircle from the position *across* to *extended*.



Levy del.

Harner sc.

Figure 1

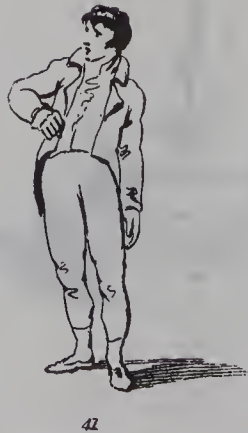
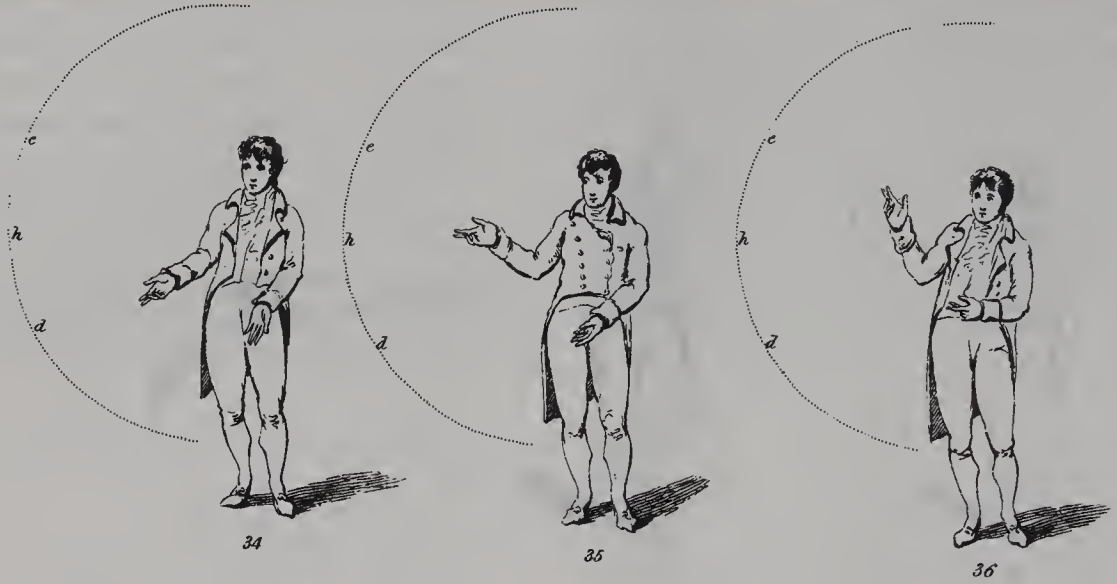
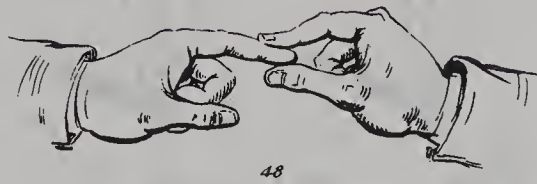
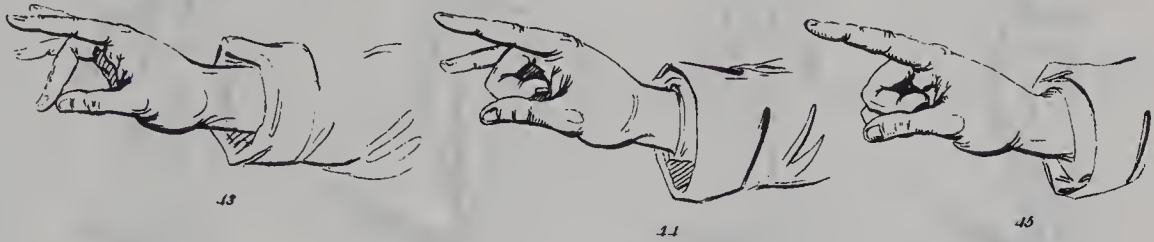


Figure 2

Positions of the Hands used by ancient Orators.

from Quintilian L.I.C.3.



Kelly del.

Warner sc.

Figure 3



Figure 4

Table I. Alphabetical Arrangement of Symbolic Letters

Above the Line. Hands, Arms, Body and Head.					Below the Line Feet.					
Small Letters relating to the Hand and Arm.					Capital B and double small Letters. Both Arms and both Hands.	Capitals for particular Parts.	Capitals for Head and Eyes.	Small Letters Steps.	Capitals Positions.	Capitals and small; significant Gestures.
1. Hand.	2. Elevation of the Arm.	3. Transverse Position of the Arm.	4 and 5. Motion and Force.							
A	- - -	- - -	ascending alternate	applied	- - -	{ assenting averted	advance	- - -	appealing attention admiration aversion	
B	backwards	- - -	backwards beckoning	both	breast	- - -	- - -	both		
C	clinched	- - -	across collecting contracted clinchng	crossed clasped	Chin	- - -	cross	- - -	commanding	
D	- - -	downwards	- - -	descending	- - -	- - -	{ down- wards denying	- - -	deprecation declaration	
E	- - -	elevated	- - -	- - -	encumbered	Eyes	erect	- - -	encourage- ment.	
F	forwards	- - -	forwards flourish	folded	Forehead	Forward	- - -	front	fear	
G	grasping	- - -	- - -	grasping	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Grief	
H	holding	horizontal	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Horror	
I	index	- - -	- - -	inwards	- - -	inclined	- - -	- - -		
K	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	a kimbo	- - -	- - -	- - -	kneeling	
L	collected	- - -	- - -	left	- - -	Lips	- - -	left	{ Lamenta- tion Listening	
M	thumb	- - -	- - -	moderate	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -		
N	natural inwards	- - -	- - -	noting	enumerating	Nose	- - -	- - -		
O	outwards	- - -	- - -	outwards	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -		
P	prone	- - -	- - -	{ pushing pressing	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Pride	
Q	- - -	- - -	oblique	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	oblique		
R	- - -	Rest	- - -	{ right re- coiling re- pressing rejecting	reposed	- - -	round	retire	right	
S	supine	- - -	- - -	{ sweep springing, striking shaking	- - -	- - -	{ shaking aside	{ start stamp shock	side	shame
T	- - -	- - -	- - -	{ touching throwing	- - -	- - -	Tossing	traverse	- - -	threatning
U	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	Uwpards	- - -	- - -	
V	Vertical	- - -	- - -	revolving	- - -	- - -	Vacancy	- - -	- - -	Veneration
W	hollow	- - -	- - -	waving	wringing	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	
X	extended	- - -	extended	extreme	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	
Z	- - -	Zenith	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	- - -	

George Campbell

1719–1796

George Campbell was born in Aberdeen, Scotland, studied at Marischal College in Aberdeen, and later entered the Church of Scotland. In 1759, after serving for eleven years as a minister, he became the principal of Marischal; in 1771, he became a professor of divinity as well. He served in these positions until the year before his death.

In 1758, Campbell helped found the Philosophical Society of Aberdeen, a small study group that included Thomas Reid, originator of Scottish commonsense philosophy; Reid's colleague James Beattie; Alexander Gerard, who held the chair of logic; and as many as a dozen others. This group was mightily influenced by Scottish philosopher David Hume (p. 828); it chiefly criticized but also admired his work. Campbell's *Dissertation on Miracles* (1762) answers Hume's famous attack on religion (as does, indirectly, the discussion of testimony in *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, 1776; excerpted here). Campbell's other works are a translation of the Gospels (1789) and three sets of lectures—on ecclesiastical history, theology, and pulpit eloquence—all published posthumously.

As noted in the introduction to Part Four, Campbell seeks to base his rhetorical theory on the psychology of John Locke (p. 814) and also to consider the contemporary concerns of rhetoric for elocution, grammar, pulpit oratory, and literary criticism, as well as the abiding connection of rhetoric with its classical roots. Campbell's argument, presented in Book I of *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, is that rhetoric must address all the mind's faculties—the understanding, the imagination, the passions, and the will—to achieve persuasion. In other words, rhetoric must be able to inform and argue, to provide aesthetic delight, to affect the feelings, and to urge action. The following table summarizes Campbell's notion of the faculties, their purposes, and the forms appropriate for appealing to each of them:

FACULTY	END (PURPOSE)	FORM
Understanding	{ Inform Convince	Perspicuity Argument
Imagination	Please	Beauty
Passion	Move	<i>Pathos</i>
Will	Persuade	Vehemence

The path to persuasion, in Campbell's theory, passes through each of the faculties in turn. Therefore, rhetoric must appeal first to the understanding and produce conviction, without which persuasion cannot follow. Convincing arguments are based upon reasoning, of which, says Campbell, there are two kinds: scientific and moral. Scientific reasoning relies on general principles, such as mathematical axioms or inductive generalizations. From these principles, it demonstrates a conclusion by a chain of logical links. But in all human affairs that concern "pleasure and

pain, wisdom and folly, beauty and deformity” and in disputes where there is real evidence on both sides of the case, moral reasoning takes precedence over scientific reasoning.

A linear demonstration of axioms and propositions can serve to present a case in the realm of scientific reasoning, but rhetoric is the proper vehicle for moral reasoning. Rhetoric deals with experience, analogy, testimony, and probability, which are forms of moral evidence. This kind of evidence must be weighed and judged: It cannot simply be offered as axiomatic. Moral reasoning thus presents a bundle of evidence rather than a causal chain. For Campbell, the purpose of reasoning, whether scientific or moral, is to produce conviction. Truth itself is elusive, and not even the strictest reasoning can guarantee its capture. Reasoning thus becomes a natural part of rhetoric: Rhetoric begins with the search for truth and then proceeds to persuasion, the attempt to move the will to ethical action.

The topics, the syllogism, and the stages of composition (invention, arrangement, and so on) are unnecessary in Campbell’s rhetoric. The syllogism can help to ensure consistent expression, he says, but it does not adequately address any of the faculties. And instead of the stages of composition, Campbell describes the two stages of persuasion: The orator must “excite some desire or passion in the hearers” and then “satisfy their judgment that there is a connexion between the action to which he would persuade them, and the gratification of the desire or passion which he excites.”¹ This concept forms the basis for what twentieth-century speech communication textbooks call the motivated sequence. Campbell does use classical categories to examine the occasions for speaking and the character of audiences, developing the following scheme:

PLACE	SPEAKER	AUDIENCE	SUBJECT	END (PURPOSE)
Bar	Ethical	Judge/Jury	Law	Judgment
Senate	Ethical	Legislators	Utility	Vote
Pulpit	Sincere	Mixed	Religion	Salvation

All these issues are treated in the excerpts reprinted here.

In Book II, “The Foundations and Essential Properties of Elocution,” Campbell makes scientific linguistics the foundation of rhetoric. Here he discusses the conventionality of language and the principle of descriptive grammar:

Language is purely a species of fashion . . . in which, by the general but tacit consent of the people of a particular state or country, certain sounds come to be appropriated to certain things, as their signs, and certain ways of inflecting and combining those sounds come to be established, as denoting the relations which subsist among the things signified.

It is not the business of grammar, as some critics seem preposterously to imagine, to give law to the fashions which regulate our speech. On the contrary, from its conformity to these, and from that alone, it derives all its authority and value. For, what is the grammar of any language? It is no other than a collection of general observations methodically digested, and comprising all the modes previously and independently established, by

¹See p. 927 in this book.

which the significations, derivations, and combinations of words in that language are ascertained.²

Here, too, is Campbell's now-famous formulation of the principle of correct usage: Use, he explains, "is the sole mistress of language," and proper usage is "reputable, national, and present."³ By *reputable*, he means the generally accepted usage of educated people and particularly of well-regarded writers. *National* means usage and pronunciation that are most widely understood throughout a country—again, usually among the educated class. And *present* refers both to "not absent" (that is, not foreign or faddish) and to "not obsolete." The last principle modifies the first two, for customary use changes with the times.

In the remainder of Book II, Campbell discusses particular problems of usage and guidelines for making stylistic choices in diction and syntax. In Chapter 7, he discusses the semiotic theories of Locke, Berkeley, and Hume, finding them to be in essential agreement that "we really think by signs as well as speak by them." Although this notion suggests that perspicuity is desirable—the clarity of language conducing to clarity of thought—it also leads Campbell to recognize that purposeful obscurity has a place: for example, in "delicate" matters, where suggestion is better than precise description. But, he notes, "it is the thought more than the expression that serves for a veil to the sentiment suggested," observing that if the intended meaning is taken from an indirect or euphemistic statement, then the expression is not obscure at all.

Although Campbell does not reach a satisfactory conclusion about the psychological processes that would explain connotation, he is quite sensitive to the possible difference between sense and expression. In style as in grammar, he shuns prescriptivism. Early in Book III, "The Discriminating Properties of Elocution," he says:

I cannot help remarking, before I conclude this article of the origin of tropes, and of the changes they undergo, through the gradual operation of custom, that critics ought to show more reserve and modesty than they commonly do, in pronouncing either on the fitness or on the beauty of such as occur sometimes in ancient authors. [For] . . . it ought to be considered, that many words which appear as tropical to a learner of a distant age, who acquires the language by the help of grammars and dictionaries, may, through the imperceptible influence of use, have totally lost that appearance to the natives, who consider them purely as proper terms.⁴

The same caveat applies to works in other languages, particularly to translations. Campbell makes a similar point about the dangers of paraphrase: Since we must be in doubt about the precise meaning of the original, any paraphrase must be considered an interpretation.

Campbell's discussion is by no means purely theoretical. He attempts to provide guidelines for making real choices of language and style, and he gives many examples, chiefly from Scripture and English poetry. His illustrations show the same

²George Campbell, *Philosophy of Rhetoric*, ed. Lloyd Bitzer (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1963), pp. 139–40.

³Campbell, p. 151.

⁴Campbell, p. 299.

attention to detail and sensitivity to nuance as his philosophical analyses. *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* has been justly praised as the turning point in the development of rhetoric in the eighteenth century, as the first modern rhetoric, and even as the first real advance in rhetorical theory since Aristotle.

Selected Bibliography

Campbell's *Philosophy of Rhetoric*, first published in 1776, is available in the Southern Illinois University Press Landmark edition (1963), a facsimile of the 1850 London edition. The Landmark version is edited by Lloyd Bitzer, who provides a good overview of Campbell's life, a summary of the text, and an analysis of the major issues it raises. He discusses human nature, the association of ideas, and the chief elements of Campbell's rhetorical theory. Bitzer has written other articles on Campbell, most notably "Hume's Philosophy in George Campbell's *Philosophy of Rhetoric*" (*Philosophy and Rhetoric* 2 [summer 1969]: 139–66).

Vincent Bevilacqua, in "Philosophical Origins of George Campbell's *Philosophy of Rhetoric*" (*Speech Monographs* 32 [March 1965]: 1–12), looks at the influence of Bacon, Descartes, Hume, and Adam Smith. "The Rhetorical Theory of George Campbell" is the subject of a symposium in the *Western Speech Journal* (spring 1968), with papers by Ernest Ettllich, Dominic La Russo, Herman Cohen, G. P. Mohrmann, and Phil Dolph. W. S. Howell gives substantial treatment to Campbell in *Eighteenth-Century British Logic and Rhetoric* (1971), exploring the links between Campbell's work and the classical tradition, on the one hand, and epistemological-psychological ideas, on the other. *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 13 (winter 1983) focuses on Campbell, including a bibliography and several articles. Vincent Bevilacqua makes an interesting connection in "Campbell, Vico, and the Rhetorical Science of Human Nature" (*Philosophy and Rhetoric* 18 [1985]: 23–30). More recent treatments include H. Lewis Ulman's consideration of Campbell's efforts to define a consistent theory of thought and language in *Things, Thoughts, Words, and Actions: The Problem of Language in Late Eighteenth-Century British Rhetorical Theory*, 1994; and Arthur Walzer's admiring look at Campbell's analysis of the place of emotions in persuasion in "Campbell on the Passions: A Rereading of the *Philosophy of Rhetoric*" (*Quarterly Journal of Speech* 85 [February 1999]: 72–85). Campbell's influence on later rhetoricians and composition theorists has been noted frequently, but to date there have been no extensive studies of his work.

From *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*

Book I *The Nature and Foundations* *of Eloquence*

CHAPTER I

Eloquence in the largest acceptance defined, its more general forms exhibited, with their different objects, ends, and characters.

In speaking there is always some end proposed, or some effect which the speaker intends to produce on the hearer. The word *eloquence* in its greatest latitude denotes, "That art or talent by which the discourse is adapted to its end."¹

All the ends of speaking are reducible to four; every speech being intended to enlighten the understanding, to please the imagination, to move the passions, or to influence the will.

Any one discourse admits only one of these ends as the principle. Nevertheless, in discoursing on a subject, many things may be introduced, which are more immediately and apparently directed to some of the other ends of speaking, and not to that which is the chief intent of the whole. But then these other and immediate ends are in effect but means, and must be rendered conducive to that which is the primary intention. Accordingly, the propriety or the impropriety of the introduction of such secondary ends, will always be inferred from their subserviency or want of subserviency to that end, which is, in respect of them, the ultimate. For example, a discourse addressed to the understanding, and calculated to illustrate or evince some point purely speculative, may borrow aid from the imagination, and admit metaphor and comparison, but not the bolder and

more striking figures, as that called vision or fiction, *prosopopœia*, and the like, which are not so much intended to elucidate a subject, as to excite admiration. Still less will it admit an address to the passions, which, as it never fails to disturb the operation of the intellectual faculty, must be regarded by every intelligent hearer as foreign at least, if not insidious. It is obvious, that either of these, far from being subservient to the main design, would distract the attention from it.

There is indeed one kind of address to the understanding, and only one, which, it may not be improper to observe, disdains all assistance whatever from the fancy. The address I mean is mathematical demonstration. As this does not, like moral reasoning, admit degrees of evidence, its perfection, in point of eloquence, if so uncommon an application of the term may be allowed, consists in perspicuity. Perspicuity here results entirely from propriety and simplicity of diction, and from accuracy of method, where the mind is regularly, step by step, conducted forwards in the same track, the attention no way diverted, nothing left to be supplied, no one unnecessary word or idea introduced.² On the contrary, an harangue framed for affecting the hearts or influencing the resolves of an assembly, needs greatly the assistance both of intellect and of imagination.

In general it may be asserted, that each preceding species, in the order above exhibited, is preparatory to the subsequent; that each subsequent species is founded on the preceding; and that thus they ascend in a regular progression. Knowledge, the object of the intellect, furnisheth materials for the fancy; the fancy culls, compounds, and, by her mimic art, disposes these

¹"Dicere secundum virtutem orationis. Scientia bene dicendi." Quintilian. The word *eloquence*, in common conversation, is seldom used in such a comprehensive sense. I have, however, made choice of this definition on a double account: 1st. It exactly corresponds to Tully's idea of a perfect orator; "Optimus est orator qui dicendo animos audientium et docet, et delectat, et permovet." 2dly. It is best adapted to the subject of these papers. [Au.]

²Of this kind Euclid hath given us the most perfect models, which have not, I think, been sufficiently imitated by later mathematicians. In him you find the exactest arrangement invariably observed, the properest and simplest, and by consequence the plainest expressions constantly used, nothing deficient, nothing superfluous; in brief, nothing which in more, or fewer, or other words, or words otherwise disposed, could have been better expressed. [Au.]

materials so as to affect the passions; the passions are the natural spurs to volition or action, and so need only to be right directed. This connexion and dependency will better appear from the following observations.

When a speaker addresseth himself to the understanding, he proposes the *instruction* of his hearers, and that, either by explaining some doctrine unknown, or not distinctly comprehended by them, or by proving some position disbelieved or doubted by them.—In other words, he proposes either to dispel ignorance or to vanquish error. In the one, his aim is their *information*; in the other, their *conviction*. Accordingly the predominant quality of the former is *perspicuity*; of the latter, *argument*. By that we are made to know, by this to believe.

The imagination is addressed by exhibiting to it a lively and beautiful representation of a suitable object. As in this exhibition, the task of the orator may, in some sort, be said, like that of the painter, to consist in imitation, the merit of the work results entirely from these two sources; dignity, as well in the subject or thing imitated, as in the manner of imitation; and resemblance, in the portrait or performance. Now the principal scope for this class being in narration and description, poetry, which is one mode of oratory especially epic poetry, must be ranked under it. The effect of the dramatic, at least of tragedy, being upon the passions, the drama falls under another species, to be explained afterwards. But that kind of address of which I am now treating, attains the summit of perfection in the *sublime*, or those great and noble images, which, when in suitable colouring presented to the mind, do, as it were, distend the imagination with some vast conception, and quite ravish the soul.

The sublime, it may be urged, as it raiseth admiration, should be considered as one species of address to the passions. But this objection, when examined, will appear superficial. There are few words in any language (particularly such as relate to the operations and feelings of the mind) which are strictly univocal. Thus admiration, when persons are the object, is commonly used for a high degree of esteem; but when otherwise applied, it denotes solely an internal taste. It is that pleasurable sensation which instantly ariseth on the perception of magnitude, or of whatever is great and

stupendous in its kind. For there is a greatness in the degrees of quality in spiritual subjects, analogous to that which subsists in the degrees of quantity in material things. Accordingly, in all tongues, perhaps without exception, the ordinary terms, which are considered as literally expressive of the latter, are also used promiscuously to denote the former. Now admiration, when thus applied, doth not require to its production, as the passions generally do, any reflex view of motives or tendencies, or of any relation either to private interest, or to the good of others; and ought therefore to be numbered among those original feelings of the mind, which are denominated by some the reflex senses, being of the same class with a taste for beauty, an ear for music, or our moral sentiments. Now, the immediate view of whatever is directed to the imagination (whether the subject be things inanimate or animal forms, whether characters, actions, incidents, or manners) terminates in the gratification of some internal taste: as a taste for the wonderful, the fair, the good; for elegance, for novelty, or for grandeur.

But it is evident, that this creative faculty, the fancy, frequently lends her aid in promoting still nobler ends. From her exuberant stores most of those tropes and figures are extracted, which, when properly employed, have such a marvellous efficacy in rousing the passions, and by some secret, sudden, and inexplicable association, awakening all the tenderest emotions of the heart. In this case, the address of the orator is not ultimately intended to astonish by the loftiness of his images, or to delight by the beauteous resemblance which his painting bears to nature; nay, it will not permit the hearers even a moment's leisure for making the comparison, but as it were by some magical spell, hurries them, ere they are aware, into love, pity, grief, terror, desire, aversion, fury, or hatred. It therefore assumes the denomination of *pathetic*,³ which is the characteristic of the third species of discourse, that addressed to the passions.

Finally, as that kind, the most complex of all, which is calculated to influence the will, and persuade to a certain conduct, is in reality an artful

³I am sensible that this word is commonly used in a more limited sense, for that which only excites commiseration. Perhaps the word *impassioned* would answer better. [Au.]

mixture of that which proposes to convince the judgment, and that which interests the passions, its distinguishing excellency results from these two, the argumentative and the pathetic incorporated together. These acting with united force, and, if I may so express myself, in concert, constitute that passionate evicition, that *vehemence* of contention, which is admirably fitted for persuasion, and hath always been regarded as the supreme qualification in an orator.⁴ It is this which bears down every obstacle, and procures the speaker an irresistible power over the thoughts and purposes of his audience. It is this which hath been so justly celebrated as giving one man an ascendant over others, superior even to what despotism itself can bestow; since by the latter the more ignoble part only, the body and its members are enslaved; whereas from the dominion of the former, nothing is exempted, neither

⁴This animated reasoning the Greek rhetoricians termed *δεινότης*, which from signifying the principal excellency in an orator, came at length to denote oratory itself. And as *vehemence* and *eloquence* became synonymous, the latter, suitably to this way of thinking, was sometimes defined the *art of persuasion*. But that this definition is defective, appears even from their own writings, since in a consistency with it, their rhetorics could not have comprehended those orations called *demonstrative*, the design of which was not to persuade but to please. Yet it is easy to discover the origin of this defect, and that both from the nature of the thing, and from the customs which obtained among both Greeks and Romans. First, from the nature of the thing, for to persuade presupposes in some degree, and therefore may be understood to imply, all the other talents of an orator, to enlighten, to evince, to paint, to astonish, to inflame; but this doth not hold inversely; one may explain with clearness, and prove with energy, who is incapable of the sublime, the pathetic, and the vehement: besides, this power of persuasion, or, as Cicero calls it, "Posse voluntates hominum impellere quo velis, unde velis, deducere," as it makes a man master of his hearers, is the most considerable in respect of consequences. Secondly, from ancient customs. All their public orations were ranked under three classes, the demonstrative, the judiciary, and the deliberative. In the two last it was impossible to rise to eminence, without that important talent, the power of persuasion. These were in much more frequent use than the first, and withal the surest means of advancing both the fortune and the fame of the orator; for as on the judiciary the lives and estates of private persons depended, on the deliberative hung the resolves of senates, the fate of kingdoms, nay, of the most renowned republics the world ever knew. Consequently, to excel in these, must have been the direct road to riches, honours, and preferment. No wonder, then, that persuasion should almost wholly engross the rhetorician's notice. [Au.]

judgment nor affection, not even the inmost recesses, the most latent movements of the soul. What opposition is he not prepared to conquer, on whose arms reason hath conferred solidity and weight, and passion such a sharpness as enables them, in defiance of every obstruction, to open a speedy passage to the heart?

It is not, however, every kind of pathos, which will give the orator so great an ascendancy over the minds of his hearers. All passions are not alike capable of producing this effect. Some are naturally inert and torpid; they deject the mind, and indispose it for enterprise. Of this kind are sorrow, fear, shame, humility. Others, on the contrary, elevate the soul, and stimulate to action. Such are hope, patriotism, ambition, emulation, anger. These, with the greatest facility, are made to concur in direction with arguments exciting to resolution and activity: and are, consequently, the fittest for producing what, for want of a better term in our language, I shall henceforth denominate the *vehement*. There is, besides, an intermediate kind of passions, which do not so congenially and directly either restrain us from acting, or incite us to act; but, by the art of the speaker, can, in an oblique manner, be made conducive to either. Such are joy, love, esteem, compassion. Nevertheless, all these kinds may find a place in suatory discourses, or such as are intended to operate on the will. The first is properest for dissuading; the second, as hath been already hinted, for persuading; the third is equally accommodated to both.

Guided by the above reflections, we may easily trace the connexion in the various forms of eloquence, which was remarked on, distinguishing them by their several objects. The imagination is charmed by a finished picture, wherein even drapery and ornament are not neglected; for here the end is pleasure. Would we penetrate further, and agitate the soul, we must exhibit only some vivid strokes, some expressive features, not decorated as for show (all ostentation being both despicable and hurtful here), but such as appear the natural exposition of those bright and deep impressions, made by the subject upon the speaker's mind; for here the end is not pleasure, but emotion. Would we not only touch the heart, but win it entirely to co-operate with our views, those affecting lineaments must be so interwoven

with our argument, as that, from the passion excited our reasoning may derive importance, and so be fitted for commanding attention; and by the justness of the reasoning the passion may be more deeply rooted and enforced; and that thus both may be made to conspire in effectuating that persuasion which is the end proposed. For here, if I may adopt the schoolmen's language, we do not argue to gain barely the assent of the understanding, but, which is infinitely more important, the consent of the will.

To prevent mistakes, it will not be beside my purpose further to remark, that several of the terms above explained are sometimes used by rhetoricians and critics in a much larger and more vague signification, than has been given them here. Sublimity and vehemence, in particular, are often confounded, the latter being considered as a species of the former. In this manner has this subject been treated by that great master Longinus, whose acceptance of the term *sublime* is extremely indefinite, importing an eminent degree of almost any excellence of speech, of whatever kind. Doubtless, if things themselves be understood, it does not seem material what names are assigned them. Yet it is both more accurate, and proves no inconsiderable aid to the right understanding of things, to discriminate by different signs such as are truly different. And that the two qualities above mentioned are of this number is undeniable, since we can produce passages full of vehemence, wherein no image is presented, which, with any propriety, can be termed great or sublime. In matters of criticism, as in the abstract sciences, it is of the utmost consequence to ascertain, with precision, the meanings of words, and, as nearly as the genius of the language in which one writes will permit, to make them correspond to the boundaries assigned by Nature to the things signified. That the lofty and the vehement, though still distinguishable, are sometimes combined, and act with united force, is not to be denied. It is then only that the orator can be said to fight with weapons which are at once sharp, massive, and refulgent, which, like heaven's artillery, dazzle while they strike, which overpower the sight and the heart at the same instant. How admirably do the two forenamed qualities, when happily blended, correspond in the rational, to

the thunder and lightning in the natural world, which are not more awfully majestic in sound and aspect, than irresistible in power.

Thus much shall suffice for explaining the spirit, the intent, and the distinguishing qualities of each of the forementioned sorts of address; all of which agree in this, an accommodation to affairs of a serious and important nature. . . .

CHAPTER IV

Of the relation which eloquence bears to logic and to grammar.

In contemplating a human creature, the most natural division of the subject is the common division into soul and body, or into the living principle of perception and of action, and that system of material organs by which the other receives information from without, and is enabled to exert its powers, both for its own benefit and for that of the species. Analogous to this, there are two things in every discourse which principally claim our attention, the sense and the expression; or in other words, the thought and the symbol by which it is communicated. These may be said to constitute the soul and the body of an oration, or indeed of whatever is signified to another by language. For, as in man, each of these constituent parts hath its distinctive attributes, and as the perfection of the latter consisteth in its fitness for serving the purposes of the former, so it is precisely with those two essential parts of every speech, the sense and the expression. Now, it is by the sense that rhetoric holds of logic, and by the expression that she holds of grammar.

The sole and ultimate end of logic is the eviction of truth; one important end of eloquence, though, as appears from the first chapter, neither the sole, nor always the ultimate, is the conviction of the hearers. Pure logic regards only the subject, which is examined solely for the sake of information. Truth, as such, is the proper aim of the examiner. Eloquence not only considers the subject, but also the speaker and the hearers, and both the subject and the speaker for the sake of the hearers, or rather for the sake of the effect intended to be produced in them. Now, to convince the hearers is always either proposed by the

orator, as his end in addressing them, or supposed to accompany the accomplishment of his end. Of the five sorts of discourses above mentioned, there are only two wherein conviction is the avowed purpose. One is that addressed to the understanding, in which the speaker proposeth to prove some position disbelieved or doubted by the hearers; the other is that which is calculated to influence the will, and persuade to a certain conduct; for it is by convincing the judgment that he proposeth to interest the passions and fix the resolution. As to the three other kinds of discourses enumerated, which address the understanding, the imagination, and the passions, conviction, though not the end, ought ever to accompany the accomplishment of the end. It is never formally proposed as an end where there are not supposed to be previous doubts or errors to conquer. But when due attention is not paid to it, by a proper management of the subject, doubts, disbelief, and mistake will be raised by the discourse itself, where there were none before, and these will not fail to obstruct the speaker's end, whatever it be. In explanatory discourses, which are of all kinds the simplest, there is a certain precision of manner which ought to pervade the whole, and which, though not in the form of argument, is not the less satisfactory, since it carries internal evidence along with it. In harangues pathetic or panegyric, in order that the hearers may be moved or pleased, it is of great consequence to impress them with the belief of the reality of the subject. Nay, even in those performances where truth, in regard to the individual facts related, is neither sought nor expected, as in some sorts of poetry, and in romance, truth still is an object to the mind, the general truths regarding character, manners, and incidents. When these are preserved, the piece may justly be denominated true, considered as a picture of life; though false, considered as a narrative of particular events. And even these untrue events must be counterfeits of truth, and bear its image; for in cases wherein the proposed end can be rendered consistent with unbelief, it cannot be rendered compatible with incredibility. Thus, in order to satisfy the mind, in most cases, truth, and in every case, what bears

the semblance of truth, must be presented to it. This holds equally, whatever be the declared aim of the speaker. I need scarcely add, that to prove a particular point is often occasionally necessary in every sort of discourse, as a subordinate end conducive to the advancement of the principal. If then it is the business of logic to evince the truth, to convince an auditory, which is the province of eloquence, is but a particular application of the logician's art. As logic therefore forges the arms which eloquence teacheth us to wield, we must first have recourse to the former, that being made acquainted with the materials of which her weapons and armour are severally made, we may know their respective strength and temper, and when and how each is to be used.

Now, if it be by the sense or soul of the discourse that rhetoric holds of logic, or the art of thinking and reasoning, it is by the expression or body of the discourse that she holds of grammar, or the art of conveying our thoughts in the words of a particular language. The observation of one analogy naturally suggests another. As the soul is of heavenly extraction and the body of earthly, so the sense of the discourse ought to have its source in the invariable nature of truth and right, whereas the expression can derive its energy only from the arbitrary conventions of men, sources as unlike, or rather as widely different, as the breath of the Almighty and the dust of the earth. In every region of the globe we may soon discover, that people feel and argue in much the same manner, but the speech of one nation is quite unintelligible to another. The art of the logician is accordingly, in some sense, universal; the art of the grammarian is always particular and local. The rules of argumentation laid down by Aristotle, in his *Analytics*, are of as much use for the discovery of truth in Britain or China as they were in Greece; but Priscian's rules of inflection and construction can assist us in learning no language but Latin. In propriety there cannot be such a thing as an universal grammar, unless there were such a thing as an universal language. The term hath sometimes, indeed, been applied to a collection of observations on the similar analogies that have been discovered in all tongues, ancient and mod-

ern, known to the authors of such collections. I do not mention this liberty in the use of the term with a view to censure it. In the application of technical or learned words, an author hath greater scope than in the application of those which are in more frequent use, and is only then thought censurable when he exposeth himself to be misunderstood. But it is to my purpose to observe that, as such collections convey the knowledge of no tongue whatever, the name *grammar*, when applied to them, is used in a sense quite different from that which it has in the common acceptance; perhaps as different, though the subject be language, as when it is applied to a system of geography.

Now, the grammatical art hath its completion in syntax; the oratorical, as far as the body or expression is concerned, in style. Syntax regards only the composition of many words into one sentence; style, at the same time that it attends to this, regards further the composition of many sentences into one discourse. Nor is this the only difference; the grammarian, with respect to what the two arts have in common, the structure of sentences, requires only purity; that is, that the words employed belong to the language, and that they be construed in the manner, and used in the signification, which custom hath rendered necessary for conveying the sense. The orator requires also beauty and strength. The highest aim of the former is the lowest aim of the latter; where grammar ends eloquence begins.

Thus the grammarian's department bears much the same relation to the orator's which the art of the mason bears to that of the architect. There is, however, one difference that well deserves our notice. As in architecture it is not necessary that he who designs should execute his own plans, he may be an excellent artist in this way who would handle very awkwardly the hammer and the trowel. But it is alike incumbent on the orator to design and to execute. He must, therefore, be master of the language he speaks or writes, and must be capable of adding to grammatic purity those higher qualities of elocution which will render his discourse graceful and energetic.

So much for the connexion that subsists between rhetoric and these parent arts, logic and grammar.

CHAPTER V

Of the different sources of Evidence, and the different Subjects to which they are respectively adapted.

Logical truth consisteth in the conformity of our conceptions to their archetypes in the nature of things. This conformity is perceived by the mind, either immediately on a bare attention to the ideas under review, or mediately by a comparison of these with other related ideas. Evidence of the former kind is called intuitive; of the latter, deductive.

Section I. Of Intuitive Evidence

Part I. Mathematical Axioms

Of intuitive evidence there are different sorts, One is that which results purely from *intellection*.⁵ Of this kind is the evidence of these propositions: "One and four make five—Things equal to the same thing are equal to one another—The whole is greater than a part;" and, in brief, all axioms in arithmetic and geometry. These are, in effect, but so many different expositions of our own general notions, taken in different views. Some of them are no other than definitions, or equivalent to definitions. To say, "One and four make *five*," is precisely the same as to say, "We give the name of *five* to one added to four." In fact, they are all, in some respect, reducible to this axiom, "Whatever is, is." I do not say they are deduced from it, for they have in like manner that original and intrinsic evidence, which makes them, as soon as the terms are understood, to be perceived intuitively. And if they are not thus

⁵I have here adopted the term *intellection* rather than *perception*, because, though not so usual, it is both more apposite and less equivocal. *Perception* is employed alike to denote every immediate object of thought, or whatever is apprehended by the mind, our sensations themselves, and those qualities in body suggested by our sensations, the ideas of these upon reflection, whether remembered or imagined, together with those called general notions, or abstract ideas. It is only the last of these kinds which are considered as peculiarly the object of the understanding, and which, therefore, require to be distinguished by a peculiar name. Obscurity arising from an uncommon word is easily surmounted, whereas ambiguity, by misleading us, ere we are aware, confounds our notion of the subject altogether. [Au.]

perceived, no deduction of reason will ever confer on them any additional evidence. Nay, in point of time, the discovery of the less general truths has the priority, not from their superior evidence, but solely from this consideration, that the less general are sooner objects of perception to us, the natural progress of the mind, in the acquisition of its ideas, being from particular things to universal notions, and not inversely. But I affirm that, though not deduced from that axiom, they may be considered as particular exemplifications of it, and coincident with it, inasmuch as they are all implied in this, that the properties of our clear and adequate ideas can be no other than what the mind clearly perceives them to be.

But, in order to prevent mistakes, it will be necessary further to illustrate this subject. It might be thought that if axioms were propositions perfectly identical, it would be impossible to advance a step, by their means, beyond the simple ideas first perceived by the mind. And it must be owned, if the predicate of the proposition were nothing but a repetition of the subject, under the same aspect, and in the same or synonymous terms, no conceivable advantage could be made of it for the furtherance of knowledge. Of such propositions as these for instance, "Seven are seven," "eight are eight," and "ten added to eleven, are equal to ten added to eleven," it is manifest, that we could never avail ourselves of them for the improvement of science. Nor does the change of the name make any alteration in point of utility. The propositions, "Twelve are a dozen," "twenty are a score," unless considered as explications of the words *dozen* and *score*, are equally insignificant with the former. But when the thing, though in effect coinciding, is considered under a different aspect; when what is single in the subject is divided in the predicate, and conversely; or when what is a whole in the one is regarded as a part of something else in the other; such propositions lead to the discovery of innumerable and apparently remote relations. One added to four may be accounted no other than a definition of the word *five*, as was remarked above. But when I say, "Two added to three are equal to five," I advance a truth, which, though equally clear, is quite distinct from the preceding. Thus, if one should affirm, "Twice fifteen make

thirty," and again, "Thirteen added to seventeen make thirty," nobody would pretend that he had repeated the same proposition in other words. The cases are entirely similar. In both, the same thing is predicated of ideas which, taken severally, are different. From these again result other equations, as, "One added to four are equal to two added to three," and "twice fifteen are equal to thirteen added to seventeen."

Now, it is by the aid of such simple and elementary principles, that the arithmetician and the algebraist proceed to the most astonishing discoveries. Nor are the operations of the geometriician essentially different. By a very few steps you are made to perceive the equality, or rather the coincidence, of the sum of the two angles formed by one straight line falling on another, with two right angles. By a process equally plain you are brought to discover, first, that if one side of a triangle be produced, the external angle will be equal to both the internal and opposite angles, and then, that all the angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles. So much for the nature and use of the first kind of intuitive evidence, resulting from pure intellection.

Part II. Consciousness

The next kind is that which ariseth from *consciousness*. Hence every man derives the perfect assurance that he hath of his own existence. Nor is he only in this way assured that he exists, but that he thinks, that he feels, that he sees, that he hears, and the like. Hence his absolute certainty in regard to the reality of his sensations and passions, and of every thing whose essence consists in being perceived. Nor does this kind of intuition regard only the truth of the original feelings or impressions, but also many of the judgments that are formed by the mind, on comparing these one with another. Thus the judgments we daily and hourly form, concerning resemblances or disparities in visible objects, or size in things tangible, where the odds is considerable, darker or lighter tints in colours, stronger or weaker tastes or smells, are all self-evident, and discoverable at once. It is from the same principle that, in regard to ourselves, we judge infallibly concerning the feelings, whether pleasant or painful, which we derive from what are called the internal senses,

and pronounce concerning beauty or deformity, harmony or discord, the elegant or the ridiculous. The difference between this kind of intuition and the former will appear on the slightest reflection. The former concerns only abstract notions and ideas, particularly in regard to number and extension, the objects purely of the understanding; the latter concerns only the existence of the mind itself, and its actual feelings, impressions or affections, pleasures or pains, the immediate subjects of sense, taking that word in the largest acceptation. The former gives rise to those universal truths, first principles or axioms, which serve as the foundation of abstract science; whereas the latter, though absolutely essential to the individual, yet as it only regards particular perceptions, which represent no distinct genus or species of objects, the judgments resulting thence cannot form any general positions to which a chain of reasoning may be fastened, and consequently are not of the nature of axioms, though both similar and equal in respect of evidence.

Part III. Common Sense

The third sort is that which ariseth from what hath been termed properly enough, *common sense*,⁶ as being an original source of knowledge

⁶The first among the moderns who took notice of this principle, as one of the genuine springs of our knowledge, was Buffier, a French philosopher of the present century, in a book entitled *Traité des premières Vérités*; one who to an uncommon degree of acuteness in matters of abstraction added that solidity of judgment which hath prevented in him, what had proved the wreck of many great names in philosophy, his understanding becoming the dupe of his ingenuity. This doctrine hath lately, in our own country, been set in the clearest light, and supported by invincible force of argument, by two very able writers in the science of man, Dr. Reid, in his *Inquiry into the Human Mind*, and Dr. Beattie, in his *Essay on the Immutability of Truth*. I beg leave to remark in this place, that, though for distinction's sake, I use the term *common sense* in a more limited signification than either of the authors last mentioned, there appears to be no real difference in our sentiments of the thing itself. I am not ignorant that this doctrine has been lately attacked by Dr. Priestley in a most extraordinary manner, a manner which no man, who has any regard to the name either of Englishman or of philosopher, will ever desire to see imitated, in this or any other country. I have read the performance, but have not been able to discover the author's sentiments in relation to the principal point in dispute. He says expressly, [Examination of Dr. Reid's Inquiry. &c. p. 119,] "Had these writers," Messieurs Reid, Beattie,

common to all mankind. I own, indeed, that in different persons it prevails in different degrees of strength; but no human creature hath been found originally and totally destitute of it, who is not accounted a monster in his kind; for such, doubtless, are all idiots and changelings. By madness, a disease which makes terrible havoc on the faculties of the mind, it may be in a great measure, but is never entirely lost.

It is purely hence that we derive our assurance of such truths as these: "Whatever has a beginning has a cause"—"When there is in the effect a manifest adjustment of the several parts to a certain end, there is intelligence in the cause." "The course of nature will be the same tomorrow that it is today; or, the future will resemble the past"—"There is such a thing as body; or, there are material substances independent of the mind's conceptions"—"There are other intelligent beings in the universe besides me"—"The clear representations of my memory, in regard to past events, are indubitably true." These, and a great many more of the same kind, it is impossible for any man by reasoning to evince, as might easily be shown, were this a proper place for the discussion. And it is equally impossible, without a full conviction of them, to advance a single step in the acquisition

and Oswald, "assumed as the elements of their common sense certain truths which are so plain that no man could doubt of them, (without entering into the ground of our assent to them,) their conduct would have been liable to very little objection." And is not this the very thing which these writers have done? What he means to signify by the parenthesis, "(without entering into the ground of our assent to them,)" it is not easy to guess. By a ground of assent to any proposition is commonly understood a reason or argument in support of it. Now, by his own hypothesis, there are truths so plain, that no man can doubt of them. If so, what ground of assent beyond their own plainness ought we to seek; what beside this can we ever hope to find, or what better reason needs be given for denominating such truths the dictates of common sense? If something plainer could be found to serve as evidence of any of them, then this plainer truth would be admitted as the first principle, and the other would be considered as deduced by reasoning. But notwithstanding the mistake in the instance, the general doctrine of primary truths would remain unhurt. It seems, however, that though their conduct would have been liable to very little, it would have been liable to some objection. "All that could have been said would have been, that, without any necessity, they had made an innovation in the received use of the term." I have a better opinion

of knowledge, especially in all that regards mankind, life, and conduct.

I am sensible that some of these, to men not accustomed to inquiries of this kind, will appear at first not to be primary principles, but conclusions from other principles; and some of them will be thought to coincide with the other kinds of intuition above mentioned. Thus the first, "Whatever hath a beginning hath a cause," may be thought to stand on the same footing with mathematical axioms. I acknowledge that in point of evidence they are equal, and it is alike impossible, in either case, for a rational creature to withhold his assent. Nevertheless, there is a difference in kind. All the axioms in mathematics are but the enunciations of certain properties in our abstract notions, distinctly perceived by the mind, but have no relation to any thing without themselves, and can never be made the foundation of any conclusion concerning actual existence; whereas, in the axiom last specified, from

of these gentlemen than to imagine, that if the thing which they contend for be admitted, they will enter into a dispute with any person about the name: though, in my judgment, even as to this, it is not they, but he, who is the innovator. He proceeds, "For no person ever denied that there are self-evident truths, and that these must be assumed, as the foundation of all our reasoning. I never met with any person who did not acknowledge this, or heard of any argumentative treatise that did not go on the supposition of it." Now, if this be the case, I would gladly know what is the great point he controverts. Is it, whether such self-evident truths shall be denominated principles of Common Sense, or be distinguished by some other appellation? Was it worth any man's while to write an octavo of near 400 pages, for the discussion of such a question as this? And if, as he assures us, they have said more than is necessary, in proof of a truth which he himself thinks indisputable, was it no more than necessary in Dr. Priestley to compose so large a volume, in order to convince the world that too much had been said already on the subject? I do not enter into the examination of his objections to some of the particular principles produced as primary truths. An attempt of this kind would be foreign to my purpose; besides that the authors he has attacked are better qualified for defending their own doctrine, and no doubt will do it, if they think there is occasion. I shall only subjoin two remarks on this book. The first is, that the author, through the whole, confounds two things totally distinct, certain associations of ideas, and certain judgments implying belief, which, though in some, are not in all cases, and therefore not necessarily, connected with association. And if so, merely to account for the association is in no case to account for the belief with which it is attended. Nay, admitting his plea, [page 86,] that by the principle of association not only the ideas but the con-

the existence of one thing we intuitively conclude the existence of another. This proposition, however, so far differs, in my apprehension, from others of the same order, that I cannot avoid considering the opposite assertion as not only false but contradictory; but I do not pretend to explain the ground of this difference.

The faith we give to memory may be thought, on a superficial view, to be resolvable into consciousness, as well as that we give to the immediate impressions of sense. But on a little attention one may easily perceive the difference. To believe the report of our senses doth indeed commonly imply to believe the existence of certain external and corporeal objects, which give rise to our particular sensations. This, I acknowledge, is a principle which doth not spring from consciousness, (for consciousness cannot extend beyond sensation,) but from common sense, as well as the assurance we have in the report of memory. But this was not intended to be included

comitant belief may be accounted for, even this does not invalidate the doctrine he impugns. For, let it be observed that it is one thing to assign a cause which, from the mechanism of our nature, has given rise to a particular tenet or belief, and another thing to produce a reason by which the understanding has been convinced. Now, unless this be done as to the principles in question, they must be considered as primary truths, in respect of the understanding, which never deduced them from other truths, and which is under a necessity, in all moral reasonings, of founding upon them. In fact, to give any other account of our conviction of them is to confirm instead of confuting the doctrine, that in all argumentation they must be regarded as primary truths, or truths which reason never inferred, through any medium, from other truths previously perceived. My second remark is, that though this examiner has, from Dr. Reid, given us a catalogue of first principles, which he deems unworthy of the honourable place assigned them, he has no where thought proper to give us a list of those self-evident truths which, by his own account, and in his own express words, "must be assumed as the foundation of all our reasoning." How much light might have been thrown upon the subject by the contrast! Perhaps we should have been enabled, on the comparison, to discover some distinctive characters in his genuine axioms, which would have preserved us from the danger of confounding them with their spurious ones. Nothing is more evident than that, in whatever regards matter of fact, the mathematical axioms will not answer. These are purely fitted for evolving the abstract relations of quantity. This he in effect owns himself [page 39]. It would have been obliging, then, and would have greatly contributed to shorten the controversy, if he had given us at least a specimen of those self-evident principles, which, in his estimation, are the *ne plus ultra* of moral reasoning. [Au.]

under the second branch of intuitive evidence. By that firm belief in sense, which I there resolved into consciousness, I meant no more than to say, I am certain that I see, and feel, and think, what I actually see, and feel, and think. As in this I pronounce only concerning my own present feelings, whose essence consists in being felt, and of which I am at present conscious, my conviction is reducible to this axiom, or coincident with it, "It is impossible for a thing to be and not to be at the same time." Now when I say, I trust entirely to the clear report of my memory, I mean a good deal more than, "I am certain that my memory gives such a report, or represents things in such a manner," for this conviction I have indeed from consciousness; but I mean, "I am certain that things happened heretofore at such a time, in the precise manner in which I now remember that they then happened." Thus there is a reference in the ideas of memory to former sensible impressions, to which there is nothing analogous in sensation. At the same time it is evident, that remembrance is not always accompanied with this full conviction. To describe, in words, the difference between those lively signatures of memory, which command an unlimited assent, and those fainter traces which raise opinion only, or even doubt, is perhaps impracticable; but no man stands in need of such assistance to enable him in fact to distinguish them, for the direction of his own judgment and conduct. Some may imagine that it is from experience we come to know what faith in every case is due to memory. But it will appear more fully afterwards, that unless we had implicitly relied on the distinct and vivid informations of that faculty, we could not have moved a step towards the acquisition of experience. It must, however, be admitted, that experience is of use in assisting us to judge concerning the more languid and confused suggestions of memory; or, to speak more properly, concerning the reality of those things, of which we ourselves are doubtful whether we remember them or not.

In regard to the primary truths of this order, it may be urged that it cannot be affirmed of them all at least, as it may of the axioms in mathematics, or the assurances we have from consciousness, that the denial of them implies a manifest contradiction. It is, perhaps, physically possible that the course of nature will be inverted the very

next moment; that my memory is not other than a delirium, and my life a dream; that all is mere illusion; that I am the only being in the universe, and that there is no such thing as body. Nothing can be juster than the reply given by Buffier, "It must be owned," says he,⁷ "that to maintain propositions, the reverse of the primary truths of common sense, doth not imply a contradiction; it only implies insanity." But if any person, on account of this difference in the nature of these two classes of axioms, should not think the term intuitive so properly applied to the evidence of the last mentioned, let him denominate it, if he please, instinctive: I have no objection to the term; nor do I think it derogates in the least from the dignity, the certainty, or the importance of the truths themselves. Such instincts are no other than the oracles of eternal wisdom.

For, let it be observed further, that axioms of this last kind are as essential to moral reasoning, to all deductions concerning life and existence, as those of the first kind are to the sciences of arithmetic and geometry. Perhaps it will appear afterwards that, without the aid of some of them, these sciences themselves would be utterly inaccessible to us. Besides, the mathematical axioms can never extend their influence beyond the precincts of abstract knowledge, in regard to number and extension, or assist us in the discovery of any matter of fact: whereas, with knowledge of the latter kind, the whole conduct and business of human life is principally and intimately connected. All reasoning necessarily supposes that there are certain principles in which we must acquiesce, and beyond which we cannot go—principles clearly discernible by their own light, which can derive no additional evidence from any thing besides. On the contrary supposition, the investigation of truth would be an endless and a fruitless task; we should be eternally proving, whilst nothing could ever be proved; because, by the hypothesis, we could never ascend to premises which require no proof. "If there be no first truths," says the author lately quoted,⁸ "there can be no second truths, nor third, nor indeed any truth at all."

So much for intuitive evidence, in the extensive

⁷Premières Vérités, Part i. Chap. xi. [Au.]

⁸Ib. Dessein de l'Ouvrage. [Au.]

meaning which hath here been given to that term, as including every thing whose evidence results from the simple contemplation of the ideas or perceptions which form the proposition under consideration, and requires not the intervention of any third idea as a medium of proof. This, for order's sake, I have distributed into three classes, the truths of pure intellection, of consciousness, and of common sense. The first may be denominated metaphysical, the second physical, the third moral; all of them natural, original, and unaccountable.

Section II. Of deductive evidence

Part I. Division of the subject into scientific and moral, with the principal distinctions between them.

All rational or deductive evidence is derived from one or other of these two sources: from the invariable properties or relations of general ideas; or from the actual, though perhaps variable connexions subsisting among things. The former we call demonstrative, the latter moral. Demonstration is built on pure intellection, and consisteth in an uninterrupted series of axioms. That propositions formerly demonstrated are taken into the series, doth not in the least invalidate this account; inasmuch as these propositions are all resolvable into axioms, and are admitted as links in the chain; not because necessary, but merely to avoid the useless prolixity which frequent and tedious repetition of proofs formerly given would occasion. Moral evidence is founded on the principles we have from consciousness and common sense, improved by experience; and as it proceeds on this general presumption or moral axiom, that the course of nature in time to come will be similar to what it hath been hitherto, it decides, in regard to particulars, concerning the future from the past, and concerning things unknown from things familiar to us. The first is solely conversant about number and extension, and about those other qualities which are measurable by these. Such are duration, velocity, and weight. With regard to such qualities as pleasure and pain, virtue and vice, wisdom and folly, beauty and deformity, though they admit de-

grees, yet, as there is no standard or common measure, by which their differences and proportions can be ascertained and expressed in numbers, they can never become the subject of demonstrative reasoning. Here rhetoric, it must be acknowledged, hath little to do. Simplicity of diction, and precision in arrangement, whence results perspicuity, are, as was observed already,⁹ all the requisites. The proper province of rhetoric is the second, or moral evidence; for to the second belong all decisions concerning fact, and things without us.

But that the nature of moral evidence may be better understood, it will not be amiss to remark a few of the most eminent differences between this and the demonstrative.

The first difference that occurs is in their subjects. The subject of the one is, as hath been observed, abstract independent truth, or the unchangeable and necessary relations of ideas; that of the other, the real but often changeable and contingent connexions that subsist among things actually existing. Abstract truths, as the properties of quantity, have no respect to time or to place, no dependence on the volition of any being, or on any cause whatever, but are eternally and immutably the same. The very reverse of all this generally obtains with regard to fact. In consequence of what has been now advanced, assertions opposite to truths of the former kind, are not only false, but absurd. They are not only not true, but it is impossible they should be true, whilst the meanings of the words (and consequently the ideas compared) remain the same. This doth not hold commonly in any other kind of evidence. Take, for instance, of the first kind, the following affirmations, "The cube of two is the half of sixteen,"—"The square of the hypotenuse is equal to the sum of the squares of the sides,"—"If equal things be taken from equal things, the remainders will be equal." Contrary propositions, as, "The cube of two is more than the half of sixteen,"—"The square of the hypotenuse is less than the sum of the squares of the sides,"—"If equal things be taken from equal things, the remainders will be unequal," are changeable, not only with falsity, but with absur-

⁹Chap. i. [Au.]

dity, being inconceivable and contradictory. Whereas, to these truths which we acquire by moral evidence, "Cæsar overcame Pompey,"—"The sun will rise tomorrow,"—"All men will die,"—the opposite assertions, though untrue, are easily conceivable without changing, in the least, the import of the words, and therefore do not imply a contradiction.

The second difference I shall remark is, that moral evidence admits degrees, demonstration doth not. This is a plain consequence of the preceding difference. Essential or necessary truth, the sole object of the latter, is incompatible with degree. And though actual truth, or matter of fact, be the ultimate aim of the former, likelihood alone, which is susceptible of degree, is usually the utmost attainment. Whatever is exhibited as demonstration is either mere illusion, and so no evidence at all, or absolutely perfect. There is no medium. In moral reasoning we ascend from possibility, by an insensible gradation, to probability, and thence, in the same manner, to the summit of moral certainty. On this summit, or on any of the steps leading to it, the conclusion of the argument may rest. Hence the result of that is, by way of eminence, denominated science, and the evidence itself is termed scientific; the result of this is frequently (not always) entitled to no higher denomination than opinion. Now, in the mathematical sciences, no mention is ever made of opinions.

The third difference is, that in the one there never can be any contrariety of proofs; in the other, there not only may be, but almost always is. If one demonstration were ever capable of being refuted, it could be solely by another demonstration, this being the only sort of evidence adapted to the subject, and the only sort by which the former could be matched. But to suppose that contraries are demonstrable, is to suppose that the same proposition is both true and false, which is a manifest contradiction. Consequently, if there should ever be the appearance of demonstration on opposite sides, that on one side must be fallacious and sophistical. It is not so with moral evidence, for, unless in a few singular instances, there is always real, not apparent evidence on both sides. There are contrary experiences, contrary presumptions, contrary testi-

monies, to balance against one another. In this case, the probability, upon the whole, is in the proportion which the evidence on the side that preponderates bears to its opposite. We usually say, indeed, that the evidence lies on such a side of the question, and not on the reverse; but by this expression is only meant the overplus of evidence, on comparing both sides. In like manner, when we affirm of an event, that it is probable, we say the contrary is only possible, although, when they are severally considered, we do not scruple to say, This is more probable than that; or, The probabilities on one side outweigh those on the other.

The fourth and last difference I shall observe is, that scientific evidence is simple, consisting of only one coherent series, every part of which depends on the preceding, and, as it were, suspends the following: moral evidence is generally complicated, being in reality a bundle of independent proofs. The longest demonstration is but one uniform chain, the links whereof, taken severally, are not to be regarded as so many arguments, and consequently when thus taken, they conclude nothing; but taken together, and in their proper order, they form one argument, which is perfectly conclusive. It is true, the same theorem may be demonstrable in different ways, and by different mediums; but as a single demonstration, clearly understood, commands the fullest conviction, every other is superfluous. After one demonstrative proof, a man may try a second, purely as an exercise of ingenuity, or the better to assure himself that he hath not committed an oversight in the first. Thus it may serve to warrant the regular procedure of his faculties, but not to make an addition to the former proof, or supply any deficiency perceived in it. So far is it from answering this end, that he is no sooner sensible of a defect in an attempt of this nature, than the whole is rejected as good for nothing, and carrying with it no degree of evidence whatever. In moral reasoning, on the contrary, there is often a combination of many distinct topics of argument, no way dependent on one another. Each hath a certain portion of evidence belonging to itself, each bestows on the conclusion a particular degree of likelihood, of all which accumulated the credibility of the fact is compounded. The

former may be compared to an arch, no part of which can subsist independently of the rest. If you make any breach in it, you destroy the whole. The latter may be compared to a tower, the height whereof is but the aggregate of the heights of the several parts reared above one another, and so may be gradually diminished, as it was gradually raised.

So much for the respective natures of scientific and of moral evidence, and those characteristic qualities which discriminate them from each other. On a survey of the whole, it seems indubitable, that if the former is infinitely superior in point of authority, the latter no less excels in point of importance. Abstract truth, as far as it is the object of our faculties, is almost entirely confined to quantity, concrete or discrete. The sphere of Demonstration is narrow, but within her sphere she is a despotic sovereign, her sway is uncontrollable. Her rival, on the contrary, hath less power but wider empire. Her forces, indeed, are not always irresistible; but the whole world is comprised in her dominions. Reality or fact comprehends the laws and the works of nature, as well as the arts and the institutions of men; in brief, all the beings which fall under the cognizance of the human mind, with all their modifications, operations, and effects. By the first, we must acknowledge, when applied to things, and combined with the discoveries of the second, our researches into nature in a certain line are facilitated, the understanding is enlightened, and many of the arts, both elegant and useful, are improved and perfected. Without the aid of the second, society must not only suffer but perish. Human nature itself could not subsist. This organ of knowledge, which extends its influence to every precinct of philosophy, and governs in most, serves also to regulate all the ordinary but indispensable concerns of life. To these it is admirably adapted, notwithstanding its inferiority in respect of dignity, accuracy, and perspicuity. For it is principally to the acquisitions procured by experience that we owe the use of language, and the knowledge of almost every thing that makes the soul of a man differ from that of a newborn infant. On the other hand, there is no despot so absolute as not to be liable to a check on some side or other; and that the prerogatives

of demonstration are not so very considerable, as on a cursory view one is apt to imagine; that this, as well as every other operation of the intellect, must partake in the weakness incident to all our mental faculties, and inseparable from our nature, I shall afterwards take an opportunity particularly to evince.

Part II. The Nature and Origin of Experience

I should now consider the principal tribes comprehended under the general name of moral evidence; but, that every difficulty may be removed, which might retard our progress in the proposed discussion, it will be necessary, in the first place, to explore more accurately those sources in our nature which give being to experience, and consequently to all those attainments, moral and intellectual, that are derived from it. These sources are two, sense and memory. The senses, both external and internal, are the original inlets of perception. They inform the mind of the facts, which in the present instant are situated within the sphere of their activity, and no sooner discharge their office in any particular instance than the articles of information exhibited by them are devolved on the memory. Remembrance instantly succeeds sensation, insomuch that the memory becomes the sole repository of the knowledge received from sense; knowledge which, without this repository, would be as instantaneously lost as it is gotten, and could be of no service to the mind. Our sensations would be no better than the fleeting pictures of a moving object on a camera obscura, which leave not the least vestige behind them. Memory, therefore, is the only original voucher extant of those past realities for which we had once the evidence of sense. Her ideas are, as it were, the prints that have been left by sensible impressions. But from these two faculties, considered in themselves, there results to us the knowledge only of individual facts, and only of such facts as either heretofore have come, or at present do come, under the notice of our senses.

Now, in order to render this knowledge useful to us, in discovering the nature of things, and in regulating our conduct, a further process of the mind is necessary, which deserves to be carefully attended to, and may be thus illustrated. I have

observed a stone fall to the ground when nothing intervened to impede its motion. This single fact produces little or no effect on the mind beyond a bare remembrance. At another time, I observe the fall of a tile, at another of an apple, and so of almost every kind of body in the like situation. Thus my sense first, and then my memory, furnish me with numerous examples, which, though different in every other particular, are similar in this, that they present a body moving downwards, till obstructed either by the ground or by some intervenient object. Hence by first notion of gravitation. For, with regard to the similar circumstances of different facts, as by the repetition such circumstances are more deeply imprinted, the mind acquires a habit of retaining them, omitting those circumstances peculiar to each wherein their differences consist. Hence, if objects of any kind, in a particular manner circumstanced, are remembered to have been usually, and still more if uniformly, succeeded by certain particular consequences, the idea of the former, in the supposed circumstance introduced into the mind, immediately associates the idea of the latter; and if the object itself, so circumstanced, be presented to the senses, the mind instantly anticipates the appearance of the customary consequence. This holds also inversely. The retention and association above explained are called Experience. The anticipation is in effect no other than a particular conclusion from that experience. Here we may remark by the way, that though memory gives birth to experience, which results from the comparison of facts remembered, the experience or habitual association remains, when the individual facts on which it is founded are all forgotten. I know from an experience which excludes all doubt, the power of fire in melting silver, and yet may not be able at present to recollect a particular instance in which I have seen this effect produced, or even in which I have had the fact attested by a credible witness.

Some will perhaps object that the account now given makes our experimental reasoning look like a sort of mechanism, necessarily resulting from the very constitution of the mind. I acknowledge the justness of the remark, but do not think that it ought to be regarded as an objection. It is plain that our reasoning in this way, if you

please to call it so, is very early, and precedes all reflection on our faculties, and the manner of applying them. Those who attend to the progress of human nature through its different stages, and through childhood in particular, will observe that children make great acquisitions in knowledge from experience long before they attain the use of speech. The beasts also, in their sphere, improve by experience, which hath in them just the same foundations of sense and memory as in us, and hath, besides, a similar influence on their actions. It is precisely in the same manner, and with the same success, that you might train a dog, or accustom a child to expect food on your calling to him in one tone of voice, and to dread your resentment when you use another. The brutes have evidently the rudiments of this species of rationality, which extends as far in them as the immediate purposes of self-preservation require, and which, whether you call it reason or instinct, they both acquire and use in the same manner as we do. That it reaches no further in them, seems to arise from an original incapacity of classing, and (if I may use the expression) generalizing their perceptions; an exercise which to us very quickly becomes familiar, and is what chiefly fits us for the use of language. Indeed, in the extent of this capacity, as much, perhaps, as in any thing, lies also the principal natural superiority of one man over another.

But that we may be satisfied, that to this kind of reasoning, in its earliest or simplest form, little or no reflection is necessary, let it be observed, that it is now universally admitted by opticians, that it is not purely from sight, but from sight aided by experience, that we derive our notions of the distance of visible objects from the eye. The sensation, say they, is instantaneously followed by a conclusion or judgment founded on experience. The point is determined from the different phases of the object found, in former trials, to be connected with different distances, or from the effort that accompanies the different conformations we are obliged to give the organs of sight, in order to obtain a distinct vision of the object. Now, if this be the case, as I think hath been sufficiently evinced of late, it is manifest that this judgment is so truly instantaneous, and so perfectly the result of feeling and association, that the forming of it totally escapes our notice.

Perhaps in no period of life will you find a person, that, on the first mention of it, can be easily persuaded that he derives this knowledge from experience. Every man will be ready to tell you that he needs no other witnesses than his eyes, to satisfy him that objects are not in contact with his body, but are at different distances from him as well as from one another. So passive is the mind in this matter, and so rapid are the transitions which, by this ideal attraction, she is impelled to make, that she is, in a manner, unconscious of her own operations. There is some ground to think, from the exact analogy which their organs bear to ours, that the discovery of distance from the eye is attained by brutes in the same manner as by us. As to this, however, I will not be positive. But though, in this way, the mind acquires an early perception of the most obvious and necessary truths, without which the bodily organs would be of little use; in matters less important her procedure is much slower, and more the result of voluntary application; and as the exertion is more deliberate, she is more conscious of her own activity, or, at least, remembers it longer. It is then only that in common style we honour her operation with the name of *reasoning*; though there is no essential difference between the two cases. It is true, indeed, that the conclusions in the first way, by which also in infancy we learn language, are commonly more to be regarded as infallible, than those effected in the second.

Part III. The subdivisions of Moral Reasoning

But to return to the proposed distribution of moral evidence. Under it I include these three tribes, experience, analogy, and testimony. To these I shall subjoin the consideration of a fourth, totally distinct from them all, but which appears to be a mixture of the demonstrative and the moral; or rather a particular application of the former, for ascertaining the precise force of the latter. The evidence I mean is that resulting from calculations concerning chances.

i. Experience

The first of these I have named peculiarly the evidence of experience, not with philosophical

propriety, but in compliance with common language, and for distinction's sake. Analogical reasoning is surely reasoning from a more indirect experience. Now, as to this first kind, our experience is either uniform or various. In the one case, provided the facts on which it is founded be sufficiently numerous, the conclusion is said to be morally certain. In the other, the conclusion, built on the greater number of instances, is said to be probable, and more or less so, according to the proportion which the instances on that side bear to those on the opposite. Thus we are perfectly assured that iron thrown into the river will sink, that deal will float; because these conclusions are built on a full and uniform experience. That in the last week of December next, it will snow in any part of Britain specified, is perhaps probable; that is, if, on inquiry or recollection, we are satisfied that this hath more frequently happened than the contrary; that some time in that month it will snow, is more probable, but not certain, because, though this conclusion is founded on experience, that experience is not uniform; lastly, that it will snow some time during winter will, I believe, on the same principles, be pronounced certain.

It was affirmed that experience, or the tendency of the mind to associate ideas under the notion of causes, effects, or adjuncts, is never contracted by one example only. This assertion, it may be thought, is contradicted by the principle on which physiologists commonly proceed, who consider one accurate experiment in support of a particular doctrine as sufficient evidence. The better to explain this phenomenon, and the further to illustrate the nature of experience, I shall make the following observations. First, whereas sense and memory are conversant only about individuals, our earliest experiences imply, or perhaps generate, the notion of a species, including all those individuals which have the most obvious and universal resemblance. From Charles, Thomas, William, we ascend to the idea of man; from Britain, France, Spain, to the idea of kingdom. As our acquaintance with nature enlarges, we discover resemblances, of a striking and important nature, between one species and another, which naturally begets the notion of a genus. From comparing men with beasts, birds,

fishes, and reptiles, we perceive that they are all alike possessed of life, or a principle of sensation and action, and of an organized body, and hence acquire the idea of animal: in like manner, from comparing kingdoms with republics and aristocracies, we obtain the idea of nation, and thence again rise in the same track to ideas still more comprehensive. Further, let it be remembered, that by experience we not only decide concerning the future from the past, but concerning things uncommon from things familiar which resemble them.

Now, to apply this observation: a botanist, in traversing the fields, lights on a particular plant, which appears to be of a species he is not acquainted with. The flower, he observes, is monopetalous, and the number of flowers it carries is seven. Here are two facts that occur to his observation; let us consider in what way he will be disposed to argue from them. From the first he does not hesitate to conclude, not only as probable, but as certain, that this individual, and all of the same species, invariably produce monopetalous flowers. From the second, he by no means concludes, as either certain, or even probable, that the flowers which either this plant, or others of the same species, carry at once, will always be seven. This difference, to a superficial inquirer, might seem capricious, since there appears to be one example, and but one in either case, on which the conclusion can be founded. The truth is, that it is not from this example only that he deduces these inferences. Had he never heretofore taken the smallest notice of any plant, he could not have reasoned at all from these remarks. The mind recurs instantly from the unknown to all the other known species of the same genus, and thence to all the known genera of the same order of tribe; and having experienced in the one instance, a regularity in every species, genus, and tribe, which admits no exception; in the other a variety as boundless as that of season, soil, and culture, it learns hence to mark the difference.

Again, we may observe that, on a closer acquaintance with those objects wherewith we are surrounded, we come to discover that they are mostly of a compound nature, and that not only

as containing a complication of those qualities called accidents, as gravity, mobility, colour, extension, figure, solidity, which are common almost to all matter, not only as consisting of different members, but as comprehending a mixture of bodies, often very different in their nature and properties, as air, fire, water, earth, salt, oil, spirit, and the like. These, perhaps, on deeper researches, will be found to consist of materials still simpler. Moreover, as we advance in the study of nature, we daily find more reason to be convinced of her constancy in all her operations, that like causes, in like circumstances, always produce like effects, and inversely, like effects always flow from like causes. The inconstancy which appears at first in some of nature's works, a more improved experience teacheth us to account for in this manner. As most of the objects we know are of a complex nature, on a narrower scrutiny we find, that the effects ascribed to them ought often solely to be ascribed to one or more of the component parts; that the other [parts] noway contribute to the production; that, on the contrary, they sometimes tend to hinder it. If the parts in the composition of similar objects were always in equal quantity, their being compounded would make no odds; if the parts, though not equal, bore always the same proportion to the whole, this would make a difference: but such as in many cases might be computed. In both respects, however, there is an immense variety. Perhaps every individual differs from every other individual of the same species, both in the quantities and in the proportions of its constituent member and component parts. This diversity is also found in other things, which, though hardly reducible to species, are generally known by the same name. The atmosphere in the same place at different times, or at the same time in different places, differs in density, heat, humidity, and the number, quality, and proportion of the vapours or particles with which it is loaden. The more then we become acquainted with elementary natures, the more we are ascertained by a general experience of the uniformity of their operations. And though perhaps it be impossible for us to attain the knowledge of the simplest elements of any body, yet when any thing appears so simple, or

rather so exactly uniform, as that we have observed it invariably to produce similar effects; on discovering any new effects, though but by one experiment, we conclude, from the general experience of the efficient, a like constancy in this energy as in the rest. Fire consumes wood, melts copper, and hardens clay. In these instances it acts uniformly, but not in these only. I have always experienced hitherto, that whatever of any species is consumed by it once, all of the same species it will consume upon trial at any time. The like may be said of what is melted, or hardened, or otherwise altered by it. If then, for the first time, I try the influence of fire on any fossil, or other substance, whatever be the effect, I readily conclude that fire will always produce a similar effect on similar bodies. This conclusion is not founded on this single instance, but on this instance compared with a general experience of the regularity of this element in all its operations.

So much for the first tribe, the evidence of experience, on which I have enlarged the more, as it is, if not the foundation, at least the criterion of all moral reasoning whatever. It is, besides, the principal organ of truth in all the branches of physiology (I use the word in its largest acceptation), including natural history, astronomy, geography, mechanics, optics, hydrostatics, meteorology, medicine, chemistry. Under the general term I also comprehend natural theology and psychology, which, in my opinion, have been most unnaturally disjoined by philosophers. Spirit, which here comprises only the Supreme Being and the human soul, is surely as much included under the notion of natural object as body is, and is knowable to the philosopher purely in the same way, by observation and experience.

ii. Analogy

The evidence of analogy, as was hinted above, is but a more indirect experience, founded on some remote similitude. As things, however, are often more easily comprehended by the aid of example than by definition, I shall in that manner illustrate the difference between experimental evidence and analogical. The circulation of the blood in one human body is, I shall suppose, experimentally discovered. Nobody will doubt of

this being a sufficient proof from experience, that the blood circulates in every human body. Nay, further, when we consider the great similarity which other animal bodies bear to the human body, and that both in the structure and in the destination of the several organs and limbs; particularly when we consider the resemblance in the blood itself, and blood vessels, and in the fabric and pulsation of the heart and arteries, it will appear sufficient experimental evidence of the circulation of the blood in brutes, especially in quadrupeds. Yet, in this application, it is manifest, that the evidence is weaker than in the former. But should I from the same experiment infer the circulation of the sap in vegetables, this would be called an argument only from analogy. Now, all reasonings from experience are obviously weakened in proportion to the remoteness of the resemblance subsisting between that on which the argument is founded, and that concerning which we form the conclusion.

The same thing may be considered in a different way. I have learnt from experience, that like effects sometimes proceed from objects which faintly resemble, but not near so frequently as from objects which have been a more perfect likeness. By this experience I have been enabled to determine the degrees of probability from the degrees of similarity in the different cases. It is presumable that the former of these ways has the earliest influence, when the mind, unaccustomed to reflection, forms but a weak association, and consequently but a weak expectation of a similar event from a weak resemblance. The latter seems more the result of thought, and is better adapted to the ordinary forms of reasoning.

It is allowed that analogical evidence is at best but a feeble support, and is hardly ever honoured with the name of proof. Nevertheless, when the analogies are numerous, and the subject admits not evidence of another kind, it doth not want efficacy. It must be owned, however, that it is generally more successful in silencing objections than in evincing truth, and on this account may more properly be styled the defensive arms of the orator than the offensive. Though it rarely refutes, it frequently repels refutation, like those weapons which, though they cannot kill the enemy, will ward his blows.

iii. Testimony

The third tribe is the evidence of testimony, which is either oral or written. This also hath been thought by some, but unjustly, to be solely and originally derived from the same source, experience.¹⁰ The utmost in regard to this, that can be affirmed with truth, is that the evidence of testimony is to be considered as strictly logical, no further than human veracity in general, or the veracity of witnesses of such a character, and in such circumstances in particular, is supported, or perhaps more properly, hath not been refuted, by experience. But that testimony, antecedently to experience, hath a natural influence on belief, is undeniable. In this it resembles memory; for though the defects and misrepresentations of memory are corrected by experience, yet that this faculty hath an innate evidence of its own we know from this, that if we had not previously given an implicit faith to memory, we had never been able to acquire experience. This will appear from the revisal of its nature, as explained above. Nay, it must be owned, that in what regards single facts, testimony is more adequate evidence than any conclusions from experience. The immediate conclusions from experience are general, and run thus: "This is the ordinary course of nature;"—"Such an event may reasonably be expected, when all the attendant circumstances are similar." When we descend in particulars, the conclusion necessarily becomes weaker, being more indirect. For though all the *known* circumstances be similar, all the *actual* circumstances may not be similar; nor is it possible in any case to be assured, that all the actual circumstances are known to us. Accordingly, experience is the foundation of philosophy; which consists in a collection of general truths, systematically digested. On the contrary, the direct conclusion from testimony is particular, and runs thus: "This is the fact in the instance specified." Testimony, therefore, is the foundation of history, which is occupied about individuals. Hence we derive our acquaintance with past ages, as from experience

¹⁰I had occasion to make some reflections on this subject formerly. See *Dissertations on Miracles*, Part i. Sect. 1. There are several ingenious observations on the same subject in Reid's *Inquiry*, Ch. vi. Sect. 23. [Au.]

we derive all that we can discover of the future. But the former is dignified with the name of knowledge, whereas the latter is regarded as matter of conjecture only. When experience is applied to the discovery of the truth in a particular incident, we call the evidence presumptive; ample testimony is accounted a positive proof of the fact. Nay, the strongest conviction built merely on the former is sometimes overturned by the slightest attack of the latter. Testimony is capable of giving us absolute certainty (Mr. Hume himself being judge¹¹) even of the most miraculous fact, or of what is contrary to uniform experience. For, perhaps, in no other instance can experience be applied to individual events with so much certainty, as in what relates to the revolutions of the heavenly bodies. Yet, even this evidence, he admits, may not only be counterbalanced, but destroyed by testimony.

But to return. Testimony is a serious intimation from another, of any fact or observation, as being what he remembers to have seen or heard or experienced. To this, when we have no positive reasons of mistrust or doubt, we are, by an original principle of our nature (analogous to that which compels our faith in memory), led to give an unlimited assent. As on memory alone is founded the merely personal experience of the individual, so on testimony in concurrence with memory is founded the much more extensive experience which is not originally our own, but derived from others.¹² By the first, I question not, a man might acquire all the knowledge necessary for mere animal support, in that rudest state of human nature (if ever such a state existed) which was without speech and without society; to the last, in conjunction with the other, we are indebted for every thing which distinguishes the man from the brute, for language, arts, and civilization. It hath been observed, that from experience we learn to confine our belief in human testimony within the proper bounds. Hence we are taught to consider many attendant circumstances, which serve either to corroborate or to invalidate its evidence. The reputation of the attester, his manner of address, the nature of the fact attested,

¹¹Essay on Miracles, p. 2. [Au.]

¹²Dissertation on Miracles, Part i. Sect. 2. [Au.]

the occasion of giving the testimony, the possible or probable design in giving it, the disposition of the hearers to whom it was given, and several other circumstances, have all considerable influence in fixing the degree of credibility. But of these I shall have occasion to take notice afterwards. It deserves likewise to be attended to on this subject, that in a number of concurrent testimonies (in cases wherein there could have been no previous concert), there is a probability distinct from that which may be termed the sum of the probabilities resulting from the testimonies of the witnesses, a probability which would remain even though the witnesses were of such a character as to merit no faith at all. This probability arises purely from the concurrence itself. That such a concurrence should spring from chance is as one to infinite; that is, in other words, morally impossible. If therefore concert be excluded, there remains no other cause but the reality of the fact.

Now to this species of evidence, testimony, we are first immediately indebted for all the branches of philology, such as, history, civil, ecclesiastic, and literary; grammar, languages, jurisprudence, and criticism; to which I may add revealed religion, as far as it is to be considered as a subject of historical and critical inquiry, and so discoverable by natural means; and secondly, to the same source we owe, as was hinted above, a great part of that light which is commonly known under the name of experience, but which is, in fact, not founded on our own personal observations, or the notices originally given by our own senses, but on the attested experiences and observations of others. So that as hence we derive entirely our knowledge of the actions and productions of men, especially in other regions and in former ages, hence also we derive, in a much greater measure than is commonly imagined, our acquaintance with Nature and her works. — Logic, rhetoric, ethics, economics, and politics are properly branches of pneumatology,¹³ though very closely connected with the philological studies above enumerated.

¹³The study of spirits or spiritual phenomena. [Ed.]

iv. Calculations of Chances

The last kind of evidence I proposed to consider, was that resulting from calculations of chances. Chance is not commonly understood, either in philosophic or in vulgar language, to imply the exclusion of a cause, but our ignorance of the cause. It is often employed to denote a bare possibility of an event, when nothing is known either to produce or to hinder it. But in this meaning it can never be made the subject of calculation. It then only affords scope to the calculator, when a cause is known for the production of an effect, and when that effect must necessarily be attended with this or that or the other circumstance; but no cause is known to determine us to regard one particular circumstance in preference to the rest, as that which shall accompany the supposed effect. The effect is then considered as necessary, but the circumstance as only casual or contingent. When a die is thrown out of the hand, we know that its gravity will make it fall; we know also that this, together with its cubical figure, will make it lie so, when intercepted by the table, as to have one side facing upwards. Thus far we proceed on the certain principles of a uniform experience; but there is no principle which can lead me to conclude that one side rather than another will be turned up. I know that this circumstance is not without a cause; but is, on the contrary, as really effected by the previous tossing which it receives in the hand or in the box, as its fall and the manner of its lying are by its gravity and figure. But the various turns or motions given it, in this manner, do inevitably escape my notice; and so are held for nothing. I say, therefore, that the chance is equal for every one of the six sides. Now, if five of these were marked with the same figure, suppose a dagger [†], and only one with an asterisk [*], I should in that case say, there were five chances that the die would turn up the dagger, for one that it would turn up the asterisk. For the turning up each of the six sides being equally possible, there are five cases in which the dagger, and only one in which the asterisk would be uppermost.

This differs from experience, inasmuch as I reckon the probability here, not from numbering

and comparing the events after repeated trials, but without any trial, from balancing the possibilities on both sides. But though different from experience, it is so similar, that we cannot wonder that it should produce a similar effect upon the mind. These different positions being considered as equal, if any of five shall produce one effect, and but the sixth another, the mind, weighting the different events, resteth in an expectation of that in which the greater number of chances concur; but still accompanied with a degree of hesitancy, which appears proportioned to the number of chances on the opposite side. It is much after the same manner that the mind, on comparing its own experiences, when five instances favour one side to one that favours the contrary, determines the greater credibility of the former. Hence, in all complicated cases, the very degree of probability may be arithmetically ascertained. That two dice marked in the common way will turn up seven, is thrice as probable as that they will turn up eleven, and six times as probable as that they will turn up twelve.¹⁴ The degree of probability is here determined demonstratively. It is indeed true that such mathematical calculations may be founded on experience, as well as upon chances. Examples of this we have in the computations that have been made of the value of annuities, insurances, and several other commercial articles. In such cases a great number of instances is necessary, the greatest exactness in collecting them on each side, and due care that there be no discoverable peculiarity in any of them, which would render them unfit for supporting a general conclusion.

Part IV. The superiority of Scientific Evidence reexamined

After the enumeration made in the first part of this section, of the principal differences between

¹⁴Call one die A, the other B. The chances for 7 are

A 1.	B 6.	A 4.	B 3.
A 2.	B 5.	A 5.	B 2.
A 3.	B 4.	A 6.	B 1.

The chances for eleven are
 A 6. B 5.
 A 5. B 6.

The only chance for 12 is A 6. B 6. The 1st is to the 2nd as 6 to 2; to the 3rd, as 6 to 1 [Au.]

scientific evidence and moral, I signified my intention of resuming the subject afterwards, as far at least as might be necessary to show, that the prerogatives of demonstration are not so considerable, as on a cursory view one is apt to imagine. It will be proper now to execute this intention. I could not attempt it sooner, as the right apprehension of what is to be advanced will depend on a just conception of those things which have lately been explained. In the comparison referred to, I contrasted the two sorts of evidence, as they are in themselves, without considering the influence which the necessary application of our faculties in using both, has, and ought to have, on the effect. The observations then made in that abstracted view of the subject, appear to be well founded. But that view, I acknowledge, doth not comprehend the whole with which we are concerned.

It was observed of memory, that as it instantly succeeds sensation, it is the repository of all the stores from which our experience is collected, and that without an implicit faith in the clear representations of that faculty, we could not advance a step in the acquisition of experimental knowledge. Yet we know that memory is not infallible: nor can we pretend that in any case there is not a physical possibility of her making a false report. Here, it may be said, is an irremediable imbecility in the very foundation of moral reasoning. But is it less so in demonstrative reasoning? This point deserves a careful examination.

It was remarked concerning the latter, that it is a proof consisting of an uninterrupted series of axioms. The truth of each is intuitively perceived as we proceed. But this process is of necessity gradual, and these axioms are all brought in succession. It must then be solely by the aid of memory, that they are capable of producing conviction in the mind. Nor by this do I mean to affirm, that we can remember the preceding steps with their connexions, so as to have them all present to our view at one instant; for then we should, in that instant, perceive the whole intuitively. Our remembrance, on the contrary, amounts to no more than this, that the perception of the truth of the axiom to which we are advanced in the proof, is accompanied with a strong impression on the memory of the satisfaction that the mind received

from the justness and regularity of what preceded. And in this we are under a necessity of acquiescing; for the understanding is no more capable of contemplating and perceiving at once the truth of all the propositions in the series, than the tongue is capable of uttering them at once. Before we make progress in geometry, we come to demonstrations, wherein there is a reference to preceding demonstrations; and in these perhaps to others that preceded them. The bare reflection, that as to these we once were satisfied, is accounted by every learner, and teacher too, as sufficient. And if it were not so, no advancement at all could be made in this science. Yet, here again, the whole evidence is reduced to the testimony of memory. It may be said that, along with the remembrance now mentioned, there is often in the mind a conscious power of recollecting the several steps, whenever it pleases; but the power of recollecting them severally, and successively, and the actual instantaneous recollection of the whole, are widely different. Now, what is the consequence of this induction? It is plainly this, that, in spite of the pride of mathesis, no demonstration whatever can produce, or reasonably ought to produce, a higher degree of certainty than that which results from the vivid representations of memory, on which the other is obliged to lean. Such is here the natural subordination, however rational and purely intellectual the former may be accounted, however mysterious and inexplicable the latter. For it is manifest, that without a perfect acquiescence in such representations, the mathematician could not advance a single step beyond his definitions and axioms. Nothing therefore is more certain, however inconceivable it appeared to Dr. Priestley, than what was affirmed by Dr. Oswald, that *the possibility of error attends the most complete demonstration*.

If from theory we recur to fact, we shall quickly find, that those most deeply versed in this sort of reasoning are conscious of the justness of the remark now made. A geometrician, I shall suppose, discovers a new theorem, which, having made a diagram for the purpose, he attempts to demonstrate, and succeeds in the attempt. The figure he hath constructed is very complex, and the demonstration long. Allow me now to ask, Will he be so perfectly satisfied on the first trial

as not to think it of importance to make a second, perhaps a third, and a fourth? Whence arises this diffidence? Purely from the consciousness of the fallibility of his own faculties. But to what purpose, it may be said, the reiterations of the attempt, since it is impossible for him, by any efforts, to shake off his dependence on the accuracy of his attention and fidelity of his memory? Or, what can he have more than reiterated testimonies of his memory, in support of the truth of its former testimony? I acknowledge, that after a hundred attempts he can have no more. But even this is a great deal. We learn from experience, that the mistakes or oversights committed by the mind in one operation, are sometimes, on a review, corrected on the second, or perhaps on a third. Besides, the repetition, when no error is discovered, enlivens the remembrance, and so strengthens the conviction. But, for this conviction, it is plain that we are in a great measure indebted to memory, and in some measure even to experience.

Arithmetical operations, as well as geometrical, are in their nature scientific; yet the most accurate accountants are very sensible of the possibility of committing a blunder, and therefore rarely fail, for securing the matter, when it is of importance, to prove what they have done, by trying to effect the same thing another way. You have employed yourself, I suppose, in resolving some difficult problem by algebra, and are convinced that your solution is just. One whom you know to be an expert algebraist, carefully peruses the whole operation, and acquaints you that he hath discovered an error in your procedure. You are that instant sensible that your conviction was not of such an impregnable nature, but that his single testimony, in consequence of the confidence you repose in his experienced veracity and skill, makes a considerable abatement in it.

Many cases might be supposed, of belief founded only on moral evidence, which it would be impossible thus to shake. A man of known probity and good sense, and (if you think it makes an addition of any moment in this case) an astronomer and philosopher, bids you look at the sun as it goes down, and tells you, with a serious countenance, that the sun which sets today will never again rise upon the earth. What would be the effect of this declaration? Would it create in

you any doubts? I believe it might, as to the soundness of the man's intellects, but not as to the truth of what he said. Thus, if we regard only the effect, demonstration itself doth not always produce such immovable certainty, as is sometimes consequent on merely moral evidence. And if there are, on the other hand, some well-known demonstrations, of so great authority, that it would equally look like lunacy to impugn, it may deserve the attention of the curious to inquire how far, with respect to the bulk of mankind, these circumstances, their having stood the test of ages, their having obtained the universal suffrage of those who are qualified to examine them (things purely of the nature of moral evidence), have contributed to that unshaken faith with which they are received.

The principal difference then, in respect of the result of both kinds, is reduced to this narrow point. In mathematical reasoning, provided you are ascertained of the regular procedure of the mind, to affirm that the conclusion is false implies a contradiction; in moral reasoning, though the procedure of the mind were quite unexceptionable, there still remains a physical possibility of the falsity of the conclusion. But how small this difference is in reality, any judicious person who but attends a little may easily discover. The geometrician, for instance, can no more doubt whether the book called Euclid's Elements is a human composition, whether its contents were discovered and digested into the order in which they are there disposed, by human genius and art, than he can doubt the truth of the propositions therein demonstrated. Is he in the smallest degree surer of any of the properties of the circle, than that if he take away his hand from the compasses with which he is describing it on the wall, they will immediately fall to the ground? These things affect his mind, and influence his practice, precisely in the same manner.

So much for the various kinds of evidence, whether intuitive or deductive; intuitive evidence, as divided into that of pure intellection, of consciousness, and of common sense, under the last of which that of memory is included; deductive evidence, as divided into scientific and moral, with the subdivisions of the latter into experience, analogy, and testimony, to which hath

been added the consideration of a mixed species concerning chances. So much for the various subjects of discourse, and the sorts of eviction of which they are respectively, susceptible. This, though peculiarly the logician's province, is the foundation of all conviction, and consequently of persuasion too. To attain either of these ends, the speaker must always assume the character of the close and candid reasoner; for though he may be an acute logician who is no orator, he will never be a consummate orator who is no logician. . . .

CHAPTER VII

Of the Consideration which the Speaker ought to have of the Hearers, as men in general.

Rhetoric, as was observed already, not only considers the subject, but also the hearers and the speaker.¹⁵ The hearers must be considered in a twofold view, as men in general, and as such men in particular.

As men in general, it must be allowed there are certain principles in our nature, which, when properly addressed and managed, give no inconsiderable aid to reason in promoting belief. Nor is it just to conclude from this concession, as some have hastily done, that oratory may be defined, "The art of deception." The use of such helps will be found, on a stricter examination, to be in most cases quite legitimate, and even necessary, if we would give reason herself that influence which is certainly her due. In order to evince the truth considered by itself, conclusive arguments alone are requisite; but in order to convince me by these arguments, it is moreover requisite that they be understood, that they be attended to, that they be remembered by me; and in order to persuade me by them to any particular action or conduct, it is further requisite, that by interesting me in the subject, they may, as it were, be felt. It is not therefore the understanding alone that is here concerned. If the orator would prove successful, it is necessary that he engage in his service all these different powers of the mind, the imagination, the memory, and the passions. These are not the supplanters of reason, or even

¹⁵Chap. iv. [Au.]

rivals in her sway; they are her handmaids, by whose ministry she is enabled to usher truth into the heart, and procure it there a favourable reception. As handmaids they are liable to be seduced by sophistry in the garb of reason, and sometimes are made ignorantly to lend their aid in the introduction of falsehood. But their service is not on this account to be dispensed with; there is even a necessity of employing it, founded on our nature. Our eyes and hands and feet will give us the same assistance in doing mischief as in doing good; but it would not therefore be better for the world, that all mankind were blind and lame. Arms are not to be laid aside by honest men, because carried by assassins and ruffians; they are to be used the rather for this very reason. Nor are those mental powers, of which eloquence so much avails herself, like the art of war or other human arts, perfectly indifferent to good and evil, and only beneficial as they are rightly employed. On the contrary, they are by nature, as will perhaps appear afterwards, more friendly to truth than to falsehood, and more easily retained in the cause of virtue, than in that of vice.

Section I. Men considered as endowed with Understanding

But to descend to particulars; the first thing to be studied by the speaker is, that his arguments may be understood. If they be unintelligible, the cause must be either in the sense or in the expression. It lies in the sense if the mediums of proof be such as the hearers are unacquainted with; that is, if the ideas introduced be either without the sphere of their knowledge, or too abstract for their apprehension and habits of thinking. It lies in the sense likewise, if the train of reasoning (though no unusual ideas should be introduced) be longer, or more complex, or more intricate, than they are accustomed to. But as the fitness of the arguments, in these respects, depends on the capacity, education, and attainments of the hearers, which in different orders of men are different, this properly belongs to the consideration which the speaker ought to have of his audience, not as men in general, but as men in particular. The obscurity which ariseth from the expression will come in course to be considered in the sequel.

Section II. Men considered as endowed with Imagination

The second thing requisite is that his reasoning be attended to; for this purpose the imagination must be engaged. Attention is prerequisite to every effect of speaking, and without some gratification in hearing, there will be no attention, at least of any continuance. Those qualities in ideas which principally gratify the fancy, are vivacity, beauty, sublimity, novelty. Nothing contributes more to vivacity than striking resemblances in the imagery, which convey, besides, an additional pleasure of their own.

But there is still a further end to be served by pleasing the imagination, than that of awakening and preserving the attention, however important this purpose alone ought to be accounted. I will not say with a late subtle metaphysician,¹⁶ that "Belief consisteth in the liveliness of our ideas." That this doctrine is erroneous, it would be quite foreign to my purpose to attempt here to evince.¹⁷ Thus much however is indubitable, that belief commonly enlivens our ideas; and that lively ideas have a stronger influence than faint ideas to induce belief. But so far are these two from being coincident, that even this connexion between them, though common, is not necessary. Vivacity of ideas is not always accompanied with faith, nor is faith always able to produce vivacity. The ideas raised in my mind by the (*Ædipus Tyrannus* of Sophocles, or the *Lear* of Shakespeare, are incomparably more lively than those excited by a cold but faithful historiographer. Yet I may give full credit to the languid narrative of the latter, though I believe not a single sentence in those tragedies. If a proof were asked of the greater vivacity in the one case than in the other (which, by the way, must be finally determined by consciousness), let these effects serve for arguments. The ideas of the poet give greater pleasure, command closer attention, operate more strongly on the passions, and are longer remembered. If these be not sufficient evidences of greater vivacity, I own I have no apprehension of

¹⁶The author of a *Treatise of Human Nature*, in 3 vols. [Au.]

¹⁷If one is desirous to see a refutation of this principle, let him consult Reid's *Inquiry*, Chap. ii. Sect. 5. [Au.]

the meaning which that author affixes to the term. The connexion, however, that generally subsisteth between vivacity and belief will appear less marvellous, if we reflect that there is not so great a difference between argument and illustration as is usually imagined. The same ingenious writer says, concerning moral reasoning, that it is but a kind of comparison. The truth of this assertion any one will easily be convinced of, who considers the preceding observations on that subject.

Where then lies the difference between addressing the judgment and addressing the fancy? and what hath given rise to the distinction between ratiocination and imagery? The following observations will serve for an answer to this query. It is evident, that though the mind receives a considerable pleasure from the discovery of resemblance, no pleasure is received when the resemblance is of such a nature as is familiar to every body. Such are those resemblances which result from the specific and generic qualities of ordinary objects. What gives the principle delight to the imagination, is the exhibition of a strong likeness, which escapes the notice of the generality of people. The similitude of man to man, eagle to eagle, sea to sea, or in brief, of one individual to another individual of the same species, affects not the fancy in the least. What poet would ever think of comparing a combat between two of his heroes to a combat between other two? Yet no where else will he find so strong a resemblance. Indeed, to the faculty of imagination, this resemblance appears rather under the notion of identity; although it be the foundation of the strongest reasoning from experience. Again, the similarity of one species to another of the same genus, as of the lion to the tiger, of the alder to the oak, though this too be a considerable fund of argumentation, hardly strikes the fancy more than the preceding, inasmuch as the general properties, whereof every species participates, are also obvious. But if from the experimental reasoning we descend to the analogical, we may be said to come upon a common to which reason and fancy have an equal claim. "A comparison," says Quintilian, "hath almost the effect of an example." But what are rhetorical comparisons, when brought to illustrate any point inculcated

on the hearers, — what are they, I say, but arguments from analogy? In proof of this let us borrow an instance from the forementioned rhetorician, "Would you be convinced of the necessity of education for the mind, consider of what importance culture is to the ground: the field which, cultivated, produceth a plentiful crop of useful fruits, if neglected, will be overrun with briars and brambles, and other useless or noxious weeds." It would be no better than trifling to point out the argument couched in this passage. Now if comparison, which is the chief, hath so great an influence upon conviction, it is no wonder that all those other oratorical tropes and figures addressed to the imagination, which are more or less nearly related to comparison, should derive hence both life and efficacy. Even antithesis implies comparison. Simile is a comparison in epitome.¹⁸ Metaphor is an allegory in miniature. Allegory and prosopopeia are comparisons conveyed under a particular form.

Section III. Men considered as endowed with Memory

Further, vivid ideas are not only more powerful than languid ideas in commanding and preserving attention, they are not only more efficacious in producing conviction, but they are also more easily retained. Those several powers, understanding, imagination, memory, and passion, are mutually subservient. That it is necessary for the orator to engage the help of memory, will appear from many reasons, particularly from what was remarked above, on the fourth difference between moral reasoning and demonstrative.¹⁹ It was there observed, that in the former the credibility of the fact is the sum of the evidence of all the arguments, often independent of one another, brought to support it. And though it was shown that demonstration itself, without the assistance of this faculty, could never produce conviction;

¹⁸Simile and comparison are in common language frequently confounded. The difference is this: Simile is no more than a comparison suggested in a word or two; as, He fought like a lion: His face shone as the sun. Comparison is a simile circumstantiated and included in one or more separate sentences. [Au.]

¹⁹Chap. v. Sect. ii. [Au.]

yet here it must be owned, that the natural connexion of the several links in the chain renders the remembrance easier. Now, as nothing can operate on the mind which is not in some respect present to it, care must be taken by the orator that, in introducing new topics, the vestiges left by the former on the minds of the hearers may not be effaced. It is the sense of this necessity which hath given rise to the rules of composition.

Some will perhaps consider it as irregular, that I speak here of addressing the memory, of which no mention at all was made in the first chapter, wherein I considered the different forms of eloquence, classing them by the different faculties of the mind addressed. But this apparent irregularity will vanish, when it is observed, that, with regard to the faculties there mentioned, each of them may not only be the direct, but even the ultimate object of what is spoken. The whole scope may be at one time to inform or convince the understanding, at another to delight the imagination, at a third to agitate the passions, and at a fourth to determine the will. But it is never the ultimate end of speaking to be remembered, when what is spoken tends neither to instruct, to please, to move, nor to persuade. This therefore is of necessity no more on any occasion than a subordinate end; or, which is precisely the same thing, the means to some further end; and as such, it is more or less necessary on every occasion. The speaker's attention to this subserviency of memory is always so much the more requisite, the greater the difficulty of remembrance is, and the more important the being remembered is to the attainment of the ultimate end. On both accounts, it is of more consequence in those discourses whose aim is either instruction or persuasion, than in those whose design is solely to please the fancy, or to move the passions. And if there are any which answer none of those ends, it were better to learn to forget them than to teach the method of making them to be retained.

The author of the treatise above quoted hath divided the principles of association in ideas into resemblance, contiguity, and causation. I do not here inquire into all the defects of this enumeration, but only observe that, even on his own system, order both in space and time ought to have been included. It appears at least to have an equal title with causation, which, according to him, is

but a particular modification and combination of the other two. Causation, considered as an associating principle, is, in his theory, no more than the contiguous succession of two ideas, which is more deeply imprinted on the mind by its experience of a similar contiguity and succession of the impressions from which they are copied. This therefore is the result of resemblance and vicinity united. Order in place is likewise a mode of vicinity, where this last tie is strengthened by the regularity and simplicity of figure; which qualities arise solely from the resemblance of the corresponding parts of the figure; or the parts similarly situated. Regular figures, besides the advantages they derive from simplicity and uniformity, have this also, that they are more familiar to the mind than irregular figures, and are therefore more easily conceived. Hence the influence which order in place hath upon the memory. If any person question this influence, let him but reflect, how much easier it is to remember a considerable number of persons, whom one hath seen ranged on benches or chairs, round a hall, than the same number seen standing promiscuously in a crowd: and how natural it is, for assisting the memory in recollecting the persons, to recur to the order wherein they were placed.

As to order in time, which in composition is properly styled Method, it consisteth principally in connecting the parts in such a manner as to give vicinity to things in the discourse which have an affinity; that is, resemblance, causality, or other relation in nature; and thus making their customary association and resemblance, as in the former case, co-operate with their contiguity in duration, or immediate succession in the delivery. The utility of method for aiding the memory, all the world knows. But besides this, there are some parts of the discourse, as well as figures of speech, peculiarly adapted to this end. Such are the division of the subject, the rhetorical repetitions of every kind, the different modes of transition and recapitulation.

Section IV. Men considered as endowed with Passions

To conclude; when persuasion is the end, passion also must be engaged. If it is fancy which bestows brilliancy on our ideas, if it is memory

which gives them stability, passion doth more, it animates them. Hence they derive spirit and energy. To say that it is possible to persuade without speaking to the passions, is but at best a kind of specious nonsense. The coolest reasoner always in persuading addresseth himself to the passions some way or other. This he cannot avoid doing, if he speak to the purpose. To make me believe it is enough to show me that things are so; to make me act, it is necessary to show that the action will answer some end. That can never be an end to me which gratifies no passion or affection in my nature. You assure me, "It is for my honour." Now you solicit my pride, without which I had never been able to understand the word. You say, "It is for my interest." Now you bespeak my self-love. "It is for the public good." Now you rouse my patriotism. "It will relieve the miserable." Now you touch my pity. So far therefore it is from being an unfair method of persuasion to move the passions, that there is no persuasion without moving them.

But if so much depend on passion, where is the scope for argument? Before I answer this question, let it be observed that, in order to persuade, there are two things which must be carefully studied by the orator. The first is, to excite some desire or passion in the hearers; the second is to satisfy their judgment that there is a connexion between the action to which he would persuade them, and the gratification of the desire or passion which he excites. This is the analysis of persuasion. The former is effected by communicating lively and glowing ideas of the object; the latter, unless so evident of itself as to supersede the necessity, by presenting the best and most forcible arguments which the nature of the subject admits. In the one lies the pathetic, in the other the argumentative. These incorporated together (as was observed in the first chapter) constitute that vehemence of contention, to which the greatest exploits of eloquence ought doubtless to be ascribed. Here then is the principal scope for argument, but not the only scope, as will appear in the sequel. When the first end alone is attained, the pathetic without the rational, the passions are indeed roused from a disagreeable languor by the help of the imagination, and the mind is thrown into a state which, though accompanied with some painful emotions, rarely

fails, upon the whole, to affect it with pleasure. But, if the hearers are judicious, no practical effect is produced. They cannot by such declamation be influenced to a particular action, because not convinced that that action will conduce to the gratifying of the passion raised. Your eloquence hath fired my ambition, and makes me burn with public zeal. The consequence is, there is nothing which at present I would not attempt for the sake of fame, and the interest of my country. You advise me to such a conduct; but you have not shown me how that can contribute to gratify either passion. Satisfy me in this, and I am instantly at your command. Indeed, when the hearers are rude and ignorant, nothing more is necessary in the speaker than to inflame their passions. They will not require that the connexion between the conduct he urges and the end proposed be evinced to them. His word will satisfy. And therefore bold affirmations are made to supply the place of reasons. Hence it is that the rabble are ever the prey of quacks and impudent pretenders of every denomination.

On the contrary, when the other end alone is attained, the rational without the pathetic, the speaker is as far from his purpose as before. You have proved, beyond contradiction, that acting thus is the sure way to procure such an object. I perceive that your reasoning is conclusive: but I am not affected by it. Why? I have no passion for the object. I am indifferent whether I procure it or not. You have demonstrated that such a step will mortify my enemy. I believe it; but I have no resentment, and will not trouble myself to give pain to another. Your arguments evince that it would gratify my vanity. But I prefer my ease. Thus passion is the mover to action, reason is the guide. Good is the object of the will, truth is the object of the understanding.²⁰

²⁰Several causes have contributed to involve this subject in confusion. One is the ambiguity and imperfection of language. Motives are often called arguments, and both motives and arguments are promiscuously styled reasons. Another is, the idle disputes that have arisen among philosophers concerning the nature of good, both physical and moral. "Truth and good are one," says the author of the Pleasures of Imagination, an author whose poetical merit will not be questioned by persons of taste. The expression might have been passed in the poet, whose right to the use of *catathresis*, one of the many privileges comprehended under the name of *poetic*

It may be thought that when the motive is the equity, the generosity, or the intrinsic merit of the action recommended, argument may be employed to evince the reasonableness of the end, as well as the fitness of the means. But this way of speaking suits better the popular dialect than the philosophical. The term *reasonableness*, when used in this manner, means nothing but the goodness, the amiableness, or moral excellency. If therefore the hearer hath no love of justice, no benevolence, no regard to right, although he were endowed with the perspicacity of a cherub, your harangue could

license, prescription hath fully established. But by philosophizing on this passage in his notes, he warrants us to canvass his reasoning, for no such privilege hath as yet been conceded to philosophers. Indeed, in attempting to illustrate, he has, I think, confuted it, or, to speak more properly, shown it to have no meaning. He mentions two opinions concerning the connexion of truth and beauty, which is one species of good. "Some philosophers," says he, "assert an independent and invariable law in nature, in consequence of which *all rational beings must alike perceive beauty in some certain proportions, and deformity in the contrary.*" Now, though I do not conceive what is meant either by an *independent law*, or by *contrary proportions*, this, if it proves any thing, proves as clearly that deformity and truth are one, as that beauty and truth are one: for those *contrary propositions* are surely as much proportions, or, if you will, as true proportions, as *some certain proportions* are. Accordingly, if, in the conclusion deduced, you put the word *deformity* instead of *beauty*, and the word *beauty* instead of *deformity*, the sense will be equally complete. "Others," he adds, "there are, who believe beauty to be merely a relative and arbitrary thing; and that it is not impossible, in a physical sense, that two beings of equal capacities for truth, should perceive, one of them beauty, and the other deformity, in the same relations. And upon this supposition, by that truth which is always connected with beauty, nothing more can be meant than the conformity of any object to those proportions, upon which, after a careful examination, the beauty of that species is found to depend." This opinion, if I am able to comprehend it, differs only in one point from the preceding. It supposes the standard or law of beauty not invariable or universal. It is liable to the same objection, and that rather more glaringly; for if the same relations must be always equally *true relations*, deformity is as really one with truth as beauty is, since the very same relations can exhibit both appearances. In short, no hypothesis hitherto invented hath shown that by means of the discursive faculty, without the aid of any other mental power, we could ever obtain a notion of either the beautiful or the good; and till this be shown, nothing is shown to the purpose. The author aforesaid, far from attempting this, proceeds on the supposition, that we first perceive beauty, he says not how, and then having, by a careful examination, discovered the proportions which give rise to the perception, denominate them *true*; so that all those

never have any influence on his mind. The reason is, when you speak of the fitness of the means, you address yourself only to the head; when you speak of the goodness of the end, you address yourself to the heart, of which we supposed him destitute. Are we then to class the virtues among the passions? By no means. But without entering into a discussion of the difference, which would be foreign to our purpose, let it suffice to observe, that they have this in common with passion. They necessarily imply an habitual propensity to a certain species of conduct, an habitual aversion to

elaborate disquisitions with which we are amused, amount only to a few insignificant identical propositions very improperly expressed. For out of a vast profusion of learned phrase, this is all the information we can pick, that "Beauty is—*truly* beauty," and that "Good is—*truly* good." "Moral good," says a celebrated writer, "consisteth in *fitness.*" From this account any person would at first readily conclude, that morals, according to him, are not concerned in the ends which we pursue, but solely in the choice of means for attaining our ends; that if this choice be judicious the conduct is moral; if injudicious, the contrary. But this truly pious author is far from admitting such an interpretation of his words. *Fitness* in this sense hath no relation to a further end. It is an absolute fitness, a fitness in itself. We are obliged to ask, What then is that fitness, which you call absolute? for the application of the word in every other case invariably implying the proper direction of means to an end, far from affording light to the meaning it has here, tends directly to mislead us. The only answer, as far as I can learn, that hath ever been given to this question, is neither more nor less than this, "That alone is absolutely fit which is morally good:" so that in saying moral good consisteth in fitness, no more is meant than that it consisteth in moral good. Another moralist appears, who hath made a most wonderful discovery. It is, that there is not a vice in the world but lying, and that acting virtuously in any situation is but one way or other of telling truth. When this curious theory comes to be explained, we find the practical lie results solely from acting contrary to what those moral sentiments dictate, which, instead of deducing, he everywhere presupposeth to be known and acknowledged by us. Thus he reasons perpetually in a circle, and without advancing a single step beyond it, makes the same things both causes and effects reciprocally. Conduct appears to be false for no other reason than because it is immoral, and immoral for no other reason but because it is false. Such philosophy would not have been unworthy those profound ontologists, who have blest the world with the discovery that "One being is but *one* being," that "A being is *truly* a being," and that "Every being has all the *properties* that it has," and who, to the unspeakable increase of useful knowledge, have denominated these the general attributes of being, and distinguished them by the titles, *unity*, *truth*, and *goodness*. This, if it be any thing, is the very sublimate of science. [Au.]

the contrary: a veneration for such a character, an abhorrence of such another. They are, therefore, though not passions, so closely related to them, that they are properly considered as motives to action, being equally capable of giving an impulse to the will. The difference is akin to that, if not the same, which rhetoricians observe between *pathos* and *ethos*, passion and disposition. Accordingly, what is addressed solely to the moral powers of the mind, is not so properly denominated the pathetic, as the *sentimental*. The term, I own, is rather modern, but is nevertheless convenient, as it fills a vacant room, and doth not, like most of our newfangled words, jostle out older and worthier occupants, to the no small detriment of the language. It occupies, so to speak, the middle place between the pathetic and that which is addressed to the imagination, and partakes of both, adding to the warmth of the former the grace and attractions of the latter.

Now, the principal questions on this subject are these two:—How is a passion or disposition that is favourable to the design of the orator, to be excited in the hearers? How is an unfavourable passion or disposition to be calmed? As to the first it was said already in general, that passion must be awakened by communicating lively ideas of the object. The reason will be obvious from the following remarks: A passion is most strongly excited by sensation. The sight of danger, immediate or near, instantly rouseth fear; the feeling of an injury, and the presence of the injurer, in a moment kindle anger. Next to the influence of sense is that of memory, the effect of which upon passion, if the fact be recent, and remembered distinctly and circumstantially, is almost equal. Next to the influence of memory is that of imagination; by which is here solely meant the faculty or apprehending what is neither perceived by the senses, nor remembered. Now, as it is this power of which the orator must chiefly avail himself, it is proper to inquire what those circumstances are, which will make the ideas he summons up in the imaginations of his hearers, resemble, in lustre and steadiness, those of sensation and remembrance. For the same circumstances will infallibly make them resemble also in their effects; that is, in the influence they will have upon the passions and affections of the heart.

Section V. The circumstances that are chiefly instrumental in operating on the Passions

These are perhaps all reducible to the seven following, probability, plausibility, importance, proximity of time, connexion of place, relation of the actors or sufferers to the hearers or speaker, interest of the hearers or speaker in the consequences.²¹

Part I. Probability

The first is *probability*, which is now considered only as an expedient for enlivening passion. Here again there is commonly scope for argument.²² Probability results from evidence, and begets belief. Belief invigorates our ideas. Belief raised to the highest becomes certainty. Certainty flows either from the force of the evidence, real or apparent, that is produced: or without any evidence produced by the speaker, from the previous notoriety of the fact. If the fact be notorious, it will not only be superfluous in the speaker to attempt to prove it, but it will be pernicious to his design. The reason is plain. By proving he supposeth it questionable, and by supposing actually renders it so to his audience: he brings them from viewing it in the stronger light of certainty, to view it in the weaker light of probability: in lieu of sunshine he gives them twilight. Of the different means and kinds of probation I have spoken already.

Part II. Plausibility

The second circumstance is *plausibility*, a thing totally distinct from the former, as having an effect upon the mind quite independent of faith or probability. It ariseth chiefly from the

²¹I am not quite positive as to the accuracy of this enumeration, and shall therefore freely permit my learned and ingenious friend Dr. Reid, to annex the *et cetera* he proposes in such cases, in order to supply all defects. See Sketches of the History of Man, B. iii. Sk. i. Appendix, c. ii. sect. 2. [Au.]

²²In the judiciary orations of the ancients, this was the principal scope for argument. That to condemn the guilty, and to acquit the innocent, would gratify their indignation against the injurious, and their love of right, was too manifest to require a proof. The fact that there was guilt in the prisoner, or that there was innocence, did require it. It was otherwise in deliberative orations, as the conduct recommended was more remotely connected with the emotions raised. [Au.]

consistency of the narration, from its being what is commonly called natural and feasible. This the French critics have aptly enough denominated in their language *vraisemblance*, the English critics more improperly in theirs *probability*. In order to avoid the manifest ambiguity there is in this application of the word, it had been better to retain the word *verisimilitude*, now almost obsolete. That there is a relation between those two qualities must, notwithstanding, be admitted. This, however, is an additional reason for assigning them different names. An homonymous term, whose different significations have no affinity to one another, is very seldom liable to be misunderstood.

But as to the nature and extent of this relation, let it be observed, that the want of plausibility implies an internal improbability, which it will require the stronger external evidence to surmount. Nevertheless, the implausibility may be surmounted by such evidence, and we may be fully ascertained of what is in itself exceedingly implausible. Implausibility is, in a certain degree, positive evidence against a narrative; whereas plausibility implies no positive evidence for it. We know that fiction may be as plausible as truth. A narration may be possessed of this quality to the highest degree, which we not only regard as improbable, but know to be false. Probability is a light darted on the object, from the proofs, which for this reason are pertinently enough styled *evidence*. Plausibility is a native lustre issuing directly from the object. The former is the aim of the historian, the latter of the poet. That every one may be satisfied that the second is generally not inferior to the first, in its influence on the mind, we need but appeal to the effects of tragedy, of epic, and even of romance, which, in its principal character, participates of the nature of poesy, though written in prose.

It deserves, however, to be remarked, that though plausibility alone hath often greater efficacy in rousing the passions than probability, or even certainty; yet, in any species of composition wherein truth, or at least probability, is expected, the mind quickly nauseates the most plausible tale, which is unsupported by proper arguments. For this reason it is the business of the orator, as much as his subject will permit, to avail himself

of both qualities. There is one case, and but one, in which plausibility itself may be dispensed with; that is, when the fact is so incontestible that it is impossible to entertain a doubt of it; for when implausibility is incapable of impairing belief, it hath sometimes, especially in forensic causes, even a good effect. By presenting us with something monstrous in its kind, it raiseth astonishment, and thereby heightens every passion which the narrative is fitted to excite.

But to return to the explication of this quality. When I explained the nature of experience, I showed that it consisteth of all the general truth collected from particular facts remembered; the mind forming to itself, often insensibly, and as it were mechanically, certain maxims, from comparing, or rather associating the similar circumstances of different incidents.²³ Hence it is, that when a number of ideas relating to any fact or event are successively introduced into my mind by a speaker; if the train he deduceth coincide with the general current of my experience; if in nothing it thwart those conclusions and anticipations which are become habitual to me, my mind accompanies him with facility, glides along from one idea to another, and admits the whole with pleasure. If, on the contrary, the train he introduceth run counter to the current of my experience; if in many things it shock those conclusions and anticipations which are become habitual to me, my mind attends him with difficulty, suffers a sort of violence in passing from one idea to another, and rejects the whole with disdain:

For while upon such monstrous scenes we gaze,
They shock our faith, our indignation raise.²⁴

In the former case I pronounce the narrative natural and credible, in the latter I say it is unnatural and incredible, if not impossible; and, which is particularly expressive of the different appearances in respect of connexion made by the ideas in my mind, the one tale I call coherent, the other incoherent. When therefore the orator can obtain no direct aid from the memory of his hearers, which is rarely to be obtained, he must, for the sake of brightening, and strengthening, and if I

²³Chap. V. Sect. ii. Part 2. [Au.]

²⁴Horace, *The Art of Poetry*, trans. Francis. [Ed.]

may be permitted to use so bold a metaphor, cementing his ideas, bespeak the assistance of experience. This, if properly employed, will prove a potent ally, by adding the grace of *verisimilitude* to the whole. It is therefore first of all requisite, that the circumstances of the narration, and the order in which they are exhibited, be what is commonly called natural, that is, congruous to general experience.

Where passion is the end, it is not a sufficient reason for introducing any circumstance that it is natural; it must also be pertinent. It is pertinent, when either necessary for giving a distinct and consistent apprehension of the object, at least for obviating some objection that may be started, or doubt that may be entertained concerning it; or when such as, in its particular tendency, promotes the general aim. All circumstances, however plausible, which serve merely for decoration, never fail to divert the attention, and so become prejudicial to the proposed influence on passion.

But I am aware that, from the explication I have given of this quality, it will be said, that I have run into the error, if it be an error, which I intended to avoid, and have confounded it with probability, by deriving it solely from the same origin, experience. In answer to this, let it be observed, that in every plausible tale which is unsupported by external evidence, there will be found throughout the whole, when duly canvassed, a mixture of possibilities and probabilities, and that not in such a manner as to make one part or incident probable, another barely possible, but so blended as equally to affect the whole, and every member. Take the *Iliad* for an example. That a haughty, choleric, and vindictive hero, such as Achilles is represented to have been, should, upon the public affront and injury he received from Agamemnon, treat that general with indignity, and form a resolution of withdrawing his troops, remaining thenceforth an unconcerned spectator of the calamities of his countrymen, our experience of the baleful influences of pride and anger renders in some degree probable; again, that one of such a character as Agamemnon, rapacious, jealous of his pre-eminence as commander-in-chief, who envied the superior merit of Achilles, and harboured resent-

ment against him—that such a one, I say, on such an occurrence as is related by the poet, should have given the provocation, will be acknowledged also to have some probability. But that there were such personages, of such characters, in such circumstances, is merely possible. Here there is a total want of evidence. Experience is silent. Properly indeed the case comes not within the verge of its jurisdiction. Its general conclusions may serve in confutation, but can never serve in proof of particular or historical facts. Sufficient testimony, and that only, will answer here. The testimony of the poet in this case goes for nothing. His object we know is not truth but likelihood. Experience, however, advances nothing against those allegations of the poet, therefore we call them possible; it can say nothing for them, therefore we do not call them probable. The whole at most amounts to this—if such causes existed, such effects probably followed. But we have no evidence of the existence of the causes; therefore we have no evidence of the existence of the effects. Consequently, all the probability implied in this quality is a hypothetical probability, which is in effect none at all. It is an axiom among dialecticians, in relation to the syllogistic art, that the conclusion always follows the weaker of the premises. To apply this to the present purpose, an application not illicit, though unusual,—if one of the premises, suppose the major, contain an affirmation that is barely possible, the minor, one that is probable, possibility only can be deduced in the conclusion.

These two qualities, therefore, PROBABILITY and PLAUSIBILITY, (if I may be indulged a little in the allegoric style), I shall call sister-graces, daughters of the same father *Experience*, who is the progeny of *Memory*, the first-born and heir of *Sense*. These daughters *Experience* had by different mothers. The elder is the offspring of *Reason*, the younger is the child of *Fancy*. The elder, regular in her features, and majestic both in shape and mien, is admirably fitted for commanding esteem, and even a religious veneration: the younger, careless, blooming, sprightly, is entirely formed for captivating the heart, and engaging love. The conversation of each is entertaining and instructive, but in different ways. Sages seem to think that there is more instruction to be gotten

from the just observations of the elder; almost all are agreed that there is more entertainment in the lively sallies of the younger. The principal companion and favourite of the first is *Truth*, but whether *Truth* or *Fiction* share most in the favour of the second it were often difficult to say. Both are naturally well-disposed, and even friendly to *Virtue*, but the elder is by much the more steady of the two; the younger, though perhaps not less capable of doing good, is more easily corrupted, and hath sometimes basely turned procuress to *Vice*. Though rivals, they have a sisterly affection to each other, and love to be together. The elder, sensible that there are but few who can for any time relish her society alone, is generally anxious that her sister be of the party; the younger, conscious of her own superior talents in this respect, can more easily dispense with the other's company. Nevertheless, when she is discoursing on great and serious subjects, in order to add weight to her words, she often quotes her sister's testimony, which she knows is better credited than her own, a compliment that is but sparingly returned by the elder. Each sister hath her admirers. Those of the younger are more numerous, those of the elder more constant. In the retinue of the former you will find the young, the gay, the dissipated; but these are not her only attendants. The middle-aged, however, and the thoughtful, more commonly attach themselves to the latter. To conclude; as something may be learned of characters from the invectives of enemies, as well as from the encomiums of friends, those who have not judgment to discern the good qualities of the firstborn, accuse her of dulness, pedantry, and stiffness; those who have not taste to relish the charms of the second, charge her with folly, levity, and falseness. Meantime, it appears to be the universal opinion of the impartial, and such as have been best acquainted with both, that though the attractives of the younger be more irresistible at sight, the virtues of the elder will be longer remembered.

So much for the two qualities *probability* and *plausibility*, on which I have expatiated the more, as they are the principal, and in some respect, indispensable. The others are not compatible with every subject; but as they are of real moment, it is necessary to attend to them, that so they may

not be overlooked in cases wherein the subject requires that they be urged.

Part III. Importance

The third circumstance I took notice of was *importance*, the appearance of which always tends, by fixing attention more closely, to add brightness and strength to the ideas. The importance in moral subjects is analogous to the quantity of matter in physical subjects, as on quantity the moment of moving bodies in a great degree depends. An action may derive importance from its own nature, from those concerned in it as acting or suffering, or from its consequences. It derives importance from its own nature, if it be stupendous in its kind, if the result of what is uncommonly great, whether good or bad, passion or invention, virtue or vice, as what in respect of generosity is godlike, what in respect of atrocity is diabolical: it derives importance from those concerned in it, when the actors or the sufferers are considerable, on account either of their dignity or of their number, or of both: it derives importance from its consequences, when these are remarkable in regard to their greatness, their multitude, their extent, and that either as to the many and distant places affected by them, or as to the future and remote periods to which they may reach, or as to both.

All the four remaining circumstances derive their efficacy purely from one and the same cause, the connexion of the subject with those occupied, as speaker or hearers, in the discourse. *Self* is the centre here, which hath a similar power in the ideal world to that of the sun in the material world, in communicating both light and heat to whatever is within the sphere of its activity, and in a greater or less degree according to the nearness or remoteness.

Part IV. Proximity of Time

First, as to *proximity of time*, every one knows that any melancholy incident is the more affecting that it is recent. Hence it is become common with story-tellers, that they may make a deeper impression on the hearers, to introduce remarks like these; that the tale which they relate is not old, that it happened but lately, or in their own time, or that they are yet living who had a part in it, or were witnesses of it. Proximity of time re-

gards not only the past but the future. An event that will probably soon happen hath greater influence upon us than what will probably happen a long time hence. I have hitherto proceeded on the hypothesis, that the orator rouses the passions of his hearers by exhibiting some past transaction; but we must acknowledge that passion may be as strongly excited by his reasonings concerning an event yet to come. In the judiciary orations there is greater scope for the former, in the deliberative for the latter; though in each kind there may occasionally be scope for both. All the seven circumstances enumerated are applicable, and have equal weight, whether they relate to the future or to the past. The only exception that I know of is, that probability and plausibility are scarcely distinguishable, when used in reference to events in futurity. As in these there is no access for testimony, what constitutes the principal distinction is quite excluded. In comparing the influence of the past upon our minds, with that of the future, it appears in general, that if the evidence, the importance, and the distance of the objects be equal, the latter will be greater than the former. The reason, I imagine, is, we are conscious that at every moment, the future, which seems placed before us, is approaching; and the past, which lies, as it were, behind, is retiring, our nearness or relation to the one constantly increaseth as the other decreaseth. There is something like attraction in the first case, and repulsion in the second. This tends to interest us more in the future than in the past, and consequently to the present view aggrandizes the one and diminishes the other.

What, nevertheless, gives the past a very considerable advantage, is its being generally susceptible of much stronger evidence than the future. The lights of the mind are, if I may so express myself, in an opposite situation to the lights of the body. These discover clearly the prospect lying before us, but not the ground we have already passed. By the memory, on the contrary, that great luminary of the mind, things past are exhibited in retrospect: we have no correspondent faculty to irradiate the future: and even in matters which fall not within the reach of our memory, past events are often clearly discoverable by testimony, and by effects at present existing; whereas we have nothing equivalent to

found our arguments upon in reasoning about things to come. It is for this reason, that the future is considered as the province of conjecture and uncertainty.

Part V. Connexion of Place

Local *connexion*, the fifth in the above enumeration, hath a more powerful effect than proximity of time. Duration and space are two things, (call them entities or attributes, or what you please,) in some respects the most like, and in some respects the most unlike to one another. They resemble in continuity, divisibility, infinity, in their being deemed essential to the existence of other things, and in the doubts that have been raised as to their having a real or independent existence of their own. They differ, in that the latter is permanent, whereas the very essence of the former consisteth in transitoriness; the parts of the one are all successive, of the other all coexistent. The greater portions of time are all distinguished by the memorable things which have been transacted in them, the smaller portions by the revolutions of the heavenly bodies: the portions of place, great and small, (for we do not here consider the regions of the fixed stars and planets,) are distinguished by the various tracts of land and water, into which the earth is divided, and subdivided; the one distinction intelligible, the other sensible; the one chiefly known to the inquisitive, the other in a great measure obvious to all.

Hence perhaps it arises, that the latter is considered as a firmer ground of relation than the former. Who is not more curious to know the notable transactions which have happened in his own country from the earliest antiquity, than to be acquainted with those which have happened in the remotest regions of the globe, during the century wherein he lives? It must be owned, however, that the former circumstance is more frequently aided by that of personal relation than the latter. Connexion of place not only includes vicinage, but every other local relation, such as being in a province under the same government with us, in a state that is in alliance with us, in a country well known to us, and the like. Of the influence of this connexion in operating on our passions we have daily proofs. With how much

indifference, at least with how slight and transient emotion, do we read in newspapers the accounts of the most deplorable accidents in countries distant and unknown! How much, on the contrary, are we alarmed and agitated on being informed that any such accident hath happened in our neighborhood, and that even though we be totally unacquainted with the persons concerned!

Part VI. Relation to the Persons Concerned

Still greater is the power of *relation* to the persons concerned, which was the sixth circumstance mentioned, as this tie is more direct than that which attacheth us to the scene of action. It is the persons, not the place, that are the immediate objects of the passions love or hatred, pity or anger, envy or contempt. Relation to the actors commonly produces an effect contrary to that produced by relation to the sufferers, the first in extenuation, the second in aggravation of the crime alleged. The first makes for the apologist, the second for the accuser. This I say is commonly the case, not always. A remote relation to the actors, when the offense is heinous, especially if the sufferers be more nearly related, will sometimes rather aggravate than extenuate the guilt in our estimation. But it is impossible with any precision to reduce these effects to rules; so much depending on the different tempers and sentiments of different audiences. Personal relations are of various kinds. Some have generally greater influence than others; some again have greater influence with one person, others with another. They are consanguinity, affinity, friendship, acquaintance, being fellow-citizens, countrymen, of the same surname, language, religion, occupation, and innumerable others.

Part VII. Interest in the Consequences

But of all the connective circumstances, the most powerful is *interest*, which is the last. Of all relations, personal relation, by bringing the object very near, most enlivens that sympathy which attacheth us to the concerns of others; interest in the effects brings the object, if I may say so, into contact with us, and makes the mind cling to it as a concern of its own. Sympathy is but a reflected feeling, and therefore, in ordinary cases, must be weaker than the original. Though

the mirror be ever so true, a lover will not be obliged to it for presenting him with the figure of his mistress when he hath an opportunity of gazing on her person. Nor will the orator place his chief confidence in the assistance of the social and sympathetic affections, when he hath it in his power to arm the selfish.

Men universally, from a just conception of the difference, have, when self is concerned, given a different name to what seems originally the same passion in a higher degree. Injury, to whomsoever offered, is to every man that observes it, and whose sense of right is not debauched by vicious practice, the natural object of *indignation*. Indignation always implies *resentment*, or a desire of retaliating on the injurious person, so far at least as to make him repent the wrong he hath committed. This indignation in the person injured is, from our knowledge of mankind, supposed to be, not indeed universally, but generally so much stronger, that it ought to be distinguished by another appellation, and is, accordingly, denominated *revenge*. In like manner beneficence, on whomsoever exercised, is the natural object of our *love*, love always implies *benevolence*, or a desire of promoting the happiness of the beneficent person; but this passion in the person benefited is conceived to be so much greater, and to infer so strong an obligation to a return of good offices to his benefactor, that it merits to be distinguished by the title *gratitude*. Now by this circumstance of *interest* in the effects, the speaker, from engaging *pity* in his favour, can proceed to operate on a more powerful principle, *self-preservation*. The *benevolence* of his hearers he can work up into *gratitude*, their *indignation* into *revenge*.

The two last-mentioned circumstances, personal relation and interest, are not without influence, as was hinted in the enumeration, though they regard the speaker only, and not the hearers. The reason is, a person present with us, whom we see and hear, and who, by words, and looks, and gestures, gives the liveliest signs of his feelings, has the surest and most immediate claim upon our sympathy. We become infected with his passions. We are hurried along by them, and not allowed leisure to distinguish between his relation and our relation, his interest and our interest.

Section VI. Other Passions, as well as Moral Sentiments, useful auxiliaries

So much for those circumstances in the object presented by the speaker, which serve to awaken and inflame the passions of the hearers. But when a passion is once raised, there are also other means by which it may be kept alive, and even augmented. Other passions or dispositions may be called in as auxiliaries. Nothing is more efficacious in this respect than a sense of justice, a sense of public utility, a sense of glory; and nothing conduceth more to operate on these, than the sentiments of sages whose wisdom we venerate, the example of heroes whose exploits we admire. I shall conclude what relates to the exciting of passion when I have remarked, that pleading the importance and the other pathetic circumstances, or pleading the authority of opinions or precedents, is usually considered, and aptly enough, as being likewise a species of reasoning.

This concession, however, doth not imply, that by any reasoning we are ever taught that such an object ought to awaken such a passion. This we must learn originally from feeling, not from argument. No speaker attempts to prove it; though he sometimes introduceth moral considerations, in order to justify the passion when raised, and to prevent the hearers from attempting to suppress it. Even when he is enforcing their regard to the pathetic circumstances above mentioned, it is not so much his aim to show that these circumstances ought to augment the passion, as that these circumstances are in the object. The effect upon their minds he commonly leaves to nature; and is not afraid of the conclusion, if he can make every aggravating circumstance be, as it were, both perceived and felt by them. In the enthymeme, (the syllogism of orators, as Quintilian terms it,) employed in such cases, the sentiment that such a quality of circumstance ought to rouse such a passion, though the foundation of all, is generally assumed without proof, or even without mention. This forms the major proposition, which is suppressed as obvious. His whole art is exerted in evincing the minor, which is the antecedent in his argument, and which maintains the reality of those attendant circumstances in the case in hand. A careful attention to the examples

of vehemence in the first chapter, and the quotation in the foregoing note, will sufficiently illustrate this remark.

Section VII. How an Unfavourable Passion must be calmed

I come now to the second question on the subject of passion. How is an unfavourable passion, or disposition, to be calmed? The answer is, either, first, by annihilating, or at least diminishing the object which raised it; or secondly, by exciting some other passion which may counterwork it.

By proving the falsity of the narration, or the utter incredibility of the future event, on the supposed truth of which the passion was founded, the object is annihilated. It is diminished by all such circumstances as are contrary to those by which it is increased. These are, improbability, implausibility, insignificance, distance of time, remoteness of place, the persons concerned such as we have no connexion with, the consequences such as we have no interest in. The method recommended by Gorgias, and approved by Aristotle, though peculiar in its manner, is, in those cases wherein it may properly be attempted, coincident in effect with that now mentioned. "It was a just opinion of Gorgias, that the serious argument of an adversary should be confounded by ridicule, and his ridicule by serious argument." For this is only endeavouring, by the aid of laughter and contempt, to diminish, or even quite undo, the unfriendly emotions that have been raised in the minds of the hearers; or, on the contrary, by satisfying them of the seriousness of the subject, and of the importance of its consequences, to extinguish the contempt, and make the laughter, which the antagonist wanted to excite, appear when examined, no better than madness.

The second way of silencing an unfavourable passion or disposition, is by conjuring up some other passion or disposition, which may overcome it. With regard to conduct, whenever the mind deliberates, it is conscious of contrary motives impelling it in opposite directions; in other words, it finds that acting thus would gratify one passion; not acting, or acting otherwise, would gratify another. To take such a step, I perceive,

would promote my interest, but derogate from my honour. Such another will gratify my resentment, but hurt my interest. When this is the case, as the speaker can be at no loss to discover the conflicting passions, he must be sensible that whatever force he adds to the disposition that favours his design, is in fact so much subtracted from the disposition that opposeth it, and conversely; as in the two scales of a balance, it is equal in regard to the effect, whether you add so much weight to one scale, or take it from the other.

Thus we have seen in what manner passion to an absent object may be excited by eloquence, which, by enlivening and invigorating the ideas of imagination, makes them resemble the impressions of sense and the traces of memory; and in this respect hath an effect on the mind similar to that produced by a telescope on the sight; things remote are brought near, things obscure rendered conspicuous. We have seen also in what manner a passion already excited may be calmed; how, by the oratorical magic, as by inverting the telescope, the object may be again removed and diminished.

It were endless to enumerate all the rhetorical figures that are adapted to the pathetic. Let it suffice to say, that most of those already named may be successfully employed here. Of others the principal are these, correction, climax, vision, exclamation, apostrophe, and interrogation. The three first, correction, climax, and vision, tend greatly to enliven the ideas, by the implicit, but animated comparison and opposition conveyed in them. Implicit and indirect comparison is more suitable to the disturbed state of mind required by the pathetic, than that which is explicit and direct. The latter implies leisure and tranquillity, the former rapidity and fire. Exclamation and apostrophe operate chiefly by sympathy, as they are the most ardent expressions of perturbation in the speaker. It at first sight appears more difficult to account for the effect of interrogation, which, being an appeal to the hearers, though it might awaken a closer attention, yet could not, one would imagine, excite in their minds any emotion that was not there before. This, nevertheless, it doth excite, through an oblique operation of the same principle. Such an appeal implies in the or-

ator the strongest confidence in the rectitude of his sentiments, and in the concurrence of every reasonable being. The auditors, by sympathizing with this frame of spirit, find it impracticable to withhold an assent which is so confidently depended on. But there will be occasion afterwards for discussing more particularly the rhetorical tropes and figures, when we come to treat of elocution.

Thus I have finished the consideration which the speaker ought to have of his hearers as men in general; that is, as thinking beings endowed with understanding, imagination, memory, and passions, such as we are conscious of in ourselves, and learn from the experience of their effects to be in others. I have pointed out the arts to be employed by him in engaging all those faculties in his service, that what he advanceth may not only be understood, not only command attention, not only be remembered, but, which is the chief point of all, may interest the heart.

CHAPTER VIII

Of the Consideration which the Speaker ought to have of the Hearers, as such men in particular.

It was remarked in the beginning of the preceding chapter, that the hearers ought to be considered in a twofold view, as men in general, and as such men in particular. The first consideration I have despatched, I now enter on the second.

When it is affirmed that the hearers are to be considered as such men in particular, no more is meant, than that regard ought to be had by the speaker to the special character of the audience, as composed of such individuals; that he may suit himself to them, both in his style and in his arguments.²⁵ Now, the difference between one audience and another is very great, not only in intellectual but in moral attainments. That may be clearly intelligible to a House of Commons, which would appear as if spoken in an unknown tongue to a conventicle of enthusiasts. That may kindle fury in the latter, which would create no emotion in the former but laughter and contempt.

²⁵He must be "*Orpheus in sylvis, inter delphinas Arion.*" Virgil. ["As Orpheus in the woods, as Arion among the dolphins." Ed.]

The most obvious difference that appears in different auditories, results from the different cultivation of the understanding; and the influence which this, and their manner of life, have both upon the imagination and upon the memory.

But even in cases wherein the difference in education and moral culture hath not been considerable, different habits afterwards contracted, and different occupations in life, give different propensities, and make one incline more to one passion, another to another. They consequently afford the intelligent speaker an easier passage to the heart, through the channel of the favourite passion. Thus liberty and independence will ever be prevalent motives with republicans, pomp and splendour with those attached to monarchy. In mercantile states, such as Carthage among the ancients, or Holland among the moderns, interest will always prove the most cogent argument; in states solely or chiefly composed of soldiers, such as Sparta and Ancient Rome, no inducement will be found a counterpoise to glory. Similar differences are also to be made in addressing different classes of men. With men of genius the most successful topic will be fame; with men of industry, riches; with men of fortune, pleasure.

But as the characters of audiences may be infinitely diversified, and as the influence they ought to have respectively upon the speaker must be obvious to a person of discernment, it is sufficient here to have observed thus much in the general concerning them.

CHAPTER IX

Of the Consideration which the Speaker ought to have of Himself.

The last consideration I mentioned, is that which the speaker ought to have of himself. By this we are to understand, not that estimate of himself which is derived directly from consciousness or self-acquaintance, but that which is obtained reflexively from the opinion entertained of him by the hearers, or the character which he bears with them. Sympathy is one main engine by which the orator operates on the passions.

With them who laugh, our social joy appears;
With them who mourn, we sympathize in tears;

If you would have me weep, begin the strain,
Then I shall feel your sorrows, feel your pain.²⁶

Whatever, therefore, weakens that principle of sympathy, must do the speaker unutterable prejudice in respect of his power over the passions of his audience, but not in this respect only. One source, at least, of the primary influence of testimony on faith, is doubtless to be attributed to the same communicative principle. At the same time it is certain, as was remarked above, that every testimony doth not equally attach this principle; that in this particular the reputation of the attester hath a considerable power. Now, the speaker's apparent conviction of the truth of what he advanceth, adds to all his other arguments an evidence, though not precisely the same, yet near akin to that of his own testimony. This hath some weight even with the wisest hearers, but is every thing with the vulgar. Whatever therefore lessens sympathy, must also impair belief.

Sympathy in the hearers to the speaker may be lessened several ways, chiefly by these two; by a low opinion of his intellectual abilities, and by a bad opinion of his morals. The latter is the more prejudicial of the two. Men generally will think themselves in less danger of being seduced by a man of weak understanding, but of distinguished probity, than by a man of the best understanding who is of a profligate life. So much more powerfully do the qualities of the heart attach us, than those of the head. This preference, though it may be justly called untaught and instinctive, arising purely from the original frame of the mind, reason, or the knowledge of mankind acquired by experience, instead of weakening, seems afterwards to corroborate. Hence it hath become a common topic with rhetoricians, that, in order to be a successful orator, one must be a good man; for to be good is the only sure way of being long esteemed good, and to be esteemed good is previously necessary to one's being heard with due attention and regard. Consequently, the topic hath a foundation in human nature. There are indeed other things in the character of the speaker, which, in a less degree, will hurt his influence; youth, inexperience of affairs, former want of success, and the like.

²⁶Horace, *The Art of Poetry*, trans. Francis. [Ed.]

But of all the prepossessions in the minds of the hearers which tend to impede or counteract the design of the speaker, party spirit, where it happens to prevail, is the most pernicious, being at once that most inflexible and the most unjust. This prejudice I mention by itself, as those above recited may have place at any time, and in any national circumstances. This hath place only when a people is so unfortunate as to be torn by faction. In that case, if the speaker and the hearers, or the bulk of the hearers, be of contrary parties, their minds will be more prepossessed against him, though his life were ever so blameless, than if he were a man of the most flagitious manners, but of the same party. This holds but too much alike of all parties, religious and political. Violent party men not only lose all sympathy with those of the opposite side, but contract an antipathy to them. This, on some occasions, even the divinest eloquence will not surmount.

As to personal prejudices in general, I shall conclude with two remarks. The first is, the more gross the hearers are, so much the more susceptible they are of such prejudices. Nothing exposes the mind more to all their baneful influences than ignorance and rudeness; the rabble chiefly consider who speaks, men of sense and education what is spoken. Nor are the multitude, to do them justice, less excessive in their love than in their hatred, in their attachments than in their aversions. From a consciousness, it would seem, of their own incapacity to guide themselves, they are ever prone blindly to submit to the guidance of some popular orator, who hath had the address first, either to gain their approbation by his real or pretended virtues, or, which is the easier way, to recommend himself to their esteem by a flaming zeal for their favourite distinctions, and afterwards by his eloquence to work upon their passions. At the same time it must be acknowledged, on the other hand, that even men of the most improved intellects, and most refined sentiments, are not altogether beyond the reach of preconceived opinion, either in the speaker's favour or to his prejudice.

The second remark is, that when the opinion of the audience is unfavourable, the speaker hath need to be much more cautious in every step he takes, to show more modesty, and greater defer-

ence to the judgment of his hearers; perhaps in order to win them, he may find it necessary to make some concessions in relation to his former principles or conduct, and to entreat their attention from pure regard to the subject; that, like men of judgment and candour, they would impartially consider what is said, and give a welcome reception to truth, from what quarter soever it proceed. Thus he must attempt, if possible, to mollify them, gradually to insinuate himself into their favour, and thereby imperceptibly to transfuse his sentiments and passions into their minds.

The man who enjoys the advantage of popularity needs not this caution. The minds of his auditors are perfectly attuned to his. They are prepared for adopting implicitly his opinions, and accompanying him in all his most passionate excursions. When the people are willing to run with you, you may run as fast as you can, especially when the case requires impetuosity and despatch. But if you find in them no such ardour, if it is not even without reluctance that they are induced to walk with you, you must slacken your pace and keep them company, lest they either stand still or turn back. Different rules are given by rhetoricians as adapted to different circumstances. Differences in this respect are numberless. It is enough here to have observed those principles in the mind on which the rules are founded.

CHAPTER X

The different kinds of public speaking in use among the moderns compared, with a view to their different advantages in respect of eloquence.

The principal sorts of discourses which here demand our notice, and on which I intend to make some observations, are the three following: orations delivered at the bar, those pronounced in the senate, and those spoken from the pulpit. I do not make a separate article of the speeches delivered by judges to their colleagues on the bench; because, though there be something peculiar here, arising from the difference in character that subsists between the judge and the pleader, in all the other material circumstances, the persons addressed, the subject, the occasion, and the purpose in speaking, there is in these two sorts a per-

fect coincidence. In like manner, I forbear to mention the theatre, because so entirely dissimilar, both in form and in kind, as hardly to be capable of a place in the comparison. Besides, it is only a cursory view of the chief differences, and not a critical examination of them all, that is here proposed; my design being solely to assist the mind both in apprehending rightly, and in applying properly, the principles above laid down. In this respect, the present discussion will serve to exemplify and illustrate those principles. Under these five particulars, therefore, the speaker, the hearers or persons addressed, the subject, the occasion, and the end in view, or the effect intended to be produced by the discourse, I shall arrange, for order's sake, the remarks I intend to lay before the reader.

Section I. In regard to the Speaker

The first consideration is that of the character to be sustained by the speaker. It was remarked in general, in the preceding chapter, that for promoting the success of the orator, (whatever be the kind of public speaking in which he is concerned,) it is a matter of some consequence that, in the opinion of those whom he addresseth, he is both a wise and a good man. But though this in some measure holds universally, nothing is more certain than that the degree of consequence which lies in their opinion, is exceedingly different in the different kinds. In each it depends chiefly on two circumstances, the nature of his profession as a public speaker, and the character of those to whom his discourses are addressed.

As to the first, arising from the nature of the profession, it will not admit a question, that the preacher hath in this respect the most difficult task; inasmuch as he hath a character to support, which is much more easily injured than that either of the senator, or the speaker at the bar. No doubt the reputation of capacity, experience in affairs, and as much integrity as is thought attainable by those called men of the world, will add weight to the words of the senator; that of skill in his profession, and fidelity in his representation, will serve to recommend what is spoken by the lawyer at the bar; but if these characters in general remain unimpeached, the public will be suf-

ficiently indulgent to both in every other respect. On the contrary, there is little or no indulgence, in regard to his own failings, to be expected by the man who is professedly a sort of authorized censor, who hath it in charge to mark and reprehend the faults of others. And even in the execution of this so ticklish a part of his office, the least excess on either hand exposeth him to censure and dislike. Too much lenity is enough to stigmatize him as lukewarm in the cause of virtue, and too much severity as a stranger to the spirit of the gospel.

But let us consider more directly what is implied in the character, that we may better judge of the effect it will have on the expectations and demands of the people, and consequently on his public teaching. First, then, it is a character of some authority, as it is of one educated for a purpose so important as that of a teacher of religion. This authority, however, from the nature of the function, must be tempered with moderation, candour, and benevolence. The preacher of the gospel, as the very terms import, is the minister of grace, the herald of divine mercy to ignorant, sinful, and erring men. The magistrate, on the contrary, (under which term may be included secular judges and counsellors of every denomination,) is the minister of divine justice and of wrath. *He beareth not the sword in vain.*²⁷ He is on the part of heaven the avenger of the society with whose protection he is intrusted, against all who invade its rights. The first operates chiefly on our love, the second on our fear. *Minister of religion*, like angel of God, is a name that ought to convey the idea of something endearing and attractive; whereas the title *minister of justice* invariably suggests the notion of something awful and unrelenting. In the former, even his indignation against sin ought to be surmounted by his pity of the condition, and concern for the recovery, of the sinner. Though firm in declaring the will of God, though steady in maintaining the cause of truth, yet mild in his addresses to the people, condescending to the weak, using rather entreaty than command, beseeching them by the lowliness and gentleness of Christ, knowing that, "the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be

²⁷Romans xiii. 4. [Au.]

gentle to all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves.”²⁸ He must be grave without moroseness, cheerful without levity. And even in setting before his people the terrors of the Lord, affection ought manifestly to predominate in the warning which he is compelled to give. From these few hints it plainly appears, that there is a certain delicacy in the character of a preacher, which he is never at liberty totally to overlook, and to which, if there appear any thing incongruous, either in his conduct or in his public performances, it will never fail to injure their effect. On the contrary, it is well known, that as, in the other professions, the speaker’s private life is but very little minded, so there are many things which, though they would be accounted nowise unsuitable from the bar or in the senate, would be deemed altogether unfitting the pulpit.

It ought not to be overlooked, on the other hand, that there is one peculiarity in the lawyer’s professional character, which is unfavourable to conviction, and consequently gives him some disadvantage both of the senator and the preacher. We know that he must defend his client, and argue on the side on which he is retained. We know also that a trifling and accidental circumstance, which nowise affects the merit of the cause, such as a prior application from the adverse party, would probably have made him employ the same acuteness, and display the same fervour, on the opposite side of the question. This circumstance, though not considered as a fault in the character of the man, but a natural, because an ordinary, consequent of the office, cannot fail, when reflected on, to make us shyer of yielding our assent. It removes entirely what was observed in the preceding chapter to be of great moment, our belief of the speaker’s sincerity. This belief can hardly be rendered compatible with the knowledge that both truth and right are so commonly and avowedly sacrificed to interest. I acknowledge that an uncommon share of eloquence will carry off the minds of most people from attending to this circumstance, or at least from paying any regard to it. Yet Antony is represented by Cicero, as thinking the advocate’s reputation so

delicate, that the practice of amusing himself in philosophical disputations with his friends is sufficient to hurt it, and consequently to affect the credibility of his pleadings. Surely the barefaced prostitution of his talents, (and in spite of his commonness, what else can we call it?) in supporting indifferently, as pecuniary considerations determine him, truth or falsehood, justice or injustice, must have a still worse effect on the opinion of his hearers.

It was affirmed that the consequence of the speaker’s own character, in furthering or hindering his success, depends in some measure on the character of those whom he addresseth. Here indeed it will be found, on inquiry, that the preacher labours under a manifest disadvantage. Most congregations are of that kind, as will appear from the article immediately succeeding, which, agreeably to an observation made in the former chapter, very much considers who speaks; those addressed from the bar, or in the senate, consider more what is spoken.

Section II. In regard to the Persons addressed

The second particular mentioned as a ground of comparison, is the consideration of the character of the hearers, or more properly the persons addressed. The necessity which a speaker is under of suiting himself to his audience, both that he may be understood by them, and that his words may have influence upon them, is a maxim so evident as to need neither proof nor illustration.

Now, the first remark that claims our attention here is, that the more mixed the auditory is, the greater is the difficulty of speaking to them with effect. The reason is obvious—what will tend to favour your success with one, may tend to obstruct it with another. The more various therefore the individuals are, in respect of age, rank, fortune, education, prejudices, the more delicate must be the art of preserving propriety in an address to the whole. The pleader has, in this respect, the simplest and the easiest task of all; the judges, to whom his oration is addressed, being commonly men of the same rank, of similar education, and not differing greatly in respect of studies or attainments. The difference in these respects is much more considerable when he ad-

²⁸2 Tim. ii. 24, 25. [Au.]

dresses the jury. A speaker in the house of peers hath not so mixed an auditory as one who harangues in the house of commons. And even here, as all the members may be supposed to have been educated as gentlemen, the audience is not nearly so promiscuous as were the popular assemblies of Athens and of Rome, to which their demagogues declaimed with so much vehemence, and so wonderful success. Yet, even of these, women, minors, and servants made no part.

We may therefore justly reckon a christian congregation in a populous and flourishing city, where there is a great variety in rank and education, to be of all audiences the most promiscuous. And though it is impossible that, in so mixed a multitude, every thing that is advanced by the speaker should, both in sentiment and in expression, be adapted to the apprehension of every individual hearer, and fall in with his particular prepossessions, yet it may be expected, that whatever is advanced shall be within the reach of every class of hearers, and shall not unnecessarily shock the innocent prejudices of any. This is still, however, to be understood with the exception of mere children, fools, and a few others who, through the total neglect of parents or guardians in their education, are grossly ignorant. Such, though in the audience, are not to be considered as constituting a part of it. But how great is the attention requisite in the speaker in such an assembly, that, whilst on the one hand he avoids, either in style or in sentiment, soaring above the capacity of the lower class, he may not, on the other, sink below the regard of the higher. To attain simplicity without flatness, delicacy without refinement, perspicuity without recurring to low idioms and similitudes, will require his utmost care.

Another remark on this article that deserves our notice is, that the less improved in knowledge and discernment the hearers are, the easier it is for the speaker to work upon their passions, and by working on their passions, to obtain his end. This, it must be owned, appears, on the other hand, to give a considerable advantage to the preacher, as in no congregation can the bulk of the people be regarded as on a footing, in point of improvement, with either house of parliament, or

with the judges in a court of judicature. It is certain, that the more gross the hearers are, the more avowedly may you address yourself to their passions, and the less occasion there is for argument; whereas, the more intelligent they are, the more covertly must you operate on their passions, and the more attentive must you be in regard to the justness, or at least the speciousness of your reasoning. Hence some have strangely concluded, that the only scope for eloquence is in haranguing the multitude; that in gaining over to your purpose men of knowledge and breeding, the exertion of oratorical talents hath no influence. This is precisely as if one should argue, because a mob is much easier subdued than regular troops, there is no occasion for the art of war, nor is there a proper field for the exertion of military skill, unless when you are quelling an undisciplined rabble. Every body sees in this case, not only how absurd such a way of arguing would be, but that the very reverse ought to be the conclusion. The reason why people do not so quickly perceive the absurdity in the other case is, that they affix no distinct meaning to the word *eloquence*, often denoting no more by that term than simply the power of moving the passions. But even in this improper acceptance, their notion is far from being just; for wherever there are men, learned or ignorant, civilized or barbarous, there are passions; and the greater the difficulty is in affecting these, the more art is requisite. The truth is, eloquence, like every other art, proposeth the accomplishment of a certain end. Passion is for the most part but the means employed for effecting the end, and therefore, like all other means, will no further be regarded in any case, than it can be rendered conducive to the end.

Now the preacher's advantage even here, in point of facility, at least in several situations, will not appear, on reflection, to be so great as on a superficial view it may be thought. Let it be observed, that in such congregations as were supposed, there is a mixture of superior and inferior ranks. It is therefore the business of the speaker, so far only to accommodate himself to one class, as not wantonly to disgust another. Besides, it will scarcely be denied that those in the superior walks of life, however much by reading and conversation improved in all genteel

accomplishments, often have as much need of religious instruction and moral improvement, as those who in every other particular are acknowledged to be their inferiors. And doubtless the reformation of such will be allowed to be, in one respect, of greater importance, (and therefore never to be overlooked,) that in consequence of such an event, more good may redound to others, from the more extensive influence of their authority and example.

Section III. In regard to the Subject

The third particular mentioned was the subject of discourse. This may be considered in a twofold view; first, as implying the topics of argument, motives, and principles, which are suited to each of the different kinds, and must be employed in order to produce the intended effect on the hearers; secondly, as implying the persons or things in whose favour, or to whose prejudice, the speaker purposes to excite the passions of the audience, and thereby to influence their determinations.

On the first of these articles, I acknowledge the preacher hath incomparably the advantage of every other public orator. At the bar, critical explications of dark and ambiguous statutes, quotations of precedents sometimes contradictory, and comments on jarring decisions and reports, often necessarily consume the greater part of the speaker's time. Hence the mixture of a sort of metaphysics and verbal criticism, employed by lawyers in their pleadings, hath come to the distinguished by the name *chicane*, a species of reasoning too abstruse to command attention of any continuance even from the studious, and consequently not very favourable to the powers of rhetoric. When the argument doth not turn on the common law, or on nice and hypercritical explications of the statute, but on the great principles of natural right and justice, as sometimes happens, particularly in criminal cases, the speaker is much more advantageously situated for exhibiting his rhetorical talents than in the former case. When, in consequence of the imperfection of the evidence, the question happens to be more a question of fact than either of municipal law or of natural equity, the pleader hath more advantages than in the first case, and fewer than in the second.

Again, in the deliberations in the senate, the utility or the disadvantages that will probably follow on a measure proposed, if it should receive the sanction of the legislature, constitute the principle topics of debate. This, though it sometimes leads to a kind of reasoning rather too complex and involved for ordinary apprehension, is in the main more favourable to the display of pathos, vehemence, and sublimity than the much greater part of the forensic causes can be said to be. That these qualities have been sometimes found in a very high degree in the orations pronounced in a British senate, is a fact incontrovertible.

But beyond all question, the preacher's subject of argument, considered in itself, is infinitely more lofty and more affecting. The doctrines of religion are such as relate to God, the adorable Creator and Ruler of the world, his attributes, government, and law. What science to be compared with it in sublimity? It teaches also the origin of man, his primitive dignity, the source of his degeneracy, the means of his recovery, the eternal happiness that awaits the good, and the future misery of the impenitent. Is there any kind of knowledge in which human creatures are so deeply interested? In a word, whether we consider the doctrines of religion or its documents, the examples it holds forth to our imitation, or its motives, promises, and threatenings, we see on every hand a subject that gives a scope for the exertion of all the highest powers of rhetoric. What are the sanctions of any human laws, compared with the sanctions of the divine law, with which we are brought acquainted by the gospel? Or where shall we find instructions, similitudes, and examples, that speak so directly to the heart, as the parables and other divine lessons of our blessed Lord?

In regard to the second thing which I took notice of as included under the general term *subject*, namely the persons or things in whose favour, or to whose prejudice the speaker intends to excite the passions of the audience, and thereby to influence their determinations, the other two have commonly the advantage of the preacher. The reason is, that his subject is generally things; theirs, on the contrary, is persons. In what regards the painful passions, indignation, hatred, contempt, abhorrence, this difference in-

variably obtains. The preacher's business is solely to excite your detestation of the crime; the pleader's business is principally to make you detest the criminal. The former paints vice to you in all its odious colours; the latter paints the vicious. There is a degree of abstraction, and consequently a much greater degree of attention, requisite to enable us to form just conceptions of the ideas and sentiments of the former; whereas, those of the latter, referring to an actual, perhaps a living, present, and well-known subject, are much more level to common capacity, and therefore not only are more easily apprehended by the understanding, but take a stronger hold of the imagination. It would have been impossible even for Cicero to inflame the minds of the people to so high a pitch against *oppression*, considered in the abstract, as he actually did inflame them against Verres the *oppressor*; nor could he have incensed them so much against *treason* and *conspiracy*, as he did incense them against Catiline the *traitor* and *conspirator*. The like may be observed of the effects of these orations against Antony, and in a thousand other instances.

Though the occasions in this way are more frequent at the bar, yet, as the deliberations in the senate often proceed on the reputation and past conduct of individuals, there is commonly here also a much better handle for rousing the passions than that enjoyed by the preacher. How much advantage Demosthenes drew from the known character and insidious arts of Philip king of Macedon, for influencing the resolves of the Athenians, and other Grecian states, those who are acquainted with the Philippics of the orator, and the history of that period, will be very sensible. In what concerns the pleasing affections, the preacher may sometimes, not often, avail himself of real human characters, as in funeral sermons, and in discourses on the patterns of virtue given us by our Saviour, and by those saints of whom we have the history in the sacred code. But such examples are comparatively few.

Section IV. In regard to the Occasion

The fourth circumstance mentioned as a ground of comparison, is the particular occasion of speaking. And in this I think it evident, that both

the pleader and the senator have the advantage of the preacher. When any important cause comes to be tried before a civil judicatory, or when any important question comes to be agitated in either house of parliament, as the point to be discussed hath generally for some time before been a topic of conversation in most companies, perhaps throughout the kingdom, (which of itself is sufficient to gibe consequence to any thing,) people are apprized beforehand of the particular day fixed for the discussion. Accordingly, they come prepared with some knowledge of the case, a persuasion of its importance, and a curiosity which sharpens their attention, and assists both their understanding and their memory.

Men go to church without any of these advantages. The subject of the sermon is not known to the congregation, till the minister announce it just as he begins, by reading the text. Now, from our experience of human nature, we may be sensible that whatever be the comparative importance of the things themselves, the generality of men cannot here be wrought up, in an instant, to the like anxious curiosity about what is to be said, nor can be so well prepared for hearing it. It may indeed be urged, in regard to those subjects which come regularly to be discussed at stated times, as on public festivals, as well as in regard to assize sermons, charity sermons, and other occasional discourses, that these must be admitted as exceptions. Perhaps in some degree they are, but not altogether: for first, the precise point to be argued, or proposition to be evinced, is very rarely known. The most that we can say is, that the subject will have a relation (sometimes remote enough) to such an article of faith, or to the obligations we lie under to the practice of such a duty. But further, if the topic were ever so well known, the frequent recurrence of such occasions, once a year at least, hath long familiarized us to them, and, by destroying their novelty, hath abated exceedingly of that ardour which ariseth in the mind for hearing a discussion, conceived to be of importance, which one never had access to hear before, and probably never will have access to hear again.

I shall here take notice of another circumstance, which, without great stretch, may be classed under this article, and which likewise

gives some advantage to the counsellor and the senator. It is the opposition and contradiction which they expect to meet with. Opponents sharpen one another, as iron sharpeneth iron. There is not the same spur either to exertion in the speaker, or to attention in the hearer, where there is no conflict, where you have no adversary to encounter on equal terms. Mr. Bickerstaff would have made but small progress in the science of defence, by pushing at the human figure which he had chalked upon the wall, in comparison of what he might have made by the help of a fellow combatant of flesh and blood. I do not, however, pretend that these cases are entirely parallel. The whole of an adversary's plea may be perfectly known, and may, to the satisfaction of every reasonable person, be perfectly confuted, though he hath not been heard by the counsel at the bar.

Section V. In regard to the End in view

The fifth and last particular mentioned, and indeed that most important of them all, is the effect in each species intended to be produced. The primary intention of preaching is the reformation of mankind. "The grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world."²⁹ Reformation of life and manners—of all things that which is the most difficult by any means whatever to effectuate; I may add, of all tasks ever attempted by persuasion, that which has the most frequently baffled its power.

What is the task of any other orator compared with this? It is really as nothing at all, and hardly deserves to be named. An unjust judge, gradually worked on by the resistless force of human eloquence, may be persuaded, against his inclination, perhaps against a previous resolution, to pronounce an equitable sentence. All the effect on him, intended by the pleader, was merely momentary. The orator hath had the address to employ the time allowed him in such a manner as to secure the happy moment. Notwithstanding this, there may be no real change wrought upon the

²⁹Tit. ii. 11, 12. [Au.]

judge. He may continue the same obdurate wretch he was before. Nay, if the sentence had been delayed but a single day after hearing the cause, he would perhaps have given a very different award.

Is it to be wondered at, that when the passions of the people were agitated by the persuasive powers of a Demosthenes, whilst the thunder of his eloquence was yet sounding in their ears, the orator should be absolute master of their resolves? But an apostle or evangelist (for there is no anachronism in a bare supposition) might have thus addressed the celebrated Athenian, "You do, indeed, succeed to admiration, and the address and genius which you display in speaking justly entitle you to our praise. But however great the consequences may be of the measures to which, by your eloquence, they are determined, the change produced in the people is nothing, or next to nothing. If you would be ascertained of the truth of this, allow the assembly to disperse immediately after hearing you; give them time to cool, and then collect their votes, and it is a thousand to one you shall find that the charm is dissolved."

But very different is the purpose of the Christian orator. It is not a momentary, but a permanent effect at which he aims. It is not an immediate and favourable suffrage, but a thorough change of heart and disposition, that will satisfy his view. That man would need to be possessed of oratory superior to human, who would effectually persuade him that stole to steal no more, the sensualist to forego his pleasures, and the miser his hoards, the insolent and haughty to become meek and humble, the vindictive forgiving, the cruel and unfeeling merciful and humane.

I may add to these considerations, that the difficulty lies not only in the permanency, but in the very nature of the change to be effected. It is wonderful, but it is too well vouched to admit of a doubt, that by the powers of rhetoric you may produce in mankind almost any change more easily than this. It is not unprecedented that one should persuade a multitude, from mistaken motives of religion, to act the part of ruffians, fools, or madmen; to perpetuate the most extravagant, nay, the most flagitious actions; to steel their hearts against humanity, and the loudest calls of

affection; but where is the eloquence that will gain such an ascendant over a multitude, as to persuade them, for the love of God, to be wise, and just, and good? Happy the preacher whose sermons, by the blessing of Heaven, have been instrumental in producing even a few such instances! Do but look into the annals of church history, and you will soon be convinced of the surprising difference there is in the two cases mentioned—the amazing facility of the one, and the almost impossibility of the other.

As to the foolish or mad extravagances, hurtful only to themselves, to which numbers may be excited by the powers of persuasion, the history of the flagellants, and even the history of monachism, afford many unquestionable examples. But what is much worse, at one time you see Europe nearly depopulated at the persuasion of a fanatical monk, its inhabitants rushing armed into Asia, in order to fight for Jesus Christ, as they termed it, but as it proved in fact, to disgrace, as far as lay in them, the name of Christ and of Christian amongst infidels; to butcher those who never injured them, and to whose lands they had at least no better title than those whom they intended, by all possible means, to dispossess; and to give the world a melancholy proof, that there is no pitch of brutality and rapacity to which the passions of avarice and ambition, consecrated and inflamed by religious enthusiasm, will not drive mankind. At another time you see multitudes, by the like methods, worked up into a fury against innocent countrymen, neighbours, friends, and kinsmen, glorying in being most active in cutting the throats of those who were formerly held dear to them.

Such were the crusades preached up but too effectually, first against the Mahometans in the East, and next against Christians whom they called heretics, in the heart of Europe. And even in our own time, have we not seen new factions raised by popular declaimers, whose only merit was impudence, whose only engine of influence was calumny and self-praise, whose only moral lesson was malevolence? As to the dogmas whereby such have at any time affected to discriminate themselves, these are commonly no other than the *shibboleth*, the watchword of the party, worn, for distinction's sake, as a badge, a

jargon unintelligible alike to the teacher and to the learner. Such apostles never fail to make proselytes. For who would not purchase heaven at so cheap a rate? There is nothing that people can more easily afford. It is only to think very well of their leader and of themselves, to think very ill of their neighbour, to calumniate him freely, and to hate him heartily.

I am sensible that some will imagine that this account itself throws an insuperable obstacle in our way, as from it one will naturally infer, that oratory must be one of the most dangerous things in the world, and much more capable of doing ill than good. It needs but some reflection to make this mighty obstacle entirely vanish. — Very little eloquence is necessary for persuading people to a conduct to which their own depravity hath previously given them a bias. How soothing is it to them not only to have their minds made easy under the indulged malignity of their disposition, but to have that very malignity sanctified with a good name! So little of the oratorical talent is required here, that those who court popular applause, and look upon it as the pinnacle of human glory to be blindly followed by the multitude, commonly recur to defamation, especially of superiors and brethren, not so much for a subject on which they may display their eloquence, as for a succedaneum to supply their want of eloquence, a succedaneum which never yet was found to fail. I knew a preacher who, from this expedient alone, from being long the aversion of the populace, on account of his dulness, awkwardness, and coldness, all of a sudden became their idol. Little force is necessary to push down heavy bodies placed on the verge of a declivity, but much force is requisite to stop them in their progress, and push them up.

If a man should say, that because the first is more frequently effected than the last, it is the best trial of strength, and the only suitable use to which it can be applied, we should at least not think him remarkable for distinctness in his ideas. Popularity alone, therefore, is no test at all of the eloquence of the speaker, no more than velocity alone would be of the force of the external impulse originally given to the body moving. As in this direction of the body, and other circumstances, must be taken into the account; so in

that, you must consider the tendency of the teaching, whether it favours or opposes the vices of the hearers. To head a sect, to infuse party-spirit, to make men arrogant, uncharitable, and malevolent, is the easiest task imaginable, and to which almost any blockhead is fully equal. But to produce the contrary effect, to subdue the spirit of faction, and that monster spiritual pride, with which it is invariably accompanied, to inspire equity, moderation, and charity into men's sentiments and conduct with regard to others, is the genuine test of eloquence. Here its triumph is truly glorious, and in its application to this end lies its great utility:

The gates of hell are open night and day;
Smooth the descent, and easy is the way:
But to return and view the cheerful skies,
In this the task and mighty labour lies.³⁰

Now in regard to the comparison, from which I fear I shall be thought to have digressed, between the forensic and senatorian eloquence, and that of the pulpit, I must not omit to observe, that in what I say of the difference of the effect to be produced by the last mentioned species, I am to be understood as speaking of the effect intended by preaching in general, and even of that which, in whole or in part, is, or ought to be, either more immediately or more remotely, the scope of all discourses proceeding from the pulpit. I am, at the same time, sensible that in some of these, beside the ultimate view, there is an immediate and outward effect which the sermon is intended to produce. This is the case particularly in charity-sermons, and perhaps some other occasional discourses. Now of these few, in respect of such immediate purpose, we must admit, that they bear a pretty close analogy to the pleadings of the advocate, and the orations of the senator.

Upon the whole of the comparison I have stated, it appears manifest that, in most of the particulars above enumerated, the preacher labours under a very great disadvantage. He hath himself a more delicate part to perform than ei-

ther the pleader or the senator, and a character to maintain which is much more easily injured. The auditors, though rarely so accomplished as to require the same accuracy of composition, or acuteness of reasoning, as may be expected in the other two, are more various in age, rank, taste, inclinations, sentiments, prejudices, to which he must accommodate himself. And if he derives some advantages from the richness, the variety, and the nobleness of the principles, motives, and arguments with which his subject furnishes him, he derives also some inconveniences from this circumstance, that almost the only engine by which he can operate on the passions of his hearers, is the exhibition of abstract qualities, virtues, and vices, whereas that chiefly employed by other orators is the exhibition of real persons, the virtuous and the vicious. Nor are the occasions of his addresses to the people equally fitted with those of the senator and of the pleader for exciting their curiosity and riveting their attention. And, finally, the task assigned him, the effect which he ought ever to have in view, is so great, so important, so durable, as seems to bid defiance to the strongest efforts of oratorical genius.

Nothing is more common than for people, I suppose without reflecting, to express their wonder that there is so little eloquence amongst our preachers, and that so little success attends their preaching. As to the last, their success, it is a matter not to be ascertained with so much precision as some appear fondly to imagine. The evil prevented, as well as the good promoted, ought here, in all justice, to come into the reckoning. And what that may be, it is impossible in any supposed circumstances to determine. As to the first, their eloquence, I acknowledge that for my own part, considering how rare the talent is among men in general, considering all the disadvantages preachers labour under, not only those above enumerated, but others, arising from their different situations, particularly considering the frequency of this exercise, together with the other duties of their office, to which the fixed pastors are obliged, I have been for a long time more disposed to wonder, that we hear so many instructive and even eloquent sermons, than that we hear so few.

³⁰Virgil, *Aeneid*, Bk. VI, trans. John Dryden. [Ed.]

Hugh Blair

1718–1800

In an 1873 edition of *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* (excerpted here) that was published in the United States, the noted teacher Abraham Mills provides, for nearly every chapter, a summary and list of questions for students. These questions call attention to every detail, every distinction, and every illustration in the text. There are, for example, 111 questions appended to Lecture 2, on taste (“How does it appear that delivery and correctness mutually imply each other? In what is the power of delicacy chiefly seen; and of correctness? Having viewed taste in its most improved state, what does our author next consider? Why does this bring us to the most difficult part of our task?”). This scriptural reverence for Hugh Blair’s work is not at all out of the ordinary. Blair is, at least with respect to his influence, the Quintilian of his time, combining in his rhetoric a theory that met with nearly universal approval and a pedagogy that won nearly universal application.

Born in Edinburgh, Blair entered the university in that city in 1730, earned an M.A. in 1739, and entered the ministry in 1742. By 1758, he had won appointment to the prestigious pulpit of St. Giles. The following year, he began lecturing on rhetoric and belles lettres, and in 1762 he was appointed the first Regius Professor of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres at his old university. A popular preacher, he published four volumes of sermons. He also edited Shakespeare’s works and supervised a forty-volume edition of the English poets. As a highly placed churchman, he was an important defender of David Hume (p. 828) and Lord Kames—his colleagues in the Scottish Select Society—against the charges of heresy leveled at them by conservative elements in the Church of Scotland. Much influenced by Hume’s philosophy, Blair came to embody the ideal critic and collector of literary touchstones envisioned in Hume’s essay on taste (p. 830).

The *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* were published in 1783, the year Blair retired from teaching. They are directed to those who are “studying to cultivate their taste, to form their style, or to prepare themselves for public speaking or composition.” In the first lecture, which is included here, Blair connects his rhetoric to the leading ideas of the period: to reason, human nature, the need to cultivate taste, and moral improvement. This scheme clearly links rhetoric and belles lettres. Rhetoric seeks to persuade through appeals to reason and the passions; criticism, in turn, evaluates aesthetic objects on the basis of their appeals to the same faculties. Good taste is thus at the root of both, and human nature is the foundation of taste. Finally, the cultivation of taste leads one to the higher intellectual pleasures, including the pleasure of virtuous behavior. Thus Blair’s rhetoric aims ultimately at a rather classical goal, to produce good men who will speak (and write) well in the service of the community, whether for the pulpit, the bar, or the halls of legislature.

In pursuing this model, Blair is at pains to reject received notions of eloquence and style and to build instead on modern psychology. In Lecture 34, for example, he discusses self-improvement in eloquence. The first requirement of the excellent

speaker is good character; thus one should practice the virtues. Second, one must have knowledge of the subject of the discourse and, as support for that knowledge, a general familiarity with polite literature. Third comes industriousness; fourth, good models; fifth, practice; and sixth, study of rhetorical theory. The study of “rhetorical writers” is “not to be neglected,” he says, “. . . yet I dare not say that much is to be expected from them.” Quintilian is the best rhetorician, but even he is too concerned with systematic rhetoric—topics, arrangement, and figures. Blair repeatedly emphasizes that although it is “polite” to know the ancients, one should not heed their advice. Their style does not suit modern taste and their theory does not conform to modern science.

In similar fashion, Blair addresses each of his subjects, finding psychological foundations, acknowledging cultural relativism, seeking a rational basis for judgments, providing illustrations from polite literature ancient and modern, and giving judicious advice. The main subjects of the lectures are as follows:

- Taste, the sublime, beauty (four lectures)
- The history and structure of language (seven lectures)
- Figures of speech and kinds of style (six lectures)
- Critical analysis of Addison (five lectures)
- The history of rhetoric (two lectures)
- Types of speech (three lectures)
- Organization (two lectures)
- Pronunciation (one lecture)
- Belletristic genres: history, philosophy, poetry, drama (thirteen lectures)

This list clearly shows that Blair gives most attention to “polite” literature, and modern scholars have charged that Blair shifted the attention of educators “away from deliberative, forensic, and epideictic discourse and toward poetic discourse,” as historians of rhetoric Gregory Clark and S. Michael Halloran allege.¹ Not only does such a shift of emphasis downgrade publicly useful forms of rhetoric, but it also may support excessively conservative aesthetic, moral, and political values, as historian of rhetoric H. Lewis Ulman implies when he notes that Blair’s approach “tends to reify written and even spoken language as fixed systems that embody equally stable truths and virtues.”² This may explain why English departments focus today on analyzing texts that are deemed aesthetically superior, and why they devalue more practical forms of language arts instruction. Nevertheless, historian of rhetoric Lois Agnew has argued that these effects of Blair’s influence, although they may indeed undermine rhetoric’s civic usefulness, result from Blair’s inability to foresee the extent to which the analysis and production of written texts would dominate English instruction in the nineteenth century.

In reality, Blair intended to craft an approach to rhetoric that would preserve classical goals amid changing social conditions and new developments in knowl-

¹Gregory Clark and S. Michael Halloran, “Transformations of Public Discourse in Nineteenth-Century America,” in *Oratorical Culture in Nineteenth-Century America: Transformations in the Theory and Practice of Rhetoric*, ed. Gregory Clark and S. Michael Halloran (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1993), p. 15.

²H. Lewis Ulman, *Things, Thoughts, Words and Actions: The Problem of Language in Late Eighteenth-Century British Rhetorical Theory* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1994), p. 145.

edge. He treated the subjects of his lectures from the standpoint of empirical observation and psychological evaluation. George Campbell had made the necessary link between philosophy and rhetoric, Adam Smith and others had brought rhetoric together with belles lettres, and now Blair brought these forces together in a persuasive and useful way. As Blair modestly acknowledges, there is little in the lectures that is original—but everything is thoroughly assimilated and elegantly presented.

Selected Bibliography

Blair's *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* were published in two volumes in 1783 and are available in the Southern Illinois University Press Landmark edition, also in two volumes, edited by Harold F. Harding (1965). Harding summarizes each lecture and examines Blair's sources.

Blair received more scholarly attention in the 1990s than previously in the twentieth century, both in his own right and for his place in the development of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century education in the United States and Great Britain. There are still no book-length studies, however, other than Robert M. Schmitz's *Hugh Blair* (1948), which recounts Blair's life, summarizes his major works, and provides some bibliography. A good shorter introduction is Linda Ferreira-Buckley's "Hugh Blair," in *Eighteenth-Century British and American Rhetorics and Rhetoricians: Critical Studies and Sources*, ed. Michael G. Moran (1994). W. S. Howell claims that Blair was a synthesizer of the rhetorical tradition and of current epistemological ideas, in *Eighteenth-Century British Logic and Rhetoric* (1971).

Winifred Bryan Horner provides substantial background on rhetorical education in Scottish universities in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in *Nineteenth-Century Scottish Rhetoric: The American Connection* (1993). For more on Blair's influence in the United States, see Nan Johnson, *Nineteenth-Century Rhetoric in North America* (1991), which includes information on Blair's adoption as a course text and the many references to his text in other rhetoric books in nineteenth-century American colleges; and Gregory Clark and S. Michael Halloran, "Transformations of Public Discourse in Nineteenth-Century America," in *Oratorical Culture in Nineteenth-Century America: Transformations in the Theory and Practice of Rhetoric*, ed. Clark and Halloran (1993).

Vincent Bevilacqua emphasizes the epistemological side of Blair's thought in "Philosophical Assumptions Underlying Hugh Blair's *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*" (*Western Speech* 31 [summer 1967]: 150–64). Herman Cohen offers a comparative analysis of "Hugh Blair's Theory of Taste" (*Quarterly Journal of Speech* 44 [October 1958]: 265–74; rpt. in *Readings in Rhetoric*, ed. L. Crocker and P. A. Carmack, 1965). Building on the work of Bevilacqua and others is the chapter on Blair in H. Lewis Ulman's *Things, Thoughts, Words and Actions: The Problem of Language in Late Eighteenth-Century British Rhetorical Theory* (1994). Lois Agnew helpfully surveys recent scholarship and defends Blair's classical motives in "The Civic Function of Taste: A Re-Assessment of Hugh Blair's Rhetorical Theory" (*Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 28 [spring 1998]: 25–36).

From *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*

Lecture I

INTRODUCTION

One of the most distinguished privileges which Providence has conferred upon mankind, is the power of communicating their thoughts to one another. Destitute of this power, reason would be a solitary, and, in some measure, an unavailable principle. Speech is the great instrument by which man becomes beneficial to man: and it is to the intercourse and transmission of thought, by means of speech, that we are chiefly indebted for the improvement of thought itself. Small are the advances which a single unassisted individual can make towards perfecting any of his powers. What we call human reason, is not the effort or ability of one, so much as it is the result of the reason of many, arising from lights mutually communicated, in consequence of discourse and writing.

It is obvious, then, that writing and discourse are objects entitled to the highest attention. Whether the influence of the speaker, or the entertainment of the hearer, be consulted; whether utility or pleasure be the principal aim in view, we are prompted, by the strongest motives, to study how we may communicate our thoughts to one another with most advantage. Accordingly we find, that in almost every nation, as soon as language had extended itself beyond that scanty communication which was requisite for the supply of men's necessities, the improvement of discourse began to attract regard. In the language even of rude uncultivated tribes, we can trace some attention to the grace and force of those expressions which they used, when they sought to persuade or to affect. They were early sensible of a beauty in discourse, and endeavoured to give it certain decorations, which experience had taught them it was capable of receiving, long before the study of those decorations was formed into a regular art.

But, among nations in a civilized state, no art has been cultivated with more care, than that of language, style, and composition. The attention paid to it may, indeed, be assumed as one mark of the progress of society towards its most improved period. For, according as society improves and flourishes, men acquire more influence over one another by means of reasoning and discourse; and in proportion as that influence is felt to enlarge; it must follow, as a natural consequence, that they will bestow more care upon the methods of expressing their conceptions with propriety and eloquence. Hence we find, that in all the polished nations of Europe, this study has been treated as highly important, and has possessed a considerable place in every plan of liberal education.

Indeed, when the arts of speech and writing are mentioned, I am sensible that prejudices against them are apt to rise in the minds of many. A sort of art is immediately thought of, that is ostentatious and deceitful; the minute and trifling study of words alone; the pomp of expression; the studied fallacies of rhetoric; ornament substituted in the room of use. We need not wonder, that, under such imputations, all study of discourse as an art, should have suffered in the opinion of men of understanding; and I am far from denying, that rhetoric and criticism have sometimes been so managed as to tend to the corruption, rather than to the improvement, of good taste and true eloquence. But sure it is equally possible to apply the principles of reason and good sense to this art, as to any other that is cultivated among men. If the following Lectures have any merit, it will consist in an endeavour to substitute the application of these principles in the place of artificial and scholastic rhetoric; in an endeavour to explode false ornament, to direct attention more towards substance than show, to recommend good sense as the foundation of all good composition, and simplicity as essential to all true ornament.

When entering on this subject, I may be allowed, on this occasion, to suggest a few thoughts concerning the importance and advantages of such studies, and the rank they are entitled to possess in academical education.¹ I am under no temptation, for this purpose, of extolling their importance at the expense of any other department of science. On the contrary, the study of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres supposes and requires a proper acquaintance with the rest of the liberal arts. It embraces them all within its circle, and recommends them to the highest regard. The first care of all such as wish either to write with reputation, or to speak in public so as to command attention, must be, to extend their knowledge; to lay in a rich store of ideas relating to those subjects of which the occasions of life may call them to discourse or to write. Hence, among the ancients, it was a fundamental principle, and frequently inculcated, “*Quod omnibus disciplinis et artibus debet esse instructus orator*”; that the orator ought to be an accomplished scholar, and conversant in every part of learning. It is indeed impossible to contrive an art, and very pernicious it were if it could be contrived, which should give the stamp of merit to any composition rich or splendid in expression, but barren or erroneous in thought. They are the wretched attempts towards an art of this kind, which have so often disgraced oratory, and debased it below its true standard. The graces of composition have been employed to disguise or to supply the want of matter; and the temporary applause of the ignorant has been courted, instead of the lasting approbation of the discerning. But such imposture can never maintain its ground long. Knowledge and science must furnish the materials that form the body and substance of any valuable composition. Rhetoric serves to add the polish; and we know that none but firm and solid bodies can be polished well.

¹The author was the first who read lectures on this subject in the university of Edinburgh. He began with reading them in a private character in the year 1759. In the following year he was chosen Professor of Rhetoric by the magistrates and town council of Edinburgh; and, in 1762, his Majesty was pleased to erect and endow a Profession of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres in that university, and the author was appointed the first Regius Professor. [Au.]

Of those who peruse the following Lectures, some by the profession to which they addict themselves, or in consequence of their prevailing inclination, may have the view of being employed in composition, or in public speaking. Others, without any prospect of this kind, may wish only to improve their taste with respect to writing and discourse, and to acquire principles which will enable them to judge for themselves in that part of literature called the Belles Lettres.

With respect to the former, such as may have occasion to communicate their sentiments to the public, it is abundantly clear that some preparation of study is requisite for the end which they have in view. To speak or to write perspicuously and agreeably with purity, with grace and strength, are attainments of the utmost consequence to all who purpose, either by speech or writing, to address the public. For without being master of those attainments, no man can do justice to his own conceptions; but how rich soever he may be in knowledge and in good sense, will be able to avail himself less of those treasures, than such as possess not half his store, but who can display what they possess with more propriety. Neither are these attainments of that kind for which we are indebted to nature merely. Nature has, indeed, conferred upon some a very favourable distinction in this respect, beyond others. But in these, as in most other talents she bestows, she has left much to be wrought out by every man's own industry. So conspicuous have been the effects of study and improvement in every part of eloquence; such remarkable examples have appeared of persons surmounting, by their diligence, the disadvantages of the most untoward nature; that among the learned it has long been a contested, and remains still an undecided point, whether nature or art confer most towards excelling in writing and discourse.

With respect to the manner in which art can most effectually furnish assistance for such a purpose, there may be diversity of opinions. I by no means pretend to say that mere rhetorical rules, how just soever, are sufficient to form an orator. Supposing natural genius to be favourable, more by a great deal will depend upon private application and study, than upon any system of instruction that is capable of being publicly

communicated. But at the same time, though rules and instructions cannot do all that is requisite, they may, however, do much that is of real use. They cannot, it is true, inspire genius; but they can direct and assist it. They cannot remedy barrenness; but they may correct redundancy. They point out proper models for imitation. They bring into view the chief beauties that ought to be studied, and the principle faults that ought to be avoided; and thereby tend to enlighten taste, and to lead genius from unnatural deviations, into its proper channel. What would not avail for the production of great excellencies, may at least serve to prevent the commission of considerable errors.

All that regards the study of eloquence and composition merits the higher attention upon this account, that it is intimately connected with the improvement of our intellectual powers. For I must be allowed to say, that when we are employed, after a proper manner, in the study of composition, we are cultivating reason itself. True rhetoric and sound logic are very nearly allied. The study of arranging and expressing our thoughts with propriety, teaches to think, as well as to speak, accurately. By putting our sentiments into words, we always conceive them more distinctly. Every one who has the slightest acquaintance with composition knows, that when he expresses himself ill on any subject, when his arrangement is loose, and his sentences become feeble, the defects of his style can, almost on every occasion, be traced back to his indistinct conception of the subject: so close is the connexion between thoughts, and the words in which they are clothed.

The study of composition, important in itself at all times, has acquired additional importance from the taste and manners of the present age. It is an age wherein improvements, in every part of science, have been prosecuted with ardour. To all the liberal arts much attention has been paid; and to none more than to the beauty of language, and the grace and elegance of every kind of writing. The public ear is become refined. It will not easily bear what is slovenly and incorrect. Every author must aspire to some merit in expression, as well as in sentiment, if he would not incur the danger of being neglected and despised.

I will not deny that the love of minute ele-

gance, and attention to inferior ornaments of composition, may at present have engrossed too great a degree of the public regard. It is indeed my opinion, that we lean to this extreme; often more careful of polished style, than of storing it with thought. Yet hence arises a new reason for the study of just and proper composition. If it be requisite not to be deficient in elegance or ornament in times when they are in such high estimation, it is still more requisite to attain the power of distinguishing false ornament from true, in order to prevent our being carried away by that torrent of false and frivolous taste, which never fails, when it is prevalent, to sweep along with it the raw and the ignorant. They who have never studied eloquence in its principles, nor have been trained to attend to the genuine and manly beauties of good writing, are always ready to be caught by the mere glare of language; and when they come to speak in public, or to compose, have no other standard on which to form themselves, except what chances to be fashionable and popular, how corrupted soever, and erroneous, that may be.

But, as there are many who have no such objects as either composition or public speaking in view, let us next consider what advantages may be derived by them from such studies as form the subject of these Lectures. To them, rhetoric is not so much a practical art as a speculative science; and the same instructions which assist others in composing, will assist them in discerning, and relishing, the beauties of composition. Whatever enables genius to execute well, will enable taste to criticise justly.

When we name criticising, prejudices may perhaps arise, of the same kind with those which I mentioned before with respect to rhetoric. As rhetoric has been sometimes thought to signify nothing more than the scholastic study of words, and phrases, and tropes, so criticism has been considered as merely the art of finding faults; as the frigid application of certain technical terms, by means of which persons are taught to cavil and censure in a learned manner. But this is the criticism of pedants only. True criticism is a liberal and humane art. It is the offspring of good sense and refined taste. It aims at acquiring a just discernment of the real merit of authors. It pro-

motes a lively relish of their beauties, while it preserves us from that blind and implicit veneration which would confound their beauties and faults in our esteem. It teaches us, in a word, to admire and to blame with judgment, and not to follow the crowd blindly.

In an age when works of genius and literature are so frequently the subjects of discourse, when every one erects himself into a judge, and when we can hardly mingle in polite society without bearing some share in such discussions; studies of this kind, it is not to be doubted, will appear to derive part of their importance from the use to which they may be applied in furnishing materials for those fashionable topics of discourse, and thereby enabling us to support a proper rank in social life.

But I should be sorry if we could not rest the merit of such studies on somewhat of solid and intrinsic use, independent of appearance and show. The exercise of taste and of sound criticism, is in truth one of the most improving employments of the understanding. To apply the principles of good sense to composition and discourse; to examine what is beautiful, and why it is so; to employ ourselves in distinguishing accurately between the specious and the solid, between affected and natural ornament, must certainly improve us not a little in the most valuable part of all philosophy, the philosophy of human nature. For such disquisitions are very intimately connected with the knowledge of ourselves. They necessarily lead us to reflect on the operations of the imagination, and the movements of the heart; and increase our acquaintance with some of the most refined feelings which belong to our frame.

Logical and ethical disquisitions move in a higher sphere, and are conversant with objects of a more severe kind; the progress of the understanding in its search after knowledge, and the direction of the will in the proper pursuit of good. They point out to man the improvement of his nature as an intelligent being; and his duties as the subject of moral obligation. Belles lettres and criticism chiefly consider him as a being endowed with those powers of taste and imagination, which were intended to embellish his mind, and to supply him with rational and useful entertainment. They open a field of investigation pec-

uliar to themselves. All that relates to beauty, harmony, grandeur, and elegance; all that can soothe the mind, gratify the fancy, or move the affections, belongs to their province. They present human nature under a different aspect from that which it assumes when viewed by other sciences. They bring to light various springs of action, which, without their aid, might have passed unobserved; and which, though of a delicate nature, frequently exert a powerful influence on several departments of human life.

Such studies have also this peculiar advantage, that they exercise our reason without fatiguing it. They lead to inquiries acute, but not painful; profound, but not dry nor abstruse. They strew flowers in the path of science; and while they keep the mind bent, in some degree, and active, they relieve it, at the same time, from that more toilsome labour to which it must submit in the acquisition of necessary erudition, or the investigation of abstract truth.

The cultivation of taste is further recommended by the happy effects which it naturally tends to produce on human life. The most busy man, in the most active sphere, cannot be always occupied by business. Men of serious professions cannot always be on the stretch of serious thought. Neither can the most gay and flourishing situations of fortune afford any man the power of filling all his hours with pleasure. Life must always languish in the hands of the idle. It will frequently languish even in the hands of the busy, if they have not some employment subsidiary to that which forms their main pursuit. How then shall these vacant spaces, those unemployed intervals, which, more or less, occur in the life of every one, be filled up? How can we contrive to dispose of them in any way that shall be more agreeable in itself, or more consonant to the dignity of the human mind, than in the entertainments of taste, and the study of polite literature? He who is so happy as to have acquired a relish for these, has always at hand an innocent and irreproachable amusement for his leisure hours, to save him from the danger of many a pernicious passion. He is not in hazard of being a burden to himself. He is not obliged to fly to low company, or to court the riot of loose pleasures, in order to cure the tediousness of existence.

Providence seems plainly to have pointed out this useful purpose to which the pleasures of taste may be applied, by interposing them in a middle station between the pleasures of sense and those of pure intellect. We were not designed to grovel always among objects so low as the former; nor are we capable of dwelling constantly in so high a region as the latter. The pleasures of taste refresh the mind after the toils of the intellect, and the labours of abstract study; and they gradually raise it above the attachments of sense, and prepare it for the enjoyments of virtue.

So consonant is this to experience, that, in the education of youth, no object has in every age appeared more important to wise men, than to tincture them early with a relish for the entertainments of taste. The transition is commonly made with ease from these to the discharge of the higher and more important duties of life. Good hopes may be entertained of those whose minds have this liberal and elegant turn. It is favourable to many virtues. Whereas, to be entirely devoid of relish for eloquence, poetry, or any of the fine arts, is justly construed to be an unpromising symptom of youth; and raises suspicions of their being prone to low gratifications, or destined to drudge in the more vulgar and illiberal pursuits of life.

There are indeed few good dispositions of any kind with which the improvement of taste is not more or less connected. A cultivated taste increases sensibility to all the tender and humane passions, by giving them frequent exercise; while it tends to weaken the more violent and fierce emotions.

— *Ingenuas didicisse fideliter artes,
Emollit mores, nec sinit esse ferus.*²

The elevated sentiments and high examples which poetry, eloquence, and history, are often bringing under our view, naturally tend to nourish in our minds public spirit, the love of glory, contempt of external fortune, and the admiration of what is truly illustrious and great.

I will not go so far as to say that the improvement of taste and of virtue is the same; or that they may always be expected to co-exist in an

²These polish'd arts have humaniz'd mankind,
Soften'd the rude, and calm'd the boist'rous mind. [Au.]

equal degree. More powerful correctives than taste can apply, are necessary for reforming the corrupt propensities which too frequently prevail among mankind. Elegant speculations are sometimes found to float on the surface of the mind, while bad passions possess the interior regions of the heart. At the same time, this cannot but be admitted, that the exercise of taste is, in its native tendency, moral and purifying. From reading the most admired productions of genius, whether in poetry or prose, almost every one rises with some good impressions left on his mind: and though these may not always be durable, they are at least to be ranked among the means of disposing the heart to virtue. One thing is certain, and I shall hereafter have occasion to illustrate it more fully, that, without possessing the virtuous affections in a strong degree, no man can attain eminence in the sublime parts of eloquence. He must feel what a good man feels, if he expects greatly to move or to interest mankind. They are the ardent sentiments of honour, virtue, magnanimity, and public spirit, that only can kindle that fire of genius, and call up into the mind those high ideas, which attract the admiration of ages; and if this spirit be necessary to produce the most distinguished efforts of eloquence, it must be necessary also to our relishing them with proper taste and feeling.

On these general topics I shall dwell no longer; but proceed directly to the consideration of the subjects which are to employ the following Lectures. They divide themselves into five parts. First, some introductory dissertations on the Nature of Taste, and upon the Sources of its Pleasures: secondly, the consideration of Language: thirdly, of Style: fourthly, of Eloquence properly so called, or Public Speaking in its different kinds: lastly, a critical examination of the most distinguished Species of Composition, both in prose and verse.

Lecture II

TASTE

The nature of the present undertaking leads me to begin with some inquiries concerning taste, as it is this faculty which is always appealed to in dis-

quisitions concerning the merit of discourse and writing.

There are few subjects on which men talk more loosely and indistinctly than on taste; few which it is more difficult to explain with precision; and none which in this course of Lectures will appear more dry or abstract. What I have to say on the subject shall be in the following order. I shall first explain the nature of taste as a power or faculty in the human mind. I shall next consider how far it is an improveable faculty. I shall show the sources of its improvement, and the characters of taste in its most perfect state. I shall then examine the various fluctuations to which it is liable, and inquire whether there be any standard to which we can bring the different tastes of men, in order to distinguish the corrupted from the true.

Taste may be defined, "The power of receiving pleasure from the beauties of nature and of art." The first question that occurs concerning it is, whether it is to be considered as an internal sense, or as an exertion of reason? Reason is a very general term; but if we understand by it that power of the mind which in speculative matters discovers truth, and in practical matters judges of the fitness of means to an end, I apprehend the question may be easily answered. For nothing can be more clear, than that taste is not resolvable into any such operation of reason. It is not merely through a discovery of the understanding, or a deduction of argument, that the mind receives pleasure from a beautiful prospect or a fine poem. Such objects often strike us intuitively, and make a strong impression, when we are unable to assign the reasons of our being pleased. They sometimes strike in the same manner the philosopher and the peasant; the boy and the man. Hence the faculty by which we relish such beauties, seems more nearly allied to a feeling of sense, than to a process of the understanding; and accordingly, from an external sense it has borrowed its name; that sense by which we receive and distinguish the pleasures of food having, in several languages, given rise to the word "taste" in the metaphorical meaning under which we now consider it. However, as, in all subjects which regard the operations of the mind, the inaccurate use of words is to be carefully avoided,

it must be inferred, from what I have said, that reason is entirely excluded from the exertions of taste. Though taste, beyond doubt, be ultimately founded on a certain natural and instinctive sensibility to beauty, yet reason, as I shall show hereafter, assists taste in many of its operations, and serves to enlarge its power³

Taste, in the sense in which I have explained it, is a faculty common in some degree to all men. Nothing that belongs to human nature is more general than the relish of beauty of one kind or other; of what is orderly, proportioned, grand, harmonious, new, or sprightly. In children, the rudiments of taste discover themselves very early in a thousand instances; in their fondness for regular bodies, their admiration of pictures and statues, and imitations of all kinds; and their strong attachment to whatever is new or marvellous. The most ignorant peasants are delighted with ballads and tales, and are struck with the beautiful appearance of nature in the earth and heavens. Even in the deserts of America, where human nature shows itself in its most uncultivated state, the savages have their ornaments of dress, their war and their death songs, their harangues and their orators. We must therefore conclude the principles of taste to be deeply founded in the human mind. It is no less essential to man to have some discernment of beauty, than it is to possess the attributes of reason and of speech.⁴

But although none be wholly devoid of this faculty, yet the degrees in which it is possessed are widely different. In some men only the feeble glimmerings of taste appear; the beauties which they relish are of the coarsest kind; and of these they have but a weak and confused impression: while, in others, taste rises to an acute discernment, and a lively enjoyment of the most refined beauties. In general, we may observe, that in the powers and pleasures of taste, there is a more re-

³See Dr. Gerrard's *Essay on Taste*.—D'Alembert's *Reflections on the Use and Abuse of Philosophy in Matters which relate to Taste*.—*Reflections Critiques sur la Poésie et sur la Peinture*, tome ii. ch. 22–31.—*Elements of Criticism*, ch. 25.—Mr. Hume's *Essay on the Standard of Taste*.—Introduction to the *Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful*. [Au.]

⁴On the subject of Taste, considered as a power or faculty of the mind, much less is to be found among the ancient, than among the modern rhetorical and critical writers. . . . [Au.]

markable inequality among men, than is usually found in point of common sense, reason, and judgment. The constitution of our nature in this, as in all other respects, discovers admirable wisdom. In the distribution of those talents which are necessary for man's well-being, Nature hath made less distinction among her children. But in the distribution of those which belong only to the ornamental part of life, she hath bestowed her favours with more frugality. She hath both sown the seeds more sparingly, and rendered a higher culture requisite for bringing them to perfection.

This inequality of taste among men is owing, without doubt, in part, to the different frame of their natures; to nicer organs, and finer internal powers, with which some are endowed beyond others. But, if it be owing in part to nature, it is owing to education and culture still more. The illustration of this leads to my next remark on this subject, that taste is a most improveable faculty, if there be any such in human nature; a remark which gives great encouragement to such a course of study as we are now proposing to pursue. Of the truth of this assertion we may easily be convinced, by only reflecting on that immense superiority which education and improvement give to civilized, above barbarous nations, in refinement of taste; and on the superiority which they give in the same nation to those who have studied the liberal arts, above the rude and untaught vulgar. The difference is so great, that there is perhaps no one particular in which these two classes of men are so far removed from each other, as in respect of the powers and the pleasures of taste; and assuredly for this difference no other general cause can be assigned, but culture and education.—I shall now proceed to show what the means are, by which taste becomes so remarkably susceptible of cultivation and progress.

Reflect first upon that great law of our nature, that exercise is the chief source of improvement in all our faculties. This holds both in our bodily and in our mental powers. It holds even in our external senses; although these be less the subject of cultivation than any of our other faculties. We see how acute the senses become in persons whose trade or business leads to nice exertions of them. Touch, for instance, becomes infinitely

more exquisite in men whose employment requires them to examine the polish of bodies, than it is in others. They who deal in microscopical observations, or are accustomed to engrave on precious stones, acquire surprising accuracy of sight in discerning the minutest objects; and practice in attending to different flavours and tastes of liquors, wonderfully improves the power of distinguishing them, and of tracing their composition. Placing internal taste therefore on the footing of a simple sense, it cannot be doubted that frequent exercise, and curious attention to its proper objects, must greatly heighten its power. Of this we have one clear proof in that part of taste, which is called an ear for music. Experience every day shows that nothing is more improveable. Only the simplest and plainest compositions are relished at first: use and practice extend our pleasure, teach us to relish finer melody, and by degrees enable us to enter into the intricate and compounded pleasures of harmony. So an eye for the beauties of painting is never all at once acquired. It is gradually formed by being conversant among pictures, and studying the works of the best masters.

Precisely in the same manner, with respect to the beauty of composition and discourse, attention to the most approved models, study of the best authors, comparisons of lower and higher degrees of the same beauties, operate towards the refinement of taste. When one is only beginning his acquaintance with works of genius, the sentiment which attends them is obscure and confused. He cannot point out the several excellencies or blemishes of a performance which he peruses; he is at a loss on what to rest his judgment; all that can be expected is, that he should tell in general whether he be pleased or not. But allow him more experience in works of this kind, and his taste becomes by degrees more exact and enlightened. He begins to perceive not only the character of the whole, but the beauties and defects of each part; and is able to describe the peculiar qualities which he praises or blames. The mist is dissipated which seemed formerly to hang over the object; and he can at length pronounce firmly, and without hesitation, concerning it. Thus, in taste, considered as mere sensibility, exercise opens a great source of improvement.

But although taste be ultimately founded on sensibility, it must not be considered as instinctive sensibility alone. Reason and good sense, as I before hinted, have so extensive an influence on all the operations and decisions of taste, that a thorough good taste may well be considered as a power compounded of natural sensibility to beauty, and of improved understanding. In order to be satisfied to this, let us observe, that the greater part of the productions of genius are no other than imitations of nature; representations of the characters, actions, or manners of men. The pleasure we receive from such imitations or representations is founded on mere taste; but to judge whether they be properly executed, belongs to the understanding, which compares the copy with the original.

In reading, for instance, such a poem as the *Æneid*, a great part of our pleasure arises from the plan or story being well conducted, and all the parts joined together with probability and due connexion; from the characters being taken from nature, the sentiments being suited to the characters, and the style to the sentiments. The pleasure which arises from a poem so conducted, is felt or enjoyed by taste as an internal sense: but the discovery of this conduct in the poem is owing to reason; and the more that reason enables us to discover such propriety in the conduct, the greater will be our pleasure. We are pleased, through our natural sense of beauty. Reason shows us why and upon what grounds we are pleased. Wherever, in works of taste, any resemblance to nature is aimed at; wherever there is any reference of parts to a whole, or of means to an end, as there is indeed in almost every writing and discourse; there the understanding must always have a great part to act.

Here then is a wide field for reason's exerting its powers in relation to the objects of taste, particularly with respect to composition, and works of genius; and hence arises a second and a very considerable source of the improvement of taste, from the application of reason and good sense to such productions of genius. Spurious beauties, such as unnatural characters, forced sentiments, affected style, may please for a little; but they please only because their opposition to nature and to good sense has not been examined or at-

tended to. Once, show how nature might have been more justly imitated or represented; how the writer might have managed his subject to greater advantage; the illusion will presently be dissipated, and these false beauties will please no more.

From these two sources then, first, the frequent exercise of taste, and next, the application of good sense and reason to the objects of taste, as a power of the mind, receives its improvement. In its perfect state it is undoubtedly the result both of nature and of art. It supposes our natural sense of beauty to be refined by frequent attention to the most beautiful objects, and at the same time to be guided and improved by the light of the understanding.

I must be allowed to add, that as a sound head, so likewise a good heart, is a very material requisite to just taste. The moral beauties are not only in themselves superior to all others, but they exert an influence, either more near or more remote, on a great variety of other objects of taste. Wherever the affections, characters, or actions of men, are concerned, (and these certainly afford the noblest subjects to genius,) there can be neither any just or affecting description of them, nor any thorough feeling of the beauty of that description, without our possessing the virtuous affections. He whose heart is indelicate or hard, he who has no admiration of what is truly noble or praiseworthy, nor the proper sympathetic sense of what is soft and tender, must have a very important relish of the highest beauties of eloquence and poetry.

The characters of taste, when brought to its most improved state, are all reducible to two—delicacy and correctness.

Delicacy of taste respects principally the perfection of that natural sensibility on which taste is founded. It implies those finer organs or powers which enable us to discover beauties that lie hid from a vulgar eye. One may have strong sensibility, and yet be deficient in delicate taste. He may be deeply impressed by such beauties as he perceives; but he perceives only what is in some degree coarse, what is bold and palpable; while chaster and simpler ornaments escape his notice. In this state taste generally exists among rude and unrefined nations. But a person of delicate taste

both feels strongly and feels accurately. He sees distinctions and differences where others see none; the most latent beauty does not escape him, and he is sensible of the smallest blemish. Delicacy of taste is judged of by the same marks that we use in judging of the delicacy of an external sense. As the goodness of the palate is not tried by strong flavours, but by a mixture of ingredients, where, notwithstanding the confusion, we remain sensible of each; in like manner delicacy of internal taste appears, by a quick and lively sensibility to its finest, most compounded, or most latent objects.

Correctness of taste respects chiefly the improvement which that faculty receives through its connexion with the understanding. A man of correct taste is one who is never imposed on by counterfeit beauties; who carries always in his mind that standard of good sense which he employs in judging of every thing. He estimates with propriety the comparative merit of the several beauties which he meets with in any work of genius; refers them to their proper classes; assigns the principles, as far as they can be traced, whence their power of pleasing flows; and is pleased himself precisely in that degree in which he ought, and no more.

It is true that these two qualities of taste, delicacy and correctness, mutually imply each other. No taste can be exquisitely delicate without being correct; nor can be thoroughly correct without being delicate. But still a predominancy of one or other quality in the mixture is often visible. The power of delicacy is chiefly seen in discerning the true merit of a work; the power of correctness, in rejecting false pretensions to merit. Delicacy leans more to feeling; correctness more to reason and judgment. The former is more the gift of nature; the latter, more the product of culture and art. Among the ancient critics, Longinus possessed most delicacy; Aristotle most correctness. Among the moderns, Mr. Addison is a high example of delicate taste; Dean Swift, had he written on the subject of criticism, would perhaps have afforded the example of a correct one.

Having viewed taste in its most improved and perfect state, I come next to consider its deviations from that state; the fluctuations and changes

to which it is liable, and to inquire whether, in the midst of these, there be any means of distinguishing a true from a corrupted taste. This brings us to the most difficult part of our task. For it must be acknowledged, that no principle of the human mind is, in its operations, more fluctuating and capricious than taste. Its variations have been so great and frequent, as to create a suspicion with some, of its being merely arbitrary; grounded on no foundation, ascertainable by no standard, but wholly dependent on changing fancy; the consequence of which would be, that all studies or regular inquiries concerning the objects of taste were vain. In architecture, the Grecian models were long esteemed the most perfect. In succeeding ages, the Gothic architecture alone prevailed, and afterwards the Grecian taste revived in all its vigour, and engrossed the public admiration. In eloquence and poetry, the Asiatics at no time relished any thing but what was full of ornament, and splendid in a degree that we should denominate gaudy: whilst the Greek's admired only chaste and simple beauties, and despised the Asiatic ostentation. In our own country, how many writings that were greatly extolled two or three centuries ago, are now fallen into entire disrepute and oblivion! Without going back to remote instances, how very different is the taste of poetry which prevails in Great Britain now, from what prevailed there no longer ago than the reign of King Charles II, which the authors too of that time deemed an Augustan age; when nothing was in vogue but an affected brilliancy of wit; when the simple majesty of Milton was overlooked, and *Paradise Lost* almost entirely unknown; when Cowley's laboured and unnatural conceits were admired as the very quintessence of genius; Waller's gay sprightliness was mistaken for the tender spirit of love poetry; and such writers as Suckling and Etheridge were held in esteem for dramatic composition.

The question is, what conclusion we are to form from such instances as these? Is there any thing that can be called a standard of taste, by appealing to which we may distinguish between a good and a bad taste? Or, is there in truth no such distinction; and are we to hold that, according to the proverb, there is no disputing of tastes: but

that whatever pleases is right, for that reason that it does please? This is the question, and a very nice and subtle one it is, which we are now to discuss.

I begin by observing, that if there be no such thing as any standard of taste, this consequence must immediately follow, that all tastes are equally good; a position which, though it may pass unnoticed in slight matters, and when we speak of the lesser differences among the tastes of men, yet when we apply it to the extremes, presently shows its absurdity. For is there any one who will seriously maintain that the taste of a Hottentot or a Laplander is as delicate and as correct as that of a Longinus or an Addison? or, that he can be charged with no defect or incapacity who thinks a common newswriter as excellent an historian as Tacitus? As it would be held downright extravagance to talk in this manner, we are led unavoidably to this conclusion, that there is some foundation for the preference of one man's taste to that of another, or that there is a good and a bad, a right and a wrong in taste, as in other things.

But, to prevent mistakes on this subject, it is necessary to observe next, that the diversity of tastes which prevails among mankind, does not in every case infer corruption of taste, or oblige us to seek for some standard in order to determine who are in the right. The tastes of men may differ very considerably as to their object, and yet none of them be wrong. One man relishes poetry most; another takes pleasure in nothing but history. One prefers comedy; another, tragedy. One admires the simple; another the ornamented style. The young are amused with gay and sprightly compositions. The elderly are more entertained with those of a graver cast. Some nations delight in bold pictures of manners, and strong representations of passion. Others incline to more correct and regular elegance both in description and sentiment. Though all differ, yet all pitch upon some one beauty which peculiarly suits their turn of mind; and therefore no one has a title to condemn the rest. It is not in matters of taste, as in question of mere reason, where there is but one conclusion that can be true, and all the rest are erroneous. Truth, which is the object of reason, is one; beauty, which is the object of

taste, is manifold. Taste therefore admits of latitude and diversity of objects, in sufficient consistency with goodness or justness of taste.

But then, to explain this matter thoroughly, I must observe further, that this admissible diversity of tastes can only have place where the objects of taste are different. Where it is with respect to the same object that men disagree, when one condemns that as ugly, which another admires as highly beautiful; then it is no longer diversity, but direct opposition of taste that takes place; and therefore one must be in the right and another in the wrong, unless that absurd paradox were allowed to hold, that all tastes are equally good and true. One man prefers Virgil to Homer. Suppose that I, on the other hand, admire Homer more than Virgil, I have as yet no reason to say that our tastes are contradictory. The other person is more struck with the elegance and tenderness which are the characteristics of Virgil: I, with the simplicity and fire of Homer. As long as neither of us deny that both Homer and Virgil have great beauties, our difference falls within the compass of that diversity of tastes, which I have shown to be natural and allowable. But if the other man shall assert that Homer has no beauties whatever; that he holds him to be a dull and spiritless writer, and that he would as soon peruse any old legend of knight errantry as the Iliad; then I exclaim, that my antagonist either is void of all taste, or that his taste is corrupted in a miserable degree; and I appeal to whatever I think the standard of taste, to show him that he is in the wrong.

What that standard is, to which, in such opposition of tastes, we are obliged to have recourse, remains to be traced. A standard properly signifies that which is of such undoubted authority as to be the test of other things of the same kind. Thus a standard weight, or measure, is that which is appointed by law to regulate all other measures and weights. Thus the court is said to be the standard of good breeding; and the Scripture of theological truth.

When we say that nature is the standard of taste, we lay down a principle very true and just, as far as it can be applied. There is no doubt, that in all cases where an imitation is intended of some object that exists in nature, as in representing human characters or actions, conformity to

nature affords a full and distinct criterion of what is truly beautiful. Reason hath in such cases full scope for exerting its authority, for approving or condemning, by comparing the copy with the original. But there are innumerable cases in which this rule cannot be at all applied; and conformity to nature is an expression frequently used, without any distinct or determinate meaning. We must therefore search for somewhat that can be rendered more clear and precise, to be the standard of taste.

Taste, as I before explained it, is ultimately founded on an internal sense of beauty, which is natural to men, and which, in its application to particular objects, is capable of being guided and enlightened by reason. Now, were there any one person who possessed in full perfection all the powers of human nature, whose internal senses were in every instance exquisite and just, and whose reason was unerring and sure, the determination of such a person concerning beauty would, beyond doubt, be a perfect standard for the taste of all others. Wherever their taste differed from his, it could be imputed only to some imperfection in their natural powers. But as there is no such living standard, no one person to whom all mankind will allow such submission to be due, what is there of sufficient authority to be the standard of the various and opposite tastes of men? Most certainly there is nothing but the taste, as far as it can be gathered, of human nature. That which men concur the most in admiring, must be held to be beautiful. His taste must be esteemed just and true, which coincides with the general sentiments of men. In this standard we must rest. To the sense of mankind the ultimate appeal must ever lie, in all works of taste. If any one should maintain that sugar was bitter and tobacco was sweet, no reasonings could avail to prove it. The taste of such a person would infallibly be held to be diseased, merely because it differed so widely from the taste of the species to which he belongs. In like manner, with regard to the objects of sentiment or internal taste, the common feelings of men carry the same authority, and have a title to regulate the taste of every individual.

But have we then, it will be said, no other criterion of what is beautiful, than the approbation

of the majority? Must we collect the voices of others, before we form any judgment for ourselves, of what deserves applause in eloquence or poetry? By no means; there are principles of reason and sound judgment which can be applied to matters of taste as well as to the subjects of science and philosophy. He who admires or censures any work of genius, is always ready, if his taste be in any degree improved, to assign some reasons for his decision. He appeals to principles, and points out the grounds on which he proceeds. Taste is a sort of compound power, in which the light of the understanding always mingles more or less, with the feelings of sentiment.

But, though reason can carry us a certain length in judging concerning works of taste, it is not to be forgotten that the ultimate conclusions to which our reasonings lead, refer at last to sense and perception. We may speculate and argue concerning propriety of conduct in a tragedy, or an epic poem. Just reasonings on the subject will correct the caprice of unenlightened taste, and establish principles for judging of what deserves praise. But, at the same time, these reasonings appeal always, in the last resort, to feeling. The foundation upon which they rest, is what has been found from experience to please mankind universally. Upon this ground we prefer a simple and natural, to an artificial and affected style; a regular and well-connected story, to loose and scattered narratives; a catastrophe which is tender and pathetic, to one which leaves us unmoved. It is from consulting our own imagination and heart, and from attending to the feelings of others, that any principles are formed which acquire authority in matters of taste.⁵

⁵The difference between the authors who found the standard of taste upon the common feelings of human nature ascertained by general approbation, and those who found it upon established principles which can be ascertained by reason, is more an apparent than a real difference. Like many other literary controversies, it turns chiefly on modes of expression. For they who lay the greatest stress on sentiment and feeling, make no scruple of applying argument and reason to matters of taste. They appeal, like other writers, to established principles, in judging of the excellencies of eloquence or poetry; and plainly show, that the general approbation to which they ultimately recur, is an approbation resulting from discussion as well as from sentiment. They, on the other hand, who, in order to vindicate taste from any sus-

When we refer to the concurring sentiments of men as the ultimate test of what is to be accounted beautiful in the arts, this is to be always understood of men placed in such situations as are favourable to the proper exertions of taste. Every one must perceive that among rude and uncivilized nations, and during the ages of ignorance and darkness, any loose notions that are entertained concerning such subjects carry no authority. In those states of society, taste has no materials on which to operate. It is either totally suppressed, or appears in its lowest and most imperfect form. We refer to the sentiments of mankind in polished and flourishing nations; when arts are cultivated and manners refined; when works of genius are subjected to free discussion, and taste is improved by science and philosophy.

Even among nations, at such a period of society, I admit, that accidental causes may occasionally warp the proper operations of taste: sometimes the state of religion, sometimes the form of government, may for a while pervert it; a licentious court may introduce a taste for false ornaments, and dissolute writings. The usage of one admired genius may procure approbation for his faults, and even render them fashionable. Sometimes envy may have power to bear down, for a little, productions of great merit; while popular humour, or party spirit, may, at other times, exalt to a high, though short-lived, reputation, what little deserved it. But though such casual circumstances give the appearance of caprice to the judgments of taste, that appearance is easily corrected. In the course of time, the genuine taste of human nature never fails to disclose itself, and to gain the ascendant over any fantastic and corrupted modes of taste which may chance to have been introduced. These may have currency for a while, and mislead superficial judges; but being subjected to examination, by degrees they pass away; while that alone remains which is founded on sound reason, and the native feelings of men.

picion of being arbitrary, maintain that it is ascertainable by the standard of reason, admit nevertheless, that what pleases universally, must on that account be held to be truly beautiful; and that no rules or conclusions concerning objects of taste, can have any just authority, if they be found to contradict the general sentiments of men. [Au.]

I by no means pretend, that there is any standard of taste, to which, in every particular instance, we can resort for clear and immediate determination. Where, indeed, is such a standard to be found for deciding any of those great controversies in reason and philosophy, which perpetually divide mankind? In the present case, there was plainly no occasion for any such strict and absolute provision to be made. In order to judge of what is morally good or evil, of what man ought, or ought not in duty to do, it was fit that the means of clear and precise determination should be afforded us. But to ascertain in every case with the utmost exactness what is beautiful or elegant, was not at all necessary to the happiness of man. And therefore some diversity in feeling was here allowed to take place; and room was left for discussion and debate, concerning the degree of approbation to which any work of genius is entitled.

The conclusion, which it is sufficient for us to rest upon, is, that taste is far from being an arbitrary principle, which is subject to the fancy of every individual, and which admits of no criterion for determining whether it be false or true. Its foundation is the same in all human minds. It is built upon sentiments and perceptions which belong to our nature; and which, in general, operate with the same uniformity as our other intellectual principles. When these sentiments are perverted by ignorance or prejudice, they are capable of being rectified by reason. Their sound and natural state is ultimately determined, by comparing them with the general taste of mankind. Let men declaim as much as they please concerning the caprice and the uncertainty of taste, it is found by experience, that there are beauties, which, if they be displayed in a proper light, have power to command lasting and general admiration. In every composition, what interests the imagination, and touches the heart, pleases all ages and all nations. There is a certain string to which, when properly struck, the human heart is so made as to answer.

Hence the universal testimony which the most improved nations of the earth have conspired, throughout a long tract of ages, to give to some few works of genius; such as the *Iliad* of Homer, and the *Æneid* of Virgil. Hence the authority

which such works have acquired as standards, in some degree, of poetical composition; since from them we are enabled to collect what the sense of mankind is, concerning those beauties which give them the highest pleasure, and which therefore poetry ought to exhibit. Authority or prejudice may, in one age or country, give a temporary reputation to an indifferent poet, or a bad artist: but when foreigners, or when posterity examine his works, his faults are discerned, and the genuine taste of human nature appears. "Opinionum commenta delet dies; naturæ judicia confirmat." Time overthrows the illusions of opinion, but establishes the decisions of nature. . . .

Lecture XIV

ORIGIN AND NATURE OF FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

Having now finished what related to the construction of sentences, I proceed to other rules concerning style. My general division of the qualities of style, was into perspicuity and ornament. Perspicuity, both in single words and in sentences, I have considered. Ornament, as far as it arises from a graceful, strong, or melodious construction of words, has also been treated of. Another, and a great branch of the ornament of style, is, figurative language; which is now to be the subject of our consideration, and will require a full discussion.

Our first inquiry must be, What is meant by figures of speech?⁶

In general, they always imply some departure from simplicity of expression; the idea which we intend to convey, not only enunciated to others, but enunciated in a particular manner, and with some circumstance added, which is designed to render the impression more strong and vivid.

⁶On the subject of figures of speech, all the writers who treat of rhetoric or composition, have insisted largely. To make references, therefore, on this subject, were endless. On the foundation of figurative language, in general, one of the most sensible and instructive writers appears to me to be M. Marsais, in his *Traité des Tropes pour servir d'Introduction à la Rhétorique, et à la Logique*. For observations on particular figures, the *Elements of Criticism* may be consulted, where the subject is fully handled, and illustrated by a great variety of examples. [Au.]

When I say, for instance, "That a good man enjoys comfort in the midst of adversity"; I just express my thought in the simplest manner possible. But when I say, "To the upright there ariseth light in darkness"; the same sentiment is expressed in a figurative style; a new circumstance is introduced; light is put in the place of comfort, and darkness is used to suggest the idea of adversity. In the same manner, to say, "It is impossible, by any search we can make, to explore the divine nature fully," is to make a simple proposition. But when we say, "Canst thou, by searching, find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection? It is high as heaven, what canst thou do? deeper than hell, what canst thou know?" This introduces a figure into style; the proposition being not only expressed, but admiration and astonishment being expressed together with it.

But, though figures imply a deviation from what may be reckoned the most simple form of speech, we are not thence to conclude, that they imply any thing uncommon, or unnatural. This is so far from being the case, that on very many occasions they are both the most natural, and the most common method of uttering our sentiments. It is impossible to compose any discourse without using them often; nay, there are few sentences of any length, in which some expression or other, that may be termed a figure, does not occur. From what causes this happens, shall be afterwards explained. The fact, in the mean time, shows that they are to be accounted part of that language which nature dictates to men. They are not the inventions of the schools, nor the mere product of study: on the contrary, the most illiterate speak in figures, as often as the most learned. Whenever the imaginations of the vulgar are much awakened, or their passions inflamed against one another, they will pour forth a torrent of figurative language, as forcible as could be employed by the most artificial declaimer.

What then is it, which has drawn the attention of critics and rhetoricians so much to these forms of speech? It is this: they remarked, that in them consists much of the beauty and the force of language; and found them always to bear some characters, of distinguishing marks, by the help of which they could reduce them under separate

classes and heads. To this, perhaps, they owe their name of figures. As the figure or shape of one body distinguishes it from another, so these forms of speech have, each of them, a cast or turn peculiar to itself, which both distinguishes it from the rest, and distinguishes it from simple expression. Simple expression just makes our idea known to others; but figurative language, over and above, bestows a particular dress upon that idea; a dress which both makes it to be remarked, and adorns it. Hence, this sort of language became early a capital object of attention to those who studied the powers of speech.

Figures, in general, may be described to be that language, which is prompted either by the imagination, or by the passions. The justness of this description will appear, from the more particular account I am afterwards to give of them. Rhetoricians commonly divide them into two great classes; figures of words, and figures of thought. The former, figures of words, are commonly called tropes, and consist in a word's being employed to signify something that is different from its original and primitive meaning; so that if you alter the word, you destroy the figure. Thus, in the instance I gave before; "Light ariseth to the upright in darkness." The trope consists in "light and darkness," being not meant literally, but substituted for comfort and adversity, on account of some resemblance or analogy which they are supposed to bear to these conditions of life. The other class, termed figures of thought, supposes the words to be used in their proper and literal meaning, and the figure to consist in the turn of the thought; as is the case in exclamations, interrogations, apostrophes, and comparisons; where, though you vary the words that are used, or translate them from one language into another, you may, nevertheless, still preserve the same figure in the thought. This distinction, however, is of no great use; as nothing can be built upon it in practice; neither is it always very clear. It is of little importance whether we give to some particular mode of expression the name of a trope, or of a figure; provided we remember, that figurative language always imports some colouring of the imagination, or some emotion of passion, expressed in our style: and, perhaps, figures of imagination, and figures of passion, might be a

more useful distribution of the subject. But, without insisting on any artificial divisions, it will be more useful, that I inquire into the origin and the nature of figures. Only, before I proceed to this, there are two general observations which it may be proper to premise.

The first is, concerning the use of rules with respect to figurative language. I admit, that persons may both speak and write with propriety who know not the names of any of the figures of speech, nor ever studied any rules relating to them. Nature, as was before observed, dictates the use of figures; and, like Mons. Jourdain, in Moliere, who had spoken for forty years in prose, without ever knowing it; many a one uses metaphorical expressions to good purpose, without any idea of what a metaphor is. It will not, however, follow thence, that rules are of no service. All science arises from observations on practice. Practice has always gone before method and rule; but method and rule have afterwards improved and perfected practice, in every art. We every day meet with persons who sing agreeably, without knowing one note of the gamut. Yet it has been found of importance to reduce these notes to a scale, and to form an art of music; and it would be ridiculous to pretend, that the art is of no advantage, because the practice is founded in nature. Propriety and beauty of speech are certainly as improveable as the ear or the voice; and to know the principles of this beauty, or the reasons which render one figure, or one manner of speech, preferable to another, cannot fail to assist and direct a proper choice.

But I must observe, in the next place, that, although this part of style merits attention, and is a very proper object of science and rule; although much of the beauty of composition depends on figurative language; yet we must beware of imagining that it depends solely, or even chiefly, upon such language. It is not so. The great place which the doctrine of tropes and figures has occupied in systems of rhetoric; the over-anxious care which has been shown in giving names to a vast variety of them, and in ranging them under different classes, has often led persons to imagine, that if their composition was well bespangled with a number of these ornaments of speech, it wanted no other beauty; whence has arisen much stiffness

and affectation. For it is, in truth, the sentiment or passion, which lies under the figured expression, that gives it any merit. The figure is only the dress: the sentiment is the body and the substance. No figures will render a cold or an empty composition interesting; whereas, if a sentiment be sublime or pathetic, it can support itself perfectly well, without any borrowed assistance. Hence, several of the most affecting and admired passages of the best authors, are expressed in the simplest language. The following sentiment from Virgil, for instance, makes its way at once to the heart, without the help of any figure whatever. He is describing an Argive, who falls in battle, in Italy, at a great distance from his native country.

Sternitur infelix alieno vulnere, cœlumque
Adspicit, et dulces moriens reminiscitur Argos.⁷
Æneid x. 781.

A single stroke of this kind, drawn as by the very pencil of nature, is worth a thousand figures. In the same manner, the simple style of Scripture: "He spoke, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast."—"God said, Let there be light, and there was light"; imparts a lofty conception to much greater advantage, than if it had been decorated by the most pompous metaphors. The fact is, that the strong pathetic, and the pure sublime, not only have little dependence on figures of speech, but, generally, reject them. The proper region of these ornaments is, where a moderate degree of elevation and passion is predominant; and there they contribute to the embellishment of discourse, only, when there is a basis of solid thought and natural sentiment; when they are inserted in their proper place; and when they rise, of themselves, from the subject, without being sought after.

⁷"Anthares had from Argos travell'd far.
Alcides' friend, and brother of the war;
Now falling, by another's wound, his eyes
He casts to heaven, on Argos thinks, and dies."

In this translation, much of the beauty of the original is lost. "On Argos thinks, and dies," is by no means equal to "dulces moriens reminiscitur Argos": "As he dies, he remembers his beloved Argos." It is indeed observable, that in most of those tender and pathetic passages, which do so much honour to Virgil, that great poet expresses himself with the utmost simplicity. . . . [Au.]

Having premised these observations, I proceed to give an account of the origin and nature of figures; principally of such as have their dependence on language; including that numerous tribe, which the rhetoricians call tropes.

At the first rise of language, men would begin with giving names to the different objects which they discerned or thought of. This nomenclature would, at the beginning, be very narrow. According as men's ideas multiplied, and their acquaintance with objects increased, their stock of names and words would increase also. But to the infinite variety of objects and ideas no language is adequate. No language is so copious, as to have a separate word for every separate idea. Men naturally sought to abridge this labour of multiplying words *in infinitum*; and, in order to lay less burden on their memories, made one word, which they had already appropriated to a certain idea or object, stand also for some other idea or object; between which and the primary one, they found, or fancied, some relation. Thus, the preposition, *in*, was originally invented to express the circumstance of place: "The man was killed *in* the wood." In progress of time, words were wanted to express men's being connected with certain conditions of fortune, or certain situations of mind; and some resemblance, or analogy, being fancied between these, and the place of bodies, the word, *in*, was employed to express men's being so circumstanced; as, one's being *in* health or *in* sickness, *in* prosperity or *in* adversity, *in* joy or *in* grief, *in* doubt, or *in* danger, or *in* safety. Here we see this preposition, *in*, plainly assuming a tropical signification, or carried off from its original meaning, to signify something else, which relates to, or resembles it.

Tropes of this kind abound in all languages; and are plainly owing to the want of proper words. The operations of the mind and affections, in particular, are, in most languages, described by words taken from sensible objects. The reason is plain. The names of sensible objects were, in all languages, the words most early introduced; and were, by degrees, extended to those mental objects, of which men had more obscure conceptions, and to which they found it more difficult to assign distinct names. They borrowed, therefore, the name of some sensible idea,

where their imagination found some affinity. Thus we speak of a *piercing* judgment, and a *clear* head; a *soft* or a *hard* heart; a *rough* or a *smooth* behaviour. We say, *inflamed* by anger, *warmed* by love, *swelled* with pride, *melted* into grief; and these are almost the only significant words which we have for such ideas.

But, although the barrenness of language, and the want of words, be doubtless one cause of the invention of tropes; yet it is not the only, nor, perhaps, even the principal source of this form of speech. Tropes have arisen more frequently, and spread themselves wider, from the influence which imagination possesses over language. The train on which this has proceeded among all nations, I shall endeavour to explain.

Every object which makes any impression on the human mind, is constantly accompanied with certain circumstances and relations, that strike us at the same time. It never presents itself to our view, *isolé*, as the French express it; that is, independent of, and separated from, every other thing; but always occurs as somehow related to other objects; going before them, or following them; their effect or their cause; resembling them, or opposed to them; distinguished by certain qualities, or surrounded with certain circumstances. By this means, every idea or object carries in its train some other ideas, which may be considered as its accessories. These accessories often strike the imagination more than the principal idea itself. They are, perhaps, more agreeable ideas; or they are more familiar to our conceptions; or they recall to our memory a greater variety of important circumstances. The imagination is more disposed to rest upon some of them; and therefore, instead of using the proper name of the principal idea which it means to express, it employs, in its place, the name of the accessory or correspondent idea; although the principal have a proper and well-known name of its own. Hence a vast variety of tropical or figurative words obtain currency in all languages, through choice, not necessity; and men of lively imaginations are every day adding to their number.

Thus, when we design to intimate the period at which a state enjoyed most reputation or glory, it were easy to employ the proper words for expressing this; but as this is readily connected, in

our imagination, with the flourishing period of a plant or a tree, we lay hold of this correspondent idea, and say, "The Roman empire flourished most under Augustus." The leader of a faction is plain language; but, because the head is the principal part of the human body, and is supposed to direct all the animal operations, resting upon this resemblance, we say, "Catiline was the head of the party." The word, *voice*, was originally invented to signify the articulate sound, formed by the organs of the mouth; but, as by means of it men signify their ideas and their intentions to each other, *voice* soon assumed a great many other meanings, all derived from this primary effect. "To give our voice" for any thing, signified, to give our sentiment in favour of it. Not only so; but *voice* was transferred to signify any intimation of will or judgment, though given without the least interposition of voice in its literal sense, or any sound uttered at all. Thus we speak of listening to the *voice* of conscience, the *voice* of nature, the *voice* of God. This usage takes place, not so much from barrenness of language, or want of a proper word, as from an allusion which we choose to make to *voice*, in its primary sense, in order to convey our idea, connected with a circumstance which appears to the fancy to give it more sprightliness and force.

The account which I have now given, and which seems to be a full and fair one, of the introduction of tropes into all languages, coincides with what Cicero briefly hints in his third book, *De Oratore*. "Modus transferendi verba late patet; quem necessitas primum genuit, coacta inopia et angustiis; post autem delectatio jucunditasque celebravit. Nam ut vestis, frigoris depellendi causa reperta primo, post adhiberi coepta est ad ornatum etiam corporis et dignitatem, sic verbi translatio instituta est inopiæ causa, frequentata, delectationis."⁸

From what has been said it clearly appears,

⁸"The figurative usage of words is very extensive; a usage to which necessity first gave rise, on account of the paucity of words, and barrenness of language; but which the pleasure that was found in it afterwards rendered frequent. For, as garments were first contrived to defend our bodies from the cold, and afterwards were employed for the purpose of ornament and dignity, so figures of speech, introduced by want, were cultivated for the sake of entertainment." [Au.]

how that must come to pass, which I had occasion to mention in a former lecture, that all languages are most figurative in their early state. Both the causes to which I ascribed the origin of figures, concur in producing this effect at the beginnings of society. Language is then most barren; the stock of proper names which have been invented for things, is small; and, at the same time, imagination exerts great influence over the conceptions of men, and their method of uttering them; so that, both from necessity and from choice, their speech will, at that period, abound in tropes. For the savage tribes of men are always much given to wonder and astonishment. Every new object surprises, terrifies, and makes a strong impression on their mind; they are governed by imagination and passion more than by reason; and, of course, their speech must be deeply tinged by their genius. In fact, we find, that this is the character of the American and Indian languages; bold, picturesque, and metaphorical; full of strong allusions to sensible qualities, and to such objects as struck them most in their wild and solitary life. An Indian chief makes a harangue to his tribe, in a style full of stronger metaphors than an European would use in an epic poem.

As language makes gradual progress towards refinement, almost every object comes to have a proper name given to it, and perspicuity and precision are more studied. But, still, for the reasons before given, borrowed words, or, as rhetoricians call them, tropes, must continue to occupy a considerable place. In every language, too, there are a multitude of words, which, though they were figurative in their first application to certain objects, yet, by long use, lose that figurative power wholly, and come to be considered as simple and literal expressions. In this case are the terms which I remarked before, as transferred from sensible qualities to the operations or qualities of the mind, a *piercing* judgment, a *clear* head, a *hard* heart, and the like. There are other words which remain in a sort of middle state; which have neither lost wholly their figurative application, nor yet retain so much of it, as to imprint any remarkable character of figured language on our style; such as these phrases, “apprehend one’s meaning”; “enter on a subject”; “follow out an argument”; “stir up strife”; and a great many more, of

which our language is full. In the use of such phrases, correct writers will always preserve a regard to the figure or allusion on which they are founded, and will be careful not to apply them in any way that is inconsistent with it. One may be “sheltered under the patronage of a great man”; but it were wrong to say, “sheltered under the mask of dissimulation”; as a mask conceals, but does not shelter. An object, in description, may be “clothed,” if you will, “with epithets”; but it is not so proper to speak of its being “clothed with circumstances”; as the word “circumstances” alludes to standing round, not to clothing. Such attentions as these, to the propriety of language, are requisite in every composition.

What has been said on this subject, tends to throw light on the nature of language in general; and will lead to the reasons, why tropes or figures contribute to the beauty and grace of style.

First, they enrich language, and render it more copious. By their means, words and phrases are multiplied for expressing all sorts of ideas; for describing even the minutest differences; the nicest shades and colours of thought; which no language could possibly do by proper words alone, without assistance from tropes.

Secondly, they bestow dignity upon style. The familiarity of common words, to which our ears are much accustomed, tends to degrade style. When we want to adapt our language to the tone of an elevated subject, we should be greatly at a loss, if we could not borrow assistance from figures; which, properly employed, have a similar effect on language, with what is produced by the rich and splendid dress of a person of rank; to create respect, and to give an air of magnificence to him who wears it. Assistance of this kind is often needed in prose compositions; but poetry could not subsist without it. Hence figures form the constant language of poetry. To say, that “the sun rises,” is trite and common; but it becomes a magnificent image when expressed, as Mr. Thomson has done:

But yonder comes the powerful king of day
Rejoicing in the east.——

To say, that “all men are subject alike to death,” presents only a vulgar idea; but it rises and fills the imagination, when painted thus by Horace.

Pallida mors æquo pulsat pede pauperum tabernas,
Regumque turres.

Or,

Omnes eodem cogimur: omnium
Versatur urna serius ocus
Sors exitura, et nos in eternum
Exsilium impositura cymbæ.

Bk. II, Ode 3⁹

In the third place, figures give us the pleasure of enjoying two objects presented together to our view, without confusion; the principal idea, which is the subject of the discourse, along with its accessory, which gives it the figurative dress. We see one thing in another, as Aristotle expresses it; which is always agreeable to the mind. For there is nothing with which the fancy is more delighted, than with comparisons, and resemblances of objects; and all tropes are founded upon some relation or analogy between one thing and another. When, for instance, in place of "youth," I say, the "morning of life"; the fancy is immediately entertained with all the resembling circumstances which presently occur between these two objects. At one moment, I have in my eye a certain period of human life, and a certain time of the day, so related to each other, that the imagination plays between them with pleasure, and contemplates two similar objects, in one view, without embarrassment or confusion. Not only so, but,¹⁰

In the fourth place, figures are attended with this further advantage, of giving us frequently a much clearer and more striking view of the principal object, than we could have if it were expressed in simple terms, and divested of its accessory idea. This is, indeed, their principal advantage, in virtue of which, they are very properly said to illustrate a subject, or to throw a light upon it. For they exhibit the object, on which they are employed, in a picturesque form; they

⁹With equal pace, impartial fate
Knocks at the palace, as the cottage gate.

Or

We all must tread the paths of fate;
And ever shakes the mortal urn;
Whose lot embarks us, soon or late,
On Charon's boat; ah! never to return.

—FRANCIS, [Au.]

¹⁰Blair's punctuation, used throughout this selection. [Ed.]

can render an abstract conception, in some degree, an object of sense; they surround it with such circumstances, as enable the mind to lay hold of it steadily, and to contemplate it fully. "Those persons," says one, "who gain the hearts of most people, who are chosen as the companions of their softer hours, and their reliefs from anxiety and care, are seldom persons of shining qualities, or strong virtues: it is rather the soft green of the soul, on which we rest our eyes, that are fatigued with beholding more glaring objects." Here, by a happy allusion to a colour, the whole conception is conveyed clear and strong to the mind in one word. By a well chosen figure, even conviction is assisted, and the impression of a truth upon the mind, made more lively and forcible than it would otherwise be. As in the following illustration of Dr. Young's: "When we dip too deep in pleasure, we always stir a sediment that renders it impure and noxious": or in this, "A heart boiling with violent passions, will always send up infatuating fumes to the head." An image that presents so much congruity between a moral and a sensible idea, serves, like an argument from analogy, to enforce what the author asserts, and to induce belief.

Besides, whether we are endeavouring to raise sentiments of pleasure or aversion, we can always heighten the emotion by the figures which we introduce; leading the imagination to a train, either of agreeable or disagreeable, of exalting or debasing ideas, correspondent to the impression which we seek to make. When we want to render an object beautiful or magnificent, we borrow images from all the most beautiful or splendid scenes of nature; we thereby naturally throw a lustre over our object; we enliven the reader's mind, and dispose him to go along with us, in the gay and pleasing impressions which we give him of the subject. This effect of figures is happily touched in the following lines of Dr. Akenside, and illustrated by a very sublime figure.

—Then the inexpressive strain
Diffuses its enchantment. Fancy dreams
Of sacred fountains and Elysian groves,
And vales of bliss. The intellectual power
Bends from his awful throne a wond'ring ear,
And smiles. —

Pleasures of Imagination. i. 124.

What I have now explained, concerning the use and effects of figures, naturally leads us to reflect on the wonderful power of language; and, indeed, we cannot reflect on it without the highest admiration. What a fine vehicle is it now become for all the conceptions of the human mind; even for the most subtle and delicate workings of the imagination! What a pliant and flexible instrument in the hand of one who can employ it skilfully; prepared to take every form which he chooses to give it! Not content with a simple communication of ideas and thought, it paints those ideas to the eye; it gives colouring and relief, even to the most abstract conceptions. In the figures which it uses, it sets mirrors before us, where we may behold objects, a second time, in their likeness. It entertains us, as with a succession of the most splendid pictures; disposes, in the most artificial manner, of the light and shade, for viewing every thing to the best advantage; in fine, from being a rude and imperfect interpreter of men's wants and necessities, it has now passed into an instrument of the most delicate and refined luxury.

To make these effects of figurative language sensible, there are few authors in the English language, whom I can refer to with more advantage than Mr. Addison, whose imagination is, at once, remarkably rich, and remarkably correct and chaste. When he is treating, for instance, of the effect which light and colours have to entertain the fancy, considered in Mr. Locke's view of them as secondary qualities, which have no real existence in matter, but are only ideas in the mind, with what beautiful painting has he adorned this philosophic speculation! "Things," says he, "would make but a poor appearance to the eye, if we saw them only in their proper figures and motions. Now, we are every where entertained with pleasing shows and apparitions; we discover imaginary glories in the heavens, and in the earth, and see some of this visionary beauty poured out upon the whole creation. But what a rough unsightly sketch of nature should we be entertained with, did all her colouring disappear, and the several distinctions of light and shade vanish? In short, our souls are, at present, delightfully lost, and bewildered in a pleasing delusion; and we walk about, like the enchanted

hero of a romance, who sees beautiful castles, woods and meadows; and at the same time, hears the warbling of birds, and the purling of streams; but, upon the finishing of some secret spell, the fantastic scene breaks up, and the disconsolate knight finds himself on a barren heath, or in a solitary desert. It is not improbable, that something like this may be the state of the soul after its first separation, in respect of the images it will receive from matter." [No. 413, Spectator]

Having thus explained, at sufficient length, the origin, the nature, and the effects of tropes, I should proceed next to the several kinds and divisions of them. But, in treating of these, were I to follow the common track of the scholastic writers on rhetoric, I should soon become tedious, and, I apprehend, useless, at the same time. Their great business has been, with a most patient and frivolous industry, to branch them out, under a vast number of divisions, according to all the several modes in which a word may be carried from its literal meaning, into one that is figurative, without doing any more; as if the mere knowledge of the names and classes of all the tropes that can be formed, could be of any advantage towards the proper or graceful use of language. All that I purpose is, to give, in a few words, before finishing this lecture, a general view of the several sources whence the tropical meaning of words is derived; after which I shall, in subsequent lectures, descend to a more particular consideration of some of the most considerable figures of speech, and such as are in most frequent use; by treating of which, I shall give all the instruction I can concerning the proper employment of figurative language, and point out the errors and abuses which are apt to be committed in this part of style.

All tropes, as I before observed, are founded on the relation which one object bears to another; in virtue of which, the name of the one can be substituted instead of the name of the other; and by such a substitution, the vivacity of the idea is commonly meant to be increased. These relations, some more, some less intimate, may all give rise to tropes. One of the first and most obvious relations is, that between a cause and its effect. Hence, in figurative language, the cause is, sometimes, put for the effect. Thus, Mr. Addison, writing of Italy:

Blossoms and fruits, and flowers, together rise,
And the whole year in gay confusion lies:

where the "whole year" is plainly intended to signify the effects or productions of all the seasons of the year. At other times, again, the effect is put for the cause; as, "grey hairs" frequently for old age, which causes grey hairs; and "shade" for trees that produce the shade. The relation between the container and the thing contained, is also so intimate and obvious, as naturally to give rise to tropes:

— Ille impiger hausit
Spumantem pateram, et pleno se proluit auro.
Æneid i. 738.¹¹

Where every one sees, that the cup and the gold are put for the liquor that was contained in the golden cup. In the same manner, the name of any country is often used to denote the inhabitants of that country; and heaven, very commonly employed to signify God, because he is conceived as dwelling in heaven. To implore the assistance of heaven is the same as to implore the assistance of God. The relation betwixt any established sign, and the thing signified, is a further source of tropes. Hence,

Cedant arma togæ; concedat laurea linguæ.¹²

The "toga," being the badge of the civil professions, and the "laurel," of military honours, the badge of each is put for the civil and military characters themselves. "To assume the sceptre," is a common phrase for entering on royal authority. To tropes, founded on these several relations, of cause and effect, container and contained, sign and thing signified, is given the name of metonymy.

When the trope is founded on the relation between an antecedent and a consequent, or what goes before, and immediately follows, it is then called a metalepsis; as in the Roman phrase of "fuit," or "vixit," to express that one was dead. "Fuit Ilium et ingens gloria Dardanidum," signifies, that the glory of Troy is now no more.

When the whole is put for a part, or a part for

¹¹"He drained the foaming cup and drowned himself in gold." [Ed.]

¹²"Let arms yield to the toga; let the laurel yield to language." [Ed.]

the whole; a genus for a species, or a species for a genus; the singular for the plural, or the plural for the singular number; in general, when any thing less, or any thing more, is put for the precise object meant; the figure is then called a synecdoche. It is very common, for instance, to describe a whole object by some remarkable part of it; as when we say, "A fleet of so many sail," in the place of "ships"; when we use the "head" for the "person," the "pole" for the "earth," the "waves" for the "sea." In like manner, an attribute may be put for a subject; as "youth and beauty," for the "young and beautiful"; and sometimes a subject for its attribute. But it is needless to insist longer on this enumeration, which serves little purpose. I have said enough to give an opening into that great variety of relations between objects, by means of which, the mind is assisted to pass easily from one to another; and by the name of the one, understands the other to be meant. It is always some accessory idea, which recalls the principal to the imagination; and commonly recalls it with more force, than if the principal idea had been expressed.

The relation which is far the most fruitful of tropes, I have not yet mentioned; that is, the relation of similitude and resemblance. On this is founded, what is called the metaphor: when, in place of using the proper name of any object, we employ, in its place, the name of some other which is like it, which is a sort of picture of it, and which thereby awakens the conception of it with more force or grace. This figure is more frequent than all the rest put together; and the language, of both prose and verse, owes to it much of its elegance and grace. . . .

Lecture XXV

ELOQUENCE, OR PUBLIC SPEAKING— HISTORY OF ELOQUENCE— GRECIAN ELOQUENCE— DEMOSTHENES

Having finished that part of the course which relates to language and style, we are now to ascend a step higher, and to examine the subjects upon which style is employed. I begin with what is properly called eloquence, or public speaking. In

treating of this, I am to consider the different kinds and subjects of public speaking; the manner suited to each; the proper distribution and management of all the parts of a discourse; and the proper pronunciation or delivery of it. But before I enter on any of these heads, it may be proper to take a view of the nature of eloquence in general, and of the state in which it has subsisted in different ages and countries. This will lead into some detail; but I hope a useful one; as in every art it is of great consequence to have a just idea of the perfection of that art, of the end at which it aims, and of the progress which it has made among mankind.

Of eloquence, in particular, it is the more necessary to ascertain the proper notion, because there is not any thing concerning which false notions have been more prevalent. Hence, it has been so often, and is still at this day in disrepute with many. When you speak to a plain man of eloquence, or in praise of it, he is apt to hear you with very little attention. He conceives eloquence to signify a certain trick of speech; the art of varnishing weak arguments plausibly; or of speaking so as to please and tickle the ear. "Give me good sense," says he, "and keep your eloquence for boys." He is in the right, if eloquence were what he conceives it to be. It would be then a very contemptible art indeed, below the study of any wise or good man. But nothing can be more remote from truth. To be truly eloquent, is to speak to the purpose. For the best definition which, I think, can be given of eloquence, is the art of speaking in such a manner as to attain the end for which we speak. Whenever a man speaks or writes, he is supposed, as a rational being, to have some end in view; either to inform, or to amuse, or to persuade, or, in some way or other, to act upon his fellow-creatures. He who speaks, or writes, in such a manner as to adapt all his words most effectually to that end, is the most eloquent man. Whatever then the subject be, there is room for eloquence; in history, or even in philosophy, as well as in orations. The definition which I have given of eloquence, comprehends all the different kinds of it; whether calculated to instruct, to persuade, or to please. But, as the most important subject of discourse is action, or conduct, the power of eloquence chiefly appears

when it is employed to influence conduct, and persuade to action. As it is principally with reference to this end, that it becomes the object of art, eloquence may, under this view of it, be defined, the Art of Persuasion.

This being once established, certain consequences immediately follow, which point out the fundamental maxims of the art. It follows clearly, that, in order to persuade, the most essential requisites are, solid argument, clear method, a character of probity appearing in the speaker, joined with such graces of style and utterance, as shall draw our attention to what he says. Good sense is the foundation of all. No man can be truly eloquent without it; for fools can persuade none but fools. In order to persuade a man of sense, you must first convince him; which is only to be done, by satisfying his understanding of the reasonableness of what you propose to him.

This leads me to observe, that convincing and persuading, though they are sometimes confounded, import, notwithstanding, different things, which it is necessary for us, at present, to distinguish from each other. Conviction affects the understanding only; persuasion, the will and the practice. It is the business of the philosopher to convince me of truth; it is the business of the orator to persuade me to act agreeably to it, by engaging my affections on its side. Conviction and persuasion do not always go together. They *ought*, indeed, to go together; and *would* do so, if our inclination regularly followed the dictates of our understanding. But as our nature is constituted, I may be convinced that virtue, justice, or public spirit, are laudable, while, at the same time, I am not persuaded to act according to them. The inclination may revolt, though the understanding be satisfied; the passions may prevail against the judgment. Conviction is, however, always one avenue to the inclination, or heart; and it is that which an orator must first bend his strength to gain: for no persuasion is likely to be stable, which is not founded on conviction. But, in order to persuade, the orator must go farther than merely producing conviction; he must consider man as a creature moved by many different springs, and must act upon them all. He must address himself to the passions; he must paint to the fancy, and touch the heart; and hence, besides

solid argument, and clear method, all the conciliating and interesting arts, both of composition and pronunciation, enter into the idea of eloquence.

An objection may, perhaps, hence be formed against eloquence; as an art which may be employed for persuading to ill, as well as to good. There is no doubt that it may; and so reasoning may also be, and too often is employed, for leading men into error. But who would think of forming an argument from this against the cultivation of our reasoning powers? Reason, eloquence, and every art which ever had been studied among mankind, may be abused, and may prove dangerous in the hands of bad men; but it were perfectly childish to contend, that, upon this account, they ought to be abolished. Give truth and virtue the same arms which you give vice and falsehood, and the former are likely to prevail. Eloquence is no invention of the schools. Nature teaches every man to be eloquent, when he is much in earnest. Place him in some critical situation; let him have some great interest at stake, and you will see him lay hold of the most effectual means of persuasion. The art of oratory proposes nothing more than to follow out that track which nature has first pointed out. And the more exactly that this track is pursued, the more that eloquence is properly studied, the more shall we be guarded against the abuse which bad men make of it, and enabled the better to distinguish between true eloquence and the tricks of sophistry.

We may distinguish three kinds, or degrees, of eloquence. The first, and lowest, is that which aims only at pleasing the hearers. Such, generally, is the eloquence of panegyrics, inaugural orations, addresses to great men, and other harangues of this sort. This ornamental sort of composition is not altogether to be rejected. It may innocently amuse and entertain the mind; and it may be mixed, at the same time, with very useful sentiments. But it must be confessed, that where the speaker has no further aim than merely to shine and to please, there is great danger of art being strained into ostentation, and of the composition becoming tiresome and languid.

A second and a higher degree of eloquence is when the speaker aims not merely to please, but also to inform, to instruct, to convince: when his

art is exerted in removing prejudices against himself and his cause, in choosing the most proper arguments, stating them with the greatest force, arranging them in the best order, expressing and delivering them with propriety and beauty; and thereby disposing us to pass that judgment, or embrace that side of the cause, to which he seeks to bring us. Within this compass, chiefly, is employed the eloquence of the bar.

But there is a third, and still higher degree of eloquence, wherein a greater power is exerted over the human mind; by which we are not only convinced, but are interested, agitated, and carried along with the speaker; our passions are made to rise together with his; we enter into all his emotions; we love, we detest, we resent, according as he inspires us; and are prompted to resolve, or to act, with vigour and warmth. Debate in popular assemblies opens the most illustrious field to this species of eloquence; and the pulpit, also, admits it.

I am here to observe, and the observation is of consequence, that the high eloquence which I have last mentioned, is always the offspring of passion. By passion, I mean that state of the mind in which it is agitated, and fired, by some object it has in view. A man may convince, and even persuade others to act, by mere reason and argument. But that degree of eloquence which gains the admiration of mankind, and properly denominates one an orator, is never found without warmth or passion. Passion, when in such a degree as to rouse and kindle the mind, without throwing it out of the possession of itself, is universally found to exalt all the human powers. It renders the mind infinitely more enlightened, more penetrating, more vigorous and masterly, than it is in its calm moments. A man, actuated by a strong passion, becomes much greater than he is at other times. He is conscious of more strength and force; he utters greater sentiments, conceives higher designs, and executes them with a boldness and a felicity of which, on other occasions, he could not think himself capable. But chiefly, with respect to persuasion, is the power of passion felt. Almost every man, in passion, is eloquent. Then, he is at no loss for words and arguments. He transmits to others, by a sort of contagious sympathy, the warm sentiments

which he feels; his looks and gestures are all persuasive; and nature here shows herself infinitely more powerful than art. This is the foundation of that just and noted rule: "Si vis me flere, dolendum est primum ipse tibi."¹³

This principle being once admitted, that all high eloquence flows from passion, several consequences follow, which deserve to be attended to; and the mention of which will serve to confirm the principle itself. For hence the universally acknowledged effect of enthusiasm, or warmth of any kind, in public speakers, for affecting their audience. Hence all laboured declamation, and affected ornaments of style, which show the mind to be cool and unmoved, are so inconsistent with persuasive eloquence. Hence all studied prettinesses, in gesture or pronunciation, detract so greatly from the weight of a speaker. Hence a discourse that is read, moves us less than one that is spoken, as having less the appearance of coming warm from the heart. Hence, to call a man cold, is the same thing as to say that he is not eloquent. Hence a sceptical man, who is always in suspense, and feels nothing strongly; or a cunning mercenary man, who is suspected rather to assume the appearance of passion than to feel it; have so little power over men in public speaking. Hence, in fine, the necessity of being, and being believed to be, disinterested, and in earnest, in order to persuade.

These are some of the capital ideas which have occurred to me, concerning eloquence in general; and with which I have thought proper to begin, as the foundation of much of what I am afterwards to suggest. From what I have already said, it is evident that eloquence is a high talent, and of great importance in society; and that it requires both natural genius, and much improvement from art. Viewed as the art of persuasion, it requires, in its lowest state, soundness of understanding, and considerable acquaintance with human nature; and, in its higher degree, it requires, moreover, strong sensibility of mind, a warm and lively imagination, joined with correctness of judgment, and an extensive command of the power of language; to which must also be added, the graces of

¹³"If you want me to weep, it has to be sorrowful for you first." [Ed.]

pronunciation and delivery.— Let us next proceed to consider in what state eloquence has subsisted in different ages and nations.

It is an observation made by several writers, that eloquence is to be looked for only in free states. Longinus, in particular, at the end of his treatise on the sublime, when assigning the reason why so little sublimity of genius appeared in the age wherein he lived, illustrates this observation with a great deal of beauty. Liberty, he remarks, is the nurse of true genius; it animates the spirit, and invigorates the hopes of men; excites honourable emulation, and a desire of excelling in every art. All other qualifications, he says, you may find among those who are deprived of liberty; but never did a slave become an orator; he can only be a pompous flatterer. Now, though this reasoning be, in the main, true; it must, however, be understood with some limitations. For, under arbitrary governments, if they be of the civilized kind, and give encouragement to the arts, ornamented eloquence may flourish remarkably. Witness France at this day, where ever since the reign of Louis XIV, more of what may justly be called eloquence, within a certain sphere, is to be found, than perhaps, in any other nation in Europe; though freedom be enjoyed by some nations in a much greater degree. The French sermons, and orations pronounced on public occasions, are not only polite and elegant harangues, but several of them are uncommonly spirited, are animated with bold figures, and rise to a degree of the sublime. Their eloquence, however, in general, must be confessed to be of the flowery, rather than the vigorous kind; calculated more to please and sooth, than to convince and persuade. High, manly, and forcible eloquence, is, indeed, to be looked for only, or chiefly, in the regions of freedom. Under arbitrary governments, besides the general turn of softness and effeminacy which such governments may be justly supposed to give to the spirit of a nation, the art of speaking cannot be such an instrument of ambition, business, and power, as it is in democratical states. It is confined within a narrower range; it can be employed only in the pulpit, or at the bar; but is excluded from those great scenes of public business, where the spirits of men have the freest exertion; where important affairs are

transacted, and persuasion, of course, is more seriously studied. Wherever man can acquire most power over man by means of reason and discourse, which certainly is under a free state of government, there we may naturally expect that true eloquence will be best understood, and carried to the greatest height.

Hence, in tracing the rise of oratory, we need not attempt to go far back into the early ages of the world, or search for it among the monuments of eastern or Egyptian antiquity. In those ages, there was, indeed, an eloquence of a certain kind; but it approached nearer to poetry, than to what we properly call oratory. There is reason to believe, as I formerly showed, that the language of the first ages was passionate and metaphorical; owing partly to the scanty stock of words, of which speech then consisted; and partly to the tincture which language naturally takes from the savage and uncultivated state of men, agitated by unrestrained passions, and struck by events, which to them are strange and surprising. In this state, rapture and enthusiasm, the parents of poetry, had an ample field. But while the intercourse of men was as yet unfrequent, and force and strength were the chief means employed in deciding controversies, the arts of oratory and persuasion, of reasoning and debate, could be but little known. The first empires that arose, the Assyrian and Egyptian, were of the despotic kind. The whole power was in the hands of one, or at most of a few. The multitude were accustomed to a blind reverence; they were led, not persuaded; and none of those refinements of society, which make public speaking an object of importance, were as yet introduced.

It is not till the rise of the Grecian republics, that we find any remarkable appearances of eloquence as the art of persuasion; and these gave it such a field as it never had before, and perhaps, has never had again since that time. And, therefore, as the Grecian eloquence has ever been the object of admiration to those who have studied the powers of speech, it is necessary that we fix our attention, for a little, on this period.

Greece was divided into a multitude of petty states. These were governed at first by kings, who were called tyrants; on whose expulsion from all these states, there sprung up a great

number of democratical governments, founded nearly on the same plan, animated by the same high spirit of freedom, mutually jealous, and rivals of one another. We may compute the flourishing period of those Grecian states to have lasted from the battle of Marathon, till the time of Alexander the Great, who subdued the liberties of Greece; a period which comprehends about 150 years, and within which are to be found most of their celebrated poets and philosophers, but chiefly their orators; for though poetry and philosophy were not extinct among them after that period, yet eloquence hardly made any figure.

Of these Grecian republics, the most noted by far, for eloquence, and, indeed, for arts of every kind, was that of Athens. The Athenians were an ingenious, quick, sprightly people; practised in business, and sharpened by frequent and sudden revolutions, which happened in their government. The genius of their government was altogether democratical; their legislature consisted of the whole body of the people. They had, indeed, a senate of five hundred; but in the general convention of the citizens was placed the last resort; and affairs were conducted there, entirely, by reasoning, speaking, and a skilful application to the passions and interests of a popular assembly. There laws were made, peace and war decreed, and thence the magistrates were chosen. For the highest honours of the state were alike open to all; nor was the meanest tradesman excluded from a seat in their supreme courts. In such a state, eloquence, it is obvious, would be much studied, as the surest means of rising to influence and power; and what sort of eloquence? Not that which was brilliant merely, and showy, but that which was found, upon trial, to be most effectual for convincing, interesting, and persuading the hearers. For there, public speaking was not a mere competition for empty applause, but a serious contention for that public leading, which was the great object both of the men of ambition, and the men of virtue.

In so enlightened and acute a nation, where the highest attention was paid to every thing elegant in the arts, we may naturally expect to find the public taste refined and judicious. Accordingly, it was improved to such a degree, that the Attic taste and Attic manner have passed into a proverb. It is true, that ambitious demagogues,

and corrupt orators, did sometimes dazzle and mislead the people, by a showy but false eloquence; for the Athenians, with all their acuteness, were factious and giddy, and great admirers of every novelty. But when some important interest drew their attention, when any great danger roused them, and put their judgment to a serious trial, they commonly distinguished, very justly, between genuine and spurious eloquence: and hence Demosthenes triumphed over all his opponents; because he spoke always to the purpose, affected no insignificant parade of words, used weighty arguments, and showed them clearly where their interest lay. In critical conjunctures of the state, when the public was alarmed with some pressing danger, when the people were assembled, and proclamation was made by the crier, for any one to rise and deliver his opinion upon the present situation of affairs, empty declamation and sophistical reasoning would not only have been hissed, but resented and punished by an assembly so intelligent and accustomed to business. Their greatest orators trembled on such occasions, when they rose to address the people, as they knew they were to be held answerable for the issue of the counsel which they gave. The most liberal endowments of the greatest princes never could found such a school for true oratory, as was formed by the nature of the Athenian republic. Eloquence there sprung, native and vigorous, from amidst the contentions of faction and freedom, of public business and of active life; and not from that retirement and speculation, which we are apt sometimes to fancy more favourable to eloquence than they are found to be. . . .

Lecture XXXII

CONDUCT OF A DISCOURSE — THE ARGUMENTATIVE PART — THE PATHETIC PART — THE PERORATION

In treating of the constituent parts of a regular discourse or oration, I have already considered the introduction, the division, and the narration or explication. I proceed next to treat of the argumentative or reasoning part of a discourse. In

whatever place, or on whatever subject one speaks, this, beyond doubt, is of the greatest consequence. For the great end for which men speak on any serious occasion, is to convince their hearers of something being either true, or right, or good: and, by means of this conviction, to influence their practice. Reason and argument make the foundation, as I have often inculcated, of all manly and persuasive eloquence.

Now, with respect to arguments, three things are requisite. First, the invention of them; secondly, the proper disposition and arrangement of them; and thirdly, the expressing of them in such a style and manner, as to give them their full force.

The first of these, invention, is, without doubt, the most material, and the groundwork of the rest. But, with respect to this, I am afraid it is beyond the power of art to give any real assistance. Art cannot go so far, as to supply a speaker with arguments on every cause, and every subject; though it may be of considerable use in assisting him to arrange and express those, which his knowledge of the subject has discovered. For it is one thing to discover the reasons that are most proper to convince men, and another, to manage these reasons with the most advantage. The latter is all that rhetoric can pretend to.

The ancient rhetoricians did indeed attempt to go much farther than this. They attempted to form rhetoric into a more complete system; and professed not only to assist public speakers in setting off their arguments to most advantage; but to supply the defect of their invention, and to teach them where to find arguments on every subject and cause. Hence their doctrine of topics, or “loci communes,” and “sedes argumentorum,” which makes so great a figure in the writings of Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian. These topics, or loci, were no other than general ideas applicable to a great many different subjects, which the orator was directed to consult, in order to find out materials for his speech. They had their intrinsic and extrinsic loci; some loci that were common to all the different kinds of public speaking, and some that were peculiar to each. The common or general loci, were such as genus and species, cause and effect, antecedents and consequents, likeness and contrariety, definition, circum-

stances of time and place; and a great many more of the same kinds. For each of the different kinds of public speaking, they had their “loci personarum,” and “loci rerum”: as in demonstrative orations, for instance, the heads from which any one could be decried or praised; his birth, his country, his education, his kindred, the qualities of his body, the qualities of his mind, the fortune he enjoyed, the stations he had filled, &c. and in deliberative orations, the topics that might be used in recommending any public measure, or dissuading from it; such as, honesty, justice, facility, profit, pleasure, glory, assistance from friends, mortification to enemies, and the like.

The Grecian sophists were the first inventors of this artificial system of oratory; and they shewed a prodigious subtilty and fertility in the contrivance of these loci. Succeeding rhetoricians, dazzled by the plan, wrought them up into so regular a system, that one would think they meant to teach how a person might mechanically become an orator, without any genius at all. They give him receipts for making speeches, on all manner of subjects. At the same time, it is evident, that though this study of common places might produce very showy academical declamations, it could never produce useful discourses on real business. The loci indeed supplied a most exuberant fecundity of matter. One who had no other aim but to talk copiously and plausibly, by consulting them on every subject, and laying hold of all that they suggested, might discourse without end; and that too, though he had none but the most superficial knowledge of his subject. But such discourse could be no other than trivial. What is truly solid and persuasive, must be drawn “*ex visceribus causæ*,” from a thorough knowledge of the subject, and profound meditation on it. They who would direct students of oratory to any other sources of argumentation, only delude them; and by attempting to render rhetoric too perfect an art, they render it, in truth, a trifling and childish study.

On this doctrine, therefore, of the rhetorical loci, or topics, I think it superfluous to insist. If any think that the knowledge of them may contribute to improve their invention, and extend their views, they may consult Aristotle and Quintilian, or what Cicero has written on this head, in

his Treatise *De Inventione*, his *Topica*, and second book *De Oratore*. But when they are to prepare a discourse, by which they propose to convince a judge, or to produce any considerable effect upon an assembly, I would advise them, to lay aside their common places, and to think closely of their subject. Demosthenes, I dare say, consulted none of the loci, when he was inciting the Athenians to take arms against Philip; and where Cicero has had recourse to them, his orations are so much the worse on that account.

I proceed to what is of more real use, to point out the assistance that can be given, not with respect to the invention, but with respect to the disposition and conduct of arguments. . . .

After due attention given to the proper arrangement of arguments, what is next requisite for their success is to express them in such a style, and to deliver them in such a manner, as shall give them full force. On these heads I must refer the reader to the directions I have given in treating of style, in former lectures; and to the directions I am afterwards to give concerning pronunciation and delivery.

I proceed, therefore, next, to another essential part of discourse which I mentioned as the fifth in order, that is, the Pathetic; in which, if any where, eloquence reigns, and exerts its power. I shall not, in beginning this head, take up time in combating the scruples of those who have moved a question, whether it be consistent with fairness and candour in a public speaker, to address the passions of his audience? This is a question about words alone, and which common sense easily determines. In inquiries after mere truth, in matters of simple information and instruction, there is no question that the passions have no concern, and that all attempts to move them are absurd. Wherever conviction is the object, it is the understanding alone that is to be applied to. It is by argument and reasoning, that one man attempts to satisfy another of what is true, or right, or just; but if persuasion be the object, the case is changed. In all that relates to practice, there is no man who seriously means to persuade another, but addresses himself to his passions more or less; for this plain reason, that passions are the great springs of human action. The most virtuous

man in treating of the most virtuous subject, seeks to touch the heart of him to whom he speaks; and makes no scruple to raise his indignation at injustice, or his pity to the distressed, though pity and indignation be passions.

In treating of this part of eloquence, the ancients made the same sort of attempt as they employed with respect to the argumentative part, in order to bring rhetoric into a more perfect system. They inquired metaphysically into the nature of every passion; they gave a definition and description of it; they treated of its causes, its effects, and its concomitants; and thence deduced rules for working upon it. Aristotle in particular has, in his *Treatise upon Rhetoric*, discussed the nature of the passions with much profoundness and subtilty; and what he has written on that head may be read with no small profit, as a valuable piece of moral philosophy; but whether it will have any effect in rendering an orator more pathetic, is to me doubtful. It is not, I am afraid, any philosophical knowledge of the passions, that can confer this talent. We must be indebted for it to nature, to a certain strong and happy sensibility of mind; and one may be a most thorough adept in all the speculative knowledge that can be acquired concerning the passions, and remain at the same time a cold and dry speaker. The use of rules and instructions on this or any other part of oratory, is not to supply the want of genius, but to direct it, where it is found, into its proper channel; to assist it in exerting itself with most advantage, and to prevent the errors and extravagancies into which it is sometimes apt to run. On the head of the pathetic, the following directions appear to me to be useful.

The first is, to consider carefully, whether the subject admit the pathetic, and render it proper; and if it does, what part of the discourse is the most proper for attempting it. To determine these points belongs to good sense; for it is evident that there are many subjects which admit not the pathetic at all, and that even in those that are susceptible of it, an attempt to excite the passions in the wrong place, may expose an orator to ridicule. All that can be said in general is, that if we expect any emotion which we raise to have a lasting effect, we must be careful to bring over to our side, in the first place, the understanding and

judgment. The hearers must be convinced that there are good and sufficient grounds for their entering with warmth into the cause. They must be able to justify to themselves the passion which they feel; and remain satisfied that they are not carried away by mere delusion. Unless their minds be brought into this state, although they may have been heated by the orator's discourse, yet as soon as he ceases to speak, they will resume their ordinary tone of thought, and the emotion which he has raised will die entirely away. Hence most writers assign the pathetic to the peroration or conclusion, as its natural place; and, no doubt, all other things being equal, this is the impression that one would choose to make last, leaving the minds of the hearers warmed with the subject, after argument and reasoning had produced their full effect: but wherever it is introduced, I must advise,

In the second place, never to set apart a head of a discourse, in form, for raising any passion; never give warning that you are about to be pathetic; and call upon your hearers, as is sometimes done to follow you in the attempt. This almost never fails to prove a refrigerant to passion. It puts the hearers immediately on their guard, and disposes them for criticising, much more than for being moved. The indirect method of making an impression is likely to be more successful; when you seize the critical moment that is favourable to emotion, in whatever part of the discourse it occurs, and then, after due preparation, throw in such circumstances, and present such glowing images, as may kindle their passions before they are aware. This can often be done more happily in a few sentences inspired by natural warmth, than in a long and studied address.

In the third place, it is necessary to observe that there is a great difference between showing the hearers that they ought to be moved, and actually moving them. This distinction is not sufficiently attended to, especially by preachers, who, if they have a head in their sermon to show how much we are bound to be grateful to God, or to be compassionate to the distressed, are apt to imagine this to be a pathetic part. Now, all the arguments you produce to show me, why it is my duty, why it is reasonable and fit that I should be

moved in a certain way, go no farther than to dispose or prepare me for entering into such an emotion; but they do not actually excite it. To every emotion or passion, Nature has adapted a set of corresponding objects; and without setting these before the mind, it is not in the power of any orator to raise that emotion. I am warmed with gratitude, I am touched with compassion, not when a speaker shows me that these are noble dispositions, and that it is my duty to feel them; of when he exclaims against me for my indifference and coldness. All this time, he is speaking only to my reason or conscience. He must describe the kindness and tenderness of my friend; he must set before me the distress suffered by the person for whom he would interest me; then, and not till then, my heart begins to be touched, my gratitude or my compassion begins to flow. The foundation, therefore, of all successful execution in the way of pathetic oratory is, to paint the object of that passion which we wish to raise, in the most natural and striking manner; to describe it with such circumstances as are likely to awaken it in the minds of others. Every passion is most strongly excited by sensation; as anger by the feeling of an injury, or the presence of the injurer. Next to the influence of sense, is that of memory; and next to memory, is the influence of the imagination. Of this power, therefore, the orator must avail himself, so as to strike the imagination of the hearers with circumstance which, in lustre and steadiness, resemble those of sensation and remembrance. In order to accomplish this,

In the fourth place, the only effectual method is, to be moved yourselves. There are a thousand interesting circumstances suggested by real passion, which no art can imitate, and no refinement can supply. There is obviously a contagion among the passions.

Ut ridentibus, arident, sic flentibus adflent,
Humani vultus.¹⁴

The internal emotion of the speaker adds a pathos to his words, his looks, his gestures, and his whole manner, which exerts a power almost irresistible over those who hear him. But on this

¹⁴“Laugh with those who laugh and weep with those who weep.” [Ed.]

point, though the most material of all, I shall not now insist, as I have often had occasion before to show, that all attempts towards becoming pathetic, when we are not moved ourselves, expose us to certain ridicule.

Quintilian, who discourses upon this subject with much good sense, takes pains to inform us of the method which he used, when he was a public speaker, for entering into those passions which he wanted to excite in others; setting before his own imagination what he calls “phantasiæ,” or “visiones,” strong pictures of the distress or indignities which they had suffered, whose cause he was to plead, and for whom he was to interest his hearers; dwelling upon these, and putting himself in their situation, till he was affected by a passion, similar to that which the persons themselves had felt. To this method he attributes all the success he had ever had in public speaking; and there can be no doubt, that whatever tends to increase an orator’s sensibility, will add greatly to his pathetic powers.

In the fifth place, it is necessary to attend to the proper language of the passions. We should observe in what manner any one expresses himself who is under the power of a real and a strong passion; and we shall always find his language unaffected and simple. It may be animated, indeed, with bold and strong figures, but it will have no ornament or finery. He is not at leisure to follow out the play of imagination. His mind being wholly seized by one object, which has heated it, he has no other aim, but to represent that in all its circumstances, as strongly as he feels it. This must be the style of the orator, when he would be pathetic; and this will be the style, if he speaks from real feeling; bold, ardent, simple. No sort of description will then succeed, but what is written *fervente calamo*.¹⁵ If he stay till he can work up his style, and polish and adorn it, he will infallibly cool his own ardour; and then he will touch the heart no more. His composition will become frigid; it will be the language of one who describes, but who does not feel. We must take notice, that there is a great difference between painting to the imagination, and painting to the heart. The one may be done coolly and at

¹⁵“With a fervent pen.” [Ed.]

leisure; the other must always be rapid and ardent. In the former, art and labour may be suffered to appear; in the latter, no effect can follow, unless it seem to be the work of nature only.

In the sixth place, avoid interweaving any thing of a foreign nature with the pathetic part of a discourse. Beware of all digressions, which may interrupt or turn aside the natural course of the passion, when once it begins to rise and swell. Sacrifice all beauties, however bright and showy, which would divert the mind from the principal object, and which would amuse the imagination, rather than touch the heart. Hence comparisons are always dangerous, and generally quite improper, in the midst of passion. Beware even of reasoning unseasonably; or, at least, of carrying on a long and subtile train of reasoning, on occasions when the principal aim is to excite warm emotions.

In the last place, never attempt prolonging the pathetic too much. Warm emotions are too violent to be lasting. Study the proper time of making a retreat; of making a transition from the passionate to the calm tone; in such a manner, however, as to descend without falling, by keeping up the same strain of sentiment that was carried on before, though now expressing it with more moderation. Above all things, beware of straining passion too far; of attempting to raise it to unnatural heights. Preserve always a due regard to what the hearers will bear; and remember, that he who stops not at the proper point; who attempts to carry them farther, in passion, than they will follow him, destroys his whole design. By endeavouring to warm them too much, he takes the most effectual method of freezing them completely.

Having given these rules concerning the pathetic, I shall give one example from Cicero, which will serve to illustrate several of them, particularly the last. It shall be taken from his last oration against Verres, wherein he describes the cruelty exercised by Verres, when governor of Sicily, against one Gavius, a Roman citizen. This Gavius had made his escape from prison, into which he had been thrown by the governor; and when just embarked at Messina, thinking himself now safe, had uttered some threats, that when he had once arrived at Rome, Verres should hear of

him, and be brought to account for having put a Roman citizen in chains. The chief magistrate of Messina, a creature of Verres's, instantly apprehends him, and gives information of his threatenings. The behaviour of Verres, on this occasion, is described in the most picturesque manner, and with all the colours which were proper, in order to excite against him the public indignation. He thanks the magistrate of Messina for his diligence. Filled with rage, he comes into the forum; orders Gavius to be brought forth, the executioners to attend, and against the laws, and contrary to the well-known privileges of a Roman citizen, commands him to be stripped naked, bound, and scourged publicly in a cruel manner. Cicero then proceeds thus; "Cædebatur virgis, in medio foro Messanæ, civis Romanus, Judices!" every word rises above another in describing this flagrant enormity; and "Judices," is brought out at the end with the greatest propriety; "Cædebatur virgis, in medio foro Messanæ, civis Romanus, Judices! cum interea, nullus gemitus, nulla vox alia istius miseri, inter dolorem crepitumque plagarum audiebatur, nisi hæc, civis Romanus sum. Hac se commemoratione civitatis, omnia verbera depulsum a corpore arbitrabatur. Eo non modo hoc non perfecit, ut virgarum vim deprecaretur, sed cum imploraret sæpius usurparetque nomen civis, crux, crux, inquam, infelici isto et ærumnoso, qui nunquam istam potestatem viderat, comparabatur. O nomen dulce libertatis! O jus eximium nostræ civitatis! O lex Porcia, legesque Sempronæ!—Huccine omnia tandem reciderunt, ut civis Romanus, in provincia populi Romani, in oppido fœderatorum, ab eo, qui beneficio populi Romani fasces et secures haberet, deligatus, in foro, virgis cæderetur!"¹⁶

¹⁶"In the midst of the marketplace of Messina, a Roman citizen, O judges! was cruelly scourged with rods; when in the meantime, amidst the noise of the blows which he suffered, no voice, no complaint of this unhappy man was heard, except this exclamation. Remember that I am a Roman citizen! By pleading this privilege of his birthright, he hoped to have stopped the strokes of the executioner. But his hopes were vain; for, so far was he from being able to obtain thereby any mitigation of his torture, that when he continued to repeat this exclamation, and to plead the rights of a citizen, a cross, a cross, I say, was preparing to be set up for the execution of this unfortunate person, who never before had beheld that instrument of cruel death. O sacred and honoured

Nothing can be finer, nor better conducted than this passage. The circumstances are well chosen for exciting both the compassion of his hearers for Gavius, and their indignation against Verres. The style is simple; and the passionate exclamation, the address to liberty and the laws, is well timed, and in the proper style of passion. The orator goes on to exaggerate Verres's cruelty still farther, by another very striking circumstance. He ordered a gibbet to be erected for Gavius, not in a common place of execution, but just by the sea-shore, over against the coast of Italy. "Let him," said he, "who boasts so much of his being a Roman citizen, take a view from his gibbet of his own country. — This base insult over a dying man is the least part of his guilt. It was not Gavius alone that Verres meant to insult; but it was you, O Romans! it was every citizen who now hears me; in the person of Gavius, he scoffed at your rights and showed in what contempt he held the Roman name, and Roman liberties."

Hitherto all is beautiful, animated, pathetic;

name of liberty! O boasted and revered privilege of a Roman citizen! O ye Porcian and Sempronian laws! to this issue have ye all come, that a citizen of Rome, in a province of the Roman empire, within an allied city, should publicly, in a marketplace, be loaded with chains, and beaten with rods, at the command of one who, from the favour of the Roman people alone, derived all his authority and ensigns of power!" — c. 62–3. [Au.]

and the model would have been perfect, if Cicero had stopped at this point. But his redundant and florid genius carried him farther. He must needs interest not his hearers only, but the beasts, the mountains, and the stones, against Verres; "Si hæc non ad cives Romanos, non ad amicos nostræ civitatis, non ad eos qui populi Romani nomen audissent; denique si non ad homines, verum ad bestias, aut etiam, ut longius progrediar, si in aliqua desertissima solitudine, ad saxa et ad scopulos, hæc conqueri et deplorare vellem, tamen omnia muta atque inanima, tanta et tam indigna rerum atrocitate commoverentur."¹⁷ This, with all the deference due to so eloquent an orator, we must pronounce to be declamatory, not pathetic. This is straining the language of passion too far. Every hearer sees this immediately to be a studied figure of rhetoric; it may amuse him, but instead of inflaming him more, it, in truth, cools his passion. So dangerous it is to give scope to a flowery imagination, when one intends to make a strong and passionate impression.

¹⁷"Were I employed in lamenting those instances of an atrocious oppression and cruelty, not among an assembly of Roman citizens, not among the allies of our state, nor among those who had ever heard the name of the Roman people, not even among human creatures, but in the midst of the brute creation; and to go farther, were I pouring forth my lamentations to the stones, and to the rocks, in some remote and desert wilderness, even those mute and inanimate beings, would, at the recital of such shocking indignities, be thrown into commotion." — c. 67. [Au.]

Part Five

**NINETEENTH-CENTURY
RHETORIC**

Introduction

Before the end of the eighteenth century, the Industrial Revolution had begun to transform work, living conditions, population patterns, and economic standards in many parts of Europe and the United States. During the eighteenth century, calls to bring science into the curriculum went largely unheeded, but with the reforms of the nineteenth century, science and technology came into their own. The German university system made scientific research its top priority. Mathematics and science became standard subjects in the *gymnasien* (or “gymnasium,” a secondary school that prepares students for the university), along with composition in German and the study of polite literature, including some works in Latin and Greek. Composition in the vernacular replaced Latin composition throughout the Continent, and Latin disappeared almost completely from the public primary schools. In England, the aristocracy and bourgeoisie, abetted by the Church, remained reactionary about education for the working classes for a long time, fearing that such education would lead to social unrest. But even in England, reading, writing, and arithmetic became standard instructional fare for the lower classes, along with lessons in religion, citizenship, and the pleasures of sobriety. Secondary education was, by and large, for the commercial classes, whose members required solid literacy skills and the ability to do complex calculations. By the middle of the nineteenth century, Thomas Arnold, headmaster of Rugby School, had to defend the study of the classics against attacks by those favoring a more utilitarian curriculum. “Polite” classical education continued, needless to say, in schools for the upper classes and in the traditional universities.

Given all these events, rhetoric in the nineteenth century clearly had to respond to the changing nature of public education as much as to the internal economies of the discipline and related intellectual movements.

RICHARD WHATELY’S RHETORIC

The rhetorics of Sheridan, Blair, and Campbell were quite well suited to the curricular needs of most nineteenth-century schools in Europe and the United States, at least if they did not include many female or nonwhite students. From the modern

point of view, all these rhetorics play down the classical tradition. They retain enough references to the heroes of the classical tradition and enough illustrations translated from great Greek and Latin works to provide an overview for scholars not versed in the originals; they present an outline of classical rhetoric while loudly rejecting the *topoi* and syllogism as unscientific; and they defend what remains with arguments from psychology. All three are proudly modern in their inclusion of recent writers. Scotland, Ireland, and the United States in particular received two benefits from elocution and belles lettres: the high culture of imperial England, plus the satisfaction of rejecting the classical curriculum associated with English aristocratic education. Finally, the eighteenth-century rhetorics were easily adapted to the literacy needs of mass education in a commercial-industrial society. Apparently no new theory was needed; certainly none was forthcoming. The works of Blair and Campbell were often used together as course texts, and most new textbooks simply rang changes on their ideas and materials.

One significant new work was a rhetoric by Richard Whately (1787–1863), published in 1828. The full title is *Elements of Rhetoric, Comprising an Analysis of the Laws of Moral Evidence and of Persuasion, with Rules for Argumentative Composition and Elocution* (p. 1003). As the subtitle suggests, Whately picks up the dominant trends of the day—Campbell’s moral evidence, the epistemological focus on persuasion (as opposed to style), composition presumably written, and elocution clearly oral. But Whately’s contribution to rhetorical theory comes from the particular uses to which he puts these elements. Whately was an Anglican clergyman. He was educated at Oxford and remained there until 1831, when he became archbishop of Dublin. He published a considerable number of works on church-related subjects, and the *Elements of Rhetoric* is at least partly conceived as a textbook for divinity students. In it, Whately discusses the oral reading of the church service (harking back to seventeenth-century complaints); he focuses on argument to provide a defense for religion against the skepticism fired by science and rationalism; he returns to classical invention as a way to generate arguments about revealed truth—absolute truth—and is not concerned with the contingent and merely probable truths of the empiricists; and he emphasizes the need to consider the audience, namely, the generally uneducated congregation.

As scholar of rhetoric Douglas Ehninger points out in his introduction to *Elements of Rhetoric*, for these purposes Whately does not need belletrism, with its absorption in literary criticism and matters of taste and style. Instead, he begins with epistemological rhetoric, which leaves inquiry to science and looks chiefly at the psychology of audience response. Whately has no need of inquiry, either. He simply treats the revealed truth of religion as if it were analogous to the other kinds of knowledge that rhetoric deals with, knowledge discovered by the subject discipline of the discourse. Rhetoric must prove the truth thus discovered to people who have not themselves made the discovery. Truth does not convey itself, after all. Whately endorses Locke’s position that language is conventional, linked neither to external objects nor even to clear notions of complex ideas. Thus, Whately concludes, rhetoric requires a theory of argument, a form of invention concerned not with discovery but with ways of convincing. For this form of invention, he turns to Aristotle and Campbell.

Campbell (also a clergyman, as noted earlier) defends testimony as a form of moral evidence. By testimony, Campbell means not only the assertions of witnesses in the courtroom, but any assertion about experience—the assertions, for example, that constitute an historical record. Christianity, too, is dependent upon the truthfulness of testimony about the life and teachings of Jesus. Whately, following Campbell, analyzes testimony in great detail, seeking criteria for its truthfulness and examining the effects of different types of testimony on audiences. He bases this analysis on Aristotle's discussion of signs as a form of evidence and sets out in Aristotelian fashion some fourteen circumstances that determine the truthfulness or acceptability of testimony. In similar detail, he outlines the doctrines of Presumption—that is, the conditions that give one side in a dispute the *prima facie* look of correctness—and Burden of Proof—that is, the liabilities faced by the challenger of an accepted notion. Refutation receives the same kind of careful and detailed treatment. Whately thus provides the kind of treatise on practical psychological rhetoric for which Campbell and other eighteenth-century epistemological rhetoricians (like Priestley and Kames) laid the theoretical groundwork. Whately retains Campbell's distinction between conviction and persuasion, assigning reason to conviction and emotional appeals to persuasion. He always maintains that the way reasoning works to produce conviction is not necessarily logical or consistent. Thus it ought to be no embarrassment to recognize the legitimacy of appeals to the feelings, especially in a cause about which one can have no doubts.

Some of Whately's arguments are strained, marked more by apologetics than analysis. And in the effort to provide a complete rhetoric, he often resorts to sketchy, derivative comments. This is the case, for example, throughout his chapter on style. But Whately is by no means purely parochial. His contribution to rhetoric is not limited to ecclesiastical uses, and his book exerted a wide influence well into the twentieth century.

Whately influenced, among others, his student John Henry Newman. At Whately's urging, Newman wrote a long essay on Cicero in which he emphasizes the philosophical underpinnings of Cicero's rhetoric. Newman's argument in *A Grammar of Assent* (1870) relies on Whately's contention that religious belief is in fact a kind of knowledge quite similar in status to history, for both are based on faith, testimony, and probabilistic argument. Newman takes up the question of how people give credence to any proposition that is not subject to demonstration. He concludes that we assent quite justifiably to a great variety of propositions on the strength of accumulated probabilities, propositions for which we cannot adduce irrefutable proof or a clear logical argument. Newman extends Whately's theory by explaining, in more general terms, why rhetorical argument works.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN'S RHETORICS

Secondary and university education for women was still a rarity. In 1851, Harriet Taylor Mill, ardent feminist and wife of John Stuart Mill, complained that women's education remained a matter of "superficial information" even when it was about serious subjects. The problem, says Mill, lies in the continued career restrictions women face: "High mental powers in women will be but an exceptional accident,

until every career is open to them and until they as well as men, are educated for themselves and for the world, not one sex for the other.”¹ In advocating women’s education in the early eighteenth century, however, Mary Astell had heralded a trend that was to gain momentum in the nineteenth century. After 1700, women’s access to literacy and further education began to improve quickly. In seventeenth-century England, according to social historian David Cressy, only 20 percent of women were sufficiently literate to sign their names, even though the Renaissance had improved opportunities for their education (see the introduction to Part Three). But, as historian Harvey Graff has shown, by the end of the eighteenth century at least 50 percent of women in Europe and North America were literate. Until the end of the nineteenth century, women were still almost completely excluded from university education and were barred from the professions of law, religion, and political office for which university training in rhetoric prepared men. But the question of how women should be educated continued to be debated, gaining political import from movements toward more democratic forms of government in Europe and the new United States, with the concomitant need for a literate citizenry.

In the eighteenth century, most people, male and female, who acquired literacy did so at home or in village schools that offered both informal instruction and what we would now call day care. People learned to read the Bible, newspapers, broadsides, popular literature, and business documents; to sign their names on legal forms; and to write personal letters. Formal schooling at the elementary and secondary levels, for both boys and girls, increased throughout the period, but this education did not include classical learning, literacy in Greek and Latin, or formal training in rhetoric, except in a few elite schools for boys destined for the university. The exceptional women who sought university education before the end of the nineteenth century often faced serious obstacles even to acquiring adequate preparation for postsecondary work, as many of their autobiographical accounts testify.

One such nineteenth-century aspirant, Anna Julia Cooper, was allowed to enroll in a secondary school where male students prepared for college training for the ministry. A male teacher sympathetic to Cooper’s ambitions invited her to join his class in Greek. Her thoughts upon “humbly” accepting this invitation eloquently underline the barriers faced by women seeking higher education:

A boy, however meager his equipment and shallow his pretensions, had only to declare a floating intention to study theology and he could get all the support, encouragement and stimulus he needed, be absolved from work and invested beforehand with all the dignity of his far away office. While a self-supporting girl had to struggle on by teaching in the summer and working after school hours to keep up with her board bills, and actually to fight her way against positive discouragements to the higher education; till one such girl one day flared out and told the principal “the only mission opening before a girl in his school was to marry one of those candidates.” He said he didn’t know but it was. And when at last that same girl announced her desire and intention to go to college it was received with about the same incredulity and dismay as if a brass button on one of those

¹Harriet Taylor Mill, “Enfranchisement of Women,” in *John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor Mill: Essays on Sex Equality* (1851; rpt., ed. A. S. Rossi, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), pp. 112–13.

candidate's coats had propounded a new method for squaring the circle or trisecting the arch.²

Anna Julia Cooper persevered. She earned a B.A. and an M.A. from Oberlin College and was one of the first African American women to earn a Ph.D. (from the Sorbonne, at the age of sixty-seven, in 1925).

By the end of the nineteenth century, American women did have some access to higher education, both in the few coeducational schools, such as Oberlin, Iowa, and Cornell, and in women's colleges such as Mount Holyoke, Vassar, Smith, and Wellesley. Women in these schools could study rhetoric devoted in the classical spirit to public address on issues of civic importance. Moreover, they could study with a growing number of gifted women teachers. For example, Gertrude Buck, who held a Ph.D. in English and taught at Vassar, published a textbook, *Argumentative Writing*, in 1899, in which she describes a course she offered with a professor of economics. The young women in the course researched and debated topics concerning "The Relation of the State to Monopolies," such as "The profits of the railroads are excessive" and "The public should own and control the telephone service." These would seem to be topics to engage future public leaders, not just those who hoped merely to marry the leaders.

Not surprisingly, as women's education improved, women increasingly began to speak in public and to reflect on their rhetorical practices. These practices were non-traditional by definition, since women were not supposed to speak in public. Hence, as speech communication scholar Karlyn Kohrs Campbell has suggested, women's rhetoric was based not on culturally dominant values and well-established occasions for oratory but on strategies "to subvert popular belief and to overcome unusually significant persuasive obstacles, such as prohibitions against speaking itself and stereotypes that reject [women] as credible or authoritative."³

The spread of Protestant Christianity in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries aided women's efforts to become better educated and to achieve public voices. First, Protestantism encouraged women to be literate so that they could read the Bible. In addition, several Protestant denominations were spread through the efforts of itinerant preachers who exhorted crowds extemporaneously, using deliberately colloquial, earthy, moving language, and a number of these preachers were women. Some Protestant sects also encouraged social action on behalf of the poor, prostitutes, slaves, and other abused groups. Given this social action agenda, preaching sometimes shaded over into political oratory. Women who addressed political issues, however, often retained a religious orientation and relied heavily on religious justifications for their right to speak. The social evils they attacked were, they claimed, so offensive to God that pious Christian women must speak out, even at risk of social censure. This stance was needed because, as historian Barbara Welter has shown, the era's prevailing gender ideology, which she calls the "Cult of True Womanhood,"

²Anna Julia Cooper, *A Voice from the South* (1892; rpt. intro. Mary Helen Washington, New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 77–78.

³Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, "The Sound of Women's Voices," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 75 (1989): p. 212.

delimited “respectable” women to the domestic sphere, from which they were supposedly too pure, pious, and submissive to male authority to venture.⁴ If they did so, their chastity was questionable—ever the traditional sanction against women who were perceived as crossing gender boundaries (see the introduction to Part Three).

Beginning with Margaret Fell in the late seventeenth century, Quaker women were among the first to speak in public on social issues, and the number of Quakers among women social-activist orators was, and is, high in proportion to the number of Quakers in the general population. The Quaker emphasis on each person’s right and duty to conduct his or her own life by an “inner light” of spirituality provides a philosophical as well as a theological justification for women’s rejection of social constraints in favor of social justice.

Methodism also produced many early women speakers. The sect spread by organizing its adherents into prayer groups that women might lead, offering prayers, guiding discussions of spiritual development, and even expounding God’s word. John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, first permitted this participation by women on the grounds that it was not actually “preaching” because the audiences were small—he distinguished this activity from what Quaker women did. But soon larger crowds gathered to hear the most successful Methodist women leaders, and Wesley decided to encourage their public ministry. Important early leaders included Mary Bosanquet, who defended women’s preaching in a long letter to Wesley; Margaret Davidson; Sarah Crosby; and Ann Tripp. Although male leaders after Wesley found ways to restrict Methodist women’s public speaking, an activist tradition had already been established that would continue to bear fruit, especially in the United States, where woman preacher Phoebe Palmer (p. 1085) became one of the century’s most important Methodist theologians.

In nineteenth-century America, the tendency for Protestant women to speak out on public issues gave rise to a sustained political movement conducted by women, a movement that began in public social action against slavery and expanded into a campaign for a broad agenda of civil rights. One of the first women to speak from the public platform on such issues was African American Maria W. Stewart (p. 1031). Sustained by her religious faith to brave the censure heaped on a woman who addressed mixed audiences of women and men—a scandalous violation of women’s “proper” sphere—Stewart denounced white racism and exhorted African Americans to fight against slavery and for civil rights for free African Americans. She articulated a specific role for black women in the liberation of the race, including a place for them as public speakers, and thus paved the way for several generations of powerful African American women orators. People of color, previously largely excluded from a rhetorical tradition defined as white as well as male, would not simply imitate white rhetoric but would develop their own ways of using language for public action, as can be seen not only in the oratory of African American women, but also in the work of such noted African American male orators as Frederick Douglass (p. 1061) and others (discussed below).

⁴Barbara Welter, “The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820–1860,” in *Dimity Convictions: The American Woman in the Nineteenth Century* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1976).

Perhaps the first major American theorist on feminist issues, including women's rhetoric, was Quaker Sarah Grimké (p. 1045). She and her sister Angelina Grimké began to publicly denounce the evils of slavery that they had witnessed firsthand in their slave-owning family in South Carolina. But they found that, even among northern opponents of slavery, they were chastised for flouting the norms of "proper" women's behavior by addressing gender-mixed audiences for the abolition cause. Thus Sarah Grimké had to develop a feminist critique of the social and rhetorical limitations placed on women as a defense of her and her sister's abolitionist activism. She insisted on women's mental and moral equality to men, which placed on them the same responsibility to combat social evils, and she maintained that traditional strictures placed on women served male interests. Sarah and Angelina Grimké became role models for several generations of European American women activists.

Debate over the role of women in the abolition movement tore it apart, but not before a broader movement was created, led by women, who denounced slavery as well as advocating for the rights of free African Americans and of Native Americans, for temperance, and for women's rights, including suffrage. For example, Elizabeth Cady Stanton began her activist career as an abolitionist. But after being denied a seat at an abolitionist convention because of her sex, she decided to organize action on behalf of women's rights. She and fellow abolitionist and feminist Lucretia Mott convened the first American meeting devoted to women's rights, at Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848. Thus Stanton was launched on a public career that spanned the century. Before the Civil War, she combined abolition work with agitation for women's rights; after the war, she focused more on women's rights and, increasingly, on women's suffrage alone. She argued with lawyerly precision and dominated mixed audiences and the all-male audiences of state legislatures where she advocated legal redress for the inequalities visited on women.

Very different in style was Sojourner Truth, one of the best-known African American women orators of the nineteenth century. Born Isabella, a slave in upstate New York, she was freed in 1828 when slavery was abolished in the state and was self-supporting thereafter as a domestic servant. In 1843 she renamed herself Sojourner Truth and became an itinerant prophet who denounced slavery and the oppression of women. Truth never learned to read or write and never attempted to erase the broad dialect in which she spoke, which was influenced by her first language, Dutch. Her pithy sayings and platform aphorisms made a tremendous impact on the largely white audiences she addressed, and she did more perhaps than any other nineteenth-century speaker to convince white women, and even some white men, that rights for African American people of both sexes and rights for women of all races must be pursued simultaneously. As historian Nell Irvin Painter has shown, disentangling Truth as a "symbol" constructed by the white people who recorded her life (with highly variable accuracy) and Truth as she saw herself is a difficult task. Nevertheless, it is clear that Sojourner Truth brought African-inflected culture to the speaker's platform as never before in the United States, legitimating it through the widespread support she received.

In contrast, Frances Ellen Watkins Harper translated her African American heritage through the excellent education she received at the school of her uncle, William Watkins, a noted abolitionist. As her modern editor Frances Smith Foster points out, by the age of thirty Harper was already “the best known and best loved African American poet prior to Paul Laurence Dunbar.”⁵ Her antislavery verse appeared regularly in abolitionist publications. She also wrote short stories—“The Two Offers” is perhaps the first short story published by an African American writer—and novels, the best known being *Iola Leroy*. She experimented with a range of African American speech styles for her characters, from the dialects of former slaves to the elevated language of well-educated professionals such as Iola and her friends. Harper was also perhaps the most prolific public speaker among African American women in the nineteenth century. She traveled throughout the United States, north and south, speaking against slavery and for women’s rights and African American rights, and she continued after the Civil War, speaking to both white and black audiences. Her public persona was refined and “literary” yet ardent on behalf of African American rights. Harper remained firmly rooted in the black community while also being unusually adept at building bridges with white activists, working with Stanton and others to promote women’s suffrage and holding long-term office in the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, a largely white organization that was the most powerful women’s group of the postwar years.

Temperance, it must be understood, was a women’s issue in the nineteenth century. Alcohol constituted the “drug problem” of the age, and it was largely a male problem, from which women suffered because it contributed to the physical abuse of women and children, diverted family finances from needed supplies, and encouraged prostitution and other social ills. The Woman’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) gave women a means to combat alcohol, and the WCTU’s effectiveness increased greatly when Frances Willard (p. 1114) became its president in 1879. Willard, a well-educated European American woman and devout Methodist, was a tireless promoter of the organization, speaking at an average of one meeting per day during the first ten years of her presidency. She developed a particularly powerful feminine rhetorical persona, emphasizing women’s spirituality and devotion to home as the very traits that made their public participation necessary as an uplifting force. She broadened the WCTU’s agenda to include a wide range of social issues and restructured the organization to train many women to speak in public. Historian of rhetoric Carol Mattingly argues that under Willard’s guidance the WCTU became “the largest and most effective organization for teaching women rhetorical skills in the nineteenth century.”⁶ By the time Willard died in 1898, women speaking in public no longer had to defend their right to appear on the platform—they were a widespread and widely accepted phenomenon. Willard, Stewart, Grimké, Stanton, Truth, and Harper, among others, established a range of public voices for women that is still being developed today.

⁵Frances Smith Foster, ed. *A Brighter Coming Day: A Frances Ellen Watkins Harper Reader* (New York: The Feminist Press, 1990), p. 4.

⁶Carol Mattingly, *Well-Tempered Women: Nineteenth-Century Temperance Rhetoric* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1998), p. 58.

THE RHETORICS OF MEN OF COLOR

Although rhetoric in Europe was typically practiced in culturally homogeneous settings, from the early seventeenth century North America became a diverse culture, with incomers from Europe, Africa, and Asia mingling with the Native American populations. As the nation called the United States took form, the group holding political power was more homogeneous, tending to be middle- and upper-class white, Anglophone men. Thus in the United States public rhetoric, at least at first, did not have to take into account the full range of cultures represented in the whole population.

That situation began to change, however, almost as soon as the new nation established its independence from Great Britain. Free, educated people of color had always lived here, and increasingly their voices were heard from pulpit and platform. For example, William Apess, an Indian of mixed Wampanoag and Pequot background who became a Methodist minister, spoke out for Indian civil rights in Massachusetts in the 1830s. He delivered his “Eulogy on King Philip,” or Metacomet, leader of a seventeenth-century war against the English colonists, in 1836, and led the Mashpee Indians in a successful battle to throw off their oppressive white overseers.

Apess called on all men of color to unite against white supremacist racism, which he saw as originating in the Puritan colonists’ genocidal attitudes and actions toward Native Americans. But the issue that most motivated such activism in the antebellum United States was the abolition of slavery. African American women (as noted above) and men took the speaker’s platform in unprecedented numbers to denounce this evil and to campaign for civil rights for all African Americans. In so doing, they had to develop rhetorical strategies for heterogeneous and hostile audiences, to claim a hearing that their very appearance would often seem to deny them, and thus to add entirely new elements to the Western rhetorical tradition.

Foremost among the African American men who blazed this trail was Frederick Douglass (p. 1061), who escaped slavery as a young adult in 1838 and became a powerful agitator against slavery and for black civil rights. He began his work as a paid agent for the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society under the tutelage of European American abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison, but after a wildly successful tour of Britain in 1845–46 he became independent of his mentor’s guidance. Douglass published his own abolitionist newspaper, first entitled *The North Star* and later, as his fame spread, simply *Frederick Douglass’ Paper*. His power on the speaker’s platform was legendary, since he combined an arresting appearance, a well-modulated voice, and extensive self-taught European American cultural learning with a deeply convincing passion for African American rights. Abandoning Garrison’s teaching that political attempts to foster social justice would not work, Douglass spoke eloquently for a number of reform causes, notably temperance and women’s rights, and campaigned for political candidates who promised to support his views. He also published three versions of his autobiography, which powerfully depicted the horrors of slavery and his own triumph over them, showing just what a talented black man could accomplish. During the Civil War, he advised Abraham Lincoln on freeing the slaves and admitting black men to the Union Army on equal terms with whites. After the war, Douglass accepted several

government appointments honoring his respected position and his staunch support of the Republican party, notably the post of minister to Haiti. He also continued to fight for African American rights, joining forces late in life with antilynching crusader Ida B. Wells. At his death in 1895, Douglass was the best-known African American in the United States.

Douglass was certainly not the only, or even the first, African American man to make an impact, however. Preceding him on the speaker's platform in New England was Charles Parker Remond, who became his close friend. Remond, born free, was the first black agent of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society and an orator of such power that he was sent to England before Douglass as the Society's representative to attend a world antislavery convention and raise money for the cause. Although his health failed at a relatively early age and he died at sixty-three, Remond lived long enough to see the Civil War abolish slavery and to fight for the passage of the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which guaranteed the franchise to black men.

Another black Boston abolitionist who worked with Douglass was William C. Nell. Born free, Nell had trained as a lawyer, but true to his Garrisonian beliefs, refused to practice law in a corrupt, racist legal system. He was an effective local agitator, organizing protests, for example, against Boston's segregated schools, but he served African American causes primarily through writing. Nell assisted in the publication of *The North Star* and wrote the first history of African Americans, detailing their contributions during the Revolutionary period.

Martin R. Delany also worked for a time on *The North Star*. He had been born to a free mother and a slave father, and his mother took him from his native Virginia to Pennsylvania so that he could be educated without breaking the law (slave states such as Virginia forbade literacy to blacks). Although denied a degree from Harvard Medical School because of his race, Delany became one of the leading African American physicians in Pittsburgh and also a vigorous activist for black civil rights. He published his own newspaper before briefly joining Douglass's venture, and he also wrote several books on black causes. During the Civil War, like Douglass, he argued for black men's right to join the Union Army on equal terms with whites, and he became the Army's first black combat officer, at the rank of major. Unlike Douglass, Delany tended to be separatist in his views for the future of African Americans. He believed that they needed land for their own communities, whether in the western territories of the United States or abroad, although he denounced the racist resettlement schemes of the American Colonization Society, which included slaveholders among its founders. He worked for his own resettlement vision both through the Freedman's Bureau after the Civil War, where he held a prominent position, and through colonization plans that attempted to remove American blacks to Central America or Africa.

Sharing Delany's black nationalist views was Henry Highland Garnet. Like Douglass, he was born a slave in Maryland but escaped as a young boy with his family. He became a Presbyterian minister and a fiery advocate of black civil rights, rivaling Douglass in his power on the speaker's platform. He was also noted for his eloquent journalism. Garnet was more militant than many other black abolitionists,

advocating violent resistance to slavery, black separatist political agitation, and resettlement either in the western territories or outside the United States, although, like Delany, he opposed the American Colonization Society as essentially racist in motive. As a prominent black leader after the Civil War, Garnet was awarded the post of minister to Liberia, where he died.

These courageous African American speakers faced dangerously hostile audiences to forge their own unique rhetorical identities, adapting traditional rhetoric and also bringing important new elements to the repertoire of Western rhetoric.

THE RHETORIC OF COMPOSITION

By the middle of the nineteenth century, written composition had become a clearly defined branch of rhetoric. Here, as in education for oratory, the ideas of Blair, Campbell, and Whately dominated. In addition, a rather mechanistic approach to efficiency or economy in style was popularized by the work of the influential scientific writer Herbert Spencer (1820–1903). Spencer’s “Philosophy of Style” (p. 1154) proposes that successful communication is that which requires the least expenditure of mental energy to achieve successful reception. Spencer does not declare poetic language to be useless—quite the opposite, in fact. Nonetheless, his essay raised the old eighteenth-century idea of perspicuity to new heights. In a culture increasingly characterized by industry, the cult of efficiency easily spread to rhetoric.

These influences can be seen in *Elements of the Art of Rhetoric* (1850, revised as *The Art of Discourse*, 1867) by American academic Henry Day. Day treats oratory as the proper form of rhetoric, but he anticipates an approach that characterized the rhetoric of composition in the United States through the latter half of the nineteenth century. For Day, rhetoric is the art of discourse and discourse is the “faculty” of communicating thoughts. Rhetoric, in Day’s scheme, is connective rather than creative; it is grounded in the sciences of grammar, logic, ethics, and aesthetics, and so it has no content of its own. Rhetorical invention, then, consists of arranging the elements of the parent sciences into forms that will appeal to the faculties of thought. There are four of these forms: *explanation*, *confirmation*, *excitation*, and *persuasion*. Later compositionists retained the idea that rhetoric is derivative, and they sought to delimit forms of discourse that correspond to the mental faculties, but they dispensed with the idea that invention is a part of rhetoric. They also turned away from theoretical discussions of rhetoric such as Day’s and focused instead upon writing textbooks for the burgeoning composition market. In this, they followed the influential work of Alexander Bain.

Bain (1818–1903), a Scotsman from Aberdeen, used the rhetorical theory of his countryman Campbell to devise a psychological approach to written composition that still influences the field. Bain is a major figure in the development of psychology before Freud; his two psychology books were standard texts through the last half of the nineteenth century. In his rhetoric, Bain applies his versions of the theories of associationism and physiological psychology to composition. He identifies the chief mental operations as discrimination, retentiveness, and agreement. These operations are associative, bringing ideas together through contrast, contiguity, and

similarity. In *English Composition and Rhetoric: A Manual* (1866; p. 1145), Bain says that the most important figures of speech—metaphor, metonymy, and antithesis—are parallel to mental operations. The outline of Bain's rhetoric is Aristotelian, and it is the pathetic appeal, quite naturally, that most interests him.

Bain is also responsible for the decisively influential formulation of the modes of discourse—description, narration, exposition, and persuasion—and for the notion of paragraph unity as an important feature of written discourse. Bain's modes included poetry, but his successors dropped it. Whately had already disengaged the belles lettres from his rhetoric, and others were disengaging rhetoric from their belles lettres. Despite the continued use of Blair's textbook and the persistent connection between poetry and rhetoric that shows up in literary criticism (including Thomas De Quincey's essays and Walter Pater's reflections), a contrary notion was gathering strength. As Coleridge plainly put it, poetry is not rhetoric at all. Poetry, unlike rhetoric, is the expression of the poet's feelings. It is a mimetic art that mediates between people and nature. If poetry, like rhetoric, seeks to stimulate the emotions, it does so for quite different reasons—poetry for contemplation, rhetoric for action. Moreover, it is a mistake to reduce two such different forms of language use to the same theory, even if they seem to have similar ends. Coleridge emphasizes the critic's responsibility to distinguish poetry from rhetoric, philosophy, and other prose works and to allow to each its own forms, objects, and effects.

Under this pressure from both sides toward independent development, rhetoric and belles lettres split. In 1828, a chair of English literature was established at London University; in 1845, Edinburgh separated rhetoric and literature; in 1876, Johns Hopkins and Harvard did the same; and in 1904, laggard Cambridge followed. By the end of the century, a further split had occurred in the United States: Speech departments had formed, taking the elocution course and the study of rhetoric with them.

Adams Sherman Hill took the chair of rhetoric at Harvard following the creation of a separate chair of literature. Hill was content to teach style, usage, and editing. His book, *The Principles of Rhetoric* (1878; p. 1149), helped to spread this approach through the greatly expanded university system that arose as the United States entered the commercial-industrial era following the Civil War. Hill's method is congenial to the practical aims of the new system. He defines rhetoric as "the art of efficient communication." Efficiency requires, above all, getting it right. Grammar and usage, secondary concerns to the previous generation of rhetoricians, thus come at the beginning of Hill's book. He treats argument rather mechanically, as a patchwork of syllogism, signs, and testimony, and persuasion gets a perfunctory few pages near the end of the book. Exposition, not argument, is the ideal form in Hill's rhetoric. As scholar of rhetoric and composition James Berlin puts it, freshman English in Hill's day becomes a course in technical writing, one of the skills needed to earn a living.⁷

In the new middle-class colleges, composition was a required course taught by assistant professors and graduate assistants, and the emphasis was on expository

⁷James Berlin, *Writing Instruction in Nineteenth-Century American Colleges* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1984), p. 63.

writing. Persuasion, deemphasized in Hill's book and its successors, came to be associated with oral performance and was relegated to the elocution course. The "current-traditional" model of composition teaching that was thus created in the last years of the nineteenth century combines Bain's modes of discourse and paragraph unity with Hill's prescriptivism in grammar, usage, and style. This stripped-down rhetoric was a necessity because of the large number of students and the constant turnover of new instructors who needed clear guidelines on how to teach a subject that they generally hoped to leave behind as soon as possible. The efforts of teachers like Fred Newton Scott and a few others to criticize such methods and improve this gloomy situation produced no competing rhetorical theory or pedagogy. Only recently have scholars begun to examine Scott's insistence on the value of the rhetorical tradition in composition teaching, his use of linguistics and behavioral psychology, his emphasis on the composing process, and his sensitivity to the social uses of language.

ROMANTICISM AND RHETORIC

The exigencies of the academy may also account for the absence of any significant response from professional rhetoricians to two other lines of inquiry into language: romantic theories of literary composition and the continuing philosophical debates about semantics. The central themes of Romanticism are, as noted previously, fundamentally antirhetorical. Rhetoric was allied with literature and literary criticism of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries because of the reigning didactic conception of literature. Rhetoric was compatible with the view that literature should instruct by pleasing and that literary criticism should judge works and define rules for production. Both rhetoric and criticism operated empirically in an empirical age, examining successful works and identifying the features that made them effective; both relied on classical works as models of enduring effectiveness; and both defined human nature as the general experience of humankind. But during the eighteenth century, poets and critics were developing a new model of literature that focused not on its ends but on its creation. The artist's mind, in this new view, is more relevant to an understanding of art than the mind of the audience is. The recurrent ideas of the Romantic revolution reflect this turn toward the creator of art. The key terms are *solitude*, *spontaneity*, *expression of feeling*, and *imagination*—all quite opposed to the rhetorician's concern for society, planned discourse, communication, and moving the will through reason and passion. The Romantic poet is engaged in a soliloquy, not an argument, and the poet's aim is reflection, not action. The ideal genre is the lyric, not the oration or the essay.

Blair's discussion of poetry is part of this development, for he combines definitions of literature and criticism drawn from both the old and the new models. He could say without apparent contradiction that poetry should move the reader by presenting the sincere feelings of the poet. To appeal to human nature, Blair says, the writer should be natural, boldly expressing strong emotions. William Wordsworth, too, used this mixed critical vocabulary, speaking of both poet and audience and appealing to common experience as the basis for poetry. Wordsworth took seriously

the doctrine of uniform human nature and concluded that human nature could best be seen not in classical literature but in unsophisticated characters—leech-gatherers and idiot boys, for instance. Thus, although his poetic practice was radically Romantic, much of his defense still followed well-established lines of thought. It was Samuel Taylor Coleridge who recognized the need for a thoroughly new theory of poetic composition. Grammar, logic, and psychology, he said, are, of course, the basic principles of writing and the foundation of rules of judgment. But *psychology* means the mind of the writer, in whom perception is not passive but creative. Coleridge accepted the theory of faculty psychology but distinguished the associative process, the fancy, from the creative process, the imagination. Where the fancy worked mechanically to combine the ready materials of the memory, the imagination synthesized, generated new and unexpected ideas, worked through dialectical processes, and made the mind change.

For all the Romantic emphasis on the artist, the actual artifacts—the poems, novels, and essays—are not, finally, private utterances directed to the artist himself, with the rest of us merely overhearing them. A soliloquy is, after all, a dramatic performance, a convention for externalizing an equally conventional internal monologue. Romanticism is, in part, the celebration of that convention, not the end of communication itself. Critics who examined the relationship between the artist and the audience could turn once again to rhetoric, as did Thomas De Quincey. De Quincey's distinction between the literature of knowledge and the literature of power renewed the useful categories of purpose and effect in criticism. Ralph Waldo Emerson, too, appealed to rhetoric in calling for a powerful Romantic form of oratory. He advocated a rhetoric of personal expression that would stir the audience to their own creative perception. Emerson suggested the fundamental question of Romantic expression: how to represent one's experience in language in a way that will duplicate or generate that experience in the audience.

LANGUAGE, RHETORIC, AND KNOWLEDGE

The prominent philosopher John Stuart Mill held that “eloquence, like poetry, is impassioned truth.” Yet he insisted that poetry was soliloquy: “Eloquence is *heard*, poetry is *overheard*.”⁸ Although Mill acknowledged that soliloquy is a convention, he maintained that the poem-soliloquy is an internal dialogue repeated later to an audience. For poetry, utterance is the end, not, as in rhetoric, the means to an end. Mill's distinction, repeated by many a critic and rhetorician well into our own time, seems to have been a response to an earlier argument by Jeremy Bentham, the philosopher of utilitarianism. Bentham takes poetry to be a persuasive art because ideas conveyed poetically are readily believed by virtue of the pleasure poems impart. Bentham does not approve of this situation: With Plato, he complains that both poetry and rhetoric too often subvert rational judgment by giving attention to style and effect, rather than substance.

Bentham's theory of utilitarianism, whose goal is the greatest happiness for the

⁸John Stuart Mill, “Thoughts on Poetry and Its Varieties,” in *Collected Works of John Stuart Mill*, vol. 1, ed. John M. Robson and Jack Stillinger (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981), p. 348.

greatest number, is based on the principle (already noted by Campbell and Bain) that people seek pleasure and avoid pain. Bentham notes that individuals would always act selfishly were it not for the external constraints—physical, moral, religious, and political—that make societies possible. He also recognizes that individuals vary in their desires and their responses to social constraints. Reasoning itself, he concludes, is a process of persuasion: Reasons can be judged on their utility (that is, on the likelihood of producing pleasure), but their effects are uncertain. Furthermore, probability must also refer chiefly to persuasiveness rather than to facts. Bentham allows that in some sense all knowledge depends on persuasion and belief, on people's psychological reactions and society's bounds. It follows that language can be no mere vehicle of ideas but must be part of the process of persuasion that leads to knowing.

Bentham's contemporary, Wilhelm von Humboldt, dissatisfied by Lockean semantics and grammar-bound philology, argues that language can be understood only as a process, not as a system. He takes an anthropological approach, examining discourse as it is used and understood in a cultural context. Anticipating the formula of modern linguists, von Humboldt regards syntax and lexicon as products of analysis and seeks for language in the accumulated instances of actual speech: "Discourse is not composed of words that precede it . . . the words issue from the totality of discourse." Words don't begin, that is, as designations of objects; rather, man sees reality "exclusively as language presents it to him."⁹ Thus von Humboldt argues that language use reflects one's inner state, in two senses: the personal and the national or cultural. Language is a tool for studying both personality and culture.

The most radical formulation of the relation between language and knowledge comes from the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900), who says quite bluntly that all language is rhetorical (p. 1168). The very nature of language is unconsciously rhetorical, an effort "to discover and to make operative that which works and impresses." All words are tropes, signs that stand for some part of the thing they represent, like the synecdoche. For Nietzsche, the traditional philosophical search for truth that lies beyond language and convention is a hopeless delusion. We will understand our world better, he suggests, if we honestly accept that we must deal with it through the very metaphorical kind of knowledge that is all we can reasonably achieve.

The potential connections between rhetoric and philosophy suggested by these theories received little attention from philosophers or rhetoricians until the twentieth century. To some extent, the connections were obscured by the academic situation of rhetoric and by the development of scientific psychology, which dominated discussions of perception, belief, and personality. Psychology tended to counterbalance Romantic individualism by seeking empirically for universals of human thought and behavior. If all we know is our ideas, not external reality, then we are in some sense limited to the subjective reality of feelings. But if this point argued for the isolation of the individual, it also stimulated the intensive cataloging of external reality that characterized nineteenth-century science, including the search for

⁹Wilhelm von Humboldt, *On Language*, trans. Peter Heath (1836; trans. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 49.

psychological principles that allow us to share experience and deny isolation. This search focused on the structure of the mind and all but ignored language, let alone rhetoric.

The history of nineteenth-century rhetoric attracted vigorous and sustained attention at the end of the twentieth century as scholars gained sufficient distance to see its effects on present-day theory and pedagogical practice. It was only in the late twentieth century, too, that *rhetoric* became a respectable word again in some English departments, as composition specialists demonstrated the value of paying closer attention to rhetorical theory and practice. Literary theorists, too, began to acknowledge the arbitrariness of most definitions of literature and the wider scope afforded by a rhetorical approach to discourse. Departments of speech and of English (or at least their writing programs) began seeking greater contact, making tentative efforts to heal the century-old breach. As we shall see in Part Six, the story of twentieth-century rhetoric remains, at this juncture, highly speculative, highly theoretical. It is too soon to trace the influence of such theorists as Kenneth Burke (see Part Six); disconcerting though it may be to admit it, we are still reacting to the work of Whately and Bain.

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Richard Whately

1787–1863

Richard Whately took his B.A. in 1808, an M.A. in 1812, and a B.D. and D.D. in 1825, all at Oxford University. Though Aristotle was taught and revered at Oxford, philosophers since Bacon had scorned traditional syllogistic logic, just as leading rhetoricians of the previous century had scorned traditional topical invention. Whately sought to redress this neglect and partly succeeded. In his *Elements of Logic* (1826), he argues that the syllogism is a means of testing the validity of propositions, regardless of the field of knowledge to which they apply. In other words, the syllogism is a method of linguistic reasoning, not of scientific discovery, and should not be faulted for being inadequate to an activity for which it was never intended. In the *Elements of Rhetoric* (1828; excerpted here), Whately defines rhetoric in Aristotelian fashion as “an offshoot of Logic” whose function is to invent and arrange arguments. He revives a number of Aristotelian doctrines and tries to minimize the anticlassical influence of George Campbell (p. 898). But his chief success in rhetoric was perhaps to extend and refine Campbell’s contribution to rhetorical theory.

In the introduction to *Elements of Rhetoric*, Whately gives a brief history of rhetoric. He cites only Aristotle (p. 169), Cicero (p. 283), Quintilian (p. 359), Bacon (p. 736), Campbell, and Blair (p. 947). Aristotle, says Whately, is the best of the lot, and his well-developed theory has never been superseded. Cicero barely makes the list because his remarks, though helpful, are not “systematic.” Quintilian is systematic but adds little to Aristotle. Bacon is included because of his antitheses. Campbell is superior to Blair, but Whately doesn’t say why. He does say that Campbell doesn’t understand logic, as Whately had previously shown in his *Elements of Logic*. Campbell should have known logic better, because rhetoric, says Whately, is an offshoot of logic. Rhetorical theory, it appears, has advanced little since Aristotle, and we need to go back to his starting point and treat rhetoric as a branch of logic. Modern science has emphasized knowledge of facts and has neglected logic (a development, says Whately, that might surprise Bacon). To move confidently from fact to generalization, logic is necessary. The thesis of *Elements of Logic* is essentially that science and logic are separate because discovery and reasoning are different operations. Discovery is based on experience (observation, experiment, and testimony); reasoning, on argument and demonstration (using the syllogism). Rhetoric is in much the same state as its parent logic: Instead of requiring more attention to observed facts, such as details of style, rhetoric needs a theory of persuasion that describes the actual processes by which conviction is formed. Whately proposes to search out the bases of rhetoric in language and psychology. This effort, we may infer, will finally improve upon Aristotle and place Whately at the latter end of the history of rhetoric.

It may seem that Campbell proposed the identical project — and did a creditable job of it, too. Whately acknowledges Campbell’s work and uses his arguments about the probabilistic basis of both scientific demonstration and moral argument, about the nature of moral evidence, about the difference between conviction and

persuasion, and even about the value of perspicuity in style. But Whately goes further, making fine distinctions among the varieties of moral evidence, examining the preconceptions of the audience, taking into account the often irrational effects of apparently rational arguments, investigating the role of emotions in creating conviction, and setting up a system (reminiscent of Aristotle's) for turning out effective arguments. As noted in the introduction to Part Five, Whately focuses on argument from testimony and probability, since they are most likely to help clergymen who are refuting scoffers and presenting arguments for revealed truth.

As an apologist for religion in an age of skepticism inspired by science, Whately (like earlier apologists Joseph Butler and William Paley) cleverly appeals to science and logic as the foundation for his arguments. Speaking of probability as the basis of discovery, for example, he notes that people once dismissed reports of meteorites because they believed stones could not fall from the sky. But many such reports finally made the notion credible, even though no two reports concerned the same stone. Whately adds that the same reasoning applies to the many allusions in the New Testament to the calling of the gentiles. Although no single allusion warrants the broad interpretation that Jesus was always intended to go to the gentiles, when so many references concur, "the antecedent objection against each individual case is removed." It would not be surprising if scholars were to discover that Whately's students used this very example in their sermons; Whately probably intended to broadcast his sharp observations through that channel. But there is very little air here of smug satisfaction in using the weapons of science against science. Whately's use of logic as the basis for religious arguments is consistent and thoroughgoing. His eye is on the larger issue of demonstrating that there is a basis in logic for religious arguments of many kinds and, furthermore, that arguing is a perfectly reasonable activity. Like Campbell, he maintains that much scientific knowledge is based on the same kind of reasoning as moral knowledge and that linear demonstrations of causality do not constitute the whole of logic. Causal demonstration, moreover, is not appropriate to arguments about most of life's affairs. Rather, a "progressive approach" to the truth must be used. Rhetoric's proper province is therefore to argue for truths found by other means—by science or revelation.

The issue for rhetoric, then, is to determine what people will take to be true or persuasive, and this is Whately's topic in Part I of *Elements of Rhetoric*. Sometimes persuasion accords with logic, sometimes not. For example, an audience will find some kinds of testimony more convincing than others because of the character of the witnesses, the type of testimony, the concurrence of other testimony, the degree of detail, and so on. Similarly, the audience will almost inevitably make some *presumption* about which side of an argument is correct and will thus place the *burden of proof* on the other side. Whately does not feel that such presumptions are always inappropriate, and he defends them when they carry the authority of tradition, thus taking a position in an important debate in political philosophy of the period. Whereas liberals tended to support the value of the unaided individual judgment, Whately, more conservative, showed how persuasion might reasonably draw on custom and tradition. He thus put individual and communal standards of judgment into a productive tension that was further developed, as Karen Whedbee has shown,

in the work of liberal political philosophers John Stuart Mill and Alexis de Tocqueville.

So, too, in refuting an argument, logic alone may not avail. In Part II, Whately focuses on appeals to emotion, noting that it is foolish to abjure such appeals. Why should we suppose that stimulating the emotions is always overstimulating them? Are emotions not a part of human decisions? Do we not often seek to persuade ourselves to choose a course of action by representing to ourselves appropriate thoughts and feelings? It is legitimate and necessary, Whately says, to stimulate emotions such as hope, fear, and altruism because they lead to worthy aims. In Part III, he discusses style, providing standard textbook advice on perspicuity and correctness. And in Part IV, he offers advice on elocution, relying on Thomas Sheridan (p. 879) for his main points and stressing the need for naturalness, as opposed to the recent fad for mechanical systems of delivery typified by Gilbert Austin (p. 889).

Whately wrote widely on topical issues affecting Ireland, on political economy, and on religion (including a piece called *Historic Doubts Relative to Napoleon Bonaparte*, satirizing David Hume's essay on miracles). In addition, he edited the works of Bacon and of the philosopher and Christian apologist William Paley. In a peculiar way, Whately's influence may be measured by the remarks made about him by I. A. Richards (admittedly, a Cantabrigian) in 1936, who says that rhetoric begins, "of course, with Aristotle, and may perhaps be said to end with Archbishop Whately."¹ Richards means that rhetoric reached its nadir in Whately's dry rules for argument. Irrespective of the justness of this valuation, clearly Whately is the figure Richards feels he must supplant to take his own place at the end of the history of rhetoric.

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¹I. A. Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (1936; rpt. New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 5.

velopment of Richard Whately's Theory of Presumption" (*Communication Monographs* 43 [June 1976]: 115–29), and Karen Whedbee's more positive, revisionist "Authority, Freedom and Liberal Judgment: The 'Presumptions' and 'Presumptuousness' of Whately, Mill and Tocqueville" (*Quarterly Journal of Speech* 84 [May 1998]: 171–89). W. S. Howell discusses Whately's *Logic* as well as the *Rhetoric* in *Eighteenth-Century British Logic and Rhetoric* (1971). Discussions of the *Logic* often bear on the *Rhetoric*, as Howell shows and as can be seen in McKerrow's "Richard Whately and the Revival of Logic in Nineteenth-Century England" (*Rhetorica* 5 [spring 1987]: 163–85).

From *Elements of Rhetoric*

Introduction

I.

Various definitions of Rhetoric.

Of Rhetoric various definitions have been given by different writers; who, however, seem not so much to have disagreed in their conceptions of the nature of the same thing, as to have had different things in view while they employed the same term. Not only the word Rhetoric itself, but also those used in defining it, have been taken in various senses; as may be observed with respect to the word "Art" in Cicero's *De Oratore*, where a discussion is introduced as to the applicability of that term to Rhetoric; manifestly turning on the different senses in which "Art" may be understood.

To enter into an examination of all the definitions that have been given, would lead to much uninteresting and uninformative verbal controversy. It is sufficient to put the reader on his guard against the common error of supposing that a general term has some real object, properly corresponding to it, independent of our conceptions;—that, consequently, some one definition in every case is to be found which will comprehend everything that is rightly designated by that term;—and that all others must be *erroneous*: whereas, in fact, it will often happen, as in the present instance, that both the wider, and the more restricted sense of a term, will be alike sanctioned by use (the only competent authority), and that the consequence will be a corresponding

variation in the definitions employed; none of which perhaps may be fairly chargeable with error, though none can be framed that will apply to every acceptation of the term.

It is evident that in its primary signification, Rhetoric had reference to public *Speaking* alone, as its etymology implies. But as most of the rules for *Speaking* are of course applicable equally to *Writing*, an extension of the term naturally took place; and we find even Aristotle, the earliest systematic writer on the subject whose works have come down to us, including in his *Treatise* rules for such compositions as were not intended to be publicly recited.¹ And even as far as relates to *Speeches*, properly so called, he takes, in the same *Treatise*, at one time, a wider, and at another, a more restricted view of the subject; including under the term Rhetoric, in the opening of his work, nothing beyond the finding of topics of Persuasion, as far as regards the *matter* of what is spoken; and afterwards embracing the consideration of *Style*, *Arrangement*, and *Delivery*.

The invention of *Printing*,² by extending the sphere of operation of the *Writer*, has of course

¹Aristot. *Rhet.* book iii. [Au.]

²Or rather of *Paper*; for the invention of printing is too obvious not to have speedily followed, in a literary nation, the introduction of a paper sufficiently cheap to make the art available. Indeed the seals of the ancients seem to have been a kind of stamps, with which they in fact printed their names. But the high price of books, caused by the dearness of paper, precluded the sale of copies except in so *small a number* that the *printing* of them would have been more costly than transcribing. [Au.]

contributed to the extension of those terms which, in their primary signification, had reference to Speaking alone. Many objects are now accomplished through the medium of the Press, which formerly came under the exclusive province of the Orator; and the qualifications requisite for success are so much the same in both cases, that we apply the term "Eloquent" as readily to a Writer as to a Speaker; though, etymologically considered, it could only belong to the latter. Indeed "Eloquence" is often attributed even to such compositions,—e.g., Historical works,—as have in view an object entirely different from any that could be proposed by an Orator; because *some part* of the rules to be observed in Oratory, or rules analogous to these, are applicable to such compositions. Conformably to this view, therefore, some writers have spoken of Rhetoric as the Art of Composition, universally; or, with the exclusion of Poetry alone, as embracing all Prose composition.

A still wider extension of the province of Rhetoric has been contended for by some of the ancient writers; who, thinking it necessary to include, as belonging to the Art, everything that could conduce to the attainment of the object proposed, introduced into their systems, Treatises on Law, Morals, Politics, &c., on the ground that a knowledge of these subjects was requisite to enable a man to speak well on them: and even insisted on Virtue³ as an essential qualification of a perfect Orator; because a good character, which can in no way be so surely established as by deserving it, has great weight with the audience.

Aristotle's censure of his predecessors.

These notions are combated by Aristotle; who attributes them either to the ill-cultivated understanding of those who maintained them, or to their arrogant and pretending disposition; i.e., a desire to extol and magnify the Art they professed. In the present day, the extravagance of such doctrines is so apparent to most readers, that it would not be worth while to take much pains in refuting them. It is worthy of remark, however, that the very same erroneous view is, even now,

³See Quintilian. [Au.]

often taken of Logic;⁴ which has been considered by some as a kind of system of universal knowledge, on the ground that Argument may be employed on all subjects, and that no one can argue well on a subject which he does not understand; and which has been complained of by others for not supplying any such universal instruction as its unskilful advocates have placed within its province; such as in fact no one Art or System can possibly afford.

The error is precisely the same in respect of Rhetoric and of Logic; both being *instrumental* arts; and, as such, *applicable* to various kind of subject matter, which do not properly *come under* them.

So judicious an author as Quintilian would not have failed to perceive, had he not been carried away by an inordinate veneration for his own Art, that as the possession of building materials is no part of the art of Architecture, though it is impossible to build without materials, so, the knowledge of the subjects on which the Orator is to speak, constitutes no part of the art of Rhetoric, though it be essential to its successful employment; and that though virtue, and the good reputation it procures, add materially to the Speaker's influence, they are no more to be, for that reason, considered as belonging to the Orator, as such, than wealth, rank, or a good person, which manifestly have a tendency to produce the same effect.

Extremes in the limitation and extension of the province of Rhetoric.

In the present day, however, the province of Rhetoric, in the widest acceptance that would be reckoned admissible, comprehends all "Composition in Prose"; in the narrowest sense, it would be limited to "Persuasive Speaking."

Object of the present Treatise.

I propose in the present work to adopt a middle course between these two extreme points; and to treat of "Argumentative Composition," *generally*, and *exclusively*; considering Rhetoric (in

⁴Whately, *Elements of Logic*, Introd. [Au.]

conformity with the very just and philosophical view of Aristotle) as an offshoot from Logic.

Philosophy and Rhetoric compared.

I remarked in treating of that Science, that Reasoning may be considered as applicable to two purposes, which I ventured to designate respectively by the terms "Inferring," and "Proving"; i.e., the *ascertainment* of the truth by investigation, and the *establishment* of it to the satisfaction of *another*: and I there remarked, that Bacon, in his *Organon*, has laid down rules for the conduct of the former of these processes, and that the latter belongs to the province of Rhetoric: and it was added, that to *infer* is to be regarded as the proper office of the Philosopher, or the Judge;—to *prove*, of the Advocate. It is not however to be understood that Philosophical works are to be excluded from the class to which Rhetorical rules are applicable; for the Philosopher who undertakes, by writing or speaking, to convey his notions to others, assumes, for the time being, the character of Advocate of the doctrines he maintains. The process of *investigation* must be supposed completed, and certain conclusions arrived at by that process, *before* he begins to impart his ideas to others in a treatise or lecture; the object of which must of course be to *prove* the justness of those conclusions. And in doing this, he will not always find it expedient to adhere to the same course of reasoning by which his own discoveries were originally made; other arguments may occur to him afterwards, more clear, or more concise, or better adapted to the understanding of those he addresses. In explaining therefore, and establishing the truth, he may often have occasion for rules of a different kind from those employed in its discovery. Accordingly, when I remarked, in the work above alluded to, that it is a common fault, for those engaged in Philosophical and Theological inquiries, to forget their own peculiar office, and assume that of the Advocate, improperly, this caution is to be understood as applicable to the process of *forming their own opinions*; not, as excluding them from advocating by all fair arguments, the conclusions at which they have arrived by candid investigation. But if this candid investigation do

not take place in the first instance, no pains that they may bestow in searching for arguments, will have any tendency to ensure their attainment of truth. If a man begins (as is too plainly a frequent mode of proceeding) by hastily adopting, or strongly leaning to, some opinion which suits his inclination, or which is sanctioned by some authority that he blindly venerates, and then studies with the utmost diligence, not as an Investigator of Truth, but as an Advocate labouring to prove his point, his talents and his researches, whatever effect they may produce in making converts to his notions, will avail nothing in enlightening his own judgment, and securing him from error.

Composition, however, of the Argumentative kind, may be considered (as has been above stated) as coming under the province of Rhetoric. And this view of the subject is the less open to objection, inasmuch as it is not likely to lead to discussions that can be deemed superfluous, even by those who may chuse to consider Rhetoric in the most restricted sense, as relating only to "Persuasive Speaking"; since it is evident that *Argument* must be, in most cases at least, the basis of Persuasion.

Plan of the present Treatise.

I propose then to treat, first and principally, of the Discovery of ARGUMENTS, and of their Arrangement; secondly, to lay down some Rules respecting the excitement and management of what are commonly called the *Passions* (including every kind of Feeling, Sentiment, or Emotion) with a view to the attainment of any object proposed,—principally, Persuasion, in the strict sense, i.e., the influencing of the WILL; thirdly, to offer some remarks on STYLE; and, fourthly, to treat of ELOCUTION.

2.

History of Rhetoric.

It may be expected that, before I proceed to treat of the Art in question, I should present the reader with a sketch of its history. Little however is required to be said on this head, because the present is not one of those branches of study in which we

can trace with interest a progressive improvement from age to age. It is one, on the contrary, to which more attention appears to have been paid, and in which greater proficiency is supposed to have been made, in the earliest days of Science and Literature, than at any subsequent period.

Aristotle.

Among the ancients, Aristotle, the earliest whose works are extant, may safely be pronounced to be also the best of the systematic writers on Rhetoric.

Cicero.

Cicero is hardly to be reckoned among the number; for he delighted so much more in the practice, than in the theory, of his art, that he is perpetually drawn off from the rigid philosophical analysis of its principles, into discursive declamations, always eloquent indeed, and often highly interesting, but adverse to regularity of system, and frequently as unsatisfactory to the practical student as to the Philosopher. He abounds indeed with excellent practical remarks; though the best of them are scattered up and down his works with much irregularity: but his precepts, though of great weight, as being the result of experience, are not often traced up by him to first principles; and we are frequently left to guess, not only on what basis his rules are grounded, but in what cases they are applicable. Of this latter defect a remarkable instance will be hereafter cited.

Quintilian.

Quintilian is indeed a systematic writer; but cannot be considered as having much extended the philosophical views of his predecessors in this department. He possessed much good sense, but this was tinged with pedantry;—with that *pretension* . . . which extends to an extravagant degree the province of the art which he professes. A great part of his work indeed is a Treatise on Education, generally; in the conduct of which he was no mean proficient; for such was the importance attached to public speaking, even long after

the downfall of the Republic had cut off the Orator from the hopes of attaining, through the means of this qualification, the highest political importance, that he who was nominally a Professor of Rhetoric, had in fact the most important branches of instruction entrusted to his care.

Many valuable maxims however are to be found in this author; but he wanted profundity of thought and power of analysis which Aristotle possessed.

The writers on Rhetoric among the ancients whose works are lost, seem to have been numerous; but most of them appear to have confined themselves to a very narrow view of the subject; and to have been occupied, as Aristotle complains, with the minor details of style and arrangement, and with the sophistical tricks and petty artifices of the Pleader, instead of giving a masterly and comprehensive sketch of the essentials.

Bacon.

Among the moderns, few writers of ability have turned their thoughts to the subject; and but little has been added, either in respect of matter, or of system, to what the ancients have left us. Bacon's "Antitheta" however,—the Rhetorical commonplaces,—are a wonderful specimen of acuteness of thought and pointed conciseness of expression. . . .

Campbell and Blair.

It were most unjust in this place to leave unnoticed Dr. Campbell's "*Philosophy of Rhetoric*": a work which has not obtained indeed so high a degree of popular favour as Dr. Blair's once enjoyed, but is incomparably superior to it, not only in depth of thought and ingenious original research, but also in practical utility to the student. The title of Dr. Campbell's work has perhaps deterred many readers, who have concluded it to be more abstruse and less popular in its character than it really is. Amidst much however that is readily understood by any moderately intelligent reader, there is much also that calls for some exertion of thought, which the indolence of most readers refuses to bestow. And it must be owned that he also in some instances perplexes his read-

ers by being perplexed himself, and bewildered in the discussion of questions through which he does not clearly see his way. His great defect, which not only leads him into occasional errors, but leaves many of his best ideas but imperfectly developed, is his ignorance and utter misconception of the nature and object of Logic; on which some remarks are made in my Treatise on that Science. Rhetoric being in truth an offshoot of Logic, that Rhetorician must labour under great disadvantages who is not only ill-acquainted with that system, but also utterly unconscious of his deficiency.

3.

From a general view of the history of Rhetoric, two questions naturally suggest themselves, which, on examination, will be found very closely connected together: first, what is the cause of the careful and extensive cultivation, among the ancients, of an Art which the moderns have comparatively neglected; and secondly, whether the former or the latter are to be regarded as the wiser in this respect;—in other words, whether Rhetoric be *worth* any diligent cultivation.

Assiduous cultivation of Rhetoric by the ancients.

With regard to the first of these questions, the answer generally given is, that the nature of the Government in the ancient democratical States caused a demand for public speakers, and for such speakers as should be able to gain influence not only with educated persons in dispassionate deliberation, but with a promiscuous multitude; and accordingly it is remarked that the extinction of liberty brought with it, or at least brought after it, the decline of Eloquence; as is justly remarked (though in a courtly form) by the author of the dialogue on Oratory, which passes under the name of Tacitus: “What need is there of long discourses in the Senate, when the best of its members speedily come to an agreement? or of numerous harangues to the people, when deliberations on public affairs are conducted, not by a multitude of unskilled persons, but by a single individual, and that, the wisest?”

The ancients hearers rather than readers.

This account of the matter is undoubtedly correct as far as it goes; but the importance of public speaking is so great, in our own, and all other countries that are not under a despotic Government, that the apparent neglect of the study of Rhetoric seems to require some further explanation. Part of this explanation may be supplied by the consideration that the difference in this respect between the ancients and ourselves is not so great in reality as in appearance. When the *only* way of addressing the Public was by orations, and when all political measures were debated in popular assemblies, the characters of Orator, Author, and Politician, almost entirely coincided; he who would communicate his ideas to the world, or would gain political power, and carry his legislative schemes into effect, was necessarily a Speaker; since, as Pericles is made to remark by Thucydides, “one who forms a judgment on any point, but cannot explain himself clearly to the people, might as well have never thought at all on the subject.”⁵ The consequence was, that almost all who sought, and all who professed to give, instruction, in the principles of Government, and the conduct of judicial proceedings, combined these, in their minds and in their practice, with the study of Rhetoric, which was necessary to give effect to all such attainments; and in time the Rhetorical writers (of whom Aristotle makes that complaint) came to consider the Science of Legislation and of Politics in general, as a part of their own Art.

Much therefore of what was formerly studied under the name of Rhetoric, is still, under other names, as generally and as diligently studied as ever. Much of what we now call Literature or “Belles Lettres,” was formerly included in what the ancients called Rhetorical studies.

Disavowal of rhetorical studies among the moderns.

It cannot be denied however that a great difference, though less, as I have said, than might at first sight appear, does exist between the ancients

⁵Thucydides, book ii. See the Motto. [Au.]

and the moderns in this point;—that what is strictly and properly called Rhetoric, is much less studied, at least less systematically studied, now, than formerly. Perhaps this also may be in some measure accounted for from the circumstances which have been just noticed. Such is the distrust excited by any suspicion of Rhetorical artifice, that every speaker or writer who is anxious to carry his point, endeavours to disown or to keep out of sight any superiority of skill; and wishes to be considered as relying rather on the strength of his cause, and the soundness of his views, than on his ingenuity and expertness as an advocate. Hence it is, that even those who have paid the greatest and the most successful attention to the study of Composition and of Elocution, are so far from encouraging others by example or recommendation to engage in the same pursuit, that they labour rather to conceal and disavow their own proficiency; and thus theoretical rules are decried, even by those who owe the most to them. Whereas among the ancients, the same cause did not, for the reasons lately mentioned, operate to the same extent; since, however careful any speaker might be to disown the artifices of Rhetoric, properly so called, he would not be ashamed to acknowledge himself, generally, a student, or a proficient, in an Art which was understood to include the elements of Political wisdom.

4.

Utility of Rhetoric.

With regard to the other question proposed, viz., concerning the utility of Rhetoric, it is to be observed that it divides itself into two; first, whether Oratorical skill be, on the whole, a public benefit, or evil; and secondly, whether any artificial system of Rules is conducive to the attainment of that skill.

The former of these questions was eagerly debated among the ancients; on the latter, but little doubt seems to have existed. With us, on the contrary, the state of these questions seems nearly reversed. It seems generally admitted that skill in Composition and in speaking, liable as it evidently is to abuse, is to be considered, on the whole, as advantageous to the Public; because

that liability to abuse is, neither in this, nor in any other case, to be considered as conclusive against the utility of any kind of art, faculty, or profession;—because the evil effects of misdirected power require that equal powers should be arrayed on the opposite side;—and because truth, having an intrinsic superiority over falsehood, may be expected to prevail when the skill of the contending parties is equal; which will be the more likely to take place, the more widely such skill is diffused.⁶

Eloquence supposed to be something that cannot be taught.

But many, perhaps most persons, are inclined to the opinion that Eloquence, either in writing or speaking, is either a natural gift, or, at least, is to be acquired by mere practice, and is not to be attained or improved by any system of rules. And this opinion is favoured not least by those (as has been just observed) whose own experience would enable them to decide very differently; and it certainly seems to be in a great degree practically adopted. Most persons, if not left entirely to the disposal of chance in respect of this branch of education, are at least left to acquire what they can by *practice*, such as school or college-exercises afford, without much care being taken to initiate them systematically into the principles of the Art; and that, frequently, not so much from negligence in the conductors of education, as from their doubts of the utility of any such regular system.

Erroneous systems of rules.

It certainly must be admitted, that rules not constructed on broad philosophical principles, are

⁶Arist. *Rhet.* ch 1.—He might have gone further; for it will very often happen that, before a popular audience, a *greater* degree of skill is requisite for maintaining the cause of truth than of falsehood. There are cases in which the arguments which lie most on the surface, and are, to superficial reasoners, the most easily set forth in a plausible form, are those on the wrong side. It is often difficult to a Writer, and still more, to a Speaker, to point out and exhibit, in their full strength, the delicate distinctions on which truth sometimes depends. [Au.]

more likely to cramp than to assist the operations of our faculties;—that a pedantic display of technical skill is more detrimental in this than in any other pursuit, since by exciting distrust, it counteracts the very purpose of it;—that a system of rules imperfectly comprehended, or not familiarized by practice, will (while that continues to be the case) prove rather an impediment than a help; as indeed will be found in all other arts likewise;—and that no system can be expected to equalize men whose natural powers are different. But none of these concessions at all invalidate the positions of Aristotle; that some succeed better than others in explaining their opinions, and bringing over others to them; and that, not merely by superiority of natural gifts, but by acquired habit; and that consequently if we can discover the causes of this superior success,—the means by which the desired end is attained by all who *do* attain it,—we shall be in possession of rules capable of general application; which is, says he, the proper office of an Art. Experience so plainly evinces, what indeed we might naturally be led antecedently to conjecture, that a right judgment on any subject is not necessarily accompanied by skill in effecting conviction,—nor the ability to discover truth, by a facility in explaining it,—that it might be matter of wonder how any doubt should ever have existed as to the possibility of devising, and the utility of employing, a System of Rules for “Argumentative Composition” generally; distinct from any system conversant about the subject matter of each composition.

Knowledge of facts no remedy for logical inaccuracy.

I have remarked in the Lectures on Political Economy (Lect. 9.), that “some persons complain, not altogether without reason, of the prevailing *ignorance* of facts, relative to this and to many other subjects; and yet it will often be found that the parties censured, though possessed of less knowledge than they ought to have, yet possess more than they know what to do with. Their deficiency in arranging and applying their knowledge,—in combining facts,—and correctly deducing and employing general principles, shall be greater than their ignorance of

facts. Now to attempt remedying this fault by imparting to them additional knowledge,—to confer the advantage of wider experience on those who have not the power of profiting by experience,—is to attempt enlarging the prospect of a short-sighted man by bringing him to the top of a hill.

“In the tale of Sandford and Merton, where the two boys are described as amusing themselves with building a hovel with their own hands, they lay poles horizontally on the top, and cover them with straw, so as to make a flat roof: of course the rain comes through; and Master Merton then advises to *lay on more straw*: but Sandford, the more intelligent boy, remarks that as long as the roof is flat, the rain must, sooner or later, soak through; and that the remedy is to make a new *arrangement*, and form the roof sloping. Now the idea of enlightening incorrect reasoners by additional knowledge, is an error similar to that of the flat roof; it is merely laying on *more straw*: they ought first to be taught the right way of raising the roof. Of course knowledge is necessary; so is straw to thatch the roof: but no quantity of materials will supply the want of knowing how to build.

“I believe it to be a prevailing fault of the present day, not indeed to seek too much for knowledge, but to trust to accumulation of facts as a *substitute* for accuracy in the logical processes. Had Bacon lived in the present day, I am inclined to think he would have made his chief complaint against unmethodized inquiry and illogical reasoning. Certainly he would *not* have complained of *Dialectics* as corrupting Philosophy. To guard *now* against the evils prevalent in *his* time, would be to fortify a town against battering-rams, instead of against cannon. But it is remarkable that even that abuse of *Dialectics* which he complains of, was rather an error connected with the reasoning process than one arising from a want of knowledge. Men were led to false conclusions, not through mere ignorance, but from hastily assuming the correctness of the data they reasoned from, without sufficient grounds. And it is remarkable that the revolution brought about in philosophy by Bacon, was not the *effect*, but the *cause*, of increased knowledge of physical facts: it was not that men were taught to think correctly

by having new phænomena brought to light; but on the contrary, they discovered new phænomena in *consequence* of a new system of philosophizing.”

It is probable that the existing prejudices on the present subject may be traced in great measure to the imperfect or incorrect notions of some writers, who have either confined their attention to trifling minutix of style, or at least have in some respect failed to take a sufficiently comprehensive view of the principles of the Art. One distinction especially is to be clearly laid down and carefully borne in mind by those who would form a correct idea of those principles; viz., the distinction already noticed in the “*Elements of Logic*,” between *an Art*, and *the Art*. “*An Art of Reasoning*” would imply, “a Method or System of Rules by the observance of which one may reason correctly”; “*the Art of Reasoning*” would imply a System of Rules to which every one *does* conform (whether knowingly, or not) who reasons correctly: and such is Logic, considered as an Art.

A rightly-formed system does not cramp the natural powers.

In like manner “*an Art of Composition*” would imply “a System of Rules by which a good Composition may be produced”; “*the Art of Composition*,”—“such rules as *every* good Composition must conform to,” whether the author of it had them in his mind or not. Of the former character appear to have been (among others) many of the Logical and Rhetorical Systems of Aristotle’s predecessors in those departments. He himself evidently takes the other and more philosophical view of both branches: as appears (in the case of Rhetoric) both from the plan he sets out with, that of investigating the causes of the success of *all* who do succeed in effecting conviction, and from several passages occurring in various parts of his treatise; which indicate how sedulously he was on his guard to conform to that plan. Those who have not attended to the important distinction just alluded to, are often disposed to feel wonder, if not weariness, at his reiterated remarks, that “*all* men effect persuasion either in this way or in that”; “it is *impossible* to attain such and such an

object in any other way,” &c.; which doubtless were intended to remind his readers of the nature of his design; viz. not to teach *an Art* of Rhetoric, but *the Art*; not to instruct them merely how conviction *might* be produced, but how it *must*.

If this distinction were carefully kept in view by the teacher and by the learner of Rhetoric, we should no longer hear complaints of the natural powers being fettered by the formalities of a System; since no such complaint can lie against a System whose rules are drawn from the invariable practice of all who succeed in attaining their proposed object.

No one would expect that the study of Sir Joshua Reynolds’s lectures would cramp the genius of the painter. No one complains of the rules of Grammar as fettering Language; because it is understood that correct use is not founded on Grammar, but Grammar on correct use. A just system of Logic or of Rhetoric is analogous, in this respect, to Grammar.

Popular objections.

One may still however sometimes hear—though less, now, than a few years back—the hackneyed objections against Logic and Rhetoric, and even Grammar also. Cicero has been gravely cited (as Aristotle might have been also, in the passage just above alluded to, in his very treatise on Rhetoric) to testify that rhetorical rules are derived from the practice of Oratory, and not *vice versa*; and that consequently there must have been—as there still is—such a thing as a speaker ignorant of those rules. A drayman, we are told, will taunt a comrade by saying, “you’re a pretty fellow,” without having learnt that he is employing the figure called Irony; and may employ “will” and “shall” correctly, without being able to explain the principle that guides him. And it might have been added, that perhaps he will go home whistling a tune, though he does not know the name of a Note; that he will stir his fire, without knowing that he is employing the first kind of Lever;⁷ and that he will set his kettle on it to boil,

⁷It is a curious circumstance, that no longer ago than the early part of the last century, *Mathematical Studies* were a common topic of contemptuous ridicule among those igno-

though ignorant of the theory of Caloric, and of all the technical vocabulary of Chemistry. In short, of the two premises requisite for the conclusion contended for, the one about which there can be no possible doubt, is dwelt on, and elaborately proved; and the other, which is very disputable, is tacitly assumed. That the systems of Logic, Rhetoric, Grammar, Music, Mechanics, &c. must have been preceded by the practice of speaking, singing, &c., which no one ever did or can doubt, is earnestly insisted on; but that every system of which this can be said must consequently be mere useless trifling, which is at least a paradox, is quietly taken for granted; or, at least, is supposed to be sufficiently established, by repeating, in substance, the poet's remark, that

. . . all a Rhetorician's rules
But teach him how to name his tools:

and by observing that, for the most difficult points of all, natural genius and experience must do everything, and Systems of Art nothing.

To this latter remark it might have been added, that in *no* department can Systems of Art equalize men of different degrees of original ability and of experience; or teach us to accomplish all that is aimed at. No system of Agricul-

rant of the subject; just as is the case, to a certain extent, even now, with Logic (including great part of the matter treated of in this volume), with Political Economy, and some others. Pope speaks of what he calls "mad Mathësis," as "running round the circle" and "finding it square!" One may find also among the fugitive poetry of his times, descriptions of a Mathematician as something between fool and madman. And Swift's Voyage to Laputa evinces his utter contempt for such studies, and likewise his utter ignorance of them. He ridicules the Laputans for having their bread cut into "Cycloids"; which he conceived to be the name of a *solid figure*: and he (Newton's contemporary) indicates his conviction that the Aristotelian System of Astronomy was on a level with all others, and that various systems would always be successively coming into fashion and going out again, like modes of dress.

Now, the case is altered, as far as regards mathematical pursuits; which are respected even by those not versed in them: but those other sciences above referred to, though studied by a very considerable and daily increasing number, are still sneered at,—as was formerly the case with Mathematics,—by many of those who have *not* studied them (including some mathematicians), and who know no more of the subject than Swift did of Cycloids. [Au.]

ture can create Land; nor can the Art Military teach us to produce, like Cadmus, armed soldiers out of the Earth; though Land, and Soldiers, are as essential to the practice of these Arts, as the well-known preliminary admonition in the Cookery book, "first take your carp," is to the culinary art. Nor can all the books that ever were written bring to a level with a man of military genius and experience, a person of ordinary ability who has never seen service.

As for the remark about "naming one's tools," which—with fair allowance for poetical exaggeration—may be admitted to be near the truth, it should be remembered, that if an inference be thence drawn of the uselessness of being thus provided with *names*, we must admit, by parity of reasoning, that it would be no inconvenience to a carpenter, or any other mechanic, to have no names for the several operations of *sawing, planing, boring, &c.* in which he is habitually engaged, or for the tools with which he performs them; and in like manner, that it would also be no loss to be without names—or without precise, appropriate, and brief names—for the various articles of dress and furniture that we use,—for the limbs and other bodily organs, and the plants, animals, and other objects around us;—in short, that it would be little or no evil to have a Language as imperfect as Chinese, or no Language at all.

Technical terms.

The simple truth is, TECHNICAL TERMS are a PART OF LANGUAGE. Now any portion of one's Language that relates to employments and situations foreign from our own, there is little need to be acquainted with. Nautical terms, e.g., it is little loss to a landman to be ignorant of; though, to a sailor, they are as needful as any part of Language is to any one. And again, a deficiency in the proper Language of some *one* department, even though one we are not wholly unconcerned in, is not felt as a very heavy inconvenience. But if it were absolutely no disadvantage at all, then, it is plain the same might be said of a still *further* deficiency of a like character; and ultimately we should arrive at the absurdity above noticed,—the uselessness of Language altogether.

Real use of Language.

But though this is an absurdity which all would perceive,—though none would deny the importance of Language,—the full extent and real character of that importance is far from being universally understood. There are still (as is remarked in the Logic, Introduction. § 5.) many,—though I believe not near so many as a few years back,—who, if questioned on the subject, would answer that the use of Language is to *communicate* our thoughts to each other; and that it is peculiar to Man: the truth being that *that* use of Language is *not* peculiar to Man, though enjoyed by him in a much higher degree than by the Brutes; while that which does distinguish Man from Brute, is another, and quite distinct, use of Language, viz., as an *instrument of thought*,—a system of General Signs, without which the Reasoning process could not be conducted. The full importance, consequently, of Language, and of precise technical Language,—of having accurate and well-defined “names for one’s tools,”—can never be duly appreciated by those who still cling to the theory of “Ideas”; those imaginary objects of thought in the mind, of which “Common terms” are merely the names, and by means of which we are supposed to be able to do what I am convinced is impossible; to carry on a train of Reasoning without the use of Language, or of any General Signs whatever.

But each, in proportion as he the more fully embraces the doctrine of *Nominalism*, and consequently understands the real character of Language, will become the better qualified to estimate the importance of an accurate system of nomenclature.

5.

Exercises in Composition.

The chief reason probably for the existing prejudice against technical systems of composition, is to be found in the cramped, meagre, and feeble character of most of such essays, &c. as are *avowedly* composed according to the rules of any such system. It should be remembered, however, in the first place, that these are almost invariably

the productions of *learners*; it being usual for those who have attained proficiency, either to write without thinking of any rules, or to be desirous (as has been said), and, by their increased expertness, able, to conceal their employment of art. Now it is not fair to judge of the value of any system of rules,—those of a drawing master for instance,—from the first awkward sketches of tyros in the art.

Still less would it be fair to judge of one system from the ill success of another, whose rules were framed (as is the case with those ordinarily laid down for the use of students in Composition) on narrow, unphilosophical, and erroneous principles.

Choice of subjects for the composition of exercises.

But the circumstance which has mainly tended to produce the complaint alluded to, is, that in this case, the reverse takes place of the plan pursued in the learning of other arts; in which it is usual to begin, for the sake of practice, with what is *easiest*: here, on the contrary, the tyro has usually a *harder* task assigned him, and one in which he is less likely to succeed, than he will meet with in the actual business of life. For it is undeniable that it is much the most difficult to find either propositions to maintain, or arguments to prove them—to know, in short, what to say, or how to say it—on any subject on which one has hardly any information, and no interest; about which he knows little, and cares still less.

Now the subjects usually proposed for School or College-exercises are (to the learners themselves) precisely of this description. And hence it commonly happens, that an exercise composed with diligent care by a young student, though it will have cost him far more pains than a *real* letter written by him to his friends, on subjects that interest him, will be very greatly inferior to it. On the *real occasions* of after life (I mean, when the object proposed is, not to fill up a sheet, a book, or an hour, but to communicate his thoughts, to convince, or persuade),—on these real occasions, for which such exercises were designed to prepare him, he will find that he writes both better, and with more facility, than on the *artificial* occasion, as it may be called, of composing a

Declamation;—that he has been attempting to learn the easier, by practising the harder.

Ill effects often resulting from exercises.

But what is worse, it will often happen that such exercises will have formed a habit of stringing together empty commonplaces, and vapid declamations,—of multiplying words and spreading out the matter thin,—of composing in a stiff, artificial, and frigid manner: and that this habit will more or less cling through life to one who has been thus trained, and will infect all his future compositions.

So strongly, it should seem, was Milton impressed with a sense of this danger, that he was led to condemn the use altogether of exercises in Composition. In this opinion he stands perhaps alone among all writers on education. I should perhaps agree with him, if there were absolutely no other remedy for the evil in question; for I am inclined to think that this part of education, if conducted as it often is, does in general more harm than good. But I am convinced, that practice in Composition, both for boys and young men, may be so conducted as to be productive of many and most essential advantages.

Selection of subjects.

The obvious and the only preventive of the evils which I have been speaking of is, a most scrupulous care in the selection of such *subjects* for exercises as are likely to be *interesting* to the student, and on which he has (or may, with pleasure, and without much toil, acquire) sufficient information. Such subjects will of course vary, according to the learner's age and intellectual advancement; but they had better be rather below, than much above him; that is, they should never be such as to induce him to string together vague general expressions, conveying no distinct ideas to his own mind, and second-hand sentiments which he does not feel. He may freely transplant indeed from other writers such thoughts as will take root in the soil of his own mind; but he must never be tempted to collect *dried specimens*. He must also be encouraged to express himself (in correct language indeed, but) in a free, natural,

and simple style; which of course implies (considering who and what the writer is supposed to be) such a style as, in itself, would be open to severe criticism, and certainly very unfit to appear in a book.

Compositions on such subjects, and in such a style, would probably be regarded with a disdainful eye, as puerile, by those accustomed to the opposite mode of teaching. But it should be remembered that the compositions of boys *must* be puerile, in one way or the other: and to a person of unsophisticated and sound taste, the truly contemptible kind of puerility would be found in the other kind of exercises. Look at the letter of an intelligent youth to one of his companions, communicating intelligence of such petty matters as are interesting to both—describing the scenes he has visited, and the recreations he has enjoyed during a vacation; and you will see a picture of the youth himself—boyish indeed in looks and in stature—in dress and in demeanour; but lively, unfettered, natural, giving a fair promise for manhood, and, in short, what a boy should be. Look at a theme composed by the same youth, on “*Virtus est medium vitiorum,*” or “*Natura beatis omnibus esse dedit,*”⁸ and you will see a picture of the same boy, dressed up in the garb, and absurdly aping the demeanour, of an elderly man. Our ancestors (and still more recently, I believe, the continental nations) were guilty of the absurdity of dressing up children in wigs, swords, huge buckles, hoops, ruffles, and all the elaborate full-dressed finery of grown-up people of that day.⁹ It is surely reasonable that the analogous absurdity in greater matters also,—among the rest in that part of education I am speaking of,—should be laid aside; and that we should in all points consider what is appropriate to each different period of life.

Classes of subjects for exercises.

The subjects for Composition to be selected on the principle I am recommending, will generally fall under one of three classes: first, subjects

⁸“Virtue is the middle way between vices”; “Nature gave it to all men to be happy.” [Ed.]

⁹See “Sandford and Merton,” *passim*. [Au.]

drawn from the studies the learner is engaged in; relating, for instance, to the characters or incidents of any history he may be reading; and sometimes, perhaps, leading him to forestall by conjecture, something which he will hereafter come to, in the book itself: secondly, subjects drawn from any conversation he may have listened to (*with interest*) from his seniors, whether addressed to himself, or between each other: or, thirdly, relating to the amusements, familiar occurrences, and everyday transactions, which are likely to have formed the topics of easy conversation among his familiar friends. The student should not be confined exclusively to any one of these three classes of subjects. They should be intermingled in as much variety as possible. And the teacher should frequently recall to his own mind these two considerations; first, that since the benefit proposed does not consist in the intrinsic value of the composition, but in the *exercise* to the pupil's mind, it matters not how insignificant the subject may be, if it will but interest him, and thereby afford him such exercise; secondly, that the younger and backwarder each student is, the more unfit he will be for *abstract* speculations; and the less remote must be the subjects proposed from those *individual* objects and occurrences which always form the first beginnings of the furniture of the youthful mind.¹⁰

Drawing up of outlines or skeletons.

It should be added, as a practical rule for all cases, whether it be an exercise that is written for practice' sake, or a composition on some real occasion, that an outline should be first drawn out,—a *skeleton* as it is sometimes called,—of the substance of what is to be said. The more *briefly* this is done, so that it does but exhibit

¹⁰For some observations relative to the learning of Elocution, see Part IV. chap. ii. § 5, and iv. § 2. See also some valuable remarks on the subject of exercises in composition in Mr. Hill's ingenious work on Public Education. It may be added, that if the teacher will, after pointing out any faults in the learner's exercise, and making him alter or rewrite it, if necessary, then put before him a composition on the same subject written by *himself*, or by some approved writer,—such a practice, if both learner and teacher have patience and industry enough to follow it up, will be likely to produce great improvement. [Au.]

clearly the several heads of the composition, the better: because it is important that the whole of it be placed before the eye and the mind in a small compass, and be taken in as it were at a glance: and it should be written therefore not in *sentences*, but like a table of contents. Such an outline should not be allowed to *fetter* the writer, if, in the course of the actual composition, he find any reason for deviating from his original plan. It should serve merely as a *track* to mark out a path for him, not as a *groove* to confine him. But the practice of drawing out such a skeleton will give a coherence to the Composition, a due *proportion* of its several parts, and a clear and easy arrangement of them; such as can rarely be attained if one begins by *completing* one portion before thinking of the rest. And it will also be found a most useful exercise for a beginner, to practise—if possible under the eye of a judicious lecturer—the drawing out of a great number of such skeletons, more than he subsequently fills up; and likewise to practise the analysing in the same way, the Compositions of another, whether read or heard.

If the system which I have been recommending be pursued, with the addition of sedulous care in correction—encouragement from the teacher—and inculcation of such general rules as each occasion calls for; then, *and not otherwise*, Exercises in Composition will be of the most important and lasting advantage; not only in respect of the object *immediately* proposed, but in producing clearness of thought, and in giving play to all the faculties. And if this branch of education be thus conducted, then, *and not otherwise*, the greater part of the present treatise will, it is hoped, be found not much less adapted to the use of those who are writing for practice' sake, than of those engaged in meeting the occasions of real life. . . .

Part I

CHAPTER II

4.

Of Signs then there are some which from a certain Effect or phenomenon, infer the "Cause" of it; and others which, in like manner, infer some "Condition" which is not the Cause.

Testimony a kind of sign.

Of these last, one species is the Argument from Testimony: the premiss being the existence of the Testimony; the Conclusion, the truth of what is attested; which is considered as a "Condition" of the Testimony having been given: since it is evident that so far only as this is allowed (i.e., so far only as it is allowed, that the Testimony would not have been given, had it not been true), can this Argument have any force. Testimony is of various kinds; and may possess various degrees of force,¹¹ not only in reference to its own intrinsic character, but in reference also to the kind of conclusion that it is brought to support. . . .

Testimony of Adversaries.

The Testimony of Adversaries, — including under this term all who would be unwilling to admit the conclusion to which their testimony tends, — has, of course, great weight derived from that circumstance. And as it will, oftener than not, fall under the head of "undesigned," much minute research will often be needful, in order to draw it out.

Cross-Examination.

In oral examination of witnesses, a skilful cross-examiner will often elicit from a reluctant witness most important truths, which the witness is desirous of concealing or disguising. There is another kind of skill, which consists in so alarming, misleading, or bewildering an honest witness as to throw discredit on his testimony, or pervert the effect of it. Of this kind of art, which may be characterised as the most, or one of the most, base and depraved of all possible employments of intellectual power, I shall only make one further observation. I am convinced that the most effectual mode of eliciting *truth*, is quite different from that by which an honest, simple-minded

¹¹Locke has touched on this subject, though slightly and scantily. He says, "In the testimony of others, is to be considered,—1. The number. 2. The integrity. 3. The skill of the witnesses. 4. The design of the author, where it is a testimony out of a book cited. 5. The consistency of the parts and circumstances of the relation. 6. Contrary testimonies." [Au.]

witness is most easily baffled and confused. I have seen the experiment tried, of subjecting a witness to such a kind of cross-examination by a practised lawyer, as would have been, I am convinced, the most likely to alarm and perplex many an honest witness; without any effect in shaking the testimony: and afterwards, by a totally opposite mode of examination, such as would not have at all perplexed one who was honestly telling the truth, that same witness was drawn on, step by step, to acknowledge the utter falsity of the whole.

Generally speaking, I believe that a quiet, gentle, and straightforward, though full and careful examination, will be the most adapted to elicit *truth*; and that the manœuvres, and the browbeating, which are the most adapted to confuse an honest witness, are just what the dishonest one is the best prepared for. The more the storm blusters, the more carefully he wraps round him the cloak, which a warm sunshine will often induce him to throw off.

Testimony of Adversaries usually incidental.

In any testimony (whether oral or written) that is unwillingly borne, it will more frequently consist in something *incidentally implied*, than in a distinct statement. For instance, the generality of men, who are accustomed to cry up Common sense as preferable to Systems of Art, have been brought to bear witness, collectively (see Preface of "Elements of Logic"), on the opposite side; inasmuch as each of them gives the preference to the latter, in the subject, — whatever it may be, — in which he is most conversant.

Sometimes, however, an adversary will be compelled distinctly to admit something that makes against him, in order to contest some other point. Thus, the testimony of the Evangelists, that the miracles of Jesus were acknowledged by the unbelievers, and attributed to magic, is confirmed by the Jews, in a Work called "Toldoth Jeschu"; (the "Generation of Jesus") which must have been compiled (at whatever period) from *traditions existing from the very first*; since it is incredible that if those *contemporaries* of Jesus who opposed Him, had denied the *fact* of the miracles having been wrought, their *descendants*

should have admitted the facts, and resorted to the hypothesis of magic.

Negative Testimony.

The *negative* testimony, either of adversaries, or of indifferent persons, is often of great weight. When statements or arguments, publicly put forth, and generally known, remain *uncontradicted*, an appeal may fairly be made to this circumstance, as a confirmatory testimony on the part of those acquainted with the matter, and interested in it; especially if they are likely to be unwilling to admit the conclusion.¹²

Concurrent Testimony.

It is manifest that the concurrent testimony, positive or negative, of several witnesses, when there can have been no concert, and especially when there is any rivalry or hostility between them, carries with it a weight independent of that which may belong to each of them considered separately. For though, in such a case, each of the witnesses should be even considered as wholly undeserving of credit, still the chances might be incalculable against their all agreeing in the *same* falsehood. It is in this kind of testimony that the generality of mankind believe in the motions of the earth, and of the heavenly bodies, &c. Their belief is not the result of their own observations and calculations; nor yet again of their implicit reliance on the skill and the good faith of any one or more astronomers; but it rests on the agreement of many independent and rival astronomers; who want neither the ability nor the will to detect and expose each other's errors. It is on similar grounds, as Dr. Hinds has justly observed,¹³ that all men, except about two or three in a million, believe in the existence and in the genuineness of manuscripts of ancient books, such as the Scriptures. It is not that they themselves examined these; or again (as some represent), that they rely implicitly on the good faith of those who profess to have done so; but they rely on the *concurrent* and *uncontra-*

dicted testimony of all who have made, or who *might make*, the examination; both unbelievers, and believers of various hostile sects; any one of whom would be sure to seize any opportunity to expose the forgeries or errors of his opponents.

This observation is the more important, because many persons are liable to be startled and dismayed on its being pointed out to them that they have been believing something—as they are led to suppose—on very insufficient reasons; when the truth is perhaps that they have been mis-stating their reasons.

A remarkable instance of the testimony of adversaries,—both positive and negative,—has been afforded in the questions respecting penal colonies. The pernicious character of the system was proved in various publications, and subsequently, before two committees of the House of Commons, from the testimony of persons who were *friendly* to that system: the report and evidence taken before those committees was published; and all this remained uncontradicted for years; till, on motions being made for the abolition of the system,¹⁴ persons had the effrontery to come forward at the eleventh hour and deny the truth of the representations given: thus pronouncing on themselves a heavy condemnation, for having either left that representation—supposing they thought it false,—so long unrefuted, or else, denying what they knew to be true.

Misrepresentation, again, of argument,—attempts to suppress evidence, or to silence a speaker by clamour,—reviling and personality, and false charges—all these are presumptions of the same kind; that the cause against which they are brought, is,—in the opinion of adversaries at least,—unassailable on the side of truth.

Character of things attested.

As for the character of the particular things that in any case may be attested, it is plain that we have to look to the probability or improbability, on the one hand, of their being real, and, on the

¹²See Hinds on the "Inspiration of Scripture." [Au.]

¹³Hinds on Inspiration. [Au.]

¹⁴See "Substance of a Speech on Transportation, delivered in the House of Lords, on the 19th of May, 1840," &c. [Au.]

other hand, of their having been either imagined or invented by the persons attesting them.

Things intrinsically improbable, the less likely to be feigned.

Anything unlikely to *occur*, is, so far, the less likely to have been feigned or fancied: so that its antecedent improbability may sometimes add to the credibility of those who bear witness to it. And again, anything which, however likely to *take place*, would not have been likely, *otherwise*, to enter the mind of *those particular* persons who attest to it, or would be at variance with their interest or prejudices, is thereby rendered the more credible. Thus, as has been above remarked, when the disciples of Jesus record occurrences and discourses, such as were both foreign to all the notions, and at variance with all the prejudices, of any man living in those days, and of Jews more especially, this is a strong confirmation of their testimony.

Things not understood, or not believed, by those who attest them.

It is also, in some cases, a strongly confirmatory circumstance that the witness should appear not to *believe*, himself, or not to *understand*, the thing he is reporting, when it is such as is, to *us*, not unintelligible nor incredible. E.g., When an ancient historian records a report of certain voyagers having sailed to a distant country in which they found the shadows falling on the opposite side to that which they had been accustomed to, and regards the account as incredible, from not being able to understand how such a phenomenon could occur, *we*—recognising at once what we know takes place in the Southern Hemisphere, and perceiving that *he* could not have *invented* the account—have the more reason for believing it. The report thus becomes analogous to the copy of an inscription in a language unknown to him who copied it.

The negative circumstance also, of a witness's *omitting* to mention such things as it is morally certain he *would* have mentioned had he

been inventing, adds great weight to what he does say.

Superior force of negative probabilities.

And it is to be observed that, in many cases, silence, omission, absence of certain statements, &c. will have even greater weight than much that we do find stated. E.g., Suppose we meet with something in a passage of one of Paul's Epistles, which indicates with a certain degree of probability the existence of such and such a custom, institution, &c., and suppose there is just the same degree of probability that such and such another custom, institution, or event, which he does *not* mention anywhere, *would* have been mentioned by him in the same place, supposing it to have really existed, or occurred; this omission, and the *negative* argument resulting, has incomparably the more weight than the other, *if we also find* that same omission in *all the other* epistles, and in every one of the Books of the New Testament.

E.g., The universal omission of all notice of the office of Hieres (a sacerdotal priest) among the Christian ministers¹⁵—of all reference to one supreme Church bearing rule over all the rest—of all mention of any transfer of the Sabbath from the seventh day to the first—are instances of decisive arguments of this kind.

So also, the omission of all allusion to a Future State, in those parts of the writings of Moses in which he is urging the Israelites to obedience by appeals to their hopes and fears; and again, in the whole of the early part of the Book of Job, in which that topic could not have failed to occur to persons believing in the doctrine,—this is a plain indication that no revelation of the doctrine was intended to be given in those Books; and that the passage, often cited, from the Book of Job, as having reference to the resurrection, must be understood as relating to that *temporal* deliverance which is narrated immediately after: since else it would (as Bishop Warburton has just remarked) make all the rest of the book unintelligible and absurd.

¹⁵See Discourse on the Christian Priesthood appended to the Bampton Lectures. Also, Bernard's translation of Vitringa on the "Synagogue and the Church." [Au.]

Again, "although we do not admit the *positive* authority of antiquity in favour of any doctrine or practice which we do not find sanctioned by Scripture, we may yet, without inconsistency, appeal to it *negatively*, in refutation of many errors. . . . It is no argument in favour of the Millennium, that it was a notion entertained by Justin Martyr, since we do not believe him to have been inspired, and he may therefore have drawn erroneous inferences from certain texts of Scripture: but it is an argument against the doctrine of Transubstantiation, that we find no traces of it for above six centuries; and against the adoration of the Virgin Mary, that in like manner it does not appear to have been inculcated till the sixth century. It is very credible that the first Christian writers, who were but men, should have made mistakes to which all men are liable, in their interpretation of Scripture: but it is not credible that such important doctrines as Transubstantiation and the adoration of the Virgin Mary should have been transmitted from the Apostles, if we find no trace of them for five or six centuries after the birth of our Saviour."¹⁶

Absence of all records of Savages having civilized themselves.

To take another instance: I have remarked in the Lectures on Political Economy (Lect.5.), that the descriptions some writers give of the Civilization of Mankind, by the spontaneous origin, among tribes of Savages, of the various arts of life, one by one, are to be regarded as wholly imaginary, and not agreeing with anything that ever did, or can, actually take place; inasmuch as there is no record or tradition of any race of savages having ever civilized themselves without external aid. Numerous as are the accounts we have, of Savages who have *not* received such aid, we do not hear, in any one instance, of their having ceased to be Savages. And again, abundant as are the traditions (though mostly mixed up with much that is fabulous) of the origin of civilization in various nations, all concur in tracing it up to some foreign, or some superhuman, instructor.

¹⁶Bishop Pepsy's Charge, 1845. [Au.]

It ever a nation did emerge, unassisted, from the savage state, all memory of such an event is totally lost.

Now the *absence* of all such records or traditions, in a case where there is every reason to expect that an instance could be produced if any had ever occurred,—this *negative* circumstance (in conjunction with the other indications there adduced) led me, many years ago, to the conclusion, that it is impossible for mere Savages to civilize themselves—that consequently Man must at some period have received the rudiments of civilization from a *superhuman* instructor,—and that Savages are probably the descendants of civilized men, whom wars and other afflictive visitations have degraded.

It might seem superfluous to remark that none but very general rules, such as the above, can be profitably laid down; and that to attempt to supersede the discretion to be exercised on each individual case, by *fixing precisely* what degree of weight is to be allowed to the testimony of such and such persons, would be, at least, useless trifling, and, if introduced in practice, a most mischievous hindrance of a right decision. But attempts of this kind have actually been made, in the systems of Jurisprudence of some countries; and with such results as might have been anticipated. The reader will find an instructive account of some of this unwise legislation in an article on "German Jurisprudence" in the Edinburgh Review. . . .

CHAPTER III

2.

Presumption and Burden of proof.

It is a point of great importance to decide in each case, at the outset, in your own mind, and clearly to point out to the hearer, as occasion may serve, on which side the *Presumption* lies, and to which belongs the [onus probandi] *Burden of Proof*. For though it may often be expedient to bring forward more proofs than can be fairly *demand*ed of you, it is always desirable, when this is the case,

that it should be *known*, and that the strength of the cause should be estimated accordingly.

According to the most correct use of the term, a “Presumption” in favour of any supposition, means, not (as has been sometimes erroneously imagined) a preponderance of probability in its favour, but, such a *preoccupation* of the ground, as implies that it must stand good till some sufficient reason is adduced against it; in short, that the *Burden of proof* lies on the side of him who would dispute it.

Thus, it is a well-known principle of the Law, that every man (including a prisoner brought up for trial) is to be *presumed* innocent till his guilt is established. This does not, of course, mean that we are to *take for granted* he is innocent; for if that were the case, he would be entitled to immediate liberation: nor does it mean that it is antecedently *more likely than not* that he is innocent; or, that the majority of these brought to trial are so. It evidently means only that the “burden of proof” lies with the accusers;—that he is not to be called on to prove his innocence, or to be dealt with as a criminal till he has done so; but that they are to bring their charges against him, which if he can repel, he stands acquitted.

Thus again, there is a “presumption” in favour of the right of any individuals or bodies—corporate to the property of which they are in *actual possession*. This does not mean that they are, or are not, *likely* to be the rightful owners: but merely, that no man is to be disturbed in his possessions till some claim against him shall be established. He is not to be called on to prove his right; but the claimant, to disprove it; on whom consequently the “burden of proof” lies.

Importance of deciding on which side lies the onus probandi.

A moderate portion of common sense will enable any one to perceive, and to show, on which side the Presumption lies, when once his attention is called to this question; though, for want of attention, it is often overlooked: and on the determination of this question the whole character of a discussion will often very much depend. A body of troops may be perfectly adequate to the defence

of a fortress against any attack that may be made on it; and yet, if, ignorant of the advantage they possess, they sally forth into the open field to encounter the enemy, they may suffer a repulse. At any rate, even if strong enough to act on the offensive, they ought still to keep possession of their fortress. In like manner, if you have the “Presumption” on your side, and can but *refute* all the arguments brought against you, you have, for the present at least, gained a victory: but if you abandon this position, by suffering this Presumption to be forgotten, which is in fact *leaving out one of, perhaps, your strongest arguments*, you may appear to be making a feeble attack, instead of a triumphant defense.

Such an obvious case as one of those just stated, will serve to illustrate this principle. Let any one imagine a perfectly unsupported accusation of some offence to be brought against himself; and then let him imagine himself—instead of replying (as of course he would do) by a simple denial, and a defiance of his accuser to prove the charge,—setting himself to establish a negative,—taking on himself the burden of proving his own innocence, by collecting all the circumstances indicative of it that he can muster: and the result would be, in many cases, that this evidence would fall far short of establishing a certainty, and might even have the effect of raising a suspicion against him;¹⁷ he having in fact kept out of sight the important circumstance, that these probabilities in one scale, though of no great weight perhaps in themselves, are to be weighed against absolutely nothing in the other scale.

The following are a few of the cases in which it is important, though very easy, to point out where the Presumption lies.

Presumption in favour of existing institutions.

There is a Presumption in favour of every *existing* institution. Many of these (we will suppose, the majority) may be susceptible of alteration for the better; but still the “Burden of proof” lies with him who proposes an alteration; simply, on

¹⁷Hence the French proverb, “Qui s’excuse, s’accuse.” [Au.]

the ground that since a change is not a good in itself, he who demands a change should show cause for it. No one is *called on* (though he may find it advisable) to defend an existing institution, till some argument is adduced against it; and that argument ought in fairness to prove, not merely an actual inconvenience, but the possibility of a change for the better.

Presumption of innocence.

Every book again, as well as person, ought to be presumed harmless (and consequently the copyright protected by our courts) till something is proved against it. It is a hardship to require a man to prove, either of his book, or of his private life, that there is no ground for any accusation; or else to be denied the protection of his Country. The Burden of proof, in each case, lies fairly on the accuser. I cannot but consider therefore as utterly unreasonable the decisions (which some years ago excited so much attention) to refuse the interference of the Court of Chancery in cases of piracy, whenever there was even any *doubt* whether the book pirated *might* not contain something of an immoral tendency.

Presumption against a Paradox.

There is a "Presumption" against any thing *paradoxical*, i.e., contrary to the prevailing opinion: it may be true; but the Burden of proof lies with him who maintains it; since men are not expected to abandon the prevailing belief till some reason is shown.

Hence it is, probably, that many are accustomed to apply "Paradox" as if it were a term of reproach, and implied absurdity or falsity. But correct use is in favour of the etymological sense. If a Paradox is unsupported, it can claim no attention; but if false, it should be censured on *that* ground; but not for being *new*. If true, it is the more important, for being a truth not generally admitted. "Interdum vulgus rectum videt; est ubi peccat."¹⁸ Yet one often hears a charge of "para-

¹⁸"Sometimes the mob sees clearly; that is where it sins."
[Ed.]

dox and nonsense" brought forward, as if there were some close connexion between the two. And indeed, in one sense this is the case; for to those who are too dull, or too prejudiced, to admit any notion at variance with those they have been used to entertain, *that* may appear nonsense, which to others is sound sense. Thus "Christ crucified" was "to the Jews, a stumbling block" (paradox), "and to the Greeks, foolishness"; because the one "required a sign" of a different kind from any that appeared; and the others "sought after wisdom" in their schools of philosophy.

Christianity, presumptions against and for.

Accordingly there was a Presumption against the Gospel in its first announcement. A Jewish peasant claimed to be the promised Deliverer, in whom all the nations of the Earth were to be blessed. The Burden of proof lay with Him. No one could be fairly called on to admit his pretensions till He showed cause for believing in Him. If He "had not done among them the *works* which none other man did, they had not had sin."

Now, the case is reversed. Christianity *exists*; and those who deny the divine origin attributed to it, are bound to show some reasons for assigning to it a human origin: not indeed to prove that it *did* originate in this or that way, without supernatural aid; but to point out some conceivable way in which it *might* have so arisen.

It is indeed highly expedient to bring forward evidences to establish the divine origin of Christianity: but it ought to be more carefully kept in mind than is done by most writers, that all this is an argument "ex abundantia," as the phrase is,—over and above what can fairly be called for, till some hypothesis should be framed, to account for the origin of Christianity by human means. The Burden of proof, *now*, lies plainly on him who rejects the Gospel: which, if it were not established by miracles, demands an explanation of the greater miracle,—its having been established, in defiance of all opposition, by human contrivance.

The Reformation.

The Burden of proof, again, lay on the authors of the Reformation: they were bound to show cause for every *change* they advocated; and they admitted the fairness of this requisition, and accepted the challenge. But they were *not* bound to show cause for *retaining* what they left unaltered. The Presumption was, in those points, on their side; and they had only to reply to objections. This important distinction is often lost sight of, by those who look at the “doctrines, &c. of the Church of England as constituted at the Reformation,” in the mass, without distinguishing the altered from the unaltered parts. The framers of the Articles kept this in mind in their expression respecting infant-baptism, that it “ought by all means to be *retained*.” They did not introduce the practice, but left it as they found it; considering the burden to lie on those who denied its existence in the primitive church, to show *when* it did arise.

The case of Episcopacy is exactly parallel: but Hooker seems to have overlooked this advantage: he sets himself to *prove* the apostolic origin of the institution, as if his task had been to *introduce* it.¹⁹ Whatever force there may be in arguments so adduced, it is plain they must have far *more* force if the important Presumption be kept in view, that the institution had notoriously existed many ages, and that consequently, even if there had been no direct evidence for its being coeval with Christianity, it might fairly be at least supposed to be so, till some other period should be pointed out at which it had been introduced as an innovation.

Tradition.

In the case of any *doctrines* again, professing to be essential parts of the Gospel revelation, the fair *presumption* is, that we shall find all such distinctly declared in Scripture. And again, in respect of commands or prohibitions as to

¹⁹On the ambiguous employment of the phrase “divine origin”—a great source of confused reasoning among theologians—I have offered some remarks in Essay II. “On the Kingdom of Christ,” § 17. 4th edit. [Au.]

any point, which our Lord or his Apostles did deliver, there is a presumption that Christians are bound to comply. If any one maintains, on the ground of Tradition, the necessity of some additional article of faith (as for instance that of Purgatory) or the propriety of a departure from the New Testament precepts (as for instance in the denial of the cup to the Laity in the Eucharist) the burden of proof lies with him. We are not called on to prove that there is no tradition to the purpose;—much less, that no tradition can have any weight at all in *any* case. It is for *him* to prove, not merely generally, that there is such a thing as Tradition, and that it is entitled to respect, but that there is a tradition relative to each of the points which he thus maintains; and that such tradition is, in each point, sufficient to establish that point. For want of observing this rule, the most vague and interminable disputes have often been carried on respecting Tradition, generally.

It should be also remarked under this head, that in any one question the Presumption will often be found to lie on different sides, in respect of different parties. E.g., In the question between a member of the Church of England, and a Presbyterian, or member of any other Church, on which side does the Presumption lie? Evidently, to each, in favour of the religious community to which he at present belongs. He is not to separate from the Church of which he is a member, without having some sufficient reason to allege. . . .

Grounds of deference.

Admiration, esteem, &c. are more the result of a judgment of the *understanding* (though often of an erroneous one); “Deference” is apt to depend on *feelings*;—often, on whimsical and unaccountable feelings. It is often yielded to a vigorous *claim*,—to an authoritative and overbearing demeanour. With others, of an opposite character, a soothing, insinuating, flattering, and seeming submissive demeanour will often gain great influence. They will yield to those who seem to yield to them; the others, to those who seem resolved to yield to no one. Those who seek to gain

adherents to their School or Party by putting forth the claim of *antiquity* in favour of their tenets, are likely to be peculiarly successful among those of an arrogant disposition. A book or a Tradition of a thousand years old, appears to be rather a *thing* than a *person*; and will thence often be regarded with blind deference by those who are prone to treat their contemporaries with insolent contempt, but who “will not go to compare with an old man.”²⁰ They will submit readily to the authority of men who flourished fifteen or sixteen centuries ago, and whom, if now living, they would not treat with decent respect.

With some persons, again, Authority seems to act according to the law of Gravitation; inversely as the squares of the *distances*. They are inclined to be of the opinion of the person who is *nearest*. Personal *Affection*, again, in many minds, generates Deference. They form a habit of first, *wishing*, secondly, *hoping*, and thirdly, *believing* a person to be in the right, whom they would be *sorry* to think mistaken. In a state of morbid depression of spirits, the same cause leads to the opposite effect. To a person in that state, whatever he would be “sorry to think” appears probable; and consequently there is a Presumption in his mind *against* the opinions, measures, &c. of those he is most attached to. That the degree of Deference felt for any one’s Authority ought to depend not on our feelings, but on our judgment, it is almost superfluous to remark; but it is important to remember that there is a danger on *both* sides; — of an unreasonable Presumption either on the side of our wishes, or *against* them.

Deference as to particular points.

It is obvious that Deference ought to be, and usually is, felt in reference to particular points. One has a deference for his physician, in questions of medicine; and for his bailiff, in questions of farming; but not *vice versâ*. And accordingly, Deference may be misplaced in respect of the *subject*, as well as of the person. It is conceivable that one may have a *due* degree of Deference, and an *excess* of it, and a *deficiency* of it, all towards the same person, but in respect of different points.

²⁰Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*. [Au.]

Men often self-deceived as to their feelings of deference.

It is worth remarking, as a curious fact, that men are liable to deceive themselves as to the degree of Deference they feel towards various persons. But the case is the same (as I shall have occasion hereafter to point out) with many other feelings also, such as pity, contempt, love, joy, &c.; in respect of which we are apt to mistake the *conviction* that such and such an object *deserves* pity, contempt, &c. for the *feeling* itself; which often does not accompany that conviction. And so also, a person will perhaps describe himself (with sincere good faith) as feeling great Deference towards some one, on the ground of his *believing* him to be *entitled* to it; and perhaps being really indignant against *any one else* who does not manifest it. Sometimes again, one will mistake for a feeling of Deference his *concurrence* with another’s views, and admiration of what is said or done by him. But this, as has been observed above, does not imply Deference, if the same approbation would have been bestowed on the same views, supposing them stated and maintained in an anonymous paper. The converse mistake is equally natural. A man may fancy that, in each case, he acquiesces in such a one’s view or suggestions from the dictates of judgment, and for the reasons given (“What she does seems wisest, virtuous, discreet, best”²¹); when yet perhaps the very same reasons, coming from another, would have been rejected. . . .

Transferring the Burden of proof.

It is to be observed, that a Presumption may be *rebutted* by an opposite Presumption, so as to shift the Burden of proof to the other side. E.g., Suppose you had advised the removal of some *existing* restriction: you might be, in the first instance, called on to take the Burden of proof, and allege your reasons for the change, on the ground that there is a Presumption against every Change. But you might fairly reply, “True, but there is another Presumption which rebuts the former; every *Restriction* is in it-

²¹Milton. [Au.]

self an evil; and therefore there is a Presumption in favour of its removal, unless it can be shown necessary for prevention of some greater evil: I am not bound to allege any *specific* inconvenience; if the restriction is *unnecessary*, that is reason enough for its abolition: its defenders therefore are fairly called on to prove its necessity."

Again, in reference to the prevailing opinion, that the "*Nathanael*" of John's Gospel was the same person as the Apostle "*Bartholomew*" mentioned in the others, an intelligent friend once remarked to me that *two names* afford a "prima facie" Presumption of two persons. But the name of *Bartholomew*, being a "Patronymic," (like Simon Peter's designation *Bar-Jona*, and Joseph's Surname of *Barsabas*, mentioned in Acts;—he being probably the same with the Apostle "Joseph Barnabas," &c.,) affords a Counterpresumption that he must have had *another* name, to distinguish him from his own kindred. And thus we are left open to the arguments drawn from the omission, by the other Evangelists, of the name of *Nathanael*,—evidently a very eminent disciple,—the omission by John of the name of the Apostle *Bartholomew*,—and the recorded intimacy with the Apostle *Philip*. . . .

Presumptions for and against the learned.

Again, there is (according to the old maxim of "peritis credendum est in arte sua") a presumption (and a fair one), in respect of each question, in favour of the judgment of the most eminent men in the department it pertains to;—of eminent physicians, e.g., in respect of medical questions,—of theologians, in theological, &c. And by this presumption many of the Jews in our Lord's time seem to have been influenced, when they said, "have any of the Rulers, or of the Pharisees believed on Him?"

But there is a counterpresumption, arising from the circumstance that men eminent in any department are likely to regard with jealousy any one who professes to bring to light something unknown to themselves; especially if it promise to *supersede*, if established, much of what they have been accustomed to learn, and teach, and practise. And moreover, in respect of the medical profession, there is an obvious danger of a man's being regarded as a dangerous experimentalist

who adopts any novelty, and of his thus losing practice even among such as may regard him with admiration as a philosopher. In confirmation of this, it may be sufficient to advert to the cases of *Harvey* and *Jenner*. *Harvey's* discovery of the circulation of the blood is said to have lost him most of his practice, and to have been rejected by every physician in Europe above the age of forty. And *Jenner's* discovery of vaccination had, in a minor degree, similar results.

There is also this additional counterpresumption against the judgment of the proficient in any department; that they are prone to a bias in favour of everything that gives the most palpable *superiority* to themselves over the uninitiated [the *Idiotæ*], and affords the greatest scope for the employment and display of their own peculiar acquirements. Thus, e.g., if there be two possible interpretations of some Clause in an Act of Parliament, one of which appears obvious to every reader of plain good sense, and the other can be supported only by some ingenious and far-fetched legal subtlety, a practised lawyer will be liable to a bias in favour of the latter, as setting forth the more prominently his own peculiar qualifications. And on this principle in great measure seems founded *Bacon's* valuable remark; "*harum artium sæpe pravus fit usus, ne sit nullus.*" Rather than let their knowledge and skill lie idle, they will be tempted to misapply them; like a schoolboy, who, when possessed of a knife, is for trying its edge on everything that comes in his way. On the whole, accordingly, I think that of these two opposite presumptions, the counterpresumption has often as much weight as the other, and sometimes more. . . .

7.

Refutation.

Refutation of Objections should generally be placed in the midst of the Argument; but nearer the beginning than the end.

If indeed very strong objections have obtained much currency, or have been just stated by an opponent, so that what is asserted is likely to be regarded as paradoxical, it may be advisable to begin with a Refutation; but when this is not the

case, the mention of Objections in the opening will be likely to give a paradoxical air to our assertion, by implying a consciousness that much may be said against it. If again all mention of Objections be deferred till the last, the other arguments will often be listened to with prejudice by those who may suppose us to be overlooking what may be urged on the other side.

Sometimes indeed it will be difficult to give a satisfactory Refutation of the opposed opinions, till we have gone through the arguments in support of our own: even in that case however it will be better to take some brief notice of them early in the Composition, with a promise of afterwards considering them more fully, and refuting them. This is Aristotle's usual procedure.

Sophistical evasion.

A sophistical use is often made of this last rule, when the Objections are such as cannot really be satisfactorily answered. The skilful sophist will often, by the promise of a triumphant Refutation hereafter, gain attention to his own statement; which, if it be made plausible, will so draw off the hearer's attention from the Objections, that a very inadequate fulfilment of that promise will pass unnoticed, and due weight will not be allowed to the Objections.

It may be worth remarking, that Refutation will often occasion the introduction of fresh Propositions; i.e., we may have to disprove Propositions, which though incompatible with the principal one to be maintained, will not be directly contradictory to it: e.g., Burke, in order to the establishment of his theory of beauty, refutes the other theories which have been advanced by those who place it in "fitness" for a certain end—in "proportion"—in "perfection," &c.; and Dr. A. Smith, in his "Theory of Moral Sentiments," combats the opinion of those who make "expediency the test of virtue"—of the advocates of a "Moral sense," &c., which doctrines respectively are at variance with those of these authors, and *imply*, though they do not express, a contradiction of them.

Though I am at present treating principally of the proper *collocation* of Refutation, some remarks on the conduct of it will not be unsuitable

in this place. In the first place, it is to be observed that there is ²² no distinct class of refutatory Argument; since they become such merely by the circumstances under which they are employed.

Two modes of refuting.

There are two ways in which any Proposition may be refuted; first, by proving the contradictory of it; secondly, by overthrowing the Arguments by which it has been supported. The former of these is less strictly and properly called Refutation; being only *accidentally* such, since it might have been employed equally well had the opposite Argument never existed; and in fact it will often happen that a Proposition maintained by one author, may be in this way refuted by another, who had never heard of his Arguments. Thus Pericles is represented by Thucydides as proving, in a speech to the Athenians, the probability of their success against the Peloponnesians; and thus, virtually, refuting the speech of the Corinthian ambassador at Sparta, who had laboured to show the probability of their speedy downfall.²³ In fact, every one who argues in favour of any Conclusion is virtually refuting, in this way, the opposite Conclusion.

But the character of Refutation more strictly belongs to the other mode of proceeding; viz. in which a reference is made, and an answer given, to some specific arguments in favour of the opposite Conclusion. This Refutation may consist either in the denial of one of the *Premises*,²⁴ or an objection against the *conclusiveness* of the reasoning. And here it is to be observed that an ob-

²²As Aristotle remarks, *Rhet.* Book ii. apparently in opposition to some former writers. [Au.]

²³The speeches indeed appear to be in great part the composition of the historian; but he professes to give the substance of what was either actually said, or *likely* to be said, on each occasion: and the arguments urged in the speeches now in question are undoubtedly such as the respective speakers would be likely to employ. [Au.]

²⁴If the Premiss to be refuted be a "Universal," (see *Logic*, b. ii. ch. ii. § 3) it will be sufficient to establish its Contradictory, which will be a Particular; which will often be done by an argument that will naturally be exhibited in the third figure, whose conclusions are always Particulars. Hence, this may be called the *erstatic*, or *refutatory* Figure. (See *Logic*, b. ii. ch. iii. § 4.) [Au.]

jection is often supposed, from the mode in which it is expressed, to belong to this last class, when perhaps it does not, but consists in the contradiction of a Premiss; for it is very common to say, "I admit your principle, but deny that it leads to such a consequence"; "the assertion is true, but it has no force as an Argument to prove that Conclusion"; this sounds like an objection to the Reasoning itself; but it will not unfrequently be found to amount only to a denial of the *suppressed* Premiss of an Enthymeme; the assertion which is admitted being only the expressed Premiss, whose "force as an Argument" must of course depend on the other Premiss, which is understood.²⁵ Thus Warburton admits that in the Law of Moses the doctrine of a future state was not revealed; but contends that this, so far from disproving, as the Deists pretend, his divine mission, does, on the contrary, establish it. But the objection is not to the Deist's *Argument* properly so called, but to the other Premiss, which they so hastily took for granted, and which he disproves, viz. "that a divinely commissioned Lawgiver would have been sure to reveal that doctrine." The objection is then only properly said to lie against the Reasoning itself, when it is shown that, granting all that is assumed on the other side, whether expressed or understood, still the Conclusion contended for would not follow from the Premises; either on account of some ambiguity in the Middle Term, or some other fault of that class.

Fallacies.

This is the proper place for a treatise on Fallacies; but as this has been inserted in the "ELEMENTS OF LOGIC," I have only to refer the reader to it. (Book iii).

Direct and Indirect refutation.

It may be proper in this place to remark, that "Indirect Reasoning" is sometimes confounded with

²⁵It has been remarked to me by an intelligent friend, that in common discourse the word "Principle" is usually employed to designate the *major* premiss of an Argument, and "Reason," the *minor*. [Au.]

"Refutation," or supposed to be peculiarly connected with it; which is not the case; either Direct or Indirect Reasoning being employed indifferently for Refutation, as well as for any other purpose. The application of the term "elenctic" (from *elenchein* to refute or disprove) to Indirect Arguments, has probably contributed to this confusion; which, however, principally arises from the very circumstance that occasioned such a use of that term; viz., that in the Indirect method the absurdity or falsity of a Proposition (opposed to our own) is proved; and hence is suggested the idea of an *adversary* maintaining that Proposition, and of the Refutation of that adversary being necessarily accomplished in this way. But it should be remembered, that Euclid and other mathematicians, though they can have no opponent to refute, often employ the Indirect Demonstration; and that, on the other hand, if the Contradictory of an opponent's Premiss can be satisfactorily proved in the Direct method, the Refutation is sufficient.

The Indirect method sometimes preferred.

It is true, however, that while, in Science, the Direct method is considered preferable, in Controversy, the Indirect is often adopted by choice, as it affords an opportunity for holding up an opponent to scorn and ridicule, by deducing some very absurd conclusion from the principles he maintains, or according to the mode of arguing he employs. Nor indeed can a fallacy be so clearly exposed to the unlearned reader in any other way. For it is no easy matter to explain, to one ignorant of Logic, the grounds on which you object to an inconclusive argument; though he will be able to perceive its correspondence with another, brought forward to illustrate it, in which an absurd conclusion may be introduced, as drawn from true premises.

Proving too much.

It is evident that either the *Premiss* of an opponent, or his *Conclusion*, may be disproved, either in the Direct, or in the Indirect method; i.e., either by proving the truth of the Contradictory, or by showing that an absurd conclusion may fairly

be deduced from the proposition you are combating. When this latter mode of refutation is adopted with respect to the *Premiss*, the phrase by which this procedure is usually designated, is, that the "Argument proves too much"; i.e., that it proves, besides the conclusion drawn, another, which is manifestly inadmissible. E.g., The Argument by which Dr. Campbell labours to prove that every correct Syllogism must be nugatory, as involving a "*petitio principii*," proves, if admitted at all, more than he intended; since it may easily be shown to be equally applicable to *all* Reasoning whatever.

It is worth remarking, that an Indirect argument may easily be altered in form so as to be stated in the Direct mode. For, strictly speaking, that is Indirect reasoning in which we assume as true the Proposition whose Contradictory it is our object to prove; and deducing regularly from it an absurd Conclusion, infer thence that the *Premiss* in question is false; the alternative proposed in *all* correct reasoning being, either to admit the Conclusion, or to deny one of the *Premises*. But by adopting the form of a Destructive Conditional,²⁶ the same argument as this, in substance, may be stated *directly*. E.g., We may say, "let it be admitted, that no testimony can satisfactorily establish such a fact as is not agreeable to our experience; thence it will follow that the Eastern Prince judged wisely and rightly, in at once rejecting, as a manifest falsehood, the account given him of the phænomenon of ice; but he was evidently mistaken in so doing; therefore the Principle assumed is unsound." Now the substance of this Argument remaining the same, the form of it may be so altered as to make the Argument a direct one; viz., "*if* it be true that no testimony, &c. that Eastern Prince must have judged wisely, &c., but he did not; therefore that principle is not true."

Character of conditional propositions.

Universally indeed a Conditional Proposition may be regarded as an assertion of the validity of a certain Argument; the Antecedent correspond-

²⁶See *Logic*, b. ii, c. iv. § 6. [Au.]

ing to the *Premises*, and the Consequent to the Conclusion; and neither of them being asserted as true, only, the *dependence* of the one on the other; the alternative then is, to acknowledge as a conclusion, either the truth of the Consequent, as in the Constructive Syllogism, or (as in the destructive) the falsity of the Antecedent: and the former accordingly corresponds to Direct reasoning, the latter to Indirect; being, as has been said, a mode of stating it in the Direct form; as is evident from the examples adduced.

Ironical effect of indirect arguments.

The difference between these two modes of stating such an Argument is considerable, when there is a long chain of reasoning. For when we employ the Categorical form, and assume as true the *Premises* we design to disprove, it is evident we must be speaking *ironically*, and in the character, assumed for the moment, of an adversary; when, on the contrary, we use the hypothetical form, there is no irony. Butler's *Analogy* is an instance of the latter procedure; he contends that *if* such and such objections were admissible against Religion, they *would* be applicable equally to the constitution and course of Nature. Had he, on the other hand, assumed, for the argument's sake, that such objections against Religion *are* valid, and had thence proved the condition of the natural world to be totally different from what we see it to be, his arguments, which would have been the same in substance, would have assumed an ironical form. This form has been adopted by Burke in his celebrated "Defence of Natural Society, by a late noble Lord"; in which, assuming the person of Bolingbroke, he proves, according to the principles of that author, that the arguments he brought against ecclesiastical, would equally lie against civil, institutions. This is an Argument from *Analogy*, as well as Bishop Butler's, though not relating to the same point; Butler's being a defence of the *Doctrines* of Religion; Burke's, of its *Institutions* and practical effects. A defence of the *Evidences* of our religion, (the third point against which objections have been urged,) on a similar plan with the work of Burke just mentioned, and consequently, like

that, in an ironical form, I attempted some years ago, in a pamphlet (published anonymously, merely for the preservation of its ironical character), whose object was to show, that objections (“Historic Doubts”) similar to those against the Scripture-history, and much more plausible, might be urged against all the received accounts of Napoleon Buonaparte.²⁷

It is in some respects a recommendation of this latter method, and in others an objection to it, that the sophistry of an adversary will often be exposed by it in a *ludicrous* point of view; and this even where no such effect is designed; the very essence of jest being its *mimic sophistry*.²⁸ This will often give additional force to the Argument, by the vivid impression which ludicrous images produce; but again it will not unfrequently have this disadvantage, that weak men, perceiving the wit, are apt to conclude that nothing *but* wit is designed; and lose sight perhaps of a solid and convincing Argument, which they regard as no more than a good joke. Having been warned that “ridicule is not the test of truth,” and “that wisdom and wit” are not the same thing, they distrust every thing that can possibly be regarded as witty; not having judgment to perceive the combination, when it occurs, of Wit with sound Reasoning. The ivy wreath completely conceals from their view the point of the Thyrsus.

Danger of irony.

And moreover if such a mode of Argument be employed on serious subjects, the “weak brethren” are sometimes scandalized by what appears to them a profanation; not having discernment to perceive when it is that the ridicule does, and when it does not, affect the solemn subject itself. But for the respect paid to Holy Writ, the

²⁷To these examples may be added the “Pastoral Epistle to some Members of the University of Oxford,” (Fellowes) first published in 1835, and now reprinted in the “Remains of Bishop Dickinson.” It is the more valuable, now, from the *verification* of the predictions it contains, which, when it first appeared, many were disposed to regard as extravagant. [Au.]

²⁸See *Logic*, Chapter on *Fallacies*, at the conclusion. [Au.]

taunt of Elijah against the prophets of Baal, and Isaiah’s against those who “bow down to the stock of a tree,” would probably appear to such persons irreverent. And the caution now implied will appear the more important, when it is considered how large a majority they are, who, in this point, come under the description of “weak brethren.” He that can laugh at what is ludicrous, and at the same time preserve a clear discernment of sound and unsound Reasoning, is no ordinary man. And moreover the resentment and mortification felt by those whose unsound doctrines, or sophistry, are fully exposed and held up to contempt or ridicule,—this, they will often disguise from others, and sometimes from themselves, by representing the contempt or ridicule as directed against serious or sacred subjects, and not, against their own absurdities: just as if those idolators above alluded to had represented the Prophets as ridiculing *devotional feelings*, and not, merely the absurd misdirection of them to a log of wood. And such persons will often in this way exercise a powerful influence on those whose understanding is so cloudy that they do not clearly perceive against what the ridicule is directed, or who are too dull to understand it at all. For there are some persons so constituted as to be altogether incapable of even comprehending the plainest irony; though they have not in other points any corresponding weakness of intellect. The humorous satirical pamphlet, (attributed to an eminent literary character,) entitled “Advice to a Reviewer,” I have known persons read without perceiving that it was ironical. And the same, with the “Historic Doubts” lately referred to. Such persons, when assured that such and such a Work contains ridicule, and that it has some references to matters of grave importance, take for granted that it must be a work of profane levity.

There is also this danger in the use of irony; that sometimes when titles, in themselves favourable, are applied (or their application retained) to any set of men, in bitter scorn, they will then sometimes be enabled to appropriate such titles in a serious sense; the ironical force gradually evaporating. I mean, such titles as “Orthodox,” “Evangelical,” “Saints,” “Reformers,” “Liberals,” “Political-Economists,” “Rational,”

&c. The advantage thus given may be illustrated by the story of the cocoanuts in Sinbad the Sailor's fifth voyage.

It may be observed generally, that too much stress is often laid, especially by unpractised reasoners, on Refutation; (in the strictest and narrowest sense, i.e., of Objections to the Premises, or to the Reasoning;) I mean, that they are apt both to expect a Refutation where none can fairly be expected, and to attribute to it, when satisfactorily made out, more than it really accomplishes.

Unanswerable arguments may exist on both sides.

For first, not only specious, but real and solid arguments, such as it would be difficult, or impossible to refute, may be urged against a Proposition which is nevertheless true, and may be satisfactorily established by a *preponderance* of probability.²⁹ It is in strictly scientific Reasoning alone that all the arguments which lead to a false Conclusion must be fallacious. In what is called moral or probable Reasoning, there may be sound arguments, and valid objections, on both sides.³⁰ E.g., It may be shown that each of two contending parties has some reason to hope for success; and this, by irrefragable arguments on both sides; leading to conclusions which are not (strictly speaking) contradictory to each other; for though only one party can obtain the victory, it may be true that each has some reason to expect it. The real question in such cases is, which event is the *more* probable;—on which side the evidence preponderates. Now it often happens that the inexperienced reasoner, thinking it necessary that every objection should be satisfactorily answered, will have his attention drawn off from the arguments of the opposite side, and will be occupied perhaps in making a weak defence, while victory was in his hands. The objection perhaps may be unanswerable, and yet may safely be allowed, if it can be shown that more and weightier objections lie

²⁹See above, ch. ii. § 4, and also *Logic*, Part iii. § 17. [Au.]

³⁰Bacon, in his rhetorical commonplaces—heads of arguments *pro* and *contra*, on several questions—has some admirable illustrations of what has been here remarked. [Au.]

against every other supposition. This is a most important caution for those who are studying the Evidences of Religion. Let the opposer of them be called on, instead of confining himself to detached cavils, and saying, "how do you answer this?" and "how do you explain that?" to frame some consistent hypothesis to account for the introduction of Christianity by human means; and then to consider whether there are more or fewer difficulties in his hypothesis than in the other.

Sophistical Refutation.

On the other hand, one may often meet with a sophistical refutation of objections, consisting in counter-objections urged against something else which is taken for granted to be, though it is not, the *only alternative*. E.g., Objections against an unlimited Monarchy may be met by a glowing description of the horrors of the mob-government of the Athenian and Roman Republics. If an exclusive attention to mathematical pursuits be objected to, it may be answered by deprecating the *exclusion* of such studies. It is thus that a man commonly replies to the censure passed on any vice he is addicted to, by representing some other vice as worse; e.g., if he is blamed for being a sot, he dilates on the greater enormity of being a thief; as if there were any need he should be either. And it is in this way alone that the advocates of Transportation have usually defended it: describing some very ill-managed penitentiary system, and assuming, as self-evident and admitted, that this must be the *only possible substitute* for Penal Colonies.³¹ This fallacy may be stated logically, as a Disjunctive Hypothetical, with the Major, false.

Overestimate of the force of refutation.

Secondly, the force of a Refutation is often overrated: an argument which is satisfactorily answered ought merely to *go for nothing*: it is possible that the conclusion drawn may nevertheless be true: yet men are apt to take for granted that

³¹See Letters to Earl Grey on the subject,—Report of Committee, and "Substance of a Speech," &c. [Au.]

the Conclusion itself is disproved, when the Arguments brought forward to establish it have been satisfactorily refuted; assuming, when perhaps there is no ground for the assumption, that these are *all* the arguments that could be urged.³² This may be considered as the fallacy of denying the Consequent of a Conditional Proposition, from the Antecedent having been denied: “if such and such an Argument be admitted, the Assertion in question is true; but that Argument is inadmissible; *therefore the Assertion is not true.*” Hence the injury done to any cause by a weak advocate; the cause itself appearing to the vulgar to be overthrown, when the Arguments brought forward are answered.

“Hence the danger of ever advancing more than can be well maintained; since the refutation

³²“Another form of *ignoratio elenchi* (irrelevant conclusion), which is rather the more serviceable on the side of the respondent, is, to prove or disprove *some part* of that which is required, and dwell on *that*, suppressing all the rest.

“Thus, if a University is charged with cultivating *only* the mere elements of Mathematics, and in reply a list of the books studied there is produced, should even *any one* of those books be *not elementary*, the charge is in fairness refuted; but the Sophist may then earnestly contend that *some* of those books *are* elementary; and thus keep out of sight the real question, *viz.* whether they are *all* so. This is the great art of the *answerer* of a book: suppose the main positions in any work to be irrefragable, it will be strange if some illustration of them, or some subordinate part, in short, will not admit of a plausible objection; the opponent then joins issue on one of these incidental questions, and comes forward with ‘a Reply’ to such and such a work.”—*Logic*, b. iii. § 18. Another expedient which *answerers* sometimes resort to, and which is less likely to remain permanently undetected, is to garble a book; exhibiting statements without their explanations,—conclusions without their proofs,—and passages brought together out of their original order;—so as to produce an appearance of falsehood, confusion, or inconclusiveness. The last and boldest step is for the “answerer” to make some false statement or absurd remark, and then father it upon the author. And even this artifice will sometimes succeed for a time, because many persons do not suspect that any one would venture upon it. Again, it is no uncommon manœuvre of a dexterous sophist, when there is some argument, statement, scheme, &c. which he cannot directly defeat, to assent with seeming cordiality, but with some exception, addition, or qualification, (as e.g., an additional clause in an Act,) which though seemingly unimportant, shall entirely nullify all the rest. This has been humorously compared to the trick of the pilgrim in the well-known tale, who “took the liberty to boil his pease.” [Au.]

of *that* will often quash the whole. A guilty person may often escape by having too much laid to his charge; so he may also by having too much evidence against him, i.e., some that is not in itself satisfactory: thus a prisoner may sometimes obtain acquittal by showing that one of the witnesses against him is an infamous informer and spy; though perhaps if that part of the evidence had been omitted, the rest would have been sufficient for conviction.”³³

The maxim here laid down, however, applies only to those causes in which (waiving the consideration of honesty) first, it is wished to produce not merely a temporary, but a lasting impression, and that, on readers or hearers of some judgment; and secondly, where there really *are* some *weighty* arguments to be urged. When no charge e.g., can really be substantiated, and yet it is desired to produce some present effect on the unthinking, there may be room for the application of the proverb, “Slander stoutly, and something will stick”: the vulgar are apt to conclude, that where a great deal is said, *something* must be true; and many are fond of that lazy contrivance for saving the trouble of thinking,—“splitting the difference”; imagining that they show a laudable caution in believing *only a part* of what is said. And thus a malignant Sophist may gain such a temporary advantage by the multiplicity of his attacks, as the rabble of combatants described by Homer sometimes did by their showers of javelins, which encumbered and weighed down the shield of one of his heroes, though they could not penetrate it.

Objections should be stated in their full force.

On the above principle,—that a weak argument is positively hurtful, is founded a most important maxim, that it is not only the fairest, but also the wisest plan, to *state Objections in their full force*; at least, wherever there does exist a satisfactory answer to them; otherwise, those who hear them stated more strongly than by the uncandid advocate who had undertaken to repel them, will naturally enough conclude that they

³³See *Logic*, b. iii. § 18. [Au.]

are unanswerable. It is but a momentary and ineffective triumph that can be obtained by manœuvres like those of Turnus's charioteer, who furiously chased the feeble stragglers of the army, and evaded the main front of the battle.

And when the objections urged are not unanswerable, but (what is more) *decisive*,—when some argument that has been adduced, or some portion of a system, &c. is perceived to be really unsound, it is the wisest way fairly and fully to confess this, and abandon it altogether. There are many who seem to make it a point of honour never to yield a single point,—never to retract: or (if this be found unavoidable) “to back out”—as the phrase is—of an untenable position, so as to display their reluctance to make any concession; as if their credit was staked on preserving unbroken the talisman of professed infallibility. But there is little wisdom (the question of honesty is out of the province of this treatise) in such a procedure; which in fact is very liable to cast a suspicion on that which is really sound,

when it appears that the advocate is ashamed to abandon what is unsound. And such an honest avowal as I have been recommending, though it may raise at first a feeble and brief shout of exultation, will soon be followed by a general and increasing murmur of approbation. Uncandid as the world often is, it seldom fails to applaud the magnanimity of confessing a defect or a mistake, and to reward it with an increase of confidence. Indeed this increased confidence is often rashly bestowed, by a kind of over-generosity in the Public; which is apt too hastily to consider the confession of an error as a proof of universal sincerity. Some of the most skilful sophists accordingly avail themselves of this; and gain credence for much that is false, by acknowledging with an air of frankness some *one* mistake; which, like a tub thrown to the whale, they sacrifice for the sake of persuading us that they have committed *only one* error. I fear it can hardly be affirmed as yet, that “this trick has been so long used in controversy, as to be almost worn out.”

Maria W. Stewart

1803–1879

Born to free African American parents in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1803, Maria Miller was left an orphan at the age of five and was taken into the family of a Protestant clergyman as an indentured servant. She remained there until the age of fifteen, when she began to support herself as a domestic servant. Most of Maria's formal schooling was apparently acquired in Sabbath schools, which she attended until she was twenty, as she says in her pamphlet *Religion and the Pure Principles of Morality* (1831). Sabbath schools provided basic education in reading and writing so that the students could read the Bible and keep reflective journals. As historian of rhetoric Shirley Wilson Logan has suggested, Maria may also have had access to books, including books on preaching or on rhetoric more generally, because she grew up in the house of a clergyman.¹ In her published work, she expresses an avid desire for education, along with grim reflections on how hard it is to obtain when one is exhausted by manual labor. Scholars now disagree about her level of literacy as a young woman, but most discount the suggestion made in a letter attached to an 1879 edition of her works (see below) that she had to dictate her early publications to a young amanuensis.

Maria married James W. Stewart in Boston in 1826, when she was twenty-three years old and he was forty-seven. At his request, she adopted his middle initial as well as his surname, and became Maria W. Stewart. James Stewart had served in the War of 1812 on three American warships and had then developed a prosperous business as an outfitter for whaling and fishing vessels. He was a leader of Boston's African American community, which was ardently activist though numbering no more than 3 percent of the population of 60,000, and with this marriage Maria Stewart was brought in contact with other important leaders of the day. One of these was the clergyman who performed the Stewarts' wedding ceremony, the Reverend Thomas Paul, one of the first leaders to form an African American Protestant church to avoid the racism that permeated the white denominations. He had founded the African Baptist Church, where he was pastor, and had located the congregation in the African Meeting House on Beacon Hill, which also housed a school for African American children and which held the first meetings of the New England Abolitionist Society in the 1830s.

Even more important to the development of Maria Stewart's thinking was another community leader, David Walker. Born free in North Carolina, he had traveled widely before settling in Boston and building a successful used clothing business. James Stewart acquired clothing from him to provide to the ships he outfitted. Walker was a passionate abolitionist and advocate for African American rights, and he embodied his views in a fiery 1829 publication, *Walker's Appeal in Four*

¹Shirley Wilson Logan, "Maria W. Stewart (1803–1879)," in *With Pen and Voice: A Critical Anthology of Nineteenth-Century African-American Women* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1995), p. 1.

Articles; Together with a Preamble, to the Coloured Citizens of the World, but in Particular, and Very Expressly, to Those of the United States of America. In this extended essay, Walker attacks racist statements made by Thomas Jefferson and others, and he envisions the African American people in the United States as a distinct nation who should rise and throw off their oppressors by force just as the European American colonists did in the American Revolution. Maria Stewart cites this work several times in her own writings with deep respect. According to Maria Stewart's biographer Marilyn Richardson, her husband may have helped Walker to disseminate his work by slipping copies into the pockets of jackets Stewart provided to African American seamen, especially those who would touch at ports in slave states. The *Appeal* rapidly went through three editions and raised outrage among southern slaveholders, some of whom attempted to get the book suppressed legally. Others offered a bounty on Walker's head, and he died suddenly under mysterious circumstances in 1830, leading historians to speculate that he was murdered for this reward.

Walker's death was only one of the traumatic events that shaped Maria Stewart's future at this time. In 1829 her pastor, the Reverend Thomas Paul, died, and so did her husband James. She was left childless but with a substantial inheritance, which, however, was stripped from her by a group of unscrupulous white businessmen after two years of difficult litigation. These losses, and particularly the death of her husband, occasioned a religious crisis for Stewart, from which she emerged with a conviction that God intended her to dedicate herself to the service of her people.

Stewart's first step was to approach William Lloyd Garrison, a European American abolitionist activist, with her essay, *Religion and the Pure Principles of Morality*. In it she exhorts her people to improve themselves morally and educationally and to actively resist white oppression (though she does not recommend violence, since this would go against her religious principles). She also emphasizes that African American women must be active in the community as well as in their own families to achieve these improvements for the race. While diffident about her own verbal abilities, she confesses that her duty to God drives her to deliver these lessons to her people.

Garrison was about the same age as Stewart and was a fellow admirer of Walker. In 1831 he began to publish what would become the country's most famous abolitionist newspaper, *The Liberator*, and he encouraged Stewart by publishing excerpts from her essay in the newspaper and then by publishing the whole text separately as a pamphlet. In choosing Garrison as a publisher, Stewart focused her attention on the African American community, which made up about three-fourths of his subscribers. Ironically, however, given Stewart's feminism, he located her work in *The Liberator's* "Ladies' Department."

Stewart continued to publish occasional comments in *The Liberator* on the battle for African American rights. In 1832 Garrison published another of her works, a pamphlet of religious meditations entitled *Meditations from the Pen of Mrs. Maria W. Stewart*. Not content with these opportunities to address her community in print, unusual and somewhat undecorous as they were for an early-nineteenth-century woman, Stewart began, in 1832, to give public speeches on the issues that con-

cerned her. Her first speech, “An Address, Delivered before the Afric-American Female Intelligence Society, of Boston,” an African American women’s group organized for self-improvement and social action, was probably given in the spring of 1832, since it was published in *The Liberator* in April of that year.

American women were not supposed to call attention to themselves in this way. As historian Barbara Welter has shown, they were supposed to focus exclusively on domestic matters, the home being their natural “sphere,” and truly womanly women were expected to be too pious, pure, and submissive to male authority to want to venture outside this realm. To publish writings under one’s own name was to violate these conventions, even though female authorship was not unknown in this period. But to appear on the public speakers’ platform, a much more serious breach of convention, was virtually unknown—and heavily sanctioned. Initially, Stewart spoke before a presumably all-female audience, thus preserving some shreds of decorum. But in September 1832 with her second speech (included here), known as the “Lecture Delivered at the Franklin Hall,” a Boston antislavery meeting place, she addressed a gender-mixed audience. She may have been the first American woman of any race to do so. One may understand the uproar that such an unconventional action could cause from noting the response when European American upper-class ladies Sarah and Angelina Grimké spoke against slavery in Massachusetts only a few years later (see p. 1045). As historian Shirley A. Yee has shown, community pride in African American women’s accomplishments was later a counterforce to this social disapproval, but Stewart as a pioneer woman public speaker did not yet enjoy this supportive reaction.

Stewart persevered. In February 1833 she presented “An Address Delivered at the African Masonic Hall,” again to a mixed audience. All three speeches sounded the notes first struck in her pamphlet *Religion and the Pure Principles of Morality*. Although she denounced white racism and such racist schemes as sending African Americans to new colonies in Africa, she did not scruple to chastise African Americans, particularly black men, for running after trivial pursuits, for lacking in educational and professional ambition, and for avoiding the challenging task of speaking up for their people’s rights. Walker had made a similar indictment of the African American community; Stewart’s criticism was more religious, more feminist, and less violent. Apparently, however, hearing such trenchant words from the mouth of a woman was too much for her audience. In September 1833, exactly one year after she began her public speaking career, Stewart delivered “Mrs. Stewart’s Farewell Address to Her Friends in the City of Boston” (included here). Although vigorously defending her right as a woman to speak on issues of civic concern, she announced that she would leave the speaker’s platform because of the opposition she had aroused. Indeed, she would leave Boston.

Early in 1834, Stewart moved to New York City. Since she had stressed the need for better education for African Americans in all her works, it is not surprising that she sought employment as a teacher. She also collected texts of her four speeches and two pamphlets and had them published in 1835 by Garrison under the title *Productions of Mrs. Maria W. Stewart, Presented to the First African Baptist Church and Society, of the City of Boston*. Perhaps she felt that she would find sympathetic

readers and hearers among the congregants of her home church. Or perhaps the presentation was intended as an ironic corrective to a religious community that had been torn ever since Reverend Paul's death by dissension over how socially active it was to be, and that had driven away Maria Stewart's voice of social conscience.

Stewart never remarried and struggled with poverty for the rest of her life, after having briefly experienced middle-class life with her husband. Nevertheless, in New York she remained active on behalf of African American rights and women's rights. She joined women's organizations and attended the 1837 Women's Anti-Slavery Convention in the city. In 1850 she organized a fund raiser for *The North Star*, an abolitionist newspaper published by Frederick Douglass (p. 1061), who had escaped slavery to become one of the preeminent African American intellectuals of the nineteenth century. Although Stewart apparently lectured occasionally on the social causes important to her, she never again attempted a sustained career of public speaking.

In a later autobiographical sketch (see below), Stewart says that she left New York for Baltimore in 1852 to seek a better field for her educational efforts. She was largely unsuccessful, and she implies that controversies among the various African American religious denominations made it difficult for her to obtain pupils. When Civil War fighting approached the city in 1861, she fled to Washington, D.C., where, after again working as a teacher, she became the matron of the Freedman's Hospital (a position earlier held by noted African American activist Sojourner Truth). This institution was a sort of refugee camp for escaped and freed slaves, that provided them with food, clothing, and basic education and religious instruction in exchange for manual labor. As matron, Stewart's skills as a teacher were greatly appreciated.

In 1878 a new law enabled Stewart to claim a modest pension as the widow of a veteran of the War of 1812. She used the money in 1879 to publish *Meditations from the Pen of Mrs. Maria W. Stewart*, reusing an earlier title for this new edition of the four speeches and the two pamphlets she had published in Boston, along with a collection of letters from friends, including William Lloyd Garrison, who could testify to her good works from her activist days in Boston to the present. Also included was the autobiographical sketch noted above, of her "Sufferings During the War." Evidently Stewart had been able to return to Boston for a brief visit at this time, perhaps when she collected testimony to support her claim as James Stewart's widow, and, according to Garrison's letter, she and Garrison enjoyed their reunion.

This later republication of her works suggests that Stewart remained proud of her public speaking career to the end of her life and was anxious that it should stay in the written record. Shortly after the later collection was published, she died at the Freedman's Hospital, in December 1879. *The People's Advocate*, the principal newspaper of the Washington African American community, published a glowing eulogy and many letters praising her work (including some of those printed in the 1879 *Meditations*). Soon, however, Stewart's work dropped from sight—to be recovered and revalued by contemporary scholarship.

Stewart's contribution to rhetorical theory, as her biographer and editor Marilyn Richardson argues, lies in her "original synthesis of religious, abolitionist, and fem-

inist concerns,” which “places her squarely in the forefront of a black female activist and literary tradition only now beginning to be acknowledged as of integral significance to the understanding of the history of black thought and culture in America.”² Indeed, says Richardson, Stewart was a “clear forerunner” not only to such noted African American women rhetors as Sojourner Truth and Frances Ellen Watkins Harper (see the introduction to Part Five), but also to male African American activists such as Frederick Douglass, who began his speaking career almost ten years after Stewart’s, in 1841. Moreover, as literary scholar Jean Fagan Yellin has noted, Stewart should have been acknowledged by the European American women activists who soon followed in her footsteps in Massachusetts and elsewhere. They surely knew about her work from reading *The Liberator*. But, says Yellin, racism and perhaps also social class prejudice caused them to pass her over in favor of the white and upper-class Grimké sisters³ (see p. 1045).

Richardson characterizes Stewart’s rhetorical style as a form of “black jeremiad” drawing heavily on announced religious inspiration and on biblical echoes and references, especially to Jeremiah and the Book of Revelations. Literary scholar Carla Peterson explains that, as in later African American social protest, religious inspiration provides an important source of authority for speakers facing powerful opposition: “Religious belief, in particular belief in God’s divine protection, became a source of self-empowerment, an authorization to act in the world.”⁴ Furthermore, notes Peterson, “spirituality provided a gateway to political thought and often functioned as a springboard for discussions of secular history,”⁵ as can be seen in Stewart’s many references (noted also by Richardson) to the African past and African greatness, which clearly try to connect African Americans to a proud collective legacy. Stewart’s principal agenda in exhorting her African American audience to social change includes the need for education, women’s activism, and vigorous resistance to white oppression. Until, perhaps, the twentieth century, few women speakers have followed Stewart’s path in the complexity of their rhetorical personae.

Selected Bibliography

Marilyn Richardson’s *Maria W. Stewart, America’s First Black Woman Political Writer: Essays and Speeches* (1987) collects *Religion and the Pure Principles of Morality*, “Cause for Encouragement” (one of Stewart’s notes in *The Liberator*), the four Boston speeches, and the preface, letters, and autobiographical sketch from the 1879 edition of Stewart’s works. Richardson’s notes are very helpful. This edition is the source of our selections from Stewart. The complete text of the 1835 *Productions of Mrs. Maria W. Stewart*, including her 1832

²Marilyn Richardson, “Preface,” in Maria W. Stewart, *Maria W. Stewart, America’s First Black Woman Political Writer: Essays and Speeches*, ed. and intro. Marilyn Richardson (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), p. xiv.

³Jean Fagan Yellin, *Women and Sisters: The Antislavery Feminists in American Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), p. 84.

⁴Carla Peterson, “*Doers of the Word*”: *African-American Women Speakers and Writers in the North (1830–1880)* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 56.

⁵Peterson, p. 56.

Meditations from the Pen of Mrs. Maria W. Stewart (religious meditations), can be found in *Spiritual Narratives*, a 1988 volume in the Schomburg Library of Nineteenth-Century Black Women Writers. Stewart's Franklin Hall speech is reprinted with helpful notes in Karlyn Kohrs Campbell's *Man Cannot Speak for Her, Volume II: Key Texts of the Early Feminists* (1986). This speech and the "Address Delivered before the Afric-American Female Intelligence Society of Boston" can also be found, with a helpful introduction, in Shirley Wilson Logan's *With Pen and Voice: A Critical Anthology of Nineteenth-Century African-American Women* (1995).

The best account of Stewart's life remains Richardson's introduction to her collection of Stewart's works (see above). Jacqueline Jones Royster helpfully locates Stewart in the context of a literate and politically active African American community in *Traces of a Stream: Literacy and Social Change among African American Women* (2000). On the African American context, see also Shirley A. Yee's *Black Women Abolitionists: A Study in Activism, 1828–1860* (1992). Sue E. Houchins's introduction to the *Spiritual Narratives* volume (see above) places Stewart in the Western tradition of female mystics and groups her with Jarena Lee, Julia Foote, and Virginia Broughton, African American women who felt called by God to preach. Jean Fagan Yellin situates Stewart in the context of nineteenth-century white and black women's abolitionist activism in *Women and Sisters: The Antislavery Feminists in American Culture* (1989). Still helpful on the antifeminist ideologies against which activist women had to contend is Barbara Welter's "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820–1860," in *Dimity Convictions: The American Woman in the Nineteenth Century* (1976). For more on how these ideologies affected the African American community, see James Oliver Horton's "Freedom's Yoke: Gender Conventions among Free Blacks," in *Free People of Color* (1993).

Marilyn Richardson describes Stewart's rhetorical style in the introduction to her collection of Stewart's works. Shirley Wilson Logan discusses the African cultural connections in her work in "We Are Coming": *The Persuasive Discourse of Nineteenth-Century Black Women* (1999). In "Doers of the Word": *African-American Women Speakers and Writers in the North (1830–1880)* (1995), Carla Peterson analyzes Stewart's rhetorical strategies in detail and clarifies the importance of spirituality in her thinking. Also analyzing Stewart's rhetoric with a special eye to her adaptation of domestic ideologies is Laura R. Sells, "Maria W. Miller Stewart," in *Women Public Speakers in the United States, 1800–1925: A Bio-Critical Sourcebook*, ed. Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, 1993. Problems with Stewart's mix of feminine and militant personae are discussed in detail by Lora Romero in *Home Fronts: Domesticity and Its Critics in the Antebellum United States* (1997).

Lecture Delivered at the Franklin Hall¹

Boston, September 21, 1832

Why sit ye here and die? If we say we will go to a foreign land, the famine and the pestilence are there, and there we shall die. If we sit here, we shall die. Come let us plead our cause before the whites: if they save us alive, we shall live—and if they kill us, we shall but die.²

Methinks I heard a spiritual interrogation—“Who shall go forward, and take off the reproach that is cast upon the people of color? Shall it be a woman?” And my heart made this reply—“If it is thy will, be it even so, Lord Jesus!”

I have heard much respecting the horrors of slavery; but may Heaven forbid that the generality of my color throughout these United States should experience any more of its horrors than to be a servant of servants, or hewers of wood and drawers of water [Joshua 9:23]! Tell us no more of southern slavery; for with few exceptions, although I may be very erroneous in my opinion, yet I consider our condition but little better than that. Yet, after all, methinks there are no chains so galling as those that bind the soul, and exclude it from the vast field of useful and scientific knowledge. O, had I received the advantages of an early education, my ideas would, ere now, have expanded far and wide; but, alas! I possess nothing but moral capability—no teachings but the teachings of the Holy Spirit.

I have asked several individuals of my sex, who transact business for themselves, if providing our girls were to give them the most satisfactory references, they would not be willing to grant them an equal opportunity with others? Their reply has been—for their own part, they had no objection; but as it was not the custom, were they to take them into their employ, they would be in danger of losing the public patronage.

Edited by Marilyn Richardson.

¹Franklin Hall, at No. 16 Franklin Street in Boston, was the site of regular monthly meetings of the New England Anti-Slavery Society. [M. R.]

²Stewart employs the rhetorical structure of 2 Kings 7:3, 4. [M.R.]

And such is the powerful force of prejudice. Let our girls possess whatever amiable qualities of soul they may; let their characters be fair and spotless as innocence itself; let their natural taste and ingenuity be what they may; it is impossible for scarce an individual of them to rise above the condition of servants. Ah! why is this cruel and unfeeling distinction? Is it merely because God has made our complexion to vary? If it be, O shame to soft, relenting humanity! “Tell it not in Gath! publish it not in the streets of Askelon!” [2 Samuel 1:20]. Yet, after all, methinks were the American free people of color to turn their attention more assiduously to moral worth and intellectual improvement, this would be the result: prejudice would gradually diminish, and the whites would be compelled to say, unloose those fetters!³

Though black their skins as shades of night
Their hearts are pure, their souls are white.

Few white persons of either sex, who are calculated for anything else, are willing to spend their lives and bury their talents in performing mean, servile labor. And such is the horrible idea that I entertain respecting a life of servitude, that if I conceived of their [sic] being no possibility of my rising above the condition of servant, I would gladly hail death as a welcome messenger. O, horrible idea, indeed! to possess noble souls aspiring after high and honorable acquirements, yet confined by the chains of ignorance and poverty to lives of continual drudgery and toil. Neither do I know of any who have enriched themselves by spending their lives as house-domestics, washing windows, shaking carpets, brushing boots, or tending upon gentlemen’s tables. I can but die for expressing my sentiments: and I am as willing to die by the

³The United States census of 1830 listed a black population of 2,328,642 or 18 percent of the total U.S. population; 319,599 were free. Fifty-seven percent of all free blacks lived in the Southern states and Washington, D.C. The free black population of Massachusetts was 7,048. Peter M. Bergman, ed., *The Chronological History of the Negro in America* (New York: New American Library, 1969), p. 136. [M.R.]

sword as the pestilence; for I am a true born American; your blood flows in my veins, and your spirit fires my breast.

I observed a piece in the *Liberator* a few months since, stating that the colonizationists had published a work respecting us, asserting that we were lazy and idle. I confute them on that point. Take us generally as a people, we are neither lazy nor idle; and considering how little we have to excite or stimulate us, I am almost astonished that there are so many industrious and ambitious ones to be found; although I acknowledge, with extreme sorrow, that there are some who never were and never will be serviceable to society. And have you not a similar class among yourselves?

Again. It was asserted that we were "a ragged set, crying for liberty." I reply to it, the whites have so long and so loudly proclaimed the theme of equal rights and privileges, that our souls have caught the flame also, ragged as we are. As far as our merit deserves, we feel a common desire to rise above the condition of servants and drudges. I have learnt, by bitter experience, that continual hard labor deadens the energies of the soul, and benumbs the faculties of the mind; the ideas become confined, the mind barren, and, like the scorching sands of Arabia, produces nothing; or like the uncultivated soil, brings forth thorns and thistles.

Again, continual and hard labor irritates our tempers and sours our dispositions; the whole system becomes worn out with toil and fatigue; nature herself becomes almost exhausted, and we care but little whether we live or die. It is true, that the free people of color throughout these United States are neither bought nor sold, nor under the lash of the cruel driver; many obtain a comfortable support; but few, if any, have an opportunity of becoming rich and independent; and the enjoyments we most pursue are as unprofitable to us as the spider's web or the floating bubbles that vanish into air. As servants, we are respected; but let us presume to aspire any higher, our employer regards us no longer. And were it not that the King eternal has declared that Ethiopia shall stretch forth her hands unto God, I should indeed despair.

I do not consider it derogatory, my friends, for persons to live out to service. There are many whose inclination leads them to aspire no higher;

and I would highly commend the performance of almost anything for an honest livelihood; but where constitutional strength is wanting, labor of this kind, in its mildest form, is painful. And doubtless many are the prayers that have ascended to Heaven from Africa's daughters for strength to perform their work. Oh, many are the tears that have been shed for the want of that strength! Most of our color have dragged out a miserable existence of servitude from the cradle to the grave. And what literary acquirement can be made, or useful knowledge derived, from either maps, books, or charts, by those who continually drudge from Monday morning until Sunday noon? O, ye fairer sisters, whose hands are never soiled, whose nerves and muscles are never strained, go learn by experience! Had we had the opportunity that you have had, to improve our moral and mental faculties, what would have hindered our intellects from being as bright, and our manners from being as dignified as yours? Had it been our lot to have been nursed in the lap of affluence and ease, and to have basked beneath the smiles and sunshine of fortune, should we not have naturally supposed that we were never made to toil? And why are not our forms as delicate, and our constitutions as slender, as yours? Is not the workmanship as curious and complete? Have pity upon us, have pity upon us, O ye who have hearts to feel for other's woes; for the hand of God has touched us. Owing to the disadvantages under which we labor, there are many flowers among us that are

... born to bloom unseen
And waste their fragrance on the desert air.⁴

My beloved brethren, as Christ has died in vain for those who will not accept his offered mercy, so will it be vain for the advocates of freedom to spend their breath in our behalf, unless with united hearts and souls you make some mighty efforts to raise your sons and daughters from the horrible state of servitude and degradation in which they are placed. It is upon you that woman depends; she can do but little besides using her influence; and it is for her sake and

⁴"Full many a flower is born to bloom unseen, / And waste its sweetness on the desert air" (Thomas Gray, "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard," 1751). [M.R.]

yours that I have come forward and made myself a hissing and a reproach among the people [Jeremiah 29:18]; for I am also one of the wretched and miserable daughters of the descendants of fallen Africa. Do you ask, why are you wretched and miserable? I reply, look at many of the most worthy and most interesting of us doomed to spend our lives in gentlemen's kitchens. Look at our young men, smart, active and energetic, with souls filled with ambitious fire; if they look forward, alas! What are their prospects? They can be nothing but the humblest laborers, on account of their dark complexions; hence many of them lose their ambition, and become worthless.⁵ Look at our middle-aged men, clad in their rusty plaids and coats; in winter, every cent they earn goes to buy their wood and pay their rents; the poor wives also toil beyond their strength, to help support their families. Look at our aged sires, whose heads are whitened with the frosts of seventy winters, with their old wood-saws on their backs.

⁵At this period in Boston, "no colored boy could be apprenticed to any trade in any shop where white men worked." See James Oliver Horton, *Black Activism in Boston 1830-1860*, doctoral dissertation, Brandeis University, 1973, p. 58. [M.R.]

Alas, what keeps us so? Prejudice, ignorance and poverty. But ah! methinks our oppression is soon to come to an end; yea, before the Majesty of heaven, our groans and cries have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth [James 5:4]. As the prayers and tears of Christians will avail the finally impenitent nothing; neither will the prayers and tears of the friends of humanity avail us anything, unless we possess a spirit of virtuous emulation within our breasts. Did the pilgrims, when they first landed on these shores, quietly compose themselves and say, "The Britons have all the money and all the power, and we must continue their servants forever?" Did they sluggishly sigh and say, "Our lot is hard, the Indians own the soil, and we cannot cultivate it?" No; they first made powerful efforts to raise themselves, and then God raised up those illustrious patriots, WASHINGTON and LAFAYETTE, to assist and defend them. And, my brethren, have you made a powerful effort? Have you prayed the legislature for mercy's sake to grant you all the rights and privileges of free citizens, that your daughters may rise to that degree of respectability which true merit deserves, and your sons above the servile situations which most of them fill?

Mrs. Stewart's Farewell Address to Her Friends in the City of Boston

Delivered September 21, 1833

Is this vile world a friend to grace,
To help me on to God?

Ah, no! For it is with great tribulation that any shall enter through the gates of the holy city [Acts 14:22].

My Respected Friends,

You have heard me observe that the shortness of time, the certainty of death, and the instability of all things here, induce me to turn my thoughts

from earth to heaven. Borne down with a heavy load of sin and shame, my conscience filled with remorse; considering the throne of God forever guiltless, and my own eternal condemnation as just, I was at last brought to accept of salvation as a free gift, in and through the merits of a crucified Redeemer.¹ Here I was brought to see,

'Tis not by works of righteousness
That our own hands have done,
But we are saved by grace alone,
Abounding through the Son.²

¹See Ephesians 2:8. [M.R.]

²Watts, Hymn 225, the third stanza. [M.R.]

After these convictions, in imagination I found myself sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed in my right mind. For I had been like a ship tossed to and fro, in a storm at sea. Then was I glad when I realized the dangers I had escaped; and then I consecrated by soul and body, and all the powers of my mind to his service, and from that time henceforth; yea, even for evermore, amen.

I found that religion was full of benevolence; I found there was joy and peace in believing, and I felt as though I was commanded to come out from the world and be separate; to go forward and be baptized. Methought I heard a spiritual interrogation, are you able to drink of that cup that I have drank of? And to be baptized with the baptism that I have been baptized with [Matthew 20:22]? And my heart made this reply: Yea, Lord, I am able. Yet amid these bright hopes, I was filled with apprehensive fears, lest they were false. I found that sin still lurked within; it was hard for me to renounce all for Christ, when I saw my earthly prospects blasted. O, how bitter was that cup. Yet I drank it to its very dregs. It was hard for me to say, thy will be done; yet I was made to bend and kiss the rod. I was at last made willing to be anything or nothing, for my Redeemer's sake. Like many, I was anxious to retain the world in one hand, and religion in the other. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon [Matthew 6:24]," sounded in my ear, and with giant-strength, I cut off my right hand, as it were, and plucked out my right eye, and cast them from me, thinking it better to enter life halt and maimed, rather than having two hands or eyes to be cast into hell [Mark 9:43]. Thus ended these mighty conflicts, and I received this heart-cheering promise, "That neither death, nor life, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, should be able to separate me from the love of Christ Jesus, our Lord [Romans 8:38, 39]."

And truly, I can say with St. Paul that at my conversion I came to the people in the fulness of the gospel of grace [Romans 15:29]. Having spent a few months in the city of —, previous, I saw the flourishing condition of their churches, and the progress they were making in their Sabbath Schools. I visited their Bible classes, and

heard of the union that existed in their Female Associations. On my arrival here, not finding scarce an individual who felt interested in these subjects, and but few of the whites, except Mr. Garrison, and his friend, Mr. Knapp; and hearing that those gentlemen had observed that female influence was powerful, my soul became fired with a holy zeal for your cause; every nerve and muscle in me was engaged in your behalf. I felt that I had a great work to perform; and was in haste to make a profession of my faith in Christ, that I might be about my Father's business [Luke 2:49]. Soon after I made this profession, The Spirit of God came before me, and I spake before many. When going home, reflecting on what I had said, I felt ashamed, and knew not where I should hide myself. A something said within my breast, "Press forward, I will be with thee." And my heart made this reply, Lord, if thou wilt be with me, then I will speak for thee as long as I live. And thus far I have every reason to believe that it is the divine influence of the Holy Spirit operating upon my heart that could possibly induce me to make the feeble and unworthy efforts that I have.

But to begin my subject: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, whoso is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment; and whoso shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council. But whosoever shall say, thou fool, shall be in danger of hell-fire [Matthew 5:22]." For several years my heart was in continual sorrow. And I believe that the Almighty beheld from his holy habitation, the affliction wherewith I was afflicted, and heard the false misrepresentations wherewith I was misrepresented, and there was none to help. Then I cried unto the Lord in my troubles. And thus for wise and holy purposes, best known to himself, he has raised me in the midst of my enemies, to vindicate my wrongs before this people; and to reprove them for sin, as I have reasoned to them of righteousness and judgment to come. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are his ways above our ways, and his thoughts above our thoughts [Isaiah 55:9]." I believe, that for wise and holy purposes, best known to himself, he hath unloosed my tongue, and put his word into my mouth, in order to confound and put all those

to shame that have rose up against me. For he hath clothed by face with steel, and lined my forehead with brass. He hath put his testimony within me, and engraven his seal on my forehead [Revelation 9:4]. And with these weapons I have indeed set the fiends of earth and hell at defiance.

What if I am a woman; is not the God of ancient times the God of these modern days? Did he not raise up Deborah, to be a mother, and a judge in Israel [Judges 4:4]? Did not queen Esther save the lives of the Jews? And Mary Magdalene first declare the resurrection of Christ from the dead? Come, said the woman of Samaria, and see a man that hath told me all things that ever I did, is not this the Christ? St. Paul declared that it was a shame for a woman to speak in public, yet our great High Priest and Advocate did not condemn the woman for a more notorious offence than this; neither will he condemn this worthless worm. The bruised reed he will not break, and the smoking flax he will not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory. Did St. Paul but know of our wrongs and deprivations, I presume he would make no objections to our pleading in public for our rights. Again; holy women ministered unto Christ and the apostles; and women of refinement in all ages, more or less, have had a voice in moral, religious and political subjects. Again; why the Almighty hath imparted onto me the power of speaking thus, I cannot tell. "And Jesus lifted up his voice and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and has revealed them unto babes: even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight [Luke 10:21]."

But to convince you of the high opinion that was formed of the capacity and ability of woman by the ancients, I would refer you to "Sketches of the Fair Sex." Read to the 51st page, and you will find that several of the Northern nations imagined that women could look into futurity, and that they had about them, an inconceivable something, approaching to divinity. Perhaps that idea was only the effect of the sagacity common to the sex, and the advantages which their natural address gave them over rough and simple warriors. Perhaps, also, those barbarians, surprised at the

influence which beauty has over force, were led to ascribe to the supernatural attraction, a charm which they could not comprehend. A belief, however, that the Deity more readily communicates himself to women, has at one time or other, prevailed in every quarter of the earth; not only among the Germans and the Britons, but all the people of Scandinavia were possessed of it. Among the Greeks, women delivered the Oracles; the respect the Romans paid to the Sibyls is well known. The Jews had their prophetesses. The prediction of the Egyptian women obtained much credit at Rome, even under the Emperors. And in the most barbarous nations, all things that have the appearance of being supernatural, the mysteries of religion, the secrets of physic, and the rites of magic, were in the possession of women.

If such women as are here described have once existed, be no longer astonished then, my brethren and friends, that God at this eventful period should raise up your own females to strive, by their example both in public and private, to assist those who are endeavoring stop the strong current of prejudice that flows so profusely against us at present. No longer ridicule their efforts, it will be counted for sin. For God makes use of feeble means sometimes, to bring about his most exalted purposes.

In the 15th century, the general spirit of this period is worthy of observation. We might then have seen women preaching and mixing themselves in controversies. Women occupying the chairs of Philosophy and Justice; women writing in Greek, and studying in Hebrew. Nuns were poetesses, and women of quality Divines; and young girls who had studied Eloquence, would with the sweetest countenances and the most plaintive voices, pathetically exhort the Pope and the Christian Princes to declare war against the Turks. Women in those days devoted their leisure hours to contemplation and study: The religious spirit which has animated women in all ages, showed itself at this time. It has made them by turns, martyrs, apostles, warriors, and concluded in making them divines and scholars.

Why cannot a religious spirit animate us now? Why cannot we become divines and scholars? Although learning is somewhat requisite, yet recollect that those great apostles, Peter and James,

were ignorant and unlearned. They were taken from the fishing boat, and made fishers of men.³

In the 13th century, a young lady of Bologne devoted herself to the study of the Latin language, and of the laws. At the age of twenty-three she pronounced a funeral oration in Latin, in the great church of Bologne. And to be admitted as an orator, she had neither need of indulgence on account of her youth or of her sex. At the age of twenty-six, she took the degree of Doctor of Laws, and began publicly to expound the Institutions of Justinian. At the age of thirty, her great reputation raised her to a chair, where she taught the law to a prodigious concourse of scholars from all nations. She joined the charms and accomplishments of a woman to all the knowledge of a man. And such was the power of her eloquence, that her beauty was only admired when her tongue was silent.

What if such women as are here described should rise among our sable race? And it is not impossible. For it is not the color of the skin that makes the man or the woman, but the principle formed in the soul. Brilliant wit will shine, come from whence it will; and genius and talent will not hide the brightness of its lustre.

But, to return to my subject; the mighty work of reformation has begun among this people. The dark clouds of ignorance are dispersing. The light of science is bursting forth. Knowledge is beginning to flow, nor will its moral influence by extinguished till its refulgent rays have spread over us from East to West, and from North to South. Thus far is this mighty work begun, but not as yet accomplished. Christians must awake from their slumbers. Religion must flourish among them before the church will be built up in its purity, or immorality be suppressed.

Yet, notwithstanding your prospects are thus fair and bright, I am about to leave you, perhaps never more to return. For I find it is no use for me as an individual to try to make myself useful among my color in this city. It was contempt for my moral and religious opinions in private that drove me thus before a public. Had experience more plainly shown me that it was the nature of man to crush his fellow, I should not have

³Matthew 4:15. [M.R.]

thought it so hard. Wherefore, my respected friends, let us no longer talk of prejudice, till prejudice becomes extinct at home. Let us no longer talk of opposition, till we cease to oppose our own. For while these evils exist, to talk is like giving breath to the air, and labor to the wind. Though wealth is far more highly prized than humble merit, yet none of these things move me. Having God for my friend and portion, what have I to fear? Promotion cometh neither from the East or West, and as long as it is the will of God, I rejoice that I am as I am; for man in his best estate is altogether vanity. Men of eminence have mostly risen from obscurity; nor will I, although a female of a darker hue, and far more obscure than they, bend my head or hang my harp upon willows [Psalm 137:2]; for though poor, I will virtuous prove. And if it is the will of my heavenly Father to reduce me to penury and want, I am ready to say, amen, even so be it. "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head [Matthew 8:20]."

During the short period of my Christian warfare, I have indeed had to contend against the fiery darts of the devil. And was it not that the righteous are kept by the mighty power of God through faith unto salvation, long before this I should have proved to be like the seed by the way-side. For it has actually appeared to me at different periods as though the powers of earth and hell had combined against me, to prove my overthrow. Yet amidst their dire attempts, I have found the Almighty to be "a friend that sticketh closer than a brother [Proverbs 18:24]." He never will forsake the soul that leans on him; though he chastens and corrects it, it is for the soul's best interest. "And as a Father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him [Psalm 103:13]."

But some of you have said, "do not talk so much about religion, the people do not wish to hear you. We know these things, tell us something we do not know." If you know these things, my dear friends, and have performed them, far happier, and more prosperous would you now have been. "He that knoweth the Lord's will and obeyeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes [Luke 12:42]." Sensible of this, I have, regardless

of the frowns and scoffs of a guilty world, plead [sic] up religion, and the pure principles of morality among you. Religion is the most glorious theme that mortals can converse upon. The older it grows, the more new beauties it displays. Earth, with its brilliant attractions, appears mean and sordid when compared to it. It is that fountain that has no end, and those that drink thereof shall never thirst; for it is, indeed, a well of water springing up in the soul unto everlasting life.

Again, those ideas of greatness which are held forth to us, are vain delusions, are airy visions which we shall never realize. All that man can say or do can never elevate us, it is a work that must be effected between God and ourselves. And how? By dropping all political discussions in our behalf, for these, in my opinion, sow the seed of discord, and strengthen the cord of prejudice.⁴ A spirit of animosity is already risen, and unless it is quenched, a fire will burst forth and devour us, and our young will be slain by the sword. It is the sovereign will of God that our condition should be thus and so. "For he hath formed one vessel for honor, and another for dishonor [Romans 9:21]." And shall the clay say to him that hath formed it, why hast thou formed me thus? It is high time to drop political discussions, and when our day of deliverance comes, God will provide a way for us to escape, and fight his own battles.

Finally, my brethren, let us follow after godliness, and the things which make for peace. Cultivate your own minds and morals; real merit will elevate you. Pure religion will burst your fetters. Turn your attention to industry. Strive to please your employers. Lay up what you can. And remember, that in the grave, distinction withers, and the high and low are alike renowned.

But I draw to a conclusion. Long will the kind sympathy of some much loved friend, be written on the tablet of my memory, especially those kind individuals who have stood by me like pity-

⁴Here Stewart espouses the Garrisonian view opposing a political solution to the question of slavery. Garrison vowed that he would never hold office or exercise the franchise in a government that included slave-holders. The Constitution, as he saw it, was a proslavery instrument and hence not to be supported by a true abolitionist. See Quarles, *Abolitionists*, p. 43. [M.R.]

ing angels, and befriended me when in the midst of difficulty; many blessings rest on them. Gratitude is all the tribute I can offer. A rich reward awaits them.

To my unconverted friends, one and all, I would say, shortly this frail tenement of mine will be dissolved and lie mouldering in ruins. O, solemn thought! Yet why should I revolt, for it is the glorious hope of a blessed immortality, beyond the grave, that has supported me thus far through this vale of tears. Who among you will strive to meet me at the right hand of Christ. For the great day of retribution is fast approaching, and who shall be able to abide his coming? You are forming characters for eternity. As you live so will you die; as death leaves you, so judgment will find you. Then shall we receive the glorious welcome, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from before the foundation of the world [Matthew 25:34]." Or, hear the heart-rending sentence, "Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels [Matthew 25:41]." When thrice ten thousand years have rolled away, eternity will be but just begun. Your ideas will but just begin to expand. O, eternity, who can unfathom thine end, or comprehend thy beginning.

Dearly beloved, I have made myself contemptible in the eyes of many, that I might win some. But it has been like labor in vain. "Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but God alone giveth the increase [1 Corinthians 3:6]."

To my brethren and sisters in the church, I would say, be ye clothed with the breast-plate of righteousness, having your loins girt about with truth [Ephesians 6:14], prepared to meet the Bridegroom at his coming [Matthew 25:1-13]; for blessed are those servants that are found watching.

Farewell. In a few short years from now, we shall meet in those upper regions where parting will be no more. There we shall sing and shout, and shout and sing, and make heaven's high arches ring. There we shall range in rich pastures, and partake of those living streams that never dry. O, blissful thought! Hatred and contention shall cease, and we shall join with redeemed millions in ascribing glory and honor, and riches, and power and blessing to the Lamb that was

slain, and to him that sitteth upon the throne. Nor eye hath seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive of the joys that are prepared for them that love God. Thus far has my life been almost a life of complete disappointment. God had tried me as by fire. Well was I aware that if I contended boldly for his cause, I must suffer, Yet, I chose rather to suffer affliction with his people, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. And I believe that the glorious declaration was about to be made applicable to me, that was made to God's ancient covenant people by the prophet, Comfort ye,

comfort ye, my people: say unto her that her warfare is accomplished, and that her iniquities are pardoned. I believe that a rich award awaits me, if not in this world, in the world to come. O, blessed reflection. The bitterness of my soul has departed from those who endeavored to discourage and hinder me in my Christian progress; and I can now forgive my enemies, bless those who have hated me, and cheerfully pray for those who have despitefully used and persecuted me.

Fare you well, farewell.

MARIA S. [sic] STEWART
New York, April 14, 1834

Sarah Grimké

1792–1873

Sarah Moore Grimké was the sixth of nine children born to wealthy parents in Charleston, South Carolina. Her father, John Grimké, was a Revolutionary War veteran, a judge, owner of numerous plantations and slaves, and one of the most important political leaders in the region. Grimké and her sisters were educated by tutors and at finishing schools for well-to-do girls in Charleston. Art, music, and needlework were emphasized, rather than mathematics, science, history, or languages. Grimké's brothers studied these latter subjects, with tutors or at schools for boys. However, Grimké was especially close to her older brother Thomas, and he taught her some of what he had learned. She wanted to be a lawyer, and her father is supposed to have said that if she had been male, she would have made a good one.¹ He allowed her to participate in the debates he staged for his sons to practice forensic oratory, but he refused permission for her to study Latin with Thomas. Thomas's departure in 1805 for Yale, where his sister could not go, was a sad time for her. Her parents' last child, Angelina Emily, was born the following year, and thirteen-year-old Sarah asked to be made her godmother. Devotion to Angelina became a major focal point of Sarah Grimké's life.

From a young age, Grimké appears to have questioned the slave system in which she was immersed. As a young woman, she became deeply religious, and was torn between the round of social events and decorative activities with which she was supposed to amuse herself, and the spiritual crises brought on by ardent preaching and by her growing revulsion toward slavery. Grimké became interested in the Society of Friends when she accompanied her dying father on a trip to Philadelphia to seek medical aid from a specialist who happened to be a Quaker. After Judge Grimké's death in 1819, Grimké returned to Charleston but became increasingly withdrawn from the leisurely life of upper-class white women there and oppressed in spirit by the pervasive cruelty of slavery. Soon she returned to Philadelphia, and in 1823 formally joined the Society of Friends. Grimké became very close to Israel Morris, a Quaker widower who had instructed her in the faith, but ultimately decided not to accept his offer of marriage. In 1829, Angelina Grimké joined her sister in Philadelphia, where they were able to live comfortably on their inherited income, and shortly thereafter Angelina too joined the Society of Friends. The Grimkés found racism among the Philadelphia Quakers; for example, there was a separate bench at the meetinghouse for black members—on which Sarah and Angelina sat in protest. But many Quakers also were working against slavery, including Lucretia Mott, whose home was a way station on the Underground Railroad that helped slaves escape to freedom.

The Grimké sisters were impressed by Mott's activism, and gradually they became involved in abolitionist work themselves, with Angelina, the more outspoken

¹Elizabeth Ann Bartlett, *Liberty, Equality, Sorority: The Origins and Interpretation of American Feminist Thought: Frances Wright, Sarah Grimké, Margaret Fuller* (Brooklyn: Carlson, 1994), p. 57.

of the two, taking the lead. In 1836, Angelina Grimké published *An Appeal to the Christian Women of the Southern States*, urging them to oppose slavery on moral grounds. This pamphlet created a sensation, and she was soon in great demand as an abolitionist speaker. The American Anti-Slavery Society (AASS) recruited the sisters to act as its agents—the first women to do so—who would speak around the country on behalf of the cause. They attended a training session for AASS agents in New York City led by Theodore Weld, and then, in 1837, accepted an invitation from the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society to speak in Massachusetts, a tour that turned out to have historic consequences.

As feminist historian Gerda Lerner characterizes the sisters' relationship, Angelina was the doer, the activist, and Sarah was the thinker, the theorist. When the sisters addressed groups together, Sarah usually began by carefully laying out evidence of slavery's evils and biblical justifications for opposing it, and then Angelina would take the floor to passionately denounce the institution based on her eyewitness experience of its horrors, exhorting the audience to act before this moral evil brought Divine vengeance on the nation. It was still unusual and highly improper for women to speak in public, and initially the Grimké sisters accepted invitations to speak only before women's groups. The AASS intended them to address the separate female sections that most antislavery organizations maintained. Angelina Grimké, however, became an orator of such power that when the sisters toured in Massachusetts, men began to sit in on the women's meetings just to hear her.

The sisters were not the first women of established social position in America—the first “respectable” women—to address audiences of men and women together, what were then called “promiscuous gatherings.” Even in Massachusetts, they had been preceded by Maria W. Stewart (p. 1031), who addressed mixed audiences in the early 1830s. But Stewart, though middle-class, was African American, and her speeches had not attracted much attention outside the Boston African American community. In contrast, the Grimkés were respectable, refined “southern ladies,” and as speech communication scholar Kristin S. Vonnegut has pointed out, this very high social position made their public appearance all the more unseemly to conservatives.²

Opposition to the Grimké sisters' activities soon emerged. Their Massachusetts speaking engagements were increasingly attended by male hecklers who threatened violence, and the sisters encountered unexpected difficulties engaging halls in which to speak. Moreover, they were formally chastised in print by Catharine Beecher, a prominent educator who objected not only to their position for immediate abolition but also to their “unwomanliness” in defending it in public. Further, the General Association of Congregational Churches in Massachusetts issued a pastoral letter that stopped just short of naming names in condemning both radical abolitionism and women who took social-activist roles, especially when they alluded to the sexual exploitation of female slaves, an evil that the Grimké sisters had wit-

²Kristin S. Vonnegut, “Sarah M. Grimké,” in *Women Speakers in the United States, 1800–1925: A Bio-Critical Sourcebook*, ed. Karlyn Kohrs Campbell (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1993), p. 220.

nessed in their own family and that they did not scruple to expose. The ministers suggested that women who took on such activist roles called their own chastity into question; one of them is said to have remarked that he expected the Grimké sisters soon to appear on the speaker's platform nude.³

While Angelina Grimké rebutted Beecher's attack on the sisters' abolitionist position, Sarah Grimké responded to the ministers' attack on their right to speak. Her *Letters on the Equality of the Sexes and the Condition of Woman*, three of which are included here, were published serially in 1837 in a Massachusetts newspaper, *The Spectator*, and immediately reprinted in *The Liberator*, the newspaper published by radical abolitionist leader William Lloyd Garrison, whom the sisters had met in Boston. The letters appeared in book form in 1838. They are addressed to Mary Parker, president of the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society, which supported the sisters' Massachusetts speaking tour. At Parker's suggestion, Grimké raised a number of feminist issues—ironically, Parker ultimately rejected Grimké's feminism as too anticlerical and detrimental to the cause of abolition (the Boston society dissolved in conflict over these issues in 1840). The emergence of feminism in Sarah Grimké's work created an uproar elsewhere in the abolition movement as well, as political scientist Aileen Kraditor has shown. Also in 1840, the American Anti-Slavery Society split into two separate groups over this issue, one admitting women to full membership and the other remaining a male-dominated organization with a women's auxiliary. By 1848, women's growing awareness of their need for activism on their own behalf resulted in the first American women's rights convention, in Seneca Falls, New York.

In 1838, Angelina Grimké delivered two powerful addresses against slavery, one before the Massachusetts state legislature and one in Philadelphia at the dedication of Pennsylvania Hall, which was burned to the ground by an angry mob shortly after she spoke. At this time, she married fellow abolitionist Theodore Weld, who urged both sisters to abandon their public role because he felt it hurt the abolitionist cause, even though he believed in their right to speak. They took his advice. The Welds and Sarah Grimké moved to rural New Jersey, where Grimké helped her sister care for the three children born over the next five years. Always plagued by financial struggles, the Welds and Grimké opened a school in 1851 and thereafter supported themselves by teaching, first in New Jersey and subsequently in Massachusetts. Later in life they sought out and assisted their brother's children by one of his slaves, adopting the boys and helping to pay for their education.

Both Sarah and Angelina continued to write for progressive causes, and Angelina resumed some public speaking in the 1860s. The sisters also engaged in feminist demonstrations, such as leading a march to the ballot box in 1870, in a raging blizzard, when Sarah was seventy-eight years old. She died three years later and was eulogized at her funeral by her abolitionist comrade in arms, William Lloyd Garrison.

³Gerda Lerner, *The Grimké Sisters from South Carolina* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967), pp. 148–49.

Sarah Grimké was overshadowed, both in life and in later scholarship, by her sister Angelina, who was clearly the more popular speaker of the two. Recent work, however, has helped to establish Sarah Grimké's position as the first important American feminist theorist. She was strongly influenced by her Quaker faith, which taught that every individual, male or female, possessed a spiritual "inner light" to guide his or her actions. No social restrictions could be tolerated that prevented women from acting on the dictates of this moral compass: Women must be free to act as responsible moral agents. Lerner has argued that Grimké was among the first feminist thinkers to see that women were so restricted because men benefited from exploiting them in their inferior position, an insight gained from an analogy with slavery. Grimké was also a pioneer in her realization that this exploitation included physical abuse, marital rape, and forced pregnancy, which she denounces in her writings on marriage. Grimké projects a vision of women united as a group by the "bonds of womanhood" and needing to help each other break these fetters.

Like earlier Quaker leader Margaret Fell (see p. 748), whose work, *Vonnegut* believes, Grimké knew, Grimké contends that religious justifications for the subordination of women spring from male-biased interpretations of the Bible. She asserts her right to interpret key texts differently, guided by her faith and her innate rationality. Although Grimké advocates better education for women, equal education does not appear to be a major tenet of her thought, perhaps because she believed that the mental and spiritual powers needed to guide life are largely innate.

Also like Fell, Grimké justifies women's speaking on moral grounds: Women must act if they are following a moral imperative. Perhaps her most significant contribution to rhetorical theory is her insistence that women can speak to "promiscuous" or gender-mixed audiences. As speech communication scholar Susan Zaeske has shown, the traditional argument against women speaking in public was based on the assumption that they were irrational and, if so, could persuade only by seductively employing their sexuality; hence the connection between public speaking and unchastity. American women abolitionists were criticized more heavily than other women reformers for committing this sin because, argues Zaeske, abolition was the most radical political cause of the day and the area in which women's attempts to garner power for themselves by speaking had the most potential to affect, or even overturn, the social order. Grimké resolutely combats the idea that women persuade via sexuality. She denounces men's insistence on seeing women always as sexual beings and argues that women's eloquence arises not from sex but from spiritual and mental powers that they share equally with men and that they must be allowed to exercise.

Sarah and Angelina Grimké inspired the work of women activists later in the century; an example is Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who met and admired the sisters when she was a young woman. Moreover, feminists in the twentieth century have further developed an alternate women's rhetoric to which Sarah Grimké contributed. They have defended not only women's right to speak but also their right to use language in unique ways to express a perspective on social issues that has been muted by the male-dominated political hierarchy.

Selected Bibliography

Sarah Moore Grimké's *Letters on the Equality of the Sexes and the Condition of Woman* exists in a facsimile of the 1838 edition, published by Source Book Press (1970); the text printed here is taken from this edition. Elizabeth Ann Bartlett has edited a volume of these letters and other essays of Sarah Grimké (*Letters on the Equality of the Sexes and Other Essays*, 1988); her introduction sets Grimké's feminism in the intellectual context of her times. Gerda Lerner has edited a collection of letters and unpublished essays, *The Feminist Thought of Sarah Grimké* (1998), with two of her own earlier essays on the Grimké sisters and an introduction that evaluates her 1967 biography of them (see below), emphasizes Sarah Grimké's spirituality, and elevates her status as an important feminist thinker.

The standard biography of Sarah and Angelina Grimké is *The Grimké Sisters from South Carolina*, by Gerda Lerner (1967, 1998). Elizabeth Ann Bartlett discusses the intellectual influences on Sarah Grimké and the impact of her thought in *Liberty, Equality, Sorority: The Origins and Interpretation of American Feminist Thought: Frances Wright, Sarah Grimké, Margaret Fuller* (1994). Margaret Hope Bacon's *Mothers of Feminism* (1986) discusses the contributions of Quaker women to social activism from Margaret Fell to the Grimkés and on to the present day.

Among more rhetorically focused studies, Karlyn Kohrs Campbell discusses the Grimké sisters and places them in the context of nineteenth-century American women's rhetoric in *Man Cannot Speak for Her: Volume I: A Critical Study of Early Feminist Rhetoric* (1989); volume II, subtitled *Key Texts of the Early Feminists* (1989), includes an address by Angelina Grimké. In "Sarah M. Grimké" (in *Women Public Speakers in the United States, 1800–1920: A Bio-Critical Sourcebook*, ed. Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, 1993), Kristin S. Vonnegut analyzes Sarah Grimké's rhetorical strategies in detail. The issue of speaking before gender-mixed audiences is thoroughly explored in Susan Zaeske's "The 'Promiscuous Audience': Controversy and the Emergence of the Early Women's Rights Movement" (*Quarterly Journal of Speech* 81 [1995]: 191–207). Angelina Grimké's adoption of a prophetic stance in her rhetorical performance is discussed in Phyllis Japp, "Esther or Isaiah?: The Abolitionist Rhetoric of Angelina Grimké" (*Quarterly Journal of Speech* 71 [1985]: 335–48).

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Letters on the Equality of the Sexes and the Condition of Woman

Addressed to Mary S. Parker,
President of the Boston
Female Anti-Slavery Society

LETTER III

*The Pastoral Letter of the General Association
of Congregational Ministers of Massachusetts.*

Haverhill, 7th Mo. 1837.

Dear Friend,—When I last addressed thee, I had not seen the Pastoral Letter of the General Association. It has since fallen into my hands, and I must digress from my intention of exhibiting the condition of women in different parts of the world, in order to make some remarks on this extraordinary document. I am persuaded that when the minds of men and women become emancipated from the thralldom of superstition and “traditions of men,” the sentiments contained in the Pastoral Letter will be recurred to with as much astonishment as the opinions of Cotton Mather and other distinguished men of his day, on the subject of witchcraft; nor will it be deemed less wonderful, that a body of divines should gravely assemble and endeavor to prove that woman has no right to “open her mouth for the dumb,” than it now is that judges should have sat on the trials of witches, and solemnly condemned nineteen persons and one dog to death for witchcraft.

But to the letter. It says, “We invite your attention to the dangers which at present seem to threaten the FEMALE CHARACTER with widespread and permanent injury.” I rejoice that they have called the attention of my sex to this subject, because I believe if woman investigates it, she will soon discover that danger is impending, though from a totally different source from that which the Association apprehends,—danger from those who, having long held the reins of *usurped* authority, are unwilling to permit us to fill that sphere which God created us to move in, and who have entered into league to crush the

immortal mind of woman. I rejoice, because I am persuaded that the rights of woman, like the rights of slaves, need only be examined to be understood and asserted, even by some of those, who are now endeavoring to smother the irrepressible desire for mental and spiritual freedom which glows in the breast of many, who hardly dare to speak their sentiments.

“The appropriate duties and influence of women are clearly stated in the New Testament. Those duties are unobtrusive and private, but the sources of *mighty power*. When the mild, *dependent*, softening influence of women upon the sternness of man’s opinions is fully exercised, society feels the effects of it in a thousand ways.” No one can desire more earnestly than I do, that woman may move exactly in the sphere which her Creator has assigned her; and I believe her having been displaced from that sphere has introduced confusion into the world. It is, therefore, of vast importance to herself and to all the rational creation, that she should ascertain what are her duties and her privileges as a responsible and immortal being. The New Testament has been referred to, and I am willing to abide by its decisions, but must enter my protest against the false translation of some passages by the MEN who did that work, and against the perverted interpretation by the MEN who undertook to write commentaries thereon. I am inclined to think, when we are admitted to the honor of studying Greek and Hebrew, we shall produce some various readings of the Bible a little different from those we now have.

The Lord Jesus defines the duties of his followers in his Sermon on the Mount. He lays down grand principles by which they should be governed, without any reference to sex or condition—“Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick, and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men,

that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven." I follow him through all his precepts, and find him giving the same directions to women as to men, never even referring to the distinction now so strenuously insisted upon between masculine and feminine virtues: this is one of the anti-christian "traditions of men" which are taught instead of the "commandments of God." Men and women were CREATED EQUAL; they are both moral and accountable beings, and whatever is *right* for man to do, is *right* for woman.

But the influence of woman, says the Association, so to be private and unobtrusive; her light is not to shine before man like that of her brethren; but she is passively to let the lords of the creation, as they call themselves, put the bushel over it, lest peradventure it might appear that the world has been benefitted by the rays of *her* candle. So that her quenched light, according to their judgment, will be of more use than if it were set on the candlestick. "Her influence is the source of mighty power." This has ever been the flattering language of man since he laid aside the whip as a means to keep woman in subjection. He spares her body; but the war he has waged against her mind, her heart, and her soul, has been no less destructive to her as a moral being. How monstrous, how anti-christian, is the doctrine that woman is to be dependent on man! Where, in all the sacred Scriptures, is this taught? Alas! she has too well learned the lesson which MAN had labored to teach her. She has surrendered her dearest RIGHTS, and been satisfied with the privileges which man has assumed to grant her; she has been amused with the show of power, whilst man has absorbed all the reality into himself. He has adorned the creature whom God gave him as a companion, with baubles and gewgaws, turned her attention to personal attractions, offered incense to her vanity, and made her the instrument of his selfish gratification, a plaything to please his eye and amuse his hours of leisure. "Rule by obedience and by submission sway," or in other words, study to be a hypocrite, pretend to submit, but gain your point, has been the code of household morality which woman has been taught. The poet has sung, in sickly strains, the loveliness of woman's dependence

upon man, and now we find it re-echoed by those who profess to teach the religion of the Bible. God says, "Cease ye from man whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?" Man says, depend upon me. God says. "HE will teach us of his ways." Man says, believe it not, I am to be your teacher. This doctrine of dependence upon man is utterly at variance with the doctrine of the Bible. In that book I find nothing like the softness of woman, nor the sternness of man: both are equally commanded to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, love, meekness, gentleness, &c.

But we are told "the power of woman is in her dependence, flowing from a consciousness of that weakness which God has given her for her protection." If physical weakness is alluded to, I cheerfully concede the superiority; if brute force is what my brethren are claiming, I am willing to let them have all the honor they desire; but if they mean to intimate, that mental or moral weakness belongs to woman, more than to man, I utterly disclaim the charge. Our powers of mind have been crushed, as far as man could do it, our sense of morality has been impaired by his interpretation of our duties; but no where does God say that he made any distinction between us, as moral and intelligent beings.

"We appreciate," say the Association, "the *unostentatious* prayers and efforts of woman in advancing the cause of religion at home and abroad, in leading religious inquirers to THE PASTOR for instruction." Several points here demand attention. If public prayers and public efforts are necessarily ostentatious, then "Anna the prophetess, (or preacher,) who departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day," "and spake of Christ to all them that looked for redemption in Israel," was ostentatious in her efforts. Then, the apostle Paul encourages women to be ostentatious in their efforts to spread the gospel, when he gives them directions how they should appear, when engaged in praying, or preaching in the public assemblies. Then, the whole association of Congregational ministers are ostentatious, in the efforts they are making in preaching and praying to convert souls.

But woman may be permitted to lead religious

inquirers to the PASTORS for instruction. Now this is assuming that all pastors are better qualified to give instruction than woman. This I utterly deny. I have suffered too keenly from the teaching of man, to lead any one to him for instruction. The Lord Jesus says,—“Come unto me and learn of me.” He points his followers to no man; and when woman is made the favored instrument of rousing a sinner to his lost and helpless condition, she has no right to substitute any teacher for Christ; all she has to do is, to turn the contrite inquirer to the “Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world.” More souls have probably been lost by going down to Egypt for help, and by trusting in man in the early stages of religious experience, than by any other error. Instead of the petition being offered to God,—“Lead me in thy truth, and TEACH me, for thou art the God of my salvation,”—instead of relying on the precious promises—“What man is he that feareth the Lord? him shall HE TEACH in the way that he shall choose”—“I will instruct thee and TEACH thee in the way which thou shalt go—I will guide thee with mine eye”—the young convert is directed to go to man as if he were in the place of God, and his instructions essential to an advancement in the path of righteousness. That woman can have but a poor conception of the privilege of being taught of God, what he alone can teach, who would turn the “religious inquirer aside” from the fountain of living waters, where he might slake his thirst for spiritual instruction, to those broken cisterns which can hold no water, and therefore cannot satisfy the panting spirit. The business of men and women, who are ORDAINED OF GOD to preach the “unsearchable riches of Christ” to a lost and perishing world is to lead souls to Christ, and not to Pastors for instruction.

The General Association say, that “when woman assumes the place and tone of man as a public reformer, our care and protection of her seem unnecessary; we put ourselves in self-defence against her, and her character becomes unnatural.” Here again the unscriptural notion is held up, that there is a distinction between the duties of men and women as moral beings; that what is virtue in man, is vice in woman; and

women who dare to obey the command of Jehovah, “Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression,” are threatened with having the protection of the brethren withdrawn. If this is all they do, we shall not even know the time when our chastisement is inflicted; our trust is in the Lord Jehovah, and in him is everlasting strength. The motto of woman, when she is engaged in the great work of public reformation should be,—“The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?” She must feel, if she feels rightly, that she is fulfilling one of the important duties laid upon her as an accountable being, and that her character, instead of being “unnatural,” is in exact accordance with the will of Him to whom, and to no other, she is responsible for the talents and the gifts confided to her. As to the pretty simile, introduced into the “Pastoral Letter,” “If the vine whose strength and beauty is to lean upon the trellis work, and half conceal its clusters, thinks to assume the independence and the overshadowing nature of the elm,” &c. I shall only remark that it might well suit the poet’s fancy, who sings of sparkling eyes and coral lips, and knights in armor clad; but it seems to me utterly inconsistent with the dignity of a Christian body, to endeavor to draw such an anti-scriptural distinction between men and women. Ah! how many of my sex feel in the dominion, thus unrighteously exercised over them, under the gentle appellation of *protection*, that what they have leaned upon has proved a broken reed at best, and oft a spear.

Thine in the bonds of womanhood,
SARAH M. GRIMKÉ.

LETTER IV

Social Intercourse of the Sexes.

Andover, 7th Mo. 27th, 1837.
My Dear Friend,—Before I proceed with the account of that oppression which woman has suffered in every age and country from her *protector*, man, permit me to offer for your consideration, some views relative to the social intercourse of the sexes. Nearly the whole of this intercourse

is, in my apprehension, derogatory to man and woman, as moral and intellectual beings. We approach each other, and mingle with each other, under the constant pressure of a feeling that we are of different sexes; and, instead of regarding each other only in the light of immortal creatures, the mind is fettered by the idea which is early and industriously infused into it, that we must never forget the distinction between male and female. Hence our intercourse, instead of being elevated and refined, is generally calculated to excite and keep alive the lowest propensities of our nature. Nothing, I believe, has tended more to destroy the true dignity of woman, than the fact that she is approached by man in the character of a female. The idea that she is sought as an intelligent and heaven-born creature, whose society will cheer, refine, and elevate her companion, and that she will receive the same blessings she confers, is rarely held up to her view. On the contrary, man almost always addresses himself to the weakness of woman. By flattery, by an appeal to her passions, he seeks access to her heart; and when he has gained her affections, he uses her as the instrument of his pleasure—the minister of his temporal comfort. He furnishes himself with a housekeeper, whose chief business is in the kitchen, or the nursery. And whilst he goes abroad and enjoys the means of improvement afforded by collision of intellect with cultivated minds, his wife is condemned to draw nearly all her instruction from books, if she has time to peruse them; and if not, from her meditations, whilst engaged in those domestic duties, which are necessary for the comfort of her lord and master.

Surely no one who contemplates, with the eye of a Christian philosopher, the design of God in the creation of woman, can believe that she is now fulfilling that design. The literal translation of the word “help-meet” is a helper like unto himself; it is so rendered in the Septuagint, and manifestly signifies a companion. Now I believe it will be impossible for women to fill the station assigned her by God, until her brethren mingle with her as an equal, as a moral being; and lose, in the dignity of her immortal nature, and in the fact of her bearing like himself the image and superscription of her God, the idea of her being a

female. The apostle¹ beautifully remarks, “As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither *male* nor *female*; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.” Until our intercourse is purified by the forgetfulness of sex,—until we rise above the present low and sordid views which entwine themselves around our social and domestic interchange of sentiment and feelings, we never can derive that benefit from each other’s society which it is the design of our Creator that we should. Man has inflicted an unspeakable injury upon woman, by holding up to her view her animal nature, and placing in the background her moral and intellectual being. Woman has inflicted an injury upon herself by submitting to be thus regarded; and she is now called upon to rise from the station where *man*, not God, has placed her, and claim those sacred and inalienable rights, as a moral and responsible being, with which her Creator has invested her.

What but these views, so derogatory to the character of woman, could have called forth the remark contained in the Pastoral Letter? “We especially deplore the intimate acquaintance and promiscuous conversation of *females* with regard to things “which ought not to be named,” by which that modesty and delicacy, which is the charm of domestic life, and which constitutes the true influence of woman, is consumed.” How wonderful that the conceptions of man relative to woman are so low, that he cannot perceive that she may converse on any subject connected with the improvement of her species, without swerving in the least from that modesty which is one of her greatest virtues! Is it designed to insinuate that woman should possess a greater degree of modesty than man? This idea I utterly reprobate. Or is it supposed that woman cannot go into scenes of misery, the necessary result of those very things, which the Pastoral Letter says ought not to be named, for the purpose of moral reform, without becoming contaminated by those with whom she thus mingles?

¹The apostle is Paul, the most frequently cited authority against women’s speaking, but here Grimké cites a line of his used frequently (e.g., by Margaret Fell) to justify women’s speaking. [Ed.]

This is a false position; and I presume has grown out of the never-forgotten distinction of male and female. The woman who goes forth, clad in the panoply of God, to stem the tide of iniquity and misery, which she beholds rolling through our land, goes not forth to her labor of love as a female. She goes as the dignified messenger of Jehovah, and all she does and says must be done and said irrespective of sex. She is in duty bound to communicate with all, who are able and willing to aid her in saving her fellow creatures, both men and women, from that destruction which awaits them.

So far from woman losing any thing of the purity of her mind, by visiting the wretched victims of vice in their miserable abodes, by talking with them, or of them, she becomes more and more elevated and refined in her feelings and views. While laboring to cleanse the minds of others from the malaria of moral pollution, her own heart becomes purified, and her soul rises to nearer communion with her God. Such a woman is infinitely better qualified to fulfil the duties of a wife and a mother, than the woman whose *false delicacy* leads her to shun her fallen sister and brother, and shrink from *naming those sins* which she knows exist, but which she is too fastidious to labor by deed and by word to exterminate. Such a woman feels, when she enters upon the marriage relation, that God designed that relation not to debase her to a level with the animal creation, but to increase the happiness and dignity of his creatures. Such a woman comes to the important task of training her children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, with a soul filled with the greatness of the beings committed to her charge. She sees in her children, creatures bearing the images of God; and she approaches them with reverence, and treats them at all times as moral and accountable beings. Her own mind being purified and elevated, she instils into her children that genuine religion which induces them to keep the commandments of God. Instead of ministering with ceaseless care to their sensual appetites, she teaches them to be temperate in all things. She can converse with her children on any subject relating to their duty to God, can point their attention to those vices which degrade and brutify human nature, without in the least de-

filting her own mind or theirs. She views herself, and teaches her children to regard themselves as moral beings; and in all their intercourse with their fellow men, to lose the animal nature of man and woman, in the recognition of that immortal mind wherewith Jehovah has blessed and enriched them.

Thine in the bonds of womanhood,
SARAH M. GRIMKÉ.

LETTER XIV

Ministry of Women.

Brookline, 9th Mo. 1837.

My Dear Sister,—According to the principle which I have laid down, that man and woman were created equal, and endowed by their beneficent Creator with the same intellectual powers and the same moral responsibilities, and that consequently whatever is *morally* right for a man to do, is *morally* right for a woman to do, it follows as a necessary corollary, that if it is the duty of man to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, it is the duty also of woman.

I am aware, that I have the prejudices of education and custom to combat, both in my own and the other sex, as well as “the traditions of men,” which are taught for the commandments of God. I feel that I have no sectarian views to advance; for although among the Quakers, Methodists, and Christians, women are permitted to preach the glad tidings of peace and salvation, yet I know of no religious body, who entertain the Scripture doctrine of the perfect equality of man and woman, which is the fundamental principle of my argument in favor of the ministry of women. I wish simply to throw my views before thee. If they are based on the immutable foundation of truth, they cannot be overthrown by unkind insinuations, bitter sarcasms, unchristian imputations, or contemptuous ridicule. These are weapons which are unworthy of a good cause. If I am mistaken, as truth only can prevail, my supposed errors will soon vanish before her beams; but I am persuaded that woman is not filling the high and holy station which God allotted to her, and that in consequence of her having been driven from her “appropriate sphere,” both herself

and her brethren have suffered an infinity of evils.

Before I proceed to prove, that woman is bound to preach the gospel, I will examine the ministry under the Old Testament dispensation. Those who were called to this office were known under various names. Enoch, who prophesied, is designated as walking with God. Noah is called a preacher of righteousness. They were denominated men of God, seers, prophets, but they all had the same great work to perform, viz. to turn sinners from the error of their ways. This ministry existed previous to the institution of the Jewish priesthood, and continued after its abolition. *It has nothing to do with the priesthood.* It was rarely, as far as the Bible informs us, exercised by those of the tribe of Levi, and was common to all the people, women as well as men. It differed essentially from the priesthood, because there was no compensation received for calling the people to repentance. Such a thing as paying a prophet for preaching the truth of God is not even mentioned. They were called of Jehovah to go forth in his name, one from his plough, another from gathering of sycamore fruit, &c. &c. Let us for a moment imagine Jeremiah, when God says to him, "Gird up thy loins, and arise and speak unto the people all that I command thee," replying to Jehovah, "I will preach repentance to the people, if they will give me gold, but if they will not pay me for the truth, then let them perish in their sins." Now, this is virtually the language of the ministers of the present day; and I believe the secret of the exclusion of women from the ministerial office is, that that office has been converted into one of emolument, of honor, and power. Any attentive observer cannot fail to perceive, that as far as possible, all such offices are reserved by men for themselves.

The common error that Christian ministers are the successors of the priests, is founded in mistake. In the particular directions given to Moses to consecrate Aaron and his sons to the office of the priesthood, their duties are clearly defined: see Ex. 28th, 29th, and 30th chap. There is no commission to Aaron to preach to the people; his business was to offer sacrifice. Now why were sacrifices instituted? They were types of that one great sacrifice, which in the fulness of time was

offered up through the eternal Spirit without spot to God. Christ assumed the office of priest; he "offered himself," and by so doing, abolished forever the order of the priesthood, as well as the sacrifices which the priests were ordained to offer.²

But it may be inquired, whether the priests were not to teach the people. As far as I can discover from the Bible, they were simply commanded to read the law to the people. There was no other copy that we know of, until the time of the kings, who were to write out a copy for their own use. As it was deposited in the ark, the priests were required, "When all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing. Gather the people together, men, women, and children, that they may hear," Deut. 31: 9-33. See also Lev. 10: 11, Deut. 33: 10, 2d Chr. 17: 7-9, and numerous other passages. When God is enumerating the means he has used to call his people to repentance, he never, as far as I can discover, speaks of sending his priests to warn them; but in various passages we find language similar to this: "Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day, I have even sent unto you all my servants, the PROPHETS, daily rising up early and sending them. Yet they hearkened not unto me, nor inclined their ear, but hardened their neck; they did worse than their fathers." Jer. 7: 25, 26. See also, 25: 4, 2 Chr. 36: 15, and parallel passages. God says, Is. 9: 15, 16. "The prophet that teacheth lies, he is the tail; for the leaders of this people cause them to err." The distinction between priests and prophets is evident from their being mentioned as two classes. "The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means," Jer. 5: 31. See also, Ch. 2: 8, 8: 1-10, and many others.

That women were called to the prophetic office, I believe is universally admitted. Miriam, Deborah, and Huldah were prophetesses. The

²I cannot enter fully into this part of my subject. It is, however, one of great importance and I recommend those who wish to examine it, to read "The Book of the Priesthood," by an English Dissenter, and Beverly's "View of the Present State of the Visible Church of Christ." They are both masterly productions. [Au.]

judgments of the Lord are denounced by Ezekiel on false prophetesses, as well as false prophets. And if Christian ministers are, as I apprehend, successors of the prophets, and not of the priests, then of course, women are now called to that office as well as men, because God has no where withdrawn from them the privilege of doing what is the great business of preachers, viz. to point the penitent sinner to the Redeemer. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world."

It is often triumphantly inquired, why, if men and women are on an equality, are not women as conspicuous in the Bible as men? I do not intend to assign a reason, but I think one may readily be found in the fact, that from the days of Eve to the present time, the aim of man has been to crush her. He has accomplished this work in various ways; sometimes by brute force, sometimes by making her subservient to his worst passions, sometimes by treating her as a doll, and while he excluded from her mind the light of knowledge, decked her person with gewgaws and frippery which he scorned for himself, thus endeavoring to render her like unto a painted sepulchre.

It is truly marvellous that any woman can rise above the pressure of circumstances which combine to crush her. Nothing can strengthen her to do this in the character of a preacher of righteousness, but a call from Jehovah himself. And when the voice of God penetrates the deep recesses of her heart, and commands her to go and cry in the ears of the people, she is ready to exclaim, "Ah, Lord God, behold I cannot speak, for I am a woman." I have known women in different religious societies, who have felt like the prophet. "His word was in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing." But they have not dared to open their lips, and have endured all the intensity of suffering, produced by disobedience to God, rather than encounter heartless ridicule and injurious suspicions. I rejoice that we have been the oppressed, rather than the oppressors. God thus prepared his people for deliverance from outward bondage; and I hope our sorrows have prepared us to fulfil our high and holy duties, whether public or private, with humility and meekness; and that suffering has imparted fortitude to endure

trials, which assuredly await us in the attempt to sunder those chains with which man has bound us, galling to the spirit, though unseen by the eye.

Surely there is nothing either astonishing or novel in the gifts of the Spirit being bestowed on woman: nothing astonishing, because there is no respect of persons with God; the soul of the woman in his sight is as the soul of the man, and both are alike capable of the influence of the Holy Spirit. Nothing novel, because, as has been already shown, in the sacred records there are found examples of women, as well as of men, exercising the gift of prophecy.

We attach to the word prophecy, the exclusive meaning of foretelling future events, but this is certainly a mistake; for the apostle Paul defines it to be "speaking to edification, exhortation, and comfort." And there appears no possible reason, why women should not do this as well as men. At the time that the Bible was translated into English, the meaning of the word prophecy, was delivering a message from God, whether it was to predict future events, or to warn the people of the consequences of sin. Governor Winthrop, of Massachusetts, mentions in a letter, that the minister being absent, he went to ——— to prophecy to the people.

Before I proceed to prove that women, under the Christian dispensation, were anointed of the Holy Ghost to preach, or prophecy, I will mention Anna, the (last) prophetess under the Jewish dispensation. "She departed not from the temple, but served God with fasting and prayers night and day." And coming into the temple, while Simeon was yet speaking to Mary, with the infant Savior in his arms, "spake of Christ to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem." Blackwall, a learned English critic, in his work entitled, "Sacred Classics," says, in reference to this passage, Luke 2: 37—"According to the *original* reading, the sense will be, that the devout Anna, who attended in the temple, both night and day, spoke of the Messiah to all the inhabitants of that city, who constantly worshipped there, and who prepared themselves for the worthy reception of that divine person, whom they expected at this time. And 'tis certain, that other devout Jews, not inhabitants of Jerusalem, frequently repaired to the temple-worship, and

might, at this remarkable time, and several others, hear this admirable woman discourse upon the blessed advent of the Redeemer. A various reading has Israel instead of Jerusalem, which expresses that religious Jews, from distant places, came thither to divine offices, and would with high pleasure hear the discourses of this great prophetess, so famed for her extraordinary piety and valuable talents, upon the most important and desired subject."

I shall now examine the testimony of the Bible on this point, after the ascension of our Lord, beginning with the glorious effusion of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. I presume it will not be denied, that women, as well as men, were at that time filled with the Holy Ghost, because it is expressly stated, that women were among those who continued in prayer and supplication, waiting for the fulfilment of the promise, that they should be endued with power from on high. "When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were ALL with one accord in one place. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance." Peter says, in reference to this miracle, "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel. And it shall come to pass in the last days, said God, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy—and on my servants and on my hand-maidens, I will pour out in those days of my Spirit, and they shall prophesy." There is not the least intimation that this was a spasmodic influence which was soon to cease. The men and women are classed together; and if the power to preach the gospel was a supernatural and short-lived impulse in women, then it was equally so in men. But we are told, those were the days of miracles. I grant it; but the men, equally with the women, were the subjects of this marvellous fulfilment of prophecy, and of course, if women have lost the gift of prophesying, so have men. We are also gravely told, that if a woman pretends to inspiration, and thereupon grounds the right to plead the cause of a crucified Redeemer in public, she will be believed when she shows credentials from heaven, i.e., when

she works a miracle. I reply, if this be necessary to prove her right to preach the gospel, then I demand of my brethren to show me their credentials; else I cannot receive their ministry, by their own showing. John Newton has justly said, that no power but that which created a world, can make a minister of the gospel; and man may task his ingenuity to the utmost, to prove that this power is not exercised on women as well as men. He cannot do it until he has first disclaimed that simple, but all comprehensive truth, "in Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female."

Women then, according to the Bible, were, under the New Testament dispensation, as well as the Old, the recipients of the gift of prophecy. That this is no sectarian view may be proved by the following extracts. The first I shall offer is from Stratton's "Book of the Priesthood."

While they were assembled in the upper room to wait for the blessing, in number about one hundred and twenty, they received the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit's grace; they became the channels through which its more ordinary, but not less saving streams flowed to three thousand persons in one day. The whole company of assembled disciples, male and female, young and old, were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. They all contributed in producing that impression upon the assembled multitude, which Peter was instrumental in advancing to its decisive results.

Scott, in his commentary on this passage, says—

At the same time, there appeared the form of tongues divided at the tip and resembling fire; one of which rested on each of the whole company. . . . They sat on every one present, as the original determines. At the time of these extraordinary appearances, the whole company were abundantly replenished with the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, so that they began to speak with other tongues.

Henry in his notes confirms this:

It seems evident to me that not the twelve apostles only, but all the one hundred and twenty disciples were filled with the Holy Ghost alike at this time—all the seventy disciples, who were apostolical men and employed in the same work, and all the rest too that were to preach the gospel,

for it is said expressly, Eph. 4: 8-12: "When Christ ascended up on high, (which refers to this) he gave gifts unto men." The all here must refer to the all that were together.

I need hardly remark that man is a generic term, including both sexes.

Let us now examine whether women actually exercised the office of minister, under the gospel dispensation. Philip had four daughters, who prophesied or preached. Paul calls Priscilla, as well as Aquila, his helpers; or, as in the Greek, his fellow laborers³ in Christ Jesus. Divers other passages might be adduced to prove that women continued to be preachers, and that *many* of them filled this dignified station.

We learn also from ecclesiastical history, that female ministers suffered martyrdom in the early ages of the Christian church. In ancient councils, mention is made of deaconesses; and in an edition of the New Testament, printed in 1574, a woman is spoken of as minister of a church. The same word, which, in our common translation, is now rendered a servant of the church, in speaking of Phebe, Rom. 16: 1, is rendered minister, Eph. 6: 21, when applied to Tychicus. A minister, with whom I had lately the pleasure of conversing, remarked, "My rule is to expound scripture by scripture, and I cannot deny the ministry of women, because the apostle says, 'help those women who labored with me IN THE GOSPEL.' He certainly meant something more than pouring out tea for him."

In the 11th Ch. of 1 Cor., Paul gives directions to women and men how they should appear when they prophesy, or pray in public assemblies. It is evident that the design of the apostle, in this and the three succeeding chapters, is to rectify certain abuses which had crept into the Christian church. He therefore admonishes women to pray with their heads covered, because, according to the fashion of that day, it was considered immodest and immoral to do otherwise. He says, "that were all one as if she were shaven;" and shaving the head was a disgraceful punishment that was inflicted on women of bad character.

³Rom. 16:3, compare Gr. text of v. 21, 2. Cor. 8: 23; Phil. 2: 25; 1 Thes. 3:2. [Au.]

"These things," says Scott, "the apostle stated as decent and proper, but if any of the Corinthian teachers inclined to excite contention about them, he would only add, v. 16, that he and his brethren knew of no such custom as prevailed among them, nor was there any such in the churches of God which had been planted by the other apostles."

John Locke, whilst engaged in writing his notes on the Epistles of St. Paul, was at a meeting where two women preached. After hearing them, he became convinced of their commission to publish the gospel, and thereupon altered his notes on the 11th Ch. 1 Cor. in favor of women's preaching. He says—

This about women seeming as difficult a passage as most in St. Paul's Epistles, I crave leave to premise some few considerations. It is plain that this covering the head in women is restrained to some peculiar actions which they performed in the assembly, expressed by the words praying, prophesying, which, whatever they signify, must have the same meaning applied to women in the 5th verse, that they have when applied to men in the 4th, &c. The next thing to be considered is, what is here to be understood by praying and prophesying. And that seems to me the performing of some public action in the assembly, by some one person which was for that time peculiar to that person, and whilst it lasted, the rest of the assembly silently assisted. As to prophesying, the apostle in express words tells us, Ch. 14: 3, 12, that it was speaking to the assembly. The same is evident as to praying, that the apostle means by it publicly with an audible voice, ch. 14: 19.

In a letter to these two women, Rebecca Collier and Rachel Bracken, which accompanied a little testimony of his regard, he says,

I admire no converse like that of Christian freedom; and I fear no bondage like that of pride and prejudice. I now see that acquaintance by sight cannot reach the height of enjoyment, which acquaintance by knowledge arrives unto. Outward hearing may misguide us, but internal knowledge cannot err. Women, indeed, had the honor of first publishing the resurrection of the God of love—why not again the resurrection of the spirit of love? And let all the disciples of Christ rejoice therein, as doth your partner, John Locke.

See "The Friend," a periodical published in Philadelphia.

Adam Clarke's comment on 1 Cor. 11: 5, is similar to Locke's:

Whatever be the meaning of praying and prophesying in respect to the man, they have precisely the same meaning in respect to the woman. So that some women at least, as well as some men, might speak to others to edification and exhortation and comfort. And this kind of prophesying, or teaching, was predicted by Joel 2: 28, and referred to by Peter; and had there not been such gifts bestowed on women, the prophesy could not have had its fulfilment.

In the autobiography of Adam Clarke, there is an interesting account of his hearing Mary Sewall and another female minister preach, and he acknowledges that such was the power accompanying their ministry, that though he had been prejudiced against women's preaching, he could not but confess that these women were anointed for the office.

But there are certain passages in the Epistles of St. Paul, which seem to be of doubtful interpretation; at which we cannot much marvel, seeing that his brother Peter says, there are some things in them hard to be understood. Most commentators, having their minds preoccupied with the prejudices of education, afford little aid; they rather tend to darken the text by the multitude of words. One of these passages occurs in 1 Cor. 14. I have already remarked, that this chapter, with several of the preceding, was evidently designed to correct abuses which had crept into the assemblies of Christians in Corinth. Hence we find that the men were commanded to be silent, as well as the women, when they were guilty of any thing which deserved reprehension. The apostle says, "If there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church." The men were doubtless in the practice of speaking in unknown tongues, when there was no interpreter present; and Paul reproves them, because this kind of preaching conveyed no instruction to the people. Again he says, "If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace." We may infer from this, that two men sometimes attempted to speak at the same time, and the apostle rebukes them,

and adds, "Ye may ALL prophesy one by one, for God is not the author of confusion, but of peace." He then proceeds to notice the disorderly conduct of the women, who were guilty of other improprieties. They were probably in the habit of asking questions, on any points of doctrine which they wished more thoroughly explained. This custom was common among the men in the Jewish synagogues, after the pattern of which, the meetings of the early Christians were in all probability conducted. And the Christian women, presuming on the liberty which they enjoyed under the new religion, interrupted the assembly, by asking questions. The apostle disapproved of this, because it disturbed the solemnity of the meeting: he therefore admonishes the women to keep silence in the churches. That the apostle did not allude to preaching is manifest, because he tells them, "If they will *learn* any thing, let them ask their husbands at home." Now a person endowed with a gift in the ministry, does not ask questions in the public exercise of that gift, for the purpose of gaining information: she is instructing others. Moreover, the apostle, in closing his remarks on this subject, says, "Wherefore, brethren, (a generic term, applying equally to men and women,) covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues. Let all things be done decently and in order."

Clarke, on the passage, "Let women keep silence in the churches," says:

This was a Jewish ordinance. Women were not permitted to teach in the assemblies, or even to ask questions. The rabbins taught that a woman should know nothing but the use of her distaff; and the saying of Rabbi Eliezer is worthy of remark and execration: "Let the words of the law be burned, rather than that they should be delivered by women."

Are there not many of our Christian brethren, whose hostility to the ministry of women is as bitter as was that of Rabbi Eliezer, and who would rather let souls perish, than that the truths of the gospel should be delivered by women?

"This," says Clarke, "was their condition till the time of the gospel, when, according to the

prediction of Joel, the Spirit of God was to be poured out on the women as well as the men, that they might prophesy, that is, teach. And that they did prophesy, or teach, is evident from what the apostle says, ch. 11: 5, where he lays down rules to regulate this part of their conduct while ministering in the church. But does not what the apostle says here, let your women keep silence in the churches, contradict that statement, and show that the words in ch. 11, should be understood in another sense? for here it is expressly said, that they should keep silence in the churches, for it was not permitted to a woman to speak. Both places seem perfectly consistent. It is evident from the context, that the apostle refers here to asking questions, and what we call dictating in the assemblies."

The other passage on which the opinion, that women are not called to the ministry, is founded, is 1 Tim. 2d ch. The apostle speaks of the duty of prayer and supplication, mentions his own ordination as a preacher, and then adds, "I will, therefore, that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel," &c. I shall here premise, that as the punctuation and division into chapters and verses is no part of the original arrangement, they cannot determine the sense of a passage. Indeed, every attentive reader of the Bible must observe, that the injudicious separation of sentences often destroys their meaning and their beauty. Joseph John Gurney, whose skill as a biblical critic is well known in England, commenting on this passage, says,

It is worded in a manner somewhat obscure; but appears to be best construed according to the opinion of various commentators [See Pool's Synopsis] as conveying an injunction, that women as well as men should pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting. 1 Tim. 2: 8, 9. "I will therefore that men pray everywhere, &c.; likewise also the women in a modest dress." (Compare 1 Cor. 11: 5.) "I would have them adorn themselves with shamefacedness and sobriety."

I have no doubt this is the true meaning of the text, and that the translators would never have thought of altering it had they not been under the influence of educational prejudice. The apostle proceeds to exhort the women, who thus publicly made intercession to God, not to adorn them-

selves with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array, but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works. The word in this verse translated "professing," would be more properly rendered preaching godliness, or enjoining piety to the gods, or conducting public worship. After describing the duty of female ministers about their apparel, the apostle proceeds to correct some improprieties which probably prevailed in the Ephesian church, similar to those which he had reproved among the Corinthian converts. He says, "Let the women LEARN in silence with all subjection; but I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence," or quietness. Here again it is evident that the women, of whom he was speaking, were admonished to learn in silence, which could not refer to their public ministrations to others. The verb to teach, verse 12, is one of very general import, and may in this place more properly be rendered dictate. It is highly probable that women who had long been in bondage, when set free by Christianity from the restraints imposed upon them by Jewish traditions and heathen customs, ran into an extreme in their public assemblies, and interrupted the religious services by frequent interrogations, which they could have had answered as satisfactorily at home.

On a candid examination and comparison of the passages which I have endeavored to explain, viz., 1 Cor. chaps 11 and 14, and 1 Tim. 2, 8-12. I think we must be compelled to adopt one of two conclusions; either that the apostle grossly contradicts himself on a subject of great practical importance, and that the fulfilment of the prophecy of Joel was a shameful infringement of decency and order; or that the directions given to women, not to speak, or to teach in the congregations, had reference to some local and peculiar customs, which were then common in religious assemblies, and which the apostle thought inconsistent with the purpose for which they were met together. No one, I suppose, will hesitate which of these two conclusions to adopt. The subject is one of vital importance. That it may claim the calm and prayerful attention of Christians, is the desire of

Thine in the bonds of womanhood,
SARAH M. GRIMKÉ.

Frederick Douglass

1818–1895

Frederick Douglass was born a slave in 1818 on a farm in Maryland. His mother, an enslaved black woman named Harriet Bailey, was sent back to the fields soon after his birth, and he spent his early childhood with his grandmother Betsey Bailey. His father was a white man whose identity Douglass never learned; possibly he was Aaron Anthony, the plantation overseer who owned his mother, or Edward Lloyd, the landowner Anthony worked for.

At the age of six Frederick was taken from his grandmother to serve as a companion, first, to one of Lloyd's young sons, and then, in Baltimore, to the young son of Anthony's daughter's brother-in-law, Hugh Auld. Auld's wife Sophia, unaccustomed to managing slaves, treated Frederick very well at first and began to teach him to read, until her husband put a stop to it (see our first set of excerpts, from Douglass's first autobiography). Eager to learn, however, Frederick found ways to continue his education surreptitiously. He pored over an old copy of *The Columbian Orator*, a collection of speeches used to teach rhetoric. The ideals expressed in some of these speeches, as well as what he was learning about the abolition movement from secretly reading newspapers, began to convince Frederick that slavery was wrong and that he should resist it.

In 1833 he was sent back from Baltimore to the Maryland Eastern Shore, to Thomas Auld, Hugh's brother. Frederick quickly got in trouble for organizing a Sunday school for fellow slaves, at which he taught reading and writing. Auld decided to hire him out for the year of 1834 to the farmer Edward Covey, known as a "breaker" of rebellious slaves. After months of brutal treatment, Frederick finally attacked Covey, and after this battle was never whipped again. In 1835 Auld took him away from Covey and hired him to a more kindly employer. Frederick again organized clandestine literacy schooling for his fellow slaves. He also made his first attempt to flee slavery, in 1836, but the plan was discovered and Frederick and his four companions were jailed.

Although both lynching and sale to a deep-south plantation death trap were threatened, Thomas Auld decided to send Frederick back to his brother in Baltimore. Hugh Auld placed Frederick in a shipyard and trained him as a caulker. Frederick reestablished his ties with the Baltimore black community, again teaching reading and writing; he joined a debate club whose other members were free black men and became engaged to Anna Murray, a free black woman. His resolve to escape was still firm, and in September 1838, after a quarrel with Hugh Auld made him again fear being sold south, Frederick fled Baltimore using borrowed seaman's papers that falsely identified him as a free man. Anna Murray joined him in New York, where they were married, and they then went on to New Bedford, Massachusetts, a seaport town where Frederick hoped to find work as a caulker.

During his escape, Frederick used the surname Johnson rather than Bailey to help divert pursuit. Once arrived in New Bedford, however, he learned that Johnson was an exceedingly common name among local blacks, and his host Nathan

Johnson, a black man active in abolition and assistance to fugitive slaves, suggested that he take the surname Douglas, after a heroic Scottish nobleman in Sir Walter Scott's poem "The Lady of the Lake." Douglass agreed, although spelling the name as a prominent Philadelphia black family spelled it.

The racist objections of white workers prevented Douglass from finding work as a caulker, so he supported his growing family (he and Anna had five children by 1849) with unskilled labor on the docks. Douglass lost no time in informing himself about the abolitionist movement and local activism for black rights. He subscribed to William Lloyd Garrison's *The Liberator*, the leading abolitionist newspaper, and began to speak on abolition and other black civil rights issues at gatherings in African American churches in New Bedford. White abolitionist William Coffin heard him speak and invited him to attend a Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society convention held on Nantucket Island in August 1841. Here, at Coffin's urging, and with white abolitionists he much admired, preeminent among them William Lloyd Garrison, on the platform, Douglass gave his first speech against slavery that addressed a large, mixed audience: white and black men and women. His account of his own sufferings in slavery was so powerful that he was hired on the spot as a paid agent of the Society to speak against slavery around New England. He moved his family to Lynn, Massachusetts, and never worked on the docks again, making a living henceforth as an orator and later as a journalist.

Douglass's contact with the Boston-based abolition movement was intellectually formative for him. An especially strong influence was William Lloyd Garrison, whose thinking so dominated the group that they were all known as Garrisonian abolitionists. The chief tenets of Garrison's philosophy were that slavery was an un-Christian denial of the humanity of every person, that the United States Constitution and government were un-Christian and immoral for protecting slavery, and that slavery's opponents should have as little to do with this evil government as possible, instead attempting to abolish slavery by persuading its advocates that it was morally wrong. Garrison condemned not only violent resistance to slavery but also political approaches to containing it. Among Garrison's colleagues whom Douglass met in these years, and most of whom remained his lifelong friends, were free black leaders Charles Lenox Remond (Douglass would name a son after him) and William C. Nell, and white abolitionists Wendell Phillips, Parker Pillsbury, Abby Kelley (Foster), and Amy Post.

In the next several years, Douglass traveled all over the Northeast speaking against slavery, as far west as Indiana and as far south as New York City. He addressed over one hundred meetings a year, sometimes facing violent opposition (his right hand was broken in a brawl at a meeting in Indiana and never healed properly), and sometimes contending with internal quarrels in the abolition movement itself. Garrison, although a paternal mentor to Douglass, brooked no deviation from his own doctrines, and he and other white abolitionists apparently wanted little theorizing from Douglass. His role was to be the eloquent example, literally and figuratively displaying the scars of the lash to prepare audiences for white speakers who would lay out the abolition philosophy. But Douglass's brilliant and awakened in-

tellec could not remain satisfied with this subordinate role (see our second set of excerpts, from Douglass's second autobiography). He wished to analyze slavery as well as to describe it, and to make use of the full range of rhetorical resources that he was discovering at his command.

On the speaker's platform Douglass was apparently deeply impressive. Against the advice of his white friends, who felt he was destroying his credibility as a witness against slavery, Douglass made no attempt to retain a plantation accent in his speech or a trace of the slave's servility in his manner. On the contrary, he worked hard to improve his diction and his command of Standard English—while at the same time salting his speeches with expert mimicry of a variety of speech styles, from African-inflected slave dialects to the hypercorrect and hypocritical accents of white southern proslavery preachers. He learned to use his voice, naturally deep and resonant, as a flexible instrument that could range from rafter-shaking thunder to tenderly moving, quiet tones.

From very early in his career, it seems, Douglass understood that he was crafting a platform persona that had never before been seen in the Western world. He paid careful attention to clothing himself with as much refinement as his white colleagues; his face betrayed that his father was a white man, yet he identified deeply with people of African descent, like his mother, and he dressed his hair in a way that emphasized its African texture. He dramatized the complexities of his own background in virtually every speech. He had been a slave, and now he appeared conspicuously as a free man and a leader in the public fight against slavery. He had received no formal education whatsoever—"All that I know I have stolen,"¹ he told a British audience—and now he commanded the full range of Western cultural archives in the allusions, arguments, and strategies of his masterful performances. By his very presence at the podium, Douglass increased the possibilities for rhetoric, and his autobiographical reflections on his speaking career suggest that he was well aware of this fact.

Ironically, as Douglass's friends had predicted, his success as a speaker led audiences to doubt that he had ever been a slave, or, contrariwise, to doubt that he spoke his own words—instead they accused him of having some white ghost writer prepare his speeches. Douglass attempted to counter both kinds of criticism by publishing, in 1845, the *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written by Himself*. Slave narratives were already an established American genre, promoted by white abolitionists to demonstrate slavery's horrors and consumed by readers not always above prurient interest in these horrors. The narratives were produced by writers who could thus not only strike a blow against slavery, but also make known their own humanity, literacy, and philosophical views on that brutal institution. This first version of Douglass's autobiography fits well within the genre, concentrating on his life in slavery and concluding with a brief mention of his first appearance on the speaker's platform. He depicts himself as an essentially isolated

¹Frederick Douglass, "Message to the British," quoted in Benjamin Quarles, ed., *Frederick Douglass* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1968), p. 34.

and heroic fighter for freedom, echoing his platform persona. A further irony of his frankness in discussing his early life was that he thus gave information to his former owners that might assist them in tracking him down.

The American Anti-Slavery Society, parent body of the Massachusetts group that employed him, had been planning to send Douglass on a speaking tour of the British Isles, from which came important financial and political support for abolition in the United States (Britain had abolished slavery everywhere in its empire in 1834). It seemed like an opportune time for him to leave the country, and accordingly, Douglass embarked in August of 1845, while his newly published *Narrative* was selling briskly. The speaking tour was a tremendous success. Douglass was met everywhere by enthusiastic crowds and suffered none of the racist heckling and discrimination that he had endured in the United States. Moreover, his new white British abolitionist friends clearly viewed him as an intellectual equal. While in Britain, Douglass truly came into his own intellectually and broke the Garrisonian leading strings that had already been frayed by his development as a speaker in the United States. Although he still opposed violent resistance to slavery, he now gave free rein to his own view that political action against slavery was desirable and that the Constitution, properly interpreted, did not defend the institution. He continued to support other social reform efforts that the Garrisonians favored, notably temperance and women's rights, but he gave more prominence to women's rights than many others did and attempted (without fully succeeding) to make common cause among enslaved black people, free but oppressed black people, and oppressed white working-class people.

By the time Douglass returned to the United States in 1847, he was determined to put his views before the American people independently of Garrisonian guidance. He was singularly free to do so, because British friends had purchased his freedom upon hearing that the Aulds had indeed identified him from the *Narrative* and were seeking to return him to slavery. British abolitionists also equipped him with funds to begin his own abolitionist newspaper. This he did, in spite of vigorous opposition from the Garrisonians, who feared the competition with *The Liberator*, the expression of heterodox abolition views, and, somewhat contradictorily, the potential loss of Douglass to the speakers' circuit. To escape Garrisonian surveillance and to lessen the appearance of competing with *The Liberator*, Douglass moved his family to Rochester, New York, where he had many abolitionist friends—notably Amy Post and her husband Isaac—and began to publish *The North Star*, assisted by William Nell and African American physician and journalist Martin Delany. Douglass was not lost to the podium, either; he could not be content with only one medium of activism, and he needed the money from speaking fees to supplement the meager income from his newspaper.

In the years leading up to the Civil War, Douglass became increasingly involved in political attempts to institute social reforms, through both speaking and writing. He attended the first women's rights convention in Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848, and was instrumental in persuading the group to pass Elizabeth Cady Stanton's resolution for women's suffrage, which even convention co-organizer Lucretia Coffin Mott found too radical. He led protests against the 1850 Fugitive

Slave Law requiring the citizens of free states to assist in the capture of runaway slaves. He came out publicly for an antislavery interpretation of the Constitution, a move so distressing to Garrison that he removed the American Anti-Slavery Society's imprimatur from *The North Star*. Undaunted, Douglass accepted an offer from wealthy white abolition activist Gerrit Smith to merge his paper with Smith's *Liberty Party Paper*, which advocated political resistance to slavery, and in 1851 replaced *The North Star* with the new combination under the title *Frederick Douglass' Paper*, funded generously by Smith. The new title gives some indication of how well known Douglass now was as a social reform activist. He supported candidates for political office who expressed some opposition to slavery, even if they did not embrace his call for immediate abolition, and he eventually became a staunch supporter of the Republican party. In 1855, he published *My Bondage and My Freedom*, a revised and enlarged version of his autobiography that devotes more space to his life after escaping slavery, telling much more about his career as an orator. It sold very well. He continued to lecture all over the northern United States, and added to his antislavery repertoire speeches that addressed other topics such as the ethnography of the African race and the qualities of the American self-made man. Now the principal speaker wherever he appeared, rather than merely an opener, Douglass often talked for more than two hours yet held audiences spellbound, according to contemporary accounts.

Douglass had clearly become an independent force in the arena of American social reform. He had broken with Garrison completely, to the point that he entertained the possibility of violent resistance to slavery. He had earlier met John Brown, a New England farmer whose fervid devotion to abolition drove him to travel to Kansas territory and there lead murderous raids against pro-slavery voters, in an attempt to prevent the territory from entering the Union as a slave state. In 1859 Douglass became involved in Brown's plot to raid the federal armory at Harpers Ferry, Virginia, to seize weapons that he would distribute to slaves in the surrounding area. Douglass almost accompanied Brown on the raid, but declined at the last minute. The raiders were all killed or captured, and Brown was hanged as a traitor. Douglass's part in the plot became known, and to avoid arrest he departed for a year of lecturing in Britain.

Douglass returned in 1860 to campaign for Abraham Lincoln's election as president. Once the Civil War began in 1861, Douglass staunchly supported the Union cause while emphasizing the war's significance for black people. He condemned Lincoln's suggestions that free and freed African Americans return to Africa and urged Lincoln to issue an emancipation proclamation, which he finally did early in 1863. Douglass also argued for the right of African American men to serve in the Union army, preferably at the same rate of pay and with the same opportunities for advancement as white soldiers. Even though these tokens of equality were not forthcoming, he recruited men for all-black, white-led units, including his three sons. In 1864 Lincoln consulted him about options for the freed slaves, and in 1865 Lincoln invited him to his second inaugural reception over white Republican opposition. Douglass eulogized the assassinated president in Rochester in April of that year.

After the Civil War, Douglass realized that his tasks had not ended with the abolition of slavery, as he explains in his third autobiography (see our third set of excerpts). Black civil rights were still in danger everywhere, and Douglass went to work, denouncing segregated schooling, labor unions that excluded blacks, and white-supremacist roll-backs of black civil rights in the former slave states. He tried unsuccessfully to keep the American Anti-Slavery Society in existence to fight for black rights, but Garrison, regarding its mission as completed, disbanded it. Douglass then expressed support for the new American Equal Rights Association, which initially intended to support civil rights for both white women and African American men and women. This new organization, however, and the long-standing alliance between workers for abolition and for women's rights, foundered amid post-Civil War political exigencies. A prime bone of contention was the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which guaranteed the franchise to black men while failing to mention women's suffrage. Douglass, although deploring the exclusion of all women from this amendment, nevertheless felt that it should be supported. But many white women feminists argued for a more inclusive amendment. Douglass campaigned for the Fifteenth Amendment, and once it was passed, called for a campaign for another amendment to give the vote to women, but the damage was already done, and unified reform efforts virtually ceased in the postbellum United States.

Douglass, while still supporting women's rights, devoted most of his energies to black rights. Reflecting his increasing focus on achieving reform through political action, he moved his family to Washington, D.C., in 1872 after their Rochester home was destroyed by an arsonist. Through the 1870s and 1880s, he remained a staunch supporter of the Republican party, in spite of its less-than-perfect record on black rights, and promoted his own vision for the future of America even though it conflicted with that of some younger black leaders. The keynote of his thinking was the concept of equality before the law. He argued for giving African Americans an equal chance at all the rights and privileges the United States had to offer—equal schooling, equal work opportunities, equal voting rights, and more. African Americans should work to achieve these equal rights through political activism, promising their votes to those who would do the most for them. To this extent, then, Douglass advocated African Americans making common cause, but otherwise he tended to oppose separatist organizations. He exhorted African Americans to rise socially, economically, and politically by their own individual efforts, and he argued that, as their achievements accumulated, white racism would diminish. His ultimate goal was complete integration and even assimilation; he defended intermarriage as a way to make color differences disappear. Eventually, Douglass hoped, race itself would disappear as a significant category in American culture, and every individual would be judged according to his or her merits alone.

Douglass hoped for political office as a result of his faithful labor for the Republican party. Nomination to elective office was not out of the question, given the emergence of black legislators in the former slave states, but Douglass never achieved this. Appointed office seemed to be closer to his grasp, but it also produced disappointments. After holding several minor bureaucratic appointments in

Washington, in 1889 Douglass accepted the post of minister to Haiti. Although not the Cabinet position he had wished for, this diplomatic appointment came close to conferring the dignity he desired because Haiti was especially significant in the African American community. It was one of only three independent black nations in the world and had won its freedom from French colonial rule almost a hundred years earlier under the leadership of former slave Toussaint L'Ouverture, a great hero to African Americans. Unfortunately, as minister, Douglass became entangled in a scheme to extort land from Haiti for an American naval base. He attempted to respect Haitian sovereignty while carrying out his directions to negotiate for the base, which was difficult to do while American naval ships postured in the harbor. Although Haiti resisted the pressure and the scheme came to nothing, Douglass was blamed for its failure. He resigned, but published a well-received article in which he defended his actions as minister, and in 1893 he was asked by Haiti to serve as its chief representative at the Columbian Exposition, a world's fair held in Chicago.

Family concerns also occupied Douglass in the last decades of his life. He finally felt able to return to Maryland, to scenes he had known as a slave child, and he renewed acquaintance with the descendants of his former owners and also with his own brothers and sisters, whom he had scarcely known in slavery. He provided generous financial support to some of them and to his own children, who—due as much to persistent racism as to overshadowing by their famous father—had perpetual difficulties in supporting themselves and their children. His wife Anna, still illiterate in spite of his efforts to tutor her and never a full participant in his activist life, though a faithful companion and mother to their children, died in 1882, and Douglass suffered a period of deep depression. Later, in 1884, he remarried to a white woman, Helen Pitts, who lived next door to the Douglasses. This union aroused a storm of protest from his own family and from many friends, both black and white; among his few supporters was Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Nevertheless, Douglass and his new wife appeared to be very happy together and took an extended tour of Europe in 1886–1887. She accompanied him to Haiti.

In 1881 Douglass published the third version of his autobiography, now entitled *The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass*, bringing its account up through the busy postwar years. Unlike the two earlier biographies, this one, and its enlarged 1892 edition, sold poorly, implying that the story of the slave who rose to public prominence was no longer of much interest to the public. Nevertheless, Douglass did not give up his activism. He supported the antilynching crusade of the young African American reformer Ida B. Wells, raising money for her, arranging speaking engagements, and coauthoring a protest pamphlet. He also continued to address women's rights meetings and African American conventions. He was escorted to the podium of the 1895 National Council of Women's meeting by long-time friend Susan B. Anthony. Returning home, he was telling his wife about the meeting when he collapsed and died of a heart attack.

If Douglass had been somewhat neglected by the public shortly before his death, people turned out by the thousands to view his body in Washington, and many dignitaries attended the memorial service there before he was taken to Rochester for burial. In 1908, African American sociologist Kelly Miller called him “the one

commanding historic character of the colored race in America.”² Although Douglass arguably no longer holds such a position alone, the assessment gives some idea of his impact on nineteenth-century American life, and contemporary African American historian Waldo E. Martin agrees: “Frederick Douglass remains the prototypical black American hero: a peerless self-made man and symbol of success; a fearless and tireless spokesman; a thoroughgoing humanist . . . not only did he succeed, but he did so in terms signifying mythic greatness.”³

Douglass had little explicit training in rhetoric, but no doubt he studied not only the model speeches by Cicero, William Pitt, George Washington, and others in *The Columbian Orator* (1797), but also the introductory essay, “General Directions for Speaking,” by the anthologist Caleb Bingham. John W. Blassingame, a modern editor of Douglass, points out that naturalness of gesture and expression, flexible use of the voice for emphasis, and imitation of different manners of speech for humorous or otherwise illustrative effect, all emphasized by Bingham, were all noted by contemporary observers as key features in the success of Douglass’s oratory. Blassingame detects direct quotes and paraphrases of *Columbian Orator* material in Douglass’s early speeches, as well as the influence of contemporary speakers he admired, among them Wendell Phillips, William Lloyd Garrison, and Daniel Webster, and of his favorite reading, which included the Bible, Shakespeare, Dickens, Longfellow, Whittier, and the Afro-French novelist Alexandre Dumas. Blassingame also surveys reviews of contemporary orators written by Douglass and finds that Douglass reserves his highest praise for speakers who are clear and direct, avoiding the ponderous allusions and flowery ornament favored by many nineteenth-century speakers, and who have the courage to push for needed social reforms: all traits that Douglass himself exhibited.

Learning to read, write, and orate almost simultaneously, as Douglass did, prepared him well for his future career as an abolitionist agitator. Not only did oratory play a major role in the movement, but as historian of rhetoric Ernest G. Borman has indicated, the line between written and spoken rhetoric was indistinct—speeches were often carefully composed before being delivered, and they were edited again before being published; antislavery tracts might furnish material for speeches. Douglass worked hard to master the written and spoken media and, as noted earlier, to develop a culturally syncretic persona. While employing Standard English and European cultural references, for the most part, he expressed an African American point of view and gave a uniquely African American twist to European American cultural elements.

African American Studies scholar Wilson Jeremiah Moses has coined the term *black jeremiad* to characterize how Douglass and other African American orators transformed a European American genre. The Puritan jeremiad focused on the moral and political destiny of Anglo-Americans; in African American hands, this genre took on a dual meaning. Instead of Anglo-Americans, African Americans be-

²Kelly Miller, “Frederick Douglass,” in *Radicals and Conservatives and Other Essays* (1908, 1968), quoted in Waldo E. Martin Jr., *The Mind of Frederick Douglass* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984), p. 253.

³Martin, p. 253.

came the preeminent “chosen people” whose future was scrutinized and whose moral reform was invoked to ensure divine salvation from slavery and racist oppression. However, the United States as a multiracial whole was also seen as “chosen” for the task of disseminating democracy throughout the world, a task the country could accomplish only after repenting of the sins of slavery and white supremacist racism.

The dual perspective of this genre made it inherently ironic, continually inviting an examination of its own idealistic terminology. It is this critically ironic view of American life, which added a new dimension to public rhetoric, that speech communication scholar John Louis Lucaites sees as Douglass’s unique contribution:

The ironic construction of equality that emerged from Douglass’s Fifth of July oration underscored the importance of adding the voice of African-Americans to what we have come to call the dialogue of American public address. The immediate impact of that construction was of course limited, but it was to be repeated over and over again [sic] by Douglass and others in the ensuing years leading to the Civil War and beyond, and eventually it contributed to the usages of “equality” that emerged in the wake of the reconstructed [post-slavery] Constitution. Those usages emphasized the *differences* between white and black Americans as a prelude to the cultural necessity for “equality under the law.” (emphasis in original)⁴

After a long period of neglect in the first half of the twentieth century, Frederick Douglass’s autobiographies have attracted considerable attention from literary critics. As Lucaites has noted, however, his contributions as a rhetorician have been little studied. Scholars are only now beginning to realize the extent to which Douglass’s complex rhetorical stance opened new possibilities for rhetoric in the Western cultural tradition.

Selected Bibliography

The *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, My Bondage and My Freedom*, and *The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass* (1892 edition) are available in a single volume, *Autobiographies*, with helpful notes by Henry Louis Gates Jr., and a detailed chronology of Douglass’s life (1994). This is the source of our excerpts. Douglass’s speeches and newspaper writings are collected in *Life and Writings of Frederick Douglass*, ed. Philip Foner (five volumes, 1950–1975), and *The Frederick Douglass Papers*, ed. John W. Blassingame (five volumes, 1979–1992); volume I of the latter collection includes a helpful note on editorial methods that highlights the difficulties inherent in studying oral texts.

A good biography is William S. McFeely’s *Frederick Douglass* (1991). A brief account that focuses on Douglass’s knowledge of rhetoric, his rhetorical theory, and assessments of his speaking by contemporary audiences is John W. Blassingame’s “Introduction to Series One” (in *The Frederick Douglass Papers, Series One: Speeches, Debates, and Interviews, Volume I: 1841–46*, 1979). Another brief biographical account that analyzes several of

⁴John Louis Lucaites, “The Irony of ‘Equality’ in Black Abolitionist Discourse: The Case of Frederick Douglass’s ‘What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?’” in *Rhetoric and Political Culture in Nineteenth-Century America*, ed. Thomas W. Benson (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1997), pp. 63–64.

Douglass's speeches in detail and surveys scholarship on him as a master ironist is Gerald Fulkerson's "Frederick Douglass" (in *African-American Orators: A Bio-Critical Sourcebook*, ed. Richard W. Leeman, 1996). For a more detailed exploration of Douglass's thinking on abolition, other social reform issues, and American national identity generally, see *The Mind of Frederick Douglass* by Waldo E. Martin Jr. (1984). Assessments of Douglass's oratory from his own time are collected in *Frederick Douglass*, ed. Benjamin Quarles (1968). Providing information on Douglass's context of contemporary abolitionists are both the collection of abolitionist speeches and the introductory essay in Ernest G. Borman's *Forerunners of Black Power: The Rhetoric of Abolition* (1971).

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For a sampling of literary critical work on Douglass that concentrates on his autobiographies, see the Sundquist volume just cited, and *Critical Essays on Frederick Douglass*, ed. William Andrews (1991); the latter volume includes critical responses to Douglass from his own day to the present, and Andrews surveys Douglass's critical reception as a writer in his introductory essay.

From *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

CHAPTER VI

My new mistress proved to be all she appeared when I first met her at the door,—a woman of the kindest heart and finest feelings. She had never had a slave under her control previously to myself, and prior to her marriage she had been dependent upon her own industry for a living. She was by trade a weaver; and by constant application to her business, she had been in a good degree preserved from the blighting and dehumanizing effects of slavery. I was utterly aston-

ished at her goodness. I scarcely knew how to behave towards her. She was entirely unlike any other white woman I had ever seen. I could not approach her as I was accustomed to approach other white ladies. My early instruction was all out of place. The crouching servility, usually so acceptable a quality in a slave, did not answer when manifested toward her. Her favor was not gained by it; she seemed to be disturbed by it. She did not deem it impudent or unmannerly for a slave to look her in the face. The meanest slave was put fully at ease in her presence, and none

left without feeling better for having seen her. Her face was made of heavenly smiles, and her voice of tranquil music.

But, alas! this kind heart had but a short time to remain such. The fatal poison of irresponsible power was already in her hands, and soon commenced its infernal work. That cheerful eye, under the influence of slavery, soon became red with rage; that voice, made all of sweet accord, changed to one of harsh and horrid discord; and that angelic face gave place to that of a demon.

Very soon after I went to live with Mr. and Mrs. Auld, she very kindly commenced to teach me the A, B, C. After I had learned this, she assisted me in learning to spell words of three or four letters. Just at this point of my progress, Mr. Auld found out what was going on, and at once forbade Mrs. Auld to instruct me further, telling her, among other things, that it was unlawful, as well as unsafe, to teach a slave to read. To use his own words, further, he said, "If you give a nigger an inch, he will take an ell. A nigger should know nothing but to obey his master—to do as he is told to do. Learning would *spoil* the best nigger in the world. Now," said he, "if you teach that nigger (speaking of myself) how to read, there would be no keeping him. It would forever unfit him to be a slave. He would at once become unmanageable, and of no value to his master. As to himself, it could do him no good, but a great deal of harm. It would make him discontented and unhappy." These words sank deep into my heart, stirred up sentiments within that lay slumbering, and called into existence an entirely new train of thought. It was a new and special revelation, explaining dark and mysterious things, with which my youthful understanding had struggled, but struggled in vain. I now understood what had been to me a most perplexing difficulty—to wit, the white man's power to enslave the black man. It was a grand achievement, and I prized it highly. From that moment, I understood the pathway from slavery to freedom. It was just what I wanted, and I got it at a time when I the least expected it. Whilst I was saddened by the thought of losing the aid of my kind mistress, I was gladdened by the invaluable instruction which, by the merest accident, I had gained from my master. Though conscious of the difficulty of learning

without a teacher, I set out with high hope, and a fixed purpose, at whatever cost of trouble, to learn how to read. The very decided manner with which he spoke, and strove to impress his wife with the evil consequences of giving me instruction, served to convince me that he was deeply sensible of the truths he was uttering. It gave me the best assurance that I might rely with the utmost confidence on the results which, he said, would flow from teaching me to read. What he most dreaded, that I most desired. What he most loved, that I most hated. That which to him was a great evil, to be carefully shunned, was to me a great good, to be diligently sought; and the argument which he so warmly urged, against my learning to read, only served to inspire me with a desire and determination to learn. In learning to read, I owe almost as much to the bitter opposition of my master, as to the kindly aid of my mistress. I acknowledge the benefit of both.

I had resided but a short time in Baltimore before I observed a marked difference, in the treatment of slaves, from that which I had witnessed in the country. A city slave is almost a freeman, compared with a slave on the plantation. He is much better fed and clothed, and enjoys privileges altogether unknown to the slave on the plantation. There is a vestige of decency, a sense of shame, that does much to curb and check those outbreaks of atrocious cruelty so commonly enacted upon the plantation. He is a desperate slaveholder, who will shock the humanity of his non-slaveholding neighbors with the cries of his lacerated slave. Few are willing to incur the odium attaching to the reputation of being a cruel master; and above all things, they would not be known as not giving a slave enough to eat. Every city slaveholder is anxious to have it known of him, that he feeds his slaves well; and it is due to them to say, that most of them do give their slaves enough to eat. There are, however, some painful exceptions to this rule. Directly opposite to us, on Philpot Street, lived Mr. Thomas Hamilton. He owned two slaves. Their names were Henrietta and Mary. Henrietta was about twenty-two years of age, Mary was about fourteen; and of all the mangled and emaciated creatures I ever looked upon, these two were the most so. His heart must be harder than stone, that

could look upon these unmoved. The head, neck, and shoulders of Mary were literally cut to pieces. I have frequently felt her head, and found it nearly covered with festering sores, caused by the lash of her cruel mistress. I do not know that her master ever whipped her, but I have been an eye-witness to the cruelty of Mrs. Hamilton. I used to be in Mr. Hamilton's house nearly every day. Mrs. Hamilton used to sit in a large chair in the middle of the room, with a heavy cowskin always by her side, and scarce an hour passed during the day but was marked by the blood of one of these slaves. The girls seldom passed her without her saying, "Move faster, you *black gip!*" at the same time giving them a blow with the cowskin over the head or shoulders, often drawing the blood. She would then say, "Take that, you *black gip!*"—continuing, "If you don't move faster, I'll move you!" Added to the cruel lashings to which these slaves were subjected, they were kept nearly half-starved. They seldom knew what it was to eat a full meal. I have seen Mary contending with the pigs for the offal thrown into the street. So much was Mary kicked and cut to pieces, that she was oftener called "*pecked*" than by her name.

CHAPTER VII

I lived in Master Hugh's family about seven years. During this time, I succeeded in learning to read and write. In accomplishing this, I was compelled to resort to various stratagems. I had no regular teacher. My mistress, who had kindly commenced to instruct me, had, in compliance with the advice and direction of her husband, not only ceased to instruct, but had set her face against my being instructed by any one else. It is due, however, to my mistress to say of her, that she did not adopt this course of treatment immediately. She at first lacked the depravity indispensable to shutting me up in mental darkness. It was at least necessary for her to have some training in the exercise of irresponsible power, to make her equal to the task of treating me as though I were a brute.

My mistress was, as I have said, a kind and tender-hearted woman; and in the simplicity of

her soul she commenced, when I first went to live with her, to treat me as she supposed one human being ought to treat another. In entering upon the duties of a slaveholder, she did not seem to perceive that I sustained to her the relation of a mere chattel, and that for her to treat me as a human being was not only wrong, but dangerously so. Slavery proved as injurious to her as it did to me. When I went there, she was a pious, warm, and tender-hearted woman. There was no sorrow or suffering for which she had not a tear. She had bread for the hungry, clothes for the naked, and comfort for every mourner that came within her reach. Slavery soon proved its ability to divest her of these heavenly qualities. Under its influence, the tender heart became stone, and the lamb-like disposition gave way to one of tiger-like fierceness. The first step in her downward course was in her ceasing to instruct me. She now commenced to practise her husband's precepts. She finally became even more violent in her opposition than her husband himself. She was not satisfied with simply doing as well as he had commanded; she seemed anxious to do better. Nothing seemed to make her more angry than to see me with a newspaper. She seemed to think that here lay the danger. I have had her rush at me with a face made all up of fury, and snatch from me a newspaper, in a manner that fully revealed her apprehension. She was an apt woman; and a little experience soon demonstrated, to her satisfaction, that education and slavery were incompatible with each other.

From this time I was most narrowly watched. If I was in a separate room any considerable length of time, I was sure to be suspected of having a book, and was at once called to give an account of myself. All this, however, was too late. The first step had been taken. Mistress, in teaching me the alphabet, had given me the *inch*, and no precaution could prevent me from taking the *ell*.

The plan which I adopted, and the one by which I was most successful, was that of making friends of all the little white boys whom I met in the street. As many of these as I could, I converted into teachers. With their kindly aid, obtained at different times and in different places, I finally succeeded in learning to read. When I was

sent of errands, I always took my book with me, and by going one part of my errand quickly, I found time to get a lesson before my return. I used also to carry bread with me, enough of which was always in the house, and to which I was always welcome; for I was much better off in this regard than many of the poor white children in our neighborhood. This bread I used to bestow upon the hungry little urchins, who, in return, would give me that more valuable bread of knowledge. I am strongly tempted to give the names of two or three of those little boys, as a testimonial of the gratitude and affection I bear them; but prudence forbids;—not that it would injure me, but it might embarrass them; for it is almost an unpardonable offence to teach slaves to read in this Christian country. It is enough to say of the dear little fellows, that they lived on Philpot Street, very near Durgin and Bailey's ship-yard. I used to talk this matter of slavery over with them. I would sometimes say to them, I wished I could be as free as they would be when they got to be men. "You will be free as soon as you are twenty-one, *but I am a slave for life!* Have not I as good a right to be free as you have?" These words used to trouble them; they would express for me the liveliest sympathy, and console me with the hope that something would occur by which I might be free.

I was now about twelve years old, and the thought of being *a slave for life* began to bear heavily upon my heart. Just about this time, I got hold of a book entitled "The Columbian Orator." Every opportunity I got, I used to read this book. Among much of other interesting matter, I found in it a dialogue between a master and his slave. The slave was represented as having run away from his master three times. The dialogue represented the conversation which took place between them, when the slave was retaken the third time. In this dialogue, the whole argument in behalf of slavery was brought forward by the master, all of which was disposed of by the slave. The slave was made to say some very smart as well as impressive things in reply to his master—things which had the desired though unexpected effect; for the conversation resulted in the voluntary emancipation of the slave on the part of the master.

In the same book, I met with one of Sheridan's mighty speeches on and in behalf of Catholic emancipation. These were choice documents to me. I read them over and over again with unabated interest. They gave tongue to interesting thoughts of my own soul, which had frequently flashed through my mind, and died away for want of utterance. The moral which I gained from the dialogue was the power of truth over the conscience of even a slaveholder. What I got from Sheridan was a bold denunciation of slavery, and a powerful vindication of human rights. The reading of these documents enabled me to utter my thoughts, and to meet the arguments brought forward to sustain slavery; but while they relieved me of one difficulty, they brought on another even more painful than the one of which I was relieved. The more I read, the more I was led to abhor and detest my enslavers. I could regard them in no other light than a band of successful robbers, who had left their homes, and gone to Africa, and stolen us from our homes, and in a strange land reduced us to slavery. I loathed them as being the meanest as well as the most wicked of men. As I read and contemplated the subject, behold! that very discontentment which Master Hugh had predicted would follow my learning to read had already come, to torment and sting my soul to unutterable anguish. As I writhed under it, I would at times feel that learning to read had been a curse rather than a blessing. It had given me a view of my wretched condition, without the remedy. It opened my eyes to the horrible pit, but to no ladder upon which to get out. In moments of agony, I envied my fellow-slaves for their stupidity. I have often wished myself a beast. I preferred the condition of the meanest reptile to my own. Any thing, no matter what, to get rid of thinking! It was this everlasting thinking of my condition that tormented me. There was no getting rid of it. It was pressed upon me by every object within sight or hearing, animate or inanimate. The silver trump of freedom had roused my soul to eternal wakefulness. Freedom now appeared, to disappear no more forever. It was heard in every sound, and seen in every thing. It was ever present to torment me with a sense of my wretched condition. I saw nothing without seeing it, I

heard nothing without hearing it, and felt nothing without feeling it. It looked from every star, it smiled in every calm, breathed in every wind, and moved in every storm.

I often found myself regretting my own existence, and wishing myself dead; and but for the hope of being free, I have no doubt but that I should have killed myself, or done something for which I should have been killed. While in this state of mind, I was eager to hear any one speak of slavery. I was a ready listener. Every little while, I could hear something about the abolitionists. It was some time before I found what the word meant. It was always used in such connections as to make it an interesting word to me. If a slave ran away and succeeded in getting clear, or if a slave killed his master, set fire to a barn, or did any thing very wrong in the mind of a slaveholder, it was spoken of as the fruit of *abolition*. Hearing the word in this connection very often, I set about learning what it meant. The dictionary afforded me little or no help. I found it was "the act of abolishing;" but then I did not know what was to be abolished. Here I was perplexed. I did not dare to ask any one about its meaning, for I was satisfied that it was something they wanted me to know very little about. After a patient waiting, I got one of our city papers, containing an account of the number of petitions from the north, praying for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, and of the slave trade between the States. From this time I understood the words *abolition* and *abolitionist*, and always drew near when that word was spoken, expecting to hear something of importance to myself and fellow-slaves. The light broke in upon me by degrees. I went one day down on the wharf of Mr. Waters; and seeing two Irishmen unloading a scow of stone, I went, unasked, and helped them. When we had finished, one of them came to me and asked me if I were a slave. I told him I was. He asked, "Are ye a slave for life?" I told him that I was. The good Irishman seemed to be deeply affected by the statement. He said to the other that it was a pity so fine a little fellow as myself should be a slave for life. He said it was a shame to hold me. They both advised me to run away to the north; that I should find friends there, and that I should be free. I pretended not to be in-

terested in what they said, and treated them as if I did not understand them; for I feared they might be treacherous. White men have been known to encourage slaves to escape, and then, to get the reward, catch them and return them to their masters. I was afraid that these seemingly good men might use me so; but I nevertheless remembered their advice, and from that time I resolved to run away. I looked forward to a time at which it would be safe for me to escape. I was too young to think of doing so immediately; besides, I wished to learn how to write, as I might have occasion to write my own pass. I consoled myself with the hope that I should one day find a good chance. Meanwhile, I would learn to write.

The idea as to how I might learn to write was suggested to me by being in Durgin and Bailey's ship-yard, and frequently seeing the ship carpenters, after hewing, and getting a piece of timber ready for use, write on the timber the name of that part of the ship for which it was intended. When a piece of timber was intended for the larboard side, it would be marked thus—"L." When a piece was for the starboard side, it would be marked thus—"S." A piece for the larboard side forward, would be marked thus—"L. F." When a piece was for starboard side forward, it would be marked thus—"S. F." For larboard aft, it would be marked thus—"L. A." For starboard aft, it would be marked thus—"S. A." I soon learned the names of these letters, and for what they were intended when placed upon a piece of timber in the ship-yard. I immediately commenced copying them, and in a short time was able to make the four letters named. After that, when I met with any boy who I knew could write, I would tell him I could write as well as he. The next word would be, "I don't believe you. Let me see you try it." I would then make the letters which I had been so fortunate as to learn, and ask him to beat that. In this way I got a good many lessons in writing, which it is quite possible I should never have gotten in any other way. During this time, my copy-book was the board fence, brick wall, and pavement; my pen and ink was a lump of chalk. With these, I learned mainly how to write. I then commenced and continued copying the Italics in Webster's Spelling Book, until I could make them all without looking on the book. By this time, my

little Master Thomas had gone to school, and learned how to write, and had written over a number of copy-books. These had been brought home, and shown to some of our near neighbors, and then laid aside. My mistress used to go to class meeting at the Wilk Street meeting-house every Monday afternoon, and leave me to take care of

the house. When left thus, I used to spend the time in writing in the spaces left in Master Thomas's copy-book, copying what he had written. I continued to do this until I could write a hand very similar to that of Master Thomas. Thus, after a long, tedious effort for years, I finally succeeded in learning how to write.

From *My Bondage and My Freedom*

In four or five months after reaching New Bedford, there came a young man to me, with a copy of the "Liberator," the paper edited by WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON, and published by ISAAC KNAPP, and asked me to subscribe for it. I told him I had but just escaped from slavery, and was of course very poor, and remarked further, that I was unable to pay for it then; the agent, however, very willingly took me as a subscriber, and appeared to be much pleased with securing my name to his list. From this time I was brought in contact with the mind of William Lloyd Garrison. His paper took its place with me next to the bible.

The Liberator was a paper after my own heart. It detested slavery—exposed hypocrisy and wickedness in high places—made no truce with the traffickers in the bodies and souls of men; it preached human brotherhood, denounced oppression, and, with all the solemnity of God's word, demanded the complete emancipation of my race. I not only liked—I *loved* this paper, and its editor. He seemed a match for all the opponents of emancipation, whether they spoke in the name of the law, or the gospel. His words were few, full of holy fire, and straight to the point. Learning to love him, through his paper I was prepared to be pleased with his presence. Something of a hero worshiper, by nature, here was one, on first sight, to excite my love and reverence.

Seventeen years ago, few men possessed a more heavenly countenance than William Lloyd Garrison, and few men evinced a more genuine or a more exalted piety. The bible was his text book—held sacred, as the word of the Eternal

Father—sinless perfection—complete submission to insults and injuries—literal obedience to the injunction, if smitten on one side to turn the other also. Not only was Sunday a Sabbath, but all days were Sabbaths, and to be kept holy. All sectarianism false and mischievous—the regenerated, throughout the world, members of one body, and the HEAD Christ Jesus. Prejudice against color was rebellion against God. Of all men beneath the sky, the slaves, because most neglected and despised, were nearest and dearest to his great heart. Those ministers who defended slavery from the bible, were of their "father the devil;" and those churches which fellowshipped slaveholders as christians, were synagogues of Satan, and our nation was a nation of liars. Never loud or noisy—calm and serene as a summer sky, and as pure. "You are the man, the Moses, raised up by God, to deliver his modern Israel from bondage," was the spontaneous feeling of my heart, as I sat away back in the hall and listened to his mighty words; mighty in truth—mighty in their simple earnestness.

I had not long been a reader of the Liberator, and listener to its editor, before I got a clear apprehension of the principles of the anti-slavery movement. I had already the spirit of the movement, and only needed to understand its principles and measures. These I got from the Liberator, and from those who believed in that paper. My acquaintance with the movement increased my hope for the ultimate freedom of my race, and I united with it from a sense of delight, as well as duty.

Every week the Liberator came, and every

week I made myself master of its contents. All the anti-slavery meetings held in New Bedford I promptly attended, my heart burning at every true utterance against the slave system, and every rebuke of its friends and supporters. Thus passed the first three years of my residence in New Bedford. I had not then dreamed of the possibility of my becoming a public advocate of the cause so deeply imbedded in my heart. It was enough for me to listen—to receive and applaud the great words of others, and only whisper in private, among the white laborers on the wharves, and elsewhere, the truths which burned in my breast.

CHAPTER XXIII

Introduced to the Abolitionists

First speech at Nantucket—much sensation—extraordinary speech of Mr. Garrison—author becomes a public lecturer—fourteen years' experience—youthful enthusiasm—a brand new fact—matter of the author's speech—he could not follow the programme—his fugitive slaveship doubted—to settle all doubt he writes his experience of slavery—danger of recapture increased.

In the summer of 1841, a grand anti-slavery convention was held in Nantucket, under the auspices of Mr. Garrison and his friends. Until now, I had taken no holiday since my escape from slavery. Having worked very hard that spring and summer, in Richmond's brass foundery—sometimes working all night as well as all day—and needing a day or two of rest, I attended this convention, never supposing that I should take part in the proceedings. Indeed, I was not aware that any one connected with the convention even so much as knew my name. I was, however, quite mistaken. Mr. William C. Coffin, a prominent abolitionist in those days of trial, had heard me speaking to my colored friends, in the little school-house on Second street, New Bedford, where we worshiped. He sought me out in the crowd, and invited me to say a few words to the convention. Thus sought out, and thus invited, I was induced to speak out the feelings inspired by the occasion, and the fresh recollection of the scenes through which I had passed as a slave. My speech on this occasion is about the only one I

ever made, of which I do not remember a single connected sentence. It was with the utmost difficulty that I could stand erect, or that I could command and articulate two words without hesitation and stammering. I trembled in every limb. I am not sure that my embarrassment was not the most effective part of my speech, if speech it could be called. At any rate, this is about the only part of my performance that I now distinctly remember. But excited and convulsed as I was, the audience, though remarkably quiet before, became as much excited as myself. Mr. Garrison followed me, taking me as his text; and now, whether I had made an eloquent speech in behalf of freedom or not, his was one never to be forgotten by those who heard it. Those who had heard Mr. Garrison oftenest, and had known him longest, were astonished. It was an effort of unequalled power, sweeping down, like a very tornado, every opposing barrier, whether of sentiment or opinion. For a moment, he possessed that almost fabulous inspiration, often referred to but seldom attained, in which a public meeting is transformed, as it were, into a single individuality—the orator wielding a thousand heads and hearts at once, and by the simple majesty of his all controlling thought, converting his hearers into the express image of his own soul. That night there were at least one thousand Garrisonians in Nantucket! At the close of this great meeting, I was duly waited on by Mr. John A. Collins—then the general agent of the Massachusetts anti-slavery society—and urgently solicited by him to become an agent of that society, and to publicly advocate to anti-slavery principles. I was reluctant to take the proffered position. I had not been quite three years from slavery—was honestly distrustful of my ability—wished to be excused; publicity exposed me to discovery and arrest by my master; and other objections came up, but Mr. Collins was not to be put off, and I finally consented to go out for three months, for I supposed that I should have got to the end of my story and my usefulness, in that length of time.

Here opened upon me a new life—a life for which I had had no preparation. I was a “graduate from the peculiar institution,” Mr. Collins used to say, when introducing me, “*with my diploma written on my back!*” The three years of

my freedom had been spent in the hard school of adversity. My hands had been furnished by nature with something like a sordid leather coating, and I had bravely marked out for myself a life of rough labor, suited to the hardness of my hands, as a means of supporting myself and rearing my children.

Now what shall I say of this fourteen years' experience as a public advocate of the cause of my enslaved brothers and sisters? The time is but as a speck, yet large enough to justify a pause for retrospection—and a pause it must only be.

Young, ardent, and hopeful, I entered upon this new life in the full gush of unsuspecting enthusiasm. The cause was good; the men engaged in it were good; the means to attain its triumph, good; Heaven's blessing must attend all, and freedom must soon be given to the pining millions under a ruthless bondage. My whole heart went with the holy cause, and my most fervent prayer to the Almighty Disposer of the hearts of men, were continually offered for its early triumph. "Who or what," thought I, "can withstand a cause so good, so holy, so indescribably glorious. The God of Israel is with us. The might of the Eternal is on our side. Now let but the truth be spoken, and a nation will start forth at the sound!" In this enthusiastic spirit, I dropped into the ranks of freedom's friends, and went forth to the battle. For a time I was made to forget that my skin was dark and my hair crisped. For a time I regretted that I could not have shared the hardships and dangers endured by the earlier workers for the slave's release. I soon, however, found that my enthusiasm had been extravagant; that hardships and dangers were not yet passed; and that the life now before me, had shadows as well as sunbeams.

Among the first duties assigned me, on entering the ranks, was to travel, in company with Mr. George Foster, to secure subscribers to the "Anti-slavery Standard" and the "Liberator." With him I traveled and lectured through the eastern counties of Massachusetts. Much interest was awakened—large meetings assembled. Many came, no doubt, from curiosity to hear what a negro could say in his own cause. I was generally introduced as a "*chattel*"—a "*thing*"—a piece of southern "*property*"—the chairman assuring the

audience that *it* could speak. Fugitive slaves, at that time, were not so plentiful as now; and as a fugitive slave lecturer, I had the advantage of being a "*brand new fact*"—the first one out. Up to that time, a colored man was deemed a fool who confessed himself a runaway slave, not only because of the danger to which he exposed himself of being retaken, but because it was a confession of a very *low* origin! Some of my colored friends in New Bedford thought very badly of my wisdom for thus exposing and degrading myself. The only precaution I took, at the beginning, to prevent Master Thomas from knowing where I was, and what I was about, was the withholding my former name, my master's name, and the name of the state and county from which I came. During the first three or four months, my speeches were almost exclusively made up of narrations of my own personal experience as a slave. "Let us have the facts," said the people. So also said Friend George Foster, who always wished to pin me down to my simple narrative. "Give us the facts," said Collins, "we will take care of the philosophy." Just here arose some embarrassment. It was impossible for me to repeat the same old story month after month, and to keep up my interest in it. It was new to the people, it is true, but it was an old story to me; and to go through with it night after night, was a task altogether too mechanical for my nature. "Tell your story, Frederick," would whisper my then revered friend, William Lloyd Garrison, as I stepped upon the platform. I could not always obey, for I was now reading and thinking. New views of the subject were presented to my mind. It did not entirely satisfy me to *narrate* wrongs; I felt like *denouncing* them. I could not always curb my moral indignation for the perpetrators of slaveholding villainy, long enough for a circumstantial statement of the facts which I felt almost everybody must know. Besides, I was growing, and needed room. "People won't believe you ever was a slave, Frederick, if you keep on this way," said Friend Foster. "Be yourself," said Collins, "and tell your story." It was said to me, "Better have a *little* of the plantation manner of speech than not; 'tis not best that you seem too learned." These excellent friends were actuated by the best of motives, and were not altogether wrong in their advice; and

still I must speak just the word that seemed to *me* the word to be spoken *by* me.

At last the apprehended trouble came. People doubted if I had ever been a slave. They said I did not talk like a slave, look like a slave, nor act like a slave, and that they believed I had never been south of Mason and Dixon's line. "He don't tell us where he came from—what his master's name was—how he got away—nor the story of his experience. Besides, he is educated, and is, in this, a contradiction of all the facts we have concerning the ignorance of the slaves." Thus, I was in a pretty fair way to be denounced as an impostor. The committee of the Massachusetts anti-slavery society knew all the facts in my case, and agreed with me in the prudence of keeping them private. They, therefore, never doubted my being a genuine fugitive; but going down the aisles of the churches in which I spoke, and hearing the free spoken Yankees saying, repeatedly, "*He's never been a slave, I'll warrant ye,*" I resolved to dispel all doubt, at no distant day, by such a revelation of facts as could not be made by an other than a genuine fugitive.

In a little less than four years, therefore, after becoming a public lecturer, I was induced to write out the leading facts connected with my experience in slavery, giving names of persons, places, and dates—thus putting it in the power of any who doubted, to ascertain the truth or falsehood of my story of being a fugitive slave. This statement soon became known in Maryland, and I had reason to believe that an effort would be made to recapture me.

It is not probable that any open attempt to secure me as a slave could have succeeded, further

than the obtainment, by my master, of the money value of my bones and sinews. Fortunately for me, in the four years of my labors in the abolition cause, I had gained many friends, who would have suffered themselves to be taxed to almost any extent to save me from slavery. It was felt that I had committed the double offense of running away, and exposing the secrets and crimes of slavery and slaveholders. There was a double motive for seeking my reenslavement—avarice and vengeance; and while, as I have said, there was little probability of successful recapture, if attempted openly, I was constantly in danger of being spirited away, at a moment when my friends could render me no assistance. In traveling about from place to place—often alone—I was much exposed to this sort of attack. Any one cherishing the design to betray me, could easily do so, by simply tracing my whereabouts through the anti-slavery journals, for my meetings and movements were promptly made known in advance. My true friends, Mr. Garrison and Mr. Phillips, had no faith in the power of Massachusetts to protect me in my right to liberty. Public sentiment and the law, in their opinion, would hand me over to the tormentors. Mr. Phillips, especially, considered me in danger, and said, when I showed him the manuscript of my story, if in my place, he would throw it into the fire. Thus the reader will observe, the settling of one difficulty only opened the way for another; and that though I had reached a free state, and had attained a position for public usefulness, I was still tormented with the liability of losing my liberty. How this liability was dispelled, will be related, with other incidents, in the next chapter.

From *The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass*

CHAPTER V

One Hundred Conventions

Anti-slavery conventions held in parts of New England and in some of the middle and western states—mobs—incidents, etc.

The year 1843 was one of remarkable anti-slavery activity. The New England Anti-Slavery Society, at its annual meeting held in the spring of that year, resolved, under the auspices of Mr. Garrison and his friends, to hold a series of one hundred conventions. The territory embraced in this plan for creating anti-slavery sentiment included New Hampshire, Vermont, New York, Ohio, Indiana, and Pennsylvania. I had the honor to be chosen one of the agents to assist in these proposed conventions, and I never entered upon any work with more heart and hope. All that the American people needed, I thought, was light. Could they know slavery as I knew it, they would hasten to the work of its extinction. The corps of speakers who were to be associated with me in carrying on these conventions was Messrs. George Bradburn, John A. Collins, James Monroe, William A. White, Charles L. Remond, and Sydney Howard Gay. They were all masters of the subject, and some of them able and eloquent orators. It was a piece of great good fortune to me, only a few years from slavery as I was, to be brought into contact with such men. It was a real campaign, and required nearly six months for its accomplishment.

Those who only know the State of Vermont as it is to-day can hardly understand, and must wonder that there was forty years ago need for anti-slavery effort within its borders. Our first convention was held in Middlebury, its chief seat of learning and the home of William Slade, who was for years the co-worker with John Quincy Adams in Congress; and yet in this town the opposition to our anti-slavery convention was intense bitter and violent. The only man of note in the town whom I now remember as giving us sympathy or welcome was Mr. Edward Barber, who was a man of

courage as well as ability, and did his best to make our convention a success. In advance of our arrival the college students had very industriously and mischievously placarded the town with violent aspersions of our characters and the grossest misrepresentations of our principles, measures, and objects. I was described as an escaped convict from the State prison, and the other speakers were assailed not less slanderously. Few people attended our meeting, and apparently little was accomplished by it. In the neighboring town of Ferrisburgh the case was different and more favorable. The way had been prepared for us by such stalwart anti-slavery workers as Orson S. Murray, Charles C. Burleigh, Rowland T. Robinson, and others. Upon the whole, however, the several towns visited showed that Vermont was surprisingly under the influence of the slave power. Her proud boast that within her borders no slave had ever been delivered up to his master, did not hinder her hatred to *anti-slavery*. What was in this respect true of the Green Mountain State was most discouragingly true of New York, the State next visited. All along the Erie canal, from Albany to Buffalo, there was evinced apathy, indifference, aversion, and sometimes a mobocratic spirit. Even Syracuse, afterward the home of the humane Samuel J. May and the scene of the "Jerry rescue;" where Gerrit Smith, Beriah Greene, William Goodell, Alvin Stewart, and other able men taught their noblest lessons, would not at that time furnish us with church, market, house, or hall in which to hold our meetings. Discovering this state of things, some of our number were disposed to turn our backs upon the town and to shake its dust from our feet, but of these, I am glad to say, I was not one. I had somewhere read of a command to go into the hedges and highways and compel men to come in. Mr. Stephen Smith, under whose hospitable roof we were made at home, thought as I did. It would be easy to silence anti-slavery agitation if refusing its agents the use of halls and churches could affect that result. The house of our friend Smith stood on the southwest corner of the park, which was well covered with young trees too small to furnish

shade or shelter, but better than none. Taking my stand under a small tree in the southeast corner of this park I began to speak in the morning to an audience of five persons, and before the close of my afternoon meeting I had before me not less than five hundred. In the evening I was waited upon by officers of the Congregational church and tendered the use of an old wooden building which they had deserted for a better, but still owned, and here our convention was continued during three days. I believe there has been no trouble to find places in Syracuse in which to hold anti-slavery meetings since. I never go there without endeavoring to see that tree, which, like the cause it sheltered, has grown large and strong and imposing.

I believe my first offense against our Anti-Slavery Israel was committed during these Syracuse meetings. It was on this wise: Our general agent, John A. Collins, had recently returned from England full of communistic ideas, which ideas would do away with individual property, and have all things in common. He had arranged a corps of speakers of his communistic persuasion, consisting of John O. Wattles, Nathaniel Whiting, and John Orvis, to follow our anti-slavery conventions, and, while our meeting was in progress in Syracuse, a meeting, as the reader will observe, obtained under much difficulty, Mr. Collins came in with his new friends and doctrines and proposed to adjourn our anti-slavery discussions and take up the subject of communism. To this I ventured to object. I held that it was imposing an additional burden of unpopularity on our cause, and an act of bad faith with the people, who paid the salary of Mr. Collins, and were responsible for these hundred conventions. Strange to say, my course in this matter did not meet the approval of Mrs. M. W. Chapman, an influential member of the board of managers of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, and called out a sharp reprimand from her, for insubordination to my superiors. This was a strange and distressing revelation to me, and one of which I was not soon relieved. I thought I had only done my duty, and I think so still. The chief reason for the reprimand was the use which the liberty party-papers would make of my seeming rebellion against the commanders of our anti-slavery army.

In the growing city of Rochester we had in every way a better reception. Abolitionists of all

shades of opinion were broad enough to give the Garrisonians (for such we were) a hearing. Samuel D. Porter and the Avery family, though they belonged to the Gerrit Smith, Myron Holly, and William Goodell school, were not so narrow as to refuse us the use of their church for the convention. They heard our moral suasion arguments, and in a manly way met us in debate. We were opposed to carrying the anti-slavery cause to the ballot-box, and they believed in carrying it there. They looked at slavery as a creature of *law*; we regarded it as a creature of public opinion. It is surprising how small the difference appears as I look back to it, over the space of forty years; yet at the time of it this difference was immense.

During our stay at Rochester we were hospitably entertained by Isaac and Amy Post, two people of all-abounding benevolence, the truest and best of Long Island and Elias Hicks Quakers. They were not more amiable than brave, for they never seemed to ask, What will the world say? but walked straight forward in what seemed to them the line of duty, please or offend whomsoever it might. Many a poor fugitive slave found shelter under their roof when such shelter was hard to find elsewhere, and I mention them here in the warmth and fullness of earnest gratitude.

Pleased with our success in Rochester, we—that is, Mr. Bradburn and myself—made our way to Buffalo, then a rising city of steamboats, bustle, and business. Buffalo was too busy to attend to such matters as we had in hand. Our friend, Mr. Marsh, had been able to secure for our convention only an old dilapidated and deserted room, formerly used as a post-office. We went at the time appointed, and found seated a few cabmen in their coarse, everyday clothes, whips in hand, while their teams were standing on the street waiting for a job. Friend Bradburn looked around upon this unpromising audience, and turned upon his heel, saying he would not speak to “such a set of ragamuffins,” and took the first steamer to Cleveland, the home of his brother Charles, and left me to “do” Buffalo alone. For nearly a week I spoke every day in this old post-office to audiences constantly increasing in numbers and respectability, till the Baptist church was thrown open to me; and when this became too small I went on Sunday into the open Park and addressed an assembly of four or five thousand persons. After this my colored friends, Charles L. Remond, Henry

Highland Garnett, Theodore S. Wright, Amos G. Beaman, Charles M. Ray, and other well-known colored men held a convention here, and then Remond and myself left for our next meeting in Clinton county, Ohio. This was held under a great shed, built for this special purpose by the abolitionists, of whom Dr. Abram Brook and Valentine Nicholson were the most noted. Thousands gathered here and were addressed by Bradburn, White, Monroe, Remond, Gay, and myself. The influence of this meeting was deep and wide-spread. It would be tedious to tell of all, or a small part of all that was interesting and illustrative of the difficulties encountered by the early advocates of anti-slavery in connection with this campaign, and hence I leave this part of it at once.

From Ohio we divided our forces and went into Indiana. At our first meeting we were mobbed, and some of us had our good clothes spoiled by evil-smelling eggs. This was at Richmond, where Henry Clay had been recently invited to the high seat of the Quaker meeting-house just after his gross abuse of Mr. Mendenhall, because of the latter presenting to him a respectful petition, asking him to emancipate his slaves. At Pendleton this mobocratic spirit was even more pronounced. It was found impossible to obtain a building in which to hold our convention, and our friends, Dr. Fussell and others, erected a platform in the woods, where quite a large audience assembled. Mr. Bradburn, Mr. White and myself were in attendance. As soon as we began to speak a mob of about sixty of the roughest characters I ever looked upon ordered us, through its leaders, to "be silent," threatening us, if we were not, with violence. We attempted to dissuade them, but they had not come to parley but to fight, and were well armed. They tore down the platform on which we stood, assaulted Mr. White and knocked out several of his teeth, dealt a heavy blow on William A. White, striking him on the back part of the head, badly cutting his scalp and felling him to the ground. Undertaking to fight my way through the crowd with a stick which I caught up in the mêlée, I attracted the fury of the mob, which laid me prostrate on the ground under a torrent of blows. Leaving me thus, with my right hand broken, and in a state of unconsciousness, the mobocrats hastily mounted their

horses and rode to Andersonville, where most of them resided. . . .

CHAPTER XIII

Vast Changes

Satisfaction and anxiety—new fields of labor opening—lyceums and colleges soliciting addresses—literary attractions—pecuniary gain—still pleading for human rights—President Andy Johnson—colored delegation—their reply to him—National Loyalist Convention, 1866, and its procession—not wanted—meeting with an old friend—joy and surprise—the old master's welcome, and Miss Amanda's friendship—enfranchisement discussed—its accomplishment—the negro a citizen.

When the war for the Union was substantially ended, and peace had dawned upon the land, as was the case almost immediately after the tragic death of President Lincoln; when the gigantic system of American slavery which had defied the march of time and resisted all the appeals and arguments of the abolitionists and the humane testimonies of good men of every generation during two hundred and fifty years, was finally abolished and forever prohibited by the organic law of the land, a strange and, perhaps, perverse feeling came over me. My great and exceeding joy over these stupendous achievements, especially over the abolition of slavery (which had been the deepest desire and the great labor of my life), was slightly tinged with a feeling of sadness.

I felt that I had reached the end of the noblest and best part of my life; my school was broken up, my church disbanded, and the beloved congregation dispersed, never to come together again. The anti-slavery platform had performed its work, and my voice was no longer needed. "Othello's occupation was gone." The great happiness of meeting with my fellow-workers was now to be among the things of memory. Then, too, some thought of my personal future came in. Like Daniel Webster, when asked by his friends to leave John Tyler's cabinet, I naturally inquired: "Where shall I go?" I was still in the midst of my years, and had something of life before me, and as the minister (urged to my old friend George Bradburn to preach anti-slavery, when to do so was unpopular) said, "It is necessary for ministers to live," I felt it was necessary

for me to live, and to live honestly. But where should I go, and what should I do? I could not now take hold of life as I did when I first landed in New Bedford, twenty-five years before; I could not go to the wharf of either Gideon or George Howland, to Richmond's brass foundry, or Richetson's candle and oil works, load and unload vessels, or even ask Governor Clifford for a place as a servant. Rolling oil-casks and shoveling coal were all well enough when I was younger, immediately after getting out of slavery. Doing this was a step up, rather than a step down; but all these avocations had had their day for me, and I had had my day for them. My public life and labors had unfitted me for the pursuits of my earlier years, and yet had not prepared me for more congenial and higher employment. Outside the question of slavery my thoughts had not been much directed, and I could hardly hope to make myself useful in any cause than that to which I had given the best twenty-five years of my life. A man in the situation in which I found myself has not only to divest himself of the old, which is never easily done, but to adjust himself to the new, which is still more difficult. Delivering lectures under various names, John B. Gough says, "Whatever may be the title, my lecture is always on Temperance"; and such is apt to be the case with any man who has devoted his time and thoughts to one subject for any considerable length of time. But what should I do, was the question. I had a few thousand dollars (a great convenience, and one not generally so highly prized by my people as it ought to be) saved from the sale of "My Bondage and My Freedom," and the proceeds of my lectures at home and abroad, and with this sum I thought of following the noble example of my old friends Stephen and Abby Kelley Foster, purchase a little farm and settle myself down to earn an honest living by tilling the soil. My children were grown and ought to be able to take care of themselves. This question, however, was soon decided for me. I had after all acquired (a very unusual thing) a little more knowledge and aptitude fitting me for the new condition of things than I knew, and had a deeper hold upon public attention than I had supposed. Invitations began to pour in upon me from colleges, lyceums, and literary societies, of-

fering me one hundred, and even two hundred dollars for a single lecture.

I had, some time before, prepared a lecture on "Self-made Men," and also one upon Ethnology, with special reference to Africa. The latter had cost me much labor, though, as I now look back upon it, it was a very defective production. I wrote it at the instance of my friend Doctor M. B. Anderson, President of Rochester University, himself a distinguished ethnologist, a deep thinker and scholar. I had been invited by one of the literary societies of Western Reserve College (then at Hudson, but recently removed to Cleveland, Ohio), to address it on Commencement day; and never having spoken on such an occasion, never, indeed, having been myself inside of a school-house for the purpose of an education, I hesitated about accepting the invitation, and finally called upon Prof. Henry Wayland, son of the great Doctor Wayland of Brown University, and on Doctor Anderson, and asked their advice whether I ought to accept. Both gentlemen advised me to do so. They knew me, and evidently thought well of my ability. But the puzzling question now was, what shall I say if I do go there? It won't do to give them an old-fashioned anti-slavery discourse. (I learned afterwards that such a discourse was precisely what they needed, though not what they wished; for the faculty, including the President, was in great distress because I, a colored man, had been invited, and because of the reproach this circumstance might bring upon the College.) But what shall I talk about? became the difficult question. I finally hit upon the one before mentioned. I had read, with great interest, when in England a few years before, parts of Doctor Pritchard's "Natural History of Man," a large volume marvelously calm and philosophical in its discussion of the science of the origin of the races, and was thus in the line of my then convictions. I at once sought in our bookstores for this valuable book, but could not obtain it anywhere in this country. I sent to England, where I paid the sum of seven and a half dollars for it. In addition to this valuable work President Anderson kindly gave me a little book entitled "Man and His Migrations," by Dr. R. G. Latham, and loaned me the large work of Dr. Morton, the famous archæologist, and that of

Messrs. Nott and Glidden, the latter written evidently to degrade the Negro and support the then-prevalent Calhoun doctrine of the rightfulness of slavery. With these books and occasional suggestions from Dr. Anderson and Prof. Wayland I set about preparing my commencement address. For many days and nights I toiled, and succeeded at last in getting something together in due form. Written orations had not been in my line. I had usually depended upon my unsystematized knowledge and the inspiration of the hour and the occasion, but I had now got the "scholar bee in my bonnet," and supposed that inasmuch as I was to speak to college professors and students I must at least make a show of some familiarity with letters. It proved, as to its immediate effect, a great mistake, for my carefully-studied and written address, full of learned quotations, fell dead at my feet, while a few remarks I made extemporaneously at collation were enthusiastically received. Nevertheless, the reading and labor expended were of much value to me. They were needed steps preparatory to the work upon which I was about to enter. If they failed at the beginning, they helped to success in the end. My lecture on "The Races of Men" was seldom called for, but that on "Self-made Men" was in great demand, especially through the West. I found that the success of a lecturer depends more upon the quality of his stock in store than the amount. My friend Wendell Phillips (for such I esteem him), who has said more cheering words to me and in vindication of my race than any man now living, has delivered his famous lecture on the "Lost Arts" during the last forty years; and I doubt if among all his lectures, and he has many, there is one in such requisition as this. When Daniel O'Connell was asked why he did not make a new speech he playfully replied that "it would take Ireland twenty years to learn his old ones." Upon some such consideration as this I adhered pretty closely to my old lecture on "Self-made Men," retouching and shading it a little from time to time as occasion seemed to require.

Here, then, was a new vocation before me, full of advantages mentally and pecuniarily. When in the employment of the American Anti-Slavery Society my salary was about four hundred and fifty dollars a year, and I felt I was well paid for

my services; but I could now make from fifty to a hundred dollars a night, and have the satisfaction, too, that I was in some small measure helping to lift my race into consideration, for no man who lives at all lives unto himself—he either helps or hinders all who are in any wise connected with him. I never rise to speak before an American audience without something of the feeling that my failure or success will bring blame or benefit to my whole race. But my activities were not now confined entirely to lectures before lyceums. Though slavery was abolished, the wrongs of my people were not ended. Though they were not slaves, they were not yet quite free. No man can be truly free whose liberty is dependent upon the thought, feeling, and action of others, and who has himself no means in his own hands for guarding, protecting, defending, and maintaining that liberty. Yet the Negro, after his emancipation, was precisely in this state of destitution. The law on the side of freedom is of great advantage only where there is power to make that law respected. I know no class of my fellow-men, however just, enlightened, and humane, which can be wisely and safely trusted absolutely with the liberties of any other class. Protestants are excellent people, but it would not be wise for Catholics to depend entirely upon them to look after their rights and interests. Catholics are a pretty good sort of people (though there is a soul-shuddering history behind them), yet no enlightened Protestants would commit their liberty to their care and keeping. And yet the government had left the freedmen in a worse condition than either of these. It felt that it had done enough for him. It had made him free, and henceforth he must make his own way in the world. Yet he had none of the conditions for self-preservation or self-protection. He was free from the individual master, but the slave of society. He had neither money, property, nor friends. He was free from the old plantation, but he had nothing but the dusty road under his feet. He was free from the old quarter that once gave him shelter, but a slave to the rains of summer and to the frosts of winter. He was, in a word, literally turned loose, naked, hungry, and destitute, to the open sky. The first feeling toward him by the old master classes was full of bitterness and wrath. They resented his emancipation as an act

of hostility toward them, and, since they could not punish the emancipator, they felt like punishing the object which that act had emancipated. Hence they drove him off the old plantation, and told him he was no longer wanted there. They not only hated him because he had been freed as a punishment to them, but because they felt that they had been robbed of his labor. An element of greater bitterness still came into their hearts; the freedman had been the friend of the government, and many of his class had borne arms against them during the war. The thought of paying cash for labor that they could formerly extort by the lash did not in any wise improve their disposition to the emancipated slave, or improve his own condition. Now, since poverty has, and can have, no chance against wealth, the landless against the landowner, the ignorant against the intelligent, the freedman was powerless. He had nothing left him with which to fight the battle of life, but a slavery-distorted and diseased body and lame and twisted limbs. I therefore soon found that the Negro had still a cause, and that he needed my voice and pen with others to plead for it. The American Anti-Slavery Society under the lead of Mr. Garrison had disbanded, its newspapers were discontinued, its agents were withdrawn from the field, and all systematic efforts by abolitionists were abandoned. Many of the society, Mr. Phillips and myself amongst the number, differed from Mr. Garrison as to the wisdom of this course. I felt that the work of the society was not done and that it had not fulfilled its mission, which was, not merely to emancipate, but to elevate the enslaved class. But against Mr. Garrison's leadership, and the surprise and joy occasioned by the emancipation, it was impossible to keep the association alive, and the cause of the freedmen was left mainly to individual effort and to hastily-extemporized societies of an ephemeral character; brought together under benevolent impulse, but having no history behind them, and, being new to the work, they were not as effective for good as the old society would have been had it followed up its work and kept its old instrumentalities in operation.

From the first I saw no chance of bettering the condition of the freedman until he should cease to

be merely a freedman and should become a citizen. I insisted that there was no safety for him or for anybody else in America outside the American government; that to guard, protect, and maintain his liberty the freedman should have the ballot; that the liberties of the American people were dependent upon the ballotbox, the jury-box, and the cartridge-box; that without these no class of people could live and flourish in this country; and this was now the word for the hour with me, and the word to which the people of the North willingly listened when I spoke. Hence, regarding as I did the elective franchise as the one great power by which all civil rights are obtained, enjoyed, and maintained under our form of government, and the one without which freedom to any class is delusive if not impossible, I set myself to work with whatever force and energy I possessed to secure this power for the recently-emancipated millions.

The demand for the ballot was such a vast advance upon the former objects proclaimed by the friends of the colored race, that it startled and struck men as preposterous and wholly inadmissible. Anti-slavery men themselves were not united as to the wisdom of such demand. Mr. Garrison himself, though foremost for the abolition of slavery, was not yet quite ready to join this advanced movement. In this respect he was in the rear of Mr. Phillips, who saw not only the justice, but the wisdom and necessity of the measure. To his credit it may be said, that he gave the full strength of his character and eloquence to its adoption. While Mr. Garrison thought it too much to ask, Mr. Phillips thought it too little. While the one thought it might be postponed to the future, the other thought it ought to be done at once. But Mr. Garrison was not a man to lag far in the rear of truth and right, and he soon came to see with the rest of us that the ballot was essential to the freedom of the freedman. A man's head will not long remain wrong, when his heart is right. The applause awarded to Mr. Garrison by the conservatives, for his moderation both in respect of his views on this question, and the disbandment of the American Anti-Slavery Society must have disturbed him. He was at any rate soon found on the right side of the suffrage question.

Phoebe Palmer

1807–1874

Phoebe Palmer was born in New York City and lived there all her life. Her father was Henry Worrall, a well-to-do English merchant who had settled in the United States and who had been converted to Methodism by John Wesley himself. Her mother was Dorothea Wade, also a devout Methodist. Little is known about Phoebe's early education, but references in her writing attest that from a very young age she was familiar with the Bible and with biographies of early Methodists, including John Wesley, his mother Susannah Wesley, and early Methodist preacher Mary Bosanquet. Prepared by both the religious approach and the organizational structure of Methodism as originated by Wesley, Phoebe Worrall Palmer would become an important figure in both religion and rhetoric in nineteenth-century America.

John Wesley was a priest of the Anglican Church. He never intended to separate from this church, and his theology was mostly orthodox. But he felt that the church needed a spiritual awakening and that he himself needed a deeper conviction of his personal relationship with a saving God. After an unusually intense religious experience in May of 1738, Wesley began to articulate a "method" for achieving a heightened spiritual state. The process begins with God's free gift of "grace" to humans, by which God enables people both to recognize their sinful state and to change it. The next step is for people to repent of their sins, a decisive emotional moment. This "conversion" is evidenced by prayer and good works. Though these activities do not earn salvation, after they have been pursued sincerely for a time, people can hope to achieve a conviction of "justification," that is, the feeling that God has indeed forgiven their sins and is ready to accept their entire devotion. With justification comes "assurance" of God's love to the soul that is painfully conscious of its sinfulness. Believers now begin the process of "going on to perfection" or "sanctification," in which they are better and better able to understand God's love and to act according to God's will. "Entire sanctification" describes a state of complete love of God and conformity to God's will in all of one's actions. Achievement of this state, signaled by a second decisive emotional experience, comes to only a few before the moment of death, but people must continually strive for it.

Wesley believed that the Holy Spirit gives people the strength to undertake this process of salvation. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are unconstrained and unpredictable, and awareness of their presence comes from the believer's own perceptions of his or her spiritual state. Thus, although Wesley believed that followers of his spiritual path should remain connected to the Anglican Church in order to receive the sacraments, this path requires minimal clerical mediation. Nevertheless, people can be helped along the path, first by listening to preaching that awakens them to their sinful state and directs them to prayer and good works, and also by participating in prayer groups in which the members help each other chart their progress toward justification and sanctification. Wesley designed an organization that acknowledged the action of the Holy Spirit in raising up lay leaders to assist

people's spiritual progress. He encouraged lay preachers as well as ordained ministers to call people to repentance, and he recognized a range of preaching styles that relied more on personal testimony and less on the academic analysis of texts than would be found among the traditional clergy. He grouped new converts into "classes," in which they could pray, discuss their spiritual development, and encourage each other under the guidance of more experienced laypeople. At the same time, the more experienced received support in their own "bands." Preachers traveled from town to town and might visit classes and bands, but normally these groups were under lay leadership.

The great majority of early converts to Methodism were women, and Wesley accorded them positions of importance in the new movement. Among his many close women counselors was his mother, Susannah Wesley, who had led large prayer meetings in their home when her Anglican priest husband was absent. Wesley permitted women to lead both mixed-sex classes and women's single-sex bands. These activities required some speaking ability, and soon Methodist women felt called to preach to large, mixed crowds as well. There seemed no logical reason why they might not be touched by the Holy Spirit just as men were—no one would want to say that such action was beyond God's power—and if the principal content of Methodist spiritual discourse comprised accounts of one's own spiritual progress, then training in biblical scholarship, theology, and rhetoric, all largely unavailable to women, was not required for such preaching. Wesley condoned this public religious activism by women, although it was controversial.

Mary Bosanquet (who later married Wesley's colleague John Fletcher) was instrumental in persuading Wesley to accept women's preaching. She had fled her upper-middle-class home in 1759 at the age of twenty to escape what she saw as its spiritual emptiness and worldly frivolity, and she soon found a religious home in Methodism. She was an active class and band leader, and also helped to found one of the first Methodist charity schools. Her prayer meetings attracted hundreds of hearers and many converts, but she also drew criticism from male preachers. In 1771 she wrote Wesley a long letter defending her practice. She couched it in the form of a debate between objections to women's preaching and her answers. The first objection is the familiar citation of Paul's prohibition against women speaking in church:

OB:—But the Apostle says, I suffer not a woman to speak in the Church—but learn at home. I answer—was not that spoke in reference to a time of dispute and contention, when many were striving to be heads and leaders, so that his saying, She is not to speak, here seems to me to imply no more than the other, she is not to meddle with Church Government.

OB:—Nay, but it meant literally, not to speak by way of Edification, while in the Church, or company of promiscuous [mixed-sex] worshippers.

AN:—Then why is it said, Let the woman prophesy with her head covered, or can she prophesy without speaking? Or ought she to speak but not to edification?

OB:—She may now and then, if under a peculiar impulse, but never else.

AN:—But how often is she to feel this impulse? Perhaps you will say, two or three times in her life; perhaps *God* will say, two or three times in a week, or a day—and

where shall we find the Rule for this? But the consequences (here I acknowledge is my own objection, that all I do is *lawful*, I have no doubt, but is it expedient? That, my dear Sir, I want your light in) but what are the consequences feared?¹

Bosanquet proceeds to deal with these fearful consequences, the first being that women preachers will draw hearers away from male preachers. If sinners are converted, she says, what matter who converts them? If it is feared that incompetent women will preach, simply censure those who are incompetent, not all women. To meet the objection that public preaching violates a woman's proper "Christian modesty,"² Bosanquet cites biblical examples of women who spoke out, beginning with Mary, who was asked by the risen Christ to deliver the news of his resurrection. She concludes: "I do not believe every woman is called to speak publicly, no more than every man to be a Methodist preacher, yet some have an extraordinary call to it, and woe be to them if they obey it not."³ In his reply to this letter, Wesley seized on her concept of the "extraordinary call" as a way of defending women's preaching while still not completely overthrowing Paul's prohibition (which, he felt, the Quakers did):

I think the strength of the cause rests there, in your having an *Extraordinary Call*. So, I am persuaded, has every one of our Lay-preachers: otherwise I could not countenance his preaching at all. It is plain to me that the whole Work of God termed Methodism is an extraordinary dispensation of His Providence. Therefore I do not wonder if several things occur therein which do not fall under ordinary rules of discipline. St. Paul's ordinary rule was, "I permit not a woman to speak in the congregation." Yet in extraordinary cases he made a few exceptions. . . .⁴

Other Methodist women, including Sarah Crosby and Sarah Mallet, also received Wesley's approval as preachers. They would be important models for American Methodist women such as Palmer.

This support for women's public ministry was not unequivocal, as rhetorician Vicki Tolar Collins has shown. Wesley instructed Crosby to tell the crowds who came to hear her that she would not preach, since Methodism did not permit women preachers, but to say that "I will just nakedly tell you what is in my heart."⁵ Sarah Mallet first preached while convulsed by a seizure. She was unable to remember any of her words upon awakening. Yet she was ultimately the first English Methodist woman to be explicitly recognized as a "preacher" by her male colleagues. These examples suggest that speaking by Methodist women still had to be firmly differentiated from the more learned and rationally conscious preaching of men. Yes, the women could speak—but only if it was obvious that the Holy Spirit was providing their words. After Wesley's death in 1791, the male Methodist leaders

¹Mary Bosanquet, letter to John Wesley, 1771, in *A History of the Methodist Church in Great Britain*, vol. 4, ed. Rupert Davies, A. Raymond George, and Gordon Rupp (London: Epworth Press, 1988), p. 169, emphasis in original.

²Bosanquet, p. 170.

³Bosanquet, p. 171.

⁴Bosanquet, p. 172, emphasis in original.

⁵Quoted in Vicki Tolar Collins, "Women's Voices and Women's Silences in the Tradition of Early Methodism," in *Listening to Their Voices: The Rhetorical Activities of Historical Women*, ed. Molly Meijer Wertheimer (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1997), p. 236.

consolidated Methodism as a denomination separate from Anglicanism that was separately empowered to administer the sacraments. They also worked to close off public opportunities for women, and in England they were largely successful, although women continued to preach in some Methodist sects until the mid-nineteenth century. But in the United States, Methodism's emphasis on the unconstrained and unpredictable function of the Holy Spirit to raise up lay leaders continued to provide opportunities for women, and most prominent among them was Phoebe Palmer.

By the mid-nineteenth century, Methodism, which had arrived in the United States in 1784, was the largest religious denomination in the country, with separate black and white congregations and northern and southern branches differentiated by their stands on slavery. By midcentury, too, a veritable tract war over the right of women to preach was in full swing. Black Methodist preacher Jarena Lee was among those who used the genre of spiritual autobiography to describe and defend her call to preach:

Between four and five years after my sanctification, on a certain time, an impressive silence fell upon me, and I stood as if some one was about to speak to me, yet I had no such thought in my heart.—But to my utter surprise there seemed to sound a voice which I thought I distinctly heard, and most certainly understood, which said to me, “Go preach the Gospel!” . . . O how careful ought we to be, lest through our by-laws of church government and discipline, we bring into disrepute even the word of life. For as unseemly as it may appear now-a-days for a woman to preach, it should be remembered that nothing is impossible with God. And why should it be thought impossible, heterodox, or improper for a woman to preach? Seeing the Saviour [sic] died for the woman as well as the man. If the man may preach, because the Saviour died for him, why not the woman? seeing he died for her also. Is he not a whole Saviour, instead of a half one? As those who hold it wrong for a woman to preach, would seem to make it appear.⁶

Catherine Booth, an English Methodist who later helped to found the Salvation Army, published a defense of women's preaching after hearing Palmer speak in her country, and she became a powerful preacher herself. Frances Willard (p. 1114), first president of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), confessed to an early longing to be a preacher, which she suppressed for fear of public censure; but she wrote an impassioned defense of *Woman in the Pulpit* (p. 1124), and arguably used her position as WCTU head to exercise spiritual influence through her public speaking. In 1864 American Methodists failed to pass a national resolution banning the preaching of women (British Methodists had enacted such a ban in 1803). Local conferences were allowed to make their own decisions—providing space for a number of “extraordinary calls”—and by the early twentieth century, according to historians Nancy Hardesty, Lucille Sider-Dayton, and Donald Dayton, female Methodist preachers were relatively common.

Palmer entered this tract war at the height of her influence as a leader of the Holiness Movement, which peaked in 1858, a year in which Palmer traveled all across

⁶Jarena Lee, “Autobiography,” rpt. in William L. Andrews, ed. and intro., *Sisters of the Spirit* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), pp. 35, 36.

the United States and Canada speaking at large prayer meetings. In 1859, she published *The Promise of the Father* (excerpted here), over four hundred pages of argument in defense of women's public ministry (Palmer also summarized her argument in a much shorter pamphlet, the 1859 *Tongue of Fire on the Daughters of the Lord*, reprinted here). The "promise" of the title is expressed in the words of the prophet Joel, 2:28, "And thy sons and thy daughters shall prophesy," a prophecy applied specifically to Christians by Peter (Acts 2:17–18). A look at Palmer's biography will suggest how she achieved her position of prominence on this issue.

In 1827 she married Walter Palmer, a physician who shared her Methodist faith. They were apparently a happily united couple, although their early married life was marred by the loss of three babies between the years 1828 and 1833; three later children survived. Palmer wrote in her journal: "After my loved ones were snatched away, I saw that I had concentrated my time and attentions far too exclusively, to the neglect of the religious activities demanded."⁷ Historian Anne Loveland has argued that Palmer used such reasoning to justify her increasing departures from the nineteenth-century ideology that confined women's activities to the strictly domestic. Palmer's young family shared a house in New York City with her sister Sarah Lankford and Lankford's husband, and in February of 1836 the two women began to hold regular prayer meetings there. At first the gatherings were for women only, but their fame was such that by 1839 men, too, were attending. These "Tuesday Meetings for the Promotion of Holiness" continued for over sixty years and became a model for Methodist spiritual practice worldwide. At first Sarah Lankford led the meetings, which were characterized by "earnest prayer, study of scripture, [and] spontaneous testimony,"⁸ but Palmer soon took over, especially after she achieved entire sanctification in July of 1837. Her sister moved away from New York in 1840 and Palmer continued leading alone.

By 1839 Palmer had expanded her ministry in several ways. She began to speak frequently at religious revival meetings around the country. Although her husband would later join her in these efforts, initially he stayed home with their children. At the Tuesday meetings, Palmer had functioned primarily as a discussion leader, speaking at no greater length than any other participant. But at revival meetings, she addressed the congregation much as a minister would do, mounting the pulpit, expounding a biblical text, exhorting her hearers to repent or to seek further holiness, and praying with those who came forward for salvation. Contemporary descriptions suggest that she was not an emotional or histrionic speaker:

In addressing an audience her position is erect. . . . She is calm and free from vociferation, and is rarely vehement. Her style is clear, concise, and colloquial. In the structure of her sentences there is nothing elaborate or involved. . . . In her communications there is more of logic than of rhetoric. . . . Her spirit is intensely earnest. . . .⁹

⁷Quoted in Anne Loveland, "Domesticity and Religion in the Antebellum Period: The Career of Phoebe Palmer," *The Historian* 39 (1977): 457.

⁸Thomas Oden, "Introduction," in Phoebe Palmer, *Phoebe Palmer: Selected Writings*, ed. Thomas Oden (New York: Paulist Press, 1988), p. 11.

⁹Quoted in Harold E. Raser, *Phoebe Palmer: Her Life and Thought* (Lewiston, Maine: Edwin Meller Press, 1987), pp. 117–18.

In addition, Palmer and Sarah Lankford encouraged publication of the first journal directed toward the American revivalist movement, the *Guide to Christian Perfection*, later the *Guide to Holiness*, edited by regular Tuesday Meeting participant Timothy Merritt. Palmer wrote frequently for this journal. She and her husband assumed the editorship in 1864, and its already large circulation then boomed; by 1870 it had become one of the most popular religious magazines in the country. Moreover, Palmer took the lead in encouraging social action by Methodists. In 1849, for example, she helped to found the first urban settlement house for the poor, in the Five Points, Bowery, New York City, notable for ministering to the physical as well as the spiritual needs of the neighborhood. She encouraged missionary work among American Jews, and she is credited with founding American Methodism's vigorous program of foreign missions. She abandoned a plan to go to China herself but raised funds to put other missionaries in foreign fields. Oddly, though Palmer deplored slavery, she never actively supported abolition, perhaps because she feared its schismatic effect on the Methodist Church. She was also influential in education: Attendees at the Tuesday Meetings and correspondents included the founders, presidents, and trustees of such institutions as Northwestern University, Boston University, Oberlin, Cornell, and Syracuse. Palmer also collaborated with Catherine Beecher to send young women to the American frontiers to teach school and Sunday school. Prominent reform leaders who knew Palmer as an evangelist included Susan B. Anthony and Frances Willard (p. 1114), who experienced religious conversion at one of her Tuesday Meetings. Palmer also began what would be a prolific career as a writer on religious matters, publishing *The Way of Holiness*, an account of her own progress to entire sanctification, in 1843; it became a best-seller.

Palmer became well known for her speaking in the 1840s and 1850s. In 1853 she undertook the first of her evangelizing trips to Canada. She became a leader of the "Holiness Movement," a religious revival movement that soon spread beyond its Methodist origins, and she was one of the leading Methodist theologians of the nineteenth century, according to Methodist theologian Thomas Oden. The Holiness Movement was the central current in the revivalism that dominated American Protestantism from Jonathan Edwards's Great Awakening in the early eighteenth century until the end of the nineteenth century. It had been launched by the preaching of Charles Grandison Finney in the 1820s. Finney was an ordained Presbyterian minister, but, much like the founder of Methodism, he found mainstream Protestantism lacking in spiritual power for the individual believer.

Finney's renewal movement, which soon connected with American Methodism, was especially important to women. From the beginning, he encouraged women to speak in mixed-sex public meetings, a scandalous position at that time (for more on prohibitions against women's public speaking, see the headnote on Sarah Grimké, p. 1045). He renewed the religious conviction of many prominent feminists, including Theodore Weld, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Paulina Wright Davis. Finney went on to teach theology at Oberlin College, the country's first coeducational institution, and among his early students were feminist leaders Lucy Stone and Antoinette Brown Blackwell, the latter being one of the first American women to be ordained as a Christian minister. Methodism's association with women's rights is

attested by the fact that the famous 1848 Seneca Falls women's rights convention took place in a Methodist church building.

Historians Hardesty, Sider-Dayton, and Dayton argue that the Holiness Movement was congenial to women for several reasons. For one thing, it offered a "theology centered in experience,"¹⁰ obviating the need for extensive education and allowing each individual to work actively for his or her own salvation. In contributing to Holiness theology, Palmer encouraged Methodists to believe that their earnest efforts at prayer and Bible study could lead them to entire sanctification much more quickly than John Wesley had anticipated, and the emphasis on personal experience expedited this process. Furthermore, the Holiness Movement required that people testify before the congregation about their religious experiences, and Palmer used this requirement to encourage women to overcome their fear of violating conventional prohibitions against women's public speaking. "HOLINESS IS POWER," wrote Palmer in this context.¹¹ The Bible, not the writings of human theologians, was the central Holiness text, and Palmer encouraged women to find their own interpretations of Scripture. The Holiness Movement stressed the action of the Holy Spirit in inspiring religious seeking, and Palmer emphasized that the Holy Spirit could touch women just as powerfully as men. It was necessary to experiment in religious practices—such as by allowing women to preach—to give the power of the Holy Spirit free play. Palmer also encouraged more spontaneous and heartfelt prayer as part of the worship service.

At the same time, Palmer deplored "emotive, subjective pietism"¹² and emphasized rationality in guiding the seeker to conviction. She taught that the achievement of entire sanctification relies much more on the believer's rational apprehension of scriptural promises and the resolve to act on them than on continual anxious monitoring of fluctuating emotional states. Hardesty, Sider-Dayton, and Dayton maintain that Palmer's doctrine that entire sanctification was within the immediate grasp of ordinary Methodists was an inherently revolutionary view that encouraged dissatisfaction with the status quo not only in one's personal spiritual life and church practices but also in one's social interactions. This dissatisfaction led to participation in reform movements, for example, on behalf of the poor and for women's rights.

Palmer continued and expanded the Methodist tradition of lay leadership and enhanced opportunities for women. Interestingly, she never pushed for the formal ordination of women, perhaps because ordination was not needed to provide the kind of authority on which she and other lay speakers depended—the inwardly felt direction of the Holy Spirit. At the same time that she advocated change, Palmer remained faithful to the Methodist Episcopal Church and deprecated break-away radical sects. Nevertheless, according to Oden, she is a pivotal figure not only in the

¹⁰Nancy Hardesty, Lucille Sider-Dayton, and Donald W. Dayton, "Women in the Holiness Movement: Feminism in the Evangelical Tradition," in *Women of Spirit: Female Leadership in the Jewish and Christian Traditions*, ed. Rosemary Reuther and Eleanor McLaughlin (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979), p. 241.

¹¹Hardesty, Sider-Dayton, and Dayton, p. 243, capitalization in original.

¹²Oden, p. 12.

development of American Methodism but also in the formation of the Pentecostal, Holiness, and Charismatic churches that emerged from the Holiness Movement. These new denominations offered many leadership roles to women, and the ordination of women became commonplace in them well before it was accepted in other American Protestant denominations.

In 1859, already well known as a powerful preacher, Palmer published *The Promise of the Father*, a book-length defense of women's public ministry, and *Tongue of Fire on the Daughters of the Lord*, a pamphlet-length summary of the argument. Because of her fame and her leadership position in the most powerful Christian denomination in the United States at the time, Palmer's opinions had wide circulation and influence. In that same year, she departed with her husband on a four-year missionary trip to Britain, where they were very well received. Upon their return in 1864, they assumed the editorship of the *Guide to Holiness*, as noted above, and also continued a hectic schedule of preaching at religious meetings in the United States and Canada, until Palmer died in 1874. After her death, her widowed sister Sarah married Walter Palmer, and they continued to conduct the Tuesday Meetings and to edit the *Guide to Holiness*.

SUMMARY OF *THE PROMISE OF THE FATHER*

Chapter 1 (reprinted here) opens by reassuring readers that Palmer does not intend to overturn all nineteenth-century gender conventions. Nevertheless, drawing on Mary Bosanquet Fletcher's formulation of the "extraordinary call," Palmer justifies some kinds of public speaking by religious women. She also cites biblical precedents. She says that Paul's prohibition against women's speaking applies only to the particular circumstances of his day. In Chapter 2, Palmer indicts the Christian Church for neglecting God's gifts to women and contrasts this attitude with the praise given in the New Testament and by the early Church Fathers to women who followed Jesus and served the early Church. Chapter 3 contends that women were fitted for leadership in the early Church by their participation in the Pentecost experience, fulfilling Joel's prophecy that both men and women would be enabled to speak with power. Palmer contrasts the early Church's recognition of women's gifts with the cold reception of a contemporary woman who wished to testify for Christ.

Chapter 4 explores the question of what prophecy is, since Joel's promise was that both men and women would prophesy. Palmer contends that in primitive Christianity prophecy was hard to distinguish from preaching because both delivered divinely inspired messages. As denominations age and grow away from their early ardent connection to the Holy Spirit, says Palmer, such inspired speaking, especially by women, decreases or is positively discouraged, to be replaced by showier but spiritually empty pulpit oratory. Here she adds long quotes from male authorities supporting the claim that the early Church was distinguished by women's public ministry and reinterpreting Paul to allow it.

Chapter 5 shows that modern times have witnessed women's prophetic gifts as well, as is evidenced in the careers of Mary Bosanquet Fletcher, Susannah Wesley, and other British Methodists. It notes John Wesley's support for these women and gives examples of Quaker women speakers. Chapter 6 continues with the example

of Mrs. Mary Taft, a Methodist preacher of the early nineteenth century, and cites approval of her career by contemporary male ministers. Chapter 7 begins by citing male ministerial authority on women's moral and intellectual equality with men and goes on to discuss at length the career of Mary Bosanquet Fletcher.

Palmer begins Chapter 8 with an acknowledgment that her topic is unpopular, but says she is compelled to speak the truth anyway. She illustrates the strength of such compulsion with Wesley's account of the career of Sarah Mallett—who became a preacher in spite of herself—along with quotes from Mallett's journal. In Chapter 9, Palmer admonishes male ministers not to betray their responsibility to speak the truth by opposing women's preaching. She cites examples of many eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century women who, though timid, persevered against such opposition and won many souls to Christ. Chapter 10 tells the story of a woman who stepped forward to lead her church when it was without a minister and was fast declining. A neighboring minister led a fight against her, driving her out of the community. He has much to answer for, says Palmer. When women are silenced, the spiritual quality of the congregation always declines, she contends in Chapter 11; such silencing of women resembles their cloistering by Roman Catholicism (Palmer assumes her readers will want to reject anything "Popish"). Yet even men coarsened by business are allowed to speak.

How do we know that women's current compulsion to preach is of divine origin? Palmer begins Chapter 12 with this question. One sign is the intense suffering of women speakers, who are fearful of attracting censure yet even more fearful of disobeying God's command. Of course, no easy way ever led to salvation. Such women offer themselves as "whole burnt offerings" upon God's altar when they obtain the courage to speak. Palmer asks her readers to consider whether they have surrendered as entirely to God's will as these women have done. Another sign of divine origin is the large number of converts these women—and men—bring to Christ. Palmer gives many examples of the Holy Spirit's wonderful power currently manifested in both women and men, and in many religious denominations. She discusses at length one example of such power: the Tuesday Meeting she and her sister originated. Palmer then describes her own ministry, the theology that underlies it, and its success as attested in her own records and in letters from friends, some of them male ministers.

Chapter 13 begins with another story of a woman stepping forward to speak in her home church and being denied by the minister and other male authorities. She moves to another church where she is allowed to preach, and this church soon experiences a remarkable "outpouring of the [Holy] Spirit." Palmer says, think how absurd it would be to gather your family together and yet forbid the female members of it to speak. Women are never silenced at a worldly social gathering. Yet, when godly women wish to speak in a religious gathering, they are not allowed to. Fortunately, some ministers do regard women's call to preach as equal to men's. Palmer cites these authorities. Chapter 14 continues the theme by describing a woman friend of Palmer's who preached powerfully. Do not reject the truth of women's call because it is unpopular, Palmer exhorts. Women are "crucified" by enforced silence.

Chapter 15 asks the question, What is preaching? In the Bible, says Palmer, it is simply telling the good news of Christ's message. This is what Paul does, what any

Christian may do, and what women must also do. It is not an oration such as we think of preaching today. Pastors who understand the message will not silence women preachers. Palmer begins Chapter 16 with the image of the church as a “potter’s field” where innumerable women’s gifts lie buried, when they could be serving the Church. She gives a man’s testimony on how he and his wife discovered that she needed to speak in church and he needed to allow her to do so. Then Palmer describes a cultivated, fascinating woman, much sought out by worldly company for her conversation, who becomes religious and brings her eloquence to the church—and who is silenced. Christian men who permit such waste must answer to Jesus!

In Chapter 17, Palmer directs her Holiness theology toward the topic of how to acquire the gifts of the Holy Spirit. You must demand these gifts now, she says—it is a matter of your will, and your willingness to make any sacrifice. Then the power will come, as she illustrates with some brief examples. In Chapter 18, she tells the story of a husband and wife who opposed women’s preaching until the woman was required by the Holy Spirit to open her mouth. Chapters 19, 20, and 21 conclude the book by discussing two women and a male minister who became convincing preachers once they followed Palmer’s path to entire sanctification.

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The Promise of the Father

Chapter I

*Stand up for Jesus! All who lead his host,
Crowned with the splendors of the Holy Ghost!
Shrink from no foe, to no temptations yield,
Urge on the triumphs of this glorious field—
Stand up for Jesus.*

Do not be startled, dear reader. We do not intend to discuss the question of “Women’s Rights” or of “Women’s Preaching,” technically so called. We leave this for those whose ability and tastes may better fit them for discussions of this sort. We believe woman has her legitimate sphere of action, which differs in most cases materially from that of man; and in this legitimate sphere she is both happy and useful. Yet we do not doubt that some reforms contemplated in recent movements may, in various respects, be decidedly advantageous. But we have never conceived that it would be subservient to the happiness, usefulness, or true dignity of woman, were she permitted to occupy a prominent part in legislative halls, or take a leading position in the orderings of church conventions. Ordinarily, these are not the circumstances where woman can best serve her generation according to the will of God. Yet facts show that it is in the order of God

that woman may occasionally be brought out of the ordinary sphere of action, and occupy in either church or state positions of high responsibility; and if, in the orderings of providence, it so occur, the God of providence will enable her to meet the emergency with becoming dignity, wisdom, and womanly grace.

Examples of modern and ancient days might be furnished of women who have been called to fill positions involving large responsibilities, both civil and ecclesiastical. It was thus that Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, was called to judge Israel—not because there were no men in Israel who might fill the position, but because God, in his wisdom, had so ordained; and it was also by the direction of Providence she was compelled to take the lead in the orderings of the battle—not because there were not men in Israel to do this, for she sent and called Barak, who might, as captain of the host, have led forth the people to conquest, but his faith and courage were insufficient to lead out Israel. Her disinterested, womanly heart would have given Barak the honor of the conquest, but he was faint-hearted; and the holy zeal of this mother in Israel nerved her for the conflict, and, with a faith and courage outbraving every difficulty, she led forth the armies of God to glorious conquest. Yet who

talked of Deborah as overstepping the bounds of womanly propriety, in either judging Israel, or in leading forth the armies of the living God to victory? Whisperers might have said that, in using this gift of prophecy with which God had endued her, and in leading out Israel to conquest, she stepped beyond the sphere of woman, and weakened her influence; and thus, perhaps, the Merozites were hindered from coming up to the help of the Lord against the mighty, and brought down the curse of the God of battles on themselves. But whether there were such whisperers is not recorded; and if so, in fact, their names are written in the dust, while the name of this ancient prophetess, who led Israel forth to victory, stands recorded in the Book of eternal remembrance.

And when Josiah the King of Israel and his officers of state saw, from the reading of a book found in the house of the Lord, that great wrath was impending, they did not go to Huldah the prophetess for advice, because there was not a male prophet who might have been consulted; for it was in the days of Jeremiah the prophet, that this official deputation went from the king to Huldah. And when, in the order of God, woman has from time to time been called to sustain positions of momentous trust, involving the destinies of her country, facts show that she has not been wanting in ability to meet the demands of her station in such a manner, as to command the respect of her constituents or the homage of her subjects. Look at Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, the reigning sovereign of the most mighty, intelligent people of this or any other age. Who questions her ability for her station, and talks of her as having transcended the bounds set by public opinion of the sphere of woman?

And is it in religion alone that woman is prone to overstep the bounds of propriety, when the impellings of her Heaven-baptized soul would lead her to come out from the cloister, and take positions of usefulness for God? Whence has the idea obtained that she may not even open her lips for God in the assembly of the pious, without being looked upon repulsively, as though she were unwomanly in her aims and predilections?

And where is the beloved female disciple of any denomination, truly baptized of the Holy Ghost, but feels the Spirit's urgings to open her

mouth for God? We do not now speak of that cold, worldly conformed professor, who has never, in obedience to the command of the Saviour, tarried at Jerusalem, as did Mary and the other women, on the day of Pentecost. We speak of that consistently pious, earnest, Christian woman, whose every-day life is an ever-speaking testimony of an indwelling Saviour, and on whose head the tongue of fire has descended. And it is of the power of an ever-present Jesus that the Spirit would have her testify; but the seal of silence has been placed on her lips. And who has placed the seal of silence on those Heaven-touched lips? Who would restrain the lips of those whom God has endued with the gift of utterance, when those lips would fain abundantly utter the memory of God's great goodness? Not worldly opinions or usages, for these reprove. Think of a refined social gathering of worldlings, to which invitations have been extended to ladies with the expectation that the seal of silence would be imposed! No, it is not the world that forbids; for due consideration will constrain us to acknowledge that in this regard "the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light." Who is it then that forbids that woman should open her mouth is either prayer or speaking in the assemblies of the saints?

And here we come to the point, and are forced to an answer to which in the name of the Head of the church we claim a rejoinder. Our answer is this: The Christian churches of the present day, with but few exceptions, have imposed silence on Christian woman, so that her voice may but seldom be heard in Christian assemblies. And why do the churches impose it? The answer comes from a thousand lips, and from every point. The Head of the church forbids it, and the churches only join in the authoritative prohibition, "Let your women keep silence in the churches." And here we come fairly at the question. If the Head of the church forbids it, this settles the question beyond all controversy.

But if Paul's prohibition, "Let your women keep silence in the churches," is to be carried out to the letter in relation to the prophesying of women,—that is, her speaking "to edification, exhortation, and comfort,"—regardless of explanatory connections and contradictory passages,

why should it not be carried out to the letter in other respects? If the apostle intended to enjoin silence in an absolute sense, then our Episcopalian friends trespass against this prohibition at every church service, in calling out the responses of women in company with the men in their beautiful Church Liturgy, and when they repeat our Lord's Prayer in concert with their brethren. And thus also do they trespass against this prohibition every time they break silence and unite in holy song in the church of God of any or every denomination. And in fact, we doubt not but it were less displeasing to the Head of the church that his female disciples were forbidden to open their lips in singing, or in church responses, than that they should be forbidden to open their lips in fulfilment of the "Promise of the Father," when the spirit of prophecy has been poured out upon them, moving them to well nigh irrepressible utterances of God's great goodness.

Under what circumstances was this prohibition given? Was it not by way of reproofing some unseemly practices which had been introduced into the Corinthian church, and which, in fact, seem to have been peculiar to that church, for it is in connection with this and kindred disorders which had been introduced among the Corinthian believers, in connection with the exercise of the gift of prophecy, that Paul says, "We have no such custom, *neither the churches of God;*" that is, the other churches of God over which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers. Surely it is evident that the irregularities here complained of were peculiar to the church of Corinth, and in fact, we may presume, were not even applicable to other Christian churches of Paul's day, much less Christian churches of the present day, as no such disorders exist. The irregularity complained of was not the prophesying of women, for this the apostle admits, and directs how the women shall appear when engaged in the duty of praying or prophesying. But the prohibition was evidently in view of restraining women, from taking part in those disorderly debates, which were not unusual in the religious worship of those days. In the Jewish synagogues it was a matter of ordinary occurrence for persons to interrupt the speaker by introducing questionings, which frequently resulted in angry altercations. This prac-

tice had now, we have reason to infer, been introduced into the Corinthian Christian assemblies, and women—doubtless devoid of spirituality—were disposed to take part in these debates. This unseemly practice the apostle reproofs, and says, "Let your women keep silence," &c. Any one who will carefully look at this subject, with its connections, will observe that it was in reference to this reprehensible practice, which had obtained in the Corinthian church, that Paul enjoins silence, and not in reference to the exercise of the gift of prophecy, which, in connection with this subject, he so plainly admits. Otherwise the apostle's teachings were obviously contradictory. But a careful review of the subject in connection with the well-known usages of that day, will relieve it of all difficulty, and show that Paul had these questionings in view and not the ordinary speaking of women in prophesying; for says he, "If they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home."

But Paul also says, "I suffer not a woman to teach, nor usurp authority over the man." It will be found by an examination of this text with its connections, that the sort of teaching here alluded to, stands in necessary connection with usurping authority. As though the apostle had said, The gospel does not alter the relation of woman in view of priority. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And though the condition of woman is improved, and her privileges enlarged, yet she is not raised to a position of superiority, where she may usurp authority, and teach dictatorially, for the law still remains as at the beginning. It is an unalterable law of nature. Adam was first formed, then Eve, and all the daughters of Adam must acknowledge man first in creation, long as time endures.

But the sort of teaching to which the apostle here alludes, in connection with usurping authority, cannot be of the sort to which he refers, 1 Cor. xiv. Here Paul admits the prophesying of women in public assemblies, and of course could have had no intention, in his Epistle to Timothy, to forbid that sort of teaching, which stood in connection with the exercise of the gift of prophecy, which arose from the immediate impulses of the Holy Ghost, and which is rendered abundantly plain by another passage in his Epistle to the

Corinthians, in which he notices the public prophesying of females, and gives particular directions respecting their conduct and appearance, while engaged in that sacred duty. "Every man *praying* or *prophesying*, having his head covered, dishonoreth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered, dishonoreth her head." That this passage, as well as the fourteenth chapter of the same Epistle, particularly relates to the conduct of the Corinthian Christians in their assemblies for worship, and can have no special bearing on the present day, is obvious, and is allowed by eminent commentators, and is indeed evident from the whole tenor of the advice which is here given. The apostle therefore recognizes the public prophesying of females.

With respect to the prophesying to which the apostle here alludes, as exercised by both men and women in the churches of the saints, he defines its nature. (See 1 Cor. xiv. 3.) The reader will see that it was directed to the "edification, exhortation, and comfort of believers," and the result anticipated was the conviction of unbelievers and unlearned persons. "Such," says the author of an excellent work, "were the public services of women which the apostle allowed, and such was the ministry of females predicted by the prophet Joel, and described as a *leading* feature under the gospel dispensation. Women who speak in assemblies for worship under the influence of the Holy Spirit assume thereby no *personal authority* over others. They are instruments through which divine instruction is communicated to the people."

It may be conceived by some that the devoted Christian female, who is willing thus to be led by the Spirit into paths of usefulness, may lose, in some degree, those lovely and becoming traits of character, which we admire in the female sex. As far as our observations have aided us, the effect has been diametrically opposite. Religion does not despoil woman of her refined sensibilities, but only turns them into a finer mould, and brings out to the charmed beholder every thing that is pure, lovely, and of good report. Says the late Mr. Gurney, a minister in the Society of Friends, "We well know that there are no women among us more generally distinguished for modesty,

gentleness, order, and a right submission to their brethren, than those who have been called by their divine Master into the exercise of the Christian ministry." And who finds fault with the ministry of woman as practised among the society of Friends? We imagine few are so fastidious.

But says one, Is the proclamation of the gospel, as dispensed by women among the people called Friends, of such manifest utility as to warrant the belief of a divine call to this work? Says a theological writer, in treating on this subject, "There is, however, in some sections of the Christian church, a recognition of the full and free agency and operation of the Holy Spirit which divideth to every man severally as he will, and a thankful acceptance of that great gospel truth, 'There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither male nor female,' but 'they are all one in Christ Jesus.' Among such the preaching of women has been acknowledged to be a special gift from Christ, who only has a right to appoint, and who alone can qualify his ministers effectually to publish the glad tidings through him. And so effectually have these glad tidings been proclaimed by females that many have been through their instrumentality converted from the error of their way, and brought from darkness to light; many hungry and thirsty souls have been refreshed and strengthened, and many living members of the church edified together. Can we believe that the Holy Spirit is *now* more limited in its manifestations and in its requirements than when by his inspirations Miriam prophesied and sang the praise of Jehovah?"

Says the devoted philanthropist, Miss Bosanquet, afterwards the wife of the distinguished Vicar of Madely, Rev. J. Fletcher, who felt herself called to proclaim the power of saving grace to others, "Some think it inconsistent with that modesty the Christian religion requires in women professing godliness. Now, I do not apprehend Mary could in the least be accused of immodesty when she carried the joyful news of her Lord's resurrection, and in that sense taught the teachers of mankind. Neither was the woman of Samaria to be accused of immodesty when she invited the whole city to come to Christ. Neither do I think the woman mentioned in 2 Sam. xx. could be said to sin against modesty, though she called to

the general of the opposing army to converse with her, and then went to all the people to give them her advice, and by it the city was saved. Neither do I suppose Deborah did wrong in publicly declaring the message of the Lord, and afterwards accompanying Barak to war because his hands hung down at going without her. But says the objector, All these were extraordinary calls; sure you will not say yours is an extraordinary call? If I did not believe so, I would not act in an extraordinary manner. I praise God, I feel him near, and prove his faithfulness every day."

That Christ was successfully preached to the Samaritans through the instrumentality of a woman is manifest, John iv. 39. "Many of the Samaritans believed on him for the saying of the woman." This woman was the first apostle for Christ in Samaria. She went and told her fellow-citizens that the Messiah was come, and gave for proof that he had told her the most secret things she had ever done.

But Providence, under ordinary circumstances, assigns woman a sphere of action both suited to her predilections and her physical and mental structure. Indeed, can we conceive of a work more important than that which in the general orderings of Providence falls to woman? "The future destiny of the child is always the work of the mother," said the sagacious Napoleon. The training of the human mind irrespective of sex, as it comes forth fresh from the hand of the Dispenser of life, is, for the most part, committed to woman. What a high and holy trust! It were difficult to give a just presentation of the magnitude of this work. Immortal minds are to be trained for immortality and eternal life; and all the minutiae of future life, whether for

good or evil, are to show the result of these early trainings. And to all eternity, as millions on millions of ages pass away, the result of those early motherly trainings will influence largely the destiny of that deathless spirit. Not only will the women of this age have to do with the women of the future age, but, as the men of the future age will have had their early training mostly from the women of the present age, how greatly have women to do with the destinies of the moral and religious world! Wonderful indeed is the work to which woman has been called in the social relation. Says Mrs. Hale, "But with the privileges we must take the position of women; leave the work of the world and its reward, the government thereof, to men; our task is to fit them for their office, and inspire them to perform it in righteousness."

It is not our aim in this work to suggest, in behalf of woman, a change in the social or domestic relation. We are not disposed to feel that she is burdened with wrong in this direction. But we feel that there is a wrong, a serious wrong, affectingly cruel in its influences, which has long been depressing the hearts of the most devotedly pious women. And this wrong is inflicted by pious men, many of whom, we presume, imagine that they are doing God service in putting a seal upon lips which God has commanded to speak.

It is not our intention to chide those who have thus kept the Christian female in bondage, as we believe in ignorance they have done it. But we feel that the time has now come when ignorance will involve guilt; and the Head of the church imperatively demands a consideration of the question proposed in the following pages.

Tongue of Fire on the Daughters of the Lord

I. FEMALE PROPHESYING; OR, DAUGHTERS OF THE LORD ALMIGHTY

When the founder of our holy Christianity was about leaving his disciples to ascend to his Father, he commanded them to tarry at Jerusalem until endued with power from on high.¹ And of whom was this company of disciples composed? Please turn to the first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. We see the number assembled in that upper room was about one hundred and twenty.² Here were Peter, James, John, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James the son of Alpheus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James.³ "These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren."⁴

Let us observe that here were both male and female disciples, continuing with one accord in prayer and supplication, in obedience to the command of their risen Lord: they are all here waiting for the promise of the Father.⁵

And did all these waiting disciples, who thus with one accord continued in prayer, receive the grace for which they supplicated? It was the gift of the Holy Ghost that had been promised. And was this promise of the Father as truly made to the daughters of the Lord Almighty as to his sons?—See Joel ii. 28,29. "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit."⁶ When the

Spirit was poured out in answer to the united prayers of God's sons and daughters, did the tongue of fire descend alike upon the women as upon the men? How emphatic is the answer to this question.

"And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon *each of them*."⁷ Was the effect similar upon God's daughters as upon his sons? Mark it: "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak as the Spirit gave utterance."⁸ Doubtless it was a well-nigh impelling power which was thus poured out upon these sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, moving their lips to most earnest, persuasive, convincing utterances. Not alone did Peter proclaim a crucified, risen Saviour, but each one, as the Spirit gave utterance, assisted in spreading the good news; and the result of these united ministrations of the Spirit, through human agency, was that three thousand were in one day pricked to the heart. Unquestionably, the whole of this newly baptized company of one hundred and twenty disciples, male and female, hastened in every direction, under the mighty constrainings of that perfect love that casteth out fear;⁹ and great was the company of them that believed.¹⁰

And now, in the name of the Head of the Church, let us ask, Was it designed that these demonstrations of power should cease with the day of Pentecost? If the Spirit of prophecy fell upon God's daughters alike as upon his sons in that day, and they spake in the midst of that assembled multitude as the Spirit gave utterance, on what authority do the angels of the churches¹¹ restrain the use of that gift now? Who can tell

Edited by Thomas Oden.

¹Cf. Luke 24:49. [T. O.]

²Acts 1:15. [T. O.]

³Acts 1:13. [T. O.]

⁴Acts 1:14. [T. O.]

⁵Acts 1:4. [T. O.]

⁶For an analysis of Phoebe Palmer's understanding of the prophetic role of women, see Nancy Hardesty, "Minister as Prophet? Or as Mother?" in *Women in New Worlds*, ed. Hilah

F. Thomas and Rosemary Skinner Keller, vol. 1 (Nashville: Abingdon, 1981), 88–101. [T. O.]

⁷Acts 2:3. [T. O.]

⁸Acts 2:4, her emphasis. [T. O.]

⁹Cf. 1 John 4:18. [T. O.]

¹⁰Cf. Acts 11:21. [T. O.]

¹¹Cf. Rev. 2:1, 8, 12, etc.; Mrs. Palmer refers elsewhere to church pastors as "angels of the churches," i.e., "ministering spirits" within the church. [T. O.]

how wonderful the achievements of the cross might have been, if this gift of prophecy in woman had continued in use as in apostolic days? Who can tell but long since the gospel might have been preached to every creature?¹²

Evidently this was a specialty of the last days, as set forth by the prophecy of Joel. Under the old dispensation,¹³ though there was a Miriam,¹⁴ a Deborah,¹⁵ a Huldah,¹⁶ and an Anna,¹⁷ who were prophetesses, the special outpouring of the Spirit upon God's daughters, as upon his sons, seems to have been reserved as a characteristic of the last days. "This," says Peter, as the wondering multitude beheld the extraordinary endowment of the Spirit falling alike on all the disciples,—“this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel: ‘And also upon my servants and upon my handmaidens will I pour out my Spirit.’”¹⁸

And this gift of prophecy, bestowed upon all, was continued and recognized in all the early ages of Christianity. The ministry of the word was not confined to the apostles. When, by the cruel persecutions of Saul, all the infant church were driven away from Jerusalem, except the apostles, these scattered men and women of the laity “went everywhere preaching the word;¹⁹ “that is, proclaiming a crucified, risen Saviour.”²⁰ And the effect was that the enemies of the cross, by scattering these men and women who had been saved by its virtues, were made subservient to the yet more extensive proclamation of saving grace.

Impelled by the indwelling power within, these Spirit-baptized men and women, driven by the fury of the enemy in cruel haste from place to place, made all their scatterings the occasion of preaching the gospel everywhere;²¹ and believers

were everywhere multiplied; and daily were there added to the church such as should be saved.²²

Justin Martyr, who lived till about A.D. 150, says, in his dialogue with Trypho the Jew, “that both *women* and *men* were seen among them, who had the gifts of the Spirit of God,²³ according as Joel the prophet had foretold, by which he endeavored to convince the Jew that the *latter days* were come; for by that expression Mannasah Ben Israel tells us all their wise men understood the times of Messiah.”²⁴

Dodwell,²⁵ in his dissertations on Irenaeus, says, “that the extraordinary gift of the spirit of prophecy was given to others besides the apostles; and that not only in the *first* and *second*, but in the *third* century, even to the time of Constantine, men of all sorts and ranks had their gifts; yea, and *women* too.”²⁶ Therefore we may certainly conclude that the prophetic saying of the Psalmist, lxxviii.11, was verified: “The Lord gave the word, and great was the company of those that published it.” In the original Hebrew, it is, “Great was the company of women publishers, or women evangelists.” Grotius explains, Ps. lxxviii.11, “*Dominus dabat sermonem, id est, materiam loquendi uberem, nempe ut feminarum praedicantium (victorias) multum agmen diceret, scilicet, eaque sequuntur.*”—“The Lord gave the word, that is, plentiful matter of speaking, so that he would call those which follow the great army of preaching women, viz., victories, or female conquerors.”²⁷

The Hebrew scholar, Rev. J. Benson, in his voluminous and deeply spiritual commentary,

²²Acts 2:47, her emphasis. [T. O.]

²³*Dialogue with Trypho*, ch. 88, ANF, I, 243. [T. O.]

²⁴The last of this quotation, beginning with “according as Joel,” is a paraphrase. [T. O.]

²⁵It may seem remarkable that she was apparently reading in Latin the works of Henry Dodwell (1641–1711), prolific, nonjuring Anglican theologian of Oxford. For neither Dodwell nor the following quotation from Grotius were available to her in English translation. It should not be surprising, however, that a young woman well brought up in a pious New York environment should read some Latin. [T. O.]

²⁶Dodwell, *Dissertationes in Irenaeum* (Oxford: Sheldon Theatre, 1689). [T. O.]

²⁷Hugo Grotius, *Annotationes in Vetus and Novum Testamentum* (London: Jos. Smith, 1727), vol. 1, 214. [T. O.]

¹²Cf. Mark 16:15. [T. O.]

¹³I.e., the Old Testament, the dispensation of law prior to grace, wherein women received the Spirit's gifts. [T. O.]

¹⁴Exod. 15:20. [T. O.]

¹⁵Judg. 4:4. [T. O.]

¹⁶2 Kings 22:14. [T. O.]

¹⁷Luke 2:36. [T. O.]

¹⁸Acts 2:16–17. [T. O.]

¹⁹Cf. Acts 8:1 and 4, her emphasis. [T. O.]

²⁰Quotation marks inaccurately placed in text. Cf. Acts 2:23, 36, 4:10. [T. O.]

²¹Cf. Mark 16:20. [T. O.]

says the clause here given, "The Lord gave the word, great was the company of those that published it," literally translated, is, "*Large* was the number of women who published the glad tidings."²⁸ The eminent linguist, Dr. Adam Clark, quotes the original text, and follows it with the literal reading, "*of the female preachers there was a great host.*"²⁹ And then, as though he anticipated the incredulity with which this literal rendering would be received, and resolved on relieving himself of the responsibility of a non-reception of it, he affirms, "Such is the literal translation of the passage," and leaves it with the reader to make the application, with the exclamation, "The reader may make of it what he pleases."³⁰

But though this excellent commentator suggests that the reader make what use of it he please, it certainly ought to be assumed that all sincere Christians, whether male or female, will in their Scripture searchings, make it their highest pleasure to ascertain the mind of the Spirit, adopting the Bible mode of interpreting the Scriptures by comparing Scripture with Scripture,³¹ fearful that he may be compelled to the sustainment of some unpopular theory, is not in a state of mind to warrant the belief that he shall know of this or any other doctrine, whether it be of God.

Schaff's "History of Christ's Church"³² says, "Woman, among the early Christians, had the fullest freedom in the house of worship; and the consequence was, not only that she added vastly to the success of Christianity in those times, but her own character was wonderfully elevated, and her genius developed, by this equality of right. It is said that Libanius, on seeing the mother of St. Chrysostom, a most noble woman, exclaimed, 'What women these Christians have!'"³³

Eusebius speaks of Potominia Ammias, a

²⁸Joseph Benson, *The Holy Bible with Notes* (New York: Harper, 1823), vol. 2, 795. [T. O.]

²⁹Adam Clarke, *The Holy Bible with A Commentary and Critical Notes* (New York: J. Emory and B. Waugh, 1829), vol. 3, 218. [T. O.]

³⁰*Ibid.*, p. 218. [T. O.]

³¹Cf. Adam Clarke, *Christian Theology* (Salem, Ohio: Schmul, 1967), 47-63. [T. O.]

³²Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*. [T. O.]

³³*Ibid.*, 1886 edition, revised from 1867, vol. 3, p. 934. [T. O.]

prophetess in Philadelphia, and others, who were equally distinguished by their zeal for the love which they bore to Jesus Christ.³⁴

Chrysostom and Theophylact take great notice of Junia, mentioned in the apostle's salutations. In our translation (Rom. xvi. 7), it is, "Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow-prisoners, who are of note among the apostles." By the word *kinsmen*, one would take Junia not to have been a woman, but a man.³⁵ But Chrysostom and Theophylact were both Greeks; consequently, they knew their mother-tongue better than our translators, and they say it was a woman: it should therefore have been translated, "Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsfolk."³⁶ The apostle salutes other *women* who were of note among them, particularly Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labored in the Lord,³⁷ and Persis, who labored much in the Lord.³⁸

We could refer to many women who in the apostolic age used this gift to the edification of the Church, particularly Phebe,³⁹ the *servant of the Church*, or deaconess, as the Greek word signifies, of the *church at Cenchroea*.⁴⁰ Deaconesses were ordained to the office by the imposition of the hands of the bishop. Theodorus says, "The fame of Phebe was spread throughout the world, and she was known, not only to the Greeks

³⁴Eusebius, *Church History*, v. 17, *NPNF*, 2, 1, p. 234. [T. O.]

³⁵Modern advocates of gender equity in language may be amazed that such a point was being made in the middle of the nineteenth century. The implication is that the word *kinsman* is tilted in the direction of reference to males. Phoebe Palmer wished to see such language shift toward greater equity and accuracy, hence, *kinsfolk*. The point is not a petty one. For she is trying to demonstrate that women were named by Paul as "among the apostles." She was willing to use ancient Greek authorities to make her linguistic point. [T. O.]

³⁶John Chrysostom, *Homilies on Romans*, XXXI, *NPNF*, 1st series, XI, pp. 554, 555. Cf. Theophylact or Theophylactus of Bulgaria, Archbishop of Okhrid, fl. 1078, *Commentarius in Epistolam ad Romanos*, J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, Paris: Migne, 1857-66, vol. 124 (1864), 551 (it is not likely that an English translation of Theophylact was available to Mrs. Palmer, though private translations could have been available). [T. O.]

³⁷Cf. Rom. 16:12. [T. O.]

³⁸Cf. Rom. 16:12. [T. O.]

³⁹Sic: Phoebe. [T. O.]

⁴⁰Cf. Rom. 16:1-2. [T. O.]

and Romans, but also to the barbarians";⁴¹ which implies that she travelled much, and propagated the gospel in foreign countries.⁴² "It is reasonable to suppose, in view of her being a succor of many," says the Rev. Mr. Benson, "that this acknowledged servant of the Church was a person of considerable wealth and influence; or we may suppose the appellation, 'servant of the Church,' was given her on account of the offices she performed as a deaconess."⁴³ Says another able divine on this subject, "There were deaconesses in the primitive Church; and it is evident that they were ordained to this office by the imposition of the hands of the bishop; and the form of prayer used on the occasion is still extant in the apostolic constitution.[⁴⁴"]⁴⁴ And this order was continued for several centuries in the Church, *until the reign of the man of sin* commenced.

The Christian churches of the present day, with but few exceptions, have imposed silence on Christian woman, so that her voice may but sel-

⁴¹Should be Theodoret, *Interpretatio Epistolae ad Romanos*, in *Patrologiae Cursus Completus* (Series Graeca), ed. J. Migne (Paris: 1859), vols. 82, 218, 219. [T. O.]

⁴²Cf. Eric Berne, *What Do You Say After You Say Hello?* (New York: Grove, 1972), argues that person's names are crucial factors in "scripting." Could Phoebe's name have affected her sense of calling to diaconal service? She too "travelled much" and "propagated the gospel in foreign countries." [T. O.]

⁴³Joseph Benson, *HBN*, V., p. 359 (somewhat paraphrased by Mrs. Palmer). Cf. Benson, V, pp. 120-21: "We may suppose the name was given her on account of the office she performed to many as a deaconess." [T. O.]

⁴⁴The quote is from Adam Clarke, *The New Testament With a Commentary and Critical Notes*, (HBC) (New York: Carlton and Porter, 1851), vol. 6, 161, but it ends with "apostolic constitution" (quote not closed in text; cf. *Apostolic Constitutions* VIII. 19-20, *ANF*, VII, p. 492). Clarke goes on to say that the office of deaconess continued in the Latin church until the 10th or 11th century, and to the end of the 12th century in the Greek church. The following sentence, apparently, is Mrs. Palmer's own. It remains puzzling as to whether some historical figure such as Constantine was implied in her reference to the "man of sin," or whether simply the Devil. It would not be unusual for a Protestant reference of this period to refer in this way to Constantine or more generally of the period of papal hegemony, but that could not have been consistently asserted if Mrs. Palmer had fully accredited what followed in Clarke's commentary. Paul Bassett suggests that the "man of sin" might have reference to Gregory VII (Hildebrand, c. 1023-85). [T. O.]

dom be heard in Christian assemblies. And why do the churches impose it? The answer comes from a thousand lips, and from every point, "The Head of the Church forbids it, and the churches only join in the authoritative prohibition, 'Let your women keep silence in the churches.'"⁴⁵ And here we come fairly at the question: If the Head of the Church forbids it, this settles the question beyond all controversy.

But under what circumstances was this prohibition given? Was it not by way of reproof some unseemly practices which had been introduced into the Corinthian Church, and which in fact seem to have been peculiar to *that* church? for it is in connection with this and kindred disorders which had been introduced among the Corinthian believers, in connection with the exercise of the gift of prophecy, that Paul says, "We have no such custom, *neither the churches of God*"; that is, the other churches of God over which the Holy Ghost had made him overseer. It is evident that the irregularities here complained of were peculiar to the church of Corinth; and, in fact, not even applicable to other Christian churches of Paul's day, much less Christian churches of the present day, as no such disorders exist. The irregularity complained of was not the prophesying of women; for this the apostle admits, and directs how the women shall appear when engaged in the duty of praying or prophesying. The prohibition was evidently in view of restraining women from taking part in those disorderly debates which were not unusual in the religious worship of those days. In the Jewish synagogue, it was a matter of ordinary occurrence for persons to interrupt the speaker by introducing questionings which frequently resulted in angry altercations.⁴⁶ It was in reference to this

⁴⁵1 Cor. 14:34. [T. O.]

⁴⁶Paul's argument reconstructed: In urging women to "remain silent in the churches," (1 Cor. 1:34), Paul is reproofing a particular unseemly practice found at Corinth: that of interrupting the speaker, and of disorderly debates. Mrs. Palmer argues that this practice was peculiar to the Church of Corinth, and not found elsewhere, hence inapplicable elsewhere, unless that abuse should appear. It is in relation to the usurpation of authority that Paul enjoins silence, not generally of women who are not usurping authority. It could not apply to the prophesying of women, which he elsewhere commends. [T. O.]

reprehensible practice that Paul enjoins silence, and not in reference to the exercise of the gift of prophecy, which, in connection with this subject, he so plainly admits. Otherwise the apostle's teachings were obviously contradictory.

But if Paul's prohibition, "Let your women keep silence in the churches," is to be carried out to the letter in relation to the prophesying of women,—that is, her speaking "to edification, exhortation, and comfort,"⁴⁷—regardless of explanatory connections and contradictory passages, why should it not be carried out to the letter in other respects? If the apostle intended to enjoin silence in an absolute sense, then our Episcopalian friends trespass against this prohibition at every church service, in calling out the responses of women in company with the men, in the Liturgy, and when they repeat our Lord's Prayer in concert with their brethren. And thus also do they trespass against this prohibition every time they break silence and unite in holy song in the church of God of any or every denomination. And in fact we doubt not but it were less displeasing to the Head of the Church that his female disciples were forbidden to open their lips in singing, or in church responses, than that they should be forbidden to open their lips when the spirit of prophecy has been poured out upon them, moving them to well-nigh irrepressible utterances.

But Paul also says, "I suffer not a woman to teach, nor usurp authority over the man."⁴⁸ It will be found by an examination of this text, with its connections, that the sort of teaching here alluded to stands in connection with usurping authority. As though the apostle had said, "The gospel does not alter the relation of women in view of priority. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And though the condition of woman is improved, and her privileges enlarged, yet she is not raised to a position of superiority, where she may usurp authority, and teach dictatorially, for the law still remains as at the beginning."

But the sort of teaching to which the apostle here alludes, in connection with usurping authority, cannot be the same to which he refers, I Cor.

⁴⁷Cf. I Cor. 14:3. [T. O.]

⁴⁸I Tim. 2:12. [T. O.]

xiv. Here Paul admits the prophesying of women in public assemblies,⁴⁹ and, of course, could have had no intention in his Epistle to Timothy to forbid that sort of teaching which stood in connection with the exercise of the gift of prophecy, which arose from the immediate impulses of the Holy Ghost, and which is rendered abundantly plain by another passage in his Epistle to the Corinthians, in which he notices the public prophesying of females, and gives particular directions respecting their conduct and appearance while engaged in that sacred duty. "Every man *praying* or *prophesying*, having his head covered, dishonoreth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered, dishonoreth her head."⁵⁰

With respect to the prophesying to which the apostle here alludes, as exercised by both men and women in the churches of the saints, he defines its nature (see I Cor. xiv. 3). The reader will see that it was directed to the "edification, exhortation, and comfort of believers"; and the result anticipated was the conviction of unbelievers and unlearned persons. "Such," says the author of an excellent work, "were the public services of women which the apostle allowed; and such was the ministry of females predicted by the prophet Joel, and described as a *leading* feature under the gospel dispensation. Women who speak in assemblies for worship, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, assume thereby no *personal authority* over others. They are instruments through which divine instruction is communicated to the people."⁵¹

But by whom has the exercise of the gift of prophesy in woman been most seriously resisted? Has not the use of this endowment of power been withstood mainly by those⁵² whose lips should keep knowledge? Have not the people who have sought to know the law on this important topic been met with the dissuasive teachings, as though

⁴⁹The distinction between exercising the gift of prophecy and usurpation of authority is the critical one for Paul, as viewed by Mrs. Palmer. The former he approves, the latter he rejects. [T. O.]

⁵⁰I Cor. 11:4-5. [T. O.]

⁵¹Cf. Clarke, *NT Commentary*, vol. VI, p. 250, on I Cor. 11:5. [T. O.]

⁵²Clergy. [T. O.]

God's ancient promise had not been fulfilled? We cannot resist the conviction that the restraining of the gift of prophecy as given to woman in fulfillment of the promise of the Father involves far greater responsibilities than has been apprehended. The subject of which we treat stands in vital connection with the salvation of thousands; and if so, may we not anticipate that he, whose ceaseless aim is to withstand the work of human salvation in every variety of form, will, as an angel of light, withstand the reception of truth on this subject?

Again we repeat that it is our most solemn conviction that the use of a gift of power delegated to the Church as a specialty of the last days has been neglected,⁵³—a gift which, if properly recognized, would have hastened the latter-day glory. We believe that tens of thousands more of the redeemed family would have been won over to the world's Redeemer if it had not been for the tardiness of the Church in acknowledging this gift. We believe it is through the workings of the Man of Sin, whose aim it is to withstand the upbuilding of Christ's kingdom on earth, that this deception has been accomplished. We believe that he who quoted Scripture to our Saviour has in all deceivableness quoted Scripture to pious men,—men who would not wickedly wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction,⁵⁴ but who, from a failure in not regarding the Scriptural mode of interpretation, by comparing Scripture with Scripture, have unwittingly followed the traditions of men, and have thereby been guilty of the egregious error of making the inspired teachings appear contradictory, and of withstanding the workings of the Holy Spirit in accordance with those teachings, in the hearts of thousands of the daughters of the Lord Almighty.

We believe that the attitude of the Church in relation to this matter is most grievous in the

⁵³Recapitulating this crucial turn of argument: The gift of prophecy is commended by scripture to both males and females. This gift, when given to women, has been resisted by male clergy, whom one would expect most to welcome it. This is evidence of the power of sin. Those who, by quoting scripture, resist the prophesying of women are deceived by demonic reasoning. But in these last days amid a renewal of the reception of Pentecostal gifts, Mrs. Palmer thought, this gift too is being recovered. [T. O.]

⁵⁴Cf. 2 Pet. 3:16. [T. O.]

sight of her Lord, who has purchased the whole human family unto himself, and would fain have every possible agency employed in preaching the gospel to every creature. He whose name is Faithful and True⁵⁵ has fulfilled his ancient promise, and poured out his Spirit as truly upon his daughters as upon his sons.

God has, in all ages of the Church, called some of his handmaids to eminent publicity and usefulness; and when the residue of the Spirit is poured out, and the millennium glory ushered in, the prophecy of Joel being fully accomplished in all its glory, then, probably, there will be such a sweet blending into one spirit,—the spirit of faith, of love, and of a sound mind;⁵⁶ such a willingness to receive profit by any instrument; such a spirit of humility, in honor preferring one another,⁵⁷—that the wonder will then be, that the exertions of pious females to bring souls to Christ should ever have been opposed or obstructed.

The earnestly pious of all denominations seem now disposed to recognize Wesley as having been greatly instrumental, under God, in the revival of primitive Christianity. To those acquainted with the history of the Church at the time this great reformer was raised up, we need not say that the reception of the full baptism of the Holy Ghost was but faintly, if at all, recognized as the privilege of the believer. But as soon as this primitive flame again revived, just so soon was this gift of power, anciently promised as a specialty of the last days, newly recognized. What a host of "laborers together in the gospel"⁵⁸ were quickly raised up! And who that has read the correspondence and journal of Wesley but has marked his special recognition and appreciation of this endowment of power?⁵⁹ No more appreciatively did an ancient apostle regard "those

⁵⁵Rev. 19:11. [T. O.]

⁵⁶Cf. 2 Tim. 1:7. [T. O.]

⁵⁷Cf. Rom. 12:10. [T. O.]

⁵⁸1 Cor. 3:9 with 2 Thess. 3:2. [T. O.]

⁵⁹There is indeed a significant body of literature on the special place of women in the Wesleyan tradition. For bibliography, see Kenneth E. Rowe, *Methodist Women: A Guide to the Literature* (Lake Junaluska, N.C.: United Methodist Commission on Archives and History, 1980); see Taft, *HW*; George Coles, *Heroines of Methodism* (New York: Carlton & Porter, 1857); Jesse T. Peck, *True Woman* (New York: Carlton & Porter, 1857); Abel Stevens, *The Women of Methodism*

women that labored with him in the gospel”⁶⁰ than did this modern apostle and his coadjutors.

A recognition of the full baptism of the Holy Ghost as a grace to be experienced and enjoyed in the present life was the distinguishing doctrine of Methodism.⁶¹ And who can doubt but it was this specialty that again brought out a host of Spirit-baptized laborers, as in the apostolic days? And the satisfaction with which this apostolic man recognized and encouraged the use of this endowment of power is everywhere observable throughout his writings.⁶² Says one, “Mr. Wesley pressed into the service of religion all the useful gifts he could influence.” He well knew that in the ratio in which the devoted female, or any other instrumentalities, were calculated to be useful, to just that degree would the grand adversary raise up opposing agencies to withstand.

To his friend Miss Briggs, he writes, “*undoubtedly* both you and Philothea, and my dear Miss Perronet, are now more particularly called to speak for God. In so doing, you must expect to meet with many things which are not pleasing to flesh and blood; but all is well: so much more

will you be conformed to the death of Christ.⁶³ Go in his name and in the power of his might.⁶⁴ Suffer and conquer all things.⁶⁵ Over a century has rolled away, and still we may thankfully record that this ancient flame, though not cherished as it might have been, has not died out.”⁶⁶

Mr. Wesley, in his journal thus introduces the name of one of his female helpers, Miss Sarah Mallett, afterwards Mrs. Boyce: “I was strongly importuned by our friends at Long Stratton to give them a sermon. I had heard of a young woman there who had uncommon fits, and of one that lately preached; but I did not know that it was one and the same person. I found her in the house to which I went, and talked with her at large. I was surprised. Of the following relation which she gave me, there are numberless witnessess.

“Some years since it was strongly impressed upon her mind that she ought to call sinners to repentance. This impression she vehemently resisted, believing herself quite unqualified, both by her sin and ignorance, till it was suggested, ‘If you do it not willingly, you shall do it, whether you will or no.’ She fell into a fit, and, while utterly senseless, thought she was in the preaching-house of Lowestoft, where she prayed and preached for nearly an hour to a numerous congregation. She then cried out, ‘Lord, I will obey thee; I will call sinners to repentance!’ She has done so occasionally from that time, and her fits returned no more.”⁶⁷

[“]”⁶⁸Perhaps this was intended to satisfy her own mind that God had called her to publish salvation, in the name of Jesus, to perishing sinners, and to incline her to take up that cross which appears to have been more painful to her than death itself; and also to convince others that *even now*

(New York: Carlton and Porter, 1866); Gabriel P. Disosway, *Our Excellent Women of the Methodist Church in England and America* (New York: James Miller, 1873); Warren C. Black, *Christian Womanhood* (Nashville: Methodist Publishing House, 1888); Alice Cook, *Women of the Warm Heart* (London: Epworth, 1952); Earl Kent Brown, “Standing in the Shadow: Women in Early Methodism,” *Nexus* 17/2 (1974): 22–31, and “Women of Mr. Wesley’s Methodism,” *Studies in Women and Religion*, vol. 11 (New York: New York University, 1956); cf. biographies in *CBTEL, EWM, CM*. [T. O.]

⁶⁰Cf. Phil. 4.3. [T. O.]

⁶¹By “full baptism of the Holy Ghost,” she means sanctification as preached by the Wesleys. It would be inappropriate to read into this phrase post-Palmerian nuances, such as glossolalia, which she did not associate with it. [T. O.]

⁶²It should be remembered that Wesley never made wide use of the phrase “baptism of the Holy Ghost,” (nor did he identify that phrase with entire sanctification), or of the “endowment of power,” and he never publically claimed to have attained what he called “entire sanctification” (preface to “A Collection of Forms of Prayer for Every Day of the Week” 1775, *WJW, XIV*, p. 272). Yet there is testimony in his works to his interest in those who had attained it, especially where he speaks of examining others who claimed to have received it. His preaching, a model for Mrs. Palmer’s, strongly commended the gifts of the Spirit, to be received now, and by all. [T. O.]

⁶³Cf. Phil. 3.10. [T. O.]

⁶⁴Cf. Eph. 6.10. [T. O.]

⁶⁵The quotation ending “conquer all things” is in a letter to Elizabeth Briggs, from Athlone, April 14, 1771 (*Letters*, vol. V, p. 237, Telford edition). The rest of the quotation does not appear in Telford. Endquotes misplaced. [T. O.]

⁶⁶Endquotes misplaced (see above note). [T. O.]

⁶⁷*Journal*, Mon., Dec. 4, 1786, ed. N. Curnock (London: Epworth Press, vol. VII, pp. 226–27). The quotation ends here. [T. O.]

⁶⁸This paragraph was erroneously included within quotation marks. It is written by Mrs. Palmer, not Wesley. [T. O.]

God hath poured out his Spirit upon his handmaids and upon his daughters,⁶⁹ that they may prophesy or preach in his name the unsearchable riches of Christ.

The author of “The Heroines of Methodism,” says, “Probably the experience of this young woman, and the wonderful dealings of the Lord with her, greatly helped to enlarge the views of John Wesley upon the subject of female preaching. It is very evident, from his letters and conduct towards her, that he believed her, as a preacher, to be doing what the Lord required at her hands.”⁷⁰

Says Miss Mallett, “At thirteen, I became member of the Methodist Society, and the Lord made known to me what he would have me do. But oh, how unfit did I see myself to be! From that time, the word of God was an unsealed book: it was my companion day and night. My love to God and souls increased. I have been often led to cry out, in the bitterness of my soul, ‘O Lord! I am but a child, I cannot preach thy word’;⁷¹ but the more deeply was it impressed on my mind, ‘Woe is me if I preach not the gospel,’⁷² till my distress of soul destroyed my body.

“In my twentieth year, the Lord answered my prayer in a great affliction and made known to others, as well as to myself, the work he would have me do; and fitted me in the furnace for his use. From that time, I began my public work. Mr. Wesley was to me a father, and a faithful friend. I have not, nor do I seek, either ease or wealth or honor, but the glory of God and the good of souls; and, thank God, I have not run in vain,⁷³ nor labored in vain.⁷⁴ There are some witnesses in heaven, and some on earth. When I first began to travel, I followed Mr. Wesley’s counsel, which was to let the voice of the people be to me the voice of God, and where I was sent for to go.⁷⁵ To this counsel I have attended to this day. But

the voice of the people was not the voice of some of the preachers. Mr. Wesley, however, soon made this easy, by sending me a note from the conference held at Manchester, 1787, by Mr. Joseph Harper, who was that year appointed for Norwich. The note was as follows: ‘We give the right hand of fellowship to Sarah Mallett, and have no objection to her being a preacher in our connection, so long as she preaches the Methodist doctrine, and attends to our discipline.’”⁷⁶

We believe that hundreds of conscientious, sensitive Christian women have actually suffered more under the slowly crucifying process to which they have been subjected by men who bear the Christian name than many a martyr has endured in passing through the flames. We are aware that we are using strong language; but we do not use it in bitterness, but with feelings of deep humiliation before God that the cause of truth demands the utterance of such sentiments. We conscientiously believe, and therefore must speak.

Thousands are in this day enduring this crucifying process, perhaps as never before. God has given the word; and in this wonderful season of the outpouring of the Spirit, great might be the company who would publish it.⁷⁷ This, in a most emphatic sense, is the day of which the prophet spake,—when God would pour out his Spirit on his sons and daughters.⁷⁸ Though many men have in these last days received the baptism of fire, still greater, as in all revivals, has been the number of females.⁷⁹ These constitute a great

⁷⁶More about Sarah Mallett is in Zachariah Taft’s *Holy Women* (London: Kershaw, 1825), vol. 1, 79–90. Cf. Sarah Crosby, “The Grace of God Manifested in the Account of Mrs. Crosby of Leeds,” ed. Elizabeth Richie Mortimore, *Arminian Magazine* 19 (1806): 418–73, 516–21, 563–68, 610–71; Hester Ann Rogers, *An Account of the Experience of Hester Ann Rogers* (New York: Bangs and Emory, 1828); John Lancaster, *The Life of Darcy, Lady Maxwell, of Pollock* (New York: Mason and Lane, 1837); Mary Bosanquet Fletcher, *Jesus Altogether Lovely: Or, a Letter to Some of the Single Women in the Methodist Society* (Bristol: n.p., 1766); Mary Barritt Taft, *Memoirs* (Ripon, England: John Stevens, 1827). [T. O.]

⁷⁷Cf. Ps. 68:11. [T. O.]

⁷⁸Cf. Joel 2:28–29. [T. O.]

⁷⁹A monograph is needed on the relative number of women attending and influencing the holiness revivals of the mid-nineteenth century. [T. O.]

⁶⁹Cf. Joel 2:28. [T. O.]

⁷⁰George Coles, *Heroines of Methodism* (New York: Carlton and Porter, 1857), 291. [T. O.]

⁷¹Cf. Jer. 1:6. [T. O.]

⁷²1 Cor. 9:16. [T. O.]

⁷³Cf. Gal. 2:2. [T. O.]

⁷⁴Cf. 1 Thess. 3:5. [T. O.]

⁷⁵Mrs. Palmer frequently followed this advice herself. [T. O.]

company, who would fain, as witnesses for Christ, publish the glad tidings of their own heart-experiences of his saving power, at least in the social assembly.⁸⁰

And when the reception of the gift of prophecy is thus recognized in all the disciples of the Saviour, whether male or female, the last act in the drama of man's redemption will have opened.⁸¹ Says the distinguished Dr. Wayland, "private believers will feel their obligation to carry the gospel to the destitute as strongly as ministers."⁸² Oh! if the word of the Lord, unrestrained by human hinderances, might only have free course, how great would be the company who, with burning hearts and flaming lips, would publish it!⁸³

A large proportion of the most intelligent, courageous, and self-sacrificing disciples of Christ are females. "Many women followed the Saviour"⁸⁴ when on earth; and, compared with the fewness of male disciples, many women follow him still. Were the women who followed the incarnate Saviour earnest, intelligently pious, and intrepid, willing to sacrifice that which cost them something in ministering to him of their substance?⁸⁵ In like manner, there are many women in the present day, earnest, intelligent, intrepid, and self-sacrificing, who, were they permitted or encouraged to open their lips in the assemblies of the pious in prayer, or speaking as the Spirit gives utterance,⁸⁶ might be instrumental in winning many an erring one to Christ. We say, were they permitted and encouraged; yes, encouragement may now be needful. So long has this en-

⁸⁰Social assembly, as distinguished from "Women's Preaching," technically so called," *PF*, p. 1, i.e., in the service of public worship. [T. O.]

⁸¹That the last days begin with the full reception of the gifts of prophecy is a theme that would increasingly influence holiness revivalism. [T. O.]

⁸²Francis Wayland, *Sermons to the Churches* (New York: Sheldon, Blakeman, 1858), 21ff. Dr. Wayland was president of Brown University, Providence, R.I. [T. O.]

⁸³Cf. Lucille Sider Dayton and Donald W. Dayton, "Your Daughters Shall Prophesy: Feminism in the Holiness Movement," *Methodist History* 14 (1976): 67-92; "Women as Preachers: Evangelical Precedents," *Christianity Today*, 23 May, 1975, 4-7. [T. O.]

⁸⁴Cf. Luke 23:49 with Matt. 27:55. [T. O.]

⁸⁵Luke 8:3. [T. O.]

⁸⁶Cf. Acts 2:4. [T. O.]

dowment of power been withheld from use by the dissuasive sentiments of the pulpit, press, and church officials, that it will now need the combined aid of these to give the public mind a proper direction, and undo a wrong introduced by the "man of sin"⁸⁷ centuries ago.

But more especially do we look to the ministry for the correction of this wrong.⁸⁸ Few, perhaps, have really intended to do wrong; but little do they know the embarrassment to which they have subjected a large portion of the Church of Christ by their unscriptural position in relation to this matter. The Lord our God is one Lord.⁸⁹ The same indwelling spirit of might which fell upon Mary and the other women on the glorious day that ushered in the present dispensation⁹⁰ still falls upon God's daughters. Not a few of the daughters of the Lord Almighty have, in obedience to the command of the Saviour, tarried at Jerusalem; and, the endowment from on high having fallen upon them, the same impelling power which constrained Mary and the other women to speak as the Spirit gave utterance impels them to testify of Christ.

"The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."⁹¹ And how do these divinely-baptized disciples stand ready to obey these impelling influences? Answer, ye thousands of heaven-touched lips, whose testimonies have so long been repressed in the assemblies of the pious! Yes, answer, ye thousands of female disciples of every Christian land, whose pent-up voices have so long, under the pressure of these man-made restraints, been uttered in groanings before God!⁹²

But let us conceive what would have been the effect, had either of the male disciples interfered with the utterances of the Spirit through Mary, or any of those many women who received the bap-

⁸⁷Cf. 2 Thess. 2:3. [T. O.]

⁸⁸Mrs. Palmer invested great energy in a ministry to ministers, and felt that their role was crucial in this instance—tragically so. [T. O.]

⁸⁹Deut. 6:4. [T. O.]

⁹⁰The reference is to the resurrection appearances of Jesus to women, which initiated the Christian dispensation. [T. O.]

⁹¹Rev. 19:10. [T. O.]

⁹²The fundamental idea of repression receives clear expression here. These energies are destined to break through, however long pent up. [T. O.]

tism of fire on the day of Pentecost. Suppose Peter, James, or John had questioned their right to speak as the Spirit gave utterance before the assembly, asserting that it were unseemly, and out of the sphere of woman, to proclaim a risen Jesus, in view of the fact that there were men commingling in that multitude.⁹³ How do you think that He who gave woman her commission on the morning of the resurrection, saying "Go, tell my brethren," would have been pleased with an interference of this sort?

But are not doings singularly similar to these being transacted now? We know that it is even so. However unseemly on the part of brethren, and revolting to our finer sensibilities, such occurrences may appear, we have occasion to know that they are not at all unusual in religious circles. We will refer to a Christian lady of more than ordinary intellectual endowments, of refined sensibilities, and whose literary culture and tastes were calculated to constitute her a star in the galaxy of this world.⁹⁴

2. A LIFE-PICTURE

I have seen a lovely female turn her eye away from the things of time, and fix it on the world to come. Jesus the altogether lovely, had revealed himself to her; and the vision of her mind was absorbingly entranced with his infinite loveliness, and she longed to reveal him to others. She went to the assembly of the pious. Out of the abundance of her heart, she would fain have spoken,⁹⁵ so greatly did her heart desire to win others over to love the object of her adoration. Had she been in a worldly assembly, and wished to attract others with an object of admiration, she would not have hesitated to have brought out the theme in conversation; and attracted listeners would have taken her more closely to their hearts, and been won with the object of her love.

But she is now in the assembly of the pious. It

⁹³The humor is wry and biting: The risen Lord gives commands to women; the disciples question and prevent their fulfillment. [T. O.]

⁹⁴It is likely that this lady was among Mrs. Palmer's circle of friends, but insufficient clues are given for positive identification. [T. O.]

⁹⁵Cf. Matt. 12:34. [T. O.]

is true many of them are her brothers and sisters, but cruel custom sealed her lips. Again and again she goes to the assembly for social prayer and the conference meeting, feeling the presence and power of an indwelling Saviour enthroned uppermost in her heart, and assured that he would have her testify of him. At last, she ventures to obey God rather than man.⁹⁶ And what is the result? A committee is appointed to wait on her, and assure her that she must do so no more. Whisperings are heard in every direction, that she has lost her senses; and, instead of sympathizing looks of love, she meets averted glances and heart-repulses.⁹⁷ This is not a fancy sketch; no, it is a life-picture. Ye who have aided in bringing about this state of things, how does this life-picture strike you?

3. WHO WAS REJECTED?

Think of the feelings of the Christian lady, who has thrown herself in the bosom of your church community in order that she may enjoy the sympathies of Christian love and fellowship. Has grace divested her of refined sensibilities? No: grace has only turned those refined sensibilities into a sanctified channel, and given her a yet more refined perception of every thing pure and lovely and of good report.⁹⁸ What must be the sufferings of that richly-endowed, gentle, loving heart? But was it not her loving, gentle, indwelling Saviour, that fain would had her testify for him? and in rejecting her testimony for Jesus, did not Jesus, the Head of the Church, take it as done unto himself?

Just as we were about closing the preceding paragraph, the activities of our pen were interrupted by the call of a valued minister of the gospel, whose early religious training was in the bosom of a sect where the testimony of Jesus from the lips of women was not permitted in the church.

⁹⁶Cf. Acts 5:29. [T. O.]

⁹⁷The dynamics of polite rejection, so familiar to those bereft of power who have sought reformation in religious traditions, are deftly described here by Mrs. Palmer with a subtlety that is hardly exceeded among nineteenth century writers. These dynamics are circumspectly described and courageously confronted. [T. O.]

⁹⁸Cf. Phil 4:8. [T. O.]

We will introduce him to our readers. He tells us of an experience, in connection with the theme of our work, with which some husbands may sympathize. But we will let him speak for himself.⁹⁹

4. THE SEAL BROKEN¹⁰⁰

Never shall I forget the conflicting emotions of my poor heart, when, for the first time, the voice of my wife was heard in a religious meeting. She had been trained from childhood in the Congregational Church, her father having been a deacon in the same for fifty years. I had been born and raised, and educated for the ministry, in the Episcopal Church. All know the oppressive silence imposed on woman's lips, by both these denominations, in their social meetings for prayer and Christian conference. But the voice of my wife, now for the first time, breaks upon my ear. We had only joined the Methodist Church the evening previous. I had anticipated some things in the new church not altogether in harmony with my views and tastes. But never had it entered my heart that my wife should so far forget custom of silence among females in the house of God.

My mortification for a few moments was indescribably keen. I would have dissolved our union with the church instantly, and retraced our steps, had it been possible. Such license, such disobedience to custom, I felt for the moment to be intolerable. My mortification arose, not from a conviction that God was dishonored, Christ displeased, or the Holy Ghost grieved, but that the community, our former friends in the church we had just left, would be grieved, and some point the finger of scorn. It was not a care for God's pleasure so much as a dread of violating long-established customs, wounding the hearts of old friends, that troubled me.

It was suggested to my mind that I had not religion enough to allow my wife to do what she deemed to be a duty to her Saviour; that my prejudices must be her standard of activity. I at once saw the injustice, both to my wife and to my Saviour, of

⁹⁹Here begins the testimony of a formerly Episcopalian, later Methodist, clergy husband of a woman who bore testimony in religious meetings. [T. O.]

¹⁰⁰At least the following five paragraphs are a quotation, source unidentified. [T. O.]

thus thrusting my feelings and preferences between her and the cross.¹⁰¹ I was deeply humbled; and, lifting up my heart to God in prayer, forgiveness was at once bestowed. I was made happy, and blessed to enjoy woman's voice, in spite of former prejudices, in prayer and prophesying.

"I would have consulted you, my dear husband, had I imagined, before going to church, such a duty would have been impressed upon me," said my wife.

"It is well you did not, for my consent could not have been obtained. It is done now. It nearly killed me for the moment; but I have the victory, and your testimony both rebuked and encouraged me. Henceforth, please Christ, and not your husband."

I have often thought, since then, how cruel to woman it is to compel her to stifle her convictions, to grieve the Holy Spirit,¹⁰² to deny the Saviour the service of her noble gifts, because the pleasure of the Church (not surely the world, for it favors woman's liberty) must be regarded above that of God.

The Church a Potter's Field,¹⁰³ where the gifts of women are buried! And how serious will be the responsibilities of that church which does not hasten to roll away the stone,¹⁰⁴ and bring out these long-buried gifts! Every church community needs aid that this endowment of power would speedily bring. And what might we not anticipate as the result of this speedy resurrection of buried power! Not, perhaps, that our churches would be suddenly filled with women who might aspire to occupy the sacred desk.¹⁰⁵ But what a change would soon be witnessed in the social meetings of all church communities! God has eminently endowed woman with gifts for the social circle. He has given her the power of persuasion, and the ability to captivate. Who may *win* souls to Christ, if she may not?¹⁰⁶

¹⁰¹A nineteenth-century example of "consciousness-raising"? [T. O.]

¹⁰²Cf. Eph. 4:30. [T. O.]

¹⁰³Cf. Matt. 27:7; a powerful image of lost gifts, buried competencies in the church—the burial metaphor requires resurrection. [T. O.]

¹⁰⁴Mark 16:3. [T. O.]

¹⁰⁵I.e., pulpit. [T. O.]

¹⁰⁶Mrs. Palmer thought that women were naturally more gifted for some acts of ministry than men—in persuasive gifts, where grace transmutes nature. [T. O.]

And how well-nigh endless her capabilities for usefulness, if there might only be a persevering effort on the part of the ministry to bring out her neglected gifts, added to a resolve, on the part of woman, to be answerable through grace to the requisition. Our friend speaks too truly of the Church as the only place where woman's gifts are unrecognized;¹⁰⁷ that is, the church estranges herself from woman's gifts. To doubt whether woman brings her gifts into the Church would be a libel on the Christian religion.

Let us contemplate that lovely, fascinating lady, whose cultivated tastes, richly-endowed mind, and unrivalled conversational powers, made her the soul and star of every worldly circle in which she moved.¹⁰⁸ Did she move in the festive-hall, or the refined social circle, charmed worldlings, irrespective of sex, gathered around her, and, as they greeted her gifts by unrestrained manifestations of approval, acknowledged themselves won by her endowment of power over mind.

Surely there has been no tardiness of the children of this world in acquainting themselves with her gifts. But the Holy Spirit comes to the heart of this interesting worldling, bringing to her remembrance that she is not her own, but bought with the price of her Redeemer's blood.¹⁰⁹ She now apprehends, through the enlightening influences of the Holy Spirit, that all her various gifts have been purchased at an infinite price, and must all be brought into the Lord's storehouse,¹¹⁰ in order that they may be used for his glory.

Sin has its short-lived pleasures, and she has enjoyed the pleasure of securing the smiles of an appreciative world. But the Holy Spirit assures her that she must come out from the world, and be separate;¹¹¹ and she sees that she must renounce the world and sin, and through Christ give herself up to God and his church, if she would become a member of the household of faith,¹¹² and secure

life everlasting. How crucifying to flesh¹¹³ is the struggle! but she has resolved rather to endure the death of nature than to perish everlastingly. The struggle is severe. Nature, unreprieved by God, will often suffer intensely in passing through the struggle which ensues in emerging from the death of sin to a life of holiness. God will not reprove, because he knows that nature clings to earth. But the struggle past, the emancipated soul, with all its redeemed powers, is at once taken to the heart of infinite love. This point gained, it is the divine order that all the issues of future life should flow out upon a redeemed world in unison with the Head of the Church. The church militant is Christ's visible body.

And now these gifts, so often in requisition, and so prized in the social assembly of the children of this world, have been brought into the Church. We said it were a libel on the religion of Jesus to assert that natural gifts of a high order, bestowed by the God of Nature, are recalled or buried when the possessor becomes a recipient of grace, and a child of the kingdom. The God of Nature is also the God of all grace:¹¹⁴ and whatsoever was lovely becomes now more lovely; and that which was of good report becomes of far better report¹¹⁵ through the refinings of grace, and far more effectual for good.

And now that these natural endowments of power, which were so captivating and commanding, and so appreciatively recognized in worldly assemblies, are laid as a sacrifice on the altar of the service of the Church, what becomes of them? Does the church acquaint herself with these gifts? No! she is both a stranger to them, and estranges herself from them.¹¹⁶ In most church organizations, she authorizes no church assemblies, where she brings her sons and daughters together to call out these gifts for mutual

¹¹³Cf. Gal. 5:24. [T. O.]

¹¹⁴The nature-grace relation is intuitively grounded in the Thomistic tradition, probably received through Anglican sources, see Thomas Aquinas, *ST*, I-IIae, Q109. [T. O.]

¹¹⁵Cf. Phil. 4:8. [T. O.]

¹¹⁶The dialectic of estrangement is intuited by Mrs. Palmer as both self-chosen and in a sense objective. This is a powerful indictment of the failure of the Church as an institution to recognize, develop, and utilize the gifts of women. [T. O.]

¹⁰⁷Mrs. Palmer apparently viewed the Church as more repressive than the society in this instance. [T. O.]

¹⁰⁸Here begins a rich description of the redeemed powers of a natively gifted woman. [T. O.]

¹⁰⁹I Cor. 6:19-20. [T. O.]

¹¹⁰Cf. Mal. 3:10. [T. O.]

¹¹¹Cf. 2 Cor. 6:17. [T. O.]

¹¹²Gal. 6:10. [T. O.]

edification and comfort. What means of grace does she acknowledge where her female members, in common with her male members, may use the gift of utterance with which God has endowed her?¹¹⁷ And, if the Church authorizes no means by which she may acquaint herself with the gift which God has bestowed on women, what becomes of them? Why, of course they are buried. And where are the sepulchres in which they are entombed?¹¹⁸ Why, the Church.

And when the Head of the Church comes to receive his own with usury,¹¹⁹ and demands that these buried gifts be brought forth, who will be required to meet the demand? Church communities are made up of individuals. Will it be some one individual member of that church session? or will it be that minister who has failed to acquaint himself and his church session, and other members of his flock, of their responsibility before God in thus entombing an endowment of power which might have been instrumental in the spiritual life of thousands? What wonder, then, that our devoted friend said, that the Church is as a Potter's Field to bury strangers in; for the Church estranges herself from woman's gifts, and buries them within her pale.¹²⁰

But the spirit of inspiration within us and around us, from every point, seems to say, that the time is coming, and now is,¹²¹ when woman's gifts, so long entombed in the Church, shall be resurrected.¹²² The command, "Come forth!"¹²³ is already penetrating the sepulchre where these gifts have been buried. Faith sees the stone being rolled away.¹²⁴ And what a resurrection of power shall we witness in the Church, when, in a sense answerable to the original design to God, women

shall come forth, a very great army,¹²⁵ engaging in all holy activities; when, in the true scriptural sense, and answerable to the design of the God of the Bible, woman shall have become the "helpmeet"¹²⁶ to man's spiritual nature! The idea that woman, with all her noble gifts and qualities, was formed mainly to minister to the sensuous nature of man, is wholly unworthy [of] a place in the heart of a Christian.¹²⁷

And here, in the presence of the God of the Bible, we are free to declare that a consistent Christian man—we mean one who has been baptized into the spirit of his divine Master—will not cherish such an idea. Nominal or meagre Christianity may tolerate it; and we think we see reasons most palpable, and such as should alarm all professing Christians, why the ancient Tempter, in his enmity towards woman, should have thrust this repulsive particle of old leaven¹²⁸ into the Church, and have taken so much pains to keep it there. We sincerely believe, before God, that it is this repulsive doctrine that has so much to do towards keeping Christianity meagre; ay, so repulsively meagre, that men of the world, who believe in the doctrines of Christianity, fail to see in many so-called Churches any thing answerable to a social want of man's spiritual nature,—a want which the God of Nature hath himself implanted in the human heart, and which would be abundantly met in the precious bosom of the Church, if it were not for this ingredient of wrong which has been thrown in by the Arch-Enemy. We speak with confidence and with carefulness, in the presence of Christ, the glorious Head of the Church, who would have her stand forth before the world in symmetrical proportions of unrivalled beauty, and in inviting attitude.

¹¹⁷The Pentecostal traditions of preaching would later form powerfully around particular interpretations of this phrase not yet envisioned by Mrs. Palmer. [T. O.]

¹¹⁸Cf. Matt. 23:27–29; Luke 11:47, 48. [T. O.]

¹¹⁹Luke 19:23; Matt. 25:27. The tomb image of the religious institution used by Jesus is employed powerfully to speak of the deadly entombment of women's gifts. [T. O.]

¹²⁰This damning critique of the lost possibilities of the Churches runs counter to those who tend to associate holiness revivalism with ecclesiastical conservatism. [T. O.]

¹²¹Cf. John 4:23. [T. O.]

¹²²Cf. John 5:25. [T. O.]

¹²³Cf. John 11:43. [T. O.]

¹²⁴Cf. Mark 16:4; Luke 24:2. [T. O.]

¹²⁵Joel 2:25. [T. O.]

¹²⁶Cf. Gen. 2:18. [T. O.]

¹²⁷The modern feminist critique that woman is demeaned by being viewed only or primarily in relation to man's sensual needs is clearly anticipated here by Mrs. Palmer. [T. O.]

¹²⁸The "repulsive particle of old leaven" (cf. 1 Cor. 5:6–8) is the assumption that woman exists only to serve man's physical needs—a device of the enemy, and a morally unworthy assumption to be made by both males and females in the Christian community. Mrs. Palmer was convinced that it was the work of nothing less than supernatural demonic power (eventuating in social sin) that so rigorously kept women bound to submissive roles in the church. [T. O.]

In the name of the Lord Jesus, who hath purchased the Church with his blood,¹²⁹ and hath made abundant provision, not only for her purification, but for her beauty and strength, we implore those who minister at the altar of Christian churches to look at this subject. Christ would not have the Church unseemly in the eyes of his enemies. How grievous in his sight that repelling influences should emanate from her whom he would call his beloved,¹³⁰ and whom he would fain have stand forth without spot, wrinkle, or any such thing;¹³¹ so attractive in beauty and strength as to draw all men to her holy shrine!

Surely the Church should present a model of all the blessed proprieties of grace. He by whose forming hand she should be modelled would have her inward construction and exterior surroundings all so truly in the *beauty* of holiness¹³² as to invite investigation and admiration. Why should she not be an embodiment of every thing pure, lovely, and of good report?¹³³ And such she must, in fact, be through Christ, or her Lord can never receive her approvingly, and say to her,

¹²⁹Acts 20:28. [T. O.]

¹³⁰Rom. 1:7. [T. O.]

¹³¹Cf. Eph. 5:27. [T. O.]

¹³²Cf. Ps. 29:2. [T. O.]

¹³³Phil. 4:8. [T. O.]

“Thou art all fair, my love: there is no spot in thee.”¹³⁴ Yet such she cannot be, while she entombs in her midst the gift of prophecy intrusted to her daughters.¹³⁵

Oh the endless weight of responsibility with which the Church is pressing herself earthward through the depressing influences of this error! How can she rise while the gifts of three-fourths of her membership are sepulchred in her midst? Would that we might speedily see her clothed in strength, and coming up out of “the wilderness leaning on her Beloved,¹³⁶ fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners”!¹³⁷

Daughter of Zion, from the dust
Exalt thy fallen head;
Again in thy Redeemer trust:
He calls thee from the dead.¹³⁸

¹³⁴Song 4:7. [T. O.]

¹³⁵Cf. Donna Alberta Behnke, “Created in God’s Image: Religious Issues in the Women’s Rights Movement of the Nineteenth Century,” Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, 1975. [T. O.]

¹³⁶Song 8:5. [T. O.]

¹³⁷Song 6:10. [T. O.]

¹³⁸James Montgomery, *HUMEC*, 1850, #229, v. I, entitled “Daughter of Zion, from the Dust”; C. S. Nutter, *Hymn Studies*, NY: Hunt & Eaton, n.d.

Frances Willard

1839–1898

Frances Willard was born in Churchville, New York, as one of three children of Josiah and Mary Willard. She had an older brother, Oliver, and a younger sister, Mary. Her father, a successful businessman and farmer and also a devout Methodist, sold his assets in Churchville in 1841 and moved the family to Oberlin, Ohio, so that he could prepare for the ministry at Oberlin College. His wife, who had been a schoolteacher before her marriage, also attended classes (Oberlin was the only co-educational college in the United States at that time). But in 1846 Josiah Willard contracted tuberculosis, and on doctor's orders the family moved to an isolated farm near Janesville, Wisconsin, where it was hoped the fresh air would help him.

Frances and her siblings were home-schooled by their mother and occasional tutors until 1854, when Oliver went to Beloit College to prepare for the ministry and the girls attended a school in Janesville organized by their father. In 1857 Frances and Mary enrolled in the Milwaukee Female College, a teacher-training institute established by Catharine Beecher. Their father found the school insufficiently religious, however, and transferred them in 1858 to Northwestern Female College in Evanston, Illinois, a town near Chicago. The whole family moved to Evanston, and Frances and her sister lived at home while attending school.

Willard graduated from college in 1859, and in 1860 she took a teaching position in a rural school. For the next eight years she taught at various schools around the Midwest. A Methodist minister who was a friend of her brother's, the Reverend Charles Fowler, proposed to her in 1861 and she accepted, but she broke the engagement a year later. Her letters suggest that although she esteemed Fowler highly, she did not love him, and she could not bring herself to marry just because it was the expected thing to do. At any rate, she was preoccupied in 1862 with the illness and death of her beloved sister Mary. Willard left her teaching position to nurse Mary, and then to write a memoir of Mary's life.

In 1868 Kate Jackson, a fellow teacher from a wealthy family, invited Willard to accompany her as her guest on a tour of Europe and the Middle East. Josiah Willard was reluctant to consent to the trip, but he died in this year, and Willard decided to go. She and her friend were abroad for two years. While they were traveling, Willard came to some decisions about her future. She felt that marriage was not for her and that she wanted to dedicate herself to work that would improve the position of women in the world. It seemed logical for the work to be that of education, a field for which she was already trained and in which she had some experience. Willard resolved to make a career for herself as a women's educator when she returned to the United States.

Almost immediately, the ideal opportunity presented itself. In 1871, although she was only thirty-two years old, Willard was invited to become the first woman president of a U.S. women's college. The new institution, the Evanston College for Ladies, would replace the financially ailing Northwestern Female College from which she had graduated and would be affiliated with nearby Northwestern Univer-

sity, at that time an all-male institution. Willard lived in the family home in Evanston with her mother and took up her new work with enthusiasm, teaching classes on rhetoric and composition in addition to her administrative duties. Financial problems forced the school to merge with Northwestern University in 1872, a step to which Willard assented on condition that she and the female faculty remain in charge of the women students, many of whom were young teenagers.

Unfortunately, just at this time, the Northwestern University president who had supported Willard's efforts, and with whom she had negotiated the merger agreement, resigned and was replaced by the Reverend Charles Fowler, her former fiancé. Although the two had parted on friendly terms, as far as Willard was aware, Fowler immediately opposed her plans for women's education. He reduced her authority through administrative changes, acquiesced in her harassment by some of the male Northwestern students she was now teaching, and generally made her position at the school untenable, finally forcing her resignation in 1874.

Willard now found herself in an awkward situation. Other academic posts were offered to her, but they would have required leaving Evanston. She did not want to move her elderly mother, for whom she was responsible, nor to leave the neighborhood of her many friends and her brother Oliver, his wife, and their four children. Money was a consideration, for upon his death her father had left a very small estate, having loaned large sums to Oliver, first to launch him in the ministry and then to help him find other work when his pastoral career faltered because of a drinking problem.

Willard decided that her main commitment was to improving the position of women. If she could not do so through education in a school setting, there were other ways of affecting public opinion. Public lectures and evangelical meetings were very popular, and speakers could earn money both from collections taken at the event and from salaries, should they win positions as paid agents of the era's various reform societies. At this time, the reform issue of temperance was flourishing in the Midwest. The winter of 1873–74 brought a crusade by women seeking to curb the liquor trade, the largest public demonstration by women the United States had ever seen. Willard, who had already done some public speaking for Methodist causes, was attracted to temperance. She was elected president of the Chicago Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) in the fall of 1874 and was sent as a delegate later that year to the first national meeting of women's temperance groups, which resulted in the formation of the national Woman's Christian Temperance Union, of which she was elected corresponding secretary.

When temperance activism in America began in the eighteenth century, it was not primarily a women's issue, but it was an important reform cause. Willard's own church, the Methodist, formally endorsed temperance in 1832. By 1833, a national union of temperance groups, led by men but with women's participation, numbered more than a million members. They were successful in curbing alcohol consumption in the United States by the time of the Civil War. After the war, however, some of the legal restrictions these groups had won were repealed, and liquor consumption skyrocketed. Alcohol became big business. There was one saloon for every fifty adult men in some urban areas, and an 1895 survey in Chicago showed that the number of daily saloon patrons equaled one half of the city's total population. By the turn

of the century Americans were spending over one billion dollars on alcohol, much more than they spent on public education (\$200 million). Moreover, the liquor trade protected itself politically; political meetings were often held in saloons, and brewers, saloon keepers, and others in the liquor business were elected to local offices.

Alcohol constituted the great “drug problem” of the nineteenth century. Then as now, the use of intoxicants was deplored in part because it was felt to be morally debilitating, and in part because it was known to have grave social costs. Women increasingly spoke up about how they and their children bore the brunt of these costs. The alcohol problem was becoming a women’s problem. Drinking was a more exclusively masculine activity than it is today, and alcohol abuse by men contributed to the physical abuse and financial deprivation of women and children, and to many other social ills. Furthermore, women who suffered from their husbands’ abuse of alcohol had little legal recourse, given that married women’s property laws often still gave everything, even a wife’s wages, to the husband, and divorce laws awarded custody of children to the husband. Women could not vote and so could not work directly for legislative remedies.

Instead, they adapted techniques developed in antebellum reform movements, notably abolition—by using petitions, public demonstrations, lectures, and printed appeals. Twentieth-century perceptions of temperance activism are clouded, perhaps, by the movement’s narrow focus on prohibition alone in the early twentieth century. But during Willard’s leadership the movement engaged a broad spectrum of social issues. When prohibition eventually became the law of the land, it was a dismal failure, so much so that temperance workers are now often remembered with ridicule, when they are remembered at all. In the late nineteenth century, however, the temperance movement constituted the largest mass movement of women ever in the United States. Willard’s biographer Ruth Bordin notes that although Willard believed in the goals of the temperance movement, at first it had not appeared to be very high on her list of social reform priorities. As a young woman, at least, Willard did not require total abstinence of herself, and she enjoyed the occasional glass of wine when she was in Europe. Bordin believes that the temperance movement attracted Willard in 1874 primarily because she saw it as a movement that empowered women.

As corresponding secretary of the fledgling WCTU, Willard was so successful at increasing membership that the national convention grew from 80 delegates in 1874 to 200 in 1875, representing 21 states and 7,500 members. Willard was a dynamic platform speaker, not flamboyant but utterly sincere and able to convince her hearers that she cared deeply about them even when the audience was large. She projected powerful moral authority, a reflection, perhaps, of her desire to be a pulpit minister. She confessed to this desire in *Woman in the Pulpit* (excerpted here), but she suppressed it because of the prejudices of the time. To improve her performance and strengthen her voice, she took elocution lessons from the director of the School of Oratory at Northwestern. Willard also showed great talent at organizing new WCTU chapters and helping other women find their own public voices, as shown in the excerpt here from *Woman and Temperance* on how to organize a temperance meeting and how to conduct oneself as the lead speaker.

Thus Willard helped to create a network of women's organizations in which women helped each other come to public voice, as chronicled by historian of rhetoric Carol Mattingly. At first, women needed all-female audiences in order to find the courage to speak. Within several years, however, women's speaking abilities had progressed to the point that one delegate to the annual WCTU meeting, Mrs. S. A. McClees, could testify as follows:

Women who had but lately found no wider sphere than the domestic or social circle for their *special pleadings* in favor of all things good and true . . . suddenly found themselves facing vast audiences, standing in sacred places, altars and pulpits, side by side with fathers and brethren of the ministry, to give the same solemn admonitions to which they had lent reverent ears since childhood days.¹

Willard's growing popularity must be attributed at least in part to the grateful excitement women felt as they found their voices under the guidance of the organization she directed. Mattingly argues that the WCTU was "the largest and most effective organization for teaching women rhetorical skills in the nineteenth century."²

Contrary to the wishes of other WCTU leaders, Willard, the organization's most powerful speaker, began to push for a broader agenda for the organization. On women's suffrage, she was advised and encouraged by her friend Susan B. Anthony, who was also pro-temperance (as were many other women's suffrage leaders), and who had founded the first women's temperance organization in 1852 after being refused the right to speak at a temperance conference run by men. After some struggle within the organization, Willard's views finally prevailed, and she was elected president of the national WCTU in 1879, at the age of forty. She would hold this position until her death in 1898.

Willard placed the WCTU on a firmer financial footing and reorganized its various concerns, such as promoting temperance to children, into "departments," each of which was headed by a "superintendent" who had considerable autonomy. Having thus delegated many administrative aspects of the organization, Willard was free to travel and proselytize for temperance and other social reform causes. In the first ten years of her presidency, she spoke at an average of one meeting per day—at political party conventions, conferences of many religious denominations, and temperance meetings in every U.S. state and territory.

Willard advocated what she called "Do-Everything Reform." She attached temperance work to a range of social issues, including stronger laws against rape, laws raising the legal age of consent (which was age ten in twenty states), improved conditions for women factory workers and women prison inmates, improved enforcement of anti-child-labor laws, free kindergartens and what we would call day-care programs for working mothers, and more. The two issues that were closest to Willard's heart, and that she was most influential in promoting, were women's suffrage and labor unionism. To promote women's suffrage, Willard took the phrase "Home Protection," which had referred to tariffs protecting American industry, and

¹Quoted in Carol Mattingly, *Well-Tempered Women: Nineteenth-Century Temperance Rhetoric* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1998), p. 50, emphasis in original.

²Mattingly, p. 58.

adapted it to refer to the vote for women, arguing that if women could vote, they would vote for measures that would protect women, children, and the American home, including, among other things, regulation of the alcohol trade.

Willard was also convinced that the American economic system was unjust and un-Christian. From the late 1880s she referred to her own political beliefs as “Christian Socialism.” She advocated a social order in which everyone took responsibility for everyone else, as required by proper respect for God’s laws, and she saw the organization of labor as a necessary step toward more equitable arrangements. On behalf of the WCTU, she made overtures to Terence Powderly and the Knights of Labor, an early union organization. The Knights already supported temperance and admitted women as equal members, working for equal pay for equal work and other women’s issues. Willard persuaded them to adopt women’s suffrage as well, and she added the eight-hour day and other labor issues to the WCTU agenda.

Historians have argued that the temperance movement as a whole was tinged with ethnic and racial prejudice, that it was primarily a rural, Protestant, native-born movement that tried to fend off perceived threats from urban Catholic immigrants. Willard attempted to guide the WCTU away from such prejudices, although she was not entirely free from them herself. People of color were admitted to the WCTU on an equal footing with whites—indeed, noted African American activist Frances Ellen Watkins Harper was a WCTU leader throughout the latter part of the nineteenth century. Also, Willard made it national policy that Catholics and Jews were welcome as members of the WCTU, and she extended overtures to Catholic temperance groups. Yet Willard allowed most Southern chapters of the organization to remain segregated. Although she urged the WCTU to oppose lynching and other violent features of southern resistance to Reconstruction, she also suggested that the charges for which black men were lynched were sometimes true. African American reformer Ida B. Wells attacked Willard repeatedly, even from the podium at the national WCTU convention, for not taking a stronger stand against lynching, and although Willard tried to respond to these criticisms and finally persuaded the WCTU to pass an antilynching resolution in 1895, over southern members’ protests, her public statements never repudiated the false charges against lynch victims.

Willard obviously believed that women should take stands on public issues, in spite of complaints from WCTU conservatives that she was inappropriately politicizing the organization. Further, Willard saw that the various social reforms she espoused, which were linked theoretically in the concept of Christian Socialism, needed to be linked politically into a single reform party if they were to influence the American government. A Prohibition party had been active in the United States since the Civil War, and Willard was one of its leaders. After its defeat in the 1888 elections, Willard thought that the time was right to promote fusion with other reform efforts, notably the farmers’ groups seeking national fiscal reform, which became the Populist party. She urged the Populists to adopt platform planks supporting temperance and women’s suffrage and promised the support of the Prohibition party and her very large women’s organization—about 200,000 members by 1890—if they would do so. But after several years of maneuvering, in 1892 this fusion effort was finally defeated.

1892 was also the year in which Willard's mother died, and it became a watershed year in her temperance work. No longer tied to Evanston by care for her mother, she became more active on the international scene and less active on the national. In 1891 Willard had been instrumental in organizing the first international women's temperance conference, where she became the president of the World WCTU formed at the conference, and there she had met Lady Henry Somerset, president of the British Women's Christian Temperance Union. Isabel Somerset became Willard's close friend, and upon Willard's mother's death, Willard accepted her invitation to visit her in England. From 1892 until Willard's death in 1898, Lady Henry made it possible for Willard to spend more than half her time in England. She thus became less politically active in the United States and less of a presence on the national reform scene, although she retained her presidency of the U.S. national WCTU and continued to appear as a speaker for temperance and other reforms.

During this period, too, Willard's effectiveness at home and abroad was diminished by her rapidly failing health. Worn down by a whirlwind speaking schedule, she died in New York City early in 1898, at the age of fifty-eight, while waiting to sail for England. Her death occasioned a tremendous outpouring of national grief. As her body was transported back to Evanston for burial, it was greeted by crowds of mourners at stops along the way. Obituaries compared her status to that of Queen Victoria. She was undoubtedly the most famous woman in America at the time of her death, and her eminent position was later cemented by the passage of Constitutional amendments prohibiting the sale of alcoholic beverages (1918) and granting the vote to women (1920), reforms that she was instrumental in bringing about.

Frances Willard was the best-known female public speaker that the United States had ever seen, and arguably no American woman to date has surpassed her in national and international renown. The roots of her success lie in her approach to public rhetoric. On the one hand, the keynote of Willard's oratory was always conciliation. She presented herself as a "womanly" woman, with the special spirituality, purity, and love of home and children that nineteenth-century ideologies of "woman's sphere" deemed appropriate for the sex (ironically enough, since she never married and had no children of her own). Thus women who feared to depart from accepted norms of female behavior did not feel threatened as they entertained her ideas. As Mattingly has shown, Willard and the temperance women who followed her lead also made heavy use of traditional cultural references, especially to the Bible and American history, to identify their reforms with accepted values. Willard also approached audiences gently, emphasizing that they could choose whether or not to embrace her positions, just as the WCTU allowed local chapters to decide which aspects of the national agenda, in addition to temperance, they wished to support.

On the other hand, Willard had a breadth of social vision equaled by very few American reformers. She connected temperance to a broad range of issues, in marked contrast, for example, to supporters of women's suffrage, who became more and more focused on a single issue over time. If temperance was a socially safe issue, bearing religious endorsement and an obvious connection with "home protection," Willard also passionately supported more radical causes, such as better treatment of prostitutes and women criminals, whose very existence "respectable"

women were supposed to ignore, and also women's suffrage and labor unionism, which had politically revolutionary implications. Thus listeners drawn in by Willard's conventionally feminine self-presentation might find themselves confronting surprisingly sweeping vistas of radical social change. Sociologist Janet Zollinger Giele states: "Particularly in the smaller towns, the WCTU was the thinking woman's organization, allied with a number of progressive causes."³

After Willard's death, the WCTU retreated to a position of supporting prohibition only, and younger women seeking reform outlets tended to look elsewhere. Speech communication scholar Karlyn Kohrs Campbell has speculated that the WCTU did not sustain Willard's reform agenda after her death because her rhetoric was too conciliatory and did not make strong converts of women once they were removed from her charismatic personal influence. But one social change that Willard advocated did endure. Above all, she not only spoke out herself on reform issues, but encouraged other women to do so. Willard continually defended women's right to speak in public, most coherently in her defense of women's preaching, *Woman in the Pulpit*. On the personal level, she promoted the speaking careers of her associates and gave them sincere encouragement and support. On the organizational level, she may have done more than any other nineteenth-century reformer to empower large groups of women to conduct political business and to make their voices heard.

Practical advice on how women can become effective speakers is given in a chapter in *Woman and Temperance* titled "How to Organize a WCTU" (excerpted here). Willard focuses on how to conduct the initial meeting of a group of women who will form a new WCTU chapter. She offers specific hints on how to structure a successful meeting and even provides an outline of a model opening speech (possibly echoing her earlier work as a rhetoric and composition teacher). She gives much attention to gauging the audience and avoiding any appearance of superior knowledge, along with canny advice on how to deal with obtuse or hostile questioners. Following this section in the chapter is one that gives similar advice on how to conduct a public rally for temperance at which both men and women will be present.

Willard's book *Woman in the Pulpit*, also excerpted here, is her most complete statement on women and rhetoric. Her argument centers on a defense of ministerial careers for women, still a radical idea opposed by most Christian denominations at the time, even though some ordained women were already serving. Perhaps she was influenced by her experience with well-known Methodist preacher Phoebe Palmer (p. 1085). Willard first attacks bans on female ministry based on Pauline injunctions concerning women's silence in church, as had many defenders of women's speaking before her, such as Margaret Fell and Sarah Grimké (pp. 748, 1045), although Willard appears to be unaware of their work. Willard then argues for the benefits women will bring to the ministry, and finally disposes of the objection that women ministers will not be fit mothers.

Typical of her conciliatory approach, Willard cushions this radical argument, presented in Chapters I–III, with an introduction comprising three letters from male

³Janet Zollinger Giele, *Two Paths to Women's Equality: Temperance, Suffrage, and the Origins of Modern Feminism* (New York: Twayne, 1995), p. 89.

ministers praising the project and four concluding chapters that present, respectively, many lengthy excerpts from the writings of male ministers supporting women's ministry, many lengthy excerpts from the writings of women ministers describing and defending their vocation, a critique of her argument by a male doctor of divinity, and a rebuttal of this critique by another male professor of religion. She thus surrounds herself with testimony on her behalf, implying that she would not be so arrogant as to defend a radical position alone, and also that she does not wish to diminish the authority of male ministers (since she calls on them for support, and even for criticism). Of the book's seven chapters, then, only three are entirely her words. What follows is a synopsis of Willard's three main chapters.

SUMMARY OF *WOMAN IN THE PULPIT*, CHAPTERS I-III

Our first excerpt begins with Chapter I: "The Letter Killeth." A literal reading of biblical texts enjoining women's silence in church might mean that they could not even sing in the choir. Willard implies that this view is as absurd as supposing that revolutionaries Martin Luther and George Washington violated texts against resisting earthly powers, or that slavery is defended by certain texts. Moreover, traditional male biblical exegesis is contradictory in that, whereas it insists on reading some texts very literally, it interprets others quite loosely. Willard gives examples, one of which has special value to her as a temperance leader: Literal exegesis ignores the text indicating that unleavened bread was served at the Last Supper, while attending rigorously to the text indicating that wine was served. Such contradictions can be corrected by encouraging women, too, to write interpretations of the Bible.

Male interpreters read texts literally where the texts appear to argue for female silence and subjection only because such a view of women is culturally current and also profitable to men. Readings informed by the various prejudices of the male exegetes have produced all kinds of harmful discords in the Christian Church. Willard sees a trend, however, toward more liberal readings. This is to be expected, since we see that literal readings made by the early Church leaders, even the most respected, are now exploded.

Willard next discusses various correctives to biblical interpretations that appear to contravene common sense. One is to compare texts from different biblical passages. Willard provides a table comparing texts on women, placing those that appear to limit women's participation in a context that makes them read more liberally. Another corrective is to read texts in light of the social customs that prevailed at the time they were written. Another remedy is to look carefully at the exact meanings of words used to describe women's activities in the early Christian Church. Willard gives further examples of readings in which literal and loose interpretations are irrationally mixed.

Women's rational and spiritual powers are clearly equal to those of men. Clerical opposition to women's ordination, then, may be due to fear of competition. (Our first excerpt ends here.)

Chapter II is titled "The Spirit Giveth Life." Although Christ called no woman to be an apostle, he owed his earthly existence only to God and a woman; he associated

with women throughout his ministry (Willard gives examples), and he gave to a woman the honor of announcing his resurrection. Also, women were present among the earliest Christian gatherings and received the Pentecostal fire of prophecy along with men. Clearly, then, Christ intended women, as well as men, to be his ministers on earth. To oppose women's ministry risks opposing the divine will.

Men have controlled the earth since ancient times (our second excerpt begins here), and when we see how white men behave toward all the other peoples of the earth, we see that they desperately need the corrective of a loving woman's vision. Even if no women were apostles, Protestants do not believe that today's ministers are the heirs of the apostles, so women's early absence from that role should be no bar to their ministry now. Male prejudice has deformed the Christian Church with celibacy, hierarchy, and oppression. Women's influence is needed to restore compassion. Men have warped the Church with empty ritual; women are needed to show how to live the faith. They are especially needed now that so many people have turned away from religion and dedicated themselves only to making money. People come more readily to hear a woman speaker.

Since both sexes must be saved, both sexes must preach. Male preachers have had much more success converting women than men; women preachers are needed to draw in the men. Most Christian denominations recognize this need, if not by ordaining women ministers, at least by increasing their scope of service in almost every other church office. (Our second excerpt ends here.) The women of today are more intelligent and pious than the Corinthians against whom Paul opined, and thus do not deserve similar silencing. Churches will be full again and both church and home prayer revitalized if women take an equal part in worship with men.

The oppression of women throughout society, which Elizabeth Cady Stanton and others are fighting, derives from mistaken clerical oppression of women within Christianity, which clearly violates the spirit of Christ's gospel. (Our third excerpt begins here.) Women's capacity for the ministry is suggested by their present success in other professions, by their effectiveness in speaking before large audiences on a variety of social issues, and by their academic triumphs (Willard gives examples). At the same time, women never have and never will neglect their beloved home duties. The Church loses a tremendous force for good by driving pious women into other areas of ministerial work, such as proselytizing for the WCTU. (Our third excerpt ends here.)

If male Church authorities continue to refuse to ordain women, women will ordain themselves (Willard wanted women to be formally ordained by established churches, and she was aware that some women threatened to form their own church if this did not happen, a move she resisted). WCTU evangelists now serve all over the world, expounding God's word to all walks of life, including downtrodden people whom the Church largely ignores. The Church should officially recognize such women, give them the benefit of its supervision, and enjoy the benefit of their spiritual power.

The women who can do this work are not exceptions. Many have such talents, and those who are not talented can easily be kept out, as the incompetent are

weeded out of all professions. Modern transportation makes ministry all over the world well within the physical capabilities of women.

Indeed, a change is coming, and men who oppose it are increasingly in the minority. Willard notes that she has no wish to offend the many men who support her position. She thanks men for educating women for the many learned professions they now practice, and she specifically praises coeducational Oberlin College, Northwestern University, and Garrett Biblical Institute (Northwestern's school of theology). She confesses that had it been possible when she was young, she would have liked to train for the ministry herself, and she urges young women who feel such a call to answer it now.

Chapter III is titled "The Earth-Born Argument." But can a woman minister be a good mother? Willard cites many examples of good mothers who have excelled in other professions. Moreover, the ministry is a particularly easy profession for a woman to reconcile with motherhood. She can easily find a substitute in the pulpit for the brief periods when she is incapacitated by pregnancy and childbirth. Women are healthier and stronger than people think, even when incommoded by today's absurd female fashions—which, it is to be hoped, will be sensibly modified now that more women are entering professions.

A wife and mother who is also a minister will be ideally suited to nurture her household. Her children will be poets and philosophers. At the same time, the trials and sacrifices of motherhood will open the mysteries of Christian love to her in ways few male ministers can ever experience. Hardened, materialistic male congregants will listen to the mother-minister because of their memories of their own loving mothers. Willard here inserts a lengthy quote from a woman minister confirming her points about the positive mutual influence between the roles of mother and minister but also pointing out that the mother-minister will need help with domestic chores if she is to give of her best to both family and congregation. Willard follows with another long quote from a temperance book by Senator Henry Blair, in which he argues for giving women the vote precisely because their role as mothers helps them see what the state needs. Willard suggests applying Blair's argument by making an analogy between voting and preaching.

(Our fourth excerpt begins here.) Male ministers appear to talk only to men. For the entire human family to be included in the pulpit address, women must preach. (Our fourth excerpt ends here.)

Selected Bibliography

Willard's autobiography, *Glimpses of Fifty Years, 1839–1889* (1889), provides interesting information on her development as a speaker and writer. *Woman and Temperance* was first published in Hartford in 1888; our excerpt is taken from this edition. No modern reprints of these works exist. *Woman in the Pulpit* was first published in Boston in 1888; our excerpt is taken from this edition. There is also a modern reprint (ed. Zenger, 1978). Many of Willard's speeches and other writings are available in the microfilm collection *Temperance and Prohibition Papers*, compiled by the WCTU, the Michigan Historical Society, and the

Ohio Historical Society; see *Guide to the Microfilm Edition of the Temperance and Prohibition Papers*, ed. Randall C. Jimerson, Francis X. Blouin, and Charles A. Isetts (1977). Six of Willard's speeches are collected in Richard W. Leeman's "*Do Everything*" *Reform: The Oration of Frances E. Willard* (1992), which also contains a helpful biographical introduction and analysis and notes on the speeches. Willard's speech "A White Life for Two" can be found in Karlyn Kohrs Campbell's collection, *Man Cannot Speak for Her, Volume II: Key Texts of the Early Feminists* (1989).

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From *Woman in the Pulpit*

I. THE LETTER KILLETH

The First Congregational Church organized in New Jersey ordered its chorister "not to allow any females to sing in the choir, because Paul had commanded women to keep silence in the churches." This is the most illustrious instance, so far as I know, of absolute fidelity to a literal exegesis concerning woman's relation to public worship. By the same rule of interpretation, Luther and Washington must have treasured up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath when, in church and state, they severally proceeded to "resist the power," for it is declared

(Rom. xiii.) that "whosoever resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation." This anathema is based upon the statement that "there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God," and hence follows the command, marvellously sweeping and conclusive, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers." A similar degree of reverence for the letter furnished the argument upon which excellent ecclesiastical authority claimed the divine origin of African slavery, for does not Paul say, in Ephesians vi. 5, "Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear

and trembling, in singleness of your heart as unto Christ;" (and "bond-servants" is clearly the meaning as stated in the eighth verse).

Side by side with the method of exegesis which would enforce this literal view, and promulgated by the same class of exegetes, is another, which may be called the method of playing fast and loose, and which is thus illustrated:—

In the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. v.) there is a specific command not to strike back when one is struck; not to go to law; to give to him that asketh; not to turn away from him that would borrow; and to suffer people to be divorced for one cause only; yet every one of these precepts coming from Christ himself is specifically and constantly violated by pastors and people, and without penalty. In the Gospel of John (xiii.) Christ explicitly states one of the duties of his disciples in the following language: "Ye call me Master, and Lord, and ye say well: for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you." But I know of only one small sect that is loyal to this command.

In 1 Cor. vii., Paul sets forth a doctrine that, literally interpreted, certainly elevates celibacy above marriage and widowhood above remarriage, but exegetical opinion does not coincide with the great Apostle, neither does the practice of the church, else not one of its adherents would be alive to state the fact; nor have Protestant clergymen been known to manifest the least reluctance of conscience in performing the marriage ceremony in general, or in taking marriage vows upon themselves, nor has such reluctance become apparent when a widow was thereby involved in taking a second marriage vow.

In establishing the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, we know, beyond a peradventure, that Christ used unleavened bread. But while hundreds of disquisitions have been written to prove that he did *not* use unfermented wine, I have yet to learn of a Protestant exegete who prescribes it as our duty to furnish unleavened bread, or a pastor who provides it, and yet none dispute its presence at the table where the ordinance was instituted. Nevertheless, many of the same clergymen insist on fermented wine, "lest we should disre-

gard our Saviour's plain example and command, and put him to an open shame."

In 1 Tim. ii. 9, Paul says: "I desire . . . that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefastness and sobriety; not with braided hair, and gold or pearls or costly raiment;" and adds, "Let a woman learn in quietness with all subjection. But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness. For Adam was first formed, then Eve." But our exegetes and pulpit expounders, while laying the most solemn emphasis upon the last part of this command as an unchangeable rule of faith and practice for womankind in all ages and in all places, pass over the specific commands relative to braided hair, gold, pearls, and expensive attire, and have a thousand times preached to women who were violating every one of them, without uttering the slightest warning or reproof.

In Genesis, the Lord says to Cain, the elder brother, speaking to him of Abel, "Unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him," but our exegetes do not find here divine authorization of an elder brother's supremacy, and yet they construe the same expression when the Lord speaks to Eve, as the assertion, for all time, of a woman's subjection to her husband; moreover, they do this in face of the explicit declaration that God said, "Let *us* make man in *our* image, after our likeness: and let *them* have dominion . . . so God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; *male* and *female* created he *them*."

Take the sixth chapter of 1 Cor. and note its explicit and reiterated commands to Christians never to go to law, beginning with Pauline vigor: "Dare any of you?" Where is the "sweet reasonableness" of gliding softly over these inspired mandates, and urging those of the eleventh chapter in the same epistle as though they formed part of a creed for the subjection of women? My brethren, these things ought not so to be.

In presence of these multiplied instances, and many others that might be named, what must a plain Bible-reading member of the laity conclude? For my own part, I long ago found in these two conflicting methods of exegesis, one of which strenuously insisted on a literal view, and the other played fast and loose with God's word

according to personal predilection, a pointed illustration of the divine declaration that "it is not good for man to be alone." We need women commentators to bring out the women's side of the book; we need the stereoscopic view of truth in general, which can only be had when woman's eye and man's together shall discern the perspective of the Bible's full-orbed revelation.

I do not at all impugn the good intention of the good men who have been our exegetes, and I bow humbly in presence of their scholarship; but, while they turn their linguistic telescopes on truth, I may be allowed to make a correction for the "personal equation" in the results which they espy.

Study the foregoing illustrations, and find in them one more proof of that "humanness of the saints," which is a factor in all human results. Given, in heredity and environment, an established theory of the subjection of woman, and how easily one finds the same in Paul's epistles; given an appreciation of the pleasantness of wine, and how naturally one dwells upon the duty of its use at the communion, to the exclusion of special thought about the duty of retaining anything so tasteless as unleavened bread; given the charm that men find in "stylish" dress, carefully arranged hair, and beautiful jewelry, as shown in the attire of women, and it becomes perfectly natural that they should not censure these manifestations, but expatiate, instead, upon the more pleasing theory of woman's silence and subjection. Given the custom of being waited on, and slavery is readily seen to be of divine authority; given the unpleasantness of washing people's feet, and that hallowed ordinance speedily passes into innocuous desuetude; given the fathomless quantity of unconscious selfishness still regnant in good men, and the heavenly precepts of the Sermon on the Mount become "largely tintured with oriental imagery, and not to be taken in their severely literal sense;" given in the dominant sex the quenchless love of individual liberty, and Luther finds a way of interpreting in harmony with his purpose texts which he cannot ignore, and Washington, in face of these same texts, is conscious that he does God's service; given the resistless force of attraction between man and woman, and Paul's special precepts about

celibacy are powerless as the proverbial straw in presence of the imperious Niagara.

From all of which considerations the plain wayfaring woman cannot help concluding that exegesis, thus conducted, is one of the most time-serving and man-made of all sciences, and one of the most misleading of all arts. It has broken Christendom into sects that confuse and astound the heathen world, and to-day imposes the heaviest yoke now worn by woman upon that most faithful follower of Him who is her emancipator no less than humanity's Saviour. But as the world becomes more deeply permeated by the principles of Christ's Gospel, methods of exegesis are revised. The old texts stand there, just as before, but we interpret them less narrowly. Universal liberty of person and of opinion are now conceded to be Bible-precept principles; Onesimus and Canaan are no longer quoted as the slave-holder's main-stay; the theory of unfermented wine as well as bread is accepted by our temperance people generally; the great Russian writer, Count Tolstoï, stands as the representative of a school that accepts the precepts of Christ's Sermon on the Mount with perfect literalness, and theologians, not a few, find in the Bible no warrant whatever for the subjection of woman in anything.

Exegesis is defined as being "especially the scientific interpretation of the Holy Scriptures." It is in no sense an inspired work, but grows in breadth and accuracy with the general growth of humanity. For instance, it seems to us almost incredible that St. Augustine "thought it his duty to guard especially the whole theory of the waters above the heavens," or that St. Ambrose declared that "the firmament is a solid vault, and the thunder is caused by the winds breaking through it," and taught that if the vault revolved this "water is just what is needed to lubricate and cool its axis." In like manner Tertullian and his disciples contended that lightning is identical with hell-fire, and adduced, in proof thereof, the sulphurous smell attending it. Scripture texts were made the basis of all this, and St. Augustine declared that "nothing is to be accepted save on the authority of Scripture, since greater is that authority than all the powers of the human mind."

Even in our own enlightened days, so great a

scholar as Dean Alford, in his commentary on the New Testament, has the following addition to the "Curiosities of Literature" (1 Cor. xi. 5), which is here given to show the straits to which a learned exegete is reduced when prejudice and literalism meet in his mind to produce a cyclone of absurdities:—

Woman, if she uncovers herself (that is, unveils) in such an assembly, dishonors her head, that is, *the man*, . . . by apparently casting off his headship, and if this be so, the Apostle proceeds, why not go farther and cut off her hair, which of itself is a token of this subjection? But if this be acknowledged to be shameful (it was a punishment of adulteresses), let the further decency of the additional covering be conceded likewise. Man is God's glory; He has put in him His Majesty, and he represents God on earth; woman is *man's* glory; taken from the *man*, shining not with light direct from God, but with light derived from man. . . . "For this cause," on account of what has just been said (in preceding verses), by which the subordination of woman has been proved, the woman ought to have power on her head (that is, *the sign of power or subjection*; shown by the context to mean a veil). . . . The token of power indicates being *under* power, and such token is the covering. Because of the angels, that is, because in Christian assemblies the holy angels of God are present and delighting in the due order and subordination of the ranks of God's servants, and by a violation of that order we should be giving offence to them.

Now, let any reasonable human being read this exegesis, and remember that two-thirds of the graduates from our great system of public education are women; that two-thirds of the teachers in these schools are women; that nearly three-fourths of our church members are women; that

through the modern Sunday-school women have already become the theological teachers of the future church; and that, *per contra*, out of about sixty thousand persons in our penitentiaries fifty-five thousand are men; that whiskey, beer, and tobacco to the amount of fifteen millions of dollars worth per year are consumed almost wholly by men; and then see if the said reasonable human being will find much mental or spiritual pabulum in the said learned exegesis. A pinch of common-sense forms an excellent ingredient in that complicated dish called Biblical interpretation, wherever it is set forth at the feast of reason, especially if it is expected at all to stimulate the flow of soul!

A reasonable exegesis could never so have stumbled. The modern impulse toward "real facts," which has already reconstructed the science of medicine, is already doing the same for the science of theology. In olden time the "quintessence of toads" was prescribed for the cure of cancer, a serpent's skin steeped in vinegar for toothache, and wrapping the patient in scarlet was the professional remedy for small-pox. Analogies not less grotesque prove that in the realm of exegesis the wildest fancies have in many instances usurped the throne of reason.

The devil's first argument with the Lord was based on a Scripture quotation, and in the meshes of a quotation he entangled Eve. But when a greater than Solomon was here, he answered Satan's "it is written" by his divine "Again it is written," thus teaching us to compare Scripture with Scripture.

Perhaps the difficulties in the way of literalism may be best set forth in tabulated form, showing the Bible's "it is written again":—

PAUL	OTHER SCRIPTURES	PAUL
<p><i>1 Tim. ii. 11.</i> "But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness."¹</p>	<p><i>Judg. iv. 4, 5.</i> "Now Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, she judged Israel at that time. . . . And the children of Israel came up to her for judgment."</p>	<p><i>Gal. iii. 28.</i> "There can be no male and female; for ye are all one <i>man</i> in Christ Jesus."</p>

¹"I permit not a woman to teach" is a plain declaration. But women constitute more than half the Sunday-school workers of our day. The literalist proves too much by his argument. Perhaps he solaces himself by keeping all the offices in his own hands,

PAUL	OTHER SCRIPTURES	PAUL
<p><i>1 Cor. xiv. 34.</i> “Let the women keep silence in the churches; for it is not permitted unto them to speak.”</p>	<p><i>Joel ii. 28, 29.</i> “And it shall come to pass afterward . . . that your . . . daughters shall prophesy, . . . and upon the handmaids will I pour out my spirit.”</p>	<p><i>1 Cor. xi. 5.</i> “But every woman praying or prophesying with her head unveiled dishonoreth her head.”</p>
<p><i>1 Cor. xiv. 35.</i> “It is shameful for a woman to speak in the church.”</p>	<p><i>Luke ii. 36–38.</i> “And there was one Anna, a prophetess, . . . which departed not from the temple, worshipping with fastings and supplications night and day. And coming up at that very hour she gave thanks unto God, and spake of him to all them that were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.”</p>	<p><i>Phil. iv. 3.</i> “I beseech thee also . . . help these women, for they labored with me also in the Gospel.”</p>
<p><i>1 Tim. ii. 11.</i> “Let a woman learn in quietness with all subjection.”</p>	<p><i>Acts xviii. 26.</i> “Apollos . . . began to speak boldly in the synagogue. But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more carefully.” [This seems to have been the first theological school.]</p>	<p><i>Rom. xvi. 3, 4.</i> “Salute Prisca and Aquila, my fellow-workers in Christ Jesus, . . . unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.”</p>
<p><i>1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35.</i> Let them be in subjection, as also saith the law. And if they would learn anything let them ask their own husbands at home.”</p>	<p><i>Acts xxi. 9, 10.</i> “Now this man [Philip the Evangelist] had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy. And as we tarried there many days” [<i>i.e.</i>, Paul and his company].</p>	<p><i>1 Cor. xi. 11.</i> “Howbeit neither is the woman without the man, nor the man without the woman in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, so is the man also by the woman; but all things are of God.”</p>

for eye-witnesses can testify that not in Sunday-school conventions only, but in the great national conventions of public school teachers, where nine thousand women assemble, and less than one thousand men, the latter, under the subjection theory, into which they were drilled from the beginning, proceed to distribute the positions of “honor and profit” almost wholly among themselves. These things would be grotesque to look upon if they were not so sad, and laughable if they did not, in the minds of thoughtful women, fatigue indignation and exhaust pity. [Au.]

1 Cor. xi. 3.

“The head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.”

Eph. v. 23.

“For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is head of the church.”

John i. 1, 3.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that hath been made.”

John xiv. 9.

“He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.”

Col. ii. 9.

“In Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.”

John x. 30.

“I and the Father are one.”

Rom. xvi. 1.

“I commend unto you Phœbe our sister, who is a servant² of the church that is at Cenchreæ.” [The Epistle to the Romans was written from Corinth, and sent by Phœbe. The greatest of Epistles was carried from Corinth to Rome by a woman, a journey involving a sea-voyage, and a visit to a foreign country.]

²The word “servant” is more justly translated deaconess, or *ministra*. We find that Pliny writes (A.D. 104) that he selected two females, “who were called ministræ, mistresses,” for torture, to extract information against Christians. Prophetesses is equivalent to preacheresses. [Au.]

And yet, be it noted, the same theologians who would outlaw as unorthodox any one who did not believe Christ an equal member of that Trinity of which the Supreme Creator of the world is one (declaring Him to be “very God of very God,” etc.) do not only preach but practise the heresy that woman is in subjection to man,³ when Paul distinctly declares that her relation to man is the same as that of Christ to God.

Take the description of men’s babbling, tumult, and confusion, as given in the fourteenth chapter of 1 Cor., and imagine that a woman’s meeting had been therein described; would not the ages have rung with an exegesis harrowing to the soul of woman? But whoever heard this unseemly behavior of men referred to as the basis of the doctrine for man’s subjection to woman, or

³Mosheim, in his *History of Christianity*, makes this statement: “Every church was composed of three constituent parts: First, teachers, who were also intrusted with the government of the community, according to the laws; second, ministers of *each sex*; and third, the multitude of the people.” He also says: “The church had ever belonging to it, even from its very first rise, a class of ministers composed of persons of either sex, and who were termed deacons and deaconesses.” The eminent commentator Lange says: “It is clear that the early church was formed quite as much upon the *household model* as upon that of the synagogue.” [Au.]

as the basis of a binding rule of church discipline in reference to the conduct of the men in public worship?

How great a difference here we see,
’TwiXt Tweedle-dum and Tweedle-dee!

Reasoning from the present customs of oriental countries, we must conclude that places of worship, in the age of the Apostles, were not built as they are with us, but that the women had a corner of their own, railed off by a close fence reaching above their heads. It was thus made difficult for them to hear, and in their eager, untutored state, wholly unaccustomed to public audiences, they “chattered” and asked questions. Upon this light foundation behold a doctrine built that would subject and silence two-thirds of Christ’s disciples in the free and intelligent English-speaking world!

As woman’s prophesying (literally, “speaking forth”) is plainly authorized, let us inquire what this word means. Alford, who certainly does not lean to our side of the question, says: “The foretelling of future events was not the usual form which their inspiration took, but that of an exalted and superhuman teaching . . . the utterance of their own conscious intelligence informed by the

Holy Spirit." "The prophets give utterance in glowing and exalted but intelligible language to those things which the Holy Spirit teaches them, and which have the power to *instruct, comfort, encourage, rebuke, correct, stimulate their hearers.*"⁴ But more convincing still are Paul's own definitions of the word, 1 Cor. xiv. 3: "He that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification and exhortation and comfort;" verse 4: "He that prophesieth edifieth the church." And in view of the foregoing statements, and the careful directions of the Apostle as to the manner of dress of women when they prophesied, or preached, 1 Cor. xi. 5, there can be no doubt that they *did* preach in the early church. But these points will hardly be emphasized as we could wish until women share equally in translating the sacred text. That they should do this is most desirable, and young women of linguistic talent ought to make a specialty of Hebrew and New Testament Greek in the interest of their sex.⁵ A returned missionary from China assures me that of four separate translations of the New Testament into Chinese, all change Paul's words, Phil. iv. 3, "I intreat thee, also, true yoke-fellow, help those women which labored with me in the Gospel," into "help those true yoke-fellows," etc., leaving out the idea of women altogether. A leading (male) missionary was asked the reason of this, and he naïvely replied, "Oh, it would not do, with the ideas of the Chinese, to mention women in this connection."

Who can tell what weight a similar motive may have had with transcribers of the New Testament in the uncultivated ages of the early church? Indeed, in translating the word elsewhere called "deaconess," and indicating a high office in the church, as "*servant*," when it applies to Phebe, evidence of this tendency is given.

⁴Grimm's *Lexicon*. [Au.]

⁵Instruction is now given to women in the theological seminaries named below: Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio; Boston University, Boston, Mass.; Garrett Biblical Institute, Evanston, Ill.; the Chautauqua School of Theology, Dean Wright, 38 Bromfield Street, Boston. Most Unitarian and Universalist schools of theology admit them also. The Society of Friends has no such institutions, but reports three hundred and fifty women ministers, who have all the privileges enjoyed by Quaker preachers who are men. [Au.]

Why not insist upon the deliverance "which seemed good unto the *Holy Ghost* and to us to lay upon you (the Gentiles) no greater burden than these necessary things—to abstain from meats offered to idols and from things strangled and from blood?" We are Gentiles, but surely our consciences would not be wounded by eating meat set before an East India idol, partaking of a chicken that had had its neck twisted, or of a steak so "rare" that blood was palpably present therein. Indeed, ministers are famous for doing some of these very things!

The same writers who exhaust the resources of language to deride the dogma of apostolic succession rigidly enforce that of the male priesthood, for which the Bible gives them just as little warrant. Their hierarchy is man-made from first to last. When Luther disavowed it, the deed was done forever; but the tendency of man's mind, unchecked by woman's, to run riot in the realm of force, is seen in the rank ecclesiasticism of the very church which to-day bears Luther's name. The call of the Apostles (whose supreme authorization, "whose soever sins ye remit they are remitted unto them, and whose soever sins ye retain they are retained," no Protestant minister claims to have received) was no clearer than that which came to the one hundred and twenty in the Pentecostal chamber, and in that number women were clearly and indisputably included.

The man who argues that, "Adam being first formed," woman should be in perpetual subjection to the one who, before she was created, was warned against eating of the tree of knowledge, who sinned by her side, and was dismissed with her from Eden, should remember that this literalness of rendering makes it his personal duty, day by day, actually to "eat his bread in the sweat of his face." The argument is a two-edged sword, and cuts both ways.

Time would fail me to tell of Miriam, the first prophetess, and Deborah, the first judge; of Hannah, whose answered prayer brought Samuel to be the hope and stay of a dejected nation; of Esther, the deliverer of her people; of Judith, their avenger; of the gracious group of Marys that clustered around her who was blessed among women; of Elizabeth, and Anna; of Martha, and those "daughters of Jerusalem" who lamented

while men crucified the world's Redeemer; of Lois and Eunice, who trained Timothy for the ministerial office; of "Tryphena and Tryphosa and the beloved Persis." Suffice it to say that these all stand forth the equal stewards with their brethren of God's manifold grace.

There are thirty or forty passages in favor of woman's public work for Christ, and only two against it, and these not really so when rightly understood. But, in the face of all these embodied arguments, it is objected that Paul specifies (in 2 Tim. ii. 2) men only as his successors: "And the things that thou hast heard of me, the same commit thou to faithful *men*, who shall be able to teach others also." But the word translated "men" is the same as that in the text, "God now commandeth *men* everywhere to repent," and even the literalists will admit that women are, of all people, "commanded to repent"! But here comes in again the "fast and loose" method of interpretation; for preachers almost never refer to the women of their audiences, but tell about "men," and what "a man" was and is and is to be. A most amusing instance of this one-eyed way of looking at an audience occurred in Georgia, where I once attended a meeting in the "week of prayer," and the good (young) Presbyterian pastor, in an audience of perhaps half a dozen men and seventy or more women, kept saying "brethren." When rallied upon this afterward, by a white-ribbon lady of his parish, he very seriously answered, "Certainly, I said 'brethren;' and if there had been no one present but women, I should have said 'brethren' still. I was so instructed in the theological seminary, and so I do." But it never occurred to this excellent young man, nor to his theological professors, that by parity of reasoning women should be included in every prerogative accorded to the "brethren" by the New Testament! Christ called no Gentile and no colored man, but this lack of a precedent has never been urged against either. In woman's case alone is it made to do duty, and we shall find later on that if he called anybody whatever, he called those belonging to the same class represented by his only earthly parent.

Much is made of the word "subjection" (in 1 Tim. ii. 11 and 1 Pet. iii. 1). But it occurs in another place where all members of the church are

meant, "Yea, all of you be subject one to another." That is, strive all to serve each other. The same word is in Eph. v. 21, and is applied to *men*: "Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God."

The New Testament has no record of a woman's meeting. That dreary institution is a witty invention of modern hierarchs. "They were *all* with one accord in one place" when Christ sent the promised Pentecost. A "female prayer-meeting" in those days was a species as unknown as "female religion" itself. Regenerate hearts are of the common gender, and, under the original dispensation of the Master, so are the ministers of the regeneration. It is left for Fulton Street prayer-meeting, with its modern Sanhedrin, to quench the spirit and to despise prophesyings unless uttered in a bass voice. A learned pastor wrote as follows in a scholarly exegetical treatise, "We do sometimes find a man's head on a woman's shoulders, but it is a great misfortune to her." Such an utterance from a man of intelligence and kindness would be a distinct form of blasphemy were he not too much the victim of denaturalizing theories to intend it otherwise than as a friendly warning to women of intellectual power. For such a view reverses nature's order. Life sleeps in minerals, dreams in vegetables, wakes in animals, and speaks in man. If it be a misfortune to a woman to have unusual reasoning powers, then it is better to dream than wake; then a tadpole is better off than a thinker, and a trilobite outranks both in the scale of being and of blessedness. All such utterances are bowlders in the rushing stream of thought; relics of that reign of force which hastens to be gone; fossils that will be pointed at with incredulity by the manhood of the Gospel Age now at our doors.

If they would be consistent, all ministers who accept the evolution theory—and a majority of them seem to have done so—must admit that not only was woman made out of better material than man (which they doubtless will cheerfully grant!), but that, coming last in the order of creation, she stands highest of all.

In life's prime and pride men like to quote "Adam was first formed, then Eve," but at the grave they are ready to declare that "man, born of woman, is of few days and full of trouble."

The whole subjection theory grows out of the one-sided interpretation of the Bible by men. God declares a fact that man in his lapsed estate will rule over woman; but God does not speak with approbation of this act, and the whole tenor of the Scriptures is to show that in Christ the world is to be restored to the original intent of its creation when "there shall be no more curse." Pushed to its logical conclusion, this literal theory of subjection proves too much, as it is illustrated by the passage, 1 Pet. v. 5: "Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility." Eph. v. 21: "Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God."

A stream cannot rise higher than its source, and it is rank disloyalty to the race when any man asserts that the possession of unusual reasoning powers is a misfortune to a woman. As late as 1874, in the Sarah Smiley case, the Brooklyn Presbytery reaffirmed in the following language a decision of the General Assembly dating back to 1837: "This Presbytery having been informed that a woman has preached in one of our churches,⁶ on Sabbath, at a regular service, therefore, resolved: that the Presbytery feel constrained to enjoin upon our churches strict regard to the following deliverance of the General Assembly: 'meeting of pious women by themselves, for conversation and prayer,' we entirely approve. But let not the inspired prohibition of the great Apostle, as found in his Epistles to the Corinthians and to Timothy, be violated. To teach and to exhort, or to lead in prayer in public and promiscuous assemblies is clearly forbidden to women in the holy oracles."

A general and deep-seated peculiarity of human nature is illustrated in the foregoing "deliverance." The position, in fact (never formulated, of course, by any ministerial association, and probably not realized by our honored brethren), is just this: Christian women are at liberty to work in any way that does not interfere with ecclesiastical prerogative, and does help to build up the interests of the church, financially or spiritually. It is a whimsical fact that men seem comparatively willing that women should enter any profession except their own. The lawyer is

⁶Rev. Dr. T. L. Cuyler's. [Au.]

willing that they should be doctors, and the doctor thinks they may plead at the bar if they desire to do so, but each prefers to keep them out of his own professional garden-plot. This is true of ministers with added emphasis, for here we have the pride of sex plus the pride of sacerdotalism. "Does a woman think to rank with *me*?" That is the first question, and the second is like unto it as to its animus: "Does a woman think she has a right to stand with *me* in the most sacred of all callings?" But if the purest should be called to purest ministries, then women, by men's own showing, outrank them in actual fitness for the pulpit, and the fact is that woman's holiness and wholesomeness of life, her clean hands and pure heart, specially authorize her to be a minister of God. So much for the negative side. Now for the positive. . . .

II. THE SPIRIT GIVETH LIFE

. . . "We want the earth," is the world-old motto of men. They have had their desire, and we behold the white male dynasty reigning undisputed until our own day; lording it over every heritage, and constituting the only unquestioned "apostolic succession." Only one thing can end the dire enchantment we are under, and that is to know the truth, for truth alone makes free. And the truth of God, a thousand times repeated by the voice of history, science, and every-day experience, resounds louder to-day than in all preceding ages: "It is not good for man to be alone!" Suppose it be admitted that the dual-natured founder of Christianity, in whose character the force that smote the money-changers of the temple was commingled with the love that yearned to gather Jerusalem as a hen gathers "her chickens under her wings," chose as his apostles the only ones who in that barbarous age would be tolerated in preaching it. Be it remembered that Protestantism recognizes the apostles as having had no successors. Hence, any argument built on man's primacy as related to them and the manner of their choosing falls to the ground. It is curious, considering certain exegetical literalism, that their method of choosing by lot should not have been insisted upon as a part of the divine order!

In the revolt from Roman license, the clergy

early declared woman a delusion and a snare, banished her from the company of men who aspired to holiness, and, by introducing the denaturalizing heresy of a celibate clergy, made it impossible for the doctrine of God's eternal fatherhood to be so understood by the preacher that it should become vital in the hearer's heart. It is *men* who have defrauded manhood and womanhood, in the persons of priest and monk and nun, of the right to the sanctities of home; men who have invented hierarchies, enthroned a fisherman as God's vice-regent, lighted inquisitorial fires, and made the Prince of peace a mighty man of war. It is men who have taken the simple, loving, tender Gospel of the New Testament, so suited to be the proclamation of a woman's lips, and translated it in terms of sacerdotalism, dogma, and martyrdom. It is men who have given us the dead letter rather than the living Gospel. The mother-heart of God will never be known to the world until translated into terms of speech by mother-hearted women. Law and love will never balance in the realm of grace until a woman's hand shall hold the scales.

Men preach a creed; women will declare a life. Men deal in formulas, women in facts. Men have always tithed mint and rue and cummin in their exegesis and their ecclesiasticism, while the world's heart has cried out for compassion, forgiveness, and sympathy. Men's preaching has left heads committed to a catechism, and left hearts hard as nether millstones. The Greek bishop who said, "My creed is faultless, with my life you have nothing to do," condensed into a sentence two thousand years of priestly dogma. Men reason in the abstract, women in the concrete. A syllogism symbolizes one, a rule of life the other. In saying this I wish distinctly to disclaim any attack upon the clergy, any slighting allusion to the highest and holiest of callings; I am speaking only of the intolerant sacerdotal element that has handicapped the church from the earliest ages even until now, and which has been more severely criticised by the best element in the church than by any words that I have penned.

Religion is an affair of the heart. The world is hungry for the comfort of Christ's Gospel, and thirsty for its every-day beatitudes of that holiness which alone constitutes happiness. Men

have lost faith in themselves and each other. Boodlerism and "corners" on the market, greed of gain, passion for power, desire for drink, impurity of life, the complicity of the church, Protestant as well as Papal, with the liquor traffic, the preference of a partisan to a conscientious ballot, have combined to make the men of this generation faithless toward one another. The masses of the people have forsaken God's house, and solace themselves in the saloons or with the Sunday newspaper. But the masses will go to hear women when they speak, and every woman who leads a life of week-day holiness, and has the Gospel in her looks, however plain her face and dress may be, has round her head the sweet Madonna's halo, in the eyes of every man who sees her, and she speaks to him with the sacred cadence of his own mother's voice. The devil knew what he was doing when he exhausted sophistry to keep woman down and silent. He knew that "the only consecrated place on earth is where God's Spirit is," and that a Christian woman's heart enshrines that holy Guest more surely than many a "consecrated" pulpit.

Men have been preaching well-nigh two thousand years, and the large majority of the converts have been women. Suppose now that women should share the preaching power, might it not be reasonably expected that a majority of the converts under their administration would be men? Indeed, how else are the latter to have a fair chance at the Gospel? The question is asked in all seriousness, and if its practical answer shall be the equipping of women for the pulpit, it may be reasonably claimed that men's hopes of heaven will be immeasurably increased. Hence, one who urges the taking-off of the arbitrary ruling which now excludes woman from a choice portion of her kingdom may well claim to have manifested especial considerateness toward the interests of men.

The entrance of woman upon the ministerial vocation will give to humanity just twice the probability of strengthening and comforting speech, for women have at least as much sympathy, reverence, and spirituality as men, and they have at least equal felicity of manner and of utterance. Why, then, should the pulpit be shorn of half its power?

To the exegesis of the cloister we oppose that

of common life. To the Orientalism that is passing off the stage, we oppose modern Christianity. In our day, the ministers of a great church⁷ have struck the word "obey" out of the marriage service, have made women eligible to nearly every rank except the ecclesiastic, and are withheld from raising her to the ministerial office only by the influence of a few leaders, who are insecurely seated on the safety-valve of that mighty engine, Progress. In our day, all churches, except the hierarchical Presbyterian, Episcopal, and Roman Catholic, have made women eligible as members of their councils, leaders in their Sunday-school systems, in several cases have set them apart to the ministry, and in almost all have opened their pulpits to them; even the slow-moving Presbyterian having done this quite generally in later years, and the Episcopal, in several instances, granting women "where to stand" in its chapels, outside the charmed arc of its chancel-rail. . . .

"Behold, I make all things new;" "the letter killeth, the spirit giveth life." These are his words, who spake not as man speaketh; and how the letter killeth to-day, let the sectarianism, the sacerdotalism, and the woman-silencing of the church bear witness. The time has come when those men in high places, "dressed in a little brief authority" within the church of Christ, who seek to shut women out of the pastorate, cannot do so with impunity. To-day they are taking on themselves a responsibility in the presence of which they ought to tremble. To an earnest, intelligent, and devout element among their brethren they seem to be absolutely frustrating the grace of God. They cannot fail to see how many ministers neither draw men to the Gospel feast, nor go out into the highways and hedges seeking them. They cannot fail to see that, although the novelty of women's speaking has worn off, the people rally to hear them as to hear no others, save the most celebrated men of the pulpit and platform; and that especially is it true that "the common people hear them gladly." The plea, urged by some theologians with all the cogency of physiological illustration, that woman is born to one vocation, and one alone, is negated by her mag-

⁷The Methodist Episcopal, with two millions of members. [Au.]

nificent success as a teacher, a philanthropist, and a physician, by which means she takes the part of foster-mother to myriads of children orphaned or worse than motherless. Their fear that incompetent women may become pastors and preachers should be put to flight by the survival of the church, in spite of centuries of the grossest incompetency in mind and profligacy in life, of men set apart by the laying-on of hands. Their anxiety lest too many women should crowd in is met by the method of choosing a pastor, in which both clergy and people must unite to attest the fitness and acceptability of every candidate.

Formerly the voices of women were held to render them incapable of public speech, but it has been discovered that what these voices lack in sonorosity they supply in clearness, and when women singers outrank all others, and women lecturers are speaking daily to assemblies numbering from one to ten thousand, this objection vanishes.⁸ Lack of special preparation is but a temporary barrier. When we see Agnata Ramsay, an English lady but twenty years old, carrying off the Greek prize from the students of Cambridge University, Pundita Ramabai mastering Sanskrit and four other languages, and Toru Dutt, another high-caste Hindu, writing choice verses in French and English before she was twenty-one; when we study the consensus of opinion from presidents of universities as to the equality and even the precedence of the girls in scholarship, we see how flimsy is this argument.

But some men say it will disrupt the home. As well might they talk of driving back the tides of the sea. The mother-heart will never change. Woman enters the arena of literature, art, business, what you will, becomes a teacher, a physi-

⁸It is probably no more "natural" to women to have feeble voices than it is for them to have long hair. The Greek priests of the East, not being allowed to cut their hair, wear it braided in long cues, even as our forefathers wore theirs. "Nature" has been saddled with the disabilities of women to an extent that must make the thoughtful ones among them smile. The truth is clearly enough proved from the analogies of Creation's lower orders that this gracious and impartial dame has given woman but a single disability, viz: she can never be a father; and this she has offset by man's single disability, he can never be a mother. Ignorance, prejudice, and tyranny have put upon her all the rest, and these are wearing off with encouraging rapidity. [Au.]

cian, a philanthropist, but she is a woman first of all, and cannot deny herself. In all these great vocations she has still been "true to the kindred points of heaven and home;" and everybody knows that, beyond almost any other, the minister is one who lives at home. The firesides of the people are his week-day sanctuary, the pulpit is near his own door, and its publicity is so guarded by the people's reverence and sympathy as to make it of all others the place least inharmonious with woman's character and work.

When will blind eyes be opened to see the immeasurable losses that the church sustains by not claiming for her altars these loyal, earnest-hearted daughters, who, rather than stand in an equivocal relation to her polity, are going into other lines of work or taking their commission from the evangelistic department of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union? Or are they willing that woman should go to the lowly and forgotten, but not to the affluent and powerful? Are they willing that women should baptize and administer the sacrament in the zenanas of India, but not at the elegant altars of Christendom? Are they aware that thousands of services are held each Sabbath by white-ribbon women, to whom reformed men and their wives have said: "We will come if you will speak. We don't go to

church, because they have rented pews, and because we cannot dress well enough; but we'll come to hear you"? Have they observed that W.C.T.U. halls, reading-rooms, and tabernacles for the people are being daily multiplied, in which the poor have the Gospel preached to them? Do they know that the World's W.C.T.U., with Margaret Bright Lucas, of England, at its head, is steadily wending its way around the globe, and helping women to their rightful recognition as participants in public worship and as heralds of the Gospel? . . .

III. THE EARTH-BORN ARGUMENT

. . . The average preacher almost never mentions women. "A man must do so and so;" "when a young man starts out in life his aim must be thus and thus;" "a youth should trust his father's God"—this method of discourse is familiar to women's ears as the Doxology or Benediction. But when women themselves speak, they represent not world-force so much as home-force; the home includes both man and woman, youth and maiden, boy and girl; hence it is natural to women to make all feel themselves included in the motherly utterance that not only remembers but recognizes all.

From *Woman and Temperance*

Chapter XXXV

How to Organize a W.C.T.U. How Ought a Local W.C.T.U. to Conduct a Public Meeting?

I. THE PRELIMINARIES

These are of two kinds: First, Notices to the public. Second, Opening exercises.

Your notices should be printed in all the local papers at least one week beforehand, and sent to each pulpit on the Sabbath previous. The following form is recommended:

To the ladies of ——— :

The National W.C.T.U. has twenty-five auxiliaries, and is the largest and most influential society ever composed and conducted exclusively by women. It has nearly three thousand local auxiliaries and hundreds of juvenile organizations. It is a lineal descendant of the great temperance crusade of 1873-4, and is a union of women from all denominations, for the purpose of educating the young, forming a better public sentiment, reforming the drinking classes, transforming by the power of Divine grace those who are enslaved by alcohol, and removing the dram-shop from our streets by law.

Mrs. _____ of _____, duly authorized by _____ W.C.T.U. to undertake this work, will speak in _____ on _____ at _____ o'clock on the history, aims, and methods of this society. All ladies are earnestly requested to attend. The presence of pastors is respectfully invited.

On the same slip put the following:

ATTENTION, BOYS AND GIRLS!

You have a friend who would like very much to meet and talk with you at _____ on _____ at _____ o'clock. She will show you some interesting experiments, blackboard exercises and charts. Please come, and we will try to organize a Band of Hope. Yours for clear heads and true hearts.

Mrs. _____

This should be sent to Sunday-schools and public schools as well as to pulpit and press. It is a false—let us rather say an ignorant—delicacy which hesitates to give full information through all legitimate channels, of the time, place, and object of any attempt to build up Christ's kingdom by benefiting the race for which he died.

But our workers have gone hundreds of miles to form a local union only to find a single stray line in the corner of one newspaper as the only notice given, or a brief mention at a rainy Sunday morning service their only herald. Not thus does the enemy permit his opportunities to go by default.

Second, The opening exercises. Let these be informal, but full of earnestness. Many a time have I seen the devotional spirit frozen out by the mechanical air of the leader, added to the slow process of hunting up and distributing hymn books, waiting for the organ key to be sent for; persuading some reluctant musician to come forward, and so on to the doleful climax of failure. Suppose you just omit all that—come forward at once with some pleasant allusion to a familiar hymn as "one of the special favorites in our work," strike up yourself, or have some one ready to do so without loss of time. As to Scriptural selections, I could spend a whole day exhibiting the choice cabinet of jewels in delightful variety and marvelous adaptation to our needs, which the past years of study have disclosed. As I listen to our women, East and West, in local meetings and conventions, I am impressed by

none of their beautiful gifts so much as that they are indeed workmen who need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of God. From Mrs. Leavitt of Cincinnati, with her "Saloon Keeper's" Psalm (the tenth), to Mrs. Carhart of Iowa, reading Miriam's Song at the jubilee in June; whether it be Sanballat, Gideon's Band, Deborah and Barak, Queen Esther, Joel (second chapter), or the Prodigal Son, and Good Samaritan, our workers have proved themselves mighty in the Scriptures ever since those wondrous school days when they learned to read their Bibles in the grog-shops of the land. Their "Crusade Psalm" (the 146th) is unrivaled for expository use. It is capable of being wrought into a delightful evening's "Bible Reading," but this must be greatly abridged in your opening exercises. Suppose you study its ten verses for the purpose of finding our bugle call, our key word, exhortation, basis, complete plan of work, prophecy, and philosophy, and song of jubilee—for all of these and vastly more are there!

If a pastor is present ask him to offer prayer.

II. THE ORGANIZATION

And now, with preliminaries arranged, the spirit of praise and prayer evoked, a secretary *pro tem.* appointed to keep the important record of "first things," and a group of women gathered around you in home or church parlor, what are you to say and do that they shall love our cause and work with us?

First, Don't take too much for granted. Don't think because these are women of general intelligence and Christian experience they are also clear in their respective minds as to the history, mystery, and methods of the W.C.T.U. On that subject you had better take it for granted they are outside barbarians. At least I was of this description when the crusade of 1874 struck the classic suburb of Evanston. Fancy the ignorance of one who had never, that she knew of, seen a saloon and yet had lived for nearly twenty years within a few miles of Chicago. Imagine the illiteracy that had never once laid eyes upon a temperance paper nor heard the name of J. N. Stearns. Conceive of the crudity that led me in my sober senses to make a bee line to Boston, that I might

learn of Dr. Dio Lewis the whole duty of a W.C.T.U. woman, and for the same reason to Portland that I might sit at the feet of Neal Dow.

But all this is hardly more absurd than the revelation of failure (after I thought myself a veteran in our ranks) made to me the most unwittingly by a dear old lady down in Delaware, who, after I had talked an hour by the clock on the "Aims and Methods of the W.C.T.U." said in a droll soliloquy, as she scrawled her name upon my membership card: "I'm sure I don't know what she wants us to do, but I reckon it's a good deal in temperance work as it is in goin' to prayer meetin' of a dark night—I can't see but a step to a time, but when I've taken one step, why I'm there and the lantern's there too, and we just go along to the next. So if the Lord has got temperance work for me to do he'll give me light to do it by." Learn then, dear temperance workers, that in this day of specialists you are safe in assuming that your group of good women have minds as vacant as a thimble, and about as much expanded on the scope and working and laws of the W.C.T.U. Their interest is general, not specific; they have come on purpose to find out what it is your business (not theirs) to know. Therefore, take nothing for granted save that each of them is fitted out with brain and heart and conscience on which you are to act by knowledge, sympathy, conviction.

Second, Don't assume the role of Sir Oracle. Teach without seeming to do so. Carefully skip around all such "hard words" as "Take notice," "I call your attention," "Do you understand?" and on no account conclude a sentence with that irritating grammatical nondescript "See?" Put yourself in the attitude of a learner along with the rest. Thus your style will be suggestive and winsome rather than authoritative and disagreeable. I shall never forget Bishop Warren's opening words to a room full of young people in a southern school. He stood before them with a face wise, kindly, and benignant, and gently called them "Fellow students."

Third, Don't despise the day of small things. You have no reason to be discouraged because your audience is small. I have organized seventy women into a weak society and seven into a strong one. Well do I recall a winter afternoon in 1870, when, complying with an invitation previ-

ously given by my first Bible class teacher (of auld lang syne), Mrs. Governor Beveridge, as we call her now, half a score women of Evanston went to a missionary meeting in that lady's parlor. Its object was to organize a Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, and though I had traveled in several Oriental countries, and as a tourist seen something of evangelistic work there, I found myself rudimentary in knowledge beside one who had made the subject a specialty and brought Mrs. Willing's thoroughness of grasp to the theme of woman's martyrology in lands unsunned by Christ. Less than a dozen names were that day enrolled to form our local auxiliary. A dozen years have passed, and through the influence—direct and indirect—of this society, nearly forty young people have gone out from Evanston to the foreign field, to say nothing of thousands of dollars gathered and dispensed through its treasury.

Fourth, Don't fail thoroughly to premeditate your "impromptus." The Holy Spirit seems better pleased to inspire the process of reflection and composition than to atone for what Miss Ophelia called "shiftlessness," by an eleventh hour inspiration. We want no scattering fire in our public utterances, but the sober second thought of your brightest and most studious hours. As a general outline speech I would offer the following:

1. Very brief allusion to the origin and progress of temperance movements, with earnest acknowledgment of what has been done by the Church, the Washingtonian movement, Good Templars, Catholic Total Abstinence Society, etc.
2. Brief and pictorial (not abstract) account of the Woman's Crusade.
3. Organization as its sequel—origin of National W.C.T.U., at Chautauqua in 1874.
4. Growth of the Society in the United States, in Canada, England, and elsewhere, evolution of its work, number and variety of its departments; notwithstanding this general uniformity, the National like a photograph of imperial size; the State a cabinet, the local a *carte de visite*.
5. Why we have superintendents instead of committees to insure individual responsi-

bility. Illustrate by blackboard with our departments written out.

6. Reasons why women should join us. I have often given these in anecdotal form, telling just what women, old and young, grave and gay, had said to me about the convictions resulting from their own observation and experience which had led them into temperance work.
7. Appeal from considerations embodied in our motto 1. For God; 2. For home; 3. For native land.

This address, mixed with the Word of God and prayer, both in its preparation and recital, should be followed by a humble petition for His blessing.

Fifth, Don't fail to suit the action to the word. Ask for a motion to organize, stating it in due form and requesting any lady who has the matter at heart to make it. Get a second to the motion and make a few incidental remarks about the importance of that etiquette of assemblies which we call parliamentary usage. Recommend them to buy Roberts' Rules of Order, and learn a little of it at each meeting. When it comes to a vote after the parliamentary interval for remarks, mention that you are tired of your own voice and anxious to hear theirs, adding in your clearest tones, "All in favor of that motion will please to say aye," and let your final word be in the most decided sense a rising circumflex. You will be surprised to see the readiness with which you can thus call out the voices of the timid, partly out of good nature and partly because their musical perceptions lead them to put a climax to your incomplete inflection by their own. Do not go through the dumb show of "the lifted hand," nor the imbecility of "manifest it by the usual sign" (when there are several signs), but call out that most inspiring response, the human voice divine. Remember too, that thus you educate women out of the silence which has stifled their beautiful gifts so long. Next follows the form of constitution for local auxiliaries, which should be gone over rapidly, reading only the important points, and remarking that this is the form usually adopted and subject to revision at their regular meetings. (Mrs. Buell, our National Corresponding Secre-

tary, at 53 Bible House, New York, furnishes the best.) After a *viva voce* vote on this, read with emphasis our pledge. It includes total abstinence from wine, beer, and cider as a beverage. Explain about the annual membership fee of fifty cents; exhibit *Our Union-Signal*, stating price, and send out ladies previously appointed to solicit memberships and subscribers.

This moment is the crucial test. To it everything has pointed—failing to secure its objects you will fail indeed. But just at this point we are too often unpardonably heedless. What would be said of the angler whose awkwardness at the critical moment should frighten away the fish he was about to impale? Or the farmer who should forget his scythe when going to the hay-field? But how often have we seen such a stale, flat, and unprofitable half hour succeed the aforementioned address, that it seemed as though a premium was put upon a general stampede of the auditors. "Has any one a pencil to take names?" is a question equally pregnant and imbecile, while vandal hands have made a raid upon stray hymn-books, and their fly-leaves have been ruthlessly confiscated to take the place of the enrolling tablets, conspicuous for their absence. The best way is for the leader of the meeting to keep up a running fire of pleasant explanation or of reply to questions invited by her from the pews. Among the questions which her clear-cut preliminary statements should anticipate are: "Must we pay the membership fee when we give our names?" (No, not unless it is convenient.) "Can young ladies join?" (Most gladly.) "Does this mean all kinds of cider?" (It does.) "Then I cannot join." Well, you can at least attend the regular meetings of the union to follow this, in which the cider leaflets will be discussed, and become an associate if not a regular member (only the latter are eligible to office). It should be explicitly stated that by our new basis of organization, adopted at Washington, we are entitled in the National Convention (beside our State officers) to one delegate for each five hundred members, and as we desire for a large representation, we are anxious to enroll the names of all women who are sufficiently intelligent and devoted friends of temperance to take the pledge and pay the fee, even though they are unable to do any work or to meet with us reg-

ularly. The use to be made of the fee should be distinctly stated. Draw a fifty-cent coin on the blackboard—or make a drawing of the same—and have it hung up. Divide it into equal parts, representing that one of these remains to be used in the local work, the other going to the State treasury to extend the organization, save that one-fifth of it is taken out and sent to the National W.C.T.U. to carry on its work. Explain that the National has never had a salaried officer until within three years, and now but pays the current expenses of its Corresponding Secretary at the headquarters, 53 Bible House. Bring forward *Our Union-Signal* and solicit subscribers to the national organ; speak of the Hayes memorial portrait and exhibit the ten cent a share cards by which children so readily raise the five dollars requisite to secure a copy of the same. Give references to the National Temperance Publishing House, 58 Reade Street, New York, and D. C. Cook, Chicago, by no means forgetting our own literature department, conducted by Miss Colman, at 76 Bible House, New York. Distribute the Annual Leaflet of the National W.C.T.U., which has all needed information as to who and where are our superintendents of departments. If there is a piece of fine music prepared, or if you have an interesting speaker present besides yourself, it will be well to mention that attraction as a counter-inducement to those inclined to go.

But all these exercises, from your first bow to your closing *Benedicite*, must be marked *staccato*, and must be made brief and crisp, or your group of guests (for such, do not forget, they are) will file out and hie itself away. The change from one exercise to another, if effected with sufficient ingenuity to avoid jumbling, will help to hold your audience, but most will depend upon your compliance with the suggestion—

Sixth, Don't fail to keep your wit, wisdom, and patience well to the front. Somebody will come to you then and there will be *sotto voce* gossip, with legends and histories of societies previously organized and now fossiliferous, or the prayer-meeting killer of the neighborhood will stray in and begin his sanguinary work upon your feeble banking of a society; or Miss Con-tretemps, of the contrary part, will state her objections to the pledge, or Madame Pharisee

feel called upon to explain that she never was cursed with this demon in her own home and therefore can not, etc., etc., drowsily oblivious of the statement you—should—have made, that ninety per cent. of our members share the exemption which she, with small good taste, parades. Now is the time to prove what manner of spirit you are of. Does your courage rise with danger? Are you fertile in resource? You are being tested now as they test steam engine boilers. The force is applied—the tension noted—and the strong, well wrought metal holds its own, but the thin, flaw-eaten, gives way in its weakest part. Are you master of the situation? “He that ruleth his spirit is better than he who taketh a city.” Now is your chance for *mastery*. Many of these annoyances may be prevented by circulating the question papers before the meeting opens and asking that any query, comment, or criticism be written and placed in the question-box, to be circulated before the meeting is closed. This gathering up of questions, as well as the circulation of the various documents I have mentioned, should be attended to by the Secretary *pro tem.*—to be appointed at the opening of the meeting.

Seventh, Don't be precipitate in choice of standard bearers. In this choice will be involved the success or failure of your entire movement. You are trying to launch a life-boat, but if the captain be near-sighted and the mate a blunderer, your craft will swamp before it gets beyond the breakers. The worst of it is that you are at the mercy of the raw hands who must select these officers from their own newly-enlisted crew. In this choice the element of deliberation is important, for while you will be often urged to select the officers then and there, “for fear we cannot get the women together again,” my experience is that in the long run we get better results by a careful canvass of the pros and cons. Too often when we try to finish up the business of electing at first meeting, we discover, later on, that the finish was an extinguisher. From a recent confidential letter I make this extract:

A W.C.T.U. was recently organized in our village and there isn't a quarrel in the neighborhood that was not represented on our board of officers.

As you will naturally conclude, I do not expect the liquor traffic in that locality need stand in special fear of said society. This was away down east, but a remark made to me on the frontier has in it equal food for reflection. It was from a new worker, and was so simply said, and with so much of large-eyed wonder "for the cause," that if not so tragic I would have deemed it vastly comical: "Why, do you know, that until our new President was elected I did not know that anybody could be an officer at all and yet be such a poor one!"

Alas for the applications of this utterance, which all of us have seen! Now, while we cannot hope to avoid these calamities in the present partially developed condition of woman's work; while it is doubtless true that girls now acquiring the systematic training of our public schools and colleges will make the more efficient officers of our future work, it is nevertheless possible for us to secure, in a majority of instances, excellent services from the good women of the present. But here, as always, the preliminary part of the recipe is: "First catch your hare," and I am confident a choice specimen will be caught by appointing (by previous consultation) such a committee on nomination as will represent the different churches and social circles, and adjourning to a day not distant when said committee shall report. It should also include, among its

duties, the preparation of a plan of work for the society, and the organizer should furnish it with a model from our State or National minutes, with a leaflet of the National containing our list of superintendents of departments. In appointing the list of Vice-Presidents, insist on one from each denomination, including Catholics, Jews, etc., and appoint one "at large" to represent the great and kindly outside fraternity which has this cause at heart. Insist on a Superintendent of Temperance Literature, who shall also be Librarian of your Loan Library and agent for our journalistic organ. Make these Superintendents members of your Executive Committee—which should meet weekly, while the W.C.T.U. meets monthly and has a religious, literary, and business programme. Fix the government of both meetings at five—so that the exceeding deference which causes our good women to lose so much time rather than "act without the prescribed number," may not endanger their results of work. Wear the white ribbon yourself, and urge all to do the same. Close your meeting by singing "Blest be the Tie that Binds."

I have suggested that you follow this meeting at once by another for the children. This is of paramount importance for its own sake; also to conciliate public sentiment and give your new society that *sine qua non* of its existence, to say nothing of its success—something to do.

Alexander Bain

1818–1903

Adams Sherman Hill

1833–1910

Changing the emphasis of instruction in rhetoric from speaking to writing was a curricular reform of some moment in the nineteenth century. By the time James R. Boyd urged “this Radical Change” in his 1846 textbook on rhetorical criticism, the change was already under way. A few composition textbooks had already been published, but even without them, teachers were using the established texts by Campbell, Blair, and Whately for instruction in writing. By midcentury, elocution and composition were taught together in the rhetoric courses of the established colleges in the United States and at the universities in Scotland. Throughout Europe (with the exception of England) and the United States, the function and distribution of schooling were changing, along with the college curriculum.

Why was the development of instruction in composition so pressing? Mass education meant instruction in technical subjects and in the vernacular. Study in the vernacular meant a shift in language instruction toward grammar and modern literature and away from Latin and rhetoric. Then, too, the inclusion of technical studies reduced the curricular space for such traditional subjects as rhetoric. For the newer departments of learning (most of them departments of science), writing was more important than speaking, both as a pedagogical tool and as the practical expression of knowledge.

Rhetoric instruction thus split in two. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, several colleges were offering elocution as a separate course concerned with oratorical persuasion. Early in the twentieth century, many opened separate departments of speech and communication. Composition teachers, meanwhile, sought a rhetoric that focused on writing, that treated the modes of written discourse as extensively as the old rhetoric had treated the types and occasions for speech, and that acknowledged the new scenes of an educated person’s activity—the office and the laboratory—which, unlike the court and the pulpit, required writing more than speech.

The composition textbooks that emerged in the later nineteenth century attempt to apply the available elements of rhetoric—classical and contemporary (that is, belletristic and epistemological)—to writing. Most include a handbook of grammar as the basis for correct and clear composition. All included an analysis of style and usage, emphasizing perspicuity (or economy) and recommending judicious use of images for additional effect. There is some disagreement about the place of invention in rhetoric, though most writers believe that it doesn’t have one. The mental faculties are used to divide, if not to explain, the uses of logic (for reason) and imagery (for imagination). And the modes of discourse are divided into narration, description, exposition, and argumentation, with belletristic versions including poetry.

Genres of written discourse are rarely mentioned. The textbooks do not analyze, for example, the letter, scientific treatise, business report, political diatribe, or journalistic essay. These kinds of writing are presumably subsumed under the category of exposition, at least with respect to their forms. The exclusion of invention from most textbooks may also account for the absence of the genres. Whatever the reasons, the rhetoric of composition deals not with the actual uses and effects of written discourse but only with its most general categories and abstract features, illustrated most frequently by literary selections. Similarly, as historian of rhetoric Michael Halloran has impressively complained, the shift to writing also tended to be a shift from public to private discourse, though it need not have been, given the opportunities, at least in the United States, for public written expression.

The two brief textbook excerpts printed here give a sample of the ways that rhetoric was presented in composition classrooms. Both of these texts were quite popular, and their authors were recognized as leading authorities. Many similar examples could be adduced.

ALEXANDER BAIN

Alexander Bain, a founder of the modern scientific study of psychology, was born in 1818 and educated in Aberdeen, Scotland. He graduated from Marischal College in 1840. From 1841 to 1843, he held the chair of moral philosophy at Marischal. Bain was a close friend of John Stuart Mill and helped Mill with the revision of the latter's *System of Logic* (1843). In 1855, Bain published *The Senses and the Intellect* and in 1859, its companion volume, *The Emotions and the Will*. These books, which treat psychology in relation to physiology, became the chief textbooks in the field for the rest of the nineteenth century. In 1860, Bain was the first occupant of the newly formed chair of English and logic at the University of Aberdeen.

Influenced by the rhetorical theory of fellow Scotsman George Campbell, Bain developed a psychological theory of written composition. He adapts the theories of associationism and physiological psychology to composition in a rigorous and inventive way, identifying the chief mental operations as discrimination, retentiveness, and agreement. These operations are associative—they bring ideas together through contrast, contiguity, and similarity. In *English Composition and Rhetoric* (1866; excerpted here), Bain says that the key figures of speech may be classed in the same categories, suggesting that they are parallel to mental operations. It is a natural function of the mind, that is, to generate metaphor, metonymy, and antithesis. Moreover, the response to such figures is stimulation of the corresponding mental function. The reader, according to Bain, will be more easily instructed or moved when these basic operations are stirred up by the right kinds of images.

All behavior, Bain says in his psychology texts, is based on the desire to gain pleasure or avoid pain. The will seeks out actions that will lead to the desired end. Applied to rhetoric, this idea follows Campbell's similar observation that the speaker or writer should create an image of a future state and set forth a course of action that will, depending on the argument, lead to or away from that future state.

The “motivated sequence” based on Bain’s formulation is a standard feature of speech courses to this day.

Bain’s textbook offers a brief and practical means of applying the latest theory of faculty psychology to effective discourse. The excerpt printed here contains Bain’s succinct remarks on this topic; the rest of his text consists of examples and practical advice. Brief though it is, Bain’s book settles the definitions of the modes of discourse (description, narration, exposition, and persuasion) for future textbooks. Bain is also responsible for the idea that paragraph unity and topic sentences are important elements of writing. Through Bain’s followers in the United States—Adams Sherman Hill, Barrett Wendell, John Genung, and others—these ideas became standard parts of the English composition course.

ADAMS SHERMAN HILL

Adams Sherman Hill earned a B.A. (in 1853) and an LL.B. (in 1855) at Harvard University and pursued a career as a law reporter in New York, Washington, and Chicago before returning to Harvard in 1872 as assistant professor of rhetoric. In 1870, he became Boylston Professor of Rhetoric, a post he held until 1904. He wrote several books on rhetoric, including *The Principles of Rhetoric* (1878, revised extensively in 1895; excerpted here), *Foundations of Rhetoric* (1892), and *Beginnings of Rhetoric and Composition* (1903).

Hill insists, in *The Principles of Rhetoric*, that rhetoric is not a science but an art. It is a means of achieving effectiveness, not investigating effectiveness. Hill, like most other compositionists, rejects invention, arguing that the content of discourse comes from the subject matter and not from rhetoric itself. Rhetoric conveys the results of thought, but it is not itself a form of thought. Hill relies on the modes of discourse—narration, description, and argumentation—and he wishes to focus rhetoric on its proper subject, excluding all that is peripheral. Thus he limits rhetoric to style alone, to the clear and, if possible, forceful communication of ideas. His textbook has two topics only: grammar (which comes first in his pedagogy) and style.

Following Campbell, Hill defines proper usage as that which is reputable, national, and present. In so doing, he rejects grammatical and stylistic prescriptions that rely on logic, etymology, or “classical” standards of propriety and taste. He does not, however, reject prescription itself. Indeed, he presents a conventional prescriptive grammar and usage handbook, but he bases his rules on what he takes to be well-accepted current usage, citing contemporary writers like Benjamin Disraeli, Thomas Macaulay, George Eliot, and Ralph Waldo Emerson. As is often the case with such self-proclaimed descriptivists, most of the citations he takes from these exemplars are “errors”; that is, the arbiters of the reputable and the present are often not national, and they are generally wrong. To his credit, Hill does reject many fallacious arguments about the history and nature of language. He understands the principles of linguistic change—for example, the tendency for slang terms to become part of the reputable vocabulary—and he addresses a practical problem that teachers of rhetoric have yet to solve, namely, the conflict between descriptive linguistics and the need to teach usage.

Hill seems to agree with Bain, who remarks in the preface to his book that the composition teacher must limit his aspirations, because gaining a command of language is the work of a lifetime, only a tiny bit of which overlaps with the composition course. All composition textbooks, then, are accommodations to curricular and pedagogical exigencies, compromises between a rich tradition and the pressing needs of education. Even teachers who objected to the pedagogical form of this compromise were (and still are) constrained by the limits of the composition course. Fred Newton Scott, the insightful and progressive head of the University of Michigan's Department of Rhetoric in the first decades of the twentieth century, complains (in a 1922 essay) about the deadening effects of theme writing and error correcting in courses that use the textbooks discussed here.¹ But aside from encouraging teachers to exercise greater sympathy, Scott offers no new rhetoric that will point another way. The modes of discourse, the principle of paragraph unity, the standards of clarity and force, and the models drawn from literature all persist to our own time as the core elements of the composition textbook.

Selected Bibliography

Alexander Bain's *English Composition and Rhetoric* was originally published in Aberdeen in 1866. Our excerpt is from the second edition, London, 1869. Bain revised the book extensively for an 1888 edition in two volumes. Adams Sherman Hill's *Principles of Rhetoric* was first published in 1878. Our excerpt is from the New York edition of 1891.

James A. Berlin, in *Writing Instruction in Nineteenth-Century American Colleges* (1984), discusses most of the popular textbooks as contributions to rhetorical theory. He examines the influence of classical rhetoric and the recent British rhetorics on composition theories, reviews Emerson's "Romantic" rhetoric, and touches on the incipient theories of Fred Newton Scott. John Michael Wozniak's *English Composition in Eastern Colleges, 1850-1940* (1978) traces the history of college composition, listing and discussing courses, textbooks, and professors, and is an indispensable work for this period. Also indispensable is John Brereton's *The Origins of Composition Studies in the American College, 1875-1925: A Documentary History* (1995), which contains original documents such as curriculum reports, program descriptions, and essays by Hill and many others.

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¹Fred Newton Scott, "English Composition as a Mode of Behavior," *English Journal* 11 (1922): 463-73.

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Alexander Bain

From English Composition and Rhetoric

Preface

Numerous attempts have been made, and are still making, to methodize instruction in English Composition. In these attempts, two distinct efforts are made for the benefit of the pupils; to cultivate in them a copious fund of expression, and to render more delicate their discrimination of good and ill effects.

As regards increasing the pupils’ fund of expression, the English teacher can do comparatively little. The reason is obvious. The command of language is a grand total, resulting from the practice of a life; a small fraction of that total is all that can grow up within the limits of a Course of English Composition.

With respect to the other aim—the discrimination between good and bad in expression, the case is different. Much of the necessary instruction can be condensed into principles, and may be impressed by carefully chosen examples. The teacher is here a trainer, and can impart in a short compass, what, without him, would be acquired

slowly, if at all. It is this, accordingly, that I account his principal vocation.

All the principles and rules of composition that seem to me capable of affording aid or direction in the art, I have endeavoured to bring together, omitting the notice of such technical terms as are of little practical use. The fulfilment of this design has ended in a treatise more closely allied to Campbell’s *Philosophy of Rhetoric*, Blair’s *Lectures*, and Whately’s *Rhetoric*, than to the majority of recent works on English Composition.

I have divided the work into two parts.

Part First is what pertains to Composition in General. Under it the Figures of Speech are discussed. The leading Qualities of Style are next explained, and the conditions that they depend on stated. Under the same part, I have laid down the principles governing the structure of the Sentence and the Paragraph. I attach great importance to these principles.

Part Second comprises what is special to the Five leading Kinds of Composition, namely,

Description, Narration, Exposition, Oratory, and Poetry.

The subject of Description is perhaps the one that most signally attests the utility of Rhetorical precepts. In delineating any complicated object, there is a well defined method; which being attended to, the most ordinary mind may attain success, and being neglected, the greatest genius will fail.

Narrative includes the laws of Historical Composition, and these are dwelt upon with some degree of minuteness.

Exposition belongs to Science, and to all information in the guise of general principles. The methods to be observed in rendering expository style as easy as the subjects will allow, are worthy of a full consideration.

Oratory, or Persuasion, is the original subject of the Rhetorical art, and its rules were highly elaborated in ancient times. It presents great difficulties to the teacher. Besides the wide range of the matters involved in persuasive address, there is a complication with the Art of Proof, or Logic, that could not be relieved, until Logic itself was put on the more comprehensive basis given to it in the system of John Stuart Mill.

Poetry demands a full share of attention, both on its own account, and also as supplementary to the other departments, all which cherish, as a secondary aim, matters of interest to human feeling, while these are a primary aim in poetry.

In conclusion, I may state what I consider the best mode of employing such a work as the present in tuition.

The rules and principles are accompanied with examples; the number of these is still farther increased by the Analyzed Extracts in the Appendix. It is recommended, besides, that, in the course of the pupil's reading, the principles should be applied to point out the merits and demerits of select passages. A reading book may be used for the purpose.

To obtain suitable exercises for practice in writing English, is a prime consideration with the teacher. Many kinds of exercises have been suggested; and there must always be a difference of opinion as to the most suitable, if only on the consideration that what the teacher can do best is

for his pupils best. The composition of Themes involves the burden of finding matter as well as language; and belongs rather to classes of scientific or other instruction, than to a class of English. For an English exercise, the matter should in some way or other be supplied, and the pupil disciplined in giving it expression. I know of no better method than to prescribe passages containing good matter, but in some respects imperfectly worded, to be amended according to the laws and the proprieties of style. Our older writers might be extensively, although not exclusively, drawn upon for this purpose. Another exercise is the conversion of Poetry into Prose. Much value is also attached to Abridging or Summarizing; and this might be coupled with the opposite practice of filling up and expanding brief sketches.

The sustained practice of Rhetorical *parsing*, or the applying of the designations, principles, and rules of Rhetoric, to authors studied, whether in English or in the languages, would eventually form, in the mind of the pupil, an abiding ideal of good composition.

ABERDEEN, March 1866

Rhetoric

Rhetoric discusses the means whereby language, spoken or written, may be rendered effective.

In speaking there are three principal ends,—to inform, to persuade, to please. They correspond to the three departments of the human mind, the Understanding, the Will, and the Feelings. The means being to some extent different for each, they are considered under separate heads.

But as there are various matters pertaining to all modes of address, it is convenient to divide the entire subject into the two following parts.

Part First, which relates to Style generally, embraces the following topics:—I. The *Figures of Speech*, and the consideration of the *Number* and the *Order of Words*. II. The explanation of the various *Attributes* or *Qualities of Style*. III. The *Sentence* and the *Paragraph*.

Part Second treats of the different kinds of Composition.

Those that have for their object to inform the

UNDERSTANDING, fall under three heads—*Description*, *Narration*, and *Exposition*. The means of influencing the WILL are given under one head, *Persuasion*. The employing of language to excite pleasurable FEELINGS, coincides with the most characteristic function of *Poetry*.

The Will can be moved only through the Understanding or through the Feelings. Hence, there are at bottom but two Rhetorical ends.

Style in General

THE FIGURES OF SPEECH

1. *A Figure of Speech is a deviation from the plain and ordinary mode of speaking, with a view to greater effect. When, instead of saying, "that is very strange," we exclaim "how strange!" we use a figure. "Now is the winter of our discontent," is figurative; the word "winter" is diverted from signifying a season of the year, to express a condition of the human feelings.*

The ancient Rhetoricians distinguished between Figures and Tropes. A Figure, says Quintilian, is a *form* of speech differing from the common and ordinary mode of expression; as in the first example given above. A Trope is the conversion of a *word* from its proper signification to another, in order to give force, as in the second example. The distinction is more in appearance than in substance, and has no practical value.

The Figures are classed under a variety of names. The most common are Simile, Metaphor, Allegory, Antithesis or Contrast, Metonymy, Synecdoche, Epigram, Hyperbole, Interrogation, Exclamation, Apostrophe, Climax, Irony.

2. *A classification of the more important Figures may be based on the operations of Intellect, or Understanding, that they have reference to. Now, our intellectual powers are reducible to three simple modes of working.*

The first is spoken of under the names, DISCRIMINATION, or Feeling of Difference, Contrast, Relativity. It means that the mind is affected by change, as in passing from rest to motion, from cold to heat, from light to dark; and that, the greater and the more sudden the change, the

stronger is the effect. The figure, denominated *Antithesis* or *Contrast*, derives its force from this fact.

The second power is called SIMILARITY, or the Feeling of Agreement. This signifies that when *like* objects come under our notice, we are impressed by the circumstance, as when we see the resemblance of a child to its parent. The Figures named *Simile*, *Metaphor*, *Allegory*, are modes of increasing the force of style in this way.

The third power of the Intellect, is RETENTIVENESS, or Acquisition. The ability to retain successive impressions without confusion, and to bring them up afterwards, distinguishes mind; it is a power familiarly known by the name Memory. Now, the chief way that retentiveness or memory works is this:—impressions *occurring together*, become associated together, as sunrise with daylight; and when we are made to think of one, we are reminded of the accompaniments. We cannot think of the sun's rising, without remembering daylight, and the other circumstances that go along with it. Hence, the mental association of things *contiguously* placed, is a prominent fact of the mind; and one of its many consequences is that we often name a thing by some one of its adjuncts; as "the throne" for the sovereign, "gold" for wealth. Such is the nature of the *Metonymy*. . . .

THE PARAGRAPH

1. *The division of discourse next higher than the sentence is the Paragraph; which is a collection of sentences with unity of purpose.*

Like every division of discourse, a paragraph handles and exhausts a distinct topic; between the paragraphs, there is a greater break than between the sentences.

2. *There are certain principles that govern the structure of the paragraph, for all kinds of composition.*

Although each kind of composition has its own special laws, there are conditions essential to the effect of any succession of statements directed to a given purpose.

3. I. *The first requisite of the Paragraph is, that the bearing of each sentence upon what precedes shall be explicit and unmistakeable.*

Ambiguity of reference may arise within the sentence, but is still more likely to occur in a succession of sentences.

(a). *One condition of explicit reference is the employment of the proper Conjunctions.*

Conjunctions connect sentences as well as clauses. Those employed for the purpose are of the *coordinating class*. The others (*subordinating*) are used to relate a subordinate clause to a principal in the same sentence. . . .

19. III. *The opening sentence, unless so constructed as to be obviously preparatory, is expected to indicate with prominence the subject of the Paragraph.*

A paragraph describing the constituents of the British Government may begin thus:—“*The Government of Britain, called a mixed government, and sometimes a limited monarchy, is formed by a combination of the three regular species of government.*”

The two following sentences are the opening of Graham’s celebrated paper on Dialysis. “*The property of volatility, possessed in various degrees by so many substances, affords invaluable means of separation, as is seen in the ever-recurring process of evaporation and distillation. So similar in character to volatility is the Diffusive power possessed by all liquid substances, that we may fairly reckon upon a class of analogous analytical resources arising from it.*” Now the first sentence is preparatory to the introduction of the main subject (Diffusion) in the second; but as it stands it seems to propound *volatility* as the subject of the paragraph. The author might have said:—“It has been found with regard to the property of volatility, possessed, &c.” This would have given to the sentence its true character of a preparatory illustration. Then the next

sentence would have been:—“Now, so similar in character to volatility is the Diffusive power possessed by all liquid substances,” &c., thus propounding the main subject of the paragraph and of the paper.

20. IV. *A Paragraph should be consecutive, or free from Dislocation.*

Each paragraph has a plan dictated by the nature of the composition. According to such plan, every pertinent statement has a suitable place; in that place, it contributes to the general effect; and, out of that place, it makes confusion.

21. V. *The Paragraph is understood to possess Unity: which implies a definite purpose, and forbids digressions and irrelevant matter.*

This rule belongs to compositions that address the understanding, and is not strictly enforced in Poetry. Thus in Milton:

He scarce had ceas’d, when the superior fiend
Was moving towards the shore; his pond’rous
shield,
Ethereal temper, massy, large and round.
Behind him cast; the broad circumference
Hung on his shoulders like the moon, *whose orb*
Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views
At ev’ning from the top of Fesole,
Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands,
Rivers, or mountains, in her spotty globe.

The lines beginning “*whose orb*” are a pure digression, but as they give an interesting picture, they serve the object of the poet. See also the *Odyssey*, VIII. 521–30.

Adapting an old homely maxim, we may say, Look to the Paragraphs and the Discourse will look to itself; for although a discourse as a whole has a method or plan suited to its nature, yet the confining of each paragraph to a distinct topic avoids some of the worst faults of composition; besides which, he that fully comprehends the method of a paragraph, will also comprehend the method of an entire work.

Adams Sherman Hill

From *The Principles of Rhetoric*

Introduction

For the purposes of this treatise, Rhetoric may be defined as the art of efficient communication by language. It is not one of several arts out of which a choice may be made; it is *the* art to the principles of which, consciously or unconsciously, a good writer or speaker must conform.

It is an *art*, not a science: for it neither observes, nor discovers, nor classifies; but it shows how to convey from one mind to another the results of observation, discovery, or classification; it uses knowledge, not as knowledge, but as power.

Logic simply teaches the right use of reason, and may be practised by the solitary inhabitant of a desert island; but Rhetoric, being the art of *communication* by language, implies the presence, in fact or in imagination, of at least two persons,—the speaker or the writer, and the person spoken to or written to. Aristotle makes the very essence of Rhetoric to lie in the distinct recognition of a hearer. Hence, its rules are not absolute, like those of logic, but relative to the character and circumstances of those addressed; for though truth is one, and correct reasoning must always be correct, the ways of communicating truth are many.

Being the art of communication by *language*, Rhetoric applies to any subject matter that can be treated in words, but has no subject matter peculiar to itself. It does not undertake to furnish a person with something to say; but it does undertake to tell him how best to say that with which he has provided himself. "Style," says Coleridge, "is the art of conveying the meaning appropriately and with perspicuity, whatever that meaning may be"; but some meaning there must be: for, "in order to form a good style, the primary rule and condition is, not to attempt to express ourselves in language before we thoroughly know our own meaning."

Part I of this treatise discusses and illustrates

the general principles which apply to written or spoken discourse of every kind. Part II deals with those principles which apply, exclusively or especially, to Narrative or to Argumentative Composition,—the two kinds of prose writing which seem to require separate treatment.

BOOK II. CHAPTER IV FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

The four requisites of good composition.

Thus we have seen that to the efficiency of communication by language four things are necessary: Grammatical Purity (or Correctness),—the use of those expressions, and those only, which are accepted by the consentient practice of the speakers or writers of the present time who enjoy the best national reputation; Clearness (or Perspicuity),—the quality in style by which the meaning is conveyed to the person addressed, in appropriate words, as few as are compatible with completeness of statement, and arranged as nearly in the order of the thought as the language permits; Force,—the quality that selects the most effective expressions and arranges them in the most effective manner; and Elegance (or Beauty),—conformity to good taste.

While engaged in the act of composition, a writer should think little about Force, and not at all about positive Elegance; but he should constantly aim to make himself intelligible, sure that if he does not succeed in doing this, other merits will be of little avail, and that if he does succeed, other merits will be likely to come unsought. To this end, he should obtain as extensive a command of language as possible.

When discoursing in public, let your choice of words be neither tainted with indelicacy, nor tarnished with affectation. Let your word bear the express image of your thought, and transmit it complete to your hearer's mind. You need then give

yourself very little concern to inquire for the parish register of its nativity. Whether new or old, whether of Saxon or of Grecian parentage, it will perform its duties to your satisfaction, without at all impairing your reputation for purity of speech.¹

He should seek to conform to Swift's definition of a good style: "Proper words in proper places"; and to the rules by which "any one," as Locke says, "may preserve himself from the confines and suspicion of jargon":

My lord, the new way of ideas, and the old way of speaking intelligibly, was always, and ever will be, the same. And if I may take the liberty to declare my sense of it, herein it consists: (1) That a man use no words but such as he makes the signs of certain determined objects of his mind in thinking, which he can make known to another. (2) Next that he use the same word steadily for the sign of the same immediate object of his mind in thinking. (3) That he join those words together in propositions, according to the grammatical rules of that language he speaks in. (4) That he unite those sentences in a coherent discourse.²

The question remains whether, under the general considerations that have been suggested and the rules that have been laid down, any fundamental principle exists.

Spencer's Theory.

Herbert Spencer maintains that such a principle is to be found in what he calls "economy of attention." He thinks that the sufficient reason for choosing the best words for the purpose in hand and arranging them in the best order is, that the reader's attention, being thus subjected to the least possible strain from the machinery of language, can be more closely given to the thought; that, therefore, the best writer is he who, other things being equal, draws least upon a reader's mental powers and sensibilities.

Its insufficiency.

This theory is very well as far as it goes; but it does not lay sufficient stress upon the fact that a reader's

¹J. Q. Adams: Lectures on Rhetoric and Oratory, lect. xxv. p. 159. [Au.]

²Locke: Works, vol. iv. p. 430; Second Reply to the Bishop of Worcester. [Au.]

mental power is not a constant quantity; that, therefore, a writer who increases this power by stimulating mental action arrives, by a different road, at the same destination which is reached by another writer who by a wise economy prevents unnecessary waste. The superiority of the metaphor to the simile, and of a suggestive to an "exhaustive" style, lies, as has been shown, in each case—partly, at least—in the stimulating power of the former; and the same may be said of the superiority of "words that burn" over those of the cold understanding, and of an orderly over a loose arrangement.

The greatest genius of all is, of course, he who economizes a reader's attention at the same time that he stimulates his energies: Dante, for instance, "whose verse holds itself erect by the mere force of the substantive and verb, without the help of a single epithet,"³ but who "knew how to spend as well as to spare. . . . His simile of the doves (*Inferno*, v. 82 *et seq.*), perhaps the most exquisite in all poetry, quite oversteps Rivarol's narrow limit of substantive and verb."⁴

Unity with Variety.

Another principle which underlies all rhetorical rules is (as has been hinted more than once in the foregoing pages) the principle of all art,—the principle of Unity in design conjoined with manifold Variety in methods.

A great author is not one who merely has a *copia verborum*, whether in prose or verse, and can, as it were, turn on at his will any number of splendid phrases and swelling sentences; but he is one who has something to say and knows how to say it. . . . He writes passionately, because he feels keenly; forcibly, because he conceives vividly; he sees too clearly to be vague; he is too serious to be otiose; he can analyze his subject, and therefore he is rich; he embraces it as a whole and in its parts, and therefore he is consistent; he has a firm hold of it, and therefore he is luminous. When his imagination wells up, it overflows in ornament; when his heart is touched, it thrills along his verse. He always has the right word for the right idea, and never a word too much. If he is brief, it is because few words suffice; if he is lavish

³Rivarol, quoted by J. R. Lowell: Among my Books (Second Series), p. 38. [Au.]

⁴Lowell: *Ibid.*, p. 40. [Au.]

of them, still each word has its mark, and aids, not embarrasses, the vigorous march of his elocution.⁵

Not that a writer should aim to be the “perfectly endowed man” of whom Herbert Spencer⁶ dreams. “To be specific in style,” says Spencer, “is to be poor in speech”; but to be in no sense and in no degree “specific in style” is to be “faultily faultless,” to be devoid of that individuality which is at once the spring and the charm of genius. Emerson teaches a sounder doctrine in giving the “essential caution to young writers that they shall not in their discourse leave out the one thing which the discourse was written to say,” but shall each “obey” his “native bias.” “To each his own method, style, wit, eloquence.”⁷

In each rank of fruits, as in each rank of masters, one is endowed with one virtue, and another with another; their glory is their dissimilarity, and they who propose to themselves in the training of an artist that he should unite the coloring of Tintoret, the finish of Albert Durer, and the tenderness of Correggio, are no wiser than a horticulturist would be, who made it the object of his labor to produce a

⁵J. H. Newman: Lectures on University Subjects, p. 62.

[Au.]

⁶Philosophy of Style. [Au.]

⁷Letters and Social Aims, pp. 274–77; Greatness. [Au.]

fruit which should unite in itself the lusciousness of the grape, the crispness of the nut, and the fragrance of the pine.⁸

Shakespeare most nearly approaches Spencer’s ideal, because he speaks through many voices; but even in him, when he ceases to be Iago or Juliet, “a specific style” can be traced. The fact, however, that his individuality so often eludes discovery renders him to many persons a book rather than a man.

The Unity which every writer should seek is not the unity of perfection, but is that which comes from the conception of a discourse as a whole, and from the harmonious arrangement of the parts in conformity with that conception: the only Variety which can be of avail is that which naturally presents itself. A composition should be “a body, not a mere collection of members,”⁹ but it should be a *living* body. Its life must come, partly from the natural qualities of the writer, and partly from his acquired resources, whether of matter or of language—resources which it is not the province of Rhetoric to supply.

⁸Ruskin: Modern Painters, vol. iii. part iv. p. 43 (American Edition). [Au.]

⁹Quintilian: Inst. Orator, vii. x. xvii. [Au.]

Herbert Spencer

1820–1903

Herbert Spencer was born in Derby, England. Educated at home by his father, a schoolteacher of liberal ideas and a scientific bent, and later briefly by his uncle, Spencer was mainly self-educated, focusing his study on engineering and mathematics. Abandoning plans to attend a university, he worked on and off for ten years as a railroad surveyor and engineer while pursuing his own reading and scientific experimentation. Spencer, a prolific writer, produced technical articles on mathematics and engineering and soon branched out to essays on government and public life. As an editorial writer for the *Economist* from 1848 to 1852, he became friendly with such luminaries as G. H. Lewes, Thomas Huxley, and George Eliot (to whom for a time he considered marriage). During this period, Spencer wrote his first book, the well-received *Social Statics* (1851) and the essay excerpted here, “The Philosophy of Style” (1852). A legacy from his uncle in 1853 freed him from the need to work, and he adopted the life of a private scholar and writer. Despite a collapse in 1855 that left him enervated and able to work only a few hours a day, Spencer produced an enormous number of articles and books on government, economics, education, psychology (*The Principles of Psychology* of 1855, used by William James as a textbook at Harvard), music, biology and other sciences, and, most of all, sociology. *The Study of Sociology* (1873) was a great popular success and was published serially in Britain and the United States. Spencer’s mastery of science, his philosophical orientation to evolution and its implications, and his ability to find those implications in a wide array of current issues made him well known and influential in many spheres. Indeed, during the last twenty-five years of his life, Spencer’s popular reputation as a scientist nearly rivaled Darwin’s. In the United States, Spencer’s influence on science education was quite strong, but he was also invoked in the schools as a champion of poetry and taste.

Spencer’s study of Jean-Baptiste Lamarck’s theory of evolution in 1839 was a turning point: He quickly came to see evolution as the key to all natural and human systems. Regarded as a founder of the discipline of sociology, Spencer believed that the scientific study of society depended upon developing an understanding of nature and society in evolutionary terms. It is Spencer (not Darwin) who coined the phrase *survival of the fittest*, and it is Spencer, too, who was probably the greatest promoter of social Darwinism, the idea that societies as well as species evolve toward greater organization and complexity. The main principle of evolution, for Spencer, is the change over time from homogeneity to heterogeneity—that is, to greater differentiation and individualization—in biology particularly, but in all other systems as well, from physics to art. As systems evolve toward greater complexity, they also gain greater coherence. For example, as organisms evolve, their parts (limbs and organs) become more specialized. The whole organism is less able to survive losing such a part, and of course the part cannot survive on its own. Evolution in society, in Spencer’s analogy, means greater specialization or individualization for each person. But here, too, the specialized individual contributes to and is dependent upon the larger—and now more complex—system. Thus, for Spencer, the developing function of an element in a system coexists with its increasing difference from the system.

In “The Philosophy of Style,” Spencer applies these ideas to literature and composition. His main theoretical tool is the principle of economy. This is not an entirely new idea, of course; it is a linear descendent of the idea of perspicuity so much emphasized by the critics and rhetoricians of the early eighteenth century. Spencer’s analysis of efficiency, however, is indeed new. The words and sentences that convey information require the reader to expend energy, Spencer explains. But just like any vehicle of transmission, language can work efficiently or inefficiently. To the extent that it works inefficiently, language requires additional energy from the reader, energy that would otherwise be used to process the message. Thus inefficient language “fatigues” the reader or otherwise saps the force of the message. As Fred Newton Scott puts it in his introduction to Spencer’s essay, “The value of style is determined by a kind of ledger account in which so much mental energy is credited to idea, so much debited to the bearer of the idea.”¹ Scott argues, however, that this explanation of Spencer oversimplifies his ideas. After all, says Scott, what seems like economy may be mere miserliness and not really effective. To judge style as economical, according to Spencer’s principles, requires an understanding of the organic whole to which it contributes.

Scott’s caution is well taken: The first part of Spencer’s essay adheres to the simplistic view of efficiency, and even Scott condemns some of Spencer’s points as ill-founded or even silly. For example, Spencer argues that the English phrase *a black horse* is more efficient than the French equivalent, *un cheval noir*, because the placement of the noun *cheval* raises in the mind images of horses of many colors or possibly one of the wrong color. This then requires mental energy to repair when the *noir* appears. In English, *black* raises only a generalized idea that is easily applied to *horse* thereafter. Scott points out that habitual use of one or another sequence obviates any such mistakes as Spencer imagines and, besides, that generalized concepts like “horse” don’t have such particulars attached to them. In the latter sections of the essay, however, Spencer shows a sensitive attention to audience and context—precisely what seems to be missing in the earlier chapters—as he deals with efficiency in poetry and examines the functions of art.

Spencer is not at all opposed to artful writing, to rhetorical flourish, or to poetry. He is at pains to claim that *good* poetry is good precisely because it follows the rules of economy in style. He is also modest about the usefulness of his rules. The great writer spontaneously knows how to use language well, says Spencer. Others less great may find the rules helpful for revising their efforts, but not for creating them. Despite Spencer’s own Romantic individualism and love of poetry, his principle of economy in style gave renewed impetus to the form-content split and influenced the growing mechanistic view of composition, particularly in the United States. The period of Spencer’s fame as a scientific sociologist and psychologist coincides with the growth of the rhetorics of professional writing (and what would eventually be technical writing) in the industrial era. And, toward the end of the nineteenth century, the principle of efficiency would be applied to composition teaching in general, emphasizing appeals to the psychological faculties, clarity and correctness, and the plain style.

¹Herbert Spencer, *Philosophy of Style*, ed. Fred N. Scott (1892), p. xix.

Selected Bibliography

Our excerpt of “The Philosophy of Style” is from the 1892 edition, bound as a book, with introduction and notes by Fred Newton Scott. The essay itself was first published in *Westminster Review*, October 1852. Spencer’s major works (none of which concern rhetoric or language, except peripherally) include *Social Statics* (1851), which applies his ideas about evolution to the development of individualism and independence. *Principles of Psychology* (1855) develops further Spencer’s analogy between biological, social, and psychological evolution. Spencer projected a systematic philosophy of evolution that extended to all branches of science. From this project came *First Principles* (1862), *Principles of Biology* (2 vols., 1864–67), *Principles of Sociology* (3 vols., 1876–96), and *Principles of Ethics* (2 vols., 1892–93). *Essays: Scientific, Political, and Speculative* (3 vols., 1891) provides a good sample of Spencer’s views on evolutionary theory in science, politics, and philosophy. See also *An Autobiography* (1904).

A brief introduction to Spencer’s work and its significance is the Twayne series’ *Herbert Spencer* by James G. Kennedy (1978). Thoemmes Press has issued facsimile editions of Spencer’s major works as well as *Herbert Spencer: Contemporary Assessments*, ed. M. W. Taylor (1996), with essays by John Dewey, William James, T. H. Huxley, and others. Marie Secor, in “The Legacy of Nineteenth Century Style Theory” (*Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 12 [1982]; 76–94), traces perspicuity from Campbell to Whately to Spencer and G. H. Lewes (who also attempted a scientific theory of style). Secor criticizes Spencer’s mechanistic language theory and contrasts the scientific view with the more literary one of De Quincey, J. H. Newman, and Walter Pater. A dry but helpful essay contextualizing Spencer is James Zappen’s “Scientific Rhetoric in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries: Herbert Spencer, Thomas H. Huxley, and John Dewey,” in *Textual Dynamics of the Professions*, ed. Charles Bazerman and James Paradis (1991). E. D. Hirsch adopts and applies Spencer’s theories almost uncritically to his own theory of readability in *The Philosophy of Composition* (1977).

From *The Philosophy of Style*

PART I CAUSES OF FORCE IN LANGUAGE WHICH DEPEND UPON ECONOMY OF THE MENTAL ENERGIES

i. The Principle of Economy

1. Commenting on the seeming incongruity between his father’s argumentative powers and his ignorance of formal logic, Tristram Shandy says: —“It was a matter of just wonder with my worthy tutor, and two or three fellows of that learned society, that a man who knew not so much as the names of his tools, should be able to work after that fashion with them.” Sterne’s in-

tended implication that a knowledge of the principles of reasoning neither makes, nor is essential to, a good reasoner, is doubtless true. Thus, too, is it with grammar. As Dr. Latham, condemning the usual school-drill in Lindley Murray, rightly remarks: —“Gross vulgarity is a fault to be prevented; but the proper prevention is to be got from habit—not rules.” Similarly, there can be little question that good composition is far less dependent upon acquaintance with its laws, than upon practice and natural aptitude. A clear head, a quick imagination, and a sensitive ear, will go far towards making all rhetorical precepts needless. He who daily hears and reads well-framed sentences, will naturally more or less tend to use similar ones. And where there exists any mental

Edited by Fred Newton Scott.

idiosyncrasy—where there is a deficient verbal memory, or an inadequate sense of logical dependence, or but little perception of order, or a lack of constructive ingenuity; no amount of instruction will remedy the defect. Nevertheless, *some* practical result may be expected from a familiarity with the principles of style. The endeavour to conform to laws may tell, though slowly. And if in no other way, yet, as facilitating revision, a knowledge of the thing to be achieved—a clear idea of what constitutes a beauty, and what a blemish—cannot fail to be of service.

2. No general theory of expression seems yet to have been enunciated.¹ The maxims contained in works on composition and rhetoric, are presented in an unorganized form. Standing as isolated dogmas—as empirical generalizations, they are neither so clearly apprehended, nor so much respected, as they would be were they deduced from some simple first principle. We are told that “brevity is the soul of wit.” We hear styles condemned as verbose or involved. Blair says that every needless part of a sentence “interrupts the description and clogs the image;” and again, that “long sentences fatigue the reader’s attention.”² It is remarked by Lord Kaimes, that “to give the utmost force to a period, it ought, if possible, to be closed with that word which makes the greatest figure.”³ That parentheses should be avoided and that Saxon words should be used in preference to those of Latin origin, are established precepts. But, however influential the truths thus dogmatically embodied, they would be much more influential if reduced to something like scientific ordination. In this, as in other cases, conviction will be greatly strengthened when we understand the *why*. And we may be sure that a comprehension of the general principle from which the rules of composition result, will not only bring them home to us with greater force, but will discover to us other rules of like origin.

¹That is, in works purporting to be rhetorics. General theories of literary expression had been put forth by Goethe, Schiller, Schlegel, Schopenhauer, Hegel, Vischer, and many other writers on æsthetics. [F.N.S.]

²“Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres,” Lect. xi. [F.N.S.]

³“Elements of Criticism,” Chap. 18, § 2. [F.N.S.]

3. On seeking for some clue to the law underlying these current maxims, we may see shad-owed forth in many of them, the importance of economizing the reader’s or hearer’s attention. To so present ideas that they may be apprehended with the least possible mental effort, is the desideratum towards which most of the rules above quoted point. When we condemn writing that is wordy, or confused, or intricate—when we praise this style as easy, and blame that as fatiguing, we consciously or unconsciously assume this desideratum as our standard of judgment. Regarding language as an apparatus of symbols for the conveyance of thought,⁴ we may say that, as in a mechanical apparatus, the more simple and the better arranged its parts, the greater will be the effect produced. In either case, whatever force is absorbed by the machine is deducted from the result. A reader or listener has at each moment but a limited amount of mental power available. To recognize and interpret the symbols presented to him, requires part of this power; to arrange and combine the images suggested requires a further part; and only that part which remains can be used for realizing the thought conveyed. Hence, the more time and attention it takes to receive and understand each sentence, the less time and attention can be given to the contained idea; and the less vividly will that idea be conceived.

4. How truly language must be regarded as a hindrance to thought, though the necessary instrument of it, we shall clearly perceive on remembering the comparative force with which simple ideas are communicated by signs.⁵ To

⁴See the comment made by Mr. Wright, *infra*, § 13: “The definite product language is more or less isolated from the agency using it, and viewed more in relation to the reader’s than the writer’s mind.” A brief criticism of the general principle will be found in A. S. Hill’s “Rhetoric,” pp. 163, 164. [F.N.S.]

⁵This ingenious paradox rests upon an artificial distinction between language and other modes of expression. Language itself is but a system of verbal signs. What Spencer says is therefore virtually this: “Language is an inferior form of expression for ideas which are more easily expressed by other kinds of signs.” Language in one sense is indeed a “hindrance to the expression of thought,” and properly so; it forces vague and ill-defined thought back upon itself, compelling it to assume the organized form requisite to ordered verbal expression. [F.N.S.]

say, "Leave the room," is less expressive than to point to the door. Placing a finger on the lips is more forcible than whispering, "Do not speak." A beck of the hand is better than, "Come here." No phrase can convey the idea of surprise so vividly as opening the eyes and raising the eyebrows. A shrug of the shoulders would lose much by translation into words. Again, it may be remarked that when oral language is employed, the strongest effects⁶ are produced by interjections, which condense entire sentences into syllables. And in other cases, where custom allows us to express thoughts by single words, as in *Beware*, *Heigho*, *Fudge*, much force would be lost by expanding them into specific propositions. Hence, carrying out the metaphor that language is the vehicle of thought, there seems reason to think that in all cases the friction and inertia of the vehicle deduct from its efficiency; and that in composition, the chief, if not the sole thing to be done, is, to reduce this friction and inertia to the smallest possible amount. Let us then inquire whether economy of the recipient's attention is not the secret of effect, alike in the right choice and collocation of words, in the best arrangement of clauses in a sentence, in the proper order of its principal and subordinate propositions, in the judicious use of simile, metaphor, and other figures of speech, and even in the rhythmical sequence of syllables.

ii. Economy in the Use of Words

5. The greater forcibleness of Saxon English, or rather non-Latin English, first claims our attention. The several special reasons assignable for this may all be reduced to the general reason—economy. The most important of them is early association. A child's vocabulary is almost wholly Saxon. He says, *I have*, not *I possess*—*I wish*, not *I desire*; he does not *reflect*, he *thinks*; he does not beg for *amusement*, but for *play*; he calls things *nice* or *nasty*, not *pleasant* or *disagreeable*. The synonyms which he learns in

⁶"Strongest effects" is vague to the last degree. There may be hundreds of strong effects of all shades of complexity; very obviously not all of them can be produced by interjections. [F.N.S.]

after years, never become so closely, so organically connected with the ideas signified, as do these original words used in childhood; and hence the association remains less strong. But in what does a strong association between a word and an idea differ from a weak one? Simply in the greater ease and rapidity of the suggestive action. It can be in nothing else. Both of two words, if they be strictly synonymous, eventually call up the same image. The expression—It is *acid*, must in the end give rise to the same thought as—It is *sour*; but because the term *acid* was learnt later in life, and has not been so often followed by the thought symbolized, it does not so readily arouse that thought as the term *sour*. If we remember how slowly and with what labour the appropriate ideas follow unfamiliar words in another language, and how increasing familiarity with such words brings greater rapidity and ease of comprehension; and if we consider that the same process must have gone on with the words of our mother tongue from childhood upwards, we shall clearly see that the earliest learnt and oftenest used words, will, other things equal, call up images with less loss of time and energy than their later learnt synonyms.

6. The further superiority possessed by Saxon English in its comparative brevity, obviously comes under the same generalization. If it be an advantage to express an idea in the smallest number of words, then will it be an advantage to express it in the smallest number of syllables. If circuitous phrases and needless expletives distract the attention and diminish the strength of the impression produced, then do surplus articulations do so. A certain effort, though commonly an inappreciable one, must be required to recognize every vowel and consonant. If, as all know, it is tiresome to listen to an indistinct speaker, or read a badly-written manuscript; and if, as we cannot doubt, the fatigue is a cumulative result of the attention needed to catch successive syllables; it follows that attention is in such cases absorbed by each syllable. And if this be true when the syllables are difficult of recognition, it will also be true, though in a less degree, when the recognition of them is easy. Hence, the shortness of Saxon words becomes a reason for their greater force. One qualification, however, must not be

overlooked. A word which in itself embodies the most important part of the idea to be conveyed, especially when that idea is an emotional one, may often with advantage be a polysyllabic word. Thus it seems more forcible to say, "It is *magnificent*," than "It is *grand*." The word *vast* is not so powerful a one as *stupendous*. Calling a thing *nasty* is not so effective as calling it *disgusting*.

7. There seem to be several causes for this exceptional superiority of certain long words. We may ascribe it partly to the fact that a voluminous, mouth-filling epithet is, by its very size, suggestive of largeness or strength; witness the immense pomposity of sesquipedalian verbiage: and when great power or intensity has to be suggested, this association of ideas aids the effect. A further cause may be that a word of several syllables admits of more emphatic articulation; and as emphatic articulation is a sign of emotion, the unusual impressiveness of the thing named is implied by it. Yet another cause is that a long word (of which the latter syllables are generally inferred as soon as the first are spoken) allows the hearer's consciousness a longer time to dwell upon the quality predicated; and where, as in the above cases, it is to this predicated quality that the entire attention is called, an advantage results from keeping it before the mind for an appreciable time. The reasons which we have given for preferring short words evidently do not hold here. So that to make our generalization quite correct we must say, that while in certain sentences expressing strong feeling, the word which more especially implies that feeling may often with advantage be a many-syllabled or Latin one; in the immense majority of cases, each word serving but as a step to the idea embodied by the whole sentence, should, if possible, be a one-syllabled or Saxon one.

8. Once more, that frequent cause of strength in Saxon and other primitive words — their imitative character, may be similarly resolved into the more general cause. Both those directly imitative, as *splash*, *bang*, *whiz*, *roar*, &c., and those analogically imitative, as *rough*, *smooth*, *keen*, *blunt*, *thin*, *hard*, *crag*, &c., have a greater or less likeness to the things symbolized; and by making on the senses impressions allied to the ideas to be

called up, they save part of the effort needed to call up such ideas, and leave more attention for the ideas themselves.

9. The economy of the recipient's mental energy, into which are thus resolvable the several causes of the strength of Saxon English, may equally be traced in the superiority of specific over generic words. That concrete terms produce more vivid impressions than abstract ones, and should, when possible, be used instead, is a thorough maxim of composition.⁷ As Dr. Campbell says,⁸ "The more general the terms are, the picture is the fainter; the more special they are, 'tis the brighter." We should avoid such a sentence as:—"In proportion as the manners, customs, and amusements of a nation are cruel and barbarous, the regulations of their penal code will be severe." And in place of it we should write:—"In proportion as men delight in battles, bull-fights, and combats of gladiators, will they punish by hanging, burning, and the rack."⁹

10. This superiority of specific expressions is clearly due to a saving of the effort required to

⁷The purpose of the writer and the needs of the reader must, however, always be taken into account. If the author's idea is such as to call for abstract terms, concrete expressions are obviously out of place. Of the two examples that follow in the text, it may be questioned whether to the legal or scientific mind the first will not convey by far the greater satisfaction. [F.N.S.]

⁸"Philosophy of Rhetoric," Bk. III., Chap. I., § 1. [F.N.S.]

⁹Dr. Campbell's illustration is more to the point: "Consider," says our Lord, "the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If, then, God so clothe the grass which to-day is in the field and to-morrow is cast into the oven, how much more will he clothe you?" Let us here adopt a little of the tasteless manner of modern paraphrasts, by the substitution of more general terms, one of their many expedients of infrigidating, and let us observe the effect produced by this change. "Consider the flowers how they gradually increase in their size; they do no manner of work, and yet I declare to you that no king whatever, in his most splendid habit is dressed up like them. If, then, God in his providence doth so adorn the vegetable productions which continue but a little time on the land, and are afterwards put into the fire, how much more will he provide clothing for you?" How spiritless is the same sentiment rendered by these small variations! The very particularizing of to-day and to-morrow is infinitely more expressive of transitoriness than any description wherein the terms are general that can be substituted in its room."—"Philosophy of Rhetoric," Bk. III., Chap. I., § 1. [F.N.S.]

translate words into thoughts. As we do not think in generals but in particulars—as, whenever any class of things is referred to, we represent it to ourselves by calling to mind individual members of it; it follows that when an abstract word is used, the hearer or reader has to choose from his stock of images, one or more, by which he may figure to himself the genus mentioned. In doing this, some delay must arise—some force be expended; and if, by employing a specific term, an appropriate image can be at once suggested, an economy is achieved, and a more vivid impression produced.¹⁰

iii. *The Principle of Economy Applied to Sentences*

11. Turning now from the choice of words to their sequence, we shall find the same general principle hold good.¹¹ We have *a priori* reasons for believing that in every sentence there is some one order of words more effective than any other; and that this order is the one which presents the elements of the proposition in the succession in which they may be most readily put together. As in a narrative, the events should be stated in such sequence that the mind may not have to go backwards and forwards in order to rightly connect them; as in a group of sentences, the arrangement should be such, that each of them may be under-

¹⁰The psychology of this passage is not above suspicion. The operation of the mind in thinking a class is different from its operation in thinking a particular of that class. In the latter case the mental procedure consists in bringing up a particular image of the thing; in the former the mind grasps the function of the image, leaving the particular features wholly out of account. The trained thinker in thinking the class "horse" does not "choose from his stock" of mental horses. He thinks the concept horse, and in so doing he may attain to a perfectly definite notion of the class without having in consciousness any particular horse whatsoever. The particular image is of course present, but such features as height, color, etc., are simply disregarded. See, on this point, Dewey's "Psychology," pp. 204-13; James's "Psychology," I., Chap. 12; "How do Concepts arise from Percepts?" by J. Dewey, in *Public School Journal* for November, 1891; James's address in *Psychol. Rev.* [F.N.S.]

¹¹On the general question of the order of words in sentences, see the admirable little treatise by H. Weil, "The Order of Words in the Ancient Languages compared with that of the Modern Languages" (Trans. by C. W. Super, Boston: 1887).

stood as it comes, without waiting for subsequent ones; so in every sentence, the sequence of words should be that which suggests the constituents of the thought in the order most convenient for the building up that thought. Duly to enforce this truth, and to prepare the way for applications of it, we must briefly inquire into the mental act by which the meaning of a series of words is apprehended.¹²

12. We cannot more simply do this than by considering the proper collocation of the substantive and adjective. Is it better to place the adjective before the substantive, or the substantive before the adjective? Ought we to say with the French—*un cheval noir*; or to say as we do—a black horse? Probably, most persons of culture would decide that one order is as good as the other. Alive to the bias produced by habit, they would ascribe to that the preference they feel for our own form of expression. They would expect those educated in the use of the opposite form to have an equal preference for that. And thus they would conclude that neither of these instinctive judgments is of any worth. There is, however, a philosophical ground for deciding in favour of the English custom. If "a horse black" be the arrangement, immediately on the utterance of the word "horse," there arises, or tends to arise, in the mind, a picture answering to that word; and as there has been nothing to indicate what *kind* of horse, any image of a horse suggests itself. Very likely, however, the image will be that of a brown horse, brown horses being the most familiar. The result is that when the word "black" is

¹²"But there is another element we have to take into account, and that is the rhythmical effect of Style. Mr. Herbert Spencer in his essay very clearly states the law of Sequence, but I infer that he would include it entirely under the law of Economy; at any rate he treats of it solely in reference to intelligibility, and not at all in its scarcely less important relation to harmony. . . . But Style appeals to the emotions as well as to the intellect, and the arrangement of words and sentences which will be the most economical may not be the most musical, and the most musical may not be the most pleasurable effective. For Climax and Variety it may be necessary to sacrifice something of rapid intelligibility: hence involutions, antitheses, and suspensions, which disturb the most orderly arrangement, may yet, in virtue of their own subtle influences, be counted as improvements on that arrangement."—Lewes's "Principles of Success in Literature," p. 143. [F.N.S.]

added, a check is given to the process of thought. Either the picture of a brown horse already present to the imagination has to be suppressed, and the picture of a black one summoned in its place; or else, if the picture of a brown horse be yet unformed, the tendency to form it has to be stopped. Whichever is the case, a certain amount of hindrance results. But if, on the other hand, "a black horse" be the expression used, no such mistake can be made. The word "black," indicating an abstract quality, arouses no definite idea. It simply prepares the mind for conceiving some object of that colour; and the attention is kept suspended until that object is known. If, then, by the precedence of the adjective, the idea is conveyed without liability to error, whereas the precedence of the substantive is apt to produce a misconception, it follows that the one gives the mind less trouble than the other, and is therefore more forcible.¹³

13. Possibly it will be objected that the adjective and substantive come so close together, that practically they may be considered as uttered at the same moment; and that on hearing the phrase, "a horse black," there is not time to imagine a wrongly-coloured horse before the word "black" follows to prevent it. It must be owned that it is not easy to decide by introspection whether this is so or not.¹⁴ But there are facts collaterally implying that it is not. Our ability to anticipate the words yet unspoken is one of them. If the ideas of the hearer kept considerably behind the ex-

¹³Two fallacies lurk in this argument: (1) That the "bias produced by habit" is a factor that may be disregarded, for obviously if the substantive-adjective order were the one habitually employed and expected, economy would dictate that the opposite order be avoided; (2) that the particulars of a concrete visual image necessarily arise in the mind upon hearing the term "horse." The "image" may be a sound or a moving line. "Take the following report from one of my students: 'I am unable to form in my mind's eye any visual likeness of the table whatever. After many trials I can only get a hazy surface, with nothing on or about it. I can see no variety in color, and no positive limitations in extent, while I cannot see what I see well enough to determine its position in respect to my eye, or to endow it with any quality of size. I am in the same position as to the word *dog*. I cannot see it in my mind's eye at all; and so cannot tell whether I should have to run my eye along it, if I did see it.'"—James's "Psychology," II., p. 57, note. The whole chapter should be read. [F.N.S.]

¹⁴See, for a discussion of this point, Victor Egger's "La Parole intérieure," Chaps. 6, 7; James's "Psychology," I., pp. 280, 281, note. [F.N.S.]

pressions of the speaker, as the objection assumes, he could hardly foresee the end of a sentence by the time it was half delivered: yet this constantly happens.¹⁵ Were the supposition true, the mind, instead of anticipating, would be continually falling more and more in arrear. If the meanings of words are not realized as fast as the words are uttered, then the loss of time over each word must entail such an accumulation of delays as to leave a hearer entirely behind. But whether the force of these replies be or be not admitted, it will scarcely be denied that the right formation of a picture will be facilitated by presenting its elements in the order in which they are wanted;¹⁶ even though the mind should do nothing until it has received them all.

14. What is here said respecting the succession of the adjective and substantive is obviously applicable, by change of terms, to the adverb and verb. And without further explanation, it will be manifest, that in the use of prepositions and other particles, most languages spontaneously conform with more or less completeness to this law.

15. On applying a like analysis to the larger divisions of a sentence, we find not only that the same principle holds good, but that the advantage of respecting it becomes marked. In the arrangement of predicate and subject, for example, we are at once shown that as the predicate determines the aspect under which the subject is to be conceived, it should be placed first; and the

¹⁵Spencer fails to see how this fact tells against his theory. (1) The Frenchman, accustomed to the substantive-adjective order, will anticipate the coming *noir*, or some other adjective, as soon as he hears the word *cheval*. Hence in his case the nascent image of a wrongly-colored horse will not tend to arise. The peculiar intonation of the substantive will probably give him a hint as to whether the adjective is or is not to follow. (2) In the case of the Englishman, the word "black" may lead the hearer to anticipate some other substantive than "horse"; he may expect "sheep," or "man," or "eye," to follow, since all these things may possess the quality blackness. [F.N.S.]

¹⁶In the original article as it appeared in the *Westminster Review*, the following words are inserted at this point: "and that, as in forming the image answering to a red flower, the notion of redness is one of the components that must be used in the construction of the image, the mind, if put in possession of this notion before the specific image to be formed out of it is suggested, will more easily form it than if the order be reversed." [F.N.S.]

striking effect produced by so placing it becomes comprehensible. Take the often-quoted contrast between "Great is Diana of the Ephesians," and "Diana of the Ephesians is great." When the first arrangement is used, the utterance of the word "great" arouses those vague associations of an impressive nature with which it has been habitually connected; the imagination is prepared to clothe with high attributes whatever follows; and when the words, "Diana of the Ephesians," are heard, all the appropriate imagery which can, on the instant, be summoned, is used in the formation of the picture: the mind being thus led directly, and without error, to the intended impression. When, on the contrary, the reverse order is followed, the idea, "Diana of the Ephesians," is conceived with no special reference to greatness; and when the words "is great" are added, the conception had to be remodelled: whence arises a loss of mental energy and a corresponding diminution of effect. The following verse from Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner," though somewhat irregular in structure, well illustrates the same truth:

*Alone, alone, all, all alone,
Alone on a wide, wide sea!
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony.*

16. Of course the principle equally applies when the predicate is a verb or a participle. And as effect is gained by placing first all words indicating the quality, conduct or condition of the subject, it follows that the copula also should have precedence. It is true that the general habit of our language resists this arrangement of predicate, copula and subject; but we may readily find instances of the additional force gained by conforming to it. Thus, in the line from "Julius Cæsar" —

Then *burst* his mighty heart,

priority is given to a word embodying both predicate and copula. In a passage contained in "The Battle of Flodden Field," the like order is systematically employed with great effect:

The Border slogan rent the sky!
A *Home! a Gordon!* was the cry;
Loud were the clanging blows:

*Advanced—forced back—now low, now high,
The pennon sunk and rose;
As bends the bark's mast in the gale
When rent are rigging, shrouds and sail,
It wavered 'mid the foes.*

17. Pursuing the principle yet further, it is obvious that for producing the greatest effect, not only should the main divisions of a sentence observe this sequence, but the subdivisions of these should be similarly arranged. In nearly all cases, the predicate is accompanied by some limit or qualification, called its complement. Commonly, also, the circumstances of the subject, which form its complement, have to be specified. And as these qualifications and circumstances must determine the mode in which the acts and things they belong to are conceived, precedence should be given to them. Lord Kaimes¹⁷ notices the fact that this order is preferable; though without giving the reason. He says:—"When a circumstance is placed at the beginning of the period, or near the beginning, the transition from it to the principal subject is agreeable: it is like ascending or going upward." A sentence arranged in illustration of this will be desirable. Here is one:—"Whatever it may be in theory, it is clear that in practice the French idea of liberty is—the right of every man to be master of the rest."

18. In this case, were the first two clauses, up to the word "practice" inclusive, which qualify the subject, to be placed at the end instead of the beginning, much of the force would be lost; as thus:—"The French idea of liberty is—the right of every man to be master of the rest; in practice at least, if not in theory."

19. Similarly with respect to the conditions under which any fact is predicated. Observe in the following example the effect of putting them last:—"How immense would be the stimulus to progress, were the honour now given to wealth and title given exclusively to high achievements and intrinsic worth!"

20. And then observe the superior effect of putting them first:—"Were the honour now given to wealth and title given exclusively to high achievements and intrinsic worth, how immense would be the stimulus to progress!"

¹⁷"Elements of Criticism," Chap. 18, § 2. [F.N.S.]

21. The effect of giving priority to the complement of the predicate, as well as the predicate itself, is finely displayed in the opening of "Hyperion":

*Deep in the shady sadness of a vale
Far sunken from the healthy breath of morn,
Far from the fiery noon and eve's one star
Sat gray-haired Saturn, quiet as a stone.*

Here it will be observed, not only that the predicate "sat" precedes the subject "Saturn," and that the three lines in italics, constituting the complement of the predicate, come before it; but that in the structure of that complement also, the same order is followed: each line being so arranged that the qualifying words are placed before the words suggesting concrete images.

22. The right succession of the principal and subordinate propositions in a sentence manifestly depends on the same law. Regard for economy of the recipient's attention, which, as we find, determines the best order for the subject, copula, predicate and their complements, dictates that the subordinate proposition shall precede the principal one when the sentence includes two. Containing, as the subordinate proposition does, some qualifying or explanatory idea, its priority prevents misconception of the principal one; and therefore saves the mental effort needed to correct such misconception. This will be seen in the annexed example:¹⁸ "The secrecy once maintained in respect to the parliamentary debates, is still thought needful in diplomacy; and in virtue of this secret diplomacy, England may any day be unawares betrayed by its ministers into a war costing a hundred thousand lives, and hundreds of millions of treasure: yet the English pique themselves on being a self-governed people." The two subordinate propositions, ending with the semicolon and colon respectively, almost wholly determine the meaning of the principal proposition with which it concludes; and the effect would be lost were they placed last instead of first.

¹⁸The following is the example given in the *Westminster Review*: "Those who weekly go to church, and there have doled out to them a quantum of belief which they have not energy to work out for themselves, are simply spiritual paupers." [F.N.S.]

23. The general principle of right arrangement in sentences, which we have traced in its application to the leading divisions of them, equally determines the proper order of their minor divisions. In every sentence of any complexity the complement to the subject contains several clauses, and that to the predicates several others; and these may be arranged in greater or less conformity to the law of easy apprehension. Of course with these, as with the larger members, the succession should be from the less specific to the more specific—from the abstract to the concrete.

24. Now, however, we must notice a further condition to be fulfilled in the proper construction of a sentence; but still a condition dictated by the same general principle with the other: the condition, namely, that the words and expressions most nearly related in thought shall be brought the closest together. Evidently the single words, the minor clauses, and the leading divisions of every proposition, severally qualify each other. The longer the time that elapses between the mention of any qualifying member and the member qualified; the longer must the mind be exerted in carrying forward the qualifying member ready for use. And the more numerous the qualifications to be simultaneously remembered and rightly applied, the greater will be the mental power expended, and the smaller the effect produced. Hence, other things equal, force will be gained by so arranging the members of a sentence that these suspensions shall at any moment be the fewest in number; and shall also be of the shortest duration. The following is an instance of defective combination:—"A modern newspaper-statement, though probably true, would be laughed at if quoted in a book as testimony; but the letter of a court gossip is thought good historical evidence, if written some centuries ago," A rearrangement of this, in accordance with the principle indicated above, will be found to increase the effect. Thus:—"Though probably true, a modern newspaper-statement quoted in a book as testimony, would be laughed at; but the letter of a court gossip, if written some centuries ago, is thought good historical evidence."

25. By making this change, some of the suspensions are avoided and others shortened; while

there is less liability to produce premature conceptions. The passage quoted below from "Paradise Lost" affords a fine instance of a sentence well arranged; alike in the priority of the subordinate members, in the avoidance of long and numerous suspensions, and in the correspondence between the order of the clauses and the sequence of the phenomena described, which, by the way, is a further prerequisite to easy comprehension, and therefore to effect.

As when a prowling wolf,
Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,
Watching where shepherds pen their flocks at eve,
In hurdled cotes amid the field secure,
Leaps o'er the fence with ease into the fold;
Or as a thief, bent to unhoard the cash
Of some rich burgher, whose substantial doors,
Cross-barr'd, and bolted fast, fear no assault,
In at the window climbs, or o'er the tiles;
So clomb this first grand thief into God's fold;
So since into his church lewd hirelings climb.¹⁹

26. The habitual use of sentences in which all or most of the descriptive and limiting elements precede those described and limited, gives rise to what is called the inverted style: a title which is, however, by no means confined to this structure, but is often used where the order of the words is simply unusual. A more appropriate title would be the *direct style*, as contrasted with the other, or *indirect style*: the peculiarity of the one being, that it conveys each thought into the mind step by step with little liability to error; and of the other, that it gets the right thought conceived by a series of approximations.

27. The superiority of the direct over the indirect form of sentence, implied by the several conclusions that have been drawn, must not, however, be affirmed without reservation. Though, up to a certain point, it is well for the qualifying clauses of a period to precede those qualified; yet, as carrying forward each qualifying clause costs some mental effort, it follows that when the number of them and the time they are carried become great, we reach a limit beyond which more is lost than is gained. Other things equal, the arrangement should be such that no concrete image shall be suggested until the materials out

of which it is to be made have been presented. And yet, as lately pointed out, other things equal, the fewer the materials to be held at once, and the shorter the distance they have to be borne, the better. Hence in some cases it becomes a question whether most mental effort will be entailed by the many and long suspensions, or by the correction of successive misconceptions.

28. This question may sometimes be decided by considering the capacity of the persons addressed. A greater grasp of mind is required for the ready comprehension of thoughts expressed in the direct manner, where the sentences are anywise intricate. To recollect a number of preliminaries stated in elucidation of a coming idea, and to apply them all to the formation of it when suggested, demands a good memory and considerable power of concentration. To one possessing these, the direct method will mostly seem the best; while to one deficient in them it will seem the worst. Just as it may cost a strong man less effort to carry a hundred-weight from place to place at once, than by a stone at a time; so, to an active mind it may be easier to bear along all the qualifications of an idea and at once rightly form it when named, than to first imperfectly conceive such idea and then carry back to it, one by one, the details and limitations afterwards mentioned. While conversely, as for a boy, the only possible mode of transferring a hundred-weight, is that of taking it in portions; so, for a weak mind, the only possible mode of forming a compound conception may be that of building it up by carrying separately its several parts.

29. That the indirect method—the method of conveying the meaning by a series of approximations—is best fitted for the uncultivated, may indeed be inferred from their habitual use of it. The form of expression adopted by the savage, as in—"Water, give me," is the simplest type of the approximate arrangement. In pleonasm, which are comparatively prevalent among the uneducated, the same essential structure is seen; as, for instance, in—"The men, they were there." Again, the old possessive case—"The king, his crown," conforms to the like order of thought. Moreover, the fact that the indirect mode is called the natural one, implies that it is the one spontaneously employed by the common

¹⁹Bk. IV., lines 183-93. [F.N.S.]

people: that is—the one easiest for undisciplined minds. . . .

iv. *The Principle of Economy Applied to Figures*

33. Turning now to consider figures of speech, we may equally discern the same general law of effect.²⁰ Underlying all the rules given for the choice and right use of them, we shall find the same fundamental requirement—economy of attention. It is indeed chiefly because they so well sub-serve this requirement, that figures of speech are employed. To bring the mind more easily to the desired conception, is in many cases solely, and in all cases mainly, their object.

34. Let us begin with the figures called Synecdoche. The advantage sometimes gained by putting a part for the whole, is due to the more convenient, or more accurate, presentation of the idea. If, instead of saying “a fleet of ten ships,” we say “a fleet of ten *sail*,” the picture of a group of vessels at sea is more readily suggested; and is so because the sails constitute the most conspicuous parts of vessels so circumstanced: whereas the word *ships* would very likely remind us of vessels in dock. Again, to say, “All *hands* to the pumps,” is better than to say, “All *men* to the pumps,” as it suggests the men in the special attitude intended, and so saves effort. Bringing “*gray hairs* with sorrow to the grave,” is another expression, the effect of which has the same cause.

35. The occasional increase of force produced by Metonymy may be similarly accounted for. “The low morality of *the bar*,” is a phrase both more brief and significant than the literal one it stands for. A belief in the ultimate supremacy of intelligence over brute force, is conveyed in a more concrete, and therefore more realizable form, if we substitute *the pen* and *the sword* for the two abstract terms. To say, “Beware of drinking!” is less effective than to say, “Beware of *the*

²⁰On the general subject of figures, see Max Müller’s essay in *Fortnightly*, Vol. 46, p. 617, on “Metaphor as a Mode of Abstraction”; Earle’s “English Prose,” pp. 234–53; Gummere’s “Poetics,” pp. 83–132; *Modern Language Notes*, Vol. 1, p. 140, “The Classification of Rhetorical Figures,” by C. B. Bradley. [F.N.S.]

bottle!” and is so, clearly because it calls up a less specific image.

36. The Simile is in many cases used chiefly with a view to ornament, but whenever it increases the *force* of a passage, it does so by being an economy. Here in an instance: “The illusion that great men and great events came oftener in early times than now, is partly due to historical perspective. As in a range of equidistant columns, the furthest off look the closest; so, the conspicuous objects of the past seem more thickly clustered the more remote they are.”

37. To construct by a process of literal explanation, the thought thus conveyed would take many sentences, and the first elements of the picture would become faint while the imagination was busy in adding the others. But by the help of a comparison all effort is saved; the picture is instantly realized, and its full effect produced.

38. Of the position of the Simile,²¹ it needs only to remark, that what has been said respecting the order of the adjective and substantive, predicate and subject, principal and subordinate propositions, &c., is applicable here. As whatever qualifies should precede whatever is qualified, force will generally be gained by placing the simile before the object to which it is applied. That this arrangement is the best, may be seen in the following passage from the “Lady of the Lake”:

As wreath of snow, on mountain breast,
Slides from the rock that gave it rest,
Poor Ellen glided from her stay,
And at the monarch’s feet she lay.²²

Inverting these couplets will be found to diminish the effect considerably. There are cases, however,

²¹Properly the term “simile” is applicable only to the entire figure, inclusive of the two things compared and the comparison drawn between them. But as there exists no name for the illustrative member of the figure, there seems no alternative but to employ “simile” to express this also. This context will in each case show in which sense the word is used.—H. S.

²²But compare the arrangement in the following from “Othello”:

Of one whose subdued eyes,
Albeit unused to the melting mood
Drop tears as fast as the Arabian trees
Their medicinal gum.

even where the simile is a simple one, in which it may with advantage be placed last, as in these lines from Alexander Smith's "Life Drama":

I see the future stretch
All dark and barren as a rainy sea.

The reason for this seems to be, that so abstract an idea as that attaching to the word "future," does not present itself to the mind in any definite form, and hence the subsequent arrival at the simile entails no reconstruction of the thought.

39. Such, however, are not the only cases in which this order is the most forcible. As the advantage of putting the simile before the object depends on its being carried forward in the mind to assist in forming an image of the object, it must happen that if, from length or complexity, it cannot be so carried forward, the advantage is not gained. The annexed sonnet, by Coleridge, is defective from this cause:

As when a child, on some long winter's night,
Affrighted, clinging to its grandam's knees,
With eager wond'ring and perturb'd delight
Listens strange tales of fearful dark decrees,
Mutter'd to wretch by necromantic spell;
Or of those hags who at the witching time
Of murky midnight, ride the air sublime,
And mingle foul embrace with fiends of hell;
Cold horror drinks its blood! Anon the tear
More gentle starts, to hear the beldame tell
Of pretty babes, that lov'd each other dear,
Murder'd by cruel uncle's mandate fell:
Ev'n such the shiv'ring joys thy tones impart,
Ev'n so, thou, Siddons, meltest my sad heart.

40. Here, from the lapse of time and accumulation of circumstances, the first part of the comparison is forgotten before its application is reached, and requires re-reading. Had the main idea been first mentioned, less effort would have been required to retain it, and to modify the conception of it into harmony with the comparison, than to remember the comparison, and refer back to its successive features for help in forming the final image.

41. The superiority of the Metaphor to the Simile is ascribed by Dr. Whately²³ to the fact that "all men are more gratified at catching the

²³"Rhetoric," Pt. III., Chap. 2, § 3. [F.N.S.]

resemblance for themselves, than in having it pointed out to them." But after what has been said, the great economy it achieves will seem the more probable cause. Lear's exclamation—

Ingratitude! thou marble-hearted fiend,

would lose part of its effect were it changed into—

Ingratitude! thou fiend with heart like marble;

and the loss would result partly from the position of the simile and partly from the extra number of words required. When the comparison is an involved one, the greater force of the metaphor, consequent on its greater brevity, becomes much more conspicuous. If, drawing an analogy between mental and physical phenomena, we say, "As, in passing through the crystal, beams of white light are decomposed into the colours of the rainbow; so, in traversing the soul of the poet, the colourless rays of truth are transformed into brightly tinted poetry"; it is clear that in receiving the double set of words expressing the two halves of the comparison, and in carrying the one half to the other, considerable attention is absorbed. Most of this is saved, however, by putting the comparison in a metaphorical form, thus: "The white light of truth, in traversing the many sided transparent soul of the poet, is refracted into irised poetry."

42. How much is conveyed in a few words by the help of the Metaphor, and how vivid the effect consequently produced, may be abundantly exemplified. From "A Life Drama" may be quoted the phrase,—

I spear'd him with a jest,

as a fine instance among the many which that poem contains. A passage in the "Prometheus Unbound," of Shelley, displays the power of the metaphor to great advantage:

Methought among the lawns together
We wandered, underneath the young gray dawn,
And multitudes of dense white fleecy clouds
Were wandering, in thick flocks along the mountains
Shepherded by the slow unwilling wind.

This last expression is remarkable for the distinctness with which it realizes the features of the

scene: bringing the mind, as it were, by a bound to the desired conception.

43. But a limit is put to the advantageous use of the Metaphor, by the condition that it must be sufficiently simple to be understood from a hint. Evidently, if there be any obscurity in the meaning or application of it, no economy of attention will be gained; but rather the reverse. Hence, when the comparison is complex, it is usual to have recourse to the Simile. There is, however, a species of figure, sometimes classed under Allegory, but which might, perhaps, be better called Compound Metaphor, that enables us to retain the brevity of the metaphorical form even where the analogy is intricate. This is done by indicating the application of the figure at the outset, and then leaving the mind to continue the parallel.²⁴ Emerson has employed it with great effect in the first of his "Lectures on the Times":—"The main interest which any aspects of the Times can have for us, is the great spirit which gazes through them, the light which they can shed on the wonderful questions, What are we, and Whither we tend? We do not wish to be deceived. Here we drift, like white sail across the wild ocean, now bright on the wave, now darkling in the trough of the sea; but from what port did we sail? Who knows? Or to what port are we bound? Who knows? There is no one to tell us but such poor weather-tossed mariners as ourselves, whom we speak as we pass, or who have hoisted some signal, or floated to us some letter in a bottle from far. But what know they more than we? They also found themselves on this wondrous sea. No; from the older sailors nothing. Over all their speaking trumpets the gray sea and the loud winds answer, Not in us; not in Time." . . .

vi. *The Effect of Poetry Explained*

52. . . . Poetry, we shall find, habitually adopts those symbols of thought, and those methods of using them, which instinct and analysis agree in choosing as most effective, and becomes poetry

²⁴Not uncommon in Shakespeare, as, for example, the following from "Hamlet," IV., 2:—"But such officers do the king best service in the end: he keeps them, as an ape doth nuts, in the corner of his jaw; first mouth'd to be last swallowed." [F.N.S.]

by virtue of doing this. On turning back to the various specimens that have been quoted, it will be seen that the direct or inverted form of sentence predominates in them; and that to a degree quite inadmissible in prose. And not only in the frequency, but in what is termed the violence of the inversions, will this distinction be remarked. In the abundant use of figures, again, we may recognize the same truth. Metaphors, similes, hyperboles, and personifications, are the poet's colours, which he has liberty to employ almost without limit. We characterize as "poetical" the prose which uses these appliances of language with any frequency, and condemn it as "over florid" or "affected" long before they occur with the profusion allowed in verse. Further, let it be remarked that in brevity—the other requisite of forcible expression which theory points out, and emotion spontaneously fulfils—poetical phraseology similarly differs from ordinary phraseology. Imperfect periods are frequent; elisions are perpetual; and many of the minor words, which would be deemed essential in prose, are dispensed with.

53. Thus poetry, regarded as a vehicle of thought, is especially impressive partly because it obeys all the laws of effective speech, and partly because in so doing it imitates the natural utterances of excitement. While the matter embodied is idealized emotion, the vehicle is the idealized language of emotion. As the musical composer catches the cadences in which our feelings of joy and sympathy, grief and despair, vent themselves, and out of these germs evolves melodies suggesting higher phases of these feelings;²⁵ so, the poet develops from the typical expressions in which men utter passion and sentiment, those choice forms of verbal combination in which concentrated passion and sentiment may be fitly presented.

54. There is one peculiarity of poetry conducting much to its effect—the peculiarity which is

²⁵For Spencer's views on the relation of music to speech-tunes, see his essay on the "Origin and Function of Music" in "Essays, Scientific, Political, and Speculative"; his recent paper on the "Origin of Music" in *Mind* for October, 1890; the discussion by R. Wallaschek and J. McK. Cattell in *Mind* for July, 1891; and Chap. 21 of Gurney's "Power of Sound." [F.N.S.]

indeed usually thought its characteristic one—still remaining to be considered: we mean its rhythmical structure. This, improbable though it seems, will be found to come under the same generalization with the others. Like each of them, it is an idealization of the natural language of strong emotion, which is known to be more or less metrical if the emotion be not too violent; and like each of them it is an economy of the reader's or hearer's attention. In the peculiar tone and manner we adopt in uttering versified language, may be discerned its relationship to the feelings; and the pleasure which its measured movement gives us, is ascribable to the comparative ease with which words metrically arranged can be recognized.

55. This last position will scarcely be at once admitted; but a little explanation will show its reasonableness. For if, as we have seen, there is an expenditure of mental energy in the mere act of listening to verbal articulations, or in that silent repetition of them which goes on in reading²⁶—if the perceptive faculties must be in active exercise to identify every syllable—then, any mode of so combining words as to present a regular recurrence of certain traits which the mind can anticipate, will diminish that strain upon the attention required by the total irregularity of prose.²⁷ Just as the body, in receiving a series of varying concussions, must keep the muscles ready to meet the most violent of them, as not knowing when such may come; so, the mind in receiving unarranged articulations, must keep its perceptive active enough to recognize the least easily caught sounds. And as, if the concussions recur

²⁶There has been much discussion over this point. See Bain, "Senses and Intellect," pp. 345, 353; Stricker, "Studien über die Sprachvorstellungen"; *Revue Philosophique*, Vol. 16, p. 405; Vol. 18, p. 685; and Vol. 19, p. 118. [F.N.S.]

²⁷Good prose is far from being totally irregular. It has a large rhythm peculiar to itself which is difficult to define, but even with an untrained ear, easy to perceive. The day-laborer making his way through a newspaper article will often complain that "the writing doesn't run smooth." He means that the prose-rhythm is defective. Consult on this point, Saintsbury's "Specimens of English Prose Style," Introduction; Stevenson's essay on "Style in Literature," *Contemporary Review*, Vol. 47, p. 548; Ellis's "On the Physical Constituents of Accent and Emphasis" in *Transactions of the English Philological Society for 1873-4*, pp. 113-64. [F.N.S.]

in a definite order, the body may husband its forces by adjusting the resistance needful for each concussion; so, if the syllables be rhythmically arranged, the mind may economize its energies by anticipating the attention required for each syllable.

56. Far-fetched though this idea will perhaps be thought, a little introspection will countenance it. That we *do* take advantage of metrical language to adjust our perceptive faculties to the force of the expected articulations, is clear from the fact that we are balked by halting versification. Much as at the bottom of a flight of stairs, a step more or less than we counted upon gives us a shock; so, too, does a misplaced accent or a supernumerary syllable. In the one case, we *know* that there is an erroneous preadjustment; and we can scarcely doubt that there is one in the other. But if we habitually preadjust our perceptions to the measured movement of verse, the physical analogy above given renders it probable that by so doing we economize attention; and hence that metrical language is more effective than prose, because it enables us to do this.²⁸

57. Were there space, it might be worth while to inquire whether the pleasure we take in rhyme, and also that which we take in euphony, are not partly ascribable to the same general cause.

²⁸"What the rhythm of the dance is to our muscular energies, the rhythm of poetry and music is to the ear. Its main constituent as a pleasure is the regularity of its occurrence and the consequent possibility of relaxing our attention to the accentuation or the arrangement of chords. While syllables irregularly thrown together require a certain amount of jumping from point to point in the auditory perception, syllables placed in a regular order of short and long allow us to withdraw the attention from their accent and to expect a continuance of the same harmonious and easily followed succession. Many familiar facts concur to justify this explanation. In attempting for the first time to read a perfectly new metre, it is sometimes a few minutes before *we fall into the swing of it*, as we phrase it; that is, before our auditory apparatus accommodates itself to the new mode of recurrence,"—Grant Allen, "Physiological Æsthetics," p. 115.

"The members or clauses and the periods themselves should be neither truncated nor too long. If they are too short, they often make a hearer stumble; for if, while he is hurrying on to the completion of the measure or rhythm, of which he has a definite notion in his mind, he is suddenly pulled up by a pause on the part of the speaker, there will necessarily follow a sort of stumble in consequence of the sudden check."—Aristotle, "Rhetoric," III. 9, Welldon's Trans. [F.N.S.]

PART II
CAUSES OF FORCE IN LANGUAGE
WHICH DEPEND UPON ECONOMY
OF THE MENTAL SENSIBILITIES

iv. The Ideal Writer

67. This species of composition which the law of effect points out as the perfect one, is the one which high genius tends naturally to produce. As we found that the kinds of sentences which are theoretically best, are those generally employed by superior minds, and by inferior minds when excitement has raised them; so, we shall find that the ideal form for a poem, essay, or fiction, is that which the ideal writer would evolve spontaneously. One in whom the powers of expression fully responded to the state of feeling, would unconsciously use that variety in the mode of presenting his thoughts, which Art demands. This constant employment of one species of phraseology, which all have now to strive against, implies an undeveloped faculty of language. To have a specific style is to be poor in speech. If we remember that, in the far past, men had only nouns and verbs to convey their ideas with, and that from then to now the growth has been towards a greater number of implements of thought, and consequently towards a greater complexity and variety in their combinations; we may infer that we are now, in our use of sentences, much what the primitive man was in his use of words; and that a continuance of the process that has hitherto gone on, must produce increasing heterogeneity in our modes of expression. As now, in a fine nature, the play of the features, the tones of the voice and its cadences, vary in harmony with every thought uttered; so, in one possessed of a fully-developed power of speech, the mould in which each combination of words is cast will similarly vary with, and be appropriate to the sentiment.

68. That a perfectly-endowed man must unconsciously write in all styles, we may infer from

considering how styles originate. Why is Johnson pompous, Goldsmith simple? Why is one author abrupt, another rhythmical, another concise? Evidently in each case the habitual mode of utterance must depend upon the habitual balance of the nature. The predominant feelings have by use trained the intellect to represent them. But while long, though unconscious, discipline has made it do this efficiently, it remains from lack of practice, incapable of doing the same for the less active feelings; and when these are excited, the usual verbal forms undergo but slight modifications. Let the powers of speech be fully developed, however—let the ability of the intellect to utter the emotions be complete; and this fixity of style will disappear. The perfect writer will express himself as Junius, when in the Junius frame of mind; when he feels as Lamb felt, will use a like familiar speech; and will fall into the ruggedness of Carlyle when in a Carlylean mood. Now he will be rhythmical and now irregular; here his language will be plain and there ornate; sometimes his sentences will be balanced and at other times unsymmetrical; for a while there will be considerable sameness, and then again great variety. His mode of expression naturally responding to his state of feeling, there will flow from his pen a composition changing to the same degree that the aspects of his subject change. He will thus without effort conform to what we have seen to be the laws of effect. And while his work presents to the reader that variety needful to prevent continuous exertion of the same faculties, it will also answer to the description of all highly-organized products, both of man and of nature: it will be not a series of like parts simply placed in juxtaposition, but one whole made up of unlike parts that are mutually dependent.²⁹

²⁹This is the fundamental principle with which, in the opinion of the editor, Mr. Spencer would have done well to open his essay. He would thus have brought his various exceptions, opposing rules, supplementary principles, and so forth, under one universal all-pervading law. [F.N.S.]

Friedrich Nietzsche

1844–1900

Friedrich Nietzsche studied classical philology at the universities of Bonn and Leipzig. He was so brilliant a student that in 1868 he won a professorship at the University of Basel without writing a dissertation or earning a doctorate. Soon afterward, he enlisted in the Swiss army and served briefly in the Franco-Prussian War. Injured in a riding accident from which he never fully recovered, he returned to Basel and his teaching duties and in 1872 published his first book, *The Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music*.

In this and later works, Nietzsche made no effort to appeal to the traditional interests of the academic philologists, and his books were not well received. Not only were his subjects idiosyncratic, but his style was poetic, aphoristic, dramatic, and colorful. Following four *Untimely Meditations* (1873–1876), on such topics as cultural philistinism, history, and Richard Wagner, Nietzsche wrote *Human, All-Too-Human* (1878), a series of aphorisms addressed to the question of whether human beings are motivated by the desire for power and by fear of the power of others. Here, too, he began to formulate a philosophy of self-confidence that does not require taking advantage of others. In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (Parts 1–3, 1883; Part 4, 1892), Nietzsche works through many of his themes—the will to power, the meaning of style, the need to affirm life, and so on—but does so by means of epigram, satire, and aphorism, rather than systematic argument. Of his last seven books, the best known are *Beyond Good and Evil* (1886), *Toward a Genealogy of Morals* (1887), *The Twilight of the Idols* (1889), and *Ecce Homo* (written in 1888 and published posthumously).

Nietzsche delivered a series of lectures on classical rhetoric at Basel in 1872–1873. The notes for these lectures, as well as for an additional seminar in 1874 on the history of Greek eloquence, were published after his death. Although Nietzsche's general approach to classical rhetoric is not particularly original—he follows a standard scholarly outline—he does offer some striking observations about rhetoric and language. A rhetorical style is one regarded as deliberately artistic and not natural, says Nietzsche. He suggests that if the work of the classical authors strikes us as especially rhetorical in this sense, it may be because of their orientation to oral discourse and ours to written discourse, a difference that shows up in the highly developed rhythms of the classical authors' prose, compared with the relative flatness of ours. But the verbal artistry ascribed to rhetoric is not confined to rhetoric, which should properly be understood as the conscious application of an essential quality of language itself:

There is obviously no unrhetorical “naturalness” of language to which one could appeal; language itself is the result of purely rhetorical arts. The power to discover and to make operative that which works and impresses, with respect to each thing, a power which

Aristotle calls rhetoric, is at the same time, the essence of language; the latter is based just as little as rhetoric is upon that which is true, upon the essence of things.¹

Language, Nietzsche goes on to say, conveys not sensations but “copies of sensations,” not things but images of our perception of things. Words are signs of our impulses and do not represent “a many-sided, respectable knowledge of things.” In short, emphasizes Nietzsche, “*language is rhetoric*, because it desires to convey only a *doxa* [opinion], not an *episteme* [knowledge].”

Pursuing this idea further, Nietzsche says that tropes “are considered to be the most artistic means of rhetoric. But with respect to their meanings, all words are tropes in themselves.” *Trope* means “turn,” a turning aside from literal meaning, but every word turns aside from the thing itself, offering a sound image instead. “The tropes are not just occasionally added to words but constitute their most proper nature,” he says. “It makes no sense to talk of a ‘proper meaning’ which is carried over to something else only in special cases. . . . What is usually called language is actually all figuration.”²

Nietzsche’s ideas about language inform his critique of philosophy and of common views about truth and knowledge. In his essay “On Truth and Lies in a Non-moral Sense” (included here), written in 1873 just after he gave his course on rhetoric, Nietzsche argues that “truth” is a social arrangement necessitated by the powerful tendency to tell lies. Lying is clearly an act of discourse, a misrepresentation of actual circumstances. Truth must be seen similarly as a convention of discourse, for there is no way to convert things directly into language. We put our subjective impressions of things into our words and therefore must negotiate their meanings. Language “designates the relations of things to men,” and these relations are expressed in “the boldest metaphors.” But having evolved this means of communicating about things, we forget that it is a conventional arrangement and come to “believe that we know something about the things themselves . . . yet we possess nothing but metaphors for things.” Social pressures reinforce the conventional ways of speaking of things and also encourage us to regard those ways as truth. Metaphor formation is, according to Nietzsche, the fundamental quality of the human intellect. Thus “truth” is a rhetorical construction arising from the creative use of language to make an effective social arrangement.

Nietzsche persistently rejects the traditional notion that philosophy and science search for and find truth. In his early work (published in the 1870s), he tends to attack rationalism for promoting a mistaken belief in positive knowledge; he does this by confronting the rational with the irrational impulses that it must suppress. Later, he argues for a balance between reason and passion, seeing either one alone as incomplete and not fully human. In seeking to understand the irrational, Nietzsche focused, as had earlier Enlightenment philosophers, on psychology. He posits the “will to power” as a basic human motive and finds it in a wide array of actions.

¹Friedrich Nietzsche, “Ancient Rhetoric,” in *Friedrich Nietzsche on Rhetoric and Language*, ed. and trans. S. L. Gilman, C. Blair, and D. J. Parent (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 21.

²Nietzsche, pp. 23, 25.

Gross displays of power, the recurrent attempts of individuals and groups to subjugate others, are only the most obvious manifestations. Art is an expression of the will to power as well: the desire to gain control over chaotic experience. The Greeks invented rhetoric to gain power over their audiences. And philosophy, too, comes from the human need to be in control of the world. The will to power is a motivating force, not good or bad in itself. Indeed, it is the stimulus for self-control, a quality Nietzsche admired and found necessary for creative and ethical action. The *overman* (*übermensch*) imagined by Nietzsche is one who has successfully organized the chaos of existence, one who strives for perfection and refuses to compromise with the forces of partial rationalism (represented by science and philosophy) and partial irrationalism (represented by religion).

Nietzsche's style is highly metaphorical. As rhetoric scholar Samuel IJsseling clearly points out, he does not hope to make possible a nonrhetorical philosophy by revealing some hitherto unnoticed error. To show that philosophy is rhetorical is certainly "to unmask the pretensions of philosophy," says IJsseling, but Nietzsche emphasizes the rhetorical quality of his own writing by using "the boldest of metaphors," as well as poetry, drama, and aphorisms.³ Philosophy is inseparable from language, and no self-consciousness will alter or transcend that circumstance. For Nietzsche, the goal is not to discover the unvarnished truth, for there is no such thing. Rather, the aim is to understand the forces—such as the need to communicate and the will to power—that have produced those ideas about truth that have driven philosophy through its long history. Nietzsche thus comes to see philosophy as a text. Philosophy is a form of interpretation, an attempt to see the world in a way that will allow human beings to gain some control over it. To examine a set of interpretations requires rhetorical analysis, and so it can be argued that Nietzsche's method is rhetorical as well.

Until quite recently, rhetoricians gave Nietzsche's ideas little attention even though he anticipates the most important themes developed by twentieth-century rhetorical theorists (see Part Six): I. A. Richards's fallacy of proper meaning, Richard Weaver's idea that language is sermonic, Chaim Perelman's analysis of naturalness as a rhetorical quality, and the wider movement that sees rhetoric as epistemic. Indeed, in seeing rhetoric as the basis of philosophy, Nietzsche is far bolder than most modern theorists. Nietzsche's work has deeply influenced twentieth-century philosophers Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida, who are not afraid to continue along the path he blazed, and who have been the means by which Nietzsche's ideas have penetrated many fields.

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³Samuel IJsseling, *Rhetoric and Philosophy in Conflict* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976), p. 108.

and Lies.” The introduction relates Nietzsche’s ideas to modern rhetorical issues and includes a helpful bibliography.

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On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense¹

I

Once upon a time, in some out of the way corner of that universe which is dispersed into numberless twinkling solar systems, there was a star upon which clever beasts invented knowing. That was the most arrogant and mendacious minute of

“world history,” but nevertheless, it was only a minute. After nature had drawn a few breaths, the star cooled and congealed, and the clever beasts had to die.—One might invent such a fable, and yet he still would not have adequately illustrated how miserable, how shadowy and transient, how aimless and arbitrary the human intellect looks within nature. There were eternities during which it did not exist. And when it is all over with the human intellect, nothing will have happened. For this intellect has no additional mission which

Edited and translated by Daniel Breazeale.

¹A more literal, though less English, translation of *Über Wahrheit und Lüge im aussermoralischen Sinne* might be “On Truth and Lie in the Extramoral Sense.” . . . [Tr.]

would lead it beyond human life. Rather, it is human, and only its possessor and begetter takes it so solemnly—as though the world's axis turned within it. But if we could communicate with the gnat, we would learn that he likewise flies through the air with the same solemnity,² that he feels the flying center of the universe within himself. There is nothing so reprehensible and unimportant in nature that it would not immediately swell up like a balloon at the slightest puff of this power of knowing. And just as every porter wants to have an admirer, so even the proudest of men, the philosopher, supposes that he sees on all sides the eyes of the universe telescopically focused upon his action and thought.

It is remarkable that this was brought about by the intellect, which was certainly allotted to these most unfortunate, delicate, and ephemeral beings merely as a device for detaining them a minute within existence. For without this addition they would have every reason to flee this existence as quickly as Lessing's son.³ The pride connected with knowing and sensing lies like a blinding fog over the eyes and senses of men, thus deceiving them concerning the value of existence. For this pride contains within itself the most flattering estimation of the value of knowing. Deception is the most general effect of such pride, but even its most particular effects contain within themselves something of the same deceitful character.

As a means for the preserving of the individual, the intellect unfolds its principle powers in dissimulation, which is the means by which weaker, less robust individuals preserve themselves—since they have been denied the chance to wage the battle for existence with horns or with the sharp teeth of beasts of prey. This art of dissimulation reaches its peak in man. Deception, flattering, lying, deluding, talking behind the back, putting up a false front, living in borrowed splendor, wearing a mask, hiding behind convention, playing a role for others and for oneself—in short, a continuous fluttering around the *solitary* flame of vanity—is so much the rule and the law among men that there is almost nothing

²*Pathos*. [Tr.]

³A reference to the offspring of Lessing and Eva König, who died on the day of his birth. [Tr.]

which is less comprehensible than how an honest and pure drive for truth could have arisen among them. They are deeply immersed in illusions and in dream images; their eyes merely glide over the surface of things and see “forms.” Their senses nowhere lead to truth; on the contrary, they are content to receive stimuli and, as it were, to engage in a groping game on the backs of things. Moreover, man permits himself to be deceived in his dreams every night of his life. His moral sentiment does not even make an attempt to prevent this, whereas there are supposed to be men who have stopped snoring through sheer will power. What does man actually know about himself? Is he, indeed, ever able to perceive himself completely, as if laid out in a lighted display case? Does nature not conceal most things from him—even concerning his own body—in order to confine and lock him within a proud, deceptive consciousness, aloof from the coils of the bowels, the rapid flow of the blood stream, and the intricate quivering of the fibers! She threw away the key. And woe to that fatal curiosity which might one day have the power to peer out and down through a crack in the chamber of consciousness and then suspect that man is sustained in the indifference of his ignorance by that which is pitiless, greedy, insatiable, and murderous—as if hanging in dreams on the back of a tiger. Given this situation, where in the world could the drive for truth have come from?

Insofar as the individual wants to maintain himself against other individuals, he will under natural circumstances employ the intellect mainly for dissimulation. But at the same time, from boredom and necessity, man wishes to exist socially and with the herd; therefore, he needs to make peace and strives accordingly to banish from his world at least the most flagrant *bellum omni contra omnes*.⁴ This peace treaty brings in its wake something which appears to be the first step toward acquiring that puzzling truth drive: to wit, *that* which shall count as “truth” from now on is established. That is to say, a uniformly valid and binding designation is invented for things, and this legislation of language likewise establishes the first laws of truth. For the contrast

⁴“War of each against all.” [Tr.]

between truth and lie arises here for the first time. The liar is a person who uses the valid designations, the words, in order to make something which is unreal appear to be real. He says, for example, "I am rich," when the proper designation for his condition would be "poor." He misuses fixed conventions by means of arbitrary substitutions or even reversals of names. If he does this in a selfish and moreover harmful manner, society will cease to trust him and will thereby exclude him. What men avoid by excluding the liar is not so much being defrauded as it is being harmed by means of fraud. Thus, even at this stage, what they hate is basically not deception itself, but rather the unpleasant, hated consequences of certain sorts of deception. It is in a similarly restricted sense that man now wants nothing but truth: he desires the pleasant, life-preserving consequences of truth. He is indifferent toward pure knowledge which has no consequences; toward those truths which are possibly harmful and destructive he is even hostilely inclined. And besides, what about these linguistic conventions themselves? Are they perhaps products of knowledge, that is, of the sense of truth? Are designations congruent with things? Is language the adequate expression of all realities?

It is only by means of forgetfulness that man can ever reach the point of fancying himself to possess a "truth" of the grade just indicated. If he will not be satisfied with truth in the form of tautology, that is to say, if he will not be content with empty husks, then he will always exchange truths for illusions. What is a word? It is the copy in sound of a nerve stimulus. But the further inference from the nerve stimulus to a cause outside of us is already the result of a false and unjustifiable application of the principle of sufficient reason.⁵ If truth alone had been the deciding factor in the genesis of language, and if the standpoint of certainty had been decisive for des-

⁵Note that Nietzsche is here engaged in an implicit critique of Schopenhauer, who had been guilty of precisely this misapplication of the principle of sufficient reason in his first book, *The Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason*. It is quite wrong to think that Nietzsche was ever wholly uncritical of Schopenhauer's philosophy (see, for example, the little essay, *Kritik der Schopenhauerischen Philosophie* from 1867, in *MA*, I, pp. 392-401). [Tr.]

ignations, then how could we still dare to say "the stone is hard," as if "hard" were something otherwise familiar to us, and not merely a totally subjective stimulation! We separate things according to gender, designating the tree as masculine and the plant as feminine. What arbitrary assignments!⁶ How far this oversteps the canons of certainty! We speak of a "snake": this designation touches only upon its ability to twist itself and could therefore also fit a worm.⁷ What arbitrary differentiations! What one-sided preferences, first for this, then for that property of a thing! The various languages placed side by side show that with words it is never a question of truth, never a question of adequate expression; otherwise, there would not be so many languages.⁸ The "thing in itself" (which is precisely what the pure truth, apart from any of its consequences, would be) is likewise something quite incomprehensible to the creator of language and something not in the least worth striving for. This creator only designates the relations of things to men, and for expressing these relations he lays hold of the boldest metaphors. To begin with, a nerve stimulus is transferred into an image:⁹ first metaphor. The image, in turn, is imitated in a sound: second metaphor. And each time there is a complete overleaping of one sphere, right into the middle of an entirely new and different one. One can imagine a man who is totally deaf and has never had a sensation of sound and music. Perhaps such a person will gaze with astonishment at Chladni's sound figures; perhaps he will discover their causes in the vibrations of the

⁶*welche willkürlichen Übertragungen*. The specific sense of this passage depends upon the fact that all ordinary nouns in the German language are assigned a gender: the tree is *der Baum*; the plant is *die Pflanze*. This assignment of an original sexual property to all things is the "transference" in question. On the translation of the key term *Übertragung*, see the "Introduction" and *P*, n. 83. [Tr.]

⁷This passage depends upon the etymological relation between the German words *Schlange* (snake) and *schlingen* (to wind or twist), both of which are related to the old High German *slango*. [Tr.]

⁸What Nietzsche is rejecting here is the theory that there is a sort of "naturally appropriate" connection between certain words (or sounds) and things. Such a theory is defended by Socrates in Plato's *Cratylus*. [Tr.]

⁹*Ein Nervenreiz, zuerst übertragen in ein Bild*. The "image" in this case is the visual image, what we "see." [Tr.]

string and will now swear that he must know what men mean by "sound." It is this way with all of us concerning language: we believe that we know something about the things themselves when we speak of trees, colors, snow, and flowers; and yet we possess nothing but metaphors for things—metaphors which correspond in no way to the original entities.¹⁰ In the same way that the sound appears as a sand figure, so the mysterious X of the thing in itself first appears as a nerve stimulus, then as an image, and finally as a sound. Thus the genesis of language does not proceed logically in any case, and all the material within and with which the man of truth, the scientist, and the philosopher later work and build, if not derived from never-never land,¹¹ is at least not derived from the essence of things.

In particular, let us further consider the formation of concepts. Every word instantly becomes a concept precisely insofar as it is not supposed to serve as a reminder of the unique and entirely individual original experience to which it owes its origin; but rather, a word becomes a concept insofar as it simultaneously has to fit countless more or less similar cases—which means, purely and simply, cases which are never equal and thus altogether unequal. Every concept arises from the equation of unequal things. Just as it is certain that one leaf is never totally the same as another, so it is certain that the concept "leaf" is formed by arbitrarily discarding these individual differences and by forgetting the distinguishing aspects. This awakens the idea that, in addition to the leaves, there exists in nature the "leaf": the original model according to which all the leaves were perhaps woven, sketched, measured, colored, curled, and painted—but by incompetent hands, so that no specimen has turned out to be a correct, trustworthy, and faithful likeness of the original model. We call a person "honest," and then we ask "why has he behaved so honestly today?" Our usual answer is, "on account of his honesty." Honesty! This in turn means that the leaf is the cause of the leaves. We know nothing whatsoever about an essential quality called

¹⁰*Wesenheiten*. [Tr.]

¹¹*Wolkenkuckuksheim*: literally, "cloud-cuckoo-land." [Tr.]

"honesty"; but we do know of countless individualized and consequently unequal actions which we equate by omitting the aspects in which they are unequal and which we now designate as "honest" actions. Finally we formulate from them a *qualitas occulta*¹² which has the name "honesty." We obtain the concept, as we do the form, by overlooking what is individual and actual; whereas nature is acquainted with no forms and no concepts, and likewise with no species, but only with an X which remains inaccessible and undefinable for us. For even our contrast between individual and species is something anthropomorphic and does not originate in the essence of things; although we should not presume to claim that this contrast does not correspond to the essence of things: that would of course be a dogmatic assertion and, as such, would be just as indemonstrable as its opposite.

What then is truth? A movable host of metaphors, metonymies, and anthropomorphisms: in short, a sum of human relations which have been poetically and rhetorically intensified, transferred, and embellished, and which, after long usage, seem to a people to be fixed, canonical, and binding. Truths are illusions which we have forgotten are illusions; they are metaphors that have become worn out and have been drained of sensuous force, coins which have lost their embossing and are now considered as metal and no longer as coins.

We still do not yet know where the drive for truth comes from. For so far we have heard only of the duty which society imposes in order to exist: to be truthful means to employ the usual metaphors. Thus, to express it morally, this is the duty to lie according to a fixed convention, to lie with the herd and in a manner binding upon everyone. Now man of course forgets that this is the way things stand for him. Thus he lies in the manner indicated, unconsciously and in accordance with habits which are centuries old; and precisely *by means of this unconsciousness* and forgetfulness he arrives at his sense of truth. From the sense that one is obliged to designate one thing as "red," another as "cold," and a third as "mute," there arises a moral impulse in regard

¹²"Occult quality." [Tr.]

to truth. The venerability, reliability, and utility of truth is something which a person demonstrates for himself from the contrast with the liar, whom no one trusts and everyone excludes. As a “rational” being, he now places his behavior under the control of abstractions. He will no longer tolerate being carried away by sudden impressions, by intuitions. First he universalizes all these impressions into less colorful, cooler concepts, so that he can entrust the guidance of his life and conduct to them. Everything which distinguishes man from the animals depends upon this ability to volatilize perceptual metaphors¹³ in a schema, and thus to dissolve an image into a concept. For something is possible in the realm of these schemata which could never be achieved with the vivid first impressions: the construction of a pyramidal order according to castes and degrees, the creation of a new world of laws, privileges, subordinations, and clearly marked boundaries—a new world, one which now confronts that other vivid world of first impressions as more solid, more universal, better known, and more human than the immediately perceived world, and thus as the regulative and imperative world. Whereas each perceptual metaphor is individual and without equals and is therefore able to elude all classification, the great edifice of concepts displays the rigid regularity of a Roman columbarium¹⁴ and exhales in logic that strength and coolness which is characteristic of mathematics. Anyone who has felt this cool breath [of logic] will hardly believe that even the concept—which is as bony, foursquare, and transposable as a die—is nevertheless merely the *residue of a metaphor*, and that the illusion which is involved in the artistic transference of a nerve stimulus into images is, if not the mother, then the grandmother of every single concept.¹⁵ But in this conceptual crap game “truth” means using every die in the designated manner, counting its spots accurately, fashioning the right cate-

gories, and never violating the order of caste and class rank. Just as the Romans and Etruscans cut up the heavens with rigid mathematical lines and confined a god within each of the spaces thereby delimited, as within a *templum*,¹⁶ so every people has a similarly mathematically divided conceptual heaven above themselves and henceforth thinks that truth demands that each conceptual god be sought only within *his own* sphere. Here one may certainly admire man as a mighty genius of construction, who succeeds in piling up an infinitely complicated dome of concepts upon an unstable foundation, and, as it were, on running water. Of course, in order to be supported by such a foundation, his construction must be like one constructed of spiders’ webs: delicate enough to be carried along by the waves, strong enough not to be blown apart by every wind. As a genius of construction man raises himself far above the bee in the following way: whereas the bee builds with wax that he gathers from nature, man builds with the far more delicate conceptual material which he first has to manufacture from himself. In this he is greatly to be admired, but not on account of his drive for truth or for pure knowledge of things. When someone hides something behind a bush and looks for it again in the same place and finds it there as well, there is not much to praise in such seeking and finding. Yet this is how matters stand regarding seeking and finding “truth” within the realm of reason. If I make up the definition of a mammal, and then, after inspecting a camel, declare “look, a mammal,” I have indeed brought a truth to light in this way, but it is a truth of limited value. That is to say, it is a thoroughly anthropomorphic truth which contains not a single point which would be “true in itself” or really and universally valid apart from man. At bottom, what the investigator of such truths is seeking is only the metamorphosis of the world into man. He strives to understand the world as something analogous to man, and at best he achieves by his struggles the feeling of assimilation. Similar to the way in which astrologers considered the stars to be in man’s service and connected with his happiness and

¹³*die anschaulichen Metaphern*. . . . The adjective *anschaulich* has the additional sense of “vivid”—as in the next sentence (“vivid first impressions”). [Tr.]

¹⁴A columbarium is a vault with niches for funeral urns containing the ashes of cremated bodies. [Tr.]

¹⁵I.e., concepts are derived from images, which are, in turn, derived from nerve stimuli. [Tr.]

¹⁶A delimited space restricted to a particular purpose, especially a religiously sanctified area. [Tr.]

sorrow, such an investigator considers the entire universe in connection with man: the entire universe as the infinitely fractured echo of one original sound—man; the entire universe as the infinitely multiplied copy of one original picture—man. His method is to treat man as the measure of all things, but in doing so he again proceeds from the error of believing that he has these things [which he intends to measure] immediately before him as mere objects. He forgets that the original perceptual metaphors are metaphors and takes them to be the things themselves.

Only by forgetting this primitive world of metaphor can one live with any repose, security, and consistency: only by means of the petrification and coagulation of a mass of images which originally streamed from the primal faculty of human imagination like a fiery liquid, only in the invincible faith that *this sun, this window, this table* is a truth in itself, in short, only by forgetting that he himself is an *artistically creating* subject, does man live with any repose, security, and consistency. If but for an instant he could escape from the prison walls of this faith, his “self consciousness” would be immediately destroyed. It is even a difficult thing for him to admit to himself that the insect or the bird perceives an entirely different world from the one that man does, and that the question of which of these perceptions of the world is the more correct one is quite meaningless, for this would have to have been decided previously in accordance with the criterion of the *correct perception*, which means, in accordance with a criterion which is *not available*. But in any case it seems to me that “the correct perception”—which would mean “the adequate expression of an object in the subject”—is a contradictory impossibility.¹⁷ For between two absolutely different spheres, as between subject and object, there is no causality, no correctness, and no expression; there is, at most, an *aesthetic* relation:¹⁸ I mean, a suggestive transference, a stammering translation into a completely foreign

tongue—for which there is required, in any case, a freely inventive intermediate sphere and mediating force. “Appearance” is a word that contains many temptations, which is why I avoid it as much as possible. For it is not true that the essence of things “appears” in the empirical world. A painter without hands who wished to express in song the picture before his mind would, by means of this substitution of spheres, still reveal more about the essence of things than does the empirical world. Even the relationship of a nerve stimulus to the generated image is not a necessary one. But when the same image has been generated millions of times and has been handed down for many generations and finally appears on the same occasion every time for all mankind, then it acquires at last the same meaning for men it would have if it were the sole necessary image and if the relationship of the original nerve stimulus to the generated image were a strictly causal one. In the same manner, an eternally repeated dream would certainly be felt and judged to be reality. But the hardening and congealing of a metaphor guarantees absolutely nothing concerning its necessity and exclusive justification.

Every person who is familiar with such considerations has no doubt felt a deep mistrust of all idealism of this sort: just as often as he has quite clearly convinced himself of the eternal consistency, omnipresence, and infallibility of the laws of nature. He has concluded that so far as we can penetrate here—from the telescopic heights to the microscopic depths—everything is secure, complete, infinite, regular, and without any gaps. Science will be able to dig successfully in this shaft forever, and all the things that are discovered will harmonize with and not contradict each other. How little does this resemble a product of the imagination, for if it were such, there should be some place where the illusion and unreality can be divined. Against this, the following must be said: if each of us had a different kind of sense perception—if we could only perceive things now as a bird, now as a worm, now as a plant, or if one of us saw a stimulus as red, another as blue, while a third even heard the same stimulus as a sound—then no one would speak of such a regularity of nature, rather, nature would be

¹⁷*ein widerspruchsvolles Unding.* [Tr.]

¹⁸*ein ästhetisches Verhalten.* A more literal translation of *Verhalten* is “behavior,” “attitude,” or perhaps “disposition.” [Tr.]

grasped only as a creation which is subjective in the highest degree. After all, what is a law of nature as such for us? We are not acquainted with it in itself, but only with its effects, which means in its relation to other laws of nature—which, in turn, are known to us only as sums of relations. Therefore all these relations always refer again to others and are thoroughly incomprehensible to us in their essence. All that we actually know about these laws of nature is what we ourselves bring to them—time and space, and therefore relationships of succession and number. But everything marvelous about the laws of nature, everything that quite astonishes us therein and seems to demand our explanation, everything that might lead us to distrust idealism: all this is completely and solely contained within the mathematical strictness and inviolability of our representations of time and space. But we produce these representations in and from ourselves with the same necessity with which the spider spins. If we are forced to comprehend all things only under these forms, then it ceases to be amazing that in all things we actually comprehend nothing but these forms. For they must all bear within themselves the laws of number, and it is precisely number which is most astonishing in things. All that conformity to law, which impresses us so much in the movement of the stars and in chemical processes, coincides at bottom with those properties which we bring to things. Thus it is we who impress ourselves in this way. In conjunction with this it of course follows that the artistic process of metaphor formation with which every sensation begins in us already presupposes these forms and thus occurs within them. The only way in which the possibility of subsequently constructing a new conceptual edifice from metaphors themselves can be explained is by the firm persistence of these original forms. That is to say, this conceptual edifice is an imitation of temporal, spatial, and numerical relationships in the domain of metaphor.¹⁹

¹⁹This is where section I of the fair copy made by von Gersdorff ends. But according to Schlechta (in Schlechta/Anders, pp. 14–5) Nietzsche's preliminary version continued as follows:

Empty space and empty time are ideas which are possible at any time. Every concept, thus an empty metaphor, is only

2

We have seen how it is originally *language* which works on the construction of concepts, a labor taken over in later ages by *science*. Just as the bee simultaneously constructs cells and fills them with honey, so science works unceasingly on this great columbarium of concepts, the graveyard of perceptions. It is always building new, higher stories and shoring up, cleaning, and renovating the old cells; above all, it takes pains to fill up this monstrously towering framework and to arrange therein the entire empirical world, which is to say, the anthropomorphic world. Whereas the man of action binds his life to reason and its concepts so that he will not be swept away and lost, the scientific investigator builds his hut right next to the tower of science so that he will be able to work on it and to find shelter for himself beneath those bulwarks which presently exist. And he requires shelter, for there are frightful powers which continuously break in upon him, powers which oppose scientific "truth" with completely different kinds of "truths" which bear on their shields the most varied sorts of emblems.

The drive toward the formation of metaphors is the fundamental human drive, which one cannot for a single instant dispense with in thought, for one would thereby dispense with man himself. This drive is not truly vanquished and scarcely subdued by the fact that a regular and rigid new world is constructed as its prison from its own ephemeral products, the concepts. It seeks a new realm and another channel for its activity, and it finds this in *myth* and in *art* generally. This drive continually confuses the conceptual categories and cells by bringing forward new transferences, metaphors, and metonymies. It continually manifests an ardent desire to refashion the world which presents itself to waking man, so that it will be as colorful, irregular, lacking in results and coherence, charming, and eternally new as the world of dreams. Indeed, it is

an imitation of these first ideas: space, time, and causality. Afterwards, the original imaginative act of transference into images: the first provides the matter, the second the qualities which we believe in. Comparison to music. How can one speak of it? [Tr.]

only by means of the rigid and regular web of concepts that the waking man clearly sees that he is awake; and it is precisely because of this that he sometimes thinks that he must be dreaming when this web of concepts is torn by art. Pascal is right in maintaining that if the same dream came to us every night we would be just as occupied with it as we are with the things that we see every day. "If a workman were sure to dream for twelve straight hours every night that he was king," said Pascal, "I believe that he would be just as happy as a king who dreamt for twelve hours every night that he was a workman."²⁰ In fact, because of the way that myth takes it for granted that miracles are always happening, the waking life of a mythically inspired people—the ancient Greeks, for instance—more closely resembles a dream than it does the waking world of a scientifically disenchanted thinker. When every tree can suddenly speak as a nymph, when a god in the shape of a bull can drag away maidens, when even the goddess Athena herself is suddenly seen in the company of Peisistratus driving through the market place of Athens with a beautiful team of horses²¹—and this is what the honest Athenian believed—then, as in a dream, anything is possible at each moment, and all of nature swarms around man as if it were nothing but a masquerade of the gods, who were merely amusing themselves by deceiving men in all these shapes.

But man has an invincible inclination to allow himself to be deceived and is, as it were, enchanted with happiness when the rhapsodist tells him epic fables as if they were true, or when the actor in the theater acts more royally than any real king. So long as it is able to deceive without *injuring*, that master of deception, the intellect, is free; it is released from its former slavery and

²⁰*Pensées*, number 386. Actually, Pascal says that the workman would be "almost as happy" as the king in this case! [Tr.]

²¹According to the story told by Herodotus (*Histories* I, 60) the tyrant Peisistratus adopted the following ruse to secure his popular acceptance upon his return from exile: he entered Athens in a chariot accompanied by a woman named Phye who was dressed in the costume of Athena. Thus the people were supposed to have been convinced that it was the goddess herself who was conducting the tyrant back to the Acropolis. [Tr.]

celebrates its Saturnalia. It is never more luxuriant, richer, prouder, more clever, and more daring. With creative pleasure it throws metaphors into confusion and displaces the boundary stones of abstractions, so that, for example, it designates the stream as "the moving path which carries man where he would otherwise walk." The intellect has now thrown the token of bondage from itself. At other times it endeavors, with gloomy officiousness, to show the way and to demonstrate the tools to a poor individual who covets existence; it is like a servant who goes in search of booty and prey for his master. But now it has become the master and it dares to wipe from its face the expression of indigence. In comparison with its previous conduct, everything that it now does bears the mark of dissimulation,²² just as that previous conduct did of distortion.²³ The free intellect copies human life, but it considers this life to be something good and seems to be quite satisfied with it. That immense framework and planking of concepts to which the needy man clings his whole life long in order to preserve himself is nothing but a scaffolding and toy for the most audacious feats of the liberated intellect. And when it smashes this framework to pieces, throws it into confusion, and puts it back together in an ironic fashion, pairing the most alien things and separating the closest, it is demonstrating that it has no need of these makeshifts of indigence and that it will now be guided by intuitions rather than by concepts. There is no regular path which leads from these intuitions into the land of ghostly schemata, the land of abstractions. There exists no word for these intuitions; when man sees them he grows dumb, or else he speaks only in forbidden metaphors and in unheard-of combinations of concepts. He does this so that by shattering and mocking the old conceptual barriers he may at least correspond creatively to the impression of the powerful present intuition.

There are ages in which the rational man and the intuitive man stand side by side, the one in fear of intuition, the other with scorn for abstraction. The latter is just as irrational as the former is inartistic. They both desire to rule over life: the

²²*Verstellung*. [Tr.]

²³*Verzerrung*. [Tr.]

former, by knowing how to meet his principal needs by means of foresight, prudence, and regularity; the latter, by disregarding these needs and, as an "overjoyed hero," counting as real only that life which has been disguised as illusion and beauty. Whenever, as was perhaps the case in ancient Greece, the intuitive man handles his weapons more authoritatively and victoriously than his opponent, then, under favorable circumstances, a culture can take shape and art's mastery over life can be established. All the manifestations of such a life will be accompanied by this dissimulation, this disavowal of indigence, this glitter of metaphorical intuitions, and, in general, this immediacy of deception: neither the house, nor the gait, nor the clothes, nor the clay jugs give evidence of having been invented because of a pressing need. It seems as if they were all intended to express an exalted happiness, an Olympian cloudlessness, and, as it were, a playing with seriousness. The man who is guided by concepts and abstractions only succeeds by such means in warding off misfortune, without ever gaining any happiness for himself from these abstractions. And while he aims for the greatest possible freedom from pain, the intuitive man,

standing in the midst of a culture, already reaps from his intuition a harvest of continually inflowing illumination, cheer, and redemption—in addition to obtaining a defense against misfortune. To be sure, he suffers more intensely, *when* he suffers; he even suffers more frequently, since he does not understand how to learn from experience and keeps falling over and over again into the same ditch. He is then just as irrational in sorrow as he is in happiness: he cries aloud and will not be consoled. How differently the stoical man who learns from experience and governs himself by concepts is affected by the same misfortunes! This man, who at other times seeks nothing but sincerity, truth, freedom from deception, and protection against ensnaring surprise attacks, now executes a masterpiece of deception: he executes his masterpiece of deception in misfortune, as the other type of man executes his in times of happiness. He wears no quivering and changeable human face, but, as it were, a mask with dignified, symmetrical features. He does not cry; he does not even alter his voice. When a real storm cloud thunders above him, he wraps himself in his cloak, and with slow steps he walks from beneath it.

Part Six

**MODERN AND
POSTMODERN RHETORIC**

Introduction

At the beginning of the twentieth century, rhetoric appeared to be in decline. As an academic discipline, it no longer occupied a prominent place in the university. In Europe, some universities discarded it altogether as a relic of the outmoded classical curriculum, and in others it was absorbed into the study of classics. In England, where debate developed into a competitive sport, rhetoric nonetheless progressively lost its academic presence. In the United States, it was reduced to a few courses in writing and speaking that served the needs of a new curriculum dominated by modern languages and science. Specialization and departmentalization in the modern university dispersed the many traditional intellectual concerns of rhetoric to other disciplines such as psychology, linguistics, philosophy, and literary studies.

But in the course of the twentieth century rhetoric became, once again, a valuable interdisciplinary theory of language and meaning. Philosophers and literary critics rediscovered rhetoric—or reinvented it under some other rubric, such as “discourse” or “dialogism”—as a solution to problems raised by traditional theories of language and meaning. Rhetoric has been enriched by their efforts. It has grown to encompass a theory of language as a form of social behavior, of intention and interpretation as the determinants of meaning, of the way that knowledge is created by argument, and of the way that ideology and power are extended through language. In this same period, the history of rhetoric has been rediscovered and reimagined. Enlarged as a theoretical resource, rhetoric has also expanded its grasp of the ways that women, people of color, and cultural or ethnic minorities use language to gain a hearing for themselves. In short, rhetoric has become a comprehensive theory of language as effective discourse.

The themes of language and meaning, ethics and ideology, and argument and knowledge recur and overlap at each stage in the formulation of rhetorical theories during the twentieth century. The chronological stages outlined below are arbitrary conveniences that locate groups of ideas around the dates of major texts. But it is the interconnection of these ideas—not just their chronological succession—that best characterizes twentieth-century rhetoric.

RHETORIC AND COMPOSITION

By the end of the nineteenth century, college rhetoric in the United States had become freshman English, a one- or two-semester writing course focusing on technical skill in grammar and usage, paragraph coherence, and exercises in the modes of discourse—description, narration, exposition, and argumentation (as described in the introduction to Part Five). Invention, in the classical sense of discovering probabilistic arguments, was rarely studied, for it was believed that knowledge came from the sciences and from careful observation. The job of rhetoric was therefore to record and transmit this knowledge with a minimum of distortion.

Professors in the newly established English departments advanced their professional interests through the study of modern literature, far from the outdated tradition of rhetoric and what they regarded as the philistinism of technically oriented composition. Composition instructors—graduate students and junior faculty members of the English department, most of whom were eager to gain higher status and leave composition behind as soon as possible—were content to rely on the nineteenth-century approach now known as “current-traditional,” which emphasized expository writing, the modes of discourse, and prescriptive grammar, usage, and style. Although some professors who urged a focus on public discourse and argumentation expressed opposition to the current-traditional approach, that method prevailed and, indeed, continued to be the predominant approach to composition through the first two-thirds of the twentieth century—and on some campuses much longer.

In the first decades of the twentieth century, composition courses in some of the more elite colleges used creative writing, reflective essays, and autobiography as an alternative to the dominant model of expository writing. Students were to express their own meanings, to regard themselves as artists, and to be original in thought and style. Personal writing advocates drew some support from the new field of psychoanalysis—self-expression seemed to be therapeutic, not merely self-indulgent—and, later, from the student-centered pedagogy associated with the Progressive movement in education during the 1920s and 1930s. The concerns of the Progressives merged with the modern (perhaps now we would say *modernist*) development of the social sciences in the communication movement of the succeeding decades. *Communication* was a way of thinking about language and rhetoric as a means or a “technology” for sharing experiences in a social setting. Thus communication theory drew on psychology, sociology, and even anthropology, while incorporating insights from information theory and semantics. This movement, although short-lived in most colleges and schools, was an important precursor of an interdisciplinary approach to the study of language that would become prominent later in the century.

For the most part, however, the technical concerns that dominated the undergraduate curriculum during the first part of the twentieth century meant that expository writing and grammar suited the generally practical goals of most colleges and their students. The expressive writing course never seriously challenged the current-traditional model for dominance and soon became identified as a separate course in creative writing. A more lasting effect of the creative writing approach was the in-

roduction of literary study into the composition course, which was appropriate, argued English professors, because literature provided teachable content, something to write about other than oneself or arbitrarily chosen subjects in which the teacher was not an expert.

Interest in rhetoric as a historical and theoretical discipline revived in some English departments (most notably in the University of Chicago, home of the neo-Aristotelian movement) in the fifties and sixties. In addition to studies of medieval and Renaissance literature that acknowledged the importance of rhetoric in those periods, there appeared scholarly analyses of rhetorical history and theory by English professors such as Richard Weaver and Richard McKeon. Weaver and other scholars who took part in the rhetorical revival—for example, Edward P. J. Corbett (*Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*, 1965), Wayne Booth (“The Revival of Rhetoric,” 1965), and James Kinneavy (*A Theory of Discourse*, 1971)—applied the lessons of the rhetorical tradition to composition, arguing that rhetoric was the true basis of the discipline for both pedagogy and research.

But in the 1960s and 1970s, self-expression rather than rhetoric once again appeared to be the chief alternative to the current-traditional model. Expressivism returned to the composition course as a response to political events, chiefly the civil rights movement and the Vietnam War, and to the increase in college admissions that required new approaches to “basic” writing. Personal writing, the individual’s search for an “authentic voice,” was regarded as a form of opposition to the impersonal and oppressive Establishment: It was an assertion of personal freedom in the face of the corporate and political forces that urged conformity. For all the popularity of expressivism, the current-traditional approach continued to be the most widely used method of composition instruction during the sixties and seventies. Nonetheless, expressivism had the salutary effect of sparking renewed interest in composition theory by questioning the prevailing approach and by turning attention to the experience of the writer in the process of writing.

The process model of composing that emerged during the 1970s uses a psychological approach reminiscent of the communication theory movement—it observes writers at work and attempts to identify those activities that produce good writing. The process model has clear affinities with the traditional rhetorical model of invention, arrangement, and style. For example, the “heuristics” that operate in the “prewriting” stage of the writing process can be regarded as versions of invention and arrangement. But many advocates of the process theory emphasized “cognitive” processes and “scientific” methods of research, so that for most composition teachers, the relationship between their work and the rhetorical tradition remained rather tenuous.

As the discipline of composition became more vigorous and more independent of literary study, the links between composition and traditional rhetoric became stronger. The “academic discourse” theory of composition, for example, favors rhetorical analysis of the genres of academic writing. In doing so, this theory looks at conventions of address as well as at the persuasive intent of all forms of writing. Moreover, the difficult relationship between the English department and its writing program was extensively examined and its history analyzed as composition programs

sought greater respect. Another positive sign is that literary criticism has come to take a brighter view of rhetoric. Most important for the growing connection between composition and rhetoric, however, is the professionalization of composition: the development of graduate programs in the field and the increasing number of scholars who study rhetoric from the point of view of composition.

SPEECH COMMUNICATION

Departments of speech formed in the United States at the turn of the twentieth century, breaking away from English departments, whose primary focus was literature. The curriculum of the new speech department was based on the public speaking course, which had been oddly neglected by most universities at a time when public lectures were eagerly attended and when popular political oratory was a powerful force. The speech course was, and continues to be, quite popular with students for whom the ability to speak confidently, both on the job and in community life, may be as important as the ability to write well.

In speech as in composition, the prevailing view of rhetoric since the beginning of the twentieth century has been instrumental or managerial: The purpose of rhetoric, in other words, is to convey knowledge clearly and efficiently. For this purpose, an Aristotelian approach proved entirely satisfactory. The basic course in public speaking continues to be dominated by the traditional categories of invention (or research), arrangement, style, memory (or practice), and delivery, and by the traditional forms of appeal to reason, emotion, and authority.

The basic speech course (like the composition course) focuses on a practice rather than an abstract body of knowledge, and so rhetorical theory is rarely a course topic. Instructors are more likely to be interested in pedagogical theory, focusing, for example, on the comparison between the so-called skill-oriented and function-oriented models of teaching speech communication. As long as departments of speech were devoted entirely to these basic undergraduate courses, as they were for the first quarter of the twentieth century, there was little cause to look into large theoretical questions.

In the twenties, however, speech departments sought to develop a graduate curriculum and a research agenda, and so they turned to the psychological and sociological study of speech (in the so-called Midwestern school) and to the history of rhetoric (in the so-called Cornell school). The Midwesterners sought to base the new discipline in science, discovering through behavioral psychology the springs of oral persuasion. Their speech curriculum included oral interpretation, drama, speech and diction, and speech pathology, to which they later added interpersonal, group, organizational and mass communication, public relations, and journalism. The Cornell group focused on rhetorical theory and oratory, including speech criticism (based, as the public speaking course was, on classical principles), and soon generated a plethora of historical studies of rhetoricians and orators.

For both composition and speech communication, however, the disciplinary gestation period that extended through much of the twentieth century delayed the de-

velopment of new theoretical perspectives or even the active assimilation of avant-garde positions in the philosophy of language that influenced scholars in more established fields. But in the fifties and thereafter, academic rhetoricians took more interest in theory, especially by converting the work of I. A. Richards, Kenneth Burke, Chaim Perelman, and Stephen Toulmin into analytical methods. The social protest movements of the sixties affected speech and composition similarly, sparking internal criticism and an investigation of traditional assumptions. In both disciplines, the result has been a turn toward an ideological and epistemological analysis of rhetoric, alongside a more rigorously scientific approach to psychological and statistical studies of language behavior.

ACADEMIC RHETORIC IN EUROPE AND THE UNITED STATES

At the beginning of the twentieth century, a vestigial course requirement at the secondary level was all that remained of the study of rhetoric in French and other western European schools. Philosopher Chaim Perelman (p. 1372), educated in Belgium, recalls cramming for an exam on the names of tropes and then forgetting about rhetoric until years later, when he learned that rhetoric had once been considered the counterpart of dialectic. He felt then that he had “rediscovered a part of Aristotelian logic that had long been forgotten, or at any rate, ignored and despised.”¹ His discovery is detailed in *The New Rhetoric*, which was largely responsible for a resurgence of interest in rhetoric on the Continent.

For most European language theorists, including Stephen Toulmin, Michel Foucault, and Jacques Derrida, rhetoric is a limited and moribund subject. Those who speak of it positively, like Perelman or I. A. Richards, speak in terms of its re-discovery and rehabilitation.

So, too, in the United States. In his 1950 book, *A Rhetoric of Motives*, Kenneth Burke (p. 1295) announces his aim to “rediscover rhetorical elements that had become obscured when rhetoric as a term fell into disuse, and other specialized disciplines such as esthetics, anthropology, psychoanalysis, and sociology came to the fore (so that esthetics sought to outlaw rhetoric, while the other sciences we have mentioned took over, each in its own terms, the rich rhetorical elements that esthetics would ban).”² Burke sees rhetoric as the loser in a conflict with literature (or “esthetics”), with social science available for additional depredations. Burke’s perception follows the history of rhetoric in American universities. But whereas literature was the chief opponent of rhetoric in America, linguistics and semantics opposed rhetoric in European intellectual life at the beginning of the century. Linguistics and semantics sought the “true” relationship between language and reality, a relationship that was not illuminated, or so it then seemed, by rhetoric. The story of rhetorical theory in the twentieth century is, to a considerable extent, the story of how the philosophy of language on the one hand and literary criticism on

¹See p. 1390 in this book.

²See p. 1324 in this book.

the other moved to consolidate once again the richness of rhetoric as a theory of language in use.

PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE VERSUS RHETORIC

In his excellent introduction to Jacques Derrida's *Speech and Phenomena*, Newton Garver notes that "the mediaeval trivium [grammar, logic, and rhetoric] is a much sounder approach to the study of language and gives a much more adequate framework for understanding the philosophy of language than its all too fashionable neglect might lead one to suppose."³ Grammar, as Garver explains, concerns linguistic competence; logic is a matter of knowing what expressions are sensible or not; and rhetoric, released from bondage to tropes and figures, is "not a matter of pure form but has to do with the relation of language to the world (to life) through the relation of linguistic expressions to the specific circumstances in which their use makes sense."⁴ Garver goes on to say, "In these traditional terms, the central issue of philosophy of language, the issue around which all other issues revolve and to which they all return and in terms of which we can surely see the relation of Derrida to other philosophers, is the issue about the relation of logic and rhetoric."⁵ Derrida's project, Garver says, is to attack "the whole tradition in which language is conceived as founded on logic rather than on rhetoric."⁶ Such an attack is necessary partly because, "unlike grammar and logic, rhetoric has not been refurbished by new ideas and new vigor but remains a weak and ancillary discipline about which few students of language have strong or clear ideas."⁷

Traditional language philosophy treats language as an imperfect expression of logic. Since philosophy is conducted in language and dependent on it, many branches of philosophy reflect on language, quite often in the effort to render it, or at least its philosophical manifestations, more nearly perfect. Thus in metaphysics a persistent concern has been to determine the relationship between real things and the linguistic expressions that (presumably) name them. Epistemology faces the same problem with respect to the relationship between our ability to know something and the way we express or describe it. Logic itself has a similar concern with language and its perfectibility, for logic seeks to analyze the truth values of statements based on inferential reasoning. In its more recent history, too, philosophy has been shifting to a more language-oriented analysis of concepts. Instead of seeking phenomena that correspond to concepts (morality, justice, and causality, for example) or of positing the ideal existence of concepts, philosophers are now more likely to ask what it means to speak of a concept, to define the terms that identify concepts, and to be self-conscious about semantic problems that arise in dealing with concepts.

³Newton Garver, "Preface," in Jacques Derrida, *Speech and Phenomena* (1967; trans. David Allison, Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), p. ix.

⁴Garver, p. x.

⁵Garver, p. xi.

⁶Garver, p. xiii.

⁷Garver, p. xvii.

SEMANTICS AND SEMIOTICS

Semantics is the branch of philosophy that focuses on language itself, examining such issues as *meaning*, *synonymy*, *polysemy* (multiple meanings of single words), *ambiguity*, *literal* versus *figurative* expression, distinctions between types of meaning (such as *expressive* and *emotive*), and the relationship between the structure of language and the structure of reality. In the twentieth century, the most significant semantic theory is semiology or semiotics—the theory of signs and signification.

American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce, who produced an influential theory of semiotics in the first years of the twentieth century, describes semiotics as heir to the trivium: Grammar, in semiotics, becomes the study of the conditions of meaning; logic becomes the study of the conditions of truth; and rhetoric becomes the study of the relations among signs. A sign (a word, for example) operates, Peirce says, by calling up an “interpretant” in the interpreter’s mind. The interpretant is also a sign, but it is a mental one. Thus the operation of what Peirce called “semiosis” leads from one sign to another: The mental sign, not the communicative one, has a referent in the world. Meaning, in Peirce’s scheme, is not identified with the interpretant nor even with the interpretant’s reference, but rather with the effect of the proposition upon the interpreter. Thus defined, he called the study of meaning “pragmatism.” Later philosophers referred to the elements of Peirce’s trivium as “syntactics,” “semantics,” and “pragmatics,” names given them by Peirce’s chief interpreter, philosopher C. W. Morris. Later discussions of Peirce’s theory generally ignore its connections to rhetoric and the medieval trivium.

The Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure developed, independently of Peirce, a similar theory of signs that he called semiology. For Saussure, the system of language (*langue*) makes possible and gives meaning to utterances (*parole*). *Langue* is a kind of social contract, the general grammar and lexicon that particular speakers must use to communicate successfully. Linguists study *langue*, which has two aspects, the diachronic (its history) and the synchronic (the system at a given moment). Saussure stresses that signs are arbitrary and without inherent meaning. Meaning, for Saussure, is a psychological phenomenon, a matter of the way that linguistic signs call up mental images. Meaning is not, therefore, the concern of the science of semiology: “To determine the exact place of semiology is the task of the psychologist.”⁸

Peirce influenced mainly American philosophers, and Saussure Continental ones. The decisive influence on Anglo-American philosophy of language in this period, however, comes from Bertrand Russell and Ludwig Wittgenstein. Russell, at the beginning of the century, promoted “logical atomism,” a method of reducing language to a form that would allow philosophers to determine how reality was constituted by making a linguistic analysis of propositional statements (assertions about reality). And Wittgenstein says, in the *Tractatus Logicophilosophicus* of 1922, that propositions are pictures or models of reality. The school of analytic philosophy that follows the work of Russell and Wittgenstein holds that much of philosophy is

⁸Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics* (1916), ed. C. Bally and A. Sechehaye, trans. Wade Baskin (New York: Philosophical Library, 1959), p. 16.

meaningless because philosophers have misused ordinary language. From this premise, two conclusions have emerged. One conclusion, preferred by the so-called neopositivists, is that language is inherently confusing and illogical and should be purified, at least for philosophical purposes. The other conclusion, adopted by the “ordinary language” philosophers, is that use determines meaning. Wittgenstein in his later work takes this position, and speech-act theorist J. L. Austin is one of its most important defenders.

The recent history of language philosophy thus shows some tolerance for theories of meaning based on context and use, but its main tendency is a continued reluctance to move away from the search for a universal basis for language in universal grammar or in psychology if not in logic itself. Rhetoric has been, at best, a marginal concern for both Continental and Anglo-American philosophy.

It is against the background of these developments in the philosophy of language that I. A. Richards and Mikhail Bakhtin call for a reexamination of the meaning of meaning.

THE MEANING OF MEANING IN PHILOSOPHY AND LITERATURE

I. A. Richards (1893–1979; p. 1270) and his collaborator, Cambridge philosopher C. K. Ogden, discuss the work of Peirce, Saussure, Russell, and Wittgenstein in their influential book, *The Meaning of Meaning* (1923). Richards and Ogden illustrate Peirce’s theory of signs with a communication triangle, in which the linguistic sign directly calls up the mental sign or reference and only indirectly stands for the extramental and extralinguistic “referent” out in the world of things or ideas. They also endorse Saussure’s principle of the arbitrariness of signs. But Saussure sidesteps the problem of meaning, which is precisely the issue that concerns them. Signs, to be meaningful, require interpretation, and Richards and Ogden conclude that sign interpretation is conditioned by the situations in which the sign has been experienced. Meaning therefore inheres not in words themselves but in the remembered contexts in which they have appeared to the interpreter. Richards carried this analysis of meaning into literary criticism and eventually identified it with the essence of rhetoric.

In the twenties and thirties, the aesthetically oriented New Criticism arose in the United States, and Formalism, based on structural linguistics, developed in eastern Europe. Both of these approaches eschewed the previously popular historical and biographical approaches to literary scholarship, focusing instead on the aesthetic experience of the text and the attempt to describe the text’s meaning, from which the reader’s aesthetic experience was inseparable. The artful quality of literature was taken to be evidence that literary language was more emotive, suggestive, and powerful than ordinary language. This distinction was not new: Drawing on Wordsworth’s idea that poetry is the expression of feeling, nineteenth-century philosopher John Stuart Mill had posited a scale in which expressive language (in the form of lyric poetry) was placed at the top and mere exposition at the bottom. The most expressive genres were the most literary, followed by the lesser, mixed genres, and finally the nonexpressive, purely descriptive genres. Literary language was complex and metaphoric, whereas ordinary language sought clarity in simplicity.

I. A. Richards, in his role as founder of an influential variety of formalist criticism, also observes the literary-ordinary language distinction, but he argues that the ground of meaning for both literary language and ordinary language is the same: They are both sign systems. In his early literary-critical work, *Principles of Literary Criticism* (1924), Richards says that poems must be treated like other sign systems that readers experience, as he had explained in *The Meaning of Meaning*: Previous experiences of language use—in this case, of reading poetry—determine how poems are understood.

But, like other formalists who claimed that the reader's psychological response was the basis of meaning, Richards did not intend to examine the actual experience of readers and then claim that those experiences constituted literary criticism. To the contrary, Richards analyzes the failure of readers to understand poems correctly. In *Practical Criticism* (1929), he uses psychology to explain how readers bring inappropriate associations to poems, thus distorting their meaning. Successful readings see the metaphoric resonances, the modulation of images, the tonal quality of word sounds, and so on. In other words, correct readings focus on the poem itself, not on the reader's feelings. In attending to the reader's experience as the basis of literary meaning, Richards shifts the role of psychology in criticism from the author to the reader. But for all his attention to psychological ideas and vocabulary, the result of his work is to cancel psychology and bring the text to the fore.

As for the rift between literary and ordinary language, Richards characterizes literary language as emotive rather than expressive (again shifting the focus from author to reader). In *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (1936; p. 1281), Richards sets up a scale just like Mill's: At the lower end, meaning tends to "stay put," whereas at the upper end meaning shifts about and requires more careful interpretation. In moving from literary criticism to rhetoric, Richards hopes to expand his theory that meaning depends on the experienced contexts in which language has been used. Words do not have literal meanings that travel with them wherever they go, he says. A word (or any sign) takes its meaning from the context of remembered use in the past and of other words in whose company it appears at a given time. All language is subject to some degree of contextual meaning, but literature is the exemplary case, as his scale shows. Richards uses metaphor as the model for the "interanimation of words" that determines meaning: The tenor and vehicle mutually limit and expand each other's range of meanings. Richards thus explains semiotic meaning by a literary principle that was there all along. Metaphor links literature, rhetoric, and semantics; it reveals the need for interpretation in context and allows Richards to limit "context" to the immediate verbal setting; and it retains the basic elements of the distinction between literary and ordinary language.

MEANING AND DIALOGISM

Like Richards and most students of language philosophy at the time, Mikhail Bakhtin (1895–1975; p. 1206) was also powerfully influenced by Peirce and Saussure. Bakhtin, too, comes out of a formalist system of literary criticism that he finds faulty. He accepts the fundamental principle of semiotics: that language is a sign system, that the signs themselves are arbitrary, and that signs refer to other

signs, not to extralinguistic entities. But Bakhtin rejects the conclusion, drawn by both Peirce and Saussure, that the meaning of discourse is to be found in the psychological processing of signs. In *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, he maintains that language can be understood only as dialogue. Systems such as structural linguistics or literary stylistics fail to account for the parts that intention, interpretation, social context, and historical circumstance play in the creation of meaning. Bakhtin takes the view that “the logic of consciousness is the logic of ideological communication, of the semiotic interaction of a social group.”⁹ He applies this theory of language to literary criticism as well as to discourse in general.

Before *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, Bakhtin had in fact already written a book on literary theory, *The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship* (1928). Here, Bakhtin rejects the distinction between literary and ordinary language and attacks the contemporary Russian Formalist school for maintaining that distinction. Russian Formalism drew upon Saussure’s linguistics as a way to turn attention to the close analysis of literary texts. The Formalists, like the New Critics, rejected the source criticism, influence hunting, and biographical criticism that seemed to look everywhere but at the text. Instead, they sought to isolate the text by declaring literary language a “dialect” of ordinary language, and finally, as Fredric Jameson says, “a total linguistic system in its own right.”¹⁰ Poetic language is “heightened” and draws attention to itself, the theory goes, whereas practical language tries to be transparent. Thus poetic language changes the usual, rather automatic process by which ordinary language is understood, thereby shifting the reader’s focus from the message to the medium.

Bakhtin opposes both of the Formalists’ assumptions about meaning: first, that meaning in poetry is a function of the structure of poetic language and, second, that meaning is ultimately a matter of psychological effects. Moreover, in isolating the text from any context (at least in principle) and insulating it from practical speech, the Formalists make dialogue impossible, and dialogue is the real location of meaning for Bakhtin. In the literary criticism of his later books, he treats literature as one set of genres among a great many genres of discourse, all of which are to be studied as forms of social interaction. Not unlike Kenneth Burke, Bakhtin sees all forms of discourse as strategies for producing effects in particular situations. Literature is no exception.

Bakhtin does not draw explicitly on the rhetorical tradition, but he notes, in his essay “The Problem of Speech Genres” (1953; p. 1227), that genres are a useful category in both literature and rhetoric: “Rhetorical genres have been studied since antiquity (and not much has been added in subsequent epochs to classical theory).”¹¹ He suggests extending rhetorical analysis to every kind of speech, recognizing that genres are the means of adapting an utterance to a complex situation, a situation that includes a history of previous speech acts as well as an immediate context involving socially situated speakers.

⁹See p. 1213 in this book.

¹⁰Fredric Jameson, *The Prison-House of Language* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), p. 49.

¹¹See p. 1227 in this book.

LITERATURE, LOGIC, RHETORIC, AND ETHICS

Aristotle's division between rhetoric and poetic usefully reveals the different purposes, effects, and methods of the two realms of discourse. Nonetheless, from Aristotle's time to our own, rhetoric and poetic have been closely linked. Both are concerned with ways of moving audiences by means of language. And even if, as many critics have argued, there is a distinction between the "contemplative" goal of literature and the "active" goal of rhetoric, literature frequently uses persuasion and argumentation. In terms of theory and criticism, rhetoric names the tropes used in poetry, and poetry provides the exemplary forms of the tropes for instruction in rhetoric. Narration is essential to both rhetoric and poetic. Rhetoric, in short, has often been identified with literature.

But for all these connections (and more that might be added to the list), the independence of rhetoric and poetic has been asserted and defended just as frequently as their interrelatedness. Literary critics have resisted (and many still resist) crossing the Aristotelian divide between rhetoric and poetic. At the end of the nineteenth century, after a long period when rhetoric and belles lettres (including literary criticism) were always identified with each other, critics once again asserted the contemplative-active distinction, arguing that poetry concerned only feelings, rhetoric only action (see the introduction to Part Five). Recall Mill's scale, in which expressive language is at the top and exposition at the bottom. When departments of English formed at the end of the nineteenth century, these kinds of distinctions contributed to the desire to dissociate rhetoric and literary studies. Rhetoric, as Burke reminds us, was thus supplanted by aesthetics and the social sciences.

Burke takes a rather different and more radical approach to the relationship between rhetoric and literature when he declares in his first book, *Counter-Statement* (1919), that literature is unequivocally a form of persuasive discourse and is therefore governed by rhetoric. Though he occasionally distinguishes between art and use in discourse, hinting at the literary-ordinary language distinction, Burke consistently applies his rhetorical methods to an enormous range of written and oral examples, from philosophy to advertising to chats with the dentist. As he explains in *A Grammar of Motives* and *A Rhetoric of Motives*, no form of discourse is exempt from motivation. Scientific and philosophical discourses attempt to describe systems of human motivation, and social discourses attempt to motivate. Thus it is the business of rhetoric to categorize and analyze these discourses. Motives, he says, are "distinctly linguistic products." Burke gives literature and philosophy special attention because of the long-standing presumption about their independence from motivation. Literature is "the adopting of various strategies for encompassing situations" by naming them—that is, an attempt to understand motives.¹²

Unlike Richards's instantly popular method of close reading, Burke's rhetorical approach to criticism was not widely adopted. Still, his approach rattled many who wished to maintain the sharp division between rhetoric and poetic and stimulated

¹²Kenneth Burke, *The Philosophy of Literary Form*, 3rd ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), p. 1.

those who saw the value of treating literature as a form of rhetoric. Wayne C. Booth (p. 1491) argues in *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, for example, that all literature is discourse addressed to a reader. Critics should therefore examine the techniques by which the author persuades the reader to accept the fictional world and the author's ever-present judgments about it.¹³ Following Booth's analysis, a great many critical works appeared that used the term *rhetoric* to describe techniques of all kinds in literature. A few works appeared, too, that explored the theoretical connection that Burke and Booth had put forward. For example, critic and rhetorician Walter J. Ong argues in his 1975 essay, "The Writer's Audience Is Always a Fiction," that writers cannot address an actual audience, but rather project the kind of audience that will be receptive to their work. Reading thus involves a kind of negotiation between the actual reader and the role that the author projects for the ideal reader. For this reason, the reader has an active role in producing the meaning of the work.¹⁴

Some of the reader-response critics of the seventies, such as Stanley Fish and Wolfgang Iser, took a similar position but emphasized that readers must be "informed" or "educated" for their interpretations to be correct. Others, like Norman Holland, eschewed such judgments and sought to describe the many ways in which meaning emerges during the act of reading. This approach follows the road not taken by I. A. Richards, for it attempts to describe what happens to the reader psychologically without making a judgment about the correctness of the reader's interpretation. Reader-response critics generally regard their method as context-sensitive, though not as rhetorical. Still, this method and others that oppose strictly formalistic methods (notably Marxist criticism, which seeks to describe the historical and ideological context of literature) operate on the principle that literature is a form of rhetorical discourse whose interpretation depends on context and response as well as on the structure of the text.

Beginning from rhetoric rather than philosophy or criticism, Richard M. Weaver (1910–1963; p. 1348) develops a theory of meaning similar to those advanced by Richards and Burke. When Weaver argues that language is sermonistic (the title of his influential 1963 essay), he means that all instances of language use are persuasive, rhetorical, and therefore imbued with ethical values. For Weaver, human utterances reflect a set of values and aim to move others to accept the image of the world in which those values apply (as in Burke's notion of identification). To speak or write is to perform a positive ethical action, and the value of rhetoric as a discipline, Weaver argues, comes from its goal of revealing the ethical bases of a given discourse. Weaver, a conscious Platonist, does not go so far as other theorists in linking rhetoric with logic or knowledge. He retains in his writing the category of *dialectic* as discourse that leads to knowledge of nature (though he warns that dialectic is not necessarily trustworthy for conveying knowledge in an ethical way). Nonetheless, Weaver shares the tendency of Burke and Richards to include all forms of discourse within the discipline of rhetoric.

¹³Wayne Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961).

¹⁴Walter J. Ong, S.J., "The Writer's Audience Is Always a Fiction," *PMLA* 90 (January 1975): 9–21.

RHETORIC VERSUS LOGIC

It was in the context of Bertrand Russell's analytic philosophy, its distrust of language, and its reliance on logic that Stephen Toulmin (p. 1410) developed his theory of argument. When, in *The Uses of Argument* (1958), Toulmin asserted that formal logic should not be regarded as superior to probabilistic argument in establishing truth, his Cambridge friends felt that he had abandoned philosophy altogether. His graduate advisor, he says, "was deeply pained by the book, and barely spoke to me for twenty years."¹⁵ Toulmin's goal is to extend the rigor of formal logic to arguments in realms of greater uncertainty, like law and morality, and even science. Though the standard methods of logic cannot be applied in these areas, he says, there is nonetheless a structure to their arguments that can be shown to apply across fields. An argument consists of a claim that is based on data, modified by certain qualifications and conditions. But the nature of the claims, data, and qualifications is a function of the context or field in which the argument is advanced, and the force of the argument is a question of its persuasiveness, not the perfection of the argument structure.

Apparently, Toulmin did not set out to critique the tradition of analytic philosophy or even to switch allegiances to the "ordinary language" school associated with Oxford University. Moreover, he scrupulously avoids mentioning rhetoric, the field in which his ideas have been most fruitfully applied. But in an important sense, his Cambridge colleagues are correct in their criticism: Toulmin shows that "truth" is a social phenomenon, dependent on the criteria developed by a community for determining what it will believe. In this he is closer than he might himself admit to forthright critics of traditional philosophy, such as Chaim Perelman and even Michel Foucault.

The philosophical project of Chaim Perelman is similar in many ways to Toulmin's. Perelman, a student of law and philosophy, wished to know how reasonable judgments can be reached in values and morals. Finding no account of this sort of reasoning in logic or any other area of philosophy, he and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca undertook, in *The New Rhetoric* (1958), to examine recorded examples of such judgments. While reviewing innumerable arguments from different fields, they made several discoveries. One was that there already was a discipline that studied and classified arguments—namely, rhetoric and its counterpart dialectic. Another was that because argumentation dealt with the probable, the plausible, and the uncertain, post-Cartesian philosophy had no interest in it. Where there was no proof, reason and rationality were presumably absent. Science, Perelman allows, may be within the realm of certainty, where arguments must be based on clear proof. But the vast field of human affairs depends on judgments that are not reducible to self-evident propositions, however much some systems of politics or religion may claim such a basis. Perelman's attack on the premise that there may be self-evident truths and his proposal of an informal logic based on argumentation constitute, as he notes, "a break with a concept of reason and reasoning . . . which has set its mark on

¹⁵Stephen Toulmin, "Logic and the Criticism of Arguments," in *The Rhetoric of Western Thought*, ed. J. Golden, G. Berquist, and W. Coleman, 4th ed. (Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt, 1989), p. 375.

Western philosophy for the last three centuries.”¹⁶ Finally, he concludes that knowledge itself is based upon argument, and that there is considerable ethical and ideological danger in the tendency of most arguments to claim that they rest on immutable truth. The goal of rhetoric, then, is to reveal that all discourse is rhetorical and that no claims are self-evident. Perelman felt that he was reviving rhetoric, recovering the notions of argument, persuasion, audience, and dialectic for the analysis of practical reasoning in human affairs. Indeed, his work stimulated a revival of the discipline in Europe and contributed to its growing respectability in the United States.

DISCOURSE, KNOWLEDGE, AND IDEOLOGY

In philosophy and the sciences, both social and natural, questions about knowledge and meaning have come to be bound inextricably to questions about language. Such questions are disturbing and by no means easily contemplated, let alone answered. Take, for example, the announcement by philosopher of science Thomas Kuhn that scientific knowledge advances through communal argument rather than by the discovery of new facts. Indeed, says Kuhn, the proponents of competing paradigms are like native speakers of different languages. Moving from one paradigm and one language to another is not, as naive histories of science suggest, merely accepting a new bit of data or acknowledging the correctness of a new theory; it is, rather, a strenuous process of cultural conversion. Language is not a clear medium for the exchange of information, but opaque, resistant, and imbued with cultural bias, even in the enlightened realm of science. Scientists cannot simply present new information or demonstrate new findings but must argue for new meanings and create a new community that shares them.¹⁷ Far from being among the first to reveal the place of rhetoric in the construction of knowledge, Kuhn is among the latest. Yet Kuhn’s thesis produced, in the words of the philosophers of science, a “crisis of rationality” in the scientific community.

Even this crisis of rationality is not so new, according to Michel Foucault (p. 1432), who traces it back to the beginning of the nineteenth century. It was then, he says, that words “rediscovered their ancient, enigmatic density,” lost since the demise of the Sophists. First the “human sciences,” as Foucault calls linguistics, economics, and psychology, and later the natural sciences, too, have had to deal with the complex relationship between language and knowledge, recognizing that language does not simply represent a preexisting reality or even one’s thoughts. Foucault revives Nietzsche (see p. 1168) in arguing that truth, or what counts as truth, is determined by the discursive practices of a community.

Foucault, conversant in philosophy, psychology, psychiatry, and the history of science, is, along with Jacques Derrida, the champion of postmodern opposition to philosophy’s quest for universals and absolutes. Foucault argues that knowledge is

¹⁶Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation*, trans. John Wilkinson and Purcell Weaver (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969), p. 1.

¹⁷Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).

constituted by discourse. Particular statements are taken as true, he maintains, because of the elaborate relationships of communication and power among social institutions that use and control knowledge. Foucault examines disciplinary techniques for interpreting or expounding knowledge, the certification of certain speakers as authorities, and the ways in which certified methods and authorities mediate the needs and desires of communities. Discourse, in this view, is not the transparent conveyor of knowledge, not a free system of expression, and not at all independent of the interactions embodied in it.

Like Foucault, Jacques Derrida (p. 1471) takes up Nietzsche's critique of the prevailing philosophical assumption that external reality is accessible to perception and that knowledge of the external world can be recorded and communicated in language. Derrida asserts that there is no extralinguistic knowledge at all. In this, he is close to Foucault. But he differs from Foucault in taking as his own philosophical project the critique of philosophy's attempt to accomplish the impossible task of making language transcend itself and be referential. Although Derrida takes language as the basis of his analysis of philosophy, he is not nearly as rhetorically minded as Newton Garver seems to suggest in the remarks quoted earlier. Derrida has no interest in communication, persuasion, or even the structure of discourse. He focuses on writing, as opposed to speech, as the exemplary form of language use, exemplary because it exists apart from the context of utterance or reception and thereby reveals, under the form of scrutiny Derrida calls "deconstruction," its distance from its apparent reference. Derrida's analysis supports the theory that rhetoric is epistemic, for it argues that knowledge is not a function of logic and that language is not a medium for knowledge; rather, knowledge is made by language, though for Derrida, the chief characteristic of knowledge may be that it is an elaborate self-deception.

Derrida's deconstructive method breaks down the traditional distinction between philosophy and literature by drawing on Nietzsche's observation that all language is metaphoric in operation. As deconstructionist critic Paul de Man puts it, "All philosophy is condemned, to the extent that it is dependent upon figuration, to be literary and, as the depository of this very problem, all literature is to some extent philosophical."¹⁸ De Man raises "the very difficult question whether the entire semantic, semiological, and performative field of language can be said to be covered by topological models, a question which can only be raised after the proliferating and disruptive power of figural language has been fully recognized."¹⁹ In more general terms, de Man's question concerns the boundaries between traditionally distinct realms of discourse, between rhetoric and poetic or between literary and ordinary language.

In a 1973 essay, "How Ordinary Is Ordinary Language?" literary critic Stanley Fish (p. 1605) documents the persistence of the idea that literary language is different from ordinary language. He argues that there is no such thing as ordinary language at all, if that means language that is transparent and in no need of contextual

¹⁸Paul de Man, "The Epistemology of Metaphor," in *On Metaphor*, ed. Sheldon Sacks (University of Chicago Press, 1979), p. 28.

¹⁹de Man, p. 28.

interpretation.²⁰ In his later work, Fish comes to rhetoric as the discipline that best addresses the issues of meaning and interpretation. In his essay “Rhetoric” (p. 1609), Fish situates his own understanding of epistemic language in relation to the same kind of history of twentieth-century thought that we have been examining here. Barbara Herrnstein Smith takes a position similar to Fish’s in her excellent discussion—in *On the Margins of Discourse* (1978)—of the mostly false distinction between natural and poetic discourse.²¹ Deconstructive criticism, inspired by the work of Derrida, also assumes that literary language is not different from ordinary language, for all language is fundamentally figurative and no language is referential. Deconstructive critics use this insight to collapse the distinction between philosophy and literature, and several (most notably Paul de Man, another devotee of Nietzsche) have identified rhetoric as the discipline responsible for analyzing the figurative nature and hence the epistemological function of language. But Derrida and the critics who follow him focus on the way that texts undermine their own apparent meaning. Rhetoric, in the work of these critics, thus tends to refer to tropes as symbols of an epistemological dilemma but not to the larger questions of discourse and its construction of knowledge.

In *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (1983), Marxist literary critic Terry Eagleton argues that there is no such thing as literature, if by literature we mean a text that is linguistically different from “ordinary” texts. He concludes his clear and helpful survey of modern critical theories by calling for a new rhetorical criticism, for rhetoric, he says, takes the most comprehensive view of the operations of discourse: It is by definition opposed to critical formalism, for it seeks meaning in human interactions, in history and culture, and in ideology; it also regards discourse as a form of human action, as the construction of history and culture, and as ethical and ideological. Eagleton puts it this way:

Rhetoric, which was the received form of critical analysis all the way from ancient society to the eighteenth century, examined the way discourses are constructed in order to achieve certain effects. It was not worried about whether its objects of enquiry were speaking or writing, poetry or philosophy, fiction or historiography: its horizon was nothing less than the field of discursive practices in society as a whole, and its particular interest lay in grasping such practices as forms of power and performance. . . . It saw speaking and writing not merely as textual objects, to be aesthetically contemplated or endlessly deconstructed but as forms of activity inseparable from the wider social relations between writers and readers, orators and audiences, and as largely unintelligible outside the social purposes and conditions in which they were embedded.²²

Eagleton speaks of rhetoric in the past tense while hoping that it will be the future of criticism, but the notes he strikes sound through the theories of rhetorical criti-

²⁰Stanley Fish, “How Ordinary Is Ordinary Language?” in *Is There a Text in This Class?* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980).

²¹Barbara Herrnstein Smith, *On the Margins of Discourse: The Relation of Literature and Language* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978).

²²Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983), pp. 205–06.

cism offered by Stanley Fish and Wayne C. Booth, and by those who look back to the prescient work of Kenneth Burke.

The forms of rhetorical analysis we have been examining seem to conclude that all forms of communication are rhetorical. Burke would certainly agree. He argues, for example, that Thomas Carlyle was quite right to analyze clothing as a symbol system. Clothes symbolize social distinctions. Clothing has meaning, and meaning is subject to interpretation. Mikhail Bakhtin, arguing that even natural phenomena take on ideological meaning, uses hunger as an example: Hunger is not simply a physiological fact, the same in all cases, but is interpreted by the hungry person in the context of a system of social meanings. French critic Roland Barthes, Canadian critic Marshall McLuhan, and others have pursued the rhetoric of nonlinguistic symbol systems, though chiefly under the rubric of semiotics. Historian of rhetoric George A. Kennedy contemplates animal communication as rhetorical.

For all its new-found theoretical reach, rhetoric still means the practice of effective speaking and effective writing; it still means teaching the strategies for effective discourse; and it still resides in the “public sphere,” as German sociologist Jürgen Habermas and others put it. In the twentieth century, the public sphere has become dramatically more open to the rhetoric of women and minorities, whose practices, coming from struggles to get a hearing, have materially marked contemporary rhetoric.

RHETORICS OF GENDER, RACE, AND CULTURE IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

In sharp contrast to women in other periods of Western culture, many more twentieth-century women, both white and of color, are literate, and many more are educated beyond the elementary level. Women practice rhetoric in a wider variety of forms than ever before. In addition to the many private genres in which they have always participated, more and more women are speaking and writing for public forums. Women are lawyers, ministers, college professors, and politicians. Moreover, far more women are studying and teaching rhetorical practices than ever have in the past. Women scholars in the social sciences, speech communication, literature, and composition studies are analyzing written and spoken discourse of many kinds.

Women’s theorizing about language in use is also taking new forms. As speech communication scholar Karlyn Kohrs Campbell has pointed out, women have always had to be particularly inventive in their uses of rhetoric—inventing not only the matter of their texts, but appropriate personae to deliver them.²³ In the past, women could be found reflecting on forms of rhetoric that might be used by both sexes, even if those forms were considered especially appropriate for women. For example, Aspasia (p. 56) discusses dialogue and Madeleine de Scudéry (p. 761) conversation as rhetorical genres. But perhaps the most frequent kind of reflection

²³See Karlyn Kohrs Campbell, “Inventing Women: From Amaterasu to Virginia Woolf,” *Women’s Studies in Communication* 21.2 (fall 1998): 111–26.

on rhetoric that women produced before the modern period comprised arguments for allowing women to express themselves at all in speech or writing, or especially to practice rhetoric in public forums. Examples of such claims for a public voice can be found in the work of Margaret Fell (p. 748), Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (p. 780), Maria W. Stewart (p. 1031), and Sarah Grimké (p. 1045), among others. In general, these arguments claimed for women the use of the same rhetorical practices as were available to men. By the nineteenth century, however, a new kind of theorizing about women and rhetoric began to emerge. This was work that attempted to identify something uniquely female in language use, a sort of “women’s rhetoric” that was clearly distinct from the mainstream rhetoric for men. Early attempts at such theorizing can be found, for example, in the defense of women’s public Christian ministry mounted by Phoebe Palmer (p. 1085) and Frances Willard (p. 1114).

Work on women’s rhetoric broadened and deepened in the twentieth century, so that it might now be possible to speak for the first time of a women’s tradition in rhetoric. Discussing texts in which women argue for their right to speak, feminist historian Gerda Lerner has wryly noted the tendency of successive authors to construct arguments very similar to one another—for example, in criticizing pronouncements on women’s public speaking by the Apostle Paul.²⁴ This has happened, Lerner says, because the women’s texts did not stay in print; transmission was further attenuated because of women’s uneven and uncertain access to education. But in the twentieth century, these conditions changed for the better. One of the first important theorists of women’s rhetoric in the twentieth century, Virginia Woolf (p. 1246), emphasizes the importance for women to connect with the work of earlier women writers. Moreover, Woolf mounts a critique of the social conditions, oppressive to women, that have resulted in previous suppressions of women’s writing. Appropriately enough, Woolf herself has come to be regarded as an important foremother of work on women’s rhetoric later in the century. Subsequent writers have cited her and have also emulated her feminist stance against the social, political, and economic forces that discouraged women’s writing.

Woolf’s own writing style has also been taken as paradigmatic of women’s ways of using language. For example, her essays do not proceed linearly to drive home points supporting a thesis, but rather accumulate support for her position gradually and indirectly. Her evidence may be taken from published authorities but is more likely to come from her own experience and reflections. Later women writers, including Adrienne Rich, who openly acknowledges her debt to Woolf, and Hélène Cixous (p. 1520), whose affinities with Woolf’s work have been noted by a number of scholars, have worked to develop theories of women’s language use that follow along these lines and clearly differentiate it from men’s. Cixous calls her concept of women’s writing, rooted in the ways women experience their bodies sexually, “écriture féminine.” Rich has devoted her long career as a poet and essayist entirely to working out ways to use language to express the wide range of women’s experience.

²⁴Gerda Lerner, “Introduction,” in *The Feminist Thought of Sarah Grimké*, ed. Gerda Lerner (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 21–22.

As a lesbian and a Jew, Rich has also been alert to the implications of sexual preference and ethnicity for language use. As Rich has noted, Gloria Anzaldúa (p. 1582) has become an important theorist of the intersections between women's rhetoric, gay rhetoric, and rhetorics of color.²⁵ Composition scholar Andrea Lunsford has called this conjunction in Anzaldúa's work "mestiza rhetoric."²⁶ Anzaldúa's writing mixes not only her experiences as woman, lesbian, and Chicana, but also her varied linguistic resources; she boldly uses Spanish and Nahuatl along with English even when writing for primarily English-speaking audiences. Women of color have always labored under a double burden of racial and sexual oppression in their attempts to claim a public voice, as can be seen from the experience of early-nineteenth-century African American orator Maria W. Stewart. But women's increasing educational and professional opportunities in the twentieth century have allowed more varied voices to emerge. Their work raises powerful questions that challenge the Western rhetorical tradition's assumptions of cultural homogeneity among speakers or writers and audiences. Can communication and persuasion take place when such homogeneity does not exist? The theoretical work and the popular success of twentieth-century women rhetoricians suggest that it can.

The increasing numbers of men of color entering the professions of law, medicine, politics, and the academy provide further confirmation. Some of the most influential political leaders of the twentieth century have been African American men: Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, and Jesse Jackson. Following in the footsteps of important nineteenth-century African American intellectual and political leader Frederick Douglass (p. 1061), these men have adapted forms of rhetoric preferred by the dominant culture to pursue successful political activism for social justice. At the same time, they have felt more free than Douglass did to bring the great rhetorical resources of the African American community to bear in rhetorical forums that address the general public. As literary scholar Henry Louis Gates Jr. (p. 1543) has shown, Black English and African American rhetoric have their own powerful tradition, and African American leaders have used it effectively even when communicating with people who are unfamiliar with it. Largely an oral tradition, at least before the twentieth century, African American rhetoric has not suffered from the transmission problems, noted above, that have hampered the development of women's rhetoric. It has been a vital force in the African American community for centuries and now enriches the broader American rhetorical scene.

Black English has long been recognized, at least by linguists, as a dialect, a grammatically coherent language that is a form of English and not simply English rendered incorrectly (though the persistence of that prejudicial view was evident in the battles over teaching Ebonics). The linguistic description of Black English cites the African languages that combined with English to produce distinctive grammatical, syntactic, and lexical features. In addition, sociolinguists and folklorists have looked at the rhetorical character of black discourse to discover how it functions in

²⁵See Adrienne Rich, *What Is Found There: Notebooks on Poetry and Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1993), p. 140 et passim.

²⁶Andrea Lunsford, "Toward a Mestiza Rhetoric: Gloria Anzaldúa on Composition and Postcoloniality," *Journal of Advanced Composition* 18.1 (1998): 2.

behavior, social organization, and ideological relations with the dominant white culture. Rhetoric, in most such studies, has not been called upon as a comprehensive theory of discourse. Where rhetoric appears at all, it refers to tropes, which in turn refer to a number of distinctive black speech patterns and genres, such as “playing the dozens” and “signifying.” Henry Louis Gates Jr., in *The Signifying Monkey* (p. 1551), analyzes the tropes of black discourse in terms of the epistemic notion of tropes developed by deconstructionist critics. Gates thus brings the analysis of a part of black discourse into line with a significant element of the language theory shared by literary criticism and rhetoric.

THE REACH OF RHETORIC

Twentieth-century theories of rhetoric, in formulating the relationships between language and knowledge and in reexamining the powers of discourse, have extended the concerns of rhetoric to include each and every instance of language use. Although some earlier rhetoricians, such as Isocrates, Vico, and Nietzsche, believed that rhetoric must be comprehensive and address all language acts, for centuries the scope of rhetoric was limited to overtly persuasive and deliberately stylized forms of discourse and to the speech and writing of those in power. Twentieth-century theories of rhetoric, in contrast, take the concerns of rhetoric to be nothing less than the foundations of knowledge and ideology in discourse.

The movement of philosophy toward the problems of language and epistemology, of literary analysis toward a concern for the nature of textual and contextual interpretation, of the social sciences and even the natural sciences toward the realization that knowledge is a linguistically constructed and consensual arrangement—all point to the need for a comprehensive theory of language and knowledge, a theory of practical reasoning, of speech acts, of discursive formations, of persuasion and identification—in short, a theory that encompasses all the rich elements of rhetoric. Rhetoric at the beginning of the twenty-first century is not only a field of historical investigation, systematic analysis, pedagogical practice, political change, and theoretical speculation, but an intellectual project that extends beyond disciplinary boundaries.

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tains good bibliographies of both primary and secondary works on these figures. A very useful and well-organized source addressing the connections between rhetorical theory and philosophers of the “linguistic turn” is *Rhetoric in an Antifoundational World: Language, Culture, and Pedagogy*, ed. Michael Bernard-Donals and Richard R. Glejzer (New Haven, 1998), which includes Fish’s “Rhetoric,” Eagleton’s “A Short History of Rhetoric,” and a number of other essays, including one by Richard Rorty. Yet another excellent collection of this type is *Contending with Words: Composition and Rhetoric in a Postmodern Age*, ed. Patricia Harkin and John Schilb (New York, 1991).

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(Carbondale, 1985). See especially "Rhetorical Theory in Speech Communication," by Michael Leff and Margaret Procaro; "The History of Rhetoric: The Reconstruction of Progress," by Richard Leo Enos; "Speech Communication Education in American Colleges and Universities," by Gustav Friedrich; and "The Development of Research in Speech Communication," by Herman Cohen. The "reference lists" for the essays in this book overlap somewhat, but together they make an extensive bibliography of the significant work in the field. See also the earlier collection *History of Speech Education in America*, ed. Karl Wallace (New York, 1954), and Herman Cohen's *History of Speech Communication: The Emergence of a Discipline, 1914–1945* (Annandale, Va., 1994).

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Campbell gives an overview of issues in women's rhetoric in "Inventing Women: From Amaterasu to Virginia Woolf" (*Women's Studies in Communication* 21 [fall 1998]: 111–26). Information on women rhetors can be gained from Campbell's edited volume *Women Public Speakers in the United States 1925–1993: A Bio-Critical Sourcebook* (Westport, Conn.; 1994), and from *The Rhetoric of Struggle: Public Address by African-American Women* (New York, 1992), ed. Robbie Jean Walker. Other sources on women's rhetoric can be found in the bibliographies accompanying the headnotes to Virginia Woolf, Hélène Cixous, and Gloria Anzaldúa.

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Mikhail Bakhtin

1895–1975

Mikhail Bakhtin's work is fired by his conviction that language and the forms it takes can be properly understood only as dialogue, as utterances that take place within social situations and that at least partly constitute them. He attacks every approach to the study of language or literature that is based on abstract structures or independent systems of meaning or that focuses on isolated speakers or texts. He rejects the position that utterances simply "reflect" something else, such as the psychology of the individual or the conditions of society. He proposes instead that dialogue is the model for understanding not only literature, but also ideology, psychology, and linguistics. Dialogue, for Bakhtin, occurs both in the literal exchange of utterances between speakers and in the intentional negotiation of meaning and interpretation between author and reader. He emphasizes the "polyphony" of language seen this way, the "heteroglossia" of speech and texts that are subject to multiple interpretations.

Born into the untitled nobility in 1895 in a town not far from Moscow, Bakhtin was educated in European culture and studied classics at Petersburg University, where he remained through the First World War and the Russian Revolution. Through the revolutionary period, Bakhtin taught school in a provincial town, gave public lectures on art and literature (he was considered a dynamic public speaker), cultivated his circle of artists and academics, and worked on his writing. Committed to the Russian Orthodox Church, he also lectured on theology. When Stalin came to power late in the twenties, religion was repressed and Bakhtin was arrested—charged, as Socrates had been, with corrupting youth. In 1930, he was exiled to Kazakhstan for six years.

During the twenties, Bakhtin had no official standing in the state intellectual-academic community and was even somewhat suspect because of his religious leanings. For this reason, he apparently felt that he could not find publishers for works on sensitive subjects, such as Marxism, Freud, and literary Formalism. So Bakhtin published three books and several articles under the names of other, better-established members of his circle. The books are *The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship* (1928), attributed to P. N. Medvedev; *Freudianism: A Critical Sketch* (1927), attributed to V. N. Voloshinov; and *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* (1929), also attributed to Voloshinov. During this period, Bakhtin published *Problems of Dostoevsky's Creative Works* (1929) under his own name, this topic being, presumably, a less sensitive one.

According to Bakhtin's biographers, Katerina Clark and Michael Holquist, Bakhtin's willingness to publish under his friends' names is typical of his lack of personal ambition, his generosity, and his love of practical jokes—the "carnival" quality he admires in the sixteenth-century French writer François Rabelais.¹ In-

¹Katerina Clark and Michael Holquist, *Mikhail Bakhtin* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), p. 151. See pages 146–70 for a full discussion of the authorship dispute.

deed, he kept the authorship dispute alive even after he was officially rehabilitated in the sixties, admitting that he wrote the disputed works but refusing to sign official statements to that effect. Although most scholars seem to have accepted Bakhtin's authorship, some questions about it still remain.

On his return from exile, Bakhtin wrote a dissertation on Rabelais for the Gorky Institute but, because of the Second World War, was unable to defend it. Even after the defense, which occurred in 1947, the faculty at first rejected the dissertation and then hotly debated it, until finally, in 1951, they accepted it. In the meantime, Bakhtin taught literature at a provincial university, where he was a popular lecturer. He remained on the fringes of intellectual life until the sixties, when he was discovered by younger scholars, under whose influence the Dostoevsky book was republished and the dissertation on Rabelais revised and published as *Rabelais and His World* (1965). Bakhtin was permitted to return to Moscow in 1972, and he died there in 1975.

The early works of disputed authorship, particularly *The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship* and *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, represent the manifesto of the dialogic theory that Bakhtin applies to literary criticism, literary theory, and language theory. *The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship* discusses the important but short-lived critical school that we know as Russian Formalism. Much like the New Criticism in its close reading of the style and structure of individual works, Formalism began after the First World War in the discussions of literature students who were interested in the new ideas about structural linguistics advanced by Ferdinand de Saussure. The Formalists were drawn to Saussure's descriptive linguistics because it represented a scientific approach to language that might help to put literary criticism, too, on a scientific footing. The Formalists maintained that one should describe the literary work as a linguistic object before or even in preference to any discussion of a work's context or message. Only such close attention to the literary object could reveal, they believed, the work's essential literariness.

In *The Formal Method*, Bakhtin acknowledges the virtues of Formalism in attending to the linguistic features of the text (in contrast to older methods of historical and biographical criticism) and in combating "vulgar" materialist readings that viewed literature simplistically, as a reflection of class and economic conditions. But Formalism pursued a programmatic separation of literature from history and social conditions on the principle that literary language is different from practical language. This position Bakhtin attacks. The advances of Formalism must be maintained, he argues, but criticism must also recognize that the meaning of literary works depends on the historical situation of the text, the social situation of the reader, and the complex interaction thus generated by the act of reading. Literary language is not different from practical language: Literary meaning, unstable and polysemous, depends on dialogue—that is, on the negotiation of meaning between text and interpreting reader—and not on the literariness of the text and its pure perception by the reader.

If *The Formal Method* is the poetic of dialogism, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* (excerpted here) is its rhetoric. In the latter volume, Bakhtin argues

that the true basis of linguistics is the study of utterances, of speech acts. Bakhtin accepts Saussure's semiotic assumption that communication takes place through arbitrary signs: There is, in other words, no inherent meaning in the sounds or symbols of language. But Bakhtin objects to Saussure's assumption that the sole purpose of linguistics is to analyze how these signs fit together into a system. Bakhtin charges (rather unfairly) that the chief virtue of structural linguistics is to provide an object of scientific study for linguists. Structural descriptions, he complains, do not explain the way language is actually used. The individual utterance, in structural linguistics, is an isolated event rather than a social act.

Structural linguistics regards the utterance (*parole*) as an individual's selection of elements (lexical, grammatical, and syntactic) from the larger system of language (*langue*). Bakhtin argues for a method of analysis that recognizes the primacy of the utterance-in-context and shows the dynamic relationship between system and utterance, a method that he elaborates most effectively in "The Problem of Speech Genres" (1953; excerpted here). He also rejects Saussure's assertion that signs are psychological in nature. Signs are part of material reality, Bakhtin maintains, imbued with ideological meaning by their use in social situations. They are not, therefore, simply mental phenomena. The psychologism of Saussure and other linguists reflects, for Bakhtin, the unacceptable subjectivism that treats language as the expression of the individual's thought. Instead, argues Bakhtin, consciousness should be seen as a social phenomenon that "takes shape and being in the material of signs created by an organized group in the process of its social intercourse."² He defends this position through a discussion of inner speech, borrowing the concept advanced by his contemporary, the great psychologist Lev Vygotsky.

Bakhtin remarks in *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* that "the structure of a whole utterance is something linguistics leaves to the competence of other disciplines—to rhetoric and poetics."³ In "The Problem of Speech Genres," he attempts to analyze the "whole utterance" and, in effect, to merge rhetoric and linguistics. The genres of speech are, he says, the "relatively stable types" of utterance that occur in "each sphere in which language is used." They include, for example, the conventions of casual conversation, the formulas of business documents, and the well-known literary genres. He wants the idea of speech genres to honor both convention and individual choice, to see both constraints and openness in communication.

It would not be wrong to think of the speech genres, then, as rhetorical situations and to see Bakhtin's argument as a way of extending rhetoric's gaze to every act of speaking or writing. To be sure, Bakhtin takes his approach not from rhetoric but from linguistics and semantics. Indeed, Bakhtin slights rhetoric for its traditional limitation to a few genres and mechanical taxonomies of tropes, just as he criticizes structural linguistics for its mechanistic approach. Rhetoric scholar Kay Halasek has suggested, too, that Bakhtin sees rhetoric as too confrontational and monologic

²See p. 1213 in this book.

³Mikhail Bakhtin, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* (1929; rpt., trans. Ladislav Matejka and I. R. Titunik, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973), p. 78.

in comparison with the approach to the audience implied in literary texts.⁴ Bakhtin defines his own dialogic method as a way of recognizing (a) the speaker's or writer's (rhetorical) intention to move the audience to action and (b) the audience's active role in interpreting utterances in order to reply or react, a role that the speaker or writer is well aware of: "The [literary or technical] work, like the rejoinder in dialogue, is oriented toward the response of the other."⁵ Bakhtin then distinguishes the boundaries of the utterance, both spoken and written, and argues that all mechanical or subjective theories of meaning should be abandoned in favor of a contextual one. His focus on context aligns well with the social turn in rhetoric and composition studies, accounting for the great surge of interest in his work in these fields since 1985. His emphasis on the dialogic, too, has increased interest in his work among feminist scholars looking for ways to theorize the plurality of views in their own field.

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Katerina Clark and Michael Holquist have written a scholarly, readable biography in *Mikhail Bakhtin* (Cambridge, Mass., 1984). Two essays printed in *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* provide an excellent introduction to the issues in Bakhtin's intellectual environment: Ladislav Matejka's "On the First Russian Prolegomena to Semiotics" and I. R. Titunik's "The Formal Method and the Sociological Method (M. M. Bakhtin, P. N. Medvedev, V. N. Voloshinov) in Russian Theory and Study of Literature." Titunik has also published a summary of contemporary issues in "M. M. Bakhtin (The Bakhtin School) and Soviet Semiotics" (*Dispositio* 1 [1976]: 327–38).

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⁴Kay Halasek, *A Pedagogy of Possibility: Bakhtinian Perspectives on Composition Studies* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1999), pp. x–xi.

⁵See p. 1237 in this book.

focuses on his usefulness for literary analysis. Dominick LaCapra devotes a chapter of *Re-thinking Intellectual History: Texts, Contexts, Language* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1983) to “Bakhtin, Marxism, and the Carnavalesque,” providing a lucid summary of Bakhtin’s major ideas, both literary and linguistic. Feminist work on Bakhtin by literary scholars is collected in *Feminism, Bakhtin, and the Dialogic* (Albany, N.Y., 1991), ed. Dale M. Bauer and S. Jaret McKinstry. A collection edited by Amy Mandelker, *Bakhtin in Contexts: Across the Disciplines* (Evanston, Ill., 1995), presents essays that apply Bakhtin’s ideas in Slavic studies, classics, American literature, African American studies, sociology, anthropology, linguistics, and semiotics.

Landmark Essays on Bakhtin, Rhetoric, and Writing, ed. Frank Farmer (Mahwah, N.J., 1998), collects important essays by Charles Schuster, Michael Bernard-Donals, Kay Halasek, Don H. Bialostosky, Marilyn Middendorf, Helen Rothschild Ewald, and other scholars in rhetoric and composition studies. Kay Halasek helpfully surveys this scholarship in *A Pedagogy of Possibility: Bakhtinian Perspectives on Composition Studies* (Carbondale, Ill., 1999), where she articulates Bakhtin’s ideas in relation to key composition concepts of the student writer, the audience, the topic, and critical reading and writing.

From *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*

From Part I

CHAPTER I THE STUDY OF IDEOLOGIES AND PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE

The problem of the ideological sign. The ideological sign and consciousness. The word as an ideological sign par excellence. The ideological neutrality of the word. The capacity of the word to be an inner sign. Summary.

Problems of the philosophy of language have in recent times acquired exceptional pertinence and importance for Marxism. Over a wide range of the most vital sectors in its scientific advance, the Marxist method bears directly upon these problems and cannot continue to move ahead productively without special provision for their investigation and solution.

First and foremost, the very foundations of a Marxist theory of ideologies—the bases for the studies of scientific knowledge, literature, religion, ethics, and so forth—are closely bound up with problems of the philosophy of language.

Any ideological product is not only itself a

part of a reality (natural or social), just as is any physical body, any instrument of production, or any product for consumption, it also, in contradistinction to these other phenomena, reflects and refracts another reality outside itself. Everything ideological possesses *meaning*: it represents, depicts, or stands for something lying outside itself. In other words, it is a *sign*. *Without signs, there is no ideology*. A physical body equals itself, so to speak; it does not signify anything but wholly coincides with its particular, given nature. In this case there is no question of ideology.

However, any physical body may be perceived as an image; for instance, the image of natural inertia and necessity embodied in that particular thing. Any such artistic-symbolic image to which a particular physical object gives rise is already an ideological product. The physical object is converted into a sign. Without ceasing to be a part of material reality, such an object, to some degree, reflects and refracts another reality.

The same is true of any instrument of production. A tool by itself is devoid of any special meaning; it commands only some designated function—to serve this or that purpose in production. The tool serves that purpose as the par-

Translated by Ladislav Matejka and I. R. Titunik.

ticular, given thing that it is, without reflecting or standing for anything else. However, a tool also may be converted into an ideological sign. Such, for instance, is the hammer and sickle insignia of the Soviet Union. In this case, hammer and sickle possess a purely ideological meaning. Additionally, any instrument of production may be ideologically decorated. Tools used by prehistoric man are covered with pictures or designs—that is, with signs. So treated, a tool still does not, of course, itself become a sign.

It is further possible to enhance a tool artistically, and in such a way that its artistic shapeliness harmonizes with the purpose it is meant to serve in production. In this case, something like maximal approximation, almost a coalescence, of sign and tool comes about. But even here we still detect a distinct conceptual dividing line: the tool, as such, does not become a sign; the sign, as such, does not become an instrument of production.

Any consumer good can likewise be made an ideological sign. For instance, bread and wine become religious symbols in the Christian sacrament of communion. But the consumer good, as such, is not at all a sign. Consumer goods, just as tools, may be combined with ideological signs, but the distinct conceptual dividing line between them is not erased by the combination. Bread is made in some particular shape; this shape is not warranted solely by the bread's function as a consumer good; it also has a certain, if primitive, value as an ideological sign (e.g., bread in the shape of a figure eight [*krendel*] or a rosette).

Thus, side by side with the natural phenomena, with the equipment of technology, and with articles for consumption, there exists a special world—the *world of signs*.

Signs also are particular, material things; and, as we have seen, any item of nature, technology, or consumption can become a sign, acquiring in the process a meaning that goes beyond its given particularity. A sign does not simply exist as a part of a reality—it reflects and refracts another reality. Therefore, it may distort that reality or be true to it, or may perceive it from a special point of view, and so forth. Every sign is subject to the criteria of ideological evaluation (i.e., whether it is true, false, correct, fair, good, etc.). The domain of ideology coincides with the domain of signs. They equate with one another. Wherever a

sign is present, ideology is present, too. *Everything ideological possesses semiotic value.*

Within the domain of signs—i.e., within the ideological sphere—profound differences exist: it is, after all, the domain of the artistic image, the religious symbol, the scientific formula, and the judicial ruling, etc. Each field of ideological creativity has its own kind of orientation toward reality and each refracts reality in its own way. Each field commands its own special function within the unity of social life. *But it is their semiotic character that places all ideological phenomena under the same general definition.*

Every ideological sign is not only a reflection, a shadow, of reality, but is also itself a material segment of that very reality. Every phenomenon functioning as an ideological sign has some kind of material embodiment, whether in sound, physical mass, color, movements of the body, or the like. In this sense, the reality of the sign is fully objective and lends itself to a unitary, monistic, objective method of study. A sign is a phenomenon of the external world. Both the sign itself and all the effects it produces (all those actions, reactions, and new signs it elicits in the surrounding social milieu) occur in outer experience.

This is a point of extreme importance. Yet, elementary and self-evident as it may seem, the study of ideologies has still not drawn all the conclusions that follow from it.

The idealistic philosophy of culture and psychologicistic cultural studies locate ideology in the consciousness.¹ Ideology, they assert, is a fact of consciousness; the external body of the sign is merely a coating, merely a technical means for the realization of the inner effect, which is understanding.

Idealism and psychologism alike overlook the fact that understanding itself can come about

¹It should be noted that a change of outlook in this regard can be detected in modern neo-Kantianism. We have in mind the latest book by Ernst Cassirer, *Philosophie der symbolischen Formen*, Vol. 1, 1923. While remaining on the grounds of consciousness, Cassirer considers its dominant trait to be representation. Each element of consciousness represents something, bears a symbolic function. The whole exists in its parts, but a part is comprehensible only in the whole. According to Cassirer, an idea is just as sensory as matter; the sensoriness involved, however, is that of the symbolic sign, it is representative sensoriness. [Au.]

only within some kind of semiotic material (e.g., inner speech), that sign bears upon sign, that *consciousness itself can arise and become a viable fact only in the material embodiment of signs*. The understanding of a sign is, after all, an act of reference between the sign apprehended and other, already known signs; in other words, understanding is a response to a sign with signs. And this chain of ideological creativity and understanding, moving from sign to sign and then to a new sign, is perfectly consistent and continuous: from one link of a semiotic nature (hence, also of a material nature) we proceed uninterruptedly to another link of exactly the same nature. And nowhere is there a break in the chain, nowhere does the chain plunge into inner being, nonmaterial in nature and unembodied in signs.

This ideological chain stretches from individual consciousness to individual consciousness, connecting them together. Signs emerge, after all, only in the process of interaction between one individual consciousness and another. And the individual consciousness itself is filled with signs. Consciousness becomes consciousness only once it has been filled with ideological (semiotic) content, consequently, only in the process of social interaction.

Despite the deep methodological differences between them, the idealistic philosophy of culture and psychologistic cultural studies both commit the same fundamental error. By localizing ideology in the consciousness, they transform the study of ideologies into a study of consciousness and its laws; it makes no difference whether this is done in transcendental or in empirical-psychological terms. This error is responsible not only for methodological confusion regarding the interrelation of disparate fields of knowledge, but for a radical distortion of the very reality under study as well. Ideological creativity—a material and social fact—is forced into the framework of the individual consciousness. The individual consciousness, for its part, is deprived of any support in reality. It becomes either all or nothing.

For idealism it has become all: its locus is somewhere above existence and it determines the latter. In actual fact, however, this sovereign of the universe is merely the hypostatization in idealism of an abstract bond among the most general forms and categories of ideological creativity.

For psychological positivism, on the contrary, consciousness amounts to nothing: It is just a conglomeration of fortuitous, psychophysiological reactions which, by some miracle, results in meaningful and unified ideological creativity.

The objective social regulatedness of ideological creativity, once misconstrued as a conformity with laws of the individual consciousness, must inevitably forfeit its real place in existence and depart either up into the superexistential empyrean of transcendentalism or down into the presocial recesses of the psychophysical, biological organism.

However, the ideological, as such, cannot possibly be explained in terms of either of these superhuman or subhuman, animalian, roots. Its real place in existence is in the special, social material of signs created by man. Its specificity consists precisely in its being located between organized individuals, in its being the medium of their communication.

Signs can arise only on *interindividual territory*. It is territory that cannot be called “natural” in the direct sense of the word:² signs do not arise between any two members of the species *Homo sapiens*. It is essential that the two individuals be *organized socially*, that they compose a group (a social unit); only then can the medium of signs take shape between them. The individual consciousness not only cannot be used to explain anything, but, on the contrary, is itself in need of explanation from the vantage point of the social, ideological medium.

The individual consciousness is a social-ideological fact. Not until this point is recognized with due provision for all the consequences that follow from it will it be possible to construct either an objective psychology or an objective study of ideologies.

It is precisely the problem of consciousness that has created the major difficulties and generated the formidable confusion encountered in all issues associated with psychology and the study of ideologies alike. By and large, consciousness has become the *asylum ignorantiae* for all philosophical constructs. It has been made the place

²Society, of course, is also a *part of nature*, but a part that is qualitatively separate and distinct and possesses its own *specific* systems of laws. [Au.]

where all unresolved problems, all objectively irreducible residues are stored away. Instead of trying to find an objective definition of consciousness, thinkers have begun using it as a means for rendering all hard and fast objective definitions subjective and fluid.

The only possible objective definition of consciousness is a sociological one. Consciousness cannot be derived directly from nature, as has been and still is being attempted by naive mechanistic materialism and contemporary objective psychology (of the biological, behavioristic, and reflexological varieties). Ideology cannot be derived from consciousness, as is the practice of idealism and psychologistic positivism. Consciousness takes shape and being in the material of signs created by an organized group in the process of its social intercourse. The individual consciousness is nurtured on signs; it derives its growth from them; it reflects their logic and laws. The logic of consciousness is the logic of ideological communication, of the semiotic interaction of a social group. If we deprive consciousness of its semiotic, ideological content, it would have absolutely nothing left. Consciousness can harbor only in the image, the word, the meaningful gesture, and so forth. Outside such material, there remains the sheer physiological act unilluminated by consciousness, i.e., without having light shed on it, without having meaning given to it, by signs.

All that has been said above leads to the following methodological conclusion: *the study of ideologies does not depend on psychology to any extent and need not be grounded in it.* As we shall see in greater detail in a later chapter, it is rather the reverse: *objective psychology must be grounded in the study of ideologies.* The reality of ideological phenomena is the objective reality of social signs. The laws of this reality are the laws of semiotic communication and are directly determined by the total aggregate of social and economic laws. Ideological reality is the immediate superstructure over the economic basis. Individual consciousness is not the architect of the ideological superstructure, but only a tenant lodging in the social edifice of ideological signs.

With our preliminary argument, disengaging ideological phenomena and their regulatedness from individual consciousness, we tie them in all

the more firmly with conditions and forms of social communication. The reality of the sign is wholly a matter determined by that communication. After all, the existence of the sign is nothing but the materialization of that communication. Such is the nature of all ideological signs.

But nowhere does this semiotic quality and the continuous, comprehensive role of social communication as conditioning factor appear so clearly and fully expressed as in language. *The word is the ideological phenomenon par excellence.*

The entire reality of the word is wholly absorbed in its function of being a sign. A word contains nothing that is indifferent to this function, nothing that would not have been engendered by it. A word is the purest and most sensitive medium of social intercourse.

This indicatory, representative power of the word as an ideological phenomenon and the exceptional distinctiveness of its semiotic structure would already furnish reason enough for advancing the word to a prime position in the study of ideologies. It is precisely in the material of the word that the basic, general-ideological forms of semiotic communication could best be revealed.

But that is by no means all. The word is not only the purest, most indicatory sign but is, in addition, *a neutral sign.* Every other kind of semiotic material is specialized for some particular field of ideological creativity. Each field possesses its own ideological material and formulates signs and symbols specific to itself and not applicable in other fields. In these instances, a sign is created by some specific ideological function and remains inseparable from it. A word, in contrast, is neutral with respect to any specific ideological function. It can carry out ideological functions of *any* kind—scientific, aesthetic, ethical, religious.

Moreover, there is that immense area of ideological communication that cannot be pinned down to any one ideological sphere: the area of *communication in human life, human behavior.* This kind of communication is extraordinarily rich and important. On one side, it links up directly with the processes of production; on the other, it is tangent to the spheres of the various specialized and fully fledged ideologies. In the

following chapter, we shall speak in greater detail of this special area of behavioral, or life ideology. For the time being, we shall take note of the fact that the material of behavioral communication is preeminently the *word*. The locale of so-called conversational language and its forms is precisely here, in the area of behavioral ideology.

One other property belongs to the word that is of the highest order of importance and is what makes the word the primary medium of the individual consciousness. Although the reality of the word, as is true of any sign, resides between individuals, a word, at the same time, is produced by the individual organism's own means without recourse to any equipment or any other kind of extracorporeal material. This has determined the role of word as *the semiotic material of inner life—of consciousness* (inner speech). Indeed, the consciousness could have developed only by having at its disposal material that was pliable and expressible by bodily means. And the word was exactly that kind of material. The word is available as the sign for, so to speak, inner employment: it can function as a sign in a state short of outward expression. For this reason, the problem of individual consciousness as the *inner word* (as an *inner sign* in general) becomes one of the most vital problems in philosophy of language.

It is clear, from the very start, that this problem cannot be properly approached by resorting to the usual concept of word and language as worked out in nonsociological linguistics and philosophy of language. What is needed is profound and acute analysis of the word as social sign before its function as the medium of consciousness can be understood.

It is owing to this exclusive role of the word as the medium of consciousness that *the word functions as an essential ingredient accompanying all ideological creativity whatsoever*. The word accompanies and comments on each and every ideological act. The processes of understanding any ideological phenomenon at all (be it a picture, a piece of music, a ritual, or an act of human conduct) cannot operate without the participation of inner speech. All manifestations of ideological creativity—all other nonverbal signs—are bathed by, suspended in, and cannot be entirely

segregated or divorced from the element of speech.

This does not mean, of course, that the word may supplant any other ideological sign. None of the fundamental, specific ideological signs is replaceable wholly by words. It is ultimately impossible to convey a musical composition or pictorial image adequately in words. Words cannot wholly substitute for a religious ritual; nor is there any really adequate verbal substitute for even the simplest gesture in human behavior. To deny this would lead to the most banal rationalism and simplification. Nonetheless, at the very same time, every single one of these ideological signs, though not supplantable by words, has support in and is accompanied by words, just as is the case with singing and its musical accompaniment.

No cultural sign, once taken in and given meaning, remains in isolation: it becomes part of the *unity of the verbally constituted consciousness*. It is in the capacity of the consciousness to find verbal access to it. Thus, as it were, spreading ripples of verbal responses and resonances form around each and every ideological sign. Every *ideological refraction of existence in process of generation*, no matter what the nature of its significant material, *is accompanied by ideological refraction in word* as an obligatory concomitant phenomenon. Word is present in each and every act of understanding and in each and every act of interpretation.

All of the properties of word we have examined—*its semiotic purity, its ideological neutrality, its involvement in behavioral communication, its ability to become an inner word and, finally, its obligatory presence, as an accompanying phenomenon, in any conscious act*—all these properties make the word the fundamental object of the study of ideologies. The laws of the ideological refraction of existence in signs and in consciousness, its forms and mechanics, must be studied in the material of the word, first of all. The only possible way of bringing the Marxist sociological method to bear on all the profundities and subtleties of “immanent” ideological structures is to operate from the basis of the philosophy of language as the *philosophy of the ideological sign*. And that basis must be devised and elaborated by Marxism itself.

From Part II

CHAPTER 3 VERBAL INTERACTION

Utterance, as we know, is constructed between two socially organized persons, and in the absence of a real addressee, an addressee is presupposed in the person, so to speak, of a normal representative of the social group to which the speaker belongs. The *word is oriented toward an addressee*, toward *who* that addressee might be: a fellow-member or not of the same social group, of higher or lower standing (the addressee's hierarchical status), someone connected with the speaker by close social ties (father, brother, husband, and so on) or not. There can be no such thing as an abstract addressee, a man unto himself, so to speak. With such a person, we would indeed have no language in common, literally and figuratively. Even though we sometimes have pretensions to experiencing and saying things *urbi et orbi*, actually, of course, we envision this "world at large" through the prism of the concrete social milieu surrounding us. In the majority of cases, we presuppose a certain typical and stabilized *social purview* toward which the ideological creativity of our own social group and time is oriented, i.e., we assume as our addressee a contemporary of our literature, our science, our moral and legal codes.

Each person's inner world and thought has its stabilized *social audience* that comprises the environment in which reasons, motives, values, and so on are fashioned. The more cultured a person, the more closely his inner audience will approximate the normal audience of ideological creativity; but, in any case, specific class and specific era are limits that the ideal of addressee cannot go beyond.

Orientation of the word toward the addressee has an extremely high significance. In point of fact, *word is a two-sided act*. It is determined equally by *whose* word it is and *for whom* it is meant. As word, it is precisely *the product of the reciprocal relationship between speaker and listener, addresser and addressee*. Each and every word expresses the "one" in relation to the "other." I give myself verbal shape from an-

other's point of view, ultimately, from the point of view of the community to which I belong. A word is a bridge thrown between myself and another. If one end of the bridge depends on me, then the other depends on my addressee. A word is territory shared by both addresser and addressee, by the speaker and his interlocutor.

But what does being the speaker mean? Even if a word is not entirely his, constituting, as it were, the border zone between himself and his addressee—still, it does in part belong to him.

There is one instance of the situation wherein the speaker is the undoubted possessor of the word and to which, in this instance, he has full rights. This instance is the physiological act of implementing the word. But insofar as the act is taken in purely physiological terms, the category of possession does not apply.

If, instead of the physiological act of implementing sound, we take implementation of word as sign, then the question of proprietorship becomes extremely complicated. Aside from the fact that word as sign is a borrowing on the speaker's part from the social stock of available signs, the very individual manipulation of this social sign in a concrete utterance is wholly determined by social relations. The stylistic individualization of an utterance that the Vosslerites speak about represents a reflection of social interrelationships that constitute the atmosphere in which an utterance is formed. *The immediate social situation and the broader social milieu wholly determine—and determine from within, so to speak—the structure of an utterance.*

Indeed, take whatever kind of utterance we will, even the kind of utterance that is not a referential message (communication in the narrow sense) but the verbal expression of some need—for instance, hunger—we may be certain that it is socially oriented in its entirety. Above all, it is determined immediately and directly by the participants of the speech event, both explicit and implicit participants, in connection with a specific situation. That situation shapes the utterance, dictating that it sound one way and not another—like a demand or request, insistence on one's rights or a plea for mercy, in a style flowery or plain, in a confident or hesitant manner, and so on.

The immediate social situation and its immediate social participants determine the “occasional” form and style of an utterance. The deeper layers of its structure are determined by more sustained and more basic social connections with which the speaker is in contact.

Even if we were to take an utterance still in process of generation “in the soul,” it would not change the essence of the matter, since the structure of experience is just as social as is the structure of its outward objectification. The degree to which an experience is perceptible, distinct, and formulated is directly proportional to the degree to which it is socially oriented.

In fact, not even the simplest, dimmest apprehension of a feeling—say, the feeling of hunger not outwardly expressed—can dispense with some kind of ideological form. Any apprehension, after all, must have inner speech, inner intonation and the rudiments of inner style: one can apprehend one’s hunger apologetically, irritably, angrily, indignantly, etc. We have indicated, of course, only the grosser, more egregious directions that inner intonation may take; actually, there is an extremely subtle and complex set of possibilities for intoning an experience. Outward expression in most cases only continues and makes more distinct the direction already taken by inner speech and the intonation already embedded in it.

Which way the intoning of the inner sensation of hunger will go depends upon the hungry person’s general social standing as well as upon the immediate circumstances of the experience. These are, after all, the circumstances that determine in what evaluative context, within what social purview, the experience of hunger will be apprehended. The immediate social context will determine possible addresses, friends or foes, toward whom the consciousness and the experience of hunger will be oriented: whether it will involve dissatisfaction with cruel Nature, with oneself, with society, with a specific group within society, with a specific person, and so on. Of course, various degrees of perceptibility, distinctiveness, and differentiation in the social orientation of an experience are possible; but without some kind of evaluative social orientation there is no experience. Even the cry of a nursing

infant is “oriented” toward its mother. There is the possibility that the experience of hunger may take on political coloring, in which case its structure will be determined along the lines of a potential political appeal or a reason for political agitation. It may be apprehended as a form of protest, and so on.

With regard to the potential (and sometimes even distinctly sensed) addressee, a distinction can be made between two poles, two extremes between which an experience can be apprehended and ideologically structured, tending now toward the one, now toward the other. Let us label these two extremes the “*I-experience*” and the “*we-experience*.”

The “*I-experience*” actually tends toward extermination: the nearer it approaches its extreme limit, the more it loses its ideological structuredness and, hence, its apprehensible quality, reverting to the physiological reaction of the animal. In its course toward this extreme, the experience relinquishes all its potentialities, all outcroppings of social orientation, and, therefore, also loses its verbal delineation. Single experiences or whole groups of experiences can approach this extreme, relinquishing, in doing so, their ideological clarity and structuredness and testifying to the inability of the consciousness to strike social roots.³

The “*we-experience*” is not by any means a nebulous herd experience; it is differentiated. Moreover, ideological differentiation, the growth of consciousness, is in direct proportion to the firmness and reliability of the social orientation. The stronger, the more organized, the more differentiated the collective in which an individual orients himself, the more vivid and complex his inner world will be.

The “*we-experience*” allows of different degrees and different types of ideological structuring.

Let us suppose a case where hunger is apprehended by one of a disparate set of hungry persons whose hunger is a matter of chance (the man down on his luck, the beggar, or the like). The

³On the possibility of a set of human sexual experiences falling out of social context with concomitant loss of verbal cognizance, see our book, *Frejdzizm* {Freudianism} (1927), pp. 135–36. [Au.]

experience of such a declassé loner will be colored in some specific way and will gravitate toward certain particular ideological forms with a range potentially quite broad: humility, shame, enviousness, and other evaluative tones will color his experience. The ideological forms along the lines of which the experience would develop would be either the individualistic protest of a vagabond or repentant, mystical resignation.

Let us now suppose a case in which the hungry person belongs to a collective where hunger is not haphazard and does bear a collective character—but the collective of these hungry people is not itself tightly bound together by material ties, each of its members experiencing hunger on his own. This is the situation most peasants are in. Hunger is experienced “at large,” but under conditions of material disparateness, in the absence of a unifying economic coalition, each person suffers hunger in the small, enclosed world of his own individual economy. Such a collective lacks the unitary material frame necessary for united action. A resigned but unashamed and undemeaning apprehension of one’s hunger will be the rule under such conditions — “everyone bears it, you must bear it, too.” Here grounds are furnished for the development of the philosophical and religious systems of the nonresistor or fatalist type (early Christianity, Tolstoyanism).

A completely different experience of hunger applies to a member of an objectively and materially aligned and united collective (a regiment of soldiers; workers in their association within the walls of a factory; hired hands on a large-scale, capitalist farm; finally, a whole class once it has matured to the point of “class unto itself”). The experience of hunger this time will be marked predominantly by overtones of active and self-confident protest with no basis for humble and submissive intonation. These are the most favorable grounds for an experience to achieve ideological clarity and structuredness.⁴

⁴Interesting material about expressions of hunger can be found in Leo Spitzer’s books, *Italienische Kriegsgefangenenbriefe* [*Italian Prisoner-of-War Letters*—not translated into English.—Ed.], and *Die Umschreibungen des Begriffes Hunger* [*Expressions of the Idea of Hunger*—not translated into English.—Ed.]. The basic concern in these studies is the adaptability of word and image to the conditions of an excep-

All these types of expression, each with its basic intonations, come rife with corresponding terms and corresponding forms of possible utterances. The social situation in all cases determines which term, which metaphor, and which form may develop in an utterance expressing hunger out of the particular intonational bearings of the experience.

A special kind of character marks the individualistic *self-experience*. It does not belong to the “I-experience” in the strict sense of the term as defined above. The individualistic experience is fully differentiated and structured. Individualism is a special ideological form of the “we-experience” of the bourgeois class (there is also an analogous type of individualistic self-experience for the feudal aristocratic class). The individualistic type of experience derives from a steadfast and confident social orientation. Individualistic confidence in oneself, one’s sense of personal value, is drawn not from within, not from the depths of one’s personality, but from the outside world. It is the ideological interpretation of one’s social recognizance and tenability by rights, and of the objective security and tenability provided by the whole social order, of one’s individual livelihood. The structure of the conscious, individual personality is just as social a structure as is the collective type of experience. It is a particular kind of interpretation, projected into the individual soul, of a complex and sustained socioeconomic situation. But there resides in this type of individualistic “we-experience,” and also in the very order to which it corresponds, an inner contradiction that sooner or later will demolish its ideological structuredness.

An analogous structure is presented in solitary self-experience (“the ability and strength to stand alone in one’s rectitude”), a type cultivated by Romain Rolland and, to some extent, by Tolstoj.⁵ The pride involved in this solitude also depends upon “we.” It is a variant of the “we-experience” characteristic of the modern-day West European

tional situation. The author does not, however, operate with a genuine sociological approach. [Au.]

⁵Romain Rolland (1866–1944), French novelist, winner of the Nobel Prize for literature in 1917. “Tolstoj” is Lev Tolstoy (1828–1910), the Russian novelist. [Ed.]

intelligentsia. Tolstoj's remarks about there being different kinds of thinking—"for oneself" and "for the public"—merely juxtapose two different conceptions of "public." Tolstoj's "for oneself" actually signifies only another social conception of addressee peculiar to himself. There is no such thing as thinking outside orientation toward possible expression and, hence, outside the social orientation of that expression and of the thinking involved.

Thus the personality of the speaker, taken from within, so to speak, turns out to be wholly a product of social interrelations. Not only its outward expression but also its inner experience are social territory. Consequently, the whole route between inner experience (the "expressible") and its outward objectification (the "utterance") lies entirely across social territory. When an experience reaches the stage of actualization in a full-fledged utterance, its social orientation acquires added complexity by focusing on the immediate social circumstances of discourse and, above all, upon actual addressees.

Our analysis casts a new light upon the problem of consciousness and ideology that we examined earlier.

Outside objectification, outside embodiment in some particular material (the material of gesture, inner word, outcry), *consciousness is a fiction*. It is an improper ideological construct created by way of abstraction from the concrete facts of social expression. But consciousness as organized, material expression (in the ideological material of word, a sign, drawing, colors, musical sound, etc.)—consciousness, so conceived, is an objective fact and a tremendous social force. To be sure, this kind of consciousness is not a supraexistential phenomenon and cannot determine the constitution of existence. It itself is part of existence and one of its forces, and for that reason it possesses efficacy and plays a role in the arena of existence. Consciousness, while still inside a conscious person's head as innerword embryo of expression, is as yet too tiny a piece of existence, and the scope of its activity is also as yet too small. But once it passes through all the stages of social objectification and enters into the power system of science, art, ethics, or law, it becomes a real force, capable even of exerting in turn an

influence on the economic bases of social life. To be sure, this force of consciousness is incarnated in specific social organizations, geared into steadfast ideological modes of expression (science, art, and so on), but even in the original, vague form of glimmering thought and experience, it had already constituted a social event on a small scale and was not an inner act on the part of the individual.

From the very start experience is set toward fully actualized outward expression and, from the very start, tends in that direction. The expression of an experience may be realized or it may be held back, inhibited. In the latter case, the experience is inhibited expression (we shall not go into the extremely complex problem of the causes and conditions of inhibition). Realized expression, in its turn, exerts a powerful, reverse influence on experience: it begins to tie inner life together, giving it more definite and lasting expression.

This reverse influence by structured and stabilized expression on experience (i.e., inner expression) has tremendous importance and must always be taken into account. The claim can be made that it is a matter *not so much of expression accommodating itself to our inner world but rather of our inner world accommodating itself to the potentialities of our expression, its possible routes and directions*.

To distinguish it from the established systems of ideology—the systems of art, ethics, law, etc.—we shall use the term *behavioral ideology* for the whole aggregate of life experiences and the outward expressions directly connected with it. Behavioral ideology is that atmosphere of unsystematized and unfixed inner and outer speech which endows our every instance of behavior and action and our every "conscious" state with meaning. Considering the sociological nature of the structure of expression and experience, we may say that behavioral ideology in our conception corresponds basically to what is termed "social psychology" in Marxist literature. In the present context, we should prefer to avoid the word "psychology," since we are concerned exclusively with the content of the psyche and the consciousness. That content is ideological through and through, determined not by individual, organismic (biological or physiological) factors,

but by factors of a purely sociological character. The individual, organismic factor is completely irrelevant to an understanding of the basic creative and living lineaments of the content of consciousness.

The established ideological systems of social ethics, science, art, and religion are crystallizations of behavioral ideology, and these crystallizations, in turn, exert a powerful influence back upon behavioral ideology, normally setting its tone. At the same time, however, these already formalized ideological products constantly maintain the most vital organic contact with behavioral ideology and draw sustenance from it; otherwise, without that contact, they would be dead, just as any literary work or cognitive idea is dead without living, evaluative perception of it. Now, this ideological perception, for which alone any ideological piece of work can and does exist, is carried out in the language of behavioral ideology. Behavioral ideology draws the work into some particular social situation. The work combines with the whole content of the consciousness of those who perceive it and derives its apperceptive values only in the context of that consciousness. It is interpreted in the spirit of the particular content of consciousness (the consciousness of the perceiver) and is illuminated by it anew. This is what constitutes the vitality of an ideological production. In each period of its historical existence, a work must enter into close association with the changing behavioral ideology, become permeated with it, and draw new sustenance from it. Only to the degree that a work can enter into that kind of integral, organic association with the behavioral ideology of a given period is it viable for that period (and of course, for a given social group). Outside its connection with behavioral ideology it ceases to exist, since it ceases to be experienced as something ideologically meaningful.

We must distinguish several different strata in behavioral ideology. These strata are defined by the social scale on which experience and expression are measured, or by the social forces with respect to which they must directly orient themselves.

The purview in which an experience or expression comes into being may, as we know, vary

in scope. The world of an experience may be narrow and dim; its social orientation may be haphazard and ephemeral and characteristic only for some adventitious and loose coalition of a small number of persons. Of course, even these erratic experiences are ideological and sociological, but their position lies on the borders of the normal and the pathological. Such an experience will remain an isolated fact in the psychological life of the person exposed to it. It will not take firm root and will not receive differentiated and full-fledged expression; indeed, if it lacks a socially grounded and stable audience, where could it possibly find bases for its differentiation and finalization? Even less likely would such an adventitious experience be set down, in writing or even more so in print. Experiences of that kind, experiences born of a momentary and accidental state of affairs, have, of course, no chance of further social impact of efficacy.

The lowest, most fluid, and quickly changing stratum of behavioral ideology consists of experiences of that kind. To this stratum, consequently, belong all those vague and undeveloped experiences, thoughts, and idle, accidental words that flash across our minds. They are all of them cases of miscarriages of social orientations, novels without heroes, performances without audiences. They lack any sort of logic or unity. The sociological regulatedness in these ideological scraps is extremely difficult to detect. In this lowest stratum of behavioral ideology only statistical regularity is detectable; given a huge quantity of products of this sort, the outlines of socioeconomic regulatedness could be revealed. Needless to say, it would be a practical impossibility to descry in any one such accidental experience or expression its socioeconomic premises.

The upper strata of behavioral ideology, the ones directly linked with ideological systems, are more vital, more serious, and bear a creative character. Compared to an established ideology, they are a great deal more mobile and sensitive: they convey changes in the socioeconomic basis more quickly and more vividly. Here, precisely, is where those creative energies build up through whose agency partial or radical restructuring of ideological systems comes about. Newly emerging social forces find ideological expression and

take shape first in these upper strata of behavioral ideology before they can succeed in dominating the arena of some organized, official ideology. Of course, in the process of this struggle, in the process of their gradual infiltration into ideological organizations (the press, literature, and science), these new currents in behavioral ideology, no matter how revolutionary they may be, undergo the influence of the established ideological systems and, to some extent, incorporate forms, ideological practices, and approaches already in stock.

What usually is called “creative individuality” is nothing but the expression of a particular person’s basic, firmly grounded, and consistent line of social orientation. This concerns primarily the uppermost, fully structured strata of inner speech (behavioral ideology), each of whose terms and intonations have gone through the stage of expression and have, so to speak, passed the test of expression. Thus what is involved here are words, intonations, and inner-word gestures that have undergone the experience of outward expression on a more or less ample social scale and have acquired, as it were, a high social polish and lustre by the effect of reactions and responses, resistance or support, on the part of the social audience.

In the lower strata of behavioral ideology, the biological-biographical factor does, of course, play a crucial role, but its importance constantly diminishes as the utterance penetrates more deeply into an ideological system. Consequently, while bio-biographical explanations are of some value in the lower strata of experience and expression (utterance), their role in the upper strata is extremely modest. Here the objective sociological method takes full command.

So, then, the theory of expression underlying individualistic subjectivism must be rejected. *The organizing center of any utterance, of any experience, is not within but outside—in the social milieu surrounding the individual being.* Only the inarticulate cry of an animal is really organized from inside the physiological apparatus of an individual creature. Such a cry lacks any positive ideological factor vis-à-vis the physiological reaction. Yet, even the most primitive human utterance produced by the individual organism is,

from the point of view of its content, import, and meaning, organized outside the organism, in the extraorganismic conditions of the social milieu. Utterance as such is wholly a product of social interaction, both of the immediate sort as determined by the circumstances of the discourse, and of the more general kind, as determined by the whole aggregate of conditions under which any given community of speakers operates.

The individual utterance (*parole*), despite the contentions of abstract objectivism, is by no means an individual fact not susceptible to sociological analysis by virtue of its individuality. Indeed, if this were so, neither the sum total of these individual acts nor any abstract features common to all such individual acts (the “normatively identical forms”) could possibly engender a social product.

Individualistic subjectivism is *correct* in that individual utterances *are* what constitute the actual, concrete reality of language, and in that they *do have* creative value in language.

But individualistic subjectivism is *wrong* in ignoring and failing to understand the social nature of the utterance and in attempting to derive the utterance from the speaker’s inner world as an expression of that inner world. The structure of the utterance and of the very experience being expressed is a *social structure*. The stylistic shaping of an utterance is shaping of a social kind, and the very verbal stream of utterances, which is what the reality of language actually amounts to, is a social stream. Each drop of that stream is social and the entire dynamics of its generation are social.

Individualistic subjectivism is also completely *correct* in that linguistic form and its ideological impletion are *not* severable. Each and every word is ideological and each and every application of language involves ideological change. But individualistic subjectivism is *wrong* insofar as it also derives this ideological impletion of the word from the conditions of the individual psyche.

Individualistic subjectivism is *wrong* in taking the monologic utterance, just as abstract objectivism does, as its basic point of departure. Certain Vosslerites, it is true, have begun to consider the problem of dialogue and so to approach a

more correct understanding of verbal interaction.⁶ Highly symptomatic in this regard is one of Leo Spitzer's books we have already cited—his *Italienische Umgangssprache*, [*Italian Conversational Language*] a book that attempts to analyze the forms of Italian conversational language in close connection with the conditions of discourse and above all with the issue of the addressee.⁷ However, Leo Spitzer utilizes a *descriptive psychological* method. He does not draw from his analysis the fundamentally sociological conclusions it suggests. For the Vosslerites, therefore, the monologic utterance still remains the basic reality.

The problem of verbal interaction has been posed clearly and distinctly by Otto Dietrich.⁸ He proceeds by way of subjecting to criticism the theory of utterance as expression. For him, the basic function of language is not expression but *communication* (in the strict sense), and this leads him to consider the role of the addressee. The minimal condition for a linguistic manifestation is, according to Dietrich, *twofold* (speaker and listener). However, Dietrich shares assumptions of a general psychological type with individualistic subjectivism. Dietrich's investigations likewise lack any determinate sociological basis.

Now we are in a position to answer the question we posed at the end of the first chapter of this section of our study. *The actual reality of language-speech is not the abstract system of linguistic forms, not the isolated monologic utterance, and not the psychophysiological act of its*

⁶See "The Problem of Speech Genres," note 2 on p. 1228. [Ed.]

⁷In this respect, the very organization of the book is symptomatic. The book divides into four main chapters. Their titles are as follows: I. *Eröffnungsformen des Gesprächs*. II. *Sprecher und Hörer*; A. *Höflichkeit (Rücksicht auf den Partner)*. B. *Sparsamkeit und Verschwendung im Ausdruck*; C. *In einandergreifen von Rede und Gegenrede*. III. *Sprecher und Situation*. IV. *Der Abschluss des Gesprächs*. [I. *Conversational Openings*. II. *Speaker and Listener*; A. *Courtesy (Consideration of the Partner)*. B. *Economy and Extravagance in Expression*. C. *The Intertwining of Statement and Response*. III. *Speaker and Situation*. IV. *The Conclusion of Conversation*.—Ed.] Spitzer's predecessor in the study of conversational language under conditions of real-life discourse was Hermann Wunderlich. See his book, *Unsere Umgangssprache* (1894). [Au.]

⁸See *Die Probleme der Sprachpsychologie* (1914). [Au.]

implementation, but the social event of verbal interaction implemented in an utterance or utterances.

Thus, verbal interaction is the basic reality of language.

Dialogue, in the narrow sense of the word, is, of course, only one of the forms—a very important form, to be sure—of verbal interaction. But dialogue can also be understood in a broader sense, meaning not only direct, face-to-face, vocalized verbal communication between persons, but also verbal communication of any type whatsoever. A book, i.e., a *verbal performance in print*, is also an element of verbal communication. It is something discussable in actual, real-life dialogue, but aside from that, it is calculated for active perception, involving attentive reading and inner responsiveness, and for organized, *printed* reaction in the various forms devised by the particular sphere of verbal communication in question (book reviews, critical surveys, defining influence on subsequent works, and so on). Moreover, a verbal performance of this kind also inevitably orients itself with respect to previous performances in the same sphere, both those by the same author and those by other authors. It inevitably takes its point of departure from some particular state of affairs involving a scientific problem or a literary style. Thus the printed verbal performance engages, as it were, in ideological colloquy of large scale: it responds to something, objects to something, affirms something, anticipates possible responses and objections, seeks support, and so on.

Any utterance, no matter how weighty and complete in and of itself, *is only a moment in the continuous process of verbal communication*. But that continuous verbal communication is, in turn, itself only a moment in the continuous, all-inclusive, generative process of a given social collective. An important problem arises in this regard: the study of the connection between concrete verbal interaction and the extraverbal situation—both the immediate situation and, through it, the broader situation. The forms this connection takes are different, and different factors in a situation may, in association with this or that form, take on different meanings (for instance, these connections differ with the different factors

of situation in literary or in scientific communication). *Verbal communication can never be understood and explained outside of this connection with a concrete situation.* Verbal intercourse is inextricably interwoven with communication of other types, all stemming from the common ground of production communication. It goes without saying that word cannot be divorced from this eternally generative, unified process of communication. In its concrete connection with a situation, verbal communication is always accompanied by social acts of a nonverbal character (the performance of labor, the symbolic acts of a ritual, a ceremony, etc.), and is often only an accessory to these acts, merely carrying out an auxiliary role. *Language acquires life and historically evolves precisely here, in concrete verbal communication, and not in the abstract linguistic system of language forms, nor in the individual psyche of speakers.*

From what has been established, it follows that the methodologically based order of study of language ought to be: (1) the forms and types of verbal interaction in connection with their concrete conditions; (2) forms of particular utterances, of particular speech performances, as elements of a closely linked interaction—i.e., the genres of speech performance in human behavior and ideological creativity as determined by verbal interaction; (3) a reexamination, on this new basis, of language forms in their usual linguistic presentation.

This is the order that the actual generative process of language follows: *social intercourse is generated (stemming from the basis); in it verbal communication and interaction are generated; and in the latter, forms of speech performances are generated; finally, this generative process is reflected in the change of language forms.*

One thing that emerges from all that has been said is the extreme importance of the problem of the forms of an utterance *as a whole*. We have already pointed out that contemporary linguistics lacks any approach to the utterance itself. Its analysis goes no further than the elements that constitute an utterance. Meanwhile, utterances are the real units that make up the stream of language-speech. What is necessary in order to study the forms of this real unit is precisely that it

not be isolated from the historical stream of utterances. As a whole entity, the utterance is implemented only in the stream of verbal intercourse. The whole is, after all, defined by its boundaries, and these boundaries run along the line of contact between a given utterance and the extraverbal and verbal (i.e., made up of other utterances) milieu.

The first and last words, the beginning and end points of real-life utterance—that is what already constitutes the problem of the whole. The process of speech, broadly understood as the process of inner and outer verbal life, goes on continuously. It knows neither beginning nor end. The outwardly actualized utterance is an island rising from the boundless sea of inner speech; the dimensions and forms of this island are determined by the particular *situation* of the utterance and its *audience*. Situation and audience make inner speech undergo actualization into some kind of specific outer expression that is directly included into an un verbalized behavioral context and in that context is amplified by actions, behavior, or verbal responses of other participants of the utterance. The full-fledged question, exclamation, command, request—these are the most typical forms of wholes in behavioral utterances. All of them (especially the command and request) require an extraverbal complement and, indeed, an extraverbal commencement. The very type of structure these little behavioral *genres* will achieve is determined by the effect, upon a word, of its coming up against the extraverbal milieu and against another word (i.e., the words of other people). Thus, the form a command will take is determined by the obstacles it may encounter, the degree of submissiveness expected, and so on. The structure of the genre in these instances will be in accord with the accidental and unique features of behavioral situations. Only when social custom and circumstances have fixed and stabilized certain forms in behavioral interchange to some appreciable degree, can one speak of specific types of structure in genres of behavioral speech. So, for instance, an entirely special type of structure has been worked out for the genre of the light and casual causerie of the drawing room where everyone “feels at home” and where the basic differentiation within the

gathering (the audience) is that between men and women. Here we find devised special forms of insinuation, half-sayings, allusions to little tales of an intentionally nonserious character, and so on. A different type of structure is worked out in the case of conversation between husband and wife, brother and sister, etc. In the case where a random assortment of people gathers—while waiting in a line or conducting some business—statements and exchanges of words will start and finish and be constructed in another, completely different way. Village sewing circles, urban carouses, workers' lunchtime chats, etc., will all have their own types. Each situation, fixed and sustained by social custom, commands a particular kind of organization of audience and, hence, a particular repertoire of little behavioral genres. The behavioral genre fits everywhere into the channel of social intercourse assigned to it and functions as an ideological reflection of its type, structure, goal, and social composition. The behavioral genre is a fact of the social milieu: of holiday, leisure time, and of social contact in the parlor, the workshop, etc. It meshes with that milieu and is delimited and defined by it in all its internal aspects.

The production process of labor and the processes of commerce know different forms of constructing utterances.

As for the forms of ideological intercourse in the strict sense of the term—forms for political speeches, political acts, laws, regulations, manifestos, and so forth; and forms for poetic utterances, scientific treatises, etc.—these have been the object of special investigation in rhetoric and poetics, but, as we have seen, these investigations have been completely divorced from the problem of language on the one hand, and from the problem of social intercourse on the other.⁹ Productive analysis of the forms of the whole of utterances as the real units in the stream of speech is possible only on a basis that regards the individual utterance as a purely sociological phenomenon. Marxist philosophy of language should and

⁹On the topic of disjuncture of a literary work of art with conditions of artistic communication and the resulting inertness of the work, see our study, "Slovo v žizni i slovo v poezii" [Word in Life and Word in Poetry], *Zvezda*, 6 (1926). [Au.]

must stand squarely on the utterance as the real phenomenon of language-speech and as a socio-ideological structure.

Now that we have outlined the sociological structure of the utterance, let us return to the two trends in philosophical linguistic thought and make a final summing up.

R. Shor, a Moscow linguist and an adherent of the second trend of thought in philosophy of language, ends a brief sketch of the contemporary state of linguistics with the following words:

"Language is not an artifact (*ergon*) but a natural and congenital activity of mankind"—so claimed the romanticist linguistics of the 19th century. Theoretical linguistics of modern times claims otherwise: "Language is not individual activity (*energeia*) but a cultural-historical legacy of mankind (*ergon*)."¹⁰

This conclusion is amazing in its bias and one-sidedness. On the factual side, it is completely untrue. Modern theoretical linguistics includes, after all, the Vossler school, one of Germany's most powerful movements in contemporary linguistic thought. It is impermissible to identify modern linguistics with only one of its trends.

From the theoretical point of view, both the thesis and the antithesis made up by Shor must equally be rejected, since they are equally inadequate to the real nature of language.

Let us conclude the argument with an attempt to formulate our own point of view in the following set of propositions:

1. *Language as a stable system of normatively identical forms is merely a scientific abstraction, productive only in connection with certain particular practical and theoretical goals. This abstraction is not adequate to the concrete reality of language.*
2. *Language is a continuous generative process implemented in the social-verbal interaction of speakers.*
3. *The laws of the generative process of language are not at all the laws of individual*

¹⁰R. Shor, "Krizis sovremennoj linvistiki" [The Crisis in Contemporary Linguistics], *Jafetičeskij sbornik*, V (1927), p. 71. [Au.]

psychology, but neither can they be divorced from the activity of speakers. The laws of language generation are *sociological* laws.

4. *Linguistic creativity does not coincide with artistic creativity nor with any other type of specialized ideological creativity. But, at the same time, linguistic creativity cannot be understood apart from the ideological meanings and values that fill it.* The generative process of language, as is true of any historical generative process, can be perceived as blind mechanical necessity, but it can also become “free necessity” once it has reached the position of a conscious and desired necessity.
5. *The structure of the utterance is a purely sociological structure.* The utterance, as such, obtains between speakers. The individual speech act (in the strict sense of the word “individual”) is *contradictio in adjecto*.

CHAPTER 4 THEME AND MEANING IN LANGUAGE

Theme and meaning. The problem of active perception. Evaluation and meaning. The dialectics of meaning.

The problem of meaning is one of the most difficult problems of linguistics. Efforts toward solving this problem have revealed the one-sided monologism of linguistic science in particularly strong relief. The theory of passive understanding precludes any possibility of engaging the most fundamental and crucial features of meaning in language.

The scope of the present study compels us to limit ourselves to a very brief and perfunctory examination of this issue. We shall attempt only to map out the main lines of its productive treatment.

A definite and unitary meaning, a unitary significance, is a property belonging to any utterance *as a whole*. Let us call the significance of a whole utterance its *theme*.¹¹ The theme must be

¹¹The term is, of course, a provisional one. *Theme* in our sense embraces its implementation as well; therefore, our concept must not be confused with that of a theme in a liter-

unitary, otherwise we would have no basis for talking about any one utterance. The theme of an utterance itself is individual and unreproducible, just as the utterance itself is individual and unreproducible. The theme is the expression of the concrete, historical situation that engendered the utterance. The utterance “What time is it?” has a different meaning each time it is used, and hence, in accordance with our terminology, has a different theme, depending on the concrete historical situation (“historical” here in microscopic dimensions) during which it is enunciated and of which, in essence, it is a part.

It follows, then, that the theme of an utterance is determined not only by the linguistic forms that comprise it—words, morphological and syntactic structures, sounds, and intonation—but also by extraverbal factors of the situation. Should we miss these situational factors, we would be as little able to understand an utterance as if we were to miss its most important words. The theme of an utterance is concrete—as concrete as the historical instant to which the utterance belongs. *Only an utterance taken in its full, concrete scope as an historical phenomenon possesses a theme.* That is what is meant by the theme of an utterance.

However, if we were to restrict ourselves to the historical unreproducibility and unitariness of each concrete utterance and its theme, we would be poor dialecticians. Together with theme or, rather, within the theme, there is also the *meaning* that belongs to an utterance. By meaning, as distinguished from theme, we understand all those aspects of the utterance that are *reproducible* and *self-identical* in all instances of repetition. Of course, these aspects are abstract: they have no concrete, autonomous existence in an artificially isolated form, but, at the same time, they do constitute an essential and inseparable part of the utterance. The theme of an utterance is, in essence, indivisible. The meaning of an utterance, on the contrary, does break down into a set of meanings belonging to each of the various linguistic elements of which the

ary work. The concept of “thematic unity” would be closer to what we mean. [Au.]

utterance consists. The unreproducible theme of the utterance “What time is it?” taken in its indissoluble connection with the concrete historical situation, cannot be divided into elements. The meaning of the utterance “What time is it?”—a meaning that, of course, remains the same in all historical instances of its enunciation—is made up of the meanings of the words, forms of morphological and syntactic union, interrogative intonations, etc., that form the construction of the utterance.

Theme is a complex, dynamic system of signs that attempts to be adequate to a given instant of generative process. Theme is reaction by the consciousness in its generative process to the generative process of existence. Meaning is the technical apparatus for the implementation of theme. Of course, no absolute, mechanistic boundary can be drawn between theme and meaning. There is no theme without meaning and no meaning without theme. Moreover, it is even impossible to convey the meaning of a particular word (say, in the course of teaching another person a foreign language) without having made it an element of theme, i.e., without having constructed an “example” utterance. On the other hand, a theme must base itself on some kind of fixity of meaning; otherwise it loses its connection with what came before and what comes after—i.e., it altogether loses its significance.

The study of the languages of prehistoric peoples and modern semantic paleontology have reached a conclusion about the so-called “complex-ness” of prehistoric thinking. Prehistoric man used one word to denote a wide variety of phenomena that, from our modern point of view, are in no way related to one another. What is more, the same word could be used to denote diametrically opposite notions—top and bottom, earth and sky, good and bad, and so on. Declares Marr:

Suffice it to say that contemporary paleontological study of language has given us the possibility of reaching, through its investigations, back to an age when a tribe had only one word at its disposal for usage in all the meanings of which mankind was aware.¹²

¹²N. Ja. Marr, *Japhetic Theory*, (1926), p. 278. [Au.]

“But was such an all-meaning word in fact a word?” we might be asked. Yes, precisely a word. If, on the contrary, a certain sound complex had only one single, inert, and invariable meaning, then such a complex would not be a word, not a sign, but only a signal.¹³ *Multiplicity of meanings is the constitutive feature of word.* As regards the all-meaning word of which Marr speaks, we can say the following: *such a word, in essence, has virtually no meaning; it is all theme.* Its meaning is *inseparable from the concrete situation of its implementation.* This meaning is different each time, just as the situation is different each time. Thus the theme, in this case, subsumed meaning under itself and dissolved it before meaning had any chance to consolidate and congeal. But as language developed further, as its stock of sound complexes expanded, meaning began to congeal along lines that were basic and most frequent in the life of the community for the thematic application of this or that word.

Theme, as we have said, is an attribute of a whole utterance only; it can belong to a separate word only inasmuch as that word operates in the capacity of a whole utterance. So, for instance, Marr’s all-meaning word always operates in the capacity of a whole (and has no fixed meanings precisely for that reason). Meaning, on the other hand, belongs to an element or aggregate of elements in their relation to the whole. Of course, if we entirely disregard this relation to the whole (i.e., to the utterance), we shall entirely forfeit meaning. That is the reason why a sharp boundary between theme and meaning cannot be drawn.

The most accurate way of formulating the interrelationship between theme and meaning is in the following terms. Theme is the *upper, actual limit of linguistic significance*; in essence, only theme means something definite. Meaning is the *lower limit of linguistic significance*. Meaning, in

¹³It is clear that even that earliest of all words, about which Marr speaks, is not in any way like a signal (to which a number of investigators endeavor to reduce language). After all, a signal that meant everything would be minimally capable of carrying out the function of a signal. The capacity of a signal to adapt to the changing conditions of a situation is very low. By and large, change in a signal means replacement of one signal by another. [Au.]

essence, means nothing; it only possesses potentiality—the possibility of having a meaning within a concrete theme. Investigation of the meaning of one or another linguistic element can proceed, in terms of our definition, in one of two directions: either in the direction of the upper limit, toward theme, in which case it would be investigation of the contextual meaning of a given word within the conditions of a concrete utterance; or investigation can aim toward the lower limit, the limit of meaning, in which case it would be investigation of the meaning of a word in the system of language or, in other words, investigation of a dictionary word.

A distinction between theme and meaning and a proper understanding of their interrelationship are vital steps in constructing a genuine science of meanings. Total failure to comprehend their importance has persisted to the present day. Such discriminations as those between a word's *usual* and *occasional* meanings, between its central and lateral meanings, between its denotation and connotation, etc., are fundamentally unsatisfactory. The basic tendency underlying all such discriminations—the tendency to ascribe greater value to the central, usual aspect of meaning, presupposing that that aspect really does exist and is stable—is completely fallacious. Moreover, it would leave theme unaccounted for, since theme, of course, can by no means be reduced to the status of the occasional or lateral meaning of words.

The distinction between theme and meaning acquires particular clarity in connection with the *problem of understanding*, which we shall now briefly touch upon.

We have already had occasion to speak of the philological type of passive understanding, which excludes response in advance. Any genuine kind of understanding will be active and will constitute the germ of a response. Only active understanding can grasp theme—a generative process

can be grasped only with the aid of another generative process.

To understand another person's utterance means to orient oneself with respect to it, to find the proper place for it in the corresponding context. For each word of the utterance that we are in process of understanding, we, as it were, lay down a set of our own answering words. The greater their number and weight, the deeper and more substantial our understanding will be.

Thus each of the distinguishable significative elements of an utterance and the entire utterance as a whole entity are translated in our minds into another, active and responsive, context. *Any true understanding is dialogic in nature.* Understanding is to utterance as one line of a dialogue is to the next. Understanding strives to match the speaker's word with a *counter word*. Only in understanding a word in a foreign tongue is the attempt made to match it with the "same" word in one's own language.

Therefore, there is no reason for saying that meaning belongs to a word as such. In essence, meaning belongs to a word in its position between speakers; that is, meaning is realized only in the process of active, responsive understanding. Meaning does not reside in the word or in the soul of the speaker or in the soul of the listener. Meaning is the *effect of interaction between speaker and listener produced via the material of a particular sound complex*. It is like an electric spark that occurs only when two different terminals are hooked together. Those who ignore theme (which is accessible only to active, responsive understanding) and who, in attempting to define the meaning of a word, approach its lower, stable, self-identical limit, want, in effect, to turn on a light bulb after having switched off the current. Only the current of verbal intercourse endows a word with the light of meaning.

From *The Problem of Speech Genres*

I. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITION OF SPEECH GENRES

All the diverse areas of human activity involve the use of language. Quite understandably, the nature and forms of this use are just as diverse as are the areas of human activity. This, of course, in no way disaffirms the national unity of language.¹ Language is realized in the form of individual concrete utterances (oral and written) by participants in the various areas of human activity. These utterances reflect the specific conditions and goals of each such area not only through their content (thematic) and linguistic style, that is, the selection of the lexical, phraseological, and grammatical resources of the language, but above all through their compositional structure. All three of these aspects—thematic content, style, and compositional structure—are inseparably linked to the *whole* of the utterance and are equally determined by the specific nature of the particular sphere of communication. Each separate utterance is individual, of course, but each sphere in which language is used develops its own *relatively stable types* of these utterances. These we may call *speech genres*.

The wealth and diversity of speech genres are boundless because the various possibilities of human activity are inexhaustible, and because each sphere of activity contains an entire repertoire of speech genres that differentiate and grow as the particular sphere develops and becomes more complex. Special emphasis should be placed on the extreme *heterogeneity* of speech genres (oral and written). In fact, the category of speech genres should include short rejoinders of daily dialogue (and these are extremely varied depending on the subject matter, situation, and participants),

Translated by Vern W. McGee.

¹“National unity of language” is a shorthand way of referring to the assemblage of linguistic and translinguistic practices common to a given region. It is, then, a good example of what Bakhtin means by an open unity. See also Otto Jespersen, *Mankind, Nation, and Individual* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1964). [Tr.]

everyday narration, writing (in all its various forms), the brief standard military command, the elaborate and detailed order, the fairly variegated repertoire of business documents (for the most part standard), and the diverse world of commentary (in the broad sense of the word: social, political). And we must also include here the diverse forms of scientific statements and all literary genres (from the proverb to the multivolume novel). It might seem that speech genres are so heterogeneous that they do not have and cannot have a single common level at which they can be studied. For here, on one level of inquiry, appear such heterogeneous phenomena as the single-word everyday rejoinder and the multivolume novel, the military command that is standardized even in its intonation and the profoundly individual lyrical work, and so on. One might think that such functional heterogeneity makes the common features of speech genres excessively abstract and empty. This probably explains why the general problem of speech genres has never really been raised. Literary genres have been studied more than anything else. But from antiquity to the present, they have been studied in terms of their specific literary and artistic features, in terms of the differences that distinguish one from the other (within the realm of literature), and not as specific types of utterances distinct from other types, but sharing with them a common *verbal* (language) nature. The general linguistic problem of the utterance and its types has hardly been considered at all. Rhetorical genres have been studied since antiquity (and not much has been added in subsequent epochs to classical theory). At that time, more attention was already being devoted to the verbal nature of these genres as utterances: for example, to such aspects as the relation to the listener and his influence on the utterance, the specific verbal finalization of the utterance (as distinct from its completeness of thought), and so forth. But here, too, the specific features of rhetorical genres (judicial, political) still overshadowed their general linguistic nature. Finally, everyday speech genres have been studied (mainly rejoinders in everyday dialogue), and

from a general linguistic standpoint (in the school of Saussure and among his later followers—the Structuralists, the American behaviorists, and, on a completely different linguistic basis, the Vosslerians).² But this line of inquiry could not lead to a correct determination of the general linguistic na-

²Saussure's teaching is based on a distinction between language (*la langue*)—a system of interconnected signs and forms that normatively determine each individual speech act and are the special object of linguistics—and speech (*la parole*)—individual instances of language use. Bakhtin discusses Saussure's teachings in *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* as one of the two main trends in linguistic thought (the trend of "abstract objectivism") that he uses to shape his own theory of the utterance. See V. N. Voloshinov, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, tr. Ladislav Matejka and I. R. Titunik (New York: Seminar Press, 1973), esp. pp. 58–61.

"Behaviorists" here refers to the school of psychology introduced by the Harvard physiologist J. B. Watson in 1913. It seeks to explain animal and human behavior entirely in terms of observable and measurable responses to external stimuli. Watson, in his insistence that behavior is a physiological reaction to environmental stimuli, denied the value of introspection and of the concept of consciousness. He saw mental processes as bodily movements, even when unperceived, so that thinking in his view is subvocal speech. There is a strong connection as well between the behaviorist school of psychology and the school of American descriptive linguistics, which is what Bakhtin is referring to here. The so-called descriptivist school was founded by the eminent anthropologist Franz Boas (1858–1942). Its closeness to behaviorism consists in its insistence on careful observation unconditioned by presuppositions or categories taken from traditional language structure. Leonard Bloomfield (1887–1949) was the chief spokesman for the school and was explicit about his commitment to a "mechanist approach" (his term for the behaviorist school of psychology): "Mechanists demand that the facts be presented without any assumption of such auxiliary factors [as a version of the mind]. I have tried to meet this demand. . . ." (*Language* [New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1933], p. vii). Two prominent linguists sometimes associated with the descriptivists, Edward Sapir (1884–1939) and his pupil Benjamin Lee Whorf (1897–1941), differ from Bloomfield insofar as behaviorism plays a relatively minor role in their work.

"Vosslerians" refers to the movement named after the German philologist Karl Vossler (1872–1949), whose adherents included Leo Spitzer (1887–1960). For Vosslerians, the reality of language is the continuously creative, constructive activity that is prosecuted through speech acts; the creativity of language is likened to artistic creativity, and stylistics becomes the leading discipline. Style takes precedence over grammar, and the standpoint of the speaker takes precedence over that of the listener. In a number of aspects, Bakhtin is close to the Vosslerians, but differs in his understanding of the utterance as the concrete reality of language life. Bakhtin

ture of the utterance either, since it was limited to the specific features of everyday oral speech, sometimes being directly and deliberately oriented toward primitive utterances (American behaviorists).

The extreme heterogeneity of speech genres and the attendant difficulty of determining the general nature of the utterance should in no way be underestimated. It is especially important here to draw attention to the very significant difference between primary (simple) and secondary (complex) speech genres (understood not as a functional difference). Secondary (complex) speech genres—novels, dramas, all kinds of scientific research, major genres of commentary, and so forth—arise in more complex and comparatively highly developed and organized cultural communication (primarily written) that is artistic, scientific, sociopolitical, and so on. During the process of their formation, they absorb and digest various primary (simple) genres that have taken form in unmediated speech communion. These primary genres are altered and assume a special character when they enter into complex ones. They lose their immediate relation to actual reality and to the real utterances of others. For example, rejoinders of everyday dialogue or letters found in a novel retain their form and their everyday significance only on the plane of the novel's content. They enter into actual reality only via the novel as a whole, that is, as a literary-artistic event and not as everyday life. The novel as a whole is an utterance just as rejoinders in everyday dialogue or private letters are (they do have a common nature), but unlike these, the novel is a secondary (complex) utterance.

The difference between primary and secondary (ideological) genres is very great and fundamental,³ but this is precisely why the nature of

does not, like the Vosslerians, conceive the utterance to be an individual speech act; rather, he emphasizes the "inner sociality" in speech communication—an aspect that is objectively reinforced in speech genres. The concept of speech genres is central to Bakhtin, then, in that it separates his translinguistics from both Saussureans and Vosslerians in the philosophy of language. [Tr.]

³"Ideology" should not be confused with the politically oriented English word. Ideology as it is used here is essen-

the utterance should be revealed and defined through analysis of both types. Only then can the definition be adequate to the complex and profound nature of the utterance (and encompass its most important facets). A one-sided orientation toward primary genres inevitably leads to a vulgarization of the entire problem (behaviorist linguistics is an extreme example). The very interrelations between primary and secondary genres and the process of the historical formation of the latter shed light on the nature of the utterance (and above all on the complex problem of the interrelations among language, ideology, and world view).

A study of the nature of the utterance and of the diversity of generic forms of utterances in various spheres of human activity is immensely important to almost all areas of linguistics and philology. This is because any research whose material is concrete language—the history of a language, normative grammar, the compilation of any kind of dictionary, the stylistics of language, and so forth—inevitably deals with concrete utterances (written and oral) belonging to various spheres of human activity and communication: chronicles, contracts, texts of laws, clerical and other documents, various literary, scientific, and commentarial genres, official and personal letters, rejoinders in everyday dialogue (in all of their diverse subcategories), and so on. And it is here that scholars find the language data they need. A clear idea of the nature of the utterance in general and of the peculiarities of the various types of utterances (primary and secondary), that is, of various speech genres, is necessary, we think, for research in any special area. To ignore the nature of the utterance or to fail to consider the peculiarities of generic subcategories of speech in any area of linguistic study leads to perfunctoriness and excessive abstractness, distorts the historicity of the research, and weakens the link between language and life. After all, language enters life through concrete utterances

tially any system of ideas. But ideology is semiotic in the sense that it involves the concrete exchange of signs in society and history. Every word/discourse betrays the ideology of its speaker; every speaker is thus an ideologue and every utterance an ideologue. [Tr.]

(which manifest language) and life enters language through concrete utterances as well. The utterance is an exceptionally important node of problems. We shall approach certain areas and problems of the science of language in this context.

First of all, stylistics. Any style is inseparably related to the utterance and to typical forms of utterances, that is, speech genres. Any utterance—oral or written, primary or secondary, and in any sphere of communication—is individual and therefore can reflect the individuality of the speaker (or writer); that is, it possesses individual style. But not all genres are equally conducive to reflecting the individuality of the speaker in the language of the utterance, that is, to an individual style. The most conducive genres are those of artistic literature: here the individual style enters directly into the very task of the utterance, and this is one of its main goals (but even within artistic literature various genres offer different possibilities for expressing individuality in language and various aspects of individuality). The least favorable conditions for reflecting individuality in language obtain in speech genres that require a standard form, for example, many kinds of business documents, military commands, verbal signals in industry, and so on. Here one can reflect only the most superficial, almost biological aspects of individuality (mainly in the oral manifestation of these standard types of utterances). In the vast majority of speech genres (except for literary-artistic ones), the individual style does not enter into the intent of the utterance, does not serve as its only goal, but is, as it were, an epiphenomenon of the utterance, one of its by-products. Various genres can reveal various layers and facets of the individual personality, and individual style can be found in various interrelations with the national language. The very problem of the national and the individual in language is basically the problem of the utterance (after all, only here, in the utterance, is the national language embodied in individual form). The very determination of style in general, and individual style in particular, requires deeper study of both the nature of the utterance and the diversity of speech genres.

The organic, inseparable link between style

and genre is clearly revealed also in the problem of language styles, or functional styles. In essence, language, or functional, styles are nothing other than generic styles for certain spheres of human activity and communication. Each sphere has and applies its own genres that correspond to its own specific conditions. There are also particular styles that correspond to these genres. A particular function (scientific, technical, commentarial, business, everyday) and the particular conditions of speech communication specific for each sphere give rise to particular genres, that is, certain relatively stable thematic, compositional, and stylistic types of utterances. Style is inseparably linked to particular thematic unities and—what is especially important—to particular compositional unities: to particular types of construction of the whole, types of its completion, and types of relations between the speaker and other participants in speech communication (listeners or readers, partners, the other's speech, and so forth). Style enters as one element into the generic unity of the utterance. Of course, this does not mean that language style cannot be the subject of its own independent study. Such a study, that is, of language stylistics as an independent discipline, is both feasible and necessary. But this study will be correct and productive only if based on a constant awareness of the generic nature of language styles, and on a preliminary study of the subcategories of speech genres. Up to this point the stylistics of language has not had such a basis. Hence its weakness. There is no generally recognized classification of language styles. Those who attempt to create them frequently fail to meet the fundamental logical requirement of the classification: a unified basis.⁴

⁴A unified basis for classifying the enormous diversity of utterances is an obsession of Bakhtin's, one that relates him directly to Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767–1835), the first in the modern period to argue systematically that language is the vehicle of thought. He calls language the "labor of the mind" (*Arbeit des Geistes*) in his famous formulation "[language] itself is not [mere] work (*ergon*), but an activity (*energeia*) . . . it is in fact the labor of the mind that otherwise would eternally repeat itself to make articulated sound capable of the expression of thought" (*Über die Verschiedenheit des menschlichen Sprachbaues*, in *Werke*, vol. 7 [Berlin: De Gruyter, 1968], p. 46). What is important here is that for Bakhtin, as for von Humboldt, the diversity of languages is itself of philo-

sophical significance, for if thought and speech are one, does not each language embody a unique way of thinking? It is here that Bakhtin also comes very close to the work of Sapir and, especially, of Whorf. See Benjamin Lee Whorf, *Language, Thought, and Reality*, ed. John B. Carroll (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1956), esp. pp. 212–19 and 239–45. [Tr.]

Existing taxonomies are extremely poor and undifferentiated.⁵ For example, a recently published academy grammar of the Russian language gives the following stylistic subcategories of language: bookish speech, popular speech, abstract-scientific, scientific-technical, journalistic-commentarial, official-business, and familiar everyday speech, as well as vulgar common parlance. In addition to these linguistic styles, there are the stylistic subcategories of dialectical words, archaic words, and occupational expressions. Such a classification of styles is completely random, and at its base lies a variety of principles (or bases) for division into styles. Moreover, this classification is both inexhaustive and inadequately differentiated. All this is a direct result of an inadequate understanding of the generic nature of linguistic styles, and the absence of a well-thought-out classification of speech genres in terms of spheres of human activity (and also ignorance of the distinction between primary and secondary genres, which is very important for stylistics).

It is especially harmful to separate style from genre when elaborating historical problems. Historical changes in language styles are inseparably linked to changes in speech genres. Literary language is a complex, dynamic system of linguistic styles. The proportions and interrelations of these styles in the system of literary language are constantly changing. Literary language, which also includes nonliterary styles, is an even more complex system, and it is organized on different bases. In order to puzzle out the complex historical dynamics of these systems and move from a simple (and, in the majority of cases, superficial)

⁵The same kinds of classifications of language styles, impoverished and lacking clarity, with a fabricated foundation, are given by A. N. Gvozdev in his book *Ocherki po stilistike russkogo jazyka* (Essays on the stylistics of the Russian language) (Moscow, 1952, pp. 13–15). All of these classifications are based on an uncritical assimilation of traditional ideas about language styles. [Au.]

description of styles, which are always in evidence and alternating with one another, to a historical explanation of these changes, one must develop a special history of speech genres (and not only secondary, but also primary ones) that reflects more directly, clearly, and flexibly all the changes taking place in social life. Utterances and their types, that is, speech genres, are the drive belts from the history of society to the history of language. There is not a single new phenomenon (phonetic, lexical, or grammatical) that can enter the system of language without having traversed the long and complicated path of generic-stylistic testing and modification.⁶

In each epoch certain speech genres set the tone for the development of literary language. And these speech genres are not only secondary (literary, commentarial, and scientific), but also primary (certain types of oral dialogue—of the salon, of one's own circle, and other types as well, such as familiar, family-everyday, sociopolitical, philosophical, and so on). Any expansion of the literary language that results from drawing on various extraliterary strata of the national language inevitably entails some degree of penetration into all genres of written language (literary, scientific, commentarial, conversational, and so forth) to a greater or lesser degree, and entails new generic devices for the construction of the speech whole, its finalization, the accommodation of the listener or partner, and so forth. This leads to a more or less fundamental restructuring and renewal of speech genres. When dealing with the corresponding extraliterary strata of the national language, one inevitably also deals with the speech genres through which these strata are manifested. In the majority of cases, these are various types of conversational-dialogical genres. Hence the more or less distinct dialogization of secondary genres, the weakening of their monological composition, the new sense of the listener as a partner-interlocutor, new forms of finalization of the whole, and so forth. When there is style there is genre. The transfer of style from

⁶This thesis of ours has nothing in common with the Vosslerian idea of the primacy of the stylistic over the grammatical. Our subsequent exposition will make this completely clear. [Au.]

one genre to another not only alters the way a style sounds, under conditions of a genre unnatural to it, but also violates or renews the given genre.

Thus, both individual and general language styles govern speech genres. A deeper and broader study of the latter is absolutely imperative for a productive study of any stylistic problem.

However, both the fundamental and the general methodological question of the interrelations between lexicon and grammar (on the one hand) and stylistics (on the other) rests on the same problem of the utterance and of speech genres.

Grammar (and lexicon) is essentially different from stylistics (some even oppose it to stylistics), but at the same time there is not a single grammatical study that can do without stylistic observation and excursus. In a large number of cases the distinction between grammar and stylistics appears to be completely erased. There are phenomena that some scholars include in the area of grammar while others include them in the area of stylistics. The syntagma is an example.

One might say that grammar and stylistics converge and diverge in any concrete language phenomenon. If considered only in the language system, it is a grammatical phenomenon, but if considered in the whole of the individual utterance or in a speech genre, it is a stylistic phenomenon. And this is because the speaker's very selection of a particular grammatical form is a stylistic act. But these two viewpoints of one and the same specific linguistic phenomenon should not be impervious to one another and should not simply replace one another mechanically. They should be organically combined (with, however, the most clear-cut methodological distinction between them) on the basis of the real unity of the language phenomenon. Only a profound understanding of the nature of the utterance and the particular features of speech genres can provide a correct solution to this complex methodological problem.

It seems to us that a study of the nature of the utterance and of speech genres is of fundamental importance for overcoming those simplistic notions about speech life, about the so-called speech flow, about communication and so forth—ideas which are still current in our language studies.

Moreover, a study of the utterance as a *real unit of speech communion* will also make it possible to understand more correctly the *nature of language units* (as a system): words and sentences.

We shall now turn to this more general problem.

II. THE UTTERANCE AS A UNIT OF SPEECH COMMUNION: THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THIS UNIT AND UNITS OF LANGUAGE (WORDS AND SENTENCES)

Nineteenth-century linguistics, beginning with Wilhelm von Humboldt, while not denying the communicative function of language, tried to place it in the background as something secondary.⁷ What it foregrounded was the function of thought emerging *independently of communication*. The famous Humboldtian formula goes like this: "Apart from the communication between one human and another, speech is a necessary condition for reflection *even in solitude*." Others, Vosslerians for example, emphasize the so-called expressive function. With all the various ways individual theoreticians understand this function, it essentially amounts to the expression of the speaker's individual discourse. Language arises from man's need to express himself, to objectify himself. The essence of any form of language is somehow reduced to the spiritual creativity of the individuum. Several other versions of the function of language have been and are now being suggested, but it is still typical to underestimate, if not altogether ignore, the communicative function of language. Language is regarded from the speaker's standpoint as if there were only *one* speaker who does not have any *necessary* relation to *other* participants in speech communication. If the role of the other is taken into account at all, it is the role of a listener, who understands the speaker only passively. The utterance is adequate to its object (i.e., the content of the uttered thought) and to the person who is pronouncing the utterance. Language essentially

needs only a speaker — one speaker — and an object for his speech. And if language also serves as a means of communication, this is a secondary function that has nothing to do with its essence. Of course, the language collective, the plurality of speakers, cannot be ignored when speaking of language, but when defining the essence of language this aspect is not a necessary one that determines the nature of language. Sometimes the language collective is regarded as a kind of collective personality, "the spirit of the people," and so forth, and immense significance is attached to it (by representatives of the "psychology of nations"),⁸ but even in this case the plurality of speakers, and others with respect to each given speaker, is denied any real essential significance.

Still current in linguistics are such *fictions* as the "listener" and "understander" (partners of the "speaker"), the "unified speech flow," and so on. These fictions produce a completely distorted idea of the complex and multifaceted process of active speech communication. Courses in general linguistics (even serious ones like Saussure's) frequently present graphic-schematic depictions of the two partners in speech communication — the speaker and the listener (who perceives the speech) — and provide diagrams of the active speech processes of the speaker and the corresponding passive processes of the listener's perception and understanding of the speech. One cannot say that these diagrams are false or that they do not correspond to certain aspects of reality. But when they are put forth as the actual whole of speech communication, they become a scientific fiction. The fact is that when the listener perceives and understands the meaning (the language meaning) of speech, he simultaneously takes an active, responsive attitude toward it. He either agrees or disagrees with it (completely or partially), augments it, applies it, prepares for its

⁷See Wilhelm von Humboldt, *Linguistic Variability and Intellectual Development* (Coral Gables: University of Miami Press, 1971). [Tr.]

⁸The phrase "psychology of nations" refers to a school organized around the nineteenth-century journal *Zeitschrift für Völkerpsychologie und Sprachwissenschaft*, whose leading spokesman, Kermann Steinthal, was among the first to introduce psychology (especially that of the Kantian biologist Herbart) into language (and vice versa). Steinthal was attracted to von Humboldt's idea of "innere Sprachform" and was important in Potebnya's attempts to wrestle with inner speech. [Tr.]

execution, and so on. And the listener adopts this responsive attitude for the entire duration of the process of listening and understanding, from the very beginning—sometimes literally from the speaker's first word. Any understanding of live speech, a live utterance, is inherently responsive, although the degree of this activity varies extremely. Any understanding is imbued with response and necessarily elicits it in one form or another: the listener becomes the speaker. A passive understanding of the meaning of perceived speech is only an abstract aspect of the actual whole of actively responsive understanding, which is then actualized in a subsequent response that is actually articulated. Of course, an utterance is not always followed immediately by an articulated response. An actively responsive understanding of what is heard (a command, for example) can be directly realized in action (the execution of an order or command that has been understood and accepted for execution), or it can remain, for the time being, a silent responsive understanding (certain speech genres are intended exclusively for this kind of responsive understanding, for example, lyrical genres), but this is, so to speak, responsive understanding with a delayed reaction. Sooner or later what is heard and actively understood will find its response in the subsequent speech or behavior of the listener. In most cases, genres of complex cultural communication are intended precisely for this kind of actively responsive understanding with delayed action. Everything we have said here also pertains to written and read speech, with the appropriate adjustments and additions.

Thus, all real and integral understanding is actively responsive, and constitutes nothing other than the initial preparatory stage of a response (in whatever form it may be actualized). And the speaker himself is oriented precisely toward such an actively responsive understanding. He does not expect passive understanding that, so to speak, only duplicates his own idea in someone else's mind. Rather, he expects response, agreement, sympathy, objection, execution, and so forth (various speech genres presuppose various integral orientations and speech plans on the part of the speakers or writers). The desire to make one's speech understood is only an abstract as-

pect of the speaker's concrete and total speech plan. Moreover, any speaker is himself a respondent to a greater or lesser degree. He is not, after all, the first speaker, the one who disturbs the eternal silence of the universe. And he presupposes not only the existence of the language system he is using, but also the existence of preceding utterances—his own and others'—with which his given utterance enters into one kind of relation or another (builds on them, polemicizes with them, or simply presumes that they are already known to the listener). Any utterance is a link in a very complexly organized chain of other utterances.

Thus, the listener who understands passively, who is depicted as the speaker's partner in the schematic diagrams of general linguistics, does not correspond to the real participant in speech communication. What is represented by the diagram is only an abstract aspect of the real total act of actively responsive understanding, the sort of understanding that evokes a response, and one that the speaker anticipates. Such scientific abstraction is quite justified in itself, but under one condition: that it is clearly recognized as merely an abstraction and is not represented as the real concrete whole of the phenomenon. Otherwise it becomes a fiction. This is precisely the case in linguistics, since such abstract schemata, while perhaps not claiming to reflect real speech communication, are not accompanied by any indication of the great complexity of the actual phenomenon. As a result, the schema distorts the actual picture of speech communication, removing precisely its most essential aspects. The active role of the *other* in the process of speech communication is thus reduced to a minimum.

This disregard for the active role of the other in the process of speech communication, and the desire generally to bypass this process, are manifested in the imprecise and ambiguous use of such terms as "speech" or "speech flow." These deliberately indefinite terms are usually intended to designate something that can be divided into language units, which are then interpreted as segments of language: phonetic (phoneme, syllable, speech rhythm [*takt*]) and lexical (sentence and word). "The speech flow can be broken down . . ."; "Our speech is divided . . ." This is the way those

sections of grammars devoted to the study of such language units are usually introduced into general courses in linguistics and grammar, and also into special research on phonetics and lexicology. Unfortunately, even our recently published academy grammar uses the same indefinite and ambiguous term “our speech.” Here is how the section on phonetics is introduced: “*Our speech* is basically divided into sentences, which in turn can be broken down into phrases and words. The word is clearly divided into small sound units—*syllables* . . . syllables are divided into individual speech sounds or phonemes . . .”⁹

But what sort of thing is this “speech flow” and what is meant by “our speech”? What is the nature of their duration? Do they have a beginning and an end? If their length is indefinite, which of their segments do we use when we break them down into units? These questions have not been raised or defined at all. Linguists have not yet transformed the imprecise *word* “speech”—which can designate language, the speech process (i.e., speaking), the individual utterance, an entire long indefinite series of such utterances, or a particular speech genre (“he gave a speech”)—into a definite (defined) *term* with clear-cut semantic boundaries (similar situations also exist in other languages). This can be explained by the almost complete lack of research into the problem of the utterance and speech genres (and, consequently, of speech communion as well). What we almost always find is a confused play with all these meanings (except for the last). Most frequently the expression “our speech” simply means any utterances of any person. But this meaning is never consistently sustained throughout.¹⁰

⁹*Grammatika russkogoazyka* (Grammar of the Russian language) (Moscow, 1952), vol. 1, p. 51. [Tr.]

¹⁰And it cannot be sustained. For example, such an utterance as “Ah!” (a rejoinder in dialogue) cannot be broken down into sentences, phrases, or syllables. Consequently, not just *any* utterance will do. Further, they divide up the utterance (speech) and obtain units of language. Frequently the sentence is then defined as the simplest utterance and, consequently, it cannot be a *unit* of the utterance. It is tacitly assumed that there is only one speaker, and dialogical overtones are thus ignored.

As compared to the boundaries of the utterance, all other boundaries (between sentences, phrases, syntagmic units, and words) are relative and arbitrary. [Au.]

And if it is indefinite and unclear just what it is that is divided and broken down into units of language, this lack of definition and confusion also spread to these units themselves.

The terminological imprecision and confusion in this methodologically central point of linguistic thinking result from ignoring the *real unit* of speech communication: the utterance. For speech can exist in reality only in the form of concrete utterances of individual speaking people, speech subjects. Speech is always cast in the form of an utterance belonging to a particular speaking subject, and outside this form it cannot exist. Regardless of how varied utterances may be in terms of their length, their content, and their compositional structure, they have common structural features as units of speech communication and, above all, quite clear-cut boundaries. Since these boundaries are so essential and fundamental they must be discussed in detail.

The boundaries of each concrete utterance as a unit of speech communication are determined by a *change of speaking subjects*, that is, a change of speakers. Any utterance—from a short (single-word) rejoinder in everyday dialogue to the large novel or scientific treatise—has, so to speak, an absolute beginning and an absolute end: its beginning is preceded by the utterances of others, and its end is followed by the responsive utterances of others (or, although it may be silent, others’ active responsive understanding, or, finally, a responsive action based on this understanding). The speaker ends his utterance in order to relinquish the floor to the other or to make room for the other’s active responsive understanding. The utterance is not a conventional unit, but a real unit, clearly delimited by the change of speaking subjects, which ends by relinquishing the floor to the other, as if with a silent *dixi*, perceived by the listeners (as a sign) that the speaker has finished.

This change of speaking subjects, which creates clear-cut boundaries of the utterance, varies in nature and acquires different forms in the heterogeneous spheres of human activity and life, depending on the functions of language and on the conditions and situations of communication. One observes this change of speaking subjects most simply and clearly in actual dialogue where the utterances of the interlocutors or partners in

dialogue (which we shall call rejoinders) alternate. Because of its simplicity and clarity, dialogue is a classic form of speech communication. Each rejoinder, regardless of how brief and abrupt, has a specific quality of completion that expresses a particular position of the speaker, to which one may respond or may assume, with respect to it, a responsive position. We shall discuss further this specific quality of completion of the utterance, one of its main markers. But at the same time rejoinders are all linked to one another. And the sort of relations that exist among rejoinders of dialogue—relations between question and answer, assertion and objection, assertion and agreement, suggestion and acceptance, order and execution, and so forth—are impossible among units of language (words and sentences), either in the system of language (in the vertical cross section) or within the utterance (on the horizontal plane). These specific relations among rejoinders in a dialogue are only subcategories of specific relations among whole utterances in the process of speech communication. These relations are possible only among utterances of different speech subjects; they presuppose *other* (with respect to the speaker) participants in speech communication. The relations among whole utterances cannot be treated grammatically since, we repeat, such relations are impossible among units of language, and not only in the system of language, but within the utterance as well.

In secondary speech genres, especially rhetorical ones, we encounter phenomena that apparently contradict this tenet. Quite frequently within the boundaries of his own utterance the speaker (or writer) raises questions, answers them himself, raises objections to his own ideas, responds to his own objections, and so on. But these phenomena are nothing other than a conventional playing out of speech communication and primary speech genres.¹¹ This kind of playing out is typical of rhetorical genres (in the broad sense, which would include certain kinds of scientific popularization), but other secondary genres (artistic and scholarly) also use various forms such as this to introduce primary speech genres

and relations among them into the construction of the utterance (and here they are altered to a greater or lesser degree, for the speaking subject does not really change). Such is the nature of secondary genres. But the relations among the reproduced primary genres cannot be treated grammatically in any of these phenomena, even though they appear within a single utterance. Within the utterance they retain their own specific nature, which is essentially different from the nature of relations among words and sentences (and other language units, i.e., phrases and so forth).

Here, drawing on material from dialogue and the rejoinders that comprise it, we must provisionally pose the problem of the *sentence* as a *unit of language*, as distinct from the *utterance* as a unit of speech communication.

(The question of the nature of the sentence is one of the most complicated and difficult in linguistics. The clash of opinions regarding this question continues in our scholarship to this day. Of course, the task we set for ourselves here does not include an investigation of this problem in all its complexity; we intend to mention only one of its aspects. But it seems to us that this aspect is essential to the entire problem. It is important for us to define precisely the relationship between the sentence and the utterance. This will give us a clearer picture of both the utterance and the sentence.)

But this will come later. Here we shall simply note that the boundaries of the sentence as a unit of language are never determined by a change of speaking subjects. Such a change, framing the sentence on both sides, transforms the sentence into an entire utterance. Such a sentence assumes new qualities and is perceived quite differently from the way it would be if it were framed by other sentences within the single utterance of one and the same speaker. The sentence is a relatively complete thought, directly correlated with the other thoughts of a single speaker within his utterance as a whole. The speaker pauses at the end of a sentence in order then to move on to his own next thought, continuing, supplementing, and substantiating the preceding one. The context of the sentence is the speech of one speaking subject (speaker). The sentence itself is not correlated directly or personally with the extraverbal

¹¹The seam of boundaries in secondary genres. [Au.]

context of reality (situation, setting, prehistory) or with the utterances of other speakers; this takes place only indirectly, through its entire surrounding context, that is, through the utterance as a whole. And if the sentence is not surrounded by a context of speech of the same speaker, that is, if it constitutes an entire completed utterance (a rejoinder in dialogue), then it (itself) directly confronts reality (the extraverbal context of the speech) and the different utterances of *others*. It is not followed by a pause that the speaker himself designates and interprets. (Any pause that is grammatical, calculated, or interpreted is possible only within the speech of a single speaker, i.e., within a single utterance. Pauses between utterances are, of course, not grammatical but real. Such real pauses—psychological, or prompted by some external circumstances—can also interrupt a single utterance. In secondary artistic genres such pauses are calculated by the artist, director, or actor. But these pauses differ essentially from both grammatical and stylistic pauses—for example, among syntagmas—within the utterance.) One expects them to be followed by a response or a responsive understanding on the part of another speaker. Such a sentence, having become an entire utterance, acquires a special semantic fullness of value. One can assume a responsive position with respect to it; one can agree or disagree with it, execute it, evaluate it, and so on. But a sentence in context cannot elicit a response. It acquires this capability (or, rather, assimilates to it) only in the entirety of the whole utterance.

All these completely new qualities and peculiarities belong not to the sentence that has become a whole utterance, but precisely to the utterance itself. They reflect the nature of the utterance, not the nature of the sentence. They attach themselves to the sentence, augmenting it until it is a complete utterance. The sentence as a language unit lacks all of these properties; it is not demarcated on either side by a change of speaking subjects; it has neither direct contact with reality (with an extraverbal situation) nor a direct relation to others' utterances; it does not have semantic fullness of value; and it has no capacity to determine directly the responsive position of the *other* speaker, that is, it cannot evoke

a response. The sentence as a language unit is grammatical in nature. It has grammatical boundaries and grammatical completedness and unity. (Regarded in the whole of the utterance and from the standpoint of this whole, it acquires stylistic properties.) When the sentence figures as a whole utterance, it is as though it has been placed in a frame made of quite a different material. When one forgets this in analyzing a sentence, one distorts the nature of the sentence (and simultaneously the nature of the utterance as well, by treating it grammatically). A great many linguists and linguistic schools (in the area of syntax) are held captive by this confusion, and what they study as a sentence is in essence a kind of *hybrid* of the sentence (unit of language) and the utterance (unit of speech communication). One does not exchange sentences any more than one exchanges words (in the strict linguistic sense) or phrases. One exchanges utterances that are constructed from language units: words, phrases, and sentences. And an utterance can be constructed both from one sentence and from one word, so to speak, from one speech unit (mainly a rejoinder in dialogue), but this does not transform a language unit into a unit of speech communication.

The lack of a well-developed theory of the utterance as a unit of speech communication leads to an imprecise distinction between the sentence and the utterance, and frequently to a complete confusion of the two.

Let us return to real-life dialogue. As we have said, this is the simplest and the most classic form of speech communication. The change of speaking subjects (speakers) that determines the boundaries of the utterance is especially clear here. But in other spheres of speech communication as well, including areas of complexly organized cultural communication (scientific and artistic), the nature of the boundaries of the utterance remains the same.

Complexly structured and specialized works of various scientific and artistic genres, in spite of all the ways in which they differ from rejoinders in dialogue, are by nature the same kind of units of speech communication. They, too, are clearly demarcated by a change of speaking subjects, and these boundaries, while retaining their *external* clarity, acquire here a special internal

aspect because the speaking subject—in this case, the *author* of the work—manifests his own individuality in his style, his world view, and in all aspects of the design of his work. This imprint of individuality marking the work also creates special internal boundaries that distinguish this work from other works connected with it in the overall processes of speech communication in that particular cultural sphere: from the works of predecessors on whom the author relies, from other works of the same school, from the works of opposing schools with which the author is contending, and so on.

The work, like the rejoinder in dialogue, is oriented toward the response of the other (others), toward his active responsive understanding, which can assume various forms: educational influence on the readers, persuasion of them, critical responses, influence on followers and successors, and so on. It can determine others' responsive positions under the complex conditions of speech communication in a particular cultural sphere. The work is a link in the chain of speech communion. Like the rejoinder in a dialogue, it is related to other work-utterances: both those to which it responds and those that respond to it. At the same time, like the rejoinder in a dialogue, it is separated from them by the absolute boundaries created by a change of speaking subjects.

Thus, the change of speaking subjects, by framing the utterance and creating for it a stable mass that is sharply delimited from other related utterances, is the first constitutive feature of the utterance as a unit of speech communication, a feature distinguishing it from units of language. Let us turn to this second feature, which is inseparably linked to the first. This second feature is the specific *finalization* of the utterance.

The finalization of the utterance is, if you will, the inner side of the change of speech subjects. This change can only take place because the speaker has said (or written) *everything* he wishes to say at a particular moment or under particular circumstances. When hearing or reading, we clearly sense the end of the utterance, as if we hear the speaker's concluding *dixi*. This finalization is specific and is determined by special criteria. The first and foremost criterion for the fi-

nalization of the utterance is *the possibility of responding to it* or, more precisely and broadly, of assuming a responsive attitude toward it (for example, executing an order). This criterion is met by a short everyday question, for example, "What time is it?" (one may respond to it), an everyday request that one may or may not fulfill, a scientific statement with which one may agree or disagree (partially or completely), or a novel, which can be evaluated as a whole. Some kind of finalization is necessary to be able to react to an utterance. It is not enough for the utterance to be understood in terms of *language*. An absolutely understood and completed sentence, if it is a sentence and not an utterance comprised of one sentence, cannot evoke a responsive reaction: it is comprehensible, but it is still not *all*. This *all*—the indicator of the *wholeness* of the utterance—is subject neither to grammatical nor to abstract semantic definition.

This finalized wholeness of the utterance, guaranteeing the possibility of a response (or of responsive understanding), is determined by three aspects (or factors) that are inseparably linked in the organic whole of the utterance: (1) semantic exhaustiveness of the theme; (2) the speaker's plan or speech will; (3) typical compositional and generic forms of finalization.

The first aspect—the referential and semantic exhaustiveness of the theme of the utterance—differs profoundly in various spheres of communication. This exhaustiveness can be almost complete in certain spheres of everyday life (questions that are purely factual and similarly factual responses to them, requests, orders, and so forth), in certain business circles, in the sphere of military and industrial commands and orders, that is, in those spheres where speech genres are maximally standard by nature and where the creative aspect is almost completely lacking. Conversely, in creative spheres (especially, of course, in scientific ones), the semantic exhaustiveness of the theme may be only relative. Here one can speak only of a certain minimum of finalization making it possible to occupy a responsive position. We do not objectively exhaust the subject, but, by becoming the *theme* of the utterance (i.e., of a scientific work) the subject achieves a relative finalization under certain conditions, when

the problem is posed in a particular way, on the basis of particular material, with particular aims set by the author, that is, already within the boundaries of a *specific authorial intent*. Thus, we inevitably come to the second aspect, which is inseparably linked to the first.

In each utterance—from the single-word, everyday rejoinder to large, complex works of science or literature—we embrace, understand, and sense the speaker's *speech plan* or *speech will*, which determines the entire utterance, its length and boundaries. We imagine to ourselves what the speaker *wishes* to say. And we also use this speech plan, this speech will (as we understand it), to measure the finalization of the utterance. This plan determines both the choice of the subject itself (under certain conditions of speech communication, in necessary connection with preceding utterances), as well as its boundaries and its semantic exhaustiveness. It also determines, of course, the choice of a generic form in which the utterance will be constructed (this is already the third aspect, to which we shall turn next). This plan—the subjective aspect of the utterance—combines in an inseparable unity with the objective referentially semantic aspect, limiting the latter by relating it to a concrete (individual) situation of speech communication with all its individual circumstances, its personal participants, and the statement-utterances that preceded it. Therefore, the immediate participants in communication, orienting themselves with respect to the situation and the preceding utterances, easily and quickly grasp the speaker's speech plan, his speech will. And from the very beginning of his words they sense the developing whole of the utterance.

Let us turn to the third and, for us, most important aspect: the stable *generic* forms of the utterance. The speaker's speech will is manifested primarily in the *choice of a particular speech genre*. This choice is determined by the specific nature of the given sphere of speech communication, semantic (thematic) considerations, the concrete situation of the speech communication, the personal composition of its participants, and so on. And when the speaker's speech plan with all its individuality and subjectivity is applied and adapted to a chosen genre, it is shaped and devel-

oped within a certain generic form. Such genres exist above all in the great and multifarious sphere of everyday oral communication, including the most familiar and the most intimate.

We speak only in definite speech genres, that is, all our utterances have definite and relatively stable typical *forms of construction of the whole*. Our repertoire of oral (and written) speech genres is rich. We use them confidently and skillfully *in practice*, and it is quite possible for us not even to suspect their existence *in theory*. Like Molière's Monsieur Jourdain who, when speaking in prose, had no idea that was what he was doing, we speak in diverse genres without suspecting that they exist. Even in the most free, the most unconstrained conversation, we cast our speech in definite generic forms, sometimes rigid and trite ones, sometimes more flexible, plastic, and creative ones (everyday communication also has creative genres at its disposal). We are given these speech genres in almost the same way that we are given our native language, which we master fluently long before we begin to study grammar. We know our native language—its lexical composition and grammatical structure—not from dictionaries and grammars but from concrete utterances that we hear and that we ourselves reproduce in live speech communication with people around us. We assimilate forms of language only in forms of utterances and in conjunction with these forms. The forms of language and the typical forms of utterances, that is, speech genres, enter our experience and our consciousness together, and in close connection with one another. To learn to speak means to learn to construct utterances (because we speak in utterances and not in individual sentences, and, of course, not in individual words). Speech genres organize our speech in almost the same way as grammatical (syntactical) forms do. We learn to cast our speech in generic forms and, when hearing others' speech, we guess its genre from the very first words; we predict a certain length (that is, the approximate length of the speech whole) and a certain compositional structure; we foresee the end; that is, from the very beginning we have a sense of the speech whole, which is only later differentiated during the speech process. If speech genres did not exist and we had not mastered them, if we

had to originate them during the speech process and construct each utterance at will for the first time, speech communication would be almost impossible.

The generic forms in which we cast our speech, of course, differ essentially from language forms. The latter are stable and compulsory (normative) for the speaker, while generic forms are much more flexible, plastic, and free. Speech genres are very diverse in this respect. A large number of genres that are widespread in everyday life are so standard that the speaker's individual speech will is manifested only in its choice of a particular genre, and, perhaps, in its expressive intonation. Such, for example, are the various everyday genres of greetings, farewells, congratulations, all kinds of wishes, information about health, business, and so forth. These genres are so diverse because they differ depending on the situation, social position, and personal interrelations of the participants in the communication. These genres have high, strictly official, respectful forms as well as familiar ones.¹² And there are forms with varying degrees of familiarity, as well as intimate forms (which differ from familiar ones). These genres also require a certain tone; their structure includes a certain expressive intonation. These genres, particularly the high and official ones, are compulsory and extremely stable. The speech will is usually limited here to a choice of a particular genre. And only slight nuances of expressive intonation (one can take a drier or more respectful tone, a colder or warmer one; one can introduce the intonation of joy, and so forth) can express the speaker's individuality (his emotional speech intent). But even here it is generally possible to reaccentuate genres. This is typical of speech communication: thus, for example, the generic form of greeting can move from the official sphere into the sphere of familiar communication, that is, it can be used with parodic-ironic reaccentuation. To a similar

¹²These and other phenomena have interested linguists (mainly language historians) in the purely stylistic level as a reflection in language of historically changed forms of etiquette, courtesy, and hospitality. See, for example, F. Brunot, *Histoire de la langue française des origines à 1900*, 10 vols. (Paris: A. Colin, 1905). [Au.]

end, one can deliberately mix genres from various spheres.

In addition to these standard genres, of course, freer and more creative genres of oral speech communication have existed and still exist: genres of salon conversations about everyday, social, aesthetic, and other subjects, genres of table conversation, intimate conversations among friends, intimate conversations within the family, and so on. (No list of oral speech genres yet exists, or even a principle on which such a list might be based.) The majority of these genres are subject to free creative reformulation (like artistic genres, and some, perhaps, to a greater degree). But to use a genre freely and creatively is not the same as to create a genre from the beginning; genres must be fully mastered in order to be manipulated freely.

Many people who have an excellent command of a language often feel quite helpless in certain spheres of communication precisely because they do not have a practical command of the generic forms used in the given spheres. Frequently a person who has an excellent command of speech in some areas of cultural communication, who is able to read a scholarly paper or engage in a scholarly discussion, who speaks very well on social questions, is silent or very awkward in social conversation. Here it is not a matter of an impoverished vocabulary or of style, taken abstractly: this is entirely a matter of the inability to command a repertoire of genres of social conversation, the lack of a sufficient supply of those ideas about the whole of the utterance that help to cast one's speech quickly and naturally in certain compositional and stylistic forms, the inability to grasp a word promptly, to begin and end correctly (composition is very uncomplicated in these genres).

The better our command of genres, the more freely we employ them, the more fully and clearly we reveal our own individuality in them (where this is possible and necessary), the more flexibly and precisely we reflect the unrepeatable situation of communication—in a word, the more perfectly we implement our free speech plan.

Thus, a speaker is given not only mandatory forms of the national language (lexical composi-

tion and grammatical structure), but also forms of utterances that are mandatory, that is, speech genres. The latter are just as necessary for mutual understanding as are forms of language. Speech genres are much more changeable, flexible, and plastic than language forms are, but they have a normative significance for the speaking individual, and they are not created by him but are given to him. Therefore, the single utterance, with all its individuality and creativity, can in no way be regarded as a *completely free combination* of forms of language, as is supposed, for example, by Saussure (and by many other linguists after him), who juxtaposed the utterance (*la parole*), as a purely individual act, to the system of language as a phenomenon that is purely social and mandatory for the individual.¹³ The vast majority of linguists hold the same position, in theory if not in practice. They see in the utterance only an individual combination of purely linguistic (lexical and grammatical) forms and they neither uncover nor study any of the other normative forms the utterance acquires in practice.

Ignoring speech genres as relatively stable and normative forms of the utterance inevitably led to the confusion we have already pointed out between the utterance and the sentence, and it had to lead them to the position (which, to be sure, was never consistently defended) that our speech is cast solely in stable sentence forms that are given to us; and the number of these interrelated sentences we speak in a row and when we stop (end)—this is completely subject to the individual speech will of the speaker or to the caprice of the mythical “speech flow.”

When we select a particular type of sentence, we do so not for the sentence itself; but out of consideration for what we wish to express with this one given sentence. We select the type of

¹³Saussure defines the utterance (*la parole*) as an “individual act. It is willful and intellectual. Within the act, we should distinguish between (1) the combinations by which the speaker uses the language code for expressing his own thought; and (2) the psychological mechanism that allows him to exteriorize those combinations” (*Course in General Linguistics* [New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966], p. 14). Thus, Saussure ignores the fact that in addition to forms of language there are also *forms of combinations* of these forms, that is, he ignores speech genres. [Au.]

sentence from the standpoint of the *whole* utterance, which is transmitted in advance to our speech imagination and which determines our choice. The idea of the form of the whole utterance, that is, of a particular speech genre, guides us in the process of our speaking. The plan of the utterance as a whole may require only one sentence for its implementation, but it may also require a large number of them. The chosen genre predetermines for us their type and their compositional links.

One reason why forms of utterances are ignored in linguistics is that these forms are extremely diverse in compositional structure, particularly in size (speech length)—from the single-word rejoinder to a large novel. There is also a great range of sizes in oral speech genres. Thus, speech genres appear incommensurable and unacceptable as units of speech.

This is why many linguists (mainly those investigating syntax) try to find special forms that lie somewhere between the sentence and the utterance, forms with the completeness of the utterance and at the same time the commensurability of the sentence. Such are the “phrase” (i.e., in Kartsevsky) and “communication” (in Shakhmatov and others).¹⁴ There is no common under-

¹⁴S. D. Kartsevsky, Russian linguist of the Geneva School who also participated in the Prague Linguistic Circle. He argued that the “phrase” should be used as a different kind of language unit from that of the sentence. Unlike the sentence, the phrase “does not have its own grammatical structure. But it has its own phonetic structure, which consists in its intonation. It is intonation that forms the phrase” (S. Karcewski, “Sur la phonologie de la phrase,” in *Travaux du Cercle linguistique de Prague* 4 [1931], 190). “The sentence, in order to be realized, must be given the intonation of the phrase. . . . The phrase is a function of dialogue. It is a unit of exchange among conversing parties. . . .” (S. Karcewski, “Sur la parataxe et la syntaxe en russe,” in *Cahiers Ferdinand de Saussure*, no. 7 [1948], 34).

Aleksey Shakhmatov (1864–1920), linguist and academician whose most important works were devoted to the history of the Russian language, modern Russian, and comparative studies of the grammars of different Slavic languages. “Communication” has a rather distinctive meaning for Shakhmatov: it refers to the act of thinking, this being the psychological basis of the sentence, the mediating link “between the psyche of the speaker and its manifestation in the discourse toward which it strives” (A. Shakhmatov, *Sintaksis russkogo jazyka* [Syntax of the Russian language] [Leningrad, 1941], pp. 19–20). [Tr.]

standing of these units among researchers who use them because no definite and clearly delimited reality corresponds to them in the life of language. All these artificial and conventional units neglect the change of speech subjects that takes place in any real live speech communication, and therefore the most essential boundaries are erased in all spheres of language activity: boundaries between utterances. Hence (in consequence of this) one also forfeits the main criterion for the finalization of the utterance as a true unit of speech communication: the capability of determining the active responsive position of the other participants in the communication.

We shall conclude this section with a few more remarks about the sentence (and return to discuss this issue in detail in the summary of our essay).

The sentence as a unit of language lacks the capability of determining the directly active responsive position of the speaker. Only after becoming a complete utterance does the individual sentence acquire this capability. Any sentence can act as a complete utterance, but then, as we know, it is augmented by a number of very essential nongrammatical aspects that change it radically. And this circumstance also causes a special syntactic aberration. When the individual sentence is analyzed separately from its context, it is interpreted to the point of becoming a whole utterance. As a result, it acquires that degree of finalization that makes a response possible.

The sentence, like the word, is a signifying unit of language. Therefore, each individual sentence, for example, "The sun has risen," is completely comprehensible, that is, we understand its language *meaning*, its *possible* role in an utterance. But in no way can we assume a responsive position with respect to this individual sentence unless we know that with this sentence the speaker has said *everything* he wishes to say, that this sentence is neither preceded nor followed by other sentences of the same speaker. But then this is no longer a sentence, but a full-fledged utterance consisting of one sentence. It is framed and delimited by a change of speech subjects and it directly reflects an extraverbal reality (situation). It is possible to respond to such an utterance.

But if this sentence were surrounded by context, then it would acquire a fullness of its own *sense* only in this context, that is, only in the whole of the utterance, and one could respond only to this entire utterance whose signifying element is the given sentence. The utterance, for example, can be thus: "The sun has risen. It's time to get up." The responsive understanding (or articulated response): "Yes, it really is time." But it can also be thus: "The sun has risen. But it's still very early. Let's get some more sleep." Here the *sense* of the utterance and the responsive reaction to it will be different. Such a sentence can also enter into the composition of an artistic work as an element of landscape. Here the responsive reaction—the artistic-ideological impression and evaluation—can pertain only to the entire landscape. In the context of another work this sentence can acquire symbolic significance. In all such cases the sentence is a signifying element of the whole utterance, which acquires its final meaning only in this whole.

If our sentence figures as a completed utterance, then it acquires its own integral sense under the particular concrete circumstances of speech communication. Thus, it can be a response to another's question: "Has the sun risen?" (of course, under the particular circumstances that justify this question). Here this utterance is an assertion of a particular fact, an assertion that can be true or false, with which one can agree or disagree. A sentence that is assertive in its *form* becomes a *real* assertion in the context of a particular utterance.

When this individual sentence is analyzed, it is usually perceived as a completed utterance in some extremely simplified situation: the sun really has risen and the speaker states: "The sun has risen." The speaker sees that the grass is green and announces: "The grass is green." Such senseless "communications" are often directly regarded as classic examples of the sentence. But in reality any communication like that, addressed to someone or evoking something, has a particular purpose, that is, it is a real link in the chain of speech communion in a particular sphere of human activity or everyday life.

The sentence, like the word, has a finality of meaning and a finality of *grammatical* form, but

this finality of meaning is abstract by nature and this is precisely why it is so clear-cut: this is the finality of an element, but not of the whole. The sentence as a unit of language, like the word, has no author. Like the word, it belongs to *nobody*, and only by functioning as a whole utterance does it become an expression of the position of someone speaking individually in a concrete situation of speech communication. This leads us to a new, third feature of the utterance—the relation of the utterance to the *speaker himself* (the author of the utterance) and to the *other* participants in speech communication.

Any utterance is a link in the chain of speech communion. It is the active position of the speaker in one referentially semantic sphere or another. Therefore, each utterance is characterized primarily by a particular referentially semantic content. The choice of linguistic means and speech genre is determined primarily by the referentially semantic assignments (plan) of the speech subject (or author). This is the first aspect of the utterance that determines its compositional and stylistic features.

The second aspect of the utterance that determines its composition and style is the *expressive* aspect, that is, the speaker's subjective emotional evaluation of the referentially semantic content of his utterance. The expressive aspect has varying significance and varying degrees of force in various spheres of speech communication, but it exists everywhere. There can be no such thing as an absolutely neutral utterance. The speaker's evaluative attitude toward the subject of his speech (regardless of what his subject may be) also determines the choice of lexical, grammatical, and compositional means of the utterance. The individual style of the utterance is determined primarily by its expressive aspect. This is generally recognized in the area of stylistics. Certain investigators even reduce style directly to the emotionally evaluative aspect of speech.

Can the expressive aspect of speech be regarded as a phenomenon of *language* as a system? Can one speak of the expressive aspect of language units, that is, words and sentences? The answer to these questions must be a categorical "no." Language as a system has, of course, a rich arsenal of language tools—lexical, morphologi-

cal, and syntactic—for expressing the speaker's emotionally evaluative position, but all these tools as language tools are absolutely neutral with respect to any particular real evaluation. The word "darling"—which is affectionate in both the meaning of its root and its suffix—is in itself, as a language unit, just as neutral as the word "distance."¹⁵ It is only a language tool for the possible expression of an emotionally evaluative attitude toward reality, but it is not applied to any particular reality, and this application, that is, the actual evaluation, can be accomplished only by the speaker in his concrete utterance. Words belong to nobody, and in themselves they evaluate nothing. But they can serve any speaker and be used for the most varied and directly contradictory evaluations on the part of the speakers.

The sentence as a unit of language is also neutral and in itself has no expressive aspect. It acquires this expressive aspect (more precisely, joins itself to it) only in a concrete utterance. The same aberration is possible here. A sentence like "He died" obviously embodies a certain expressiveness, and a sentence like "What joy!" does so to an even greater degree. But in fact we perceive sentences of this kind as entire utterances, and in a typical situation, that is, as kinds of speech genres that embody typical expression. As sentences they lack this expressiveness and are neutral. Depending on the context of the utterance, the sentence "He died" can also reflect a positive, joyful, even a rejoicing expression. And the sentence "What joy!" in the context of the particular utterance can assume an ironic or bitterly sarcastic tone.

One of the means of expressing the speaker's emotionally evaluative attitude toward the subject of his speech is expressive intonation, which resounds clearly in oral speech.¹⁶ Expressive intonation is a constitutive marker of the utterance. It does not exist in the system of language as such, that is, outside the utterance. Both the word and the sentence as *language units* are devoid of

¹⁵The Russian word Bakhtin uses here (*milenkij*) is a diminutive of *milyj*, itself a term of endearment meaning "nice" or "sweet." [Tr.]

¹⁶Of course, intonation is recognized by us and exists as a stylistic factor even with silent reading of written speech. [Au.]

expressive intonation. If an individual word is pronounced with expressive intonation it is no longer a word, but a completed utterance expressed by one word (there is no need to develop it into a sentence). Fairly standard types of evaluative utterances are very widespread in speech communication, that is, evaluative speech genres that express praise, approval, rapture, reproof, or abuse: “Excellent!” “Good for you!” “Charming!” “Shame!” “Revolting!” “Blockhead!” and so forth. Words that acquire special weight under particular conditions of sociopolitical life become expressive exclamatory utterances: “Peace!” “Freedom!” and so forth. (These constitute a special sociopolitical speech genre.) In a particular situation a word can acquire a profoundly expressive meaning in the form of an exclamatory utterance: “Thalassa, Thalassa!” [The sea! The sea!] (exclaimed 10,000 Greeks in Xenophon).

In each of these cases we are dealing not with the individual word as a unit of language and not with the *meaning* of this word but with a complete utterance and with a *specific sense*—the content of a given utterance.¹⁷ Here the meaning of the word pertains to a particular actual reality and particular real conditions of speech communication. Therefore here we do not understand the meaning of a given word simply as a word of a language; rather, we assume an active responsive position with respect to it (sympathy, agreement or disagreement, stimulus to action). Thus, expressive intonation belongs to the utterance and not to the word. But still it is very difficult to abandon the notion that each word of a language itself has or can have an “emotional tone,” “emotional coloring,” an “evaluative aspect,” a “stylistic aura,” and so forth, and, consequently, also an expressive intonation that is inherent in the word as such. After all, one might think that when selecting a word for an utterance we are guided by an emotional tone inherent in the individual

¹⁷In *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, the specific sense of an utterance is defined as its *theme (tema)*: “The theme of an utterance is essentially individual and unrepeatable, like the utterance itself. . . . The theme of the utterance is essentially indivisible. The significance of the utterance, on the contrary, breaks down into a number of significances that are included in its linguistic elements” (pp. 101–2). [Tr.]

word: we select those that in their tone correspond to the expression of our utterance and we reject others. Poets themselves describe their work on the word in precisely this way, and this is precisely the way this process is interpreted in stylistics (see Peshkovsky’s “stylistic experiment”).¹⁸

But still this is not what really happens. It is that same, already familiar aberration. When selecting words we proceed from the planned whole of our utterance,¹⁹ and this whole that we have planned and created is always expressive. The utterance is what radiates its expression (rather, our expression) to the word we have selected, which is to say, invests the word with the expression of the whole. And we select the word because of its meaning, which is not in itself expressive but which can accommodate or not accommodate our expressive goals in combination with other words, that is, in combination with the whole of our utterance. The neutral meaning of the word applied to a particular actual reality under particular real conditions of speech communication creates a spark of expression. And, after all, this is precisely what takes place in the process of creating an utterance. We repeat, only the contact between the language meaning and the concrete reality that takes place in the utterance can create the spark of expression. It exists neither in the system of language nor in the objective reality surrounding us.

Thus, emotion, evaluation, and expression are foreign to the word of language and are born only in the process of its live usage in a concrete utterance. The meaning of a word in itself

¹⁸Aleksandr Peshkovsky (1878–1933), Soviet linguist specializing in grammar and stylistics in the schools. His “stylistic experiment” consisted in artificially devising stylistic variants of the text, a device he used for analyzing artistic speech. See A. M. Peshkovsky, *Voprosy metodiki rodnogo jazyka, lingvistiki i stilistiki* (Problems in the methodology of folk language, linguistics, and stylistics) (Moscow-Leningrad, 1930), p. 133. [Tr.]

¹⁹When we construct our speech, we are always aware of the whole of our utterance: both in the form of a particular generic plan and in the form of an individual speech plan. We do not string words together smoothly and we do not proceed from word to word; rather, it is as though we fill in the whole with the necessary words. Words are strung together only in the first stage of the study of a foreign language, and then only when the methodological guidance is poor. [Au.]

(unrelated to actual reality) is, as we have already said, out of the range of emotion. There are words that specifically designate emotions and evaluations: “joy,” “sorrow,” “wonderful,” “cheerful,” “sad,” and so forth. But these meanings are just as neutral as are all the others. They acquire their expressive coloring only in the utterance, and this coloring is independent of their meaning taken individually and abstractly. For example: “Any joy is now only bitterness to me.” Here the word “joy” is given an expressive intonation that resists its own meaning, as it were.

But the above far from exhausts the question. The matter is considerably more complicated. When we select words in the process of constructing an utterance, we by no means always take them from the system of language in their neutral, *dictionary* form. We usually take them from *other utterances*, and mainly from utterances that are kindred to ours in genre, that is, in theme, composition, or style. Consequently, we choose words according to their generic specifications. A speech genre is not a form of language, but a typical form of utterance; as such the genre also includes a certain typical kind of expression that inheres in it. In the genre the word acquires a particular typical expression. Genres correspond to typical situations of speech communication, typical themes, and, consequently, also to particular contacts between the *meanings* of words and actual concrete reality under certain typical circumstances. Hence also the possibility of typical expressions that seem to adhere to words. This typical expression (and the typical intonation that corresponds to it) does not have that force of compulsoriness that language forms have. The generic normative quality is freer. In our example, “Any joy is now bitterness to me,” the expressive tone of the word “joy” as determined by the context is, of course, not typical of this word. Speech genres in general submit fairly easily to reaccentuation, the sad can be made jocular and gay, but as a result something new is achieved (for example, the genre of comical epitaphs).

This typical (generic) expression can be regarded as the word’s “stylistic aura,” but this aura belongs not to the word of language as such but to that genre in which the given word usually

functions. It is an echo of the generic whole that resounds in the word.

The word’s generic expression—and its generic expressive intonation—are impersonal, as speech genres themselves are impersonal (for they are typical forms of individual utterances, but not the utterances themselves). But words can enter our speech from others’ individual utterances, thereby retaining to a greater or lesser degree the tones and echoes of individual utterances.

The words of a language belong to nobody, but still we hear those words only in particular individual utterances, we read them in particular individual works, and in such cases the words already have not only a typical, but also (depending on the genre) a more or less clearly reflected individual context of the utterance.

Neutral dictionary meanings of the words of a language ensure their common features and guarantee that all speakers of a given language will understand one another, but the use of words in live speech communication is always individual and contextual in nature. Therefore, one can say that any word exists for the speaker in three aspects: as a neutral word of a language, belonging to nobody; as an *other’s* word, which belongs to another person and is filled with echoes of the other’s utterance; and, finally, as *my* word, for, since I am dealing with it in a particular situation, with a particular speech plan, it is already imbued with my expression. In both of the latter aspects, the word is expressive, but, we repeat, this expression does not inhere in the word itself. It originates at the point of contact between the word and actual reality, under the conditions of that real situation articulated by the individual utterance. In this case the word appears as an expression of some evaluative position of an individual person (authority, writer, scientist, father, mother, friend, teacher, and so forth), as an abbreviation of the utterance.

In each epoch, in each social circle, in each small world of family, friends, acquaintances, and comrades in which a human being grows and lives, there are always authoritative utterances that set the tone—artistic, scientific, and journalistic works on which one relies, to which one refers, which are cited, imitated, and followed. In

each epoch, in all areas of life and activity, there are particular traditions that are expressed and retained in verbal vestments: in written works, in utterances, in sayings, and so forth. There are always some verbally expressed leading ideas of the “masters of thought” of a given epoch, some basic tasks, slogans, and so forth. I am not even speaking about those examples from school readers with which children study their native language and which, of course, are always expressive.

This is why the unique speech experience of each individual is shaped and developed in con-

tinuous and constant interaction with others' individual utterances. This experience can be characterized to some degree as the process of *assimilation*—more or less creative—of others' words (and not the words of a language). Our speech, that is, all our utterances (including creative works), is filled with others' words, varying degrees of otherness or varying degrees of “our-own-ness,” varying degrees of awareness and detachment. These words of others carry with them their own expression, their own evaluative tone, which we assimilate, rework, and reaccentuate. . . .

Virginia Woolf

1882–1941

Virginia Woolf was born Adeline Virginia Stephen to well-educated upper-middle-class English parents. Her mother, née Julia Jackson, had participated as a young girl in a cultured social circle that included Pre-Raphaelite painters Holman Hunt and Edward Burne-Jones, actress Ellen Terry, and poet Alfred, Lord Tennyson. At the age of nineteen, Julia had married lawyer Herbert Duckworth, who died and left her with three children, Stella, George, and Gerald. Julia then devoted herself to nursing and published a book about it. Woolf's father, Leslie Stephen, was a well-known man of letters, author of numerous literary-critical, biographical, and philosophical works and editor of *The Cornhill Magazine*, an influential literary journal, and the *Dictionary of National Biography*. His first wife, a daughter of novelist William Makepeace Thackeray, had died, leaving him with a daughter, Laura, who was mentally retarded. Julia and Leslie married and had four more children: Vanessa, who became a painter; Thoby, who was a brilliant university student before his early death; Virginia; and Adrian, who became a psychiatrist.

The Stephen household, located in Kensington, a well-to-do section of London, was a lively place to grow up, full of children and literary visitors, including English novelist and poet George Meredith, American poet James Russell Lowell, and American novelist Henry James. Virginia and her sisters were educated at home by their mother and by tutors, while her brothers were sent away to school; she would later resent their superior education. Yet she appreciated being able to take part in literary discussions among her father's friends and to read freely in his excellent library. A homebound education may in fact have suited Virginia best, because her physical and mental health was frail. The women's colleges Newnham and Girton, on a par with the men's universities, did exist, but there is no evidence that Virginia pushed to attend them. Perhaps anticipation of her father's disapproval prevented her from trying.

This relatively happy childhood ended in 1895 when Julia Stephen died, precipitating Woolf's first mental breakdown. Woolf's older half-sister Stella filled the maternal role for a time, but within two years of Julia's death she had married and died in childbirth. Woolf's father, elderly, deaf, and ill, increasingly left the direction of the household to his stepson George Duckworth. George was apparently a caricature of the Victorian gentleman, demanding silence and obedience from his sisters in public to facilitate his social climbing, and sexually molesting them in their beds at night.

When Leslie Stephen died in 1904, his and Julia's four children moved out of the family home into their own establishment in Bloomsbury, a London neighborhood frequented by artists and literary people. Woolf's brother Thoby brought his university friends to the house, and they were a brilliant group, including biographer Lytton Strachey, economist John Maynard Keynes, art critic Clive Bell (whom Vanessa would later marry), novelist E. M. Forster, and literary critic Leonard Woolf. Virginia found their conversation stimulating, as well as their openness to

her own literary and intellectual ambitions, which had been sternly censured by her father and her stepbrother George. The Bloomsbury Group, as they came to be called, encouraged frank discussion of sexuality, artistic experimentation, and left-oriented analysis of social inequalities. Initially, too, male members of the group did not discourage Woolf's growing feminism, although they would later disapprove some of her more public feminist stands.

In this congenial environment, Woolf recovered from another period of mental instability that occurred after her father's death, and she began to write a novel. But in 1906, when the four siblings toured Greece together, Thoby contracted typhoid fever, from which he died after they returned to England. Woolf took a long time to adjust to this loss, delaying completion of her book until after her marriage to Leonard Woolf in 1912. By all accounts her marriage was a happy one to the end, although apparently without a sexual dimension. Leonard Woolf encouraged his wife's literary ambitions and gave her practical support, nursing her through illness and helping with publishing. *The Voyage Out*, her first novel, was printed in 1915.

When *The Voyage Out* appeared, Virginia Woolf was already widely known and respected as a literary reviewer for the prestigious *Times Literary Supplement* and other journals. Her first novel was well received, and over the next ten years she published a series of works of fiction that made her one of the most important writers in Britain: *Night and Day* (1919), *Jacob's Room* (1922), *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925), *To the Lighthouse* (1927), and *Orlando* (1928). In these works Woolf experimented with multiple viewpoints, fragmented narrative form, and allusive, poetic language that attempts to capture the quality of moment-by-moment conscious experience. She continued to write literary reviews and other nonfiction pieces as well, which also were often stylistically experimental—such as *A Room of One's Own* (1929; excerpted here), now a classic exposition of what women's education, economic liberation, and literary development would require. Woolf and her husband also founded the Hogarth Press, which was notable for publishing avant-garde literature such as the poems of T. S. Eliot and the short stories of Katherine Mansfield, controversial texts such as English translations of Freud, and more. During this same decade, Woolf fell in love with a younger writer, Victoria Sackville-West, known as Vita. Both Leonard Woolf and Vita's husband, Harold Nicolson, acquiesced in this passionate relationship, the great love of Woolf's life.

The 1920s was a decade of triumph for Woolf. She received high praise as a fiction writer, and with her literary criticism and other social commentary, became a leader of the Bloomsbury Group and a dominant force on the Anglo-American literary scene. Both her marriage and her affair with Vita were sustaining. But things began to change for Woolf in the 1930s. Her production of fiction, though still well regarded, slowed considerably: *The Waves* (1931), perhaps her greatest work, was not followed until 1937, by *The Years*, and her last novel, *Between the Acts*, was published posthumously in 1941. Although she continued to write reviews and essays, her dominant position as literary and social arbiter eroded, and her essay *Three Guineas* (1938), her most passionate defense of her feminist, socialist, and pacifist views, drew heavy fire. She and Vita drifted apart, and Woolf was increasingly troubled by bouts of the mental illness that had plagued her since adolescence.

Finally, World War II was imminent, horrifying Woolf not only with the general destruction it promised but also with the specific threat a potential German invasion of England posed to her Jewish husband. She and Leonard procured a drug from her brother Adrian with which to take their lives if the invasion happened. Tormented by inner voices that presaged a permanent descent into madness, Woolf did not wait, but filled her pockets with stones and walked into a river near the Woolfs' country cottage in 1941.

Virginia Woolf now holds an undisputed position as one of the most important novelists writing in English in the twentieth century. Her fiction has drawn exhaustive critical attention, but until very recently, scholarship virtually ignored her non-fiction writing and its relevance to women and rhetoric, even though Woolf published over five hundred literary reviews and essays. This neglect may have been caused in part by the experimental style in which Woolf wrote much of her nonfiction, which disguised the cogency of her arguments. Rhetorician Thomas J. Farrell has characterized it as a "female mode of rhetoric" with the following traits: Woolf pursues arguments indirectly, usually not stating her thesis until the end of a piece and even then presenting it tentatively and leaving the discussion open-ended; her structure is generally associative, appearing to imitate the way ideas occur to the mind, although at times she may use what Farrell calls a "male mode" that is more overtly logical and linear or hierarchical; her tone is usually not aggressive or agonistic, but rather light and charming; at the same time, she carefully builds up a position to support her point of view; and she often relies on personal experience (sometimes thinly disguised as fiction) for evidence, without drawing explicit generalizations from it.¹ Literary scholar Catherine Sandbach-Dahlström has suggested that these stylistic traits reinforce a method of essay writing that Woolf deliberately sets against the essay tradition dominated by men: She resists this tradition, critiques male chauvinism generally, and enacts a "skeptical feminism" through carnivalesque attacks on pompous and oppressive male-maintained social structures.² Literary critic Jane Marcus has noted that Woolf's stylistic experiments anticipate French theorist Hélène Cixous's (p. 1520) call for "writing the body."³ Marcus describes Woolf's rhetoric as "sapphistry," which subverts male-oriented classical rhetorical techniques to speak for and to attract an audience of women, and perhaps especially gay women.⁴ In Marcus's view, then, Woolf pioneered not only women's rhetoric generally, but also lesbian rhetoric.

Woolf chose her style and her intellectual agenda to match her analysis of the situation of writers, especially women writers. As rhetorician Krista Ratcliffe has explained, especially in *A Room of One's Own* Woolf focuses on the material and historical conditions that foster or hinder literary production. She sees how these conditions have always hindered women, who have not had the education, leisure,

¹See Thomas J. Farrell, "Female and Male Modes of Rhetoric," *College English* 40 (1979): 909–21.

²Catherine Sandbach-Dahlström, "'Que scais-je?': Virginia Woolf and the Essay as Feminist Critique," in *Virginia Woolf and the Essay*, ed. Beth Carole Rosenberg and Jeanne Dubino (New York: St. Martin's, 1997), p. 276 passim.

³Jane Marcus, "Sapphistry: Narration as Lesbian Seduction in *A Room of One's Own*," in *Virginia Woolf and the Languages of Patriarchy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), p. 170.

⁴Marcus, p. 169 passim.

or economic independence for writing. They have been forcibly confined to the domestic sphere and taught to value their restricted role through such ideological constructs as the selfless “Angel in the House,” whom Woolf identifies and vows to kill in “Professions for Women” (included here). Moreover, Woolf believes that the principal language available for literary and intellectual expression has been “the language of men,”⁵ so long used to express only men’s concerns that women have difficulty adapting it to their needs. Woolf calls on women writers to select from the language of men what they can use and recombine its elements to create a discourse more congenial and useful to women, as she tried to do in her own fiction and non-fiction work. A “woman’s sentence” is needed, and Woolf applauds any signs of its development, for example, in the work of novelist Dorothy Richardson, her contemporary and a great influence on her (see review included here). As Ratcliffe notes, Woolf argues that many literary genres have been so male-dominated that women should begin with the novel, which, as a younger form with fewer male examples in the canon, might provide them with more creative space. Women should feel free to blur genres to devise forms that fit what they want to say. Implicitly, Woolf treats literary tradition as tremendously influential on new writers: hence the importance of recovering, and creating, women’s literary traditions. Women writers must not listen to those who would censure their experiments, whether male or female, but find new audiences—especially young women—who will encourage their new work. Woolf’s analysis amounts to the first twentieth-century manifesto for women’s rhetoric.

Woolf’s view of herself as a rhetor was complex. As literary scholars Beth Carole Rosenberg and Jeanne Dubino argue, Woolf believed that “essays are not written to *prove* anything.”⁶ Although she was well aware of the political implications of both the production and the reception of art, she still believed that the best art transcended history and addressed “the meaning of life.”⁷ The personality of the artist should disappear; as literary critic Lisa Low has argued, above all else Woolf abhorred egotism, which she saw as the male besetting sin.⁸ In addition, art was damaged by any emergence of political grievances, even feminist critique. In *Three Guineas*, Woolf develops a metaphor in which literary art is a horse and “propaganda” is a donkey—attempting to mingle the two can produce only sterile offspring.

Yet the lines between art and “propaganda” are not so easily established in Woolf’s writing. Many critics have felt that her novels speak to a feminist agenda. Furthermore, Woolf also wrote much nonfiction prose, addressing social and political issues of the day not only in her literary reviews but, more important, in longer

⁵Krista Ratcliffe, *Anglo-American Feminist Challenges to the Rhetorical Traditions* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1996), p. 42.

⁶Beth Carole Rosenberg and Jeanne Dubino, “Introduction,” in *Virginia Woolf and the Essay*, ed. Beth Carole Rosenberg and Jeanne Dubino (New York: St. Martin’s, 1997), p. 11, emphasis in original.

⁷Quoted in Michèle Barrett, “Introduction,” in *Virginia Woolf: Women and Writing*, ed. Michèle Barrett (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979), p. 19.

⁸See Lisa Low, “Refusing to Hit Back: Virginia Woolf and the Impersonality Question,” in *Virginia Woolf and the Essay*, ed. Beth Carole Rosenberg and Jeanne Dubino (New York: St. Martin’s, 1997), pp. 257–73.

essays such as *A Room of One's Own* and *Three Guineas*. Her analysis in this work is prescient. She was among the first to link women's literary creativity with their education and economic position, and not simply to claim a public forum for women but to name and attack the patriarchy that blocked their access. She also was among the first to link social class oppression and gender oppression, identifying with working-class people without romanticizing them and calling on the middle and upper classes to give up the privileges that cemented economic inequalities, and to link patriarchy and fascism. This last view may have had much to do with the long occulting of her rhetorical accomplishments. She had the courage, and the misfortune, to advocate resistance to war among women just at the time that Hitler and Mussolini were coming to dominate Europe. Her pacifism thus came to seem like acquiescence in fascist conquest and even, for later critics, in the Holocaust. At best, she was made to seem politically naive. But both the arguments and the stylistic experiments in her essays are now central to feminist understanding.

SYNOPSIS OF *A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN*

"Women and Fiction" (included here) is a summary of the main points of *A Room of One's Own*, which is based on two papers Woolf read to the students at the women's colleges Newnham and Girton in 1928. What follows is a more detailed précis of *Room*.

Woolf begins by imagining that her audience, women at Newnham and Girton who invited her to speak on "women and fiction," is puzzled by her attention to "a room of one's own." She explains this focus by saying that she can offer no great generalizations on her announced subject, but can only tell them that "a woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction." She will try to explain to them why this is so. To accomplish this task, she invents a persona for herself and imagines that this "I" is visiting the great men's university of "Oxbridge." Strolling around the campus, she is warned off the grass by an officious beadle and barred entry to the library because she is a woman. She contemplates the beautiful old buildings and imagines how much money, over how many centuries, has been contributed to build and maintain them. She is then taken as a guest to a sumptuous luncheon at a men's college, and finally ushered out of the grounds as the gates are locked behind her. She walks down the road to a nearby women's college, to which she gives the name "Fernham." Here she eats a dinner very much inferior in quality to the luncheon she enjoyed at the men's college. She reflects that the women's college is poor because women have never been able to make the large sums of money needed to endow institutions of higher learning. They have usually been fully occupied with raising children.

In Chapter Two, Woolf's "I" goes to the British Museum to research the questions of why women are so much poorer than men and whether their poverty affects their ability to write fiction. She finds that whereas women have written few books about men, men have written many, many books about women, and most of them are devoted to analyzing women's inferiority. Angrily she concludes that "England is under the rule of a patriarchy" and that men denigrate women only to build them-

selves up. Furthermore, men also expect the women in their lives to flatter them. She mentions here how grateful she is for the legacy from an aunt that enables her to be independent of male support and of the menial and degrading jobs that are open to women who must support themselves by working. She imagines how England will be improved when every profession is open to women.

Woolf begins Chapter Three with the question of why “no woman wrote a word” of the great literature produced in the Elizabethan period. Exploring the books in her own library for answers to this question, she discovers that little is said about women in histories of the period, except to note their illiteracy, legal inability to own property, and brutal control by fathers and husbands. She now narrates the life of an imaginary sister of William Shakespeare’s, whom she calls Judith. Though uneducated compared to her brother, Judith too runs away to London to act and write plays, only to be ridiculed and rejected at every turn, and finally, when she becomes pregnant, to kill herself. Next Woolf briefly considers the careers of some women writers and speculates on the effects of the strangling discouragement with which women writers have always been met—“not indifference but hostility.” She cites several examples of such hostility in the form of scathing judgments of female ability pronounced by male authorities, past and present.

In Chapter Four, Woolf looks in more detail at the careers of women writers from the Renaissance to the mid-nineteenth century. She sees that a few aristocratic women were sometimes able to find the time and space to write, though often against gender-based opposition, lack of helpful criticism, and debilitating attacks on their capacity. Aphra Behn then is cited as an important figure because she showed that a woman could make money writing; this opened avenues for many middle-class women to write. This development is important because, Woolf believes, the more women who are writing or who have written, the more likely it is that works of genius will be produced by a woman. Such works cannot occur in a vacuum, but only in the context of rich traditions. Women’s best genre, to date, has been the novel, she says, because that form is less dominated by male examples. But, in addition to the debilitating effects of opposition to women’s writing, women’s accomplishments as novelists have been hampered by social barriers to their gaining broad life experience and by the temptations to alter their writing either to please male critics or to push too vigorously for righting wrongs done to women.

Woolf begins Chapter Five (included here) by noting that in her own day women are writing all kinds of texts—not only fiction, but many kinds of nonfiction, a development she celebrates. She explores the implications of this development for women’s fiction by analyzing a hypothetical contemporary novel by a woman novelist. Woolf notes how the woman writing now must find new structures for her plot and her sentences. Women’s writing can depict a much wider range of women’s experiences and emotions, especially their relationships with each other, whereas men’s writing about women neglects these relationships and virtually every experience in women’s lives except their love for men. It is entirely fitting that women’s writing should differ from men’s. The differences should be praised and developed so that more of life can be treated faithfully in fiction. Women should not be required

to write like men, even though this will create difficulties in evaluating women's writing, because their own tradition is still relatively scanty. Things are moving in the right direction, Woolf concludes, and if no great women writers have yet emerged, she feels sure that they soon will.

Chapter Six begins with a gaze away from shelves of books, out the window to the London street, where Woolf sees a man and a woman get into a taxi together. The sight reminds her that, although she has just been insisting on the important differences between male and female artistic visions, the greatest creativity happens in the mind that incorporates both male and female points of view, a mind that is, whether in a biologically male or female body, androgynous. She shows the weakness of the mind that ignores one-half of this creative duality by analyzing men's writing, which, Woolf suggests, is deformed by egotism. She hints that such writing is congenial to, or even contributes to, fascism. The greatest male writers have been androgynous. Now, stepping out of her constructed persona, Woolf the speaker summarizes her argument and anticipates objections, such as that she has been too materialistic. But she is convinced that "intellectual freedom depends upon material things." She notes that most of the greatest male writers have been at least middle class. She stresses again the importance of recognizing and fostering a tradition of women's writing. Finally, she heralds the advent of the truly great woman writer, who will come as times change.

Selected Bibliography

Andrew McNeillie's multivolume edition of Woolf's essays (1986–) has, so far, published only her work up to 1924. Michèle Barrett has collected many of Woolf's shorter essays and literary reviews on women and writing in *Virginia Woolf: Women and Writing* (1979); Barrett's introduction also provides a helpful overview of Woolf's feminist literary theory. This is the source of "Women and Fiction," "Professions for Women," and the review of Dorothy Richardson included here. Our excerpt from *A Room of One's Own* is taken from a 1981 edition with a foreword by Mary Gordon.

Woolf's life has invited the efforts of many biographers. *Virginia Woolf: A Biography* (1972), in two volumes, by Woolf's nephew Quentin Bell, is still a major source, although Bell has been faulted for perpetuating the view of Woolf as a snobbish, hypochondriacal esthete that developed among the younger generation of English writers in the 1930s as they defined their work in contrast to hers. A shorter biography that counters Bell's bias and attends to the central role of feminism in Woolf's thought is Phyllis Rose's *Woman of Letters: A Life of Virginia Woolf* (1978). A well-regarded recent treatment is Hermione Lee's *Virginia Woolf* (1996; American edition 1997).

The major study of Woolf as feminist rhetorician is Krista Ratcliffe's treatment in *Anglo-American Feminist Challenges to the Rhetorical Traditions* (1996). *Virginia Woolf: Emerging Perspectives* (ed. Mark Hussey and Vara Neverow, 1994) contains three essays that link Woolf with rhetoric and composition studies: Vara Neverow's "A Room of One's Own as a Model of Composition Theory" suggests that the relationship Woolf describes between the woman writer and her male critic resembles that between any undergraduate student and his or her professor, requiring the writer in both cases to overcome the blocking caused by anxiety and to resist debilitating negative criticism; in "The Chameleon Voice and Classical Structure in *Three Guineas* and *A Room of One's Own*," Nancy Hynes analyzes these essays

as classical orations with exordium, narrative, partition, and so on; and in “Doodling Her Way to Insight: From Incompetent Student to Empowered Rhetor in *A Room of One’s Own*,” Lillian M. Bisson demonstrates that the composing process described in Woolf’s essay resembles that advocated by process-writing composition pedagogues such as Donald Murray and Ann Berthoff.

Thomas J. Farrell uses Woolf as a prime example of the “female mode of rhetoric” in “Female and Male Modes of Rhetoric” (*College English* 40 [1979]: 909–21). Other interesting analyses of the feminist import of Woolf’s style can be found in the chapter on Woolf in Shari Benstock’s *Textualizing the Feminine* (1991) and in Pamela L. Caughie’s *Virginia Woolf and Postmodernism* (1991). For more on connections between Woolf and *écriture féminine*, see Françoise Defromont, “Metaphorical Thinking and Poetic Writing in Virginia Woolf and Hélène Cixous,” in *The Body and the Text: Hélène Cixous, Reading and Teaching* (ed. Helen Wilcox, Keith McWatters, Ann Thompson, and Linda R. Williams, 1990). Michèle Barrett’s introduction to her collection of Woolf’s essays on women and writing, noted above, surveys Woolf’s feminist literary theory. Aiming primarily to restore Woolf’s reputation as a literary critic, but also with helpful information for rhetorical analysis, are the editors’ introduction and articles by Lisa Low (“Refusing to Hit Back: Virginia Woolf and the Impersonality Question”), Catherine Sandbach-Dahlström (“‘Que scais-je?’: Virginia Woolf and the Essay as Feminist Critique”), and others in *Virginia Woolf and the Essay* (ed. Beth Carole Rosenberg and Jeanne Dubino, 1997). Woolf’s thoughts on art and “propaganda” in *Three Guineas*, as analyzed by Jane Marcus in “‘No More Horses’: Virginia Woolf on Art and Propaganda” (*Women’s Studies* 4 [1977]: 265–90), are relevant to rhetoric. Marcus’s essays on Woolf, including “Sapphistry: Narration as Lesbian Seduction in *A Room of One’s Own*,” are collected in *Virginia Woolf and the Languages of Patriarchy* (1987).

Professions for Women

When your secretary invited me to come here, she told me that your Society is concerned with the employment of women and she suggested that I might tell you something about my own professional experiences. It is true I am a woman; it is true I am employed; but what professional experiences have I had? It is difficult to say. My profession is literature; and in that profession there are fewer experiences for women than in any other, with the exception of the stage—fewer, I mean, that are peculiar to women. For the road was cut many years ago—by Fanny Burney, by Aphra Behn, by Harriet Martineau, by Jane Austen, by George Eliot—many famous women, and many more unknown and forgotten, have been before me, making the path smooth, and regulating my steps. Thus, when I came to write, there were very few material obstacles in my way.

Writing was a reputable and harmless occupation. The family peace was not broken by the scratching of a pen. No demand was made upon the family purse. For ten and sixpence one can buy paper enough to write all the plays of Shakespeare—if one has a mind that way. Pianos and models, Paris, Vienna and Berlin, masters and mistresses, are not needed by a writer. The cheapness of writing paper is, of course, the reason why women have succeeded as writers before they have succeeded in the other professions.

But to tell you my story—it is a simple one. You have only got to figure to yourselves a girl in a bedroom with a pen in her hand. She had only to move that pen from left to right—from ten o’clock to one. Then it occurred to her to do what is simple and cheap enough after all—to slip a few of those pages into an envelope, fix a

penny stamp in the corner, and drop the envelope into the red box at the corner. It was thus that I became a journalist; and my effort was rewarded on the first day of the following month—a very glorious day it was for me—by a letter from an editor containing a cheque for one pound ten shillings and sixpence. But to show you how little I deserve to be called a professional woman, how little I know of the struggles and difficulties of such lives, I have to admit that instead of spending that sum upon bread and butter, rent, shoes and stockings, or butcher's bills, I went out and bought a cat—a beautiful cat, a Persian cat, which very soon involved me in bitter disputes with my neighbours.

What could be easier than to write articles and to buy Persian cats with the profits? But wait a moment. Articles have to be about something. Mine, I seem to remember, was about a novel by a famous man. And while I was writing this review, I discovered that if I were going to review books I should need to do battle with a certain phantom. And the phantom was a woman, and when I came to know her better I called her after the heroine of a famous poem, *The Angel in the House*. It was she who used to come between me and my paper when I was writing reviews. It was she who bothered me and wasted my time and so tormented me that at last I killed her. You who come of a younger and happier generation may not have heard of her—you may not know what I mean by the *Angel in the House*. I will describe her as shortly as I can. She was intensely sympathetic. She was immensely charming. She was utterly unselfish. She excelled in the difficult arts of family life. She sacrificed herself daily. If there was chicken, she took the leg; if there was draught she sat in it—in short she was so constituted that she never had a mind or a wish of her own, but preferred to sympathize always with the minds and wishes of others. Above all—I need not say it—she was pure. Her purity was supposed to be her chief beauty—her blushes, her great grace. In those days—the last of Queen Victoria—every house had its *Angel*. And when I came to write I encountered her with the very first words. The shadow of her wings fell on my page; I heard the rustling of her skirts in the room. Directly, that is to say, I took my pen in

my hand to review that novel by a famous man, she slipped behind me and whispered: "My dear, you are a young woman. You are writing about a book that has been written by a man. Be sympathetic; be tender; flatter; deceive; use all the arts and wiles of our sex. Never let anybody guess that you have a mind of your own. Above all, be pure." And she made as if to guide my pen. I now record the one act for which I take some credit to myself, though the credit rightly belongs to some excellent ancestors of mine who left me a certain sum of money—shall we say five hundred pounds a year?—so that it was not necessary for me to depend solely on charm for my living. I turned upon her and caught her by the throat. I did my best to kill her. My excuse, if I were to be had up in a court of law, would be that I acted in self-defence. Had I not killed her she would have killed me. She would have plucked the heart out of my writing. For, as I found, directly I put pen to paper, you cannot review even a novel without having a mind of your own, without expressing what you think to be the truth about human relations, morality, sex. And all these questions, according to the *Angel of the House*, cannot be dealt with freely and openly by women; they must charm, they must conciliate, they must—to put it bluntly—tell lies if they are to succeed. Thus, whenever I felt the shadow of her wing or the radiance of her halo upon my page, I took up the inkpot and flung it at her. She died hard. Her fictitious nature was of great assistance to her. It is far harder to kill a phantom than a reality. She was always creeping back when I thought I had despatched her. Though I flatter myself that I killed her in the end, the struggle was severe; it took much time that had better have been spent upon learning Greek grammar; or in roaming the world in search of adventures. But it was a real experience; it was an experience that was found to befall all women writers at that time. Killing the *Angel in the House* was part of the occupation of a woman writer.

But to continue my story. The *Angel* was dead; what then remained? You may say that what remained was a simple and common object—a young woman in a bedroom with an inkpot. In other words, now that she had rid herself of falsehood, that young woman had only to

be herself. Ah, but what is "herself"? I mean, what is a woman? I assure you, I do not know. I do not believe that you know. I do not believe that anybody can know until she has expressed herself in all the arts and professions open to human skill. That indeed is one of the reasons why I have come here—out of respect for you, who are in process of showing us by your experiments what a woman is, who are in process of providing us, by your failures and successes, with that extremely important piece of information.

But to continue the story of my professional experiences. I made one pound ten and six by my first review; and I bought a Persian cat with the proceeds. Then I grew ambitious. A Persian cat is all very well, I said; but a Persian cat is not enough. I must have a motor car. And it was thus that I became a novelist—for it is a very strange thing that people will give you a motor car if you will tell them a story. It is a still stranger thing that there is nothing so delightful in the world as telling stories. It is far pleasanter than writing reviews of famous novels. And yet, if I am to obey your secretary and tell you my professional experiences as a novelist, I must tell you about a very strange experience that befell me as a novelist. And to understand it you must try first to imagine a novelist's state of mind. I hope I am not giving away professional secrets if I say that a novelist's chief desire is to be as unconscious as possible. He has to induce in himself a state of perpetual lethargy. He wants life to proceed with the utmost quiet and regularity. He wants to see the same faces, to read the same books, to do the same things day after day, month after month, while he is writing, so that nothing may break the illusion in which he is living—so that nothing may disturb or disquiet the mysterious nosings about, feelings round, darts, dashes and sudden discoveries of that very shy and illusive spirit, the imagination. I suspect that this state is the same both for men and women. Be that as it may, I want you to imagine me writing a novel in a state of trance. I want you to figure to yourselves a girl sitting with a pen in her hand, which for minutes, and indeed for hours, she never dips into the inkpot. The image that comes to my mind when I think of this girl is the image of a fisherman lying sunk in dreams on the verge of a

deep lake with a rod held out over the water. She was letting her imagination sweep unchecked round every rock and cranny of the world that lies submerged in the depths of our unconscious being. Now came the experience, the experience that I believe to be far commoner with women writers than with men. The line raced through the girl's fingers. Her imagination had rushed away. It had sought the pools, the depths, the dark places where the largest fish slumber. And then there was a smash. There was an explosion. There was foam and confusion. The imagination had dashed itself against something hard. The girl was roused from her dream. She was indeed in a state of the most acute and difficult distress. To speak without figure she had thought of something, something about the body, about the passions which it was unfitting for her as a woman to say. Men, her reason told her, would be shocked. The consciousness of what men will say of a woman who speaks the truth about her passions had roused her from her artist's state of unconsciousness. She could write no more. The trance was over. Her imagination could work no longer. This I believe to be a very common experience with women writers—they are impeded by the extreme conventionality of the other sex. For though men sensibly allow themselves great freedom in these respects, I doubt that they realize or can control the extreme severity with which they condemn such freedom in women.

These then were two very genuine experiences of my own. These were two of the adventures of my professional life. The first—killing the Angel in the House—I think I solved. She died. But the second, telling the truth about my own experiences as a body, I do not think I solved. I doubt that any woman has solved it yet. The obstacles against her are still immensely powerful—and yet they are very difficult to define. Outwardly, what is simpler than to write books? Outwardly, what obstacles are there for a woman rather than for a man? Inwardly, I think, the case is very different; she has still many ghosts to fight, many prejudices to overcome. Indeed it will be a long time still, I think, before a woman can sit down to write a book without finding a phantom to be slain, a rock to be dashed against. And if this is so in literature, the freest of

all professions for women, how is it in the new professions which you are now for the first time entering?

Those are the questions that I should like, had I time, to ask you. And indeed, if I have laid stress upon these professional experiences of mine, it is because I believe that they are, though in different forms, yours also. Even when the path is nominally open—when there is nothing to prevent a woman from being a doctor, a lawyer, a civil servant—there are many phantoms and obstacles, as I believe, looming in her way. To discuss and define them is I think of great value and importance; for thus only can the labour be shared, the difficulties be solved. But besides this, it is necessary also to discuss the ends and the aims for which we are fighting, for which we are doing battle with these formidable obstacles. Those aims cannot be taken for granted; they must be perpetually questioned and examined. The whole position, as I see it—here

in this hall surrounded by women practising for the first time in history I know not how many different professions—is one of extraordinary interest and importance. You have won rooms of your own in the house hitherto exclusively owned by men. You are able, though not without great labour and effort, to pay the rent. You are earning your five hundred pounds a year. But this freedom is only a beginning; the room is your own, but it is still bare. It has to be furnished; it has to be decorated; it has to be shared. How are you going to furnish it, how are you going to decorate it? With whom are you going to share it, and upon what terms? These, I think are questions of the utmost importance and interest. For the first time in history you are able to ask them; for the first time you are able to decide for yourselves what the answers should be. Willingly would I stay and discuss those questions and answers—but not tonight. My time is up; and I must cease.

Women and Fiction

The title of this article can be read in two ways: it may allude to women and the fiction that they write, or to women and the fiction that is written about them. The ambiguity is intentional, for in dealing with women as writers, as much elasticity as possible is desirable; it is necessary to leave oneself room to deal with other things besides their work, so much has that work been influenced by conditions that have nothing whatever to do with art.

The most superficial inquiry into women's writing instantly raises a host of questions. Why, we ask at once, was there no continuous writing done by women before the eighteenth century? Why did they then write almost as habitually as men, and in the course of that writing produce, one after another, some of the classics of English fiction? And why did their art then, and why to some extent does their art still, take the form of fiction?

A little thought will show us that we are ask-

ing questions to which we shall get, as answer, only further fiction. The answer lies at present locked in old diaries, stuffed away in old drawers, half-obliterated in the memories of the aged. It is to be found in the lives of the obscure—in those almost unlit corridors of history where the figures of generations of women are so dimly, so fitfully perceived. For very little is known about women. The history of England is the history of the male line, not of the female. Of our fathers we know always some fact, some distinction. They were soldiers or they were sailors; they filled that office or they made that law. But of our mothers, our grandmothers, our great-grandmothers, what remains? Nothing but a tradition. One was beautiful; one was red-haired; one was kissed by a Queen. We know nothing of them except their names and the dates of their marriages and the number of children they bore.

Thus, if we wish to know why at any particular time women did this or that, why they wrote

nothing, why on the other hand they wrote masterpieces, it is extremely difficult to tell. Anyone who should seek among those old papers, who should turn history wrong side out and so construct a faithful picture of the daily life of the ordinary women in Shakespeare's time, in Milton's time, in Johnson's time, would not only write a book of astonishing interest, but would furnish the critic with a weapon which he now lacks. The extraordinary woman depends on the ordinary woman. It is only when we know what were the conditions of the average woman's life—the number of her children, whether she had money of her own, if she had a room to herself, whether she had help in bringing up her family, if she had servants, whether part of the housework was her task—it is only when we can measure the way of life and the experience of life made possible to the ordinary woman that we can account for the success or failure of the extraordinary woman as a writer.

Strange spaces of silence seem to separate one period of activity from another. There was Sappho and a little group of women all writing poetry on a Greek island six hundred years before the birth of Christ. They fall silent. Then about the year 1000 we find a certain court lady, the Lady Murasaki, writing a very long and beautiful novel in Japan. But in England in the sixteenth century, when the dramatists and poets were most active, the women were dumb. Elizabethan literature is exclusively masculine. Then, at the end of the eighteenth century and in the beginning of the nineteenth, we find women again writing—this time in England—with extraordinary frequency and success.

Law and custom were of course largely responsible for these strange intermissions of silence and speech. When a woman was liable, as she was in the fifteenth century, to be beaten and flung about the room if she did not marry the man of her parents' choice, the spiritual atmosphere was not favourable to the production of works of art. When she was married without her own consent to a man who thereupon became her lord and master, "so far at least as law and custom could make him," as she was in the time of the Stuarts, it is likely she had little time for writing, and less encouragement. The immense effect

of environment and suggestion upon the mind, we in our psychoanalytical age are beginning to realize. Again, with memoirs and letters to help us, we are beginning to understand how abnormal is the effort needed to produce a work of art, and what shelter and what support the mind of the artist requires. Of those facts the lives and letters of men like Keats and Carlyle and Flaubert assure us.

Thus it is clear that the extraordinary outburst of fiction in the beginning of the nineteenth century in England was heralded by innumerable slight changes in law and customs and manners. And women of the nineteenth century had some leisure; they had some education. It was no longer the exception for women of the middle and upper classes to choose their own husbands. And it is significant that of the four great women novelists—Jane Austen, Emily Brontë, Charlotte Brontë, and George Eliot—not one had a child, and two were unmarried.

Yet, though it is clear that the ban upon writing had been removed, there was still, it would seem, considerable pressure upon women to write novels. No four women can have been more unlike in genius and character than these four. Jane Austen can have had nothing in common with George Eliot; George Eliot was the direct opposite of Emily Brontë. Yet all were trained for the same profession; all, when they wrote, wrote novels.

Fiction was, as fiction still is, the easiest thing for a woman to write. Nor is it difficult to find the reason. A novel is the least concentrated form of art. A novel can be taken up or put down more easily than a play or a poem. George Eliot left her work to nurse her father. Charlotte Brontë put down her pen to pick the eyes out of the potatoes. And living as she did in the common sitting-room, surrounded by people, a woman was trained to use her mind in observation and upon the analysis of character. She was trained to be a novelist and not to be a poet.

Even in the nineteenth century, a woman lived almost solely in her home and her emotions. And those nineteenth-century novels, remarkable as they were, were profoundly influenced by the fact that the women who wrote them were excluded by their sex from certain kinds of experience.

That experience has a great influence upon fiction is indisputable. The best part of Conrad's novels, for instance, would be destroyed if it had been impossible for him to be a sailor. Take away all that Tolstoi knew of war as a soldier, of life and society as a rich young man whose education admitted him to all sorts of experience, and *War and Peace* would be incredibly impoverished.

Yet *Pride and Prejudice*, *Wuthering Heights*, *Villette*, and *Middlemarch* were written by women from whom was forcibly withheld all experience save that which could be met with in a middle-class drawing-room. No first-hand experience of war or seafaring or politics or business was possible for them. Even their emotional life was strictly regulated by law and custom. When George Eliot ventured to live with Mr Lewes without being his wife, public opinion was scandalized. Under its pressure she withdrew into a suburban seclusion which, inevitably, had the worst possible effects upon her work. She wrote that unless people asked of their own accord to come and see her, she never invited them. At the same time, on the other side of Europe, Tolstoi was living a free life as a soldier, with men and women of all classes, for which nobody censured him and from which his novels drew much of their astonishing breadth and vigour.

But the novels of women were not affected only by the necessarily narrow range of the writer's experience. They showed, at least in the nineteenth century, another characteristic which may be traced to the writer's sex. In *Middlemarch* and in *Jane Eyre* we are conscious not merely of the writer's character, as we are conscious of the character of Charles Dickens, but we are conscious of a woman's presence—of someone resenting the treatment of her sex and pleading for its rights. This brings into women's writing an element which is entirely absent from a man's, unless, indeed, he happens to be a working-man, a Negro, or one who for some other reason is conscious of disability. It introduces a distortion and is frequently the cause of weakness. The desire to plead some personal cause or to make a character the mouthpiece of some personal discontent or grievance always has a distressing effect, as if the spot at which the reader's

attention is directed were suddenly twofold instead of single.

The genius of Jane Austen and Emily Brontë is never more convincing than in their power to ignore such claims and solicitations and to hold on their way unperturbed by scorn or censure. But it needed a very serene or a very powerful mind to resist the temptation to anger. The ridicule, the censure, the assurance of inferiority in one form or another which were lavished upon women who practised an art, provoked such reactions naturally enough. One sees the effect in Charlotte Brontë's indignation, in George Eliot's resignation. Again and again one finds it in the work of the lesser women writers—in their choice of a subject, in their unnatural self-assertiveness, in their unnatural docility. Moreover, insincerity leaks in almost unconsciously. They adopt a view in deference to authority. The vision becomes too masculine or it becomes too feminine; it loses its perfect integrity and, with that, its most essential quality as a work of art.

The great change that has crept into women's writing is, it would seem, a change of attitude. The woman writer is no longer bitter. She is no longer angry. She is no longer pleading and protesting as she writes. We are approaching, if we have not yet reached, the time when her writing will have little or no foreign influence to disturb it. She will be able to concentrate upon her vision without distraction from outside. The aloofness that was once within the reach of genius and originality is only now coming within reach of ordinary women. Therefore the average novel by a woman is far more genuine and far more interesting today than it was a hundred or even fifty years ago.

But it is still true that before a woman can write exactly as she wishes to write, she has many difficulties to face. To begin with, there is the technical difficulty—so simple, apparently; in reality, so baffling—that the very form of the sentence does not fit her. It is a sentence made by men; it is too loose, too heavy, too pompous for a woman's use. Yet in a novel, which covers so wide a stretch of ground, an ordinary and usual type of sentence has to be found to carry the reader on easily and naturally from one end of the book to the other. And this a woman must

make for herself, altering and adapting the current sentence until she writes one that takes the natural shape of her thought without crushing or distorting it.

But that, after all, is only a means to an end, and the end is still to be reached only when a woman has the courage to surmount opposition and the determination to be true to herself. For a novel, after all, is a statement about a thousand different objects—human, natural, divine; it is an attempt to relate them to each other. In every novel of merit these different elements are held in place by the force of the writer's vision. But they have another order also, which is the order imposed upon them by convention. And as men are the arbiters of that convention, as they have established an order of values in life, so too, since fiction is largely based on life, these values prevail there also to a very great extent.

It is probable, however, that both in life and in art the values of a woman are not the values of a man. Thus, when a woman comes to write a novel, she will find that she is perpetually wishing to alter the established values—to make serious what appears insignificant to a man, and trivial what is to him important. And for that, of course, she will be criticized; for the critic of the opposite sex will be genuinely puzzled and surprised by an attempt to alter the current scale of values, and will see in it not merely a difference of view, but a view that is weak, or trivial, or sentimental, because it differs from his own.

But here, too, women are coming to be more independent of opinion. They are beginning to respect their own sense of values. And for this reason the subject matter of their novels begins to show certain changes. They are less interested, it would seem, in themselves; on the other hand, they are more interested in other women. In the early nineteenth century, women's novels were largely autobiographical. One of the motives that led them to write was the desire to expose their own suffering, to plead their own cause. Now that this desire is no longer so urgent, women are beginning to explore their own sex, to write of women as women have never been written of before; for of course, until very lately, women in literature were the creation of men.

Here again there are difficulties to overcome,

for, if one may generalize, not only do women submit less readily to observation than men, but their lives are far less tested and examined by the ordinary processes of life. Often nothing tangible remains of a woman's day. The food that has been cooked is eaten; the children that have been nursed have gone out into the world. Where does the accent fall? What is the salient point for the novelist to seize upon? It is difficult to say. Her life has an anonymous character which is baffling and puzzling in the extreme. For the first time, this dark country is beginning to be explored in fiction; and at the same moment a woman has also to record the changes in women's minds and habits which the opening of the professions has introduced. She has to observe how their lives are ceasing to run underground; she has to discover what new colours and shadows are showing in them now that they are exposed to the outer world.

If, then, one should try to sum up the character of women's fiction at the present moment, one would say that it is courageous; it is sincere; it keeps closely to what women feel. It is not bitter. It does not insist upon its femininity. But at the same time, a woman's book is not written as a man would write it. These qualities are much commoner than they were, and they give even to second- and third-rate work the value of truth and the interest of sincerity.

But in addition to these good qualities, there are two that call for a word more of discussion. The change which has turned the English woman from a nondescript influence, fluctuating and vague, to a voter, a wage-earner, a responsible citizen, has given her both in her life and in her art a turn towards the impersonal. Her relations now are not only emotional; they are intellectual, they are political. The old system which condemned her to squint askance at things through the eyes or through the interests of husband or brother, has given place to the direct and practical interests of one who must act for herself, and not merely influence the acts of others. Hence her attention is being directed away from the personal centre which engaged it exclusively in the past to the impersonal, and her novels naturally become more critical of society, and less analytical of individual lives.

We may expect that the office of gadfly to the state, which has been so far a male prerogative,

will now be discharged by women also. Their novels will deal with social evils and remedies. Their men and women will not be observed wholly in relation to each other emotionally, but as they cohere and clash in groups and classes and races. That is one change of some importance. But there is another more interesting to those who prefer the butterfly to the gadfly—that is to say, the artist to the reformer. The greater impersonality of women's lives will encourage the poetic spirit, and it is in poetry that women's fiction is still weakest. It will lead them to be less absorbed in facts and no longer content to record with astonishing acuteness the minute details which fall under their own observation. They will look beyond the personal and political relationships to the wider questions which the poet tries to solve—of our destiny and the meaning of life.

The basis of the poetic attitude is of course largely founded upon material things. It depends upon leisure, and a little money, and the chance which money and leisure give to observe impersonally and dispassionately. With money and leisure at their service, women will naturally occupy themselves more than has hitherto been possible with the craft of letters. They will make a fuller and a more subtle use of the instrument of writing. Their technique will become bolder and richer.

In the past, the virtue of women's writing often lay in its divine spontaneity, like that of the

blackbird's song or the thrush's. It was untaught; it was from the heart. But it was also, and much more often, chattering and garrulous—mere talk spilt over paper and left to dry in pools and blots. In future, granted time and books and a little space in the house for herself, literature will become for women, as for men, an art to be studied. Women's gift will be trained and strengthened. The novel will cease to be the dumping-ground for the personal emotions. It will become, more than at present, a work of art like any other, and its resources and its limitations will be explored.

From this it is a short step to the practice of the sophisticated arts, hitherto so little practised by women—to the writing of essays and criticism, of history and biography. And that, too, if we are considering the novel, will be of advantage; for besides improving the quality of the novel itself, it will draw off the aliens who have been attracted to fiction by its accessibility while their hearts lay elsewhere. Thus will the novel be rid of those excrescences of history and fact which, in our time, have made it so shapeless.

So, if we may prophesy, women in time to come will write fewer novels, but better novels; and not novels only, but poetry and criticism and history. But in this, to be sure, one is looking ahead to that golden, that perhaps fabulous, age when women will have what has so long been denied them—leisure, and money, and a room to themselves.

Dorothy Richardson

THE TUNNEL

Although *The Tunnel* is the fourth book that Miss Richardson has written, she must still expect to find her reviewers paying a great deal of attention to her method. It is a method that demands attention, as a door whose handle we wrench ineffectively calls our attention to the fact that it is locked. There is no slipping smoothly down the accustomed channels; the first chapters provide an amusing spectacle of hasty critics seeking

them in vain. If this were the result of perversity, we should think Miss Richardson more courageous than wise; but being, as we believe, not wilful but natural, it represents a genuine conviction of the discrepancy between what she has to say and the form provided by tradition for her to say it in. She is one of the rare novelists who believe that the novel is so much alive that it actually grows. As she makes her advanced critic, Mr Wilson, remark: "There will be books with all that cut out—him and her—all that sort of

thing. The book of the future will be clear of all that." And Miriam Henderson herself reflects: "but if books were written like that, sitting down and doing it cleverly and knowing just what you were doing and just how somebody else had done it, there was something wrong, some mannish cleverness that was only half right. To write books knowing all about style would be to become like a man." So "him and her" are cut out, and with them goes the odd deliberate business: the chapters that lead up and the chapters that lead down; the characters who are always characteristic; the scenes that are passionate and the scenes that are humorous; the elaborate construction of reality; the conception that shapes and surrounds the whole. All these things are cast away, and there is left, denuded, unsheltered, unbegun and unfinished, the consciousness of Miriam Henderson, the small sensitive lump of matter, half transparent and half opaque, which endlessly reflects and distorts the variegated procession, and is, we are bidden to believe, the source beneath the surface, the very oyster within the shell.

The critic is thus absolved from the necessity of picking out the themes of the story. The reader is not provided with a story; he is invited to embed himself in Miriam Henderson's consciousness, to register one after another, and one on top of another, words, cries, shouts, notes of a violin, fragments of lectures, to follow these impressions as they flicker through Miriam's mind, waking incongruously other thoughts, and plaiting incessantly the many-coloured and innumerable threads of life. But a quotation is better than description.

She was surprised now at her familiarity with the details of the room . . . that idea of visiting places in dreams. It was something more than that . . . all the real part of your life has a real dream in it; some of the real dream part of you coming true. You know in advance when you are really following your life. These things are familiar because reality is here. Coming events cast *light*. It is like dropping everything and walking backward to something you know is there. However far you go out you come back. . . . I am back now where I was before I began trying to do things like other people. I left home to get here. None of those things can touch me here. They are mine.

Here we are thinking, word by word, as Miriam thinks. The method, if triumphant, should make us feel ourselves seated at the centre of another mind, and, according to the artistic gift of the writer, we should perceive in the helter-skelter of flying fragments some unity, significance, or design. That Miss Richardson gets so far as to achieve a sense of reality far greater than that produced by the ordinary means is undoubted. But, then, which reality is it, the superficial or the profound? We have to consider the quality of Miriam Henderson's consciousness, and the extent to which Miss Richardson is able to reveal it. We have to decide whether the flying helter-skelter resolves itself by degrees into a perceptible whole. When we are in a position to make up our minds we cannot deny a slight sense of disappointment. Having sacrificed not merely "hims and hers," but so many seductive graces of wit and style for the prospect of some new revelation or greater intensity, we still find ourselves distressingly near the surface. Things look much the same as ever. It is certainly a very vivid surface. The consciousness of Miriam takes the reflection of a dentist's room to perfection. Her senses of touch, sight and hearing are all excessively acute. But sensations, impressions, ideas and emotions glance off her, unrelated and unquestioned, without shedding quite as much light as we had hoped into the hidden depths. We find ourselves in the dentist's room, in the street, in the lodging-house bedroom frequently and convincingly; but never, or only for a tantalizing second, in the reality which underlies these appearances. In particular, the figures of other people on whom Miriam casts her capricious light are vivid enough, but their sayings and doings never reach that degree of significance which we, perhaps unreasonably, expect. The old method seems sometimes the more profound and economical of the two. But it must be admitted that we are exacting. We want to be rid of realism, to penetrate without its help into the regions beneath it, and further require that Miss Richardson shall fashion this new material into something which has the shapeliness of the old accepted forms. We are asking too much; but the extent of our asking proves that *The Tunnel* is better in its failure than most books in their success.

REVOLVING LIGHTS

There is no one word, such as romance or realism, to cover, even roughly, the works of Miss Dorothy Richardson. Their chief characteristic, if an intermittent student be qualified to speak, is one for which we still seek a name. She has invented, or, if she has not invented, developed and applied to her own uses, a sentence which we might call the psychological sentence of the feminine gender. It is of a more elastic fibre than the old, capable of stretching to the extreme, of suspending the frailest particles, of enveloping the vaguest shapes. Other writers of the opposite sex have used sentences of this description and stretched them to the extreme. But there is a difference. Miss Richardson has fashioned her sentence consciously, in order that it may descend to the depths and investigate the crannies of Miriam Henderson's consciousness. It is a woman's sentence, but only in the sense that it is used to describe a woman's mind by a writer who is neither proud nor afraid of anything that she may discover in the psychology of her sex. And therefore we feel that the trophies that Miss Richardson brings to the surface, however we may dispute their size, are undoubtedly genuine. Her discoveries are concerned with states of being and not with states of doing. Miriam is aware of "life itself"; of the atmosphere of the table rather than of the table; of the silence rather than of the sound. Therefore she adds an element

to her perception of things which has not been noticed before, or, if noticed, has been guiltily suppressed. A man might fall dead at her feet (it is not likely), and Miriam might feel that a violent-coloured ray of light was an important element in her consciousness of the tragedy. If she felt it, she would say it. Therefore, in reading *Revolving Lights* we are often made uncomfortable by feeling that the accent upon the emotions has shifted. What was emphatic is smoothed away. What was important to Maggie Tulliver no longer matters to Miriam Henderson. At first, we are ready to say that nothing is important to Miriam Henderson. That is the way we generally retaliate when an artist tells us that the heart is not, as we should like it to be, a stationary body, but a body which moves perpetually, and is thus always standing in a new relation to the emotions which are the same. Chaucer, Donne, Dickens—each if you read him, shows this change of the heart. That is what Miss Richardson is doing on an infinitely smaller scale. Miriam Henderson is pointing to her heart and saying she feels a pain on her right, and not on her left. She points too didactically. Her pain, compared with Maggie Tulliver's, is a very little pain. But, be that as it may, here we have both Miss Wilson and Miss Richardson proving that the novel is not hung upon a nail and festooned with glory, but on the contrary, walks the high road, alive and alert, and brushes shoulders with real men and women.

A Room of One's Own

Chapter Five

I had come at last, in the course of this rambling, to the shelves which hold books by the living; by women and by men; for there are almost as many books written by women now as by men. Or if that is not yet quite true, if the male is still the voluble sex, it is certainly true that women no longer write novels solely. There are Jane Harrison's books on Greek archaeology; Vernon Lee's books on aesthetics; Gertrude Bell's books on

Persia. There are books on all sorts of subjects which a generation ago no woman could have touched. There are poems and plays and criticism; there are histories and biographies, books of travel and books of scholarship and research; there are even a few philosophies and books about science and economics. And though novels predominate, novels themselves may very well have changed from association with books of a different feather. The natural simplicity, the epic age of women's writing, may have gone. Read-

ing and criticism may have given her a wider range, a greater subtlety. The impulse towards autobiography may be spent. She may be beginning to use writing as an art, not as a method of self-expression. Among these new novels one might find an answer to several such questions.

I took down one of them at random. It stood at the very end of the shelf, was called *Life's Adventure*, or some such title, by Mary Carmichael, and was published in this very month of October. It seems to be her first book, I said to myself, but one must read it as if it were the last volume in a fairly long series, continuing all those other books that I have been glancing at—Lady Winchilsea's poems and Aphra Behn's plays and the novels of the four great novelists. For books continue each other, in spite of our habit of judging them separately. And I must also consider her—this unknown woman—as the descendant of all those other women whose circumstances I have been glancing at and see what she inherits of their characteristics and restrictions. So, with a sigh, because novels so often provide an anodyne and not an antidote, glide one into torpid slumbers instead of rousing one with a burning brand, I settled down with a notebook and a pencil to make what I could of Mary Carmichael's first novel, *Life's Adventure*.

To begin with, I ran my eye up and down the page. I am going to get the hang of her sentences first, I said, before I load my memory with blue eyes and brown and the relationship that there may be between Chloe and Roger. There will be time for that when I have decided whether she has a pen in her hand or a pickaxe. So I tried a sentence or two on my tongue. Soon it was obvious that something was not quite in order. The smooth gliding of sentence after sentence was interrupted. Something tore, something scratched; a single word here and there flashed its torch in my eyes. She was "unhanding" herself as they say in the old plays. She is like a person striking a match that will not light, I thought. But why, I asked her as if she were present, are Jane Austen's sentences not of the right shape for you? Must they all be scrapped because Emma and Mr. Woodhouse are dead? Alas, I sighed, that it should be so. For while Jane Austen breaks from melody to melody as Mozart from song to

song, to read this writing was like being out at sea in an open boat. Up one went, down one sank. This terseness, this short-windedness, might mean that she was afraid of something; afraid of being called "sentimental" perhaps; or she remembers that women's writing has been called flowery and so provides a superfluity of thorns; but until I have read a scene with some care, I cannot be sure whether she is being herself or some one else. At any rate, she does not lower one's vitality, I thought, reading more carefully. But she is heaping up too many facts. She will not be able to use half of them in a book of this size. (It was about half the length of *Jane Eyre*.) However, by some means or other she succeeded in getting us all—Roger, Chloe, Olivia, Tony and Mr. Bigham—in a canoe up the river. Wait a moment, I said, leaning back in my chair, I must consider the whole thing more carefully before I go any further.

I am almost sure, I said to myself, that Mary Carmichael is playing a trick on us. For I feel as one feels on a switchback railway when the car, instead of sinking, as one has been led to expect, swerves up again. Mary is tampering with the expected sequence. First she broke the sentence; now she has broken the sequence. Very well, she has every right to do both these things if she does them not for the sake of breaking, but for the sake of creating. Which of the two it is I cannot be sure until she has faced herself with a situation. I will give her every liberty, I said, to choose what that situation shall be; she shall make it of tin cans and old kettles if she likes; but she must convince me that she believes it to be a situation; and then when she has made it she must face it. She must jump. And, determined to do my duty by her as reader if she would do her duty by me as writer, I turned the page and read . . . I am sorry to break off so abruptly. Are there no men present? Do you promise me that behind that red curtain over there the figure of Sir Chartres Biron is not concealed? We are all women, you assure me? Then I may tell you that the very next words I read were these—"Chloe liked Olivia . . ." Do not start. Do not blush. Let us admit in the privacy of our own society that these things sometimes happen. Sometimes women do like women.

"Chloe liked Olivia," I read. And then it struck me how immense a change was there. Chloe liked Olivia perhaps for the first time in literature. Cleopatra did not like Octavia. And how completely *Antony and Cleopatra* would have been altered had she done so! As it is, I thought, letting my mind, I am afraid, wander a little from *Life's Adventure*, the whole thing is simplified, conventionalised, if one dared say it, absurdly. Cleopatra's only feeling about Octavia is one of jealousy. Is she taller than I am? How does she do her hair? The play, perhaps, required no more. But how interesting it would have been if the relationship between the two women had been more complicated. All these relationships between women, I thought, rapidly recalling the splendid gallery of fictitious women, are too simple. So much has been left out, unattempted. And I tried to remember any case in the course of my reading where two women are represented as friends. There is an attempt at it in *Diana of the Crossways*. They are confidantes, of course, in Racine and the Greek tragedies. They are now and then mothers and daughters. But almost without exception they are shown in their relation to men. It was strange to think that all the great women of fiction were, until Jane Austen's day, not only seen by the other sex, but seen only in relation to the other sex. And how small a part of a woman's life is that: and how little can a man know even of that when he observes it through the black or rosy spectacles which sex puts upon his nose. Hence, perhaps, the peculiar nature of woman in fiction; the astonishing extremes of her beauty and horror; her alternations between heavenly goodness and hellish depravity—for so a lover would see her as his love rose or sank, was prosperous or unhappy. This is not so true of the nineteenth-century novelists, of course. Woman becomes much more various and complicated there. Indeed it was the desire to write about women perhaps that led men by degrees to abandon the poetic drama which, with its violence, could make so little use of them, and to devise the novel as a more fitting receptacle. Even so it remains obvious, even in the writing of Proust, that a man is terribly hampered and partial in his knowledge of women, as a woman in her knowledge of men.

Also, I continued, looking down at the page again, it is becoming evident that women, like men, have other interests besides the perennial interests of domesticity. "Chloe liked Olivia. They shared a laboratory together. . . ." I read on and discovered that these two young women were engaged in mincing liver, which is, it seems, a cure for pernicious anaemia: although one of them was married and had—I think I am right in stating—two small children. Now all that, of course, has had to be left out, and thus the splendid portrait of the fictitious woman is much too simple and much too monotonous. Suppose, for instance, that men were only represented in literature as the lovers of women, and were never the friends of men, soldiers, thinkers, dreamers; how few parts in the plays of Shakespeare could be allotted to them; how literature would suffer! We might perhaps have most of Othello; and a good deal of Antony; but no Caesar, no Brutus, no Hamlet, no Lear, no Jaques—literature would be incredibly impoverished, as indeed literature is impoverished beyond our counting by the doors that have been shut upon women. Married against their will, kept in one room, and to one occupation, how could a dramatist give a full or interesting or truthful account of them? Love was the only possible interpreter. The poet was forced to be passionate or bitter, unless indeed he chose to "hate women," which meant more often than not that he was unattractive to them.

Now if Chloe likes Olivia and they share a laboratory, which of itself will make their friendship more varied and lasting because it will be less personal; if Mary Carmichael knows how to write, and I was beginning to enjoy some quality in her style; if she has a room to herself, of which I am not quite sure; if she has five hundred a year of her own—but that remains to be proved—then I think that something of great importance has happened.

For if Chloe likes Olivia and Mary Carmichael knows how to express it she will light a torch in that vast chamber where nobody has yet been. It is all half lights and profound shadows like those serpentine caves where one goes with a candle peering up and down, not knowing where one is stepping. And I began to read the book again, and read how Chloe watched Olivia put a

jar on a shelf and say how it was time to go home to her children. That is a sight that has never been seen since the world began, I exclaimed. And I watched too, very curiously. For I wanted to see how Mary Carmichael set to work to catch those unrecorded gestures, those unsaid or half-said words, which form themselves, no more palpably than the shadows of moths on the ceiling, when women are alone, unlit by the capricious and coloured light of the other sex. She will need to hold her breath, I said, reading on, if she is to do it; for women are so suspicious of any interest that has not some obvious motive behind it, so terribly accustomed to concealment and suppression, that they are off at the flicker of an eye turned observingly in their direction. The only way for you to do it, I thought, addressing Mary Carmichael as if she were there, would be to talk of something else, looking steadily out of the window, and thus note, not with a pencil in a notebook, but in the shortest of shorthand, in words that are hardly syllabled yet, what happens when Olivia—this organism that has been under the shadow of the rock these million years—feels the light fall on it, and sees coming her way a piece of strange food—knowledge, adventure, art. And she reaches out for it, I thought, again raising my eyes from the page, and has to devise some entirely new combination of her resources, so highly developed for other purposes, so as to absorb the new into the old without disturbing the infinitely intricate and elaborate balance of the whole.

But, alas, I had done what I had determined not to do; I had slipped unthinkingly into praise of my own sex. “Highly developed”—“infinitely intricate”—such are undeniably terms of praise, and to praise one’s own sex is always suspect, often silly; moreover, in this case, how could one justify it? One could not go to the map and say Columbus discovered America and Columbus was a woman; or take an apple and remark, Newton discovered the laws of gravitation and Newton was a woman; or look into the sky and say aeroplanes are flying overhead and aeroplanes were invented by women. There is no mark on the wall to measure the precise height of women. There are no yard measures, neatly divided into the fractions of an inch, that one can lay against the qualities of a good mother or the devotion of

a daughter, or the fidelity of a sister, or the capacity of a housekeeper. Few women even now have been graded at the universities; the great trials of the professions, army and navy, trade, politics and diplomacy have hardly tested them. They remain even at this moment almost unclassified. But if I want to know all that a human being can tell me about Sir Hawley Butts, for instance, I have only to open Burke or Debrett and I shall find that he took such and such a degree; owns a hall; has an heir; was Secretary to a Board; represented Great Britain in Canada; and has received a certain number of degrees, offices, medals and other distinctions by which his merits are stamped upon him indelibly. Only Providence can know more about Sir Hawley Butts than that.

When, therefore, I say “highly developed,” “infinitely intricate,” of women, I am unable to verify my words either in Whitaker, Debrett or the University Calendar. In this predicament what can I do? And I looked at the bookcase again. There were the biographies: Johnson and Goethe and Carlyle and Sterne and Cowper and Shelley and Voltaire and Browning and many others. And I began thinking of all those great men who have for one reason or another admired, sought out, lived with, confided in, made love to, written of, trusted in, and shown what can only be described as some need of and dependence upon certain persons of the opposite sex. That all these relationships were absolutely Platonic I would not affirm, and Sir William Joynson Hicks would probably deny. But we should wrong these illustrious men very greatly if we insisted that they got nothing from these alliances but comfort, flattery and the pleasures of the body. What they got, it is obvious, was something that their own sex was unable to supply; and it would not be rash, perhaps, to define it further, without quoting the doubtless rhapsodical words of the poets, as some stimulus, some renewal of creative power which is in the gift only of the opposite sex to bestow. He would open the door of drawing-room or nursery, I thought, and find her among her children perhaps, or with a piece of embroidery on her knee—at any rate, the centre of some different order and system of life, and the contrast between this world and his own, which might be the law courts or the House

of Commons, would at once refresh and invigorate; and there would follow, even in the simplest talk, such a natural difference of opinion that the dried ideas in him would be fertilised anew; and the sight of her creating in a different medium from his own would so quicken his creative power that insensibly his sterile mind would begin to plot again, and he would find the phrase or the scene which was lacking when he put on his hat to visit her. Every Johnson has his Thrale, and holds fast to her for some such reasons as these, and when the Thrale marries her Italian music master Johnson goes half mad with rage and disgust, not merely that he will miss his pleasant evening at Streatham, but that the light of his life will be "as if gone out."

And without being Dr. Johnson or Goethe or Carlyle or Voltaire, one may feel, though very differently from these great men, the nature of this intricacy and the power of this highly developed creative faculty among women. One goes into the room—but the resources of the English language would be much put to the stretch, and whole flights of words would need to wing their way illegitimately into existence before a woman could say what happens when she goes into a room. The rooms differ so completely; they are calm or thunderous; open on to the sea, or, on the contrary, give on to a prison yard; are hung with washing; or alive with opals and silks; are hard as horsehair or soft as feathers—one has only to go into any room in any street for the whole of that extremely complex force of femininity to fly in one's face. How should it be otherwise? For women have sat indoors all these millions of years, so that by this time the very walls are permeated by their creative force, which has, indeed, so overcharged the capacity of bricks and mortar that it must needs harness itself to pens and brushes and business and politics. But this creative power differs greatly from the creative power of men. And one must conclude that it would be a thousand pities if it were hindered or wasted, for it was won by centuries of the most drastic discipline, and there is nothing to take its place. It would be a thousand pities if women wrote like men, or lived like men, or looked like men, for if two sexes are quite inadequate, considering the vastness and variety of the world,

how should we manage with one only? Ought not education to bring out and fortify the differences rather than the similarities? For we have too much likeness as it is, and if an explorer should come back and bring word of other sexes looking through the branches of other trees at other skies, nothing would be of greater service to humanity; and we should have the immense pleasure into the bargain of watching Professor X rush for his measuring-rods to prove himself "superior."

Mary Carmichael, I thought, still hovering at a little distance above the page, will have her work cut out for her merely as an observer. I am afraid indeed that she will be tempted to become, what I think the less interesting branch of the species—the naturalist-novelist, and not the contemplative. There are so many new facts for her to observe. She will not need to limit herself any longer to the respectable houses of the upper middle classes. She will go without kindness or condescension, but in the spirit of fellowship into those small, scented rooms where sit the courtesan, the harlot and the lady with the pug dog. There they still sit in the rough and ready-made clothes that the male writer has had perforce to clap upon their shoulders. But Mary Carmichael will have out her scissors and fit them close to every hollow and angle. It will be a curious sight, when it comes, to see these women as they are, but we must wait a little, for Mary Carmichael will still be encumbered with that self-consciousness in the presence of "sin" which is the legacy of our sexual barbarity. She will still wear the shoddy old fetters of class on her feet.

However, the majority of women are neither harlots nor courtesans; nor do they sit clasping pug dogs to dusty velvet all through the summer afternoon. But what do they do then? and there came to my mind's eye one of those long streets somewhere south of the river whose infinite rows are innumerable populated. With the eye of the imagination I saw a very ancient lady crossing the street on the arm of a middle-aged woman, her daughter, perhaps, both so respectably booted and furred that their dressing in the afternoon must be a ritual, and the clothes themselves put away in cupboards with camphor, year after year, throughout the summer months. They cross the road when the lamps are being lit (for the dusk is

their favourite hour), as they must have done year after year. The elder is close on eighty; but if one asked her what her life has meant to her, she would say that she remembered the streets lit for the battle of Balaclava, or had heard the guns fire in Hyde Park for the birth of King Edward the Seventh. And if one asked her, longing to pin down the moment with date and season, but what were you doing on the fifth of April 1868, or the second of November 1875, she would look vague and say that she could remember nothing. For all the dinners are cooked; the plates and cups washed; the children set to school and gone out into the world. Nothing remains of it all. All has vanished. No biography or history has a word to say about it. And the novels, without meaning to, inevitably lie.

All these infinitely obscure lives remain to be recorded, I said, addressing Mary Carmichael as if she were present; and went on in thought through the streets of London feeling in imagination the pressure of dumbness, the accumulation of unrecorded life, whether from the women at the street corners with their arms akimbo, and the rings embedded in their fat swollen fingers, talking with a gesticulation like the swing of Shakespeare's words; or from the violet-sellers and match-sellers and old crones stationed under doorways; or from drifting girls whose faces, like waves in sun and cloud, signal the coming of men and women and the flickering lights of shop windows. All that you will have to explore, I said to Mary Carmichael, holding your torch firm in your hand. Above all, you must illumine your own soul with its profundities and its shallows, and its vanities and its generousities, and say what your beauty means to you or your plainness, and what is your relation to the everchanging and turning world of gloves and shoes and stuffs swaying up and down among the faint scents that come through chemists' bottles down arcades of dress material over a floor of pseudomarle. For in imagination I had gone into a shop; it was laid with black and white paving; it was hung, astonishingly beautifully, with coloured ribbons. Mary Carmichael might well have a look at that in passing, I thought, for it is a sight that would lend itself to the pen as fittingly as any snowy peak or rocky gorge in the Andes. And there is the girl

behind the counter too—I would as soon have her true history as the hundred and fiftieth life of Napoleon or seventieth study of Keats and his use of Miltonic inversion which old Professor Z and his like are now inditing. And then I went on very warily, on the very tips of my toes (so cowardly am I, so afraid of the lash that was once almost laid on my own shoulders), to murmur that she should also learn to laugh, without bitterness, at the vanities—say rather at the peculiarities, for it is a less offensive word—of the other sex. For there is a spot the size of a shilling at the back of the head which one can never see for oneself. It is one of the good offices that sex can discharge for sex—to describe that spot the size of a shilling at the back of the head. Think how much women have profited by the comments of Juvenal; by the criticism of Strindberg. Think with what humanity and brilliancy men, from the earliest ages, have pointed out to women that dark place at the back of the head! And if Mary were very brave and very honest, she would go behind the other sex and tell us what she found there. A true picture of man as a whole can never be painted until a woman has described that spot the size of a shilling. Mr. Woodhouse and Mr. Casaubon are spots of that size and nature. Not of course that any one in their senses would counsel her to hold up to scorn and ridicule of set purpose—literature shows the futility of what is written in that spirit. Be truthful, one would say, and the result is bound to be amazingly interesting. Comedy is bound to be enriched. New facts are bound to be discovered.

However, it was high time to lower my eyes to the page again. It would be better, instead of speculating what Mary Carmichael might write and should write, to see what in fact Mary Carmichael did write. So I began to read again. I remembered that I had certain grievances against her. She had broken up Jane Austen's sentence, and thus given me no chance of pluming myself upon my impeccable taste, my fastidious ear. For it was useless to say, "Yes, yes, this is very nice; but Jane Austen wrote much better than you do," when I had to admit that there was no point of likeness between them. Then she had gone further and broken the sequence—the expected order. Perhaps she had done this unconsciously,

merely giving things their natural order, as a woman would, if she wrote like a woman. But the effect was somehow baffling; one could not see a wave heaping itself, a crisis coming round the next corner. Therefore I could not plume myself either upon the depths of my feelings and my profound knowledge of the human heart. For whenever I was about to feel the usual things in the usual places, about love, about death, the annoying creature twitched me away, as if the important point were just a little further on. And thus she made it impossible for me to roll out my sonorous phrases about "elemental feelings," the "common stuff of humanity," "depths of the human heart," and all those other phrases which support us in our belief that, however clever we may be on top, we are very serious, very profound and very humane underneath. She made me feel, on the contrary, that instead of being serious and profound and humane, one might be—and the thought was far less seductive—merely lazy minded and conventional into the bargain.

But I read on, and noted certain other facts. She was no "genius"—that was evident. She had nothing like the love of Nature, the fiery imagination, the wild poetry, the brilliant wit, the brooding wisdom of her great predecessors, Lady Winchilsea, Charlotte Brontë, Emily Brontë, Jane Austen and George Eliot; she could not write with the melody and the dignity of Dorothy Osborne—indeed she was no more than a clever girl whose books will no doubt be pulped by the publishers in ten years' time. But, nevertheless, she had certain advantages which women of far greater gift lacked even half a century ago. Men were no longer to her "the opposing faction"; she need not waste her time railing against them; she need not climb on to the roof and ruin her peace of mind longing for travel, experience and a knowledge of the world and character that were denied her. Fear and hatred were almost gone, or traces of them showed only in a slight exaggeration of the joy of freedom, a tendency to the caustic and satirical, rather than to the romantic, in her treatment of the other sex. Then there could be no doubt that as a novelist she enjoyed some natural advantages of a high order. She had a sensibility that was very wide, eager and free. It responded to an almost imperceptible touch on it.

It feasted like a plant newly stood in the air on every sight and sound that came its way. It ranged, too, very subtly and curiously, among almost unknown or unrecorded things; it lighted on small things and showed that perhaps they were not small after all. It brought buried things to light and made one wonder what need there had been to bury them. Awkward though she was and without the unconscious bearing of long descent which makes the least turn of the pen of a Thackeray or a Lamb delightful to the ear, she had—I began to think—mastered the first great lesson; she wrote as a woman, but as a woman who has forgotten that she is a woman, so that her pages were full of that curious sexual quality which comes only when sex is unconscious of itself.

All this was to the good. But no abundance of sensation or fineness of perception would avail unless she could build up out of the fleeting and the personal the lasting edifice which remains unthrown. I had said that I would wait until she faced herself with "a situation." And I meant by that until she proved by summoning, beckoning and getting together that she was not a skimmer of surfaces merely, but had looked beneath into the depths. Now is the time, she would say to herself at a certain moment, when without doing anything violent I can show the meaning of all this. And she would begin—how unmistakable that quickening is!—beckoning and summoning, and there would rise up in memory, half forgotten, perhaps quite trivial things in other chapters dropped by the way. And she would make their presence felt while some one sewed or smoked a pipe as naturally as possible, and one would feel, as she went on writing, as if one had gone to the top of the world and seen it laid out, very majestically, beneath.

At any rate, she was making the attempt. And as I watched her lengthening out for the test, I saw, but hoped that she did not see, the bishops and the deans, the doctors and the professors, the patriarchs and the pedagogues all at her shouting warning and advice. You can't do this and you shau't do that! Fellows and scholars only allowed on the grass! Ladies not admitted without a letter of introduction! Aspiring and graceful female novelists this way! So they kept at her like the crowd at a fence on the race-course, and it was

her trial to take her fence without looking to right or left. If you stop to curse you are lost, I said to her; equally, if you stop to laugh. Hesitate or fumble and you are done for. Think only of the jump, I implored her, as if I had put the whole of my money on her back; and she went over it like a bird. But there was a fence beyond that and a fence beyond that. Whether she had the staying power I was doubtful, for the clapping and the crying were fraying to the nerves. But she did her best. Considering that Mary Carmichael was no genius, but an unknown girl writing her first novel in a bed-sitting-room, without enough of

those desirable things, time, money and idleness, she did not do so badly, I thought.

Give her another hundred years, I concluded, reading the last chapter—people's noses and bare shoulders showed naked against a starry sky, for some one had twitched the curtain in the drawing-room—give her a room of her own and five hundred a year, let her speak her mind and leave out half that she now puts in, and she will write a better book one of these days. She will be a poet, I said, putting *Life's Adventure*, by Mary Carmichael, at the end of the shelf, in another hundred years' time.

I. A. Richards

1893–1979

Ivor Armstrong Richards was born in England and educated at Magdalen College, Cambridge. He studied philosophy under G. E. Moore, whose powerful influence extended as well to Bertrand Russell and many of the analytic philosophers of Russell's generation. At Magdalen, Richards met fellow student C. K. Ogden, with whom he would coauthor two books and, in later years, develop the "Basic English" project, through which Richards hoped to improve international understanding. After completing his undergraduate degree in 1915, Richards pursued medical studies with the intention of becoming a psychoanalyst. Tuberculosis kept him out of the First World War, although it did not prevent him from becoming an avid mountain climber. After the war, Richards dropped his medical studies and passed up an opportunity to become a professional mountaineer in order to become a lecturer in English and moral philosophy at Magdalen, his old college. He soon became a leading figure in the development of modern literary criticism. No field of study seemed foreign to him, and his many books and articles are marked by his continuing enthusiasm for psychology, linguistics, anthropology, information theory, and philosophy.

In *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (1936), Richards defines rhetoric in two ways: as "how words work in discourse" and as "the study of misunderstanding and its remedies." These definitions summarize two distinctive features of Richards's work: first, his theory that the meaning of words is a function of their interpretation in context and, second, his mission to promote better understanding by criticizing impediments to understanding and by creating tools for effective communication.

Richards's idea that meaning is a function of interpretation takes shape in *The Meaning of Meaning* (1923; excerpted here). In this wide-ranging and much-admired book, Richards and coauthor C. K. Ogden explain that words are symbols or signs, and signs require interpretation: "Throughout almost all our life we are treating things as signs. All experience, using the word in its widest possible sense, is either enjoyed or interpreted (i.e., treated as a sign) or both, and very little of it escapes some degree of interpretation."¹ Meaning does not reside in the words or signs themselves; to believe that it does is to fall victim to the "proper meaning superstition," the belief that words have inherent meaning. Following a model derived from pioneering semiotician C. S. Peirce, Ogden and Richards propose that signs refer to a mental image (the *reference*) that itself stands for something in the world (the *referent*). The "reference" of a sign is by no means a unique thing. The interpreter understands the sign in *context*, which may be the surrounding verbal context, in the case of words; the experiences associated with the sign; or both. That these concepts are so familiar to us today may well owe something to Richards's boldness in combining ideas from psychology, philosophy, linguistics, anthropology, and literary criticism in this early work.

¹I. A. Richards and C. K. Ogden, *The Meaning of Meaning* (1923; 8th ed., New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1946), p. 50.

Ogden and Richards go on to discuss the relationships among signs, thoughts, and things (some of this discussion is included in our excerpt). They review the state of research in what we now call semiotics, summarizing and comparing the ideas of Peirce, Ferdinand de Saussure, Edmund Husserl, and others. They set forth a behavioristic theory of interpretation-in-context—an extension of association psychology—in which a cluster of ideas rather than a single image serves as the “reference” of a word (an idea Richards repeats in Lecture II of *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*; excerpted here). In addition, they compare the many different meanings of meaning in popular, literary, and philosophical usage, and they print a striking essay by anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowsky, “The Problem of Meaning in Primitive Languages,” that illustrates the usefulness of the theory put forward by Ogden and Richards. Meaning is rhetorical, they conclude, because language is “an instrument for the *promotion of purposes*” and not simply “a means of *symbolizing references*.”²

For Richards, as for Kenneth Burke (p. 1295), literature is a privileged form of language in that it provides cases of compressed meanings clearly in need of interpretation. The methods developed in the laboratory of criticism can then (so the argument goes) be applied to life. In applying his theories to literature, Richards creates a new kind of criticism. Poetry, Richards says in *The Principles of Literary Criticism* (1924), is like other experiences and, like them, should be analyzed as a kind of sign. Poems are complex verbal environments in which words are highly dependent on context for meaning and effect. Criticism, then, is a description of this environment, its structure, and its effects.

In *Practical Criticism* (1929), Richards reports on an experiment in which he asked students to interpret poems stripped of all “external” information, such as the author’s name and the date of composition. Richards analyzes the students’ responses, searching for impediments to the understanding of the poems. He then classifies these impediments and proffers possible remedies. His approach soon became the dominant critical method in England and the United States, challenging historicism and influence mongering with a rigorous method of close reading. By limiting context to the immediate verbal structure, Richards can focus on a reader’s experience of the poem itself and diminish the importance of historical and biographical knowledge.

But there is a difficulty here. It is clear from Richards’s own analyses of the poems that he knows perfectly well the name of the author and the historical circumstances of composition and, moreover, that he (unlike most of the students) has access to another kind of context as well: the expert’s special knowledge about what may and may not be said about a poem. The context of Richards’s experience is the “correct” context—namely, the experience of reading and studying many poems. Richards classifies as impediments to understanding those associations which come from experiences in other realms (“mnemonic irrelevances” or “doctrinal adhesions”) or from misapprehensions about what poetry is (“critical preconceptions” or “stock responses”). Thus, his psychology is like Bacon’s in that it searches for the

²See p. 1277 in this book.

idols that turn our thoughts into the “wrong” channels. Meaning may thus be dependent on context, but some contexts, it seems, are more appropriate than others.

The problem of defining context appears again in *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*. Richards lucidly explains the need for a contextual theory of meaning to combat the “proper meaning superstition”—the belief that words have inherent meaning. The notion of context, which he equates with rhetoric’s attention to the effects of discourse on the audience, will become the foundation of a new rhetoric. Richards then repeats the definition of context as the set of associations clinging to a word through experience. Finally, he moves on to the “literary” sense of context, which he calls “the interanimation of words.” Of the several definitions of context he has offered, this last is the one he seems to prefer. In communication generally, as in literature, meaning depends on the immediate verbal environment, not on dictionary definitions of words. The paradigmatic case of the interanimation of words, for Richards, is metaphor. Richards, though less insistent than Nietzsche, offers “the principle of metaphor” as a model of all language. The “tenor” and the “vehicle”—the two things compared in a metaphor—mutually limit the range of interpretation. In understanding a metaphor, we do not simply apply the characteristics of the vehicle to the tenor, as might be supposed. Rather, we understand the one by the other: For example, with “My love is like a red, red rose,” we take only certain characteristics of the vehicle (the beauty of the rose, not its thorns) because of the nature of the tenor (my love). All discourse, Richards argues, works this way. We understand the meaning and connotations of a word or phrase by what surrounds it, while the surroundings are modified by the word or phrase.

In his later work, Richards continues to refine the definition of context. In *Interpretation in Teaching* (1938), he separates literary context from experiential context and observes that both are essential to understanding. And in a 1953 essay, “Toward a Theory of Comprehending” (in *Speculative Instruments*), he proposes a seven-part analysis of context based on the Shannon-Weaver model of communication. “A comprehending,” says Richards, “is an instance of a nexus established through past occurrences of partially similar utterances in partially similar situations—utterances and situations partially co-varying.”³ Richards continued to work on this model of context for many years, never satisfied that it identified all the necessary elements or their interactions in producing meaning.

The essay on comprehending was inspired, Richards says, by thoughts about translating Chinese into English. Translating and teaching languages are expressions of his attempts to apply his theories practically, to reduce misunderstanding in the world. This mission led him to create “Basic English,” a vocabulary of 850 words (later supplemented by audiovisual aids) that could be used to teach English as a second language and to make difficult texts more accessible. Richards spent three years at Harvard in the thirties working on this project, studied cartooning at the Disney studios as part of his search for effective visual aids, and traveled to China twice to study translation. He translated the *Iliad* into Basic English and pro-

³I. A. Richards, *Speculative Instruments* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955), pp. 23–24.

duced, with Christine Gibson, a series of texts and workbooks designed to teach not only Basic English but also Basic French, Spanish, Italian, Russian, and Hebrew. These projects, which dominated the last decades of Richards's life, met with little acceptance; indeed, they were viewed with dismay by those literary critics who looked for his return to the field in which he had had such tremendous influence.

Selected Bibliography

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The only full-scale biography is John Paul Russo's *I. A. Richards: His Life and Work* (1989). Russo traces the development of Richards's theories and places them in historical and biographical context. Russo's annotated bibliography of Richards's works appears in *I. A. Richards: Essays in His Honor*, ed. Reuben Brower, John Hollander, and Helen Vendler (1973), which includes reminiscences by Richards's students and an interesting interview with Richards himself. A good bibliography of criticism of Richards is in Jerome P. Schiller's *I. A. Richards' Theory of Literature* (1969).

Ann E. Berthoff discusses Richards's ideas with teachers of rhetoric in mind, in her essay "I. A. Richards," in *Traditions of Inquiry*, ed. John Brereton (1985). Sonja Foss, Karen Foss, and Robert Trapp summarize Richards's work in their *Contemporary Perspectives on Rhetoric* (1985). Several earlier articles assess Richards's influence at the height of his career and his impact on rhetorical theory: Manuel Bilsky's "I. A. Richards' Theory of Metaphor" (*Modern Philology* 50 [November 1952]: 130–37) and Marie Hochmuth Nichols's "I. A. Richards and the 'New Rhetoric'" (*Quarterly Journal of Speech* 44 [February 1958]: 1–16), both reprinted in *Contemporary Theories of Rhetoric*, ed. R. L. Johannesen (1971), and Daniel Fogarty's "I. A. Richards' Theory" in *Roots for a New Rhetoric* (1959). Stanley Edgar Hyman gives a lucid account of Richards's critical method in *The Armed Vision: A Study in the Methods of Modern Literary Criticism* (1948).

I. A. Richards and C. K. Ogden

From *The Meaning of Meaning*

Throughout the Western world it is agreed that people must meet frequently, and that it is not only agreeable to talk, but that it is a matter of common courtesy to say something even when there is hardly anything to say. "Every civilized man," continues the late Professor Mahaffy, to whose *Principles of the Art of Conversation* we

owe this observation, "feels, or ought to feel, this duty; it is the universal accomplishment which all must practise"; those who fail are punished by the dislike or neglect of society.

There is no doubt an Art in saying something when there is nothing to be said, but it is equally certain that there is an Art no less important of

saying clearly what one wishes to say when there is an abundance of material; and conversation will seldom attain even the level of an intellectual pastime if adequate methods of Interpretation are not also available.

Symbolism is the study of the part played in human affairs by language and symbols of all kinds, and especially of their influence on Thought. It singles out for special inquiry the ways in which symbols help us and hinder us in reflecting on things.

Symbols direct and organize, record and communicate. In stating what they direct and organize, record and communicate we have to distinguish as always between Thoughts and Things.¹ It is Thought (or, as we shall usually say, *reference*) which is directed and organized, and it is also Thought which is recorded and communicated. But just as we say that the gardener mows the lawn when we know that it is the lawnmower which actually does the cutting, so, though we know that the direct relation of symbols is with thought, we also say that symbols record events and communicate facts.

By leaving out essential elements in the language situation we easily raise problems and difficulties which vanish when the whole transaction is considered in greater detail. Words, as every one now knows, “mean” nothing by themselves, although the belief that they did, as we shall see in the next chapter, was once equally universal. It is only when a thinker makes use of them that they stand for anything, or, in one sense, have “meaning.” They are instruments. But besides this referential use which for all re-

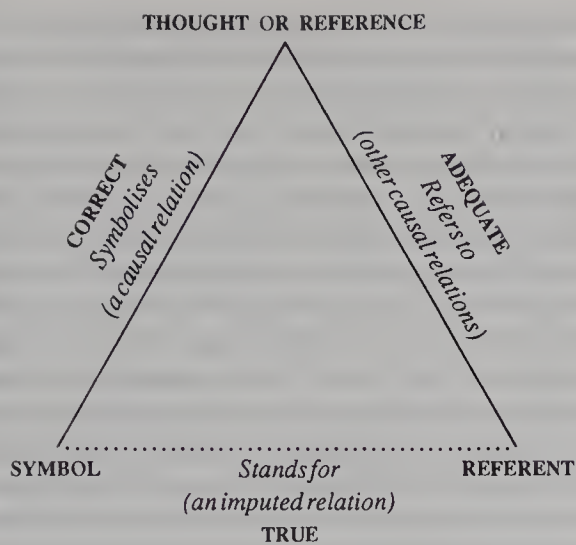
¹The word “thing” is unsuitable for the analysis here undertaken, because in popular usage it is restricted to material substances—a fact which has led philosophers to favour the terms “entity,” “ens” or “object” as the general name for whatever is. It has seemed desirable, therefore, to introduce a technical term to stand for whatever we may be thinking of or referring to. “Object,” though this is its original use, has had an unfortunate history. The word “referent,” therefore, has been adopted, though its etymological form is open to question when considered in relation to other participial derivatives, such as agent or reagent. But even in Latin the present participle occasionally (e.g., *vehens* in equo) admitted of variation in use; and in English an analogy with substantives, such as “reagent,” “extent,” and “incident” may be urged. Thus the fact that “referent” in what follows stands for a thing and not an active person, should cause no confusion. [Au.]

flective, intellectual use of language should be paramount, words have other functions which may be grouped together as emotive. These can best be examined when the framework of the problem of strict statement and intellectual communication has been set up. The importance of the emotive aspects of language is not thereby minimized, and anyone chiefly concerned with popular or primitive speech might well be led to reverse this order of approach. Many difficulties, indeed, arising through the behaviour of words in discussion, even amongst scientists, force us at an early stage to take into account these “non-symbolic” influences. But for the analysis of the senses of “meaning” with which we are here chiefly concerned, it is desirable to begin with the relations of thoughts, words, and things as they are found in cases of reflective speech uncomplicated by emotional, diplomatic, or other disturbances; and with regard to these, the indirectness of the relations between words and things is the feature which first deserves attention.

This may be simply illustrated by a diagram, in which the three factors involved whenever any statement is made, or understood, are placed at the corners of the triangle, the relations which hold between them being represented by the sides. The point just made can be restated by saying that in this respect the base of the triangle is quite different in composition from either of the other sides.

Between a thought and a symbol causal relations hold. When we speak, the symbolism we employ is caused partly by the reference we are making and partly by social and psychological factors—the purpose for which we are making the reference, the proposed effect of our symbols on other persons, and our own attitude. When we hear what is said, the symbols both cause us to perform an act of reference and to assume an attitude which will, according to circumstances, be more or less similar to the act and the attitude of the speaker.

Between the Thought and the Referent there is also a relation; more or less direct (as when we think about or attend to a coloured surface we see), or indirect (as when we “think of” or “refer to” Napoleon), in which case there may be a very long



chain of sign situations intervening between the act and its referent: word—historian—contemporary record—eyewitness—referent (Napoleon).

Between the symbol and the referent there is no relevant relation other than the indirect one, which consists in its being used by someone to stand for a referent. Symbol and Referent, that is to say, are not connected directly (and when, for grammatical reasons, we imply such a relation, it will merely be an imputed, as opposed to a real, relation) but only indirectly round the two sides of the triangle.²

²An exceptional case occurs when the symbol used is more or less directly like the referent for which it is used, as for instance, it may be when it is an onomatopœic word, or an image, or a gesture, or a drawing. In this case the triangle is completed; its base is supplied, and a great simplification of the problem involved appears to result. For this reason many attempts have been made to reduce the normal language situation to this possibly more primitive form. Its greater completeness does no doubt account for the immense superiority in efficiency of gesture languages, within their appropriate field, to other languages not supportable by gesture within their fields. Hence we know far more perfectly what has occurred if a scene is well reenacted than if it be merely described. But in the normal situation we have to recognize that our triangle is without its base, that between Symbol and Referent no direct relation holds; and, further, that it is through this lack that most of the problems of language arise. Simulative and nonsimulative languages are entirely distinct in principle. Standing for and representing are different relations. It is, however, convenient to speak at times as though there were some direct relation holding between Symbol and Referent. We then say, on the analogy of the lawnmower, that a Symbol refers to a Referent. Provided that the telescopic na-

It may appear unnecessary to insist that there is no direct connection between say “dog,” the word, and certain common objects in our streets, and that the only connection which holds is that which consists in our using the word when we refer to the animal. We shall find, however, that the kind of simplification typified by this once universal theory of direct meaning relations between words and things is the source of almost all the difficulties which thought encounters. As will appear at a later stage, the power to confuse and obstruct, which such simplifications possess, is largely due to the conditions of communication. Language if it is to be used must be a *ready* instrument. The handiness and ease of a phrase is always more important in deciding whether it will be extensively used than its accuracy. Thus such shorthand as the word “means” is constantly used so as to imply a direct simple relation between words and things, phrases and situations. If such relations could be admitted then there would of course be no problem as to the nature of Meaning, and the vast majority of those who have been concerned with it would have been right in their refusal to discuss it. But too many interesting developments have been occurring in the sciences, through the rejection of everyday symbolizations and the endeavour to replace them by more accurate accounts, for any naive theory that “meaning” is just “meaning” to be popular at the moment. As a rule new facts in startling disagreement with accepted explanations of other facts are required before such critical analyses of what are generally regarded as simple satisfactory notions are undertaken. This has been the case with the recent revolutions in physics. But in addition great reluctance to postulate anything *sui generis* and of necessity undetectable³ was needed before the simple natural notion of simultaneity, for instance, as a two-termed relation came to be questioned. Yet to such questionings the theory of Relativity was

ture of the phrase is not forgotten, confusion need not arise. In Supplement I., Part V. *infra*, Dr. Malinowski gives a valuable account of the development of the speech situation in relation to the above diagram. [Au.]

³Places and instants are very typical entities of verbal origin. [Au.]

due. The same two motives, new discrepant facts, and distaste for the use of obscure kinds of entities in eking out explanations, have led to disturbances in psychology, though here the required restatements have not yet been provided. No Copernican revolution has yet occurred, although several are due if psychology is to be brought into line with its fellow sciences.

It is noteworthy, however, that recent stirrings in psychology have been mainly if not altogether concerned with feeling and volition. The popular success of Psychoanalysis has tended to divert attention from the older problem of thinking. Yet in so far as progress here has consequences for all the other sciences and for the whole technique of investigation in psychology itself, this central problem of knowing or of "meaning" is perhaps better worth scrutiny and more likely to promote fresh orientations than any other that can be suggested. As the Behaviorists have also very properly pointed out, this question is closely connected with the use of words.

But the approach to Meaning, far more than the approach to such problems as those of physics, requires a thorough-going investigation of language. Every great advance in physics has been at the expense of some generally accepted piece of metaphysical explanation which had enshrined itself in a convenient, universally practised, symbolic shorthand. But the confusion and obstruction due to such shorthand expressions and to the naive theories they protect and keep alive, is greater in psychology, and especially in the theory of knowledge, than elsewhere; because no problem is so infected with so-called metaphysical difficulties—due here, as always, to an approach to a question through symbols without an initial investigation of their functions.

We have now to consider more closely what the causes and effects of symbols are.⁴ Whatever

⁴Whether symbols in some form or other are necessary to thought itself is a difficult problem, and is discussed in *The Meaning of Psychology* (Chapter XIII.) as well as in Chapter X. of the present work. But certainly the recording and the communication of thought (telepathy apart) require symbols. It seems that thought, so far as it is transitive and not in the form of an internal dialogue, can dispense with symbols, and that they only appear when thought takes on this monologue form. In the normal case the actual development of thought is

may be the services, other than conservative and retentive, of symbolization, all experience shows that there are also disservices. The grosser forms of verbal confusion have long been recognized; but less attention has been paid to those that are more subtle and more frequent. In the following chapters many examples of these will be given, chosen in great part from philosophical fields, for it is here that such confusions become, with the passage of time, most apparent. The root of the trouble will be traced to the superstition that words are in some way parts of things or always imply things corresponding to them, historical instances of this still potent instinctive belief being given from many sources. The fundamental and most prolific fallacy is, in other words, that the base of the triangle given above is filled in.

The completeness of any reference varies; it is more or less close and clear, it "grasps" its object in greater or less degree. Such symbolization as accompanies it—images of all sorts, words, sentences whole and in pieces—is in no very close observable connection with the variation in the perfection of the reference. Since, then, in any discussion we cannot immediately settle from the nature of a person's remarks what his opinion is, we need some technique to keep the parties to an argument in contact and to clear up misunderstandings—or, in other words, a Theory of Definition. Such a technique can only be provided by a theory of knowing, or of reference, which will avoid, as current theories do not, the attribution to the knower of powers which it may be pleasant for him to suppose himself to possess, but which are not open to the only kind of investigation hitherto profitably pursued, the kind generally known as scientific investigation.

Normally, whenever we hear anything said we spring spontaneously to an immediate conclusion, namely, that the speaker is referring to what we should be referring to were we speaking the words ourselves. In some cases this interpretation may be correct; this will prove to be what he has referred to. But in most discussions which attempt greater subtleties than could be handled in

very closely bound up with the symbolization which accompanies it. [Au.]

a gesture language this will not be so. To suppose otherwise is to neglect our subsidiary gesture languages, whose accuracy within their own limited provinces is far higher than that yet reached by any system of spoken or written symbols, with the exception of the quite special and peculiar case of mathematical, scientific, and musical notations. Words, whenever they cannot directly ally themselves with and support themselves upon gestures, are at present a very imperfect means of communication. Even for private thinking thought is often ready to advance, and only held back by the treachery of its natural symbolism; and for conversational purposes the latitude acquired constantly shows itself to all those who make any serious attempts to compare opinions.

We have not here in view the more familiar ways in which words may be used to deceive. In a later chapter, when the function of language as an instrument for the *promotion of purposes* rather than as a means of *symbolizing references* is fully discussed, we shall see how the intention of the speaker may complicate the situation. But the *honnête homme* may be unprepared for the lengths to which verbal ingenuity can be carried. At all times these possibilities have been exploited to the full by interpreters of Holy Writ who desire to enjoy the best of both worlds. Here, for example, is a specimen of the exegetic of the late Dr. Lyman Abbott, pastor, publicist, and editor, which, through the efforts of Mr. Upton Sinclair, has now become classic. Does Christianity condemn the methods of twentieth-century finance? Doubtless there are some awkward words in the Gospels, but a little "interpretation" is all that is necessary.

Jesus did not say "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth." He said "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth *where moth and rust doth corrupt and where thieves break through and steal.*" And no sensible American does. Moth and rust do not get at Mr. Rockefeller's oil wells, and thieves do not often break through and steal a railway. What Jesus condemned was hoarding wealth.

Each investment, therefore, every worldly acquisition, according to one of the leading divines of the New World, may be judged on its merits. There is no hard and fast rule. When moth and

rust have been eliminated by science the Christian investor will presumably have no problem, but in the meantime it would seem that Camphorated Oil fulfils most nearly the synoptic requirements. Burglars are not partial to it; it is anathema to moth; and the risk of rust is completely obviated.

Another variety of verbal ingenuity closely allied to this, is the deliberate use of symbols to misdirect the listener. Apologies for such a practice in the case of the madman from whom we desire to conceal the whereabouts of his razor are well known, but a wider justification has also been attempted. In the Christian era we hear of "falsifications of documents, inventions of legends, and forgeries of every description which made the Catholic Church a veritable seat of lying."⁵ A play upon words in which one sense is taken by the speaker and another sense intended by him for the hearer was permitted.⁶ Indeed, three sorts of equivocations were distinguished by Alfonso de Liguori, who was beatified in the nineteenth century, which might be used with good reason;⁷ a good reason being "any honest object, such as keeping our goods, spiritual or temporal."⁸ In the twentieth century the intensification of militant nationalism has added further "good reason"; for the military code includes all transactions with hostile nations or individuals as part of the process of keeping spiritual and temporal goods. In wartime words become a normal part of the mechanism of deceit, and the ethics of the situation have been aptly summed up by Lord Wolseley: "We will keep hammering along with the conviction that 'honesty is the best policy,' and that truth always wins in the long run. These pretty sentences do well for a child's copybook, but the man who acts upon them in war had better sheathe his sword for ever."⁹

⁵Westermarck, *The Origin and Development of Moral Ideas*, Vol. II., p. 100. [Au.]

⁶Alagona, *Compendium Manualis* D. Navarri XII., 88, p. 94. [Au.]

⁷Alfonso di Liguori, *Theologia Moralis*, III., 151, Vol. I., p. 249. [Au.]

⁸Meyrick, *Moral and Devotional Theology of the Church of Rome*, Vol. I., p. 3. Cf. further Westermarck, *loc. cit.* [Au.]

⁹*Soldier's Pocket Book for Field Service*, p. 69. [Au.]

The Greeks, as we shall see, were in many ways not far from the attitude of primitive man towards words. And it is not surprising to read that after the Peloponnesian war the verbal machinery of peace had got completely out of gear, and, says Thucydides, could not be brought back into use—"The meaning of words had no longer the same relation to things, but was changed by men as they thought proper." The Greeks were powerless to cope with such a situation. We in our wisdom seem to have created institutions which render us more powerless still.¹⁰

On a less gigantic scale the technique of deliberate misdirection can profitably be studied with a view to corrective measures. In accounting for Newman's *Grammar of Assent* Dr. E. A. Abbott had occasion to describe the process of "lubrication," the art of greasing the descent from the premises to the conclusion, which his namesake cited above so aptly employs. In order to lubricate well, various qualifications are necessary:

First a nice discrimination of words, enabling you to form, easily and naturally, a great number of finely graduated propositions, shading away, as it were, from the assertion "X is white" to the assertion "X is black." Secondly an inward and absolute contempt for logic and for words. . . . And what are words but toys and sweetmeats for grown-up babies who call themselves men?¹¹

But even where the actual referents are not in doubt, it is perhaps hardly realized how widespread is the habit of using the power of words not only for *bona fide* communications, but also as a method of misdirection; and in the world as

¹⁰As the late C. E. Montague (*Disenchantment*, p. 101) well put it, "the only new thing about deception in war is modern man's more perfect means for its practice. The thing has become, in his hand, a trumpet more efficacious than Gideon's own. . . . To match the Lewis gun with which he now fires his solids, he has to his hand the newspaper Press, to let fly at the enemy's head the thing which is not." But this was a temporary use of the modern technique of misdirection, and with the return of peace the habit is lost? Not so, says Mr. Montague. "Any weapon you use in a war leaves some bill to be settled in peace, and the Propaganda arm has its cost like another." The return of the exploiters of the verbal machine to their civil posts is a return in triumph, and its effects will be felt for many years in all countries where the power of the word amongst the masses remains paramount. [Au.]

¹¹*Philomythus*, p. 214. [Au.]

it is today the naive interpreter is likely on many occasions to be seriously misled if the existence of this unpleasing trait—equally prevalent amongst the classes and the masses without distinction of race, creed, sex, or colour—is overlooked.

Throughout this work, however, we are treating of *bona fide* communication only, except in so far as we shall find it necessary in Chapter IX. to discuss that derivate use of Meaning to which misdirection gives rise. For the rest, the verbal treachery with which we are concerned is only that involved by the use of symbols as such. As we proceed to examine the conditions of communication we shall see why any symbolic apparatus which is in general use is liable to incompleteness and defect.

But if our linguistic outfit is treacherous, it nevertheless is indispensable, nor would another complete outfit necessarily improve matters, even if it were ten times as complete. It is not always new words that are needed, but a means of controlling them as symbols, a means of readily discovering to what in the world on any occasion they are used to refer, and this is what an adequate theory of definition should provide.

But a theory of Definition must follow, not precede, a theory of Signs, and it is little realized how large a place is taken both in abstract thought and in practical affairs by sign-situations. But if an account of sign-situations is to be scientific it must take its observations from the most suitable instances, and must not derive its general principles from an exceptional case. The person actually interpreting a sign is not well placed for observing what is happening. We should develop our theory of signs from observations of other people, and only admit evidence drawn from introspection when we know how to appraise it. The adoption of the other method, on the ground that all our knowledge of others is inferred from knowledge of our own states, can only lead to the *impasse* of solipsism from which modern speculation has yet to recoil. Those who allow beyond question that there are people like themselves also interpreting signs and open to study should not find it difficult to admit that their observation of the behaviour of others may provide at least a framework within which their own introspection,

that special and deceptive case, may be fitted. That this is the practice of all the sciences need hardly be pointed out. Any sensible doctor when stricken by disease distrusts his own introspective diagnosis and calls in a colleague.

There are, indeed, good reasons why what is happening in ourselves should be partially hidden from us, and we are generally better judges of what other people are doing than of what we are doing ourselves. Before we looked carefully into other people's heads it was commonly believed that an entity called the soul resided therein, just as children commonly believe that there is a little man inside the skull who looks out at the eyes, the windows of the soul, and listens at the ears. The child has the strongest introspective evidence for this belief, which, but for scalpels and microscopes, it would be difficult to disturb. The tacitly solipsistic presumption that this naive approach is in some way a necessity of method disqualifies the majority of philosophical and psychological discussions of Interpretation. If we restrict the subject-matter of the inquiry to "ideas" and words, i.e., to the left side of our triangle, and omit all frank recognition of the world outside us, we inevitably introduce confusion on such subjects as knowledge in perception, verification, and Meaning itself.¹²

If we stand in the neighbourhood of a cross road and observe a pedestrian confronted by a notice *To Grantchester* displayed on a post, we commonly distinguish three important factors in the situation. There is, we are sure, (1) a Sign which (2) refers to a Place and (3) is being interpreted by a person. All situations in which Signs are considered are similar to this. A doctor noting that his patient has a temperature and so forth is said to diagnose his disease as influenza. If we talk like this we do not make it clear that signs are here also involved. Even when we speak of symptoms we often do not think of these as closely related to other groups of signs. But if we

¹²This tendency is particularly noticeable in such works as Baldwin's elaborate treatise on *Thoughts and Things*, where a psychological apparatus of "controls" and "contents" is hard to reconcile with the subsequent claim to discuss communication. The twist given to grammatical analysis by Aristotle's similar neglect of Reference is dealt with in Appendix A. [Au.]

say that the doctor interprets the temperature, etc., as a Sign of influenza, we are at any rate on the way to an inquiry as to whether there is anything in common between the manner in which the pedestrian treated the object at the cross road and that in which the doctor treated his thermometer and the flushed countenance.

On close examination it will be found that very many situations which we do not ordinarily regard as Sign situations are essentially of the same nature. The chemist dips litmus paper in his test-tube, and interprets the sign red or the sign blue as meaning acid or base. A Hebrew prophet notes a small black cloud, and remarks "We shall have rain." Lessing scrutinizes the Laocoön, and concludes that the features of Laocoön *père* are in repose. A New Zealand schoolgirl looks at certain letters on a page in her *Historical Manual for the use of Lower Grades* and knows that Queen Anne is dead.

The method which recognizes the common feature of sign interpretation¹³ has its dangers, but opens the way to a fresh treatment of many widely different topics.

As an instance of an occasion in which the theory of signs is of special use, the subject dealt

¹³In all these cases a sign has been interpreted rightly or wrongly, i.e., something has been not only experienced or enjoyed, but understood as referring to something else. Anything which can be experienced can also be thus understood, i.e., can also be a sign; and it is important to remember that interpretation, or what happens to (or in the mind of) an Interpreter is quite distinct both from the sign and from that for which the sign stands or to which it refers. If then we speak of the meaning of a sign we must not, as philosophers, psychologists and logicians are wont to do, confuse the (imputed) relation between a sign and that to which it refers, either with the referent (what is referred to) or with the process of interpretation (the "goings on" in the mind of the interpreter). It is this sort of confusion which has made so much previous work on the subject of signs and their meaning unfruitful. In particular, by using the same term "meaning" both for the "Goings on" inside their heads (the images, associations, etc., which enabled them to interpret signs) and for the Referents (the things to which the signs refer) philosophers have been forced to locate Grantchester, Influenza, Queen Anne, and indeed the whole Universe equally inside their heads—or, if alarmed by the prospect of cerebral congestion, at least "in their minds" in such wise that all these objects become conveniently "mental." Great care, therefore, is required in the use of the term "meaning," since its associations are dangerous. [Au.]

with in our fourth chapter may be cited. If we realize that in *all* perception, as distinguished from mere awareness, sign-situations are involved, we shall have a new method of approaching problems where a verbal deadlock seems to have arisen. Whenever we “perceive” what we name “a chair,” we are interpreting a certain group of data (modifications of the sense organs), and treating them as signs of a referent. Similarly, even before the interpretation of a word, there is the almost automatic interpretation of a group of successive noises or letters as a word. And in addition to the external world we can also explore with a new technique the sign situations involved by mental events, the “goings on” or processes of interpretation themselves. We need neither confine ourselves to arbitrary generalizations from introspection after the manner of classical psychology, nor deny the existence of images and other “mental” occurrences to their signs with the extreme Behaviorists.¹⁴ The double language hypothesis, which is suggested by the theory of signs and supported by linguistic analysis, would absolve Dr. Watson and his followers from the logical necessity of affecting general anæsthesia. Images, etc., are often most useful signs of our present and future behaviour—notably in the modern interpretation of dreams.¹⁵ An improved

¹⁴That the mind-body problem is due to a duplication of symbolic machinery is maintained in Chapter IV. Cf. also *The Meaning of Psychology*, by C. K. Ogden (1926), Chapter II., where this view is supported with reference to contemporary authorities who hold it. [Au.]

¹⁵In the terminology of the present work, many of the analyst’s “symbols” are, of course, signs only; they are not used

Behaviorism will have much to say concerning the chaotic attempts at symbolic interpretation and construction by which Psychoanalysts discredit their valuable labours.

The problems which arise in connection with any “sign situation” are of the same general form. The relations between the elements concerned are no doubt different, but they are of the same sort. A thorough classification of these problems in one field, such as the field of symbols, may be expected, therefore, to throw light upon analogous problems in fields at first sight of a very different order.

When we consider the various kinds of Sign situations instanced above, we find that those signs which men use to communicate one with another and as instruments of thought, occupy a peculiar place. It is convenient to group these under a distinctive name; and for words, arrangements of words, images, gestures, and such representations as drawings or mimetic sounds we use the term *symbols*. The influence of Symbols upon human life and thought in numberless unexpected ways has never been fully recognized, and to this chapter of history we now proceed.

for purposes of communication. But in the literature of psychoanalysis there is much valuable insistence on the need of wider forms of interpretation, especially in relation to emotional overcharge. Cf., e.g., the late Dr. Jelliffe’s “The Symbol as an Energy Condenser” (*Journal of Nervous and Mental Diseases*, December 1919), though the metaphor, like many other psychoanalytic locutions, must not be stretched too far in view of what has been said above and of what is to follow. [Au.]

I. A. Richards

From *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*

LECTURE II THE AIMS OF DISCOURSE AND TYPES OF CONTEXT

In my introductory lecture I urged that there is room for a persistent, systematic, detailed inquiry into how words work that will take the place of the discredited subject which goes by the name of Rhetoric. I went on to argue that this inquiry must be philosophic, or—if you hesitate with that word, I do myself—that it must take charge of the criticism of its own assumptions and not accept them, more than it can help, ready-made from other studies. How words mean, is not a question to which we can safely accept an answer either as an inheritance from common sense, that curious growth, or as something vouched for by another science, by psychology, say—since other sciences use words themselves and not least delusively when they address themselves to these questions. The result is that a revived Rhetoric, or study of verbal understanding and misunderstanding, must itself undertake its own inquiry into the modes of meaning—not only, as with the old Rhetoric, on a macroscopic scale, discussing the effects of different disposals of large parts of a discourse—but also on a microscopic scale by using theorems about the structure of the fundamental conjectural units of meaning and the conditions through which they, and their interconnections, arise.

In the old Rhetoric, of course, there is much that a new Rhetoric finds useful—and much besides which may be advantageous until man changes his nature, debates and disputes, incites, tricks, bullies, and cajoles his fellows less. Aristotle's notes on the forensic treatment of evidence elicited under torture are unhappily not without their utility still in some very up-to-date parts of the world.

Among the general themes of the old Rhetoric there is one which is especially pertinent to our

inquiry. The old Rhetoric was an offspring of dispute; it developed as the rationale of pleadings and persuadings; it was the theory of the battle of words and has always been itself dominated by the combative impulse. Perhaps what it has most to teach us is the narrowing and blinding influence of that preoccupation, that debaters' interest.

Persuasion is only one among the aims of discourse. It poaches on the others—especially on that of *exposition*, which is concerned to state a view, not to persuade people to agree or to do anything more than examine it. The review and correspondence columns of the learned and scientific journals are the places in which to watch this poaching at its liveliest. It is no bad preparation for any attempt at exposition—above all of such debatable and contentious matters as those to which I am soon to turn—to realize how easily the combative impulse can put us in mental blinkers and make us take another man's words in the ways in which we can down him with least trouble.

I can point this moral—call it defensive if you will—with a small specimen from one of the many little books which in the Nineteenth Century attempted a reform of Rhetoric. It is from Benjamin Humphrey Smart's *Practical Logic*, a little book written for and used for a few decades in the best young ladies' seminaries through the middle of the Nineteenth Century and now as dead as any book well can be. Smart is discussing the conduct of exposition. He has listed a number of faults commonly committed and comes to the

TENTH FAULT TO BE AVOIDED, namely: *Forgetting the Proposition*.

“Of this error,” he writes, “the following instance may suffice:

Anger has been called a short madness; and people of the weakest understanding are the most subject to it. It is remarkable that when a disputant is in the

wrong, he tries to make up in violence what he wants in argument. This arises from his pride. He will not own his error, and because he is determined not to be convicted of it, he falls into a passion.

Here (Smart comments), instead of going on to show why Anger has been called a short madness, the writer wanders into reflections which have no necessary connection with the particular proposition. He should have reasoned thus:

Anger has been called a short madness. To be convinced that the appellation is just, let us look to the effects of anger. It disturbs a man's judgment, so that he inflicts an injury on his dearest friend, who, the next moment, he loads with caresses. It makes him run headlong into dangers, which, if his mind were clear, he would be the first to see and avoid. It is true that anger does not always disturb the mind to this degree, but that it always disturbs the mind in a degree proportional to its violence, is certain; and therefore it may be justly characterised as a madness.

What necessary connection with the proposition, may we ask, has this sketch of some scenes from an early Victorian Novel? And whence comes this certainty that anger *always* disturbs the mind in a degree proportional to its violence? However, it is better perhaps to take its lesson to heart and remember that anger is not the only warping passion. Risibility and tedium, too, I think Smart would have said, can disturb the judgment.

Warned now of the dangers both of forgetting the proposition and of the "short madness" that the combative and other passions induce, let me sketch, to use Hobbes's words, a theorem about meanings which may be useful in constructing the most general problems of a new Rhetoric.

I had better put in another warning, though, here. What follows is unavoidably abstract and general in the extreme. It may therefore rather illustrate the difficulties of communicating with such highly abstract language than achieve as much communication as we would wish. If so the fault will not lie, I hope and believe, either in my stupidity or in our joint stupidity. It will lie in the abstractness of the language. It has to be abstract here. What it is trying to say cannot, I think, be

put safely in more concrete terms, for it is not talking about this or that mode of meaning but about all meanings. And I cannot here start with illustrations, because all things equally illustrate what I am saying; and how they are to be taken is just the problem. But, after this bout of abstractions, the applications I shall be making in the later Lectures will, I believe, clear up this dark patch. In brief, how we use this theorem best shows us what the theorem is.

If, then, you seem in the next half hour at times merely to be hearing words as sounds that come and go, I must beg your indulgence, or buy it with the promise that we *shall* come out again to practical problems in the everyday conduct of words. Meanwhile this very difficulty is an illustration of a chief practical problem.

What I am now going to try to say is something which, if it is right, we all in a sense know extremely well already. "It is not sufficiently considered," said Dr. Johnson, "that men more frequently require to be reminded than informed." I shall be trying to remind you of something so simple that it is hard to think of. Something as simple as possible, and, to quote Hobbes again, "clear and perspicuous to all men—save only to those who studying the hard writings of the metaphysicians, which they believe to be some egregious learning, think they understand not when they do." And it may be comforting to recall that Lotze¹ began a course of lectures on an allied subject by saying that "The simplest of the conceptions here employed, that of a thing and that of its being, however lucid they appear at first, on closer consideration grow always more and more obscure." For "always" I would say "for a time." We return to lucidity. But now to work.

I have two sets of problems in view: one set I have just been talking about—the division of the various aims of discourse, the purposes for which we speak or write; in brief, the functions of language. The other set of problems goes deeper, and, if we can set it rightly, the problems about the language functions are best approached from it. I can indicate these deeper problems in many

¹Rudolf Herman Lotze (1817–1881), German idealist philosopher. [Ed.]

ways: What is the connection between the mind and the world by which events in the mind mean other events in the world? Or “How does a thought come to be ‘of’ whatever it is that it is a thought of?” or “What is the relation between a thing and its name?” The last indication may not seem to carry as far as the others; but they are all the same problem and I put the “name” formulation in because an over-simple view of naming, or rather a treatment of words in general as though they were names (usually of ideas) has been a main defect in the traditional study. These are, you will see, really deep problems. As such we shall not expect any answers which will be satisfactory. We must be content if the answers we get are to some degree useful—useful among other things in improving themselves.

I can start the theorem safely by remarking that we are things peculiarly responsive to other things. To develop this we have to consider the peculiarities of our responsiveness. We are responsive in all sorts of ways. Some of these ways are relatively simple, if cut short enough; as when we jump at a loud noise or respond to changes of temperature. But even here, if we compare ourselves to thermometers, we see that our responses are of a different order of complexity. A thermometer responds, the length of its thread of mercury varies with the temperature, but only with the present temperature—unless the thermometer is a bad one. What has happened to it in the past, what temperatures it formerly recorded, and the order in which it recorded them, all that has no bearing upon and does not interfere with its present response to changes of temperature. We can imagine, though, a thermometer that, whenever the temperature went up and down like this, *M*, did something that could only be explained by bringing in other things that happened to it in the past when the temperature went up and down so, *M*. And correspondingly did something else whenever the temperature went down and up, *W*. Such an imaginary thermometer would be on the way to showing characteristics of the behavior of living systems, of the systems which, we say, have a mind.

Now consider our own minds’ simplest operations. Do we ever respond to a stimulus in a way

which is not influenced by the other things that happened to us when more or less similar stimuli struck us in the past? Probably never. A new kind of stimulus might perhaps give rise to a new kind of sensation, a new kind of pain, say. But even so we should probably recognize it as a pain of some sort. Effects from more or less similar happenings in the past would come in to give our response its character and this as far as it went would be meaning. Meaning of a lowly kind, no doubt, the kind of meaning that the least developed animals live by. It is important—and that is why I have started so far back with these elementaries—to realize how far back into the past all our meanings go, how they grow out of one another much as an organism grows, and how inseparable they are from one another.

I can make the same point by denying that we have any sensations. That sounds drastic but is almost certainly true if rightly understood. A sensation would be something that just was *so*, on its own, a datum; as such we have none. Instead we have perceptions, responses whose character comes to them from the past as well as the present occasion. A perception is never just of an *it*; perception takes whatever it perceives as a thing of a certain sort. All thinking from the lowest to the highest—whatever else it may be—is sorting.

That is an important part of the theorem because it removes, if it is accepted, one of the worst troubles which have distorted traditional accounts of the meanings of words—the troubles that gave rise to the Nominalist, Realist, Conceptual controversies best known to us through the great British philosophical battle of the Eighteenth Century about whether we have and how we come by abstract ideas and what they are.² This theorem alleges that meanings, from the very beginning, have a primordial generality and abstractness; and it follows William James in saying that the lowliest organism—a polyp or an amoeba—if it learns at all from its past, if it exclaims in its acts, “Hallo! Thingembob again!” thereby shows itself to be a conceptual thinker. It

²Realism holds that general qualities do exist; Conceptualism holds that generalizations are mental concepts; Nominalism holds that only words are general. [Ed.]

is behaving or thinking with a concept—not, of course, *of* one. Its act is abstractive and general; disregards in some respects the former situations and so is abstractive, and applies in some respects not to one single thing but to any of a sort and so is general.

The theorem settles the Eighteenth-Century problem by standing it on its head. That problem was, How do we manage, from this particular concrete thing and that particular concrete thing and the other particular concrete thing, to arrive at the general abstract anything? The theorem holds that we *begin* with the general abstract anything, split it, as the world makes us, into sorts and then arrive at concrete particulars by the overlapping or common membership of these sorts. This bit of paper here now in my hand is a concrete particular to us so far as we think of it as paperish, hereish, nowish, and in my hand; it is the more concrete as we take it as of more sorts, and the more specific as the sorts are narrower and more exclusive.

The next step in the theorem takes us on to words and their meanings. If we sum up thus far by saying that meaning is *delegated efficacy*, that description applies above all to the meaning of words, whose virtue is to be substitutes exerting the powers of what is not there. They do this as other signs do it, though in more complex fashions, through their contexts.

I must explain now the rather special and technical sense I am giving to this word “context.” This is the pivotal point of the whole theorem. The word has a familiar sense in “a literary context,” as the other words before and after a given word which determine how it is to be interpreted. This is easily extended to cover the rest of the book. I recall the painful shock I suffered when I first came across, in a book by Dr. Bosanquet, what he called the Golden Rule of Scholarship, “Never to quote or comment on anything in a book which you have not read from cover to cover.” As with other Golden Rules a strange peace would fall upon the world if that were observed. I cannot honestly say I either practice the Rule or recommend it. There is a middle way wiser for the Children of this World. However, as I neither am nor hope to be a scholar, I have no occasion to practise it.

The familiar sense of “context” can be extended further to include the circumstances under which anything was written or said; wider still to include, for a word in Shakespeare, say, the other known uses of the word about that time, wider still finally to include anything whatever about the period, or about anything else which is relevant to our interpretation of it. The technical use I am going to make of this term “context” is none of these—though it has something in common with them as having to do with the governing conditions of an interpretation. We can get to it best, perhaps, by considering those recurrences in nature which statements of causal laws are about.

Put very simply, a causal law may be taken as saying that, under certain conditions, of two events if one happens the other does. We usually call the first the cause and the second the effect, but the two may happen together, as when I clap my hands and both palms tingle. If we are talking about final causes we reverse them, and the lecture you are going to hear was the cause of your coming hither. There is a good deal of arbitrariness at several points here which comes from the different purposes for which we need causal laws. We decide, to suit these purposes, how we shall divide up events; we make the existence of the earth one event and the tick of a clock another, and so on. And we distribute the titles of “cause” and “effect” as we please. Thus we do not please to say that night causes day or day night. We prefer to say that given the conditions the rotation of the earth is the cause of their succession. We are especially arbitrary in picking out the cause from among the whole group, or context, of conditions—of prior and subsequent events which hang together. Thus the coroner decides that the cause of a man’s death was the act of a murderer and not the man’s meeting with the murderer, or the stopping of his heart, or the fact that he was not wearing a bullet-proof waistcoat. That is because the coroner is interested in certain kinds of causal laws but not in others. So here, in sketching this causal theorem of meaning, I am interested only in certain kinds of law and am not necessarily saying anything about others.

Now for the sense of “context.” Most gener-

ally it is a name for a whole cluster of events that recur together—including the required conditions as well as whatever we may pick out as cause or effect. But the modes of causal recurrence on which meaning depends are peculiar through that delegated efficacy I have been talking about. In these contexts one item—typically a word—takes over the duties of parts which can then be omitted from the recurrence. There is thus an abridgement of the context only shown in the behavior of living things, and most extensively and drastically shown by man. When this abridgement happens, what the sign or word—the item with these delegated powers—means is the missing parts of the context.

If we ask how this abridgement happens, how a sign comes to stand for an absent cause and conditions, we come up against the limits of knowledge at once. No one knows. Physiological speculation has made very little progress towards explaining *that*, though enormous strides have been made this century in analysing the complexities of the conditioned reflex. The shift, the handing over, is left still as inexplicable. Probably this “learning problem” goes down as deep as the nature of life itself. We can suppose, if we like, that some sorts of residual effects are left behind from former occurrences which later cooperate with the sign in determining the response. To do so is to use a metaphor drawn from the gross behavior, taken macroscopically, of systems that are not living—printed things, gramophone records and such. We can be fairly ingenious with these metaphors, invent neural archives storing up impressions, or neural telephone exchanges with fantastic properties. But how the archives get consulted or how in the telephone system *A* gets on to the *B* it needs, instead of to the whole alphabet at once in a jumble, remain utterly mysterious matters.

Fortunately linguistics and the theory of meaning need not wait until this is remedied. They can probably go much further than we have yet imagined without any answer to this question. It is enough for our purposes to say that what a word means is the missing parts of the contexts from which it draws its delegated efficacy.

At this point I must remind you of what I said a few minutes ago about the primordial general-

ity and abstractness of meaning and about how, when we mean the simplest-seeming concrete object, its concreteness comes to it from the way in which we are bringing it simultaneously into a number of sorts. The sorts grow together in it to form that meaning. Theory here, as so often, can merely exploit the etymological hint given in the word “concrete.”

If we forget this and suppose that we start with discrete impressions of particulars (“fixities and definites” as Coleridge called them) and then build these up into congeries, the theorem I am recommending collapses at once into contradictions and absurdities. That was the fault of the old Hartleian Associationism I complained of last time.³ It did not go back far enough, it took particular impressions as its initial terms. But the initial terms for this theorem are not impressions; they are sortings, recognitions, laws of response, recurrences of like behaviors.

A particular impression is already a product of concrescence. Behind, or in it, there has been a coming together of *sortings*. When we take a number of particular impressions—of a number of different white things, say—and abstract from them an idea of whiteness, we are explicitly reversing a process which has already been implicitly at work in our perception of them as all white. Our risk is to confuse the abstractness we thus arrive at intellectually with the primordial abstractness out of which these impressions have already grown—before ever any conscious explicit reflection took place.

Things, in brief, are instances of laws. As Bradley⁴ said, association marries only universals, and out of these laws, these recurrent likenesses of behavior, in our minds and in the world—not out of revived duplicates of individual past impressions—the fabric of our meanings, which is the world, is composed.

So much for the theorem. What are the problems we must use it to construct?

³David Hartley (1705–1757) synthesized the precepts of association psychology, which holds that repeated sensations leave images in the mind, after which the sensation immediately excites the associated image. The same linkage extends from images to words. [Ed.]

⁴F. H. Bradley (1846–1924), English idealist philosopher. [Ed.]

Since the whole business of Rhetoric comes down to comparisons between the meanings of words, the first problem, I think, should be this. How, if the meaning of a word is, in this sense, the missing parts of its contexts, how then should we compare the meanings of two words? There is opportunity for a grand misunderstanding here. It is not proposed that we should try to make these comparisons by a process of discovering, detailing, and then comparing these missing parts. We could not do it and, if we could, it would be waste of time. The theorem does not pretend to give us quite new ways of distinguishing between meanings. It only bars out certain practices and assumptions which are common and misleading.

The office of the theorem is much more negative than positive; but is not the less useful for that. It will not perhaps tell us how to do much that we cannot do without it already; but it will prevent us from doing stupid things which we are fond of doing. So a theory of evolution at least makes it more difficult to believe that The Dog Fritz in the German account really did the children's sums for them, or reminded them to salute their "dear German flag." So even an elementary physics puts in its place among superstitions Mr. Gladstone's firm belief that snow has "a peculiar power of penetrating leather," a power not possessed by water! For lack of that knowledge of physics in Mr. Gladstone, Lord Rayleigh found it quite impossible to persuade him it was not so.

The context theorem of meaning would prevent our making hundreds of baseless and disabling assumptions that we commonly make about meanings, over-simplifications that create false problems interfering with closer comparisons—and that is its main service. In this, it belongs with a number of other theorems which may be called policeman doctrines—because they are designed on the model of an ideal police-force, not to make any of us do anything but to prevent other people from interfering unduly with our lawful activities. The organization of impulses doctrine of values for literary criticism is in the same position. These policeman doctrines keep assumptions that are out of place from frustrating and misleading sagacity. I shall be illustrating the restraint of these bullying as-

sumptions in most parts of Rhetoric later. We had one simple instance with Lord Kames's peacock's feather, last time, where what was discouraged was a naive view of imagery as the stuff of meaning.

We shall have others in discussing the claims of usage next week. Preëminently what the theorem would discourage, is our habit of behaving as though, if a passage means one thing it cannot at the same time mean another and an incompatible thing. Freud taught us that a dream may mean a dozen different things; he has persuaded us that some symbols are, as he says, "overdetermined" and mean many different selections from among their causes. This theorem goes further, and regards all discourse—outside the technicalities of science—as overdetermined, as having multiplicity of meaning. It can illustrate this view from almost any of the great controversies. And it offers us—by restraining the One and Only One True Meaning Superstition—a better hope, I believe, of profiting from the controversies. A controversy is normally an exploitation of a systematic set of misunderstandings for war-like purposes. This theorem suggests that the swords of dispute might be turned into plough shares; and a way found by which we may (to revert to Hobbes) "make use to our benefit of effects formerly seen—for the commodity of human life."

The next problem concerns what happens when we put words together in sentences. At least that is a common way of stating it. The theorem recommends us rather to turn the problem round and ask what happens when, out of the integral utterance which is the sentence, we try to isolate the discrete meanings of the words of which it is composed. That problem, the analysis of sentences and the interaction between words in the sentence, is my subject for next week. It is there that the most deep-rooted, systematic, and persistent misunderstandings arise.

A third set of problems concerns rivalries between different types of context which supply the meaning for a single utterance. These start with the plain equivocation—as when the word "reason" may mean either a cause or an argument. I am simplifying this here to make it a type of a really simple ambiguity. Actually in most occurrences it would be much more complex and not

so easily cleared up, as the shifting meanings of “cause” and “argument” themselves show. The context theorem of meaning will make us expect ambiguity to the widest extent and of the subtlest kinds nearly everywhere, and of course we find it. But where the old Rhetoric treated ambiguity as a fault in language, and hoped to confine or eliminate it, the new Rhetoric sees it as an inevitable consequence of the powers of language and as the indispensable means of most of our most important utterances—especially in Poetry and Religion. And that too I shall be illustrating later.

Of course ambiguities are a nuisance in exposition as, in spite of my efforts, you have certainly been feeling. But neutral exposition is a very special limited use of language, comparatively a late development to which we have not (outside some parts of the sciences) yet adapted it. This brings me to those large-scale rivalries between contexts which shift the very aims of discourse. When the passions—the combative passion and others—intervene, either in the formation of an utterance or in its interpretation, we have examples of context action just as much as when the word “paper,” say, takes its meaning from its contexts. The extra meaning that comes in when a sentence, in addition to making a statement, is meant to be insulting, or flattering, or is interpreted so—we may call it emotive meaning—is not so different from plain statement as we are apt to suppose. As the word means the missing part of its contexts and is a substitute for them, so the insulting intention may be the substitute for a kick,—the missing part of its context. The same general theorem covers all the modes of meaning.

I began tonight by speaking of the poaching of the other language functions on the preserve of pure exposition. Pure exposition has its guardian passions no doubt—though I do not know their names. But they are not often as strong as the poachers and are easily beguiled by them. It has been so necessary to us, especially since the physical basis of civilization became technical, to care at least sometimes for the truth only and keep the poachers sometimes out, that we have exaggerated enormously the extent of pure exposition. It is a relatively rare occurrence outside

the routine of train services and the tamer, more settled parts of the sciences. We have exaggerated our success for strategic reasons—some of them good, because encouraging, if we do not too much hoodwink ourselves. I have aimed at points tonight to be merely expository in my remarks, but I know better than to suppose I have succeeded. We shall find, preëminently in the subject of rhetoric, that interpretations and opinions about interpretations that are not primarily steps of partisan policy are excessively hard to arrive at. And thereby we rediscover that the world—so far from being a solid matter of fact—is rather a fabric of conventions, which for obscure reasons it has suited us in the past to manufacture and support. And that sometimes is a dismaying rediscovery which seems to unsettle our foundations.

Anyone who publishes a book with the word “Meaning” in its title becomes the recipient of a fan mail of peculiar character. In comes a dribble of letters ever after from people who are quite unmistakably lunatics. Indeed, it seems that the subject is a dangerous one. Intense preoccupation with the sources of our meanings is disturbing, increasing our sense that our beliefs are a veil and an artificial veil between ourselves and something that otherwise than through a veil we cannot know. Something of the same sort can happen in travel. Anyone who has visited a sufficiently strange country and come into close contact with its life knows how unsettling and disorienting is the recognition of the place of conventions in our mental world. And the effect is deeper as the contact is closer. Few men have come into closer and more active contact with an alien world than Colonel Lawrence and when, at the end of the Introduction to *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, he writes of the selves which converse in the void, he says, “Then madness was very near, as I believe it would be near the man who could see things through the veils at once of two customs, two educations, two environments.” He is writing of fatigue, and the page reeks of the extremities of war and of the desert—the desert which pushes man down to the limits of his endurance. The meditation of a single code of meanings is not so devastating, and I have seen already enough of Bryn Mawr to

realize that it bears no least resemblance to a desert.⁵ We may then continue undeterred by the implications of my fan mail.

The subject of the next lecture will be the Doctrine of Usage and the Interanimation of Words and, as the rest of the course will be literary rather than philosophical and will attempt rather to practise than to theorize, I may close here with some lines from George Chapman about the theoretic principles of Rhetoric, the conduct of interpretation and “impartial contention” and their proper relation to action. It comes in a poem entitled

To Young Imaginaries in Knowledge

This rather were the way, if thou wouldst be
A true proficient in philosophy
Dissemble what thou studiest until
By thy impartial contention
Thou provest thee fit to do as to profess
And if thou still profess it not, what less
Is thy philosophy if in thy deeds
Rather than signs and shadows, it proceeds.

I must apologize if in this Lecture I have departed from the spirit of his recommendation.

LECTURE III THE INTERANIMATION OF WORDS

I turn now to that other sense of “context”—the literary context—which I distinguished last time from the technical sense of “context,” as a recurrent group of events, that is convenient for the theorem of meaning. Let us consider some of the effects on words of their combination in sentences, and how their meaning depends upon the other words before and after them in the sentence. What happens when we try with a sentence to decide what single words in it mean?

The sentence, of course, as Aristotle taught, is the unit of discourse. We can hardly give too much importance here to the influence of our modern way of separating words in writing. In conversation we do not ordinarily separate them so—unless we are asking questions about words. With languages which have not been used in writing and thus subjected to a special kind of

⁵Bryn Mawr College, where these lectures were given in 1936. [Ed.]

grammatical analysis—it is worth recalling that grammar takes its name from writing—there is often very great uncertainty as to where one word ends and another begins. The written form gives words far more independence than they possess as units of sound in speech and we derive thence a habit of supposing that they have far more independence as regards their meanings than they usually have in either written or spoken discourse.

The mutual dependence of words varies evidently with the type of discourse. At one end of the scale, in the strict exposition of some highly criticized and settled science through technicalized and rigid speech, a large proportion of them are independent. They mean the same whatever other words they are put with; or if a word fluctuates, it moves only into a small number of stable positions, which can be recorded and are anchored to definitions. That is the ideal limit towards which we aim in exposition. Unfortunately we tend—increasingly since the Seventeenth Century—to take rigid discourse as the norm, and impose its standards upon the rest of speech. This is much as if we thought that water, for all its virtues, in canals, baths, and turbines, were really a weak form of ice. The other end of the scale is in poetry—in some forms of poetry rather. We know very much less about the behavior of words in these cases—when their virtue is to have no fixed and settled meaning separable from those of the other words they occur with. There are many more possibilities here than the theory of language has yet tried to think out. Often the whole utterance in which the co-operating meanings of the component words hang on one another is not itself stable in meaning. It utters not one meaning but a *movement* among meanings. Of course, even in the strictest prose we always have one thing that may be described as a movement of meaning. We have change as the sentence develops. In “The cat is on the mat” we begin with the cat and end with the mat. There is a progression of some sort in every explicit sentence. But in the strictest prose the meanings of the separate words theoretically stay put and thought passes from one to another of them. At the other end of the scale the whole meaning of the sentence shifts, and with it any

meanings we may try to ascribe to the individual words. In the extreme case it will go on moving as long as we bring fresh wits to study it. When Octavius Cæsar is gazing down at Cleopatra dead, he says,

She looks like sleep,
As she would catch another Antony
In her strong toil of grace.

“Her strong toil of grace.” Where, in terms of what entries in what possible dictionary, do the meanings here of *toil* and *grace* come to rest?

But my subject is Rhetoric rather than Poetics and I want to keep to prose which is not too far from the strict scientific or “rigid” end of this scale of dependent variabilities. In the kind of prose I am talking now, you have usually to wait till I have gone on a bit before you can decide how you will understand the opening parts of the sentences. If, instead, I were reading you the first few theorems of Euclid, that would not be so. You would understand, as soon as I said “a triangle,” what the word meant, and though what I went on to say might qualify the meaning (“having two sides equal”), it would not destroy or completely change the meaning that you had so far given to the word. But in most prose, and more than we ordinarily suppose, the opening words have to wait for those that follow to settle what they shall mean—if indeed that ever gets settled.

All this holds good not only as to the *sense* of the waiting words but as regards all the other functions of language which we can distinguish and set over against the mere sense. It holds for the *feeling* if any towards what I am talking about, for the *relation towards my audience* I want to establish or maintain with the remark, and for the *confidence* I have in the soundness of the remark—to mention three main sorts of these other language functions. In speech, of course, I have the aid of intonation for these purposes. But, as with the meanings of words, so with the intonation structure. The intonation of the opening words is likely to be ambiguous; it waits till the utterance is completed for its full interpretation.

In writing we have to replace intonation as far as we can. Most of the more recondite virtues of

prose style come from the skill with which the rival claims of these various language functions are reconciled and combined. And many of the rather mysterious terms that are usually employed in discussing these matters, *harmony*, *rhythm*, *grace*, *texture*, *smoothness*, *suppleness*, *impressiveness*, and so on are best taken up for analysis from this point of view. Or rather the passages which seem to exemplify these qualities (or fail to) are best examined with the multiplicity of the language functions in mind. For we can obviously do nothing with such words as these by themselves, in the blue. They may mean all sorts of different things in different literary contexts.

I have been leading up—or down, if you like—to an extremely simple and obvious but fundamental remark: that no word can be judged as to whether it is good or bad, correct or incorrect, beautiful or ugly, or anything else that matters to a writer, in isolation. That seems so evident that I am almost ashamed to say it, and yet it flies straight in the face of the only doctrine that for two hundred years has been officially inculcated—when any doctrine is inculcated in these matters. I mean the doctrine of Usage. The doctrine that there is a right or a good use for every word and that literary virtue consists in making that good use of it.

There are several bones that can be picked with that doctrine—as it has been expounded in many epochs and, in particular for us, from the middle of the Eighteenth Century onwards. It is the worst legacy we have from that, in other ways, happy Century. At its best it can be found in George Campbell’s *Philosophy of Rhetoric*—otherwise an excellent book in many respects. At its worst, or nearly its worst, the doctrine can be found in most of the Manuals of Rhetoric and Composition which have afflicted the schools—American schools especially. It asserts that “Good use is the general, present-day practice of the best writers.” One bone we could pick would be with that “best.” How are they the best writers except by using the words in the best ways? We settle that they *are* the best writers because we find them using their words successfully. We do not settle that theirs is the right, the “good usage” of the words because *they* use them so. Never

was there a crazier case of putting the cart before the horse. It is as though we were to maintain that apples are healthy because⁶ wise people eat them, instead of recognizing that it is the other way about—that it is what the food will do for us which makes us eat it, not the fact that we eat it which makes it good food.

But that is not the main bone I have to pick with the doctrine, which is that it blanks out and hides the interanimation between words. I had better cite you a sentence or two in evidence, or you may think I am inventing a ghost to exorcize. I will take them from a *Manual of Rhetoric* which carries the names of three authors: Messrs. Gardiner, Kittredge, and Arnold. And I choose this book because the regard which I have for Mr. Kittredge's name makes a doctrine which has that sanction seem the better worth refuting. The authors write: "Usage governs language. There is no other standard. By usage, however, is meant the practice of the best writers and speakers." (I have already asked what standard is supposed to settle which are the best.) They go on to consider "four great general principles of choice: *correctness*, *precision*, *appropriateness*, and *expressiveness*," which, they say, "within the limits of good usage and in every case controlled by it . . . should guide us in the choice of words." And this is what they say of correctness: "Correctness is the most elementary of all requirements. The meanings of words are settled by usage. If we use a word incorrectly—that is in a sense which does not customarily belong to it—our readers will miss our thought, or, at best, they must arrive at it by inference and guesswork."

Inference and guesswork! What else is interpretation? How, apart from inference and skilled guesswork, can we be supposed ever to understand a writer or speaker's thought? This is, I think, a fine case of poking the fire from the top. But I have still my main bit of evidence to give you. My authors say: "In studying the four great principles of choice, we observe that only the first (correctness) involves the question of right and wrong. The others deal with questions of dis-

⁶"Because" is offering to play one of its most troublesome tricks here, of course, in the shift from "cause" to "reason." [Au.]

crimination between better and worse—that is with the closer adaptation of words to the thoughts and feelings which we undertake to express. Further, it is only in dealing with the first principle (correctness) that we can keep our attention entirely on the single word."

There! that is the view I wished to illustrate. Let us not boggle about the oddities of its expression: "right and wrong," "better and worse"; or worry as to how by keeping "our attention entirely on a single word" we could settle anything at all about it—except perhaps about its spelling! The important point is that words are here supposed just sheerly to possess their sense, as men have their names in the reverse case, and to carry this meaning with them into sentences regardless of the neighbour words. That is the assumption I am attacking, because, if we follow up its practical consequences in writing and reading and trace its effects upon interpretation, we shall find among them no small proportion of the total of our verbal misunderstandings.

I am anxious not to seem to be illustrating this sort of misunderstanding myself here, unwittingly, in my interpretation of this passage. I know well enough that the authors probably had in mind such incorrectness as occurs when people say "ingenious" when they mean "ingenuous"; and I know that the Usage Doctrine can be interpreted in several ways which make it true and innocuous.

It can say and truly, for example, that we learn how to use words from responding to them and noting how other people use them. Just how we do so learn is a deep but explorable question. It can say equally truly, that a general conformity between users is a condition of communication. *That* no one would dream of disputing. But if we consider conformity we see that there are two kinds of conformity. Conformity in the general process of interpretation, and conformity in the specific products. We all know how the duller critics of the Eighteenth Century (the century that gave us the current Doctrine of Usage) the people Wordsworth was thinking of when he wrote his Preface, confused the poetic product with the poetic process and thought a poem good because it used poetic diction—the words that former good poets had used—and used them in the same

ways. The Usage Doctrine, in the noxious interpretation of it, is just that blunder in a more pervasive and more dangerous incidence. The noxious interpretation is the common one. Its evil is that it takes the senses of an author's words to be things we know before we read him, fixed factors with which he has to build up the meaning of his sentences as a mosaic is put together of discrete independent tesserae. Instead, they are resultants which we arrive at only through the interplay of the interpretative possibilities of the whole utterance. In brief, we have to guess them and we guess much better when we realize we are guessing, and watch out for indications, than when we think we know.⁷

There are as many morals for the writer as for the reader in all this, but I will keep to interpretation. A word or phrase when isolated momentarily from its controlling neighbours is free to develop irrelevant senses which may then beguile half the other words to follow it. And this is at least equally true with the language functions *other than sense*, with *feeling*, say. I will give you one example of an erratic interpretation of feeling, and if I take it from the same *Manual of Rhetoric* that is because it illustrates one of the things to which the mosaic view or habit of interpretation, as opposed to the organic, often leads.

The Authors give the following from Bacon's *Advancement of Learning*. And in re-reading it I will ask you to note how cunningly Bacon, in describing some misuses of learning, takes back with one hand what he seems to be offering with the other, indicating both why men do prefer misuses and why they should not do so.

But the greatest error of all the rest is the mistaking or misplacing of the last or furthest end of knowledge. For men have entered into a desire of learning and knowledge, sometimes upon a natural curiosity and inquisitive appetite; sometimes to entertain their minds with variety and delight; sometimes for ornament and reputation; and sometimes to enable them to victory of wit and contradiction; and most times for lucre and profession; and seldom sincerely to give a true account of their gift of reason, to the benefit and use of men: as if there were sought in knowledge a couch, whereupon to

rest a searching or restless spirit; or a terrace, for a wandering and variable mind to walk up and down with a fair prospect; or a tower of state, for a proud mind to raise itself upon; or a fort or commanding ground, for strife and contention; or a shop, for profit or sale; and not a rich storehouse, for the glory of the Creator and the relief of man's estate.

There is much to take to heart here—especially as to the couch aspect of the Usage Doctrine, and, I must admit, the tower and fort—but what the authors say about it is this:

Here the splendor of the imagery is no mere embellishment. Without it, Bacon could not have given adequate expression to his enthusiastic appreciation of learning and his fine scorn for the unworthy uses to which it is sometimes put. At the same time, the figures elevate the passage from the ordinary levels of prose to a noble eloquence. (p. 372)

What splendor is there in the imagery? These images have no splendor as Bacon uses them, but are severely efficient, a compact means for saying what he has to say. His "enthusiastic appreciation" (a poor phrase, I suggest, to smudge over him!) of the use of knowledge and his "fine scorn" of unworthy uses are given only if we refuse to be beguiled by the possibilities of splendor in the isolated images. Loose them even a little from their service, let their "splendor" act independently, and they begin at once to fight against his intention. For the terrace, the tower and the fort, if they were allowed to "elevate," would make the misplacings of the last and furthest end of knowledge seem much grander than "a true account of their gift of reason, to the benefit and use of men"—as a terrace or tower of state or a fort will seem grander than a mere rich storehouse.

Let me go on to some further types of the mutual control and interanimation between words. So far I have considered only the influence of words actually present in the passage, but we have to include words which are not actually being uttered and are only in the background. Take the case of what are variously called expressive, symbolic, or simulative words—words

⁷See the Note at the end of this Lecture. [Au.]

which “somehow illustrate the meaning more immediately than do ordinary speech forms,” to quote Leonard Bloomfield. Examples are *flip*, *flap*, *flop*, *flitter*, *flimmer*, *flicker*, *flutter*, *flash*, *flush*, *flare*, *glare*, *glitter*, *glow*, *gloat*, *glimmer*, *bang*, *bump*, *lump*, *thump*, *thwack*, *whack*, *sniff*, *sniffle*, *snuff*. . . Why should these seem so peculiarly appropriate, or fitting, to the meanings we use them for? The popular view is that these words just simply imitate, are copies of, what they mean. But that is a short-cut theory which often does not work, and we can, I think, go further and do better. As Bloomfield, in his excellent book, *Language*, says, “the explanation is a matter of grammatical structure, to the speaker it seems as if the sounds were especially suited to the meaning.” The speaker usually thinks moreover that the word seems suited because in some way it resembles the meaning, or, if this seems unplausible, that there must be *some* direct connection between them. If it is not the sound of the word which resembles the meaning then perhaps the tongue and lip movements instead imitate something to do with the meaning and so on. Sir Richard Paget’s theories of imitative gestures are likely to be appealed to nowadays.

The most that the modern linguist—who compares the very different words which are used in different languages for their meanings—is prepared to allow towards this resemblance of sound and sense is that “we can distinguish, with various degrees of clearness and with doubtful cases on the border line, a system of initial and final root-forming morphemes of vague signification.” Note how guarded Bloomfield is over such a point.

I must explain what a morpheme is. Two or more words are said to share a morpheme when they have, at the same time, something in common in their meaning and something in common in their sound. The joint semantic-phonetic unit which distinguishes them is what is called a morpheme. It is the togetherness of a peculiar sound and a peculiar meaning for the number of words.

Thus *flash*, *flare*, *flame*, *flicker*, *flimmer* have in common the sound (fl-) and a suggestion of a “moving light”—and this joint possession is the morpheme. Similarly *blare*, *flare*, *glare*, *stare* have the sound (-εə) in common and also the

meaning “big light or noise” shall we say, and this couple—sound and meaning is the morpheme. So with “smoothly wet” and (sl-) in *slime*, *slip*, *slush*, *slobber*, *slide*, *slither*. But *pare*, *pear*, *pair*, though they have a sound in common, have no meaning in common, so have no common morpheme.

Of course, the existence of a group of words with a common morpheme has an influence on the formation of other words, and on the pronunciation of other words—assimilating them to the group. Thus, given *skid* and *skate*, that is a strong additional reason, against an English convention, for saying *skee* rather than *shee*.

This pedantic looking term, *morpheme*, is useful because with its help we manage to avoid saying that the sound (sl-) somehow itself means something like “smoothly wet or slippery” and gain a way of saying no more than that a group of words which share that sound also share a peculiar meaning. And that is all we are entitled to say. To go further and say that the words share the meaning *because* they contain this sound and because this sound has that meaning is to bring in more than we know—an explanation or theory to account for what we do know. And actually it is a bad explanation. For this sound, by itself, means nothing. It is not the shared sound but each of the words which has the meaning. The sound by itself either means nothing at all—as with (fl) in *flame*, *flare*, *flash*, *flicker*—or as with (εə) in *blare*, *flare*, *glare*, *stare* it has by itself only an irrelevant meaning, namely, that of *air*, “what we breathe.”

The theoretical position here is worth close study because it is typical of a very large group of positions in which we tend, too boldly and too innocently, to go beyond our evidence and to assume, as the obvious explanation, as almost a datum, what is really the conclusion of a vague and quick and unchecked inductive argument, often a bad and unwarrantable argument. Why should a group of words with a sound in common have similar meanings unless there was a correspondence of some kind between the sound and the meaning? That seems plausible. But state the argument more explicitly, look over the evidence carefully, and it becomes unplausible, for then we have to notice the other words which share

the sound but do not share the meaning and the other words which share the meaning without the sound. Then we see that we have been applying to words the sort of argument which would represent a fashion as a spontaneous expression of original taste on the part of all who follow it. We find in fact that we have been looking at the problem upside down. That so far from a perceived correspondence between sound and meaning being the explanation of the sharing, the existence of a group of words with a common sound and meaning is the explanation of our belief in a correspondence.

This situation, I said a moment ago, is typical. We can hardly, I think, exaggerate in an estimate of the number of literary and rhetorical problems which, as usually formulated, are upside down in this fashion. For example, our common assumption that when a word such as *beautiful* or *art* or *religion* or *good*, is used in a great variety of ways, there will be found something in common to all the uses, something which is the fundamental or essential meaning of the word and the explanation of its use. So we spend our wits trying to discover this common essential meaning, without considering that we are looking for it, most often, only as a result of a weak and hasty inductive argument. This assumption that the same word ought to have or must have the same meaning, in an important respect, is one of those bullying assumptions that the context theorem of meanings would defend us from—in the way I discussed in my lecture last week.

But to come back to this parallel assumption that some words, apart from other words, and in their own right in virtue of their sound must mean certain things. It was Aristotle who said that there can be no natural connection between the sound of any language and the things signified, and, if we set the problem right side up and remember the other words before examining it, we shall have to agree with him. Indeed, if we ask the question fairly it becomes—when we get it clear—nearly senseless. What resemblance or natural connection can there be between the semantic and phonetic elements in the morpheme? One is a sound, the other a reference. “Is (fl-) really like ‘moving light’ in any way in which (sl-) or (gl-) is not?” Is that not like asking whether

the taste of turkey is like growing in some way that the taste of mint is not?

I conclude then that these expressive or symbolic words get their feeling of being peculiarly fitting from the other words sharing the morpheme which support them in the background of the mind. If that is so, all sorts of consequences are at once evident. In translation, for example, the expressive word in another language will not necessarily sound at all like the original word. It will be a word that is backed up by other words in a somewhat analogous fashion. Evidently again, a proper appreciation of the expressiveness of a word in a foreign language will be no matter of merely knowing its meaning and relishing its sound. It is a matter of having, in the background of the mind, the other words in the language which share morphemes with it. Thus no one can appreciate these expressive features of foreign words justly without a really wide familiarity with the language. Without that our estimates are merely whimsical.

We can, and I think should, extend this notion of a word as being backed up by other words that are not uttered or thought of. A first extension is to words that sound alike but do not share a morpheme, do not have a common meaning but only some relevant meaning. Thus *blare*, *scare*, and *dare* do not share a morpheme, but on occasion the peculiar force of *blare* may well come to it in part from the others. This, of course, is only recognizing on a larger, wider scale the principle that Lewis Carroll was using in *Jabberwocky*. Its relevance to the theory of rhymes and assonances is obvious.

Another and a wider extension would include not only influences from words which in part sound alike, but from other words which in part overlap in meaning. Words, for example, which we might have used instead, and, together with these, the reasons why we did not use them. Another such extension looks to the other uses, in other contexts, of what we, too simply, call “the same word.” The meaning of a word on some occasions is quite as much in what it keeps out, or at a distance, as in what it brings in. And, on other occasions, the meaning comes from other partly parallel uses whose relevance we can feel, without necessarily being able to state it

explicitly. But with these last leaps I may seem in danger of making the force of a word, the feeling that no other word could possibly do so well or take its place, a matter whose explanation will drag in the whole of the rest of the language. I am not sure, though, that we need be shy of something very like this as a conclusion. A really masterly use of a language—in free or fluid, not technical discourse—Shakespeare’s use of English for example, goes a long way towards using the language as a whole.

Cleopatra, taking up the asp, says to it:

Come, thou mortal wretch,
With thy sharp teeth this knot intrinsicate
Of life at once untie; poor venomous fool,
Be angry, and despatch!

Consider how many senses of *mortal*, besides “death-dealing” come in; compare: “I have immortal longings in me.” Consider *knot*: “This knot intrinsicate of life”: “Something to be undone,” “Something that troubles us until it is undone,” “Something by which all holding-together hangs,” “The nexus of all meaning.” Whether the homophone *not* enters in here may be thought a doubtful matter. I feel it does. But consider *intrinsicate* along with *knot*. Edward Dowden, following the fashion of his time in making Shakespeare as simple as possible, gives “intricate” as the meaning here of *intrinsicate*. And the Oxford Dictionary, sad to say, does likewise. But Shakespeare is bringing together half a dozen meanings from *intrinsic* and *intrinsic*: “Familiar,” “intimate,” “secret,” “private,” “innermost,” “essential,” “that which constitutes the very nature and being of a thing”—all the medical and philosophic meanings of his time as well as “intricate” and “involved.” What the word does is exhausted by no one of these meanings and its force comes from all of them and more. As the movement of my hand uses nearly the whole skeletal system of the muscles and is supported by them, so a phrase may take its powers from an immense system of supporting uses of other words in other contexts.

Note

The word *usage* itself well illustrates some of the more troublesome shifts of meaning. An improved Rhetoric has among its aims an improved control over these. Here perhaps a list of some of the senses of *usage* may help us in avoiding misunderstanding.

1. The most inclusive sense is “the entire range of the powers which the word can exert as an instrument of communication in all situations and in co-operation with any other words.” (In this sense “Usage, and usage alone, undoubtedly controls language.”)
2. “Some specific power which, in a limited range of situations and with a limited type of verbal context the word normally exerts.” (This is often called a *use* or *sense* and is what the Dictionary attempts to record in its definitions, by giving other words, phrases, and sentences with the same specific power.)
3. An instance of 2, at a certain place in Shakespeare, say, which may be appealed to to show that the word can have that power.
4. A supposed fixed “proper” meaning that the word must be kept to (has in its own right, etc.). This notion is derived from 1, 2, and 3 by oversimplification and a misconception of the working of language which, typically, takes the meaning of a sentence to be something built up from separate meanings of its words—instead of recognizing that it is the other way about and that the meanings of words are derived from the meanings of sentences in which they occur. This misconception assimilates the process by which words have their meanings determined with that by which they have their spelling determined and is the origin of a large part of misinterpretation.

Kenneth Burke

1897–1993

Much of Kenneth Burke's voluminous work over more than fifty years has been an attempt to redefine and expand the scope of rhetorical analysis and to apply it to all forms of language use. His chief contributions have been in developing rhetorical literary criticism and in analyzing the ways in which language systems—philosophical, political, literary, and religious—describe and influence human motives. His early works, *Counter-Statement* (1931) and *The Philosophy of Literary Form* (1941), develop the theory that literature is a form of symbolic action. In *A Grammar of Motives* (1945), Burke presents the dramatisitic pentad (act, scene, agent, agency, and purpose) as a method of analyzing ways of talking about motives. In *A Rhetoric of Motives* (1950), he defines rhetoric as the use of language to form attitudes and influence action. In later work, such as *The Rhetoric of Religion* (1961), he presents elements of a proposed “symbolic” of motives, in which he examines the psychological effects produced by systems of rhetorical motivation.

Burke was born in Pittsburgh in 1897, attended Ohio State and Columbia Universities very briefly, and joined the Bohemian group of writers in Greenwich Village that included Hart Crane, e. e. cummings, Allen Tate, Edna St. Vincent Millay, and his childhood friend Malcolm Cowley. In the twenties, Burke worked for the avant-garde magazine *The Dial* as music critic, book reviewer, and editor while publishing poetry, short stories, essays, and reviews in a number of journals. During the Great Depression, he became attached to but did not join the Communist party, delivering papers at the Writers' Congresses of 1935, 1937, and 1939. He taught briefly at the New School for Social Research in the thirties and longer (from 1943 until 1961) at Bennington College and was visiting professor at a great many colleges. In his long career, Burke was studied and lionized by scholars in many fields. As one writer, Gregory S. Jay, put it, “He has lived to see his work repeatedly celebrated, forgotten, and revived as each new generation and movement in criticism belatedly stumbles upon the traces of Burke in territories it thought were undiscovered.”¹

In *Counter-Statement*, Burke announced that “effective literature could be nothing else but rhetoric.” In so saying, he opposed the aesthetic view of literature as poetic and contemplative, divorced from the world of action. Burke's critical theory—which anticipates elements of reader-response criticism, American Formalism, and deconstruction—is that literary forms are best understood by their effects on readers and that the study of rhetoric, much maligned by literary critics of the day, is precisely what is needed to understand the effects not only of literature but of all forms of discourse. The last section of *Counter-Statement*, the “Lexicon Rhetoricae,” is an annotated list of literary-rhetorical terms intended as tools for applying Burke's method. In rehabilitating rhetoric for use in literary criticism, Burke classifies literature as a kind of persuasive discourse, and though he tinkers with definitions that

¹Gregory S. Jay, “Burke Re-Marx,” *Pre/Text* 6 (fall/winter 1985), p. 169.

continue to distinguish “art” and “use” (that is, poetic and rhetoric), he concludes that rhetorical analysis is appropriately applied to every kind of writing and speaking and may even be applied directly to the study of human relations.

Burke was vigorously attacked by both literary critics and rhetoricians for muddling literature and nonliterature, poetic and rhetoric, language and life. He responded by propounding the theory that literature is a form of symbolic action, with purposes and effects in the field of human relations. In *The Philosophy of Literary Form: Studies in Symbolic Action*, Burke argues that poetics is a subset of rhetoric. Literature and art, he says, have a hortatory or forensic function, especially in a capitalistic society, in which they often serve as propaganda.

In *A Grammar of Motives* (excerpted here), Burke presents the dramatistic system, which unifies rhetoric and poetic in a single analytical framework. In this system, one can study and compare statements about motives by examining how they treat the dramatic elements of human relations: act, scene, agent, agency, and purpose. Burke asserts that this pentad of terms is intended as a way of analyzing not actual human behavior but only descriptions of behavior. His concern is “primarily with the analysis of language rather than with the analysis of reality.” The terms of the pentad are not “forms of experience” but “forms of talk about experience.” Nonetheless, he often applies the dramatistic method as a form of sociological analysis and, in later works, such as *Language as Symbolic Action* (1966, excerpted here), treats experience and language as completely interdependent. The bulk of *A Grammar of Motives* is taken up with analyses of common terms that are typically used to attribute motives, analyses of philosophical systems that describe motives, and a long study of the meanings of *dialectic*.

Burke’s own method is dialectical, although *deconstructive* may be a better term today for characterizing his practice of revealing contrary meanings in supposedly positive terms and his emphasis on the way language “defeats” reality. For Burke, every epistemology has a key term, a “God-term,” that names the fundamental ground of human action, as the name God does for religious epistemologies. These terms and the language systems that surround them are the resources for rhetorical action.

In *A Rhetoric of Motives* (excerpted here), Burke looks at how these resources are used to create “identification” with a group and its worldview. *Identification* means to suggest more powerfully than *persuasion* the workings of rhetorical discourse in everyday language. Burke examines the ways in which the terms used to create identification work to include the members of a group in a common ideology, while at the same time excluding alternate terms, other groups, and competing ideologies. (His general observations on the nature of inclusion and exclusion are included in our excerpt.) He then reviews the definitions of *rhetoric* given or implied by a number of philosophers, including Jeremy Bentham’s critique of metaphoric deception, Blaise Pascal’s analysis of Jesuit casuistry, and Karl Marx’s demystification of Hegelian idealism.

The whole enterprise of making a grammar, a rhetoric, and a symbolic of motives is a way of analyzing systems of knowledge—primarily philosophy and poetry but also science, psychology, and popular culture—from the point of view of

rhetoric. Burke's rhetoric, bound up in communities, communal ideas, social relations, religion, magic, and psychological effects, in both verbal and nonverbal communication, seems to encompass almost everything. Although it is often frustrating to read Burke, his theories are undeniably powerful and his analyses full of remarkable insights. The selections reprinted here provide only a hint of what Burke has to offer.

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From *A Grammar of Motives*

INTRODUCTION: THE FIVE KEY TERMS OF DRAMATISM

What is involved, when we say what people are doing and why they are doing it? An answer to that question is the subject of this book. The book is concerned with the basic forms of thought which, in accordance with the nature of the world as all men necessarily experience it, are exemplified in the attributing of motives. These forms of thought can be embodied profoundly or trivially, truthfully or falsely. They are equally present in systematically elaborated metaphysical structures, in legal judgments, in poetry and fiction, in political and scientific works, in news and in bits of gossip offered at random.

We shall use five terms as generating principles of our investigation. They are: Act, Scene, Agent, Agency, Purpose. In a rounded statement about motives, you must have some word that names the *act* (names what took place, in thought or deed), and another that names the *scene* (the background of the act, the situation in which it occurred); also, you must indicate what person or kind of person (*agent*) performed the act, what means or instruments he used (*agency*), and the *purpose*. Men may violently disagree about the purposes behind a given act, or about the character of the person who did it, or how he did it, or in what kind of situation he acted; or they may even insist upon totally different words to name the act itself. But be that as it may, any complete statement about motives will offer *some kind of*

answers to these five questions: what was done (act), when or where it was done (scene), who did it (agent), how he did it (agency), and why (purpose).

If you ask why, with a whole world of terms to choose from, we select these rather than some others as basic, our book itself is offered as the answer. For, to explain our position, we shall show how it can be applied.

Act, Scene, Agent, Agency, Purpose. Although, over the centuries, men have shown great enterprise and inventiveness in pondering matters of human motivation, one can simplify the subject by this pentad of key terms, which are understandable almost at a glance. They need never to be abandoned, since all statements that assign motives can be shown to arise out of them and to terminate in them. By examining them quizzically, we can range far; yet the terms are always there for us to reclaim, in their everyday simplicity, their almost miraculous easiness, thus enabling us constantly to begin afresh. When they might become difficult, when we can hardly see them, through having stared at them too intensely, we can of a sudden relax, to look at them as we always have, lightly, glancingly. And having reassured ourselves, we can start out again, once more daring to let them look strange and difficult for a time.

In an exhibit of photographic murals (*Road to Victory*) at the Museum of Modern Art, there was an aerial photograph of two launches, proceeding side by side on a tranquil sea. Their wakes crossed and recrossed each other in almost an in-

finity of lines. Yet despite the intricateness of this tracery, the picture gave an impression of great simplicity, because one could quickly perceive the generating principle of its design. Such, ideally, is the case with our pentad of terms, used as generating principle. It should provide us with a kind of simplicity that can be developed into considerable complexity, and yet can be discovered beneath its elaborations.

We want to inquire into the purely internal relationships which the five terms bear to one another, considering their possibilities of transformation, their range of permutations and combinations—and then to see how these various resources figure in actual statements about human motives. Strictly speaking, we mean by a Grammar of motives a concern with the terms alone, without reference to the ways in which their potentialities have been or can be utilized in actual statements about motives. Speaking broadly we could designate as “philosophies” any statements in which these grammatical resources are specifically utilized. Random or unsystematic statements about motives could be considered as fragments of a philosophy.

One could think of the Grammatical resources as *principles*, and of the various philosophies as *casuistries* which apply these principles to temporal situations. For instance, we may examine the term Scene simply as a blanket term for the concept of background or setting *in general*, a name for *any* situation in which acts or agents are placed. In our usage, this concern would be “grammatical.” And we move into matters of “philosophy” when we note that one thinker uses “God” as his term for the ultimate ground or scene of human action, another uses “nature,” a third uses “environment,” or “history,” or “means of production,” etc. And whereas a statement about the grammatical principles of motivation might lay claim to a universal validity, or complete certainty, the choice of any one philosophic idiom embodying these principles is much more open to question. Even before we know what act is to be discussed, we can say with confidence that a rounded discussion of its motives must contain a reference to *some kind of* background. But since each philosophic idiom will characterize this background differently, there will remain

the question as to which characterization is “right” or “more nearly right.”

It is even likely that, whereas one philosophic idiom offers the best calculus for one case, another case answers best to a totally different calculus. However, we should not think of “cases” in too restricted a sense. Although, from the standpoint of the grammatical principles inherent in the internal relationships prevailing among our five terms, any given philosophy is to be considered as a casuistry, even a cultural situation extending over centuries is a “case,” and would probably require a much different philosophic idiom as its temporizing calculus of motives than would be required in the case of other cultural situations.

In our original plans for this project, we had no notion of writing a “Grammar” at all. We began with a theory of comedy, applied to a treatise on human relations. Feeling that competitive ambition is a drastically overdeveloped motive in the modern world, we thought this motive might be transcended if men devoted themselves not so much to “excoriating” it as to “appreciating” it. Accordingly, we began taking notes on the foibles and antics of what we tended to think of as “the Human Barnyard.”

We sought to formulate the basic stratagems which people employ, in endless variations, and consciously or unconsciously, for the outwitting or cajoling of one another. Since all these devices had a “you and me” quality about them, being “addressed” to some person or to some advantage, we classed them broadly under the heading of a Rhetoric. There were other notes, concerned with modes of expression and appeal in the fine arts, and with purely psychological or psychoanalytic matters. These we classed under the heading of Symbolic.

We had made still further observations, which we at first strove uneasily to class under one or the other of these heads, but which we were eventually able to distinguish as the makings of a Grammar. For we found in the course of writing that our project needed a grounding in formal considerations logically prior to both the rhetorical and the psychological. And as we proceeded with this introductory groundwork, it kept extending its claims until it had spun itself from an

intended few hundred words into nearly 200,000, of which the present book is revision and abridgment.

Theological, metaphysical, and juridical doctrines offer the best illustration of the concerns we place under the heading of Grammar; the forms and methods of art best illustrate the concerns of Symbolic; and the ideal material to reveal the nature of Rhetoric comprises observations on parliamentary and diplomatic devices, editorial bias, sales methods, and incidents of social sparring. However, the three fields overlap considerably. And we shall note, in passing, how the Rhetoric and the Symbolic hover about the edges of our central theme, the Grammar.

A perfectionist might seek to evolve terms free of ambiguity and inconsistency (as with the terministic ideals of symbolic logic and logical positivism). But we have a different purpose in view, one that probably retains traces of its "comic" origin. We take it for granted that, insofar as men cannot themselves create the universe, there must remain something essentially enigmatic about the problem of motives, and that this underlying enigma will manifest itself in inevitable ambiguities and inconsistencies among the terms for motives. Accordingly, what we want is *not terms that avoid ambiguity*, but *terms that clearly reveal the strategic spots at which ambiguities necessarily arise*.

Occasionally, you will encounter a writer who seems to get great exaltation out of proving, with an air of much relentlessness, that some philosophic term or other has been used to cover a variety of meanings, and who would smash and abolish this idol. As a general rule, when a term is singled out for such harsh treatment, if you look closer you will find that it happens to be associated with some cultural or political trend from which the writer would dissociate himself; hence there is a certain notable ambiguity in this very charge of ambiguity, since he presumably feels purged and strengthened by bringing to bear upon this particular term a kind of attack that could, with as much justice, be brought to bear upon any other term (or "title") in philosophy, including of course the alternative term, or "title," that the writer would swear by. Since no two things or acts or situations are exactly alike, you

cannot apply the same term to both of them without thereby introducing a certain margin of ambiguity, an ambiguity as great as the difference between the two subjects that are given the identical title. And all the more may you expect to find ambiguity in terms so "titular" as to become the marks of a philosophic school, or even several philosophic schools. Hence, instead of considering it our task to "dispose of" any ambiguity by merely disclosing the fact that it is an ambiguity, we rather consider it our task to study and clarify the *resources* of ambiguity. For in the course of this work, we shall deal with many kinds of *transformation*—and it is in the areas of ambiguity that transformations take place; in fact, without such areas, transformation would be impossible. Distinctions, we might say, arise out of a great central moltenness, where all is merged. They have been thrown from a liquid center to the surface, where they have congealed. Let one of these crusted distinctions return to its source, and in this alchemic center it may be remade, again becoming molten liquid, and may enter into new combinations, whereat it may be again thrown forth as a new crust, a different distinction. So that A may become non-A. But not merely by a leap from one state to the other. Rather, we must take A back into the ground of its existence, the logical substance that is its causal ancestor, and on to a point where it is con-substantial with non-A; then we may return, this time emerging with non-A instead.

And so with our five terms: certain formal interrelationships prevail among these terms, by reason of their role as attributes of a common ground or substance. Their participation in a common ground makes for transformability. At every point where the field covered by any one of these terms overlaps upon the field covered by any other, there is an alchemic opportunity, whereby we can put one philosophy or doctrine of motivation into the alembic, make the appropriate passes, and take out another. From the central moltenness, where all the elements are fused into one togetherness, there are thrown forth, in separate crusts, such distinctions as those between freedom and necessity, activity and passiveness, cooperation and competition, cause and effect, mechanism and teleology.

Our term, "Agent," for instance, is a general heading that might, in a given case, require further subdivision, as an agent might have his act modified (hence partly motivated) by friends (co-agents) or enemies (counteragents). Again, under "Agent" one could place any personal properties that are assigned a motivational value, such as "ideas," "the will," "fear," "malice," "intuition," "the creative imagination." A portrait painter may treat the body as a property of the agent (an expression of personality), whereas materialistic medicine would treat it as "scenic," a purely "objective material"; and from another point of view it could be classed as an agency, a means by which one gets reports of the world at large. Machines are obviously instruments (that is, Agencies); yet in their vast accumulation they constitute the industrial scene, with its own peculiar set of motivational properties. War may be treated as an Agency, insofar as it is a means to an end; as a collective Act, subdivisible into many individual acts; as a Purpose, in schemes proclaiming a cult of war. For the man inducted into the army, war is a Scene, a situation that motivates the nature of his training; and in mythologies war is an Agent, or perhaps better a super-agent, in the figure of the war god. We may think of voting as an act, and of the voter as an agent; yet votes and voters both are hardly other than a politician's medium or agency; or from another point of view, they are a part of his scene. And insofar as a vote is cast without adequate knowledge of its consequences, one might even question whether it should be classed as an activity at all; one might rather call it passive, or perhaps sheer motion (what the behaviorists would call a Response to a Stimulus).

Or imagine that one were to manipulate the terms, for the imputing of motives, in such a case as this: The hero (agent) with the help of a friend (coagent) outwits the villain (counteragent) by using a file (agency) that enables him to break his bonds (act) in order to escape (purpose) from the room where he has been confined (scene). In selecting a casuistry here, we might locate the motive in the agent, as were we to credit his escape to some trait integral to his personality, such as "love of freedom." Or we might stress the motivational force of the scene, since nothing is surer

to awaken thoughts of escape in a man than a condition of imprisonment. Or we might note the essential part played by the *coagent*, in assisting our hero to escape—and, with such thoughts as our point of departure, we might conclude that the motivations of this act should be reduced to social origins.

Or if one were given to the brand of speculative enterprise exemplified by certain Christian heretics (for instance, those who worshipped Judas as a saint, on the grounds that his betrayal of Christ, in leading to the Crucifixion, so brought about the opportunity for mankind's redemption) one might locate the necessary motivational origin of the act in the *counteragent*. For the hero would not have been prodded to escape if there had been no villain to imprison him. Inasmuch as the escape could be called a "good" act, we might find in such motivational reduction to the counteragent a compensatory transformation whereby a bitter fountain may give forth sweet waters. In his *Anti-Dühring* Engels gives us a secular variant which no one could reasonably call outlandish or excessive:

It was slavery that first made possible the division of labour between agriculture and industry on a considerable scale, and along with this, the flower of the ancient world, Hellenism. Without slavery, no Greek state, no Greek art and science; without slavery, no Roman Empire. But without Hellenism and the Roman Empire as a basis, also no modern Europe.

We should never forget that our whole economic, political, and intellectual development has as its presupposition a state of things in which slavery was as necessary as it was universally recognized. In this sense we are entitled to say: Without the slavery of antiquity, no modern socialism.

Pragmatists would probably have referred the motivation back to a source in *agency*. They would have noted that our hero escaped by using an *instrument*, the file by which he severed his bonds; then in this same line of thought, they would have observed that the hand holding the file was also an instrument; and by the same token the brain that guided the hand would be an instrument, and so likewise the educational system that taught the methods and shaped the values involved in the incident.

True, if you reduce the terms to any one of them, you will find them branching out again; for no one of them is enough. Thus, Mead called his pragmatism a philosophy of the *act*. And though Dewey stresses the value of "intelligence" as an instrument (agency, embodied in "scientific method"), the other key terms in his casuistry, "experience" and "nature," would be the equivalents of act and scene respectively. We must add, however, that Dewey is given to stressing the *overlap* of these two terms, rather than the respects in which they are distinct, as he proposes to "replace the traditional separation of nature and experience with the idea of continuity." (The quotation is from *Intelligence and the Modern World*.)

As we shall see later, it is by reason of the pliancy among our terms that philosophic systems can pull one way and another. The margins of overlap provide opportunities whereby a thinker can go without a leap from any one of the terms to any of its fellows. (We have also likened the terms to the fingers, which in their extremities are distinct from one another, but merge in the palm of the hand. If you would go from one finger to another without a leap, you need but trace the tendon down into the palm of the hand, and then trace a new course along another tendon.) Hence, no great dialectical enterprise is necessary if you would merge the terms, reducing them even to as few as one; and then, treating this as the "essential" term, the "causal ancestor" of the lot, you can proceed in the reverse direction across the margins of overlap, "deducing" the other terms from it as its logical descendants.

This is the method, explicitly and in the grand style, of metaphysics which brings its doctrines to a head in some overall title, a word for being in general, or action in general, or motion in general, or development in general, or experience in general, etc., with all its other terms distributed about this titular term in positions leading up to it and away from it. There is also an implicit kind of metaphysics, that often goes by the name of No Metaphysics, and aims at reduction not to an overall title but to some presumably underlying atomic constituent. Its vulgar variant is to be found in techniques of "unmasking," which would make for progress and emancipation by

applying materialistic terms to immaterial subjects (the pattern here being, "X is nothing but Y," where X designates a higher value and Y a lower one, the higher value being thereby reduced to the lower one).

The titular word for our own method is "dramatism," since it invites one to consider the matter of motives in a perspective that, being developed from the analysis of drama, treats language and thought primarily as modes of action. The method is synoptic, though not in the historical sense. A purely historical survey would require no less than a universal history of human culture; for every judgment, exhortation, or admonition, every view of natural or supernatural reality, every intention or expectation involves assumptions about motive, or cause. Our work must be synoptic in a different sense: in the sense that it offers a system of placement, and should enable us, by the systematic manipulation of the terms, to "generate," or "anticipate" the various classes of motivational theory. And a treatment in these terms, we hope to show, reduces the subject synoptically while still permitting us to appreciate its scope and complexity.

It is not our purpose to import dialectical and metaphysical concerns into a subject that might otherwise be free of them. On the contrary, we hope to make clear the ways in which dialectical and metaphysical issues *necessarily* figure in the subject of motivation. Our speculations, as we interpret them, should show that the subject of motivation is a philosophic one, not ultimately to be solved in terms of empirical science.

CONTAINER AND THING CONTAINED

The Scene-Act Ratio

Using "scene" in the sense of setting, or background, and "act" in the sense of action, one could say that "the scene contains the act." And using "agents" in the sense of actors, or acters, one could say that "the scene contains the agents."

It is a principle of drama that the nature of acts and agents should be consistent with the nature of the scene. And whereas comic and grotesque works may deliberately set these elements at

odds with one another, audiences make allowances for such liberty, which reaffirms the same principle of consistency in its very violation.

The nature of the scene may be conveyed primarily by suggestions built into the lines of the verbal action itself, as with the imagery in the dialogue of Elizabethan drama and with the descriptive passages of novels; or it may be conveyed by non-linguistic properties, as with the materials of naturalistic stage sets. In any case, examining first the relation between scene and act, all we need note here is the principle whereby the scene is a fit “container” for the act, expressing in fixed properties the same quality that the action expresses in terms of development.

Ibsen’s *An Enemy of the People* is a good instance of the scene-act ratio, since the correlations between scene and act are readily observable, beginning with the fact that this representative middle-class drama is enacted against a typical middle-class setting. Indeed, in this work written at the very height of Ibsen’s realistic period, we can see how readily realism leads into symbolism. For the succession of scenes both *realistically reflects* the course of the action and *symbolizes* it.

The first act (we are now using the word “act” in the purely technical sense, to designate the major division of a play, a sense in which we could even reverse our formula and say that “the act contains its scenes”)—the first act takes place in Dr. Stockmann’s sitting room, a background perfectly suited to the thoroughly bourgeois story that is to unfold from these beginnings. In the course of this act, we learn of a scene, or situation, prior to the opening of the play, but central to its motivation. Dr. Stockmann refers to an earlier period of withdrawal, spent alone in the far North. During his isolation, he had conceived of his plan for the public Baths. This plan may be considered either realistically or symbolically; it is the dramatist’s device for materializing, or objectifying, a purely spiritual process, since the plot has to do with pollution and purification on a moral level, which has its scenic counterpart in the topic of the Baths.

Act II. Still in Dr. Stockmann’s sitting room.

Dr. Stockmann has learned that the Baths, the vessels of purification, are themselves polluted, and that prominent business and professional men would suppress this fact for financial reasons. This opposition is epitomized in the figure of Peter Stockmann, the Doctor’s brother. The intimate, familial quality of the setting thus has its counterpart in the quality of the action, which involves the struggle of two social principles, the conservative and the progressive, as objectified and personalized in the struggle of the two brothers.

Act III takes place in the editorial office of the *People’s Messenger*, a local newspaper in which Dr. Stockmann had hoped to publish his evidence that the water supply was contaminated. The action takes on a more forensic reference, in keeping with the nature of the place. In this Act we have the peripety of the drama, as Dr. Stockmann’s expectations are reversed. For he learns that the personal and financial influence of his enemies prevents the publication of the article. This turn of the plot has its scenic replica in mimicry involving Peter Stockmann’s hat and stick, properties that symbolize his identity as mayor. In false hope of victory, Dr. Stockmann had taken them up, and strutted about burlesquing his brother. But when Dr. Stockmann learns that the editor, in response to the pressure of the conservatives, will not publish the article, it is Peter Stockmann’s turn to exult. This reversal of the action is materialized (made scenic) thus:

PETER STOCKMANN: My hat and stick, if you please. (Dr. Stockmann *takes off the hat and lays it on the table with the stick*. Peter Stockmann *takes them up*.) Your authority as mayor has come to an untimely end.

In the next Act Dr. Stockmann does contrive to lay his case before a public tribunal of a sort: a gathering of fellow townsmen, assembled in “a big old-fashioned room,” in the house of a friend. His appeal is unsuccessful; his neighbors vote overwhelmingly against him, and the scene ends in turbulence. As regards the scene-act ratio, note that the semi-public, semi-intimate setting reflects perfectly the quality of Dr. Stockmann’s appeal.

In Act V, the stage directions tell us that the hero's clothes are torn, and the room is in disorder, with broken windows. You may consider these details either as properties of the scene or as a reflection of the hero's condition after his recent struggle with the forces of reaction. The scene is laid in Dr. Stockmann's *study*, a setting so symbolic of the direction taken by the plot that the play ends with Dr. Stockmann announcing his plan to enroll twelve young *disciples* and with them to found a *school* in which he will work for the *education* of society.

The whole plot is that of an internality directed outwards. We progress by stages from a scene (reported) wherein the plan of social purification was conceived in loneliness, to the scene in his study where the hero announces in the exaltation of a dramatic finale: "The strongest man in the world is he who stands most alone." The pronouncement is modified by the situation in which it is uttered: as Dr. Stockmann speaks, he is surrounded by a loyal and admiring family circle, and his educational plan calls not for complete independence, but for cooperation. He is not setting himself up as the strongest man in the world, but merely as one headed in the same direction. And, with the exception of his brother Peter, we may consider his family circle as aspects of his own identity, being under the aegis of "loneliness" since it began so and retains the quality of its ancestry.

The end of the third play in O'Neill's trilogy, *Mourning Becomes Electra*, presents a contrasting instance of the scene-act ratio:

LAVINIA: (*turns to him sharply*) You go now and close the shutters and nail them tight.

SETH: Ayeh.

LAVINIA: And tell Hannah to throw out all the flowers.

SETH: Ayeh. (*He goes past her up the steps and into the house. She ascends to the portico—and then turns and stands for a while, stiff and square-shouldered, staring into the sunlight with frozen eyes. Seth leans out of the window at the right of the door and pulls the shutters closed with a decisive bang. As if this were a word of command, Lavinia pivots sharply on her heel and marches woodenly into the house, closing the door behind her.*)

CURTAIN

We end here on the motif of the shut-in personality, quite literally objectified. And the closing, novelistic stage directions are beautifully suited to our purpose; for note how, once the shutters have been closed, thereby placing before our eyes the scenic replica of Lavinia's mental state, this scene in turn becomes the motivation of her next act. For we are told that she walks like an automaton in response to the closing of the shutter, "as if this were a word of command."

Hamlet contains a direct reference to the motivational aspect of the scene-act ratio. In an early scene, when Hamlet is about to follow the Ghost, Horatio warns:

What if it tempt you toward the flood, my lord,
Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff
That beetles o'er his base into the sea.
And there assume some other horrible form,
Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason
And draw you into madness? Think of it;
The very place puts toys of desperation,
Without more motive, into every brain
That looks so many fathoms to the sea
And hears it roar beneath.

In the last four lines of this speech, Horatio is saying that the sheer natural surroundings might be enough to provide a man with a motive for an act as desperate and absolute as suicide. This notion (of the natural scene as sufficient motivation for an act) was to reappear, in many transformations, during the subsequent centuries. We find a variant of it in the novels of Thomas Hardy, and in other regionalists who derive motivations for their characters from what Virgil would have called the *genius loci*. There are unmistakable vestiges of it in scientific theories (of Darwinian cast) according to which men's behavior and development are explained in terms of environment. Geopolitics is a contemporary variant.

From the motivational point of view, there is implicit in the quality of a scene the quality of the action that is to take place within it. This would be another way of saying that the act will be consistent with the scene. Thus, when the curtain rises to disclose a given stage set, this stage set contains, simultaneously, implicitly, all that the narrative is to draw out as a sequence, explicitly. Or, if you will, the stage set contains the ac-

tion *ambiguously* (as regards the norms of action)—and in the course of the play’s development this ambiguity is converted into a corresponding *articulacy*. The proportion would be: scene is to act as implicit is to explicit. One could not deduce the details of the action from the details of the setting, but one could deduce the quality of the action from the quality of the setting. An extreme illustration would be an Expressionistic drama, having for its scenic reflex such abstract properties as lines askew, grotesque lighting, sinister color, and odd objects.

We have, of course, chosen examples particularly suited to reveal the distinction between act and scene as well as their interdependence. The matter is obscured when we are dealing with scene in the sense of the relationships prevailing among the various *dramatis personae*. For the characters, by being in interaction, could be treated as scenic conditions or “environment,” of one another; and any act could be treated as part of the context that modifies (hence, to a degree motivates) the subsequent acts. The principles of dramatic consistency would lead one to expect such cases of overlap among the terms; but while being aware of them we should firmly fix in our minds such cases as afford a clear differentiation. Our terms leaning themselves to both merger and division, we are here trying to divide two of them while recognizing their possibilities of merger.

The Scene-Agent Ratio

The scene-agent ratio, where the synecdochic relation is between person and place, is partly exemplified in this citation from Carlyle’s *Heroes and Hero-Worship*:

These Arabs Mohammed was born among are certainly a notable people. Their country itself is notable; the fit habitation for such a race. Savage inaccessible rock-mountains, great grim deserts, alternating with beautiful strips of verdure; wherever water is, there is greenness, beauty; odoriferous balm-shrubs, date-trees, frankincense-trees. Consider that wide waste horizon of sand, empty, silent, like a sand-sea, dividing habitable place from habitable place. You are all alone there, left alone with the universe; by day a fierce sun blazing

down on it with intolerable radiance; by night the great deep heaven with its stars. Such a country is fit for a swift-handed, deep-hearted race of men.

The correlation between the quality of the country and the quality of its inhabitants is here presented in quite secular terms. There is a sonnet by Wordsworth that is a perfect instance of the scene-agent ratio treated theologically:

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free,
The holy time is quiet as a Nun
Breathless with adoration; the broad sun
Is sinking down in its tranquillity;
The gentleness of heaven broods o’er the Sea;
Listen! the mighty Being is awake,
And doth with his eternal motion make
A sound like thunder—everlastingly.

Dear Child! Dear Girl! that walkest with me here,
If thou appear untouched by solemn thought,
Thy nature is not therefore less divine:
Thou liest in Abraham’s bosom all the year;
And worship’st at the Temple’s inner shrine,
God being with thee when we know it not.

By selecting a religious image in which to convey the purely naturalistic sense of hush, the octave infuses the natural scene with hints of a wider circumference, supernatural in scope. The sestet turns from scene to agent; indeed, the octave is all scene, the sestet all agent. But by the logic of the scene-agent ratio, if the scene is supernatural in quality, the agent contained by this scene will partake of the same supernatural quality. And so, spontaneously, purely by being the kind of agent that is at one with this kind of scene, the child is “divine.” The contents of a divine container will synecdochically share in its divinity.

Swift’s satire on philosophers and mathematicians, the Laputans in the third book of *Gulliver’s Travels*, offers a good instance of the way in which the scene-agent ratio can be used for the depiction of character. To suggest that the Laputans are, we might say, “up in the air,” he portrays them as living on an island that floats in space. Here the nature of the inhabitants is translated into terms of their habitation.

Variants of the scene-agent ratio abound in typical nineteenth-century thought, so strongly given to the study of motives by the dialectic

pairing of people and things (man and nature, agent and scene). The ratio figures characteristically in the idealist's concern with the *Einklang zwischen Innen- und Aussenwelt*.¹ The paintings of the pointillist Seurat carry the sense of consistency between scene and agent to such lengths that his human figures seem on the point of dissolving into their background. However, we here move beyond strictly scene-agent matters into the area better covered by our term, agency, since the extreme impression of consistency between scene and agent is here conveyed by stressing the distinctive terms of the method, or medium (that is, agency), which serves as an element common to both scene and agents.

The logic of the scene-agent ratio has often served as an embarrassment to the naturalistic novelist. He may choose to "indict" some scene (such as bad working conditions under capitalism) by showing that it has a "brutalizing" effect upon the people who are indigenous to this scene. But the scene-agent ratio, if strictly observed here, would require that the "brutalizing" situation contain "brutalized" characters as its dialectical counterpart. And thereby, in his humanitarian zeal to save mankind, the novelist portrays characters which, in being as brutal as their scene, are not worth saving. We could phrase this dilemma in another way: our novelist points up his thesis by too narrow a conception of scene as the motive-force behind his characters; and this restricting of the scene calls in turn for a corresponding restriction upon personality, or role.

Further Instances of These Ratios

The principles of consistency binding scene, act, and agent also lead to reverse applications. That is, the scene-act ratio either calls for acts in keeping with scenes or scenes in keeping with acts—and similarly with the scene-agent ratio. When Lavinia instructs Seth to nail fast the shutters and throw out the flowers, by her command (an act) she brings it about that the scene corresponds to her state of mind. But as soon as these scenic changes have taken place, they in turn become

¹"Harmony between the inner life and the external world." [Ed.]

the motivating principle of her subsequent conduct. For the complete embodiment of her purposes functions as a "command" to her; and she obeys it as a response to a stimulus, like a pure automaton moved by the sheer disposition of material factors.

In behavioristic metaphysics (behaviorists would call it No Metaphysics) you radically truncate the possibilities of drama by eliminating action, reducing action to sheer motion. The close of the O'Neill play follows this same development from action to motion, a kind of inverted transcendence. Because of this change, Lavinia's last moments must be relegated to stage directions alone. She does not *act*, she is automatically *moved*. The trilogy did not end a moment too soon; for its close represented not only the end of Lavinia, but the end of the motivating principle of drama itself. The playwright had here obviously come to the end of a line. In his next plays he would have to "turn back." For he could have "gone on" only by abandoning drama for some more "scientific" form. (He might have transcended drama scientifically, for instance, by a collating of sociological observations designed to classify different types of motorist and to correlate them with different types of response to traffic signals.)

We noted how, in Ibsen's drama, the hero's state of mind after his conflict with the townspeople was objectified in such scenic properties as his torn clothing, and the broken windows and general disorder of his study. It is obvious that one might have carried this consistency further in either direction (for instance, spreading it more environmentally, as were we to enlist turbulent weather as an aspect of the scene, or more personally, as were we to enlist facial expressions and postures of the body, which of course the actor does, in interpreting his role, regardless of the playwright's omissions). If you took the hero's state of mind as your point of departure here, you could say that the whole scene becomes a mere aspect of the role, or person ("agent")—or that the physical body of the agent is itself but "scenic," to be listed among the person's "properties," as with a dwelling that a man had ordered built in strict accordance with his own private specifications, or as theologians see in "body" the dwelling place of "soul." We ob-

serve the same ratio in Swift's account of his Laputans when, to suggest that in their thinking they could be transcendental, or introvert, or extremely biased, but never well balanced, he writes: "Their heads were all inclined, either to the right or to the left; one of their eyes turned inward, and the other directly up to the zenith." But lest our speculations seem too arbitrary, let us cite one more anecdote, this time from a tiny drama enacted in real life, and here reported to illustrate how, when a state of mind is pronounced in quality, the agent may be observed arranging a corresponding pattern in the very properties of the scene.

The occasion: a committee meeting. The setting: a group of committee members bunched about a desk in an office, after hours. Not far from the desk was a railing; but despite the crowding, all the members were bunched about the chairman at the desk, inside the railing. However, they had piled their hats and coats on chairs and tables outside the pale. General engrossment in the discussion. But as the discussion continued, one member quietly arose, and opened the gate in the railing. As unnoticeably as possible, she stepped outside and closed the gate. She picked up her coat, laid it across her arm, and stood waiting. A few moments later, when there was a pause in the discussion, she asked for the floor. After being recognized by the chairman, she very haltingly, in embarrassment, announced with regret that she would have to resign from the committee.

Consider with what fidelity she had set the scene for this pattern of severance as she stepped beyond the railing to make her announcement. Design: chairman and fellow members within the pale, sitting, without hats and overcoats—she outside the pale, standing, with coat over her arm preparatory to departure. She had strategically modified the arrangement of the scene in such a way that it implicitly (ambiguously) contained the quality of her act.

Ubiquity of the Ratios

If we but look about us, we find examples of the two ratios everywhere; for they are at the very centre of motivational assumptions. But to dis-

cern them in their ubiquity, we must remain aware of the many guises which the five terms may assume in the various casuistries. In the introduction to his *Discourses*, for instance, Machiavelli complains that people read history without applying its lessons, "as though heaven, the sun, the elements, and men had changed the order of their motions and power, and were different from what they were in ancient times." For our purposes, the quotation could be translated, "as though human agents and both the supernatural and the natural scenes had changed, with a corresponding change in the nature of motives."

Besides general synonyms for scene that are obviously of a background character, such as "society," or "environment," we often encounter quite specific localizations, words for particular places, situations, or eras. "It is 12:20 P.M." is a "scenic" statement. Milton's *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* are formed about a scenic contrast between morning and night, with a corresponding contrast of actions. Terms for historical epochs, cultural movements, social institutions (such as "Elizabethan period," "romanticism," "capitalism") are scenic, though often with an admixture of properties overlapping upon the areas covered by the term, agent. If we recall that "ideas" are a property of agents, we can detect this strategic overlap in Locke's expression, "the scene of ideas," the form of which Carl Becker exactly reproduces when referring to "climates of opinion," in *The Heavenly City of the Eighteenth-Century Philosophers*.

The word "ground," much used in both formal philosophy and everyday speech when discussing motives, is likewise scenic, though readily encroaching upon the areas more directly covered by "agent" and "purpose." We can discern the scenic reference if the question, "On what grounds did he do this?" is translated: "What kind of scene did he say it was, that called for such an act?" Hegelian idealism exploits the double usage (ground as "background" and ground as "reason") by positing "Reason" as the ultimate ground, the *Grundprinzip*, of all history. Thus, whereas historicism regularly treats historical scenes as the background, or motive, of individual developments, Hegel would treat Reason as the background, or motive, of historical sequence

in general. Let us not worry, at this point, what it may “mean” to say that “Reason” is at once the mover of history and the substance of which history is made. It is sufficient here to note that such terministic resources were utilized, and to detect the logic of the pentad behind them.

The maxim, “terrain determines tactics,” is a strict localization of the scene-act ratio, with “terrain” as the casuistic equivalent for “scene” in a military calculus of motives, and “tactics” as the corresponding “act.”

Political commentators now generally use the word “situation” as their synonym for scene, though often without any clear concept of its function as a statement about motives. Many social psychologists consciously use the term for its motivational bearing (it has a range extending from the broadest concepts of historical setting down to the simplified, controlled conditions which the animal experimenter imposes upon his rats in a maze). The Marxist reference to “the objective situation” is explicitly motivational, and the theorists who use this formula discuss “policies” as political acts enacted in conformity with the nature of scenes. However, the scene-act ratio can be applied in two ways. It can be applied deterministically in statements that a certain policy *had* to be adopted in a certain situation, or it may be applied in hortatory statements to the effect that a certain policy *should be* adopted in conformity with the situation. The deterministic usage (in scene-agent form) was exemplified in the statement of a traveller who, on arriving from France under German domination, characterized the politicians as “prisoners of the situation.” And the hortatory usage was exemplified when a speaker said that President Roosevelt should be granted “unusual powers” because our country was in an “unusual international situation.” In a judgment written by Justice Hugo L. Black, the Supreme Court ruled that it was not “beyond the war powers of Congress and the Executive to exclude those of Japanese ancestry from the West Coast area at the time they did.” And by implication, the scene-act ratio was invoked to substantiate this judgment:

When under conditions of modern warfare our shores are threatened by hostile forces, the power

to protect must be commensurate with the threatened danger.

Among the most succinct instances of the scene-act ratio in dialectical materialism is Marx’s assertion (cited also by Lenin in *The State and Revolution*), that “Justice can never rise superior to the economic conditions of society and the cultural development conditioned by them.” That is, in contrast with those who would place justice as a property of personality (an attribute purely of the *agent*), the dialectical materialist would place it as a property of the *material situation* (“economic conditions”), the scene in which justice is to be enacted. He would say that no higher quality of justice can be enacted than the nature of the scenic properties permits. Trotsky gave the same form an ironic turn when he treated Stalinist policies as the inevitable result of the attempt to establish socialism under the given conditions. That is, you can’t get a fully socialist *act* unless you have a fully socialist *scene*, and for the dialectical materialist such a scene requires a high stage of industrial development.

And there is a variant of the usage in Coleridge (in his early libertarian and “necessitarian” period, when he was exalted with thoughts of “aspheterism”). Concerning “Pantisocracy” (the plan of Coleridge, Southey, and their associates to found a communistic colony on the banks of the Susquehanna), he wrote that it would “make virtue inevitable.” That is, the colonists were to arrange a social situation of such a sort that virtuous acts would be the logical and spontaneous result of conditions.

As for “act,” any verb, no matter how specific or how general, that has connotations of consciousness or purpose falls under this category. If one happened to stumble over an obstruction, that would be not an act, but a mere motion. However, one could convert even this sheer accident into something of an act if, in the course of falling, one suddenly *willed* his fall (as a rebuke, for instance, to the negligence of the person who had left the obstruction in the way). “Dramatistically,” the basic unit of action would be defined as “the human body in conscious or purposive motion.” Hence we are admonished that people often speak of action in a purely figurative sense

when they have only motion in mind, as with reference to the action of a motor, or the interaction of forces. Terms like “adjustment” and “adaptation” are ambiguously suited to cover both action and sheer motion, so that it is usually difficult to decide in just which sense a thinker is using them, when he applies them to social motives. This ambiguity may put them in good favor with those who would deal with the human realm in a calculus patterned after the vocabularies of the physical sciences, and yet would not wholly abandon vestiges of “animism.” Profession, vocation, policy, strategy, tactics are all concepts of action, as are any words for specific vocations. Our words “position,” “occupation,” and “office” indicate the scenic overtones in action. Our words for particular “jobs” under capitalist industrialism refer to acts, but often the element of action is reduced to a minimum and the element of sheer motion raised to a maximum. (We here have in mind not only certain near-automatic tasks performed to the timing of the conveyor belt, but also many of the purely clerical operations, filing, bookkeeping, recording, accounting, and the like, necessary to the present state of technology.)

When Christ said, “I am the way” (*hodos*), we could translate, “I am the act,” or more fully, “I represent a system, or synthesis, of the right acts.” *Tao* and *yoga* are similar words for act. And we see how readily act in this sense can overlap upon agency when we consider our ordinary attitude towards scientific method (*methodos*), which we think of pragmatically, not as a way of life, or *act of being*, but as a *means of doing*.

The Greek word for justice (*diké*) was in its beginnings as thoroughly an “act” word as *tao*, *yoga*, and *hodos*. Originally it meant *custom*, *usage*, *manner*, *fashion*. It also meant *right*. The connection between these two orders of meaning is revealed in our expression, “That sort of thing just isn’t done,” and in the fact that our word “morality” comes from a Latin word for “custom,” Liddell and Scott’s lexicon notes that in the *Odyssey* the word is used of mortals, gods, kings, and suitors, referring to their *custom*, *way of acting*, *law of being*. After the homogeneous tribal pattern of Greek life (with its one “way” or

“justice” shared by all) had dissolved into a political state, with its typical conflicts of property interests, *diké* became a word of the law courts. Hence, in post-Homeric usage, it refers to *legal justice*, the *right* which is presumed to be the object of law. In this form, it could represent a Platonic ideal, that might prevail over and above the real ways of the different social classes. This is the kind of justice that Marx was refuting by a sophisticated reversion to a more “Homeric” usage.

Range of All the Ratios

Though we have inspected two ratios, the five terms would allow for ten (scene-act, scene-agent, scene-agency, scene-purpose, act-purpose, act-agent, act-agency, agent-purpose, agent-agency, and agency-purpose). The ratios are principles of determination. Elsewhere in the Grammar we shall examine two of these (scene-purpose and agency-purpose) in other connections; and the rest will figure in passing. But the consideration of words for “ways” calls for special attention to the *act-agent* ratio.

Both act and agent require scenes that “contain” them. Hence the scene-act and scene-agent ratios are in the fullest sense positive (or “positional”). But the relation between act and agent is not quite the same. The agent does not “contain” the act, though its results might be said to “pre-exist virtually” within him. And the act does not “synecdochically share” in the agent, though certain ways of acting may be said to induce corresponding moods or traits of character. To this writer, at least, the act-agent ratio more strongly suggests a temporal or sequential relationship than a purely positional or geometric one. The agent is an author of his acts, which are descended from him, being good progeny if he is good, or bad progeny if he is bad, wise progeny if he is wise, silly progeny if he is silly. And, conversely, his acts can make him or remake him in accordance with their nature. They would be his product and/or he would be theirs. Similarly, when we use the scene-act and scene-agent ratios in reverse (as with the sequence from act or agent to corresponding scene) the image of derivation is stronger than the image of position.

One discerns the workings of the act-agent ratio in the statement of a former cabinet member to the effect that "you can safely lodge responsibility with the President of the United States," owing to "the tremendously sobering influence of the Presidency on any man, especially in foreign affairs." Here, the sheer nature of an office, or position, is said to produce important modifications in a man's character. Even a purely symbolic act, such as the donning of priestly vestments, is often credited with such a result. And I have elsewhere quoted a remark by a political commentator: "There seems to be something about the judicial robes that not only hypnotizes the beholder but transforms the wearer."

Ordinarily, the scene-act and scene-agent ratios can be extended to cover such cases. Thus, the office of the Presidency may be treated as a "situation" affecting the agent who occupies it. And the donning of vestments brings about a symbolic situation that can likewise be treated in terms of the scene-agent ratio. But there are cases where a finer discrimination is needed. For instance, the resistance of the Russian armies to the Nazi invasion could be explained "scenically" in terms of the Soviet political and economic structure; or one could use the act-agent ratio, attributing the power and tenacity to "Russian" traits of character. However, in deriving the act from the scene, one would have to credit socialism as a major scenic factor, whereas a derivation of the act from the agents would allow for a much more felicitous explanation from the standpoint of capitalist apologetics.

Thus, one of our leading newspapers asked itself whether Hitler failed "to evaluate a force older than communism, more instinctive than the mumbling cult of Stalin—the attachment of the peasant masses to 'Mother Russia,' the incoherent but cohesive force of Russian patriotism." And it concluded that "the Russian soldier has proved the depth of his devotion to the Russian soil." Patriotism, attachment to the "mother," devotion to the soil—these are essentially motives located in the agent, hence requiring no acknowledgment of socialist motives.

There is, or course, scenic reference in the offering; but the stress upon the term, agent, encourages one to be content with a very vague treat-

ment of scene, with no mention of the political and economic factors that form a major aspect of national scenes. Indeed, though our concern here is with the Grammar of Motives, we may note a related resource of Rhetoric: one may deflect attention from scenic matters by situating the motives of an act in the agent (as were one to account for wars purely on the basis of a "warlike instinct" in people): or conversely, one may deflect attention from the criticism of personal motives by deriving an act or attitude not from traits of the agent but from the nature of the situation.

The difference between the use of the scene-act and act-agent ratios can also be seen in the motivations of "democracy." Many people in Great Britain and the United States think of these nations as "vessels" of democracy. And democracy is felt to reside in us, intrinsically, because we are "a democratic people." Democratic acts are, in this mode of thought, derived from democratic agents, agents who would remain democratic in character even though conditions required the temporary curtailment or abrogation of basic democratic rights. But if one employed, instead, the scene-act ratio, one might hold that there are certain "democratic situations" and certain "situations favorable to dictatorship, or requiring dictatorship." The technological scene itself, which requires the planning of a world order, might be thought such as to favor a large measure of "dictatorship" in our political ways (at least as contrasted with the past norms of democracy). By the act-agent ratio, a "democratic people" would continue to perform "democratic acts"; and to do so they would even, if necessary, go to the extent of restoring former conditions most favorable to democracy. By the scene-act ratio, if the "situation" itself is no longer a "democratic" one, even an "essentially democratic" people will abandon democratic ways.

A picturesque effect can be got in imaginative writings by the conflicting use of the scene-act and act-agent ratios. One may place "fools" in "wise situations," so that in their acts they are "wiser than they know." Children are often "wise" in this sense. It is a principle of incongruity that Chaplin has built upon. Empson would call it an aspect of "pastoral."

Here is an interesting shift of ratios in a cita-

tion from an address by Francis Biddle when he was Attorney General:

The change of the world in terms of time and space in the past hundred years—railroad, telegraph, telephone, automobile, movie, airplane, radio—had hardly found an echo in our political growth, except in the necessary patches and arrangements which have made it so extraordinarily complex without making it more responsive to our needs.

Note first that all the changes listed here refer to *agencies* of communication (the pragmatist emphasis). Then, having in their accumulation become scenic, they are said to have had a motivating effect upon our political acts (“growth”). But though the complexity of the scene has called forth “the necessary patches and arrangements” (another expression for “acts”), we are told that there are still unsatisfied “needs.” Now, “needs” are a property of agents; hence an act designed to produce a situation “more responsive to our needs” would have its most direct locus of motivation under the heading of agent, particularly if these were said to be “primal needs” rather than “new needs,” since “new needs” might best be treated as “a function of the situation.” I borrow the expression from a prominent educator, Edward C. Lindeman, who shortly after the Japanese attack at Pearl Harbor complained of a tendency “to believe that morale will now become a function of the situation and that hence it is less important to plan for education.”

The ratios may often be interpreted as principles of selectivity rather than as thoroughly causal relationships. That is, in any given historical situation, there are persons of many sorts, with a corresponding variety in the kinds of acts that would be most representative of them. Thus, a given political situation may be said not to change people in their essential character, but rather to favor, or bring to the fore (to “vote for”), certain kinds of agents (with their appropriate actions) rather than others. Quick shifts in political exigencies do not of a sudden make all men “fundamentally” daring, or all men “fundamentally” cautious, in keeping with the nature of the scene; but rather, one situation calls for cautious men as its appropriate “voice,” another for daring men, one for traditionalists, another for in-

novators. And the inappropriate acts and temperaments simply do not “count for” so much as they would in situations for which they are a better fit. One set of scenic conditions will “implement” and “amplify” given ways and temperaments which, in other situations would remain mere potentialities, unplanted seeds, “mute inglorious Miltons.” Indeed, there are times when out-and-out materialistic philosophies, which are usually thought of as “tough,” can be of great solace to us precisely because they encourage us to believe in the ratios as a selective principle. For we may tell ourselves that the very nature of the materials with which men deal will not permit men to fall below a certain level of sloth, error, greed, and dishonesty in their relations with one another, as the cooperative necessities of the situation implement and amplify only those traits of character and action that serve the ends of progress.

There is, of course, a circular possibility in the terms. If an agent acts in keeping with his nature as an agent (act-agent ratio), he may change the nature of the scene accordingly (scene-act ratio), and thereby establish a state of unity between himself and his world (scene-agent ratio). Or the scene may call for a certain kind of act, which makes for a corresponding kind of agent, thereby likening agent to scene. Or our act may change us and our scene, producing a mutual conformity. Such would be the Edenic paradigm, applicable if we were capable of total acts that produce total transformations. In reality, we are capable of but partial acts, acts that but partially represent us and that produce but partial transformations. Indeed, if all the ratios were adjusted to one another with perfect Edenic symmetry, they would be immutable in one unending “moment.”

Theological notions of creation and recreation bring us nearest to the concept of total acts. Among the controversies that centered around Lutheranism, for instance, there was a doctrine, put forward by the theologian Striegel, who held that Christ’s work on the Cross had the effect of changing God’s attitude towards mankind, and that men born after the historical Christ can take advantage of this change. Here we have something like the conversion of God himself, brought about by Christ’s sacrifice (a total action, a total

passion). From the godlike nature came a godlike act that acted upon God himself. And as regards mankind, it amounts to a radical change in the very structure of the Universe, since it changed God's attitude towards men, and in God's attitude towards men resides the ultimate ground of human action.

A similar pattern is implicated in the close of Aeschylus's trilogy, the *Oresteia*, where the sufferings of Orestes terminate in the changed identity of the Furies, signalized by their change of name from Erinyes to Eumenides. Under the influence of the "new gods," their nature as motives takes on a totally different accent; for whereas it was their previous concern to avenge evil, it will henceforth be their concern to reward the good. An *inner* goad has thus been cast forth, externalized; whereby, as Athena says, men may be at peace within, their "dread passion for renown" thereafter being motivated solely by "war from without."

Only the scene-act and scene-agent ratios fit with complete comfort in this chapter on the relation between container and contained. The act-agent ratio tugs at its edges; and we shall close noting concerns that move us still farther afield. In the last example, we referred to God's *attitude*. Where would attitude fall within our pattern? Often it is the *preparation* for an act, which would make it a kind of symbolic act, or incipient act. But in its character as a state of *mind* that may or may not lead to an act, it is quite clearly to be classed under the head of *agent*. We also spoke of Christ's sacrifice as "a total action, a total passion." This suggests other "grammatical" possibilities that involve a dialectic pairing of "active" and "passive." And in the reference to a *state* of mind, we casually invite a dialectic pairing of "actus" and "status."²

This group of concerns will be examined in due course. Meanwhile, we should be reminded that the term *agent* embraces not only all words general or specific for person, actor, character, individual, hero, villain, father, doctor, engineer, but also any words, moral or functional, for *patient*, and words for the motivational properties or agents, such as "drives," "instincts," "states of mind." We may

²"Action" and "condition." [Ed.]

also have collective words for agent, such as nation, group, the Freudian "super ego," Rousseau's "*volonté générale*,"³ the Fichtean "generalized I."

ANTINOMIES OF DEFINITION

Paradox of Substance

There is a set of words comprising what we might call the Stance family, for they all derive from a concept of place, or placement. In the Indo-Germanic languages the root for this family is *stā*, to stand (Sanskrit, *sthā*). And out of it there has developed this essential family, comprising such members as: consist, constancy, constitution, contrast, destiny, ecstasy, existence, hypostatize, obstacle, stage, state, status, statute, stead, subsist, and system. In German, an important member of the Stance family is *stellen*, to place, a root that figures in *Vorstellung*, a philosopher's and psychologist's word for representation, conception, idea, image.

Surely, one could build a whole philosophic universe by tracking down the ramifications of this one root. It would be "implemented" too, for it would have stables, staffs, staves, stalls, stamens, stamina, stanchions, stanzas, steeds, stools, and studs. It would be a quite regional world, in which our Southern Agrarians might take their stand.⁴

Unquestionably, the most prominent philosophic member of this family is "substance." Or at least it used to be, before John Locke greatly impaired its prestige, so that many thinkers today explicitly banish the term from their vocabularies. But there is cause to believe that, in banishing the *term*, far from banishing its *functions* one merely conceals them. Hence, from the dramatic point of view, we are admonished to dwell upon the word, considering its embarrassments and its potentialities of transformation, so that we may detect its covert influence even in cases where it is overtly absent. Its relation to our five terms will become apparent as we proceed.

³"General will" (i.e., the will of society). [Ed.]

⁴*I'll Take My Stand: The South and the Agrarian Tradition* (1930) is the manifesto of the Southern Agrarian movement headed by, among others, John Crowe Ransom, Robert Penn Warren, and Allen Tate. [Ed.]

First we should note that there is, etymologically, a pun lurking behind the Latin roots. The word is often used to designate what some thing or agent intrinsically is, as *per* these meanings in Webster's: "the most important element in any existence; the characteristic and essential components of anything; the main part; essential import; purport." Yet etymologically "substance" is a scenic word. Literally, a person's or a thing's substance would be something that stands beneath or supports the person or thing.

Let us cite a relevant passage in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (Chapter XXIII, "Of Our Complex Ideas of Substances"):

1. *Ideas of particular substances, how made.*

The mind being, as I have declared, furnished with a great number of the simple ideas conveyed in by the senses, as they are found in exterior things, or by reflection on its own operations, takes notice, also, that a certain number of these simple ideas go constantly together; which being presumed to belong to one thing, and words being suited to common apprehensions, and made use of for quick despatch, are called, so united in one subject, by one name; which, by inadvertency, we are apt afterward to talk of and consider as one simple idea, which indeed is a complication of many ideas together; because, as I have said, not imagining how these simple ideas can subsist by themselves, we accustom ourselves to suppose some *substratum*, wherein they do subsist, and from which they do result; which therefore we call *substance*.

2. *Our obscure idea of substance in general.* —

So that if anyone will examine himself concerning his notion of pure substance in general, he will find he has no other idea of it at all, but only a supposition of he knows not what support of such qualities which are capable of producing simple ideas in us; which qualities are commonly called accidents. If anyone should be asked, what is the subject wherein color or weight inheres, he would have nothing to say but, the solid extended parts. And if he were demanded, what is it that solidity and extension inhere in, he would not be in a much better case than the Indian before mentioned, who, saying that the world was supported by a great elephant, was asked, what the elephant rested on; to which his answer was, a great tortoise; but being again pressed to know what gave support to the broad-backed tortoise, replied—something, he knew not

what. And thus here, as in all other cases where we use words without having clear and distinct ideas, we talk like children: who, being questioned what such a thing is which they know not, readily give this satisfactory answer, that it is *something*; which in truth signifies no more, when so used, either by children or men, but that they know not what; and that the thing they pretend to know and talk of, is what they have no distinct idea of at all, and so are perfectly ignorant of it, and in the dark. The idea, then, we have, to which we give the *general* name substance, being nothing but the supposed, but unknown support of those qualities we find existing, which we imagine cannot subsist *sine re substante*, "without something to support them," we call that support *substantia*; which according to the true import of the word, is, in plain English, standing under, or upholding.

The same structure is present in the corresponding Greek word, *hypostasis*, literally, a standing under: hence anything set under, such as stand, base, bottom, prop, support, stay; hence metaphorically, that which lies at the bottom of a thing, as the groundwork, subject matter, argument of a narrative, speech, poem; a starting point, a beginning. And then come the metaphysical meanings (we are consulting Liddell and Scott): subsistence, reality, real being (as applied to mere appearance), nature, essence. In ecclesiastical Greek, the word corresponds to the Latin *Persona*, a Person of the Trinity (which leads us back into the old argument between the homoousians and the homoiousians, as to whether the three persons were of the same or similar substance). Medically, the word can designate a suppression, as of humours that ought to come to the surface; also matter deposited in the urine; and of liquids generally, the sediment, lees, dregs, grounds. When we are examining, from the standpoint of the Symbolic, metaphysical tracts that would deal with "fundamentals" and get to the "bottom" of things, this last set of meanings can admonish us to be on the lookout for what Freud might call "cloacal" motives, furtively interwoven with speculations that may on the surface seem wholly abstract. An "acceptance" of the universe on this plane may also be a roundabout way of "making peace with the faeces."

But returning to the pun as it figures in the citation from Locke, we might point up the pattern

as sharply as possible by observing that the word "substance," used to designate what a thing *is*, derives from a word designating something that a thing *is not*. That is, though used to designate something *within* the thing, *intrinsic* to it, the word etymologically refers to something *outside* the thing, *extrinsic* to it. Or otherwise put: the word in its etymological origins would refer to an attribute of the thing's *context*, since that which supports or underlies a thing would be a part of the thing's context. And a thing's context, being outside or beyond the thing, would be something that the thing *is not*. . . .

Intrinsic and Extrinsic

The treatment of material properties as a "state" brings the actus-status pair in line with the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic substance, or between motivations within the agent and motivations derived from scenic sources that "support" (or "substand") the agent. In the introduction to his *Philosophy of History*, where Hegel places Matter in dialectical opposition to Spirit, he clearly begins by equating Matter with the extrinsic aspect of substance and Spirit with its intrinsic aspect:

As the essence of Matter is Gravity, so, on the other hand, we may affirm that the substance, the essence of Spirit is Freedom. . . . Matter possesses gravity in virtue of its tendency toward a central point. It is essentially composite; consisting of parts that *exclude* each other. It seeks its Unity; and therefore exhibits itself as self-destructive, as verging toward its opposite (an indivisible point). If it could attain this, it would be Matter no longer, it would have perished. It strives after the realization of its Idea; for in Unity it exists *ideally*. Spirit, on the contrary, may be defined as that which has its centre in itself. It has not a unity outside itself, but has already found it; it exists *in and with itself*. Matter has its essence out of itself; Spirit is *self-contained existence* (Bei-sich-selbst-sein). Now this is freedom, exactly. For if I am dependent, my being is referred to something else which I am not; I cannot exist independently of something external. I am free, on the contrary, when my existence depends upon myself.

However, before he has proceeded very far, remarks on the relation between the potential and

the actual lead into the peculiarly Hegelian theory of the State as the vessel of freedom. For the Spirit is free, we are told, and the State is "the perfect embodiment of Spirit." But by the time we arrive at this point, the intrinsic and the extrinsic have begun subtly to change places. One can discern the ambiguity by experimentally shifting the accent in Hegel's formula for the nature of the State. We may say either "embodiment of *Spirit*" or "*embodiment* of Spirit." Or, since "embodiment" is here a synonym for "materialization," we could make the ambiguity still more apparent by rephrasing it as a choice between "materialization of *Spirit*" and "*materialization* of Spirit." For the expression itself is got by the merging of antithetical terms. Hence, when you have put them together, by shifting the stress you can proclaim one or the other as the essence of the pair. Accepting Hegel's definition of Matter, only a State that is the "materialization of *Spirit*" would be "essentially" free. But a State that is the "*materialization* of Spirit" would be the very *antithesis* of freedom (and this was precisely the interpretation given by the Marxist reversal of the Hegelian dialectic).

Indeed, we can take it as a reliable rule of thumb that, whenever we find a distinction between the internal and the external, the intrinsic and the extrinsic, the within and the without, (as with Korzybski's distinction between happenings "inside the skin" and happenings "outside the skin") we can expect to encounter the paradoxes of substance.

Recently, for instance, a "gerontologist," whose specialty is the study of "aging as a physiological process," is reported to have said in an address to a body of chemists:

Aging, like life in general, is a chemical process, and just as chemistry has been able to improve on nature in many respects, virtually creating a new world by reshuffling nature's molecules, so it may be expected that eventually chemistry will learn to stimulate artificially those powers of "intrinsic resistance" to disease with which man is born.

"Intrinsic resistance," you will note, is a concept that situates a motivational source within the body as agent. But the use of chemical means to stimulate this internal motive would involve the

transformation of this "intrinsic" motive into an "extrinsic" motive, since it would become but the channel or vessel through which the chemical materials ("scenic," administered "from without") would affect the chemistry of the body. Indeed, since the body is but chemistry, and all outside the body is but chemistry, the very mode of thought that forms a concept of the "intrinsic" in these terms must also by the same terms dissolve it. Everything being chemical, the physiological center of "intrinsic resistance" is but a function of the chemical scene. In fact, insofar as chemical stimulants of the required sort were found, a dependence upon them would be a dependence upon purely *external* agencies. And far from "stimulating" intrinsic resistance, the chemicals should be expected to cause a *weakening* of it, to the extent that the economy of the body grew to require these chemicals. The only place where an intrinsic motive, as a genuinely internal activation, could be said to figure in materialistic medicine is on the occasions when physicians come upon illnesses in which the chances of recovery are felt to depend upon the *mental attitude* of the patient (whether he "wants" to recover). Here one has an intrinsic motive (involving an action) in contrast with such a motive as is supplied by the administering of chemicals (involving sheer motion).

One of the most common fallacies in the attempt to determine the intrinsic is the equating of the intrinsic with the unique. We recall an instance of this nominalist extreme in an essay by a literary critic who exhorted his fellows to discern the quality of a given poet's lines by finding in exactly what way they were distinct from the lines of every other poet (somewhat as advertisements recommending rival brands of the same product play up some one "talking point" that is said to distinguish this brand from all its competitors). Yet the intrinsic value of a poet's lines must also reside, to a very great degree, in attributes that his work shares with many other poets. We cannot define by differentia alone; the differentiated also has significant attributes as members of its class. The heresy that would define human nature solely in terms of some more inclusive category, such as chemistry, or protoplasm, or colloids, has as its over-compensatory

counterpart the heresy that would define solely in terms of distinctive traits, actual or imputed. Thus, an article in one of our best magazines is recommended on the grounds that it "applies anthropological method to the diagnosis of our distinctive cultural traits." This is, to be sure, a legitimate limitation of subject matter for treatment within the scope of one article; but we should be admonished against the assumption that even a wholly accurate description of our culture in terms of its distinctive traits alone could possibly give us a just interpretation of its motives. Indeed, we can discern a variant of the same error in nationalist and regionalist concepts of motivation as we get in the oversimplifications of literature: the treatment of motivational parts as though they were the motivational whole.

The search for the intrinsic frequently leads to the selection of calculi postulating various assortments of "instincts," "drives," "urges," etc. as the motivational springs of biologic organisms in general and of human organisms in particular. Materialistic science prefers this style of vocabulary because it assigns *scenic* terms to motives situated in the *agent*; and scenic words generally seem so much more "real" than other words, even though such lists can be expanded or contracted *ad lib.*, quite as suits one's dialectical preferences. Though the treatment of intrinsic motivation in such terms is usually made in good faith, it can also well serve as a rhetorical deflection of social criticism. For instance, if a reformer would advocate important political or social changes on the ground that the present state of affairs stimulates wars, he can be "scientifically refuted" by a calculus which postulates a "combative instinct," or "drive towards aggression," or "natural urge to kill" in all people or certain types of people. For if such motives are intrinsic to human agents, they may be expected to demand expression whatever the social and political structure may be.

When a person has his mind set upon the interpreting of human motivation in a calculus that features an innate "combative instinct" or "natural urge to kill," one may as well accept his decision as a stubborn fact of nature; instead of trying to dispel it, one should try to get around it. Recalling the paradox of substance, for instance,

we are reminded that such “drives” or “urges” are like “tendencies” or “trends,” which we discussed when on the subject of “directional” substance. And the man who would postulate an “instinct to kill” can be asked to round out his dialectic by postulating a contrary “instinct not to kill.” For there is certainly as much empirical evidence that men let one another live as there is evidence that they kill one another. Hence, whenever such words designate motives that may or may not prevail, we can at least insist that they be balanced with their dialectical counterpart. And once the pattern is thus completed, we are able to see beyond these peculiarly “intrinsic” motives to “extrinsic” or “scenic” motives, in the sense of situations which stimulate one rather than the other of the paired motives, as some situations call forth a greater amount of combativeness and destructiveness, whereas other situations call forth a greater amount of cooperation and construction. (There are, of course, complications here that require much more discriminatory calculation than could be got by confinement to such pairings. A certain kind of cooperation is stimulated by war, for instance, both at the time and as the result of new methods which, originally designed for military aggression, can later be adapted for peaceful commercial exchange.)

Spinoza defines substance as “the cause of itself” (*causa sui*). And we can see how this formulation applies to the search for the intrinsic when we contrast supernaturalist and humanist strategies of motivation. Supernaturalist strategies derive the attributes of human substance and motive from God as their ancestral source, whereas humanistic strategies situate the motivational principles within human agents themselves. In brief, humanists assign to man an *inherent* or *intrinsic* dignity, whereas supernaturalists assign to man a *derived* dignity. Any motive humanistically postulated in the agent would be a *causa sui* insofar as it is not deduced from any cause outside itself.

Since agents require placement in scenes, humanism gets its scenic counterpart in naturalism. There is also, of course, a “supernaturalist humanism,” but it would be exactly the same as the kind of doctrine we here call simply supernaturalism. And similarly what we here call human-

ism could be characterized more fully as “naturalistic humanism,” or simply “naturalism,” as in the following citation from an essay by John Dewey, assigning an intrinsic motive to human nature:

Naturalism finds the values in question, the worth and dignity of men and women, founded in human nature itself, in the connections, actual and potential, of human beings with one another in their natural social relationships. Not only that, but it is ready at any time to maintain the thesis that a foundation within man and nature is a much sounder one than is one alleged to exist outside the constitution of man and nature.

By placing man and nature together, in dialectical opposition to the supernatural, Dr. Dewey’s remarks here somewhat conceal from us the fact that we are shifting between a scenic location for motives and a location within the agent. Only the second kind would be “intrinsic” to people; the other kind would be “derivative” from nature as scene instead of from super-nature as scene. (Both “foundation” and “constitution” are “stance” words, hence capable of merging intrinsic and extrinsic reference.)

It is possible that the reverse perspective so characteristic of Russian ikons may have originated in a theory of the intrinsic, as is indicated in this citation from *The Burlington Magazine* for October 1929 (“Greco: the Epilogue to Byzantine Culture,” by Robert Byron):

It has been suggested that the habit of inverted perspective which the Greeks perpetuated in Duccio and Giotto, derived from the artist’s imagining himself within the object portrayed; so that as it progressed in the direction of the beholder it necessarily diminished. Such indeed was the Byzantine vision of form as expressed in terms of light and dark. The head, the arm, was conceived primarily as a dark mass, instead of as a given space to be invested with form by the application of shadow. This principle is explicitly stated in Denys of Fourn’s “Guide to Painting” in relation to flesh depiction; and the interest of this instruction lies in the fact that it exhibits the exact converse of the rules for the same process prescribed in mediæval western manuals such as that of Cennino Cennini.

The notion of “the artist’s imagining himself within the object portrayed” would seem to carry

the cult of the intrinsic to the point where it exemplifies the paradox of purity, as with the wag who said that only the homosexual man can be the true admirer of women, since he carries his admiration to such an extent that, identifying himself with them, he adopts their very point of view, and thus falls in love with men. For an “intrinsic” observation of women would look, not towards women, but towards men.

The Rhetoric of Substance

The ambiguity of substance affords, as one might expect, a major resource of rhetoric. We can appreciate this by referring again to the citation from Locke, when he says that in speaking of substance “we talk like children: who, being questioned what such a thing is which they know not, readily gives this satisfactory answer, that it is *something*; which in truth signifies no more, when so used, either by children or men, but that they know not what; and that the thing they pretend to know and talk of, is what they have no distinct idea of at all, and so are perfectly ignorant of it, and in the dark.” For “the *general* name substance” is “nothing but the supposed, but unknown, support of those qualities we find existing.” The most clear-sounding of words can thus be used for the vaguest of reference, quite as we speak of “a certain thing” when we have no particular thing in mind. And so rock-bottom a study as a treatise on the nature of substance might, from this point of view, more accurately be entitled, “A Treatise on the Nature of I-don’t-know-what.” One might thus express a state of considerable vagueness in the imposing accents of a juridic solidity.

We may even go a step further and note that one may say “it is *substantially* true” precisely at a time when on the basis of the evidence, it would be much more accurate to say, “it is not true.” And even a human slave could be defined in Christian doctrine as “substantially” free, by reason of qualities which he had inherited “substantially” from his creator. Even in cases where the nature of the case does not justify the usage grammatically, it can be used without strain for rhetorical purposes. What handier linguistic resource could a rhetorician want than an ambigui-

ty whereby he can say “The state of affairs is substantially such-and-such,” instead of having to say “The state of affairs *is* and/or *is not* such-and-such”?

There is a similar usage in the expression, “in principle” (a word furthermore that is literally a “first,” as we realize when we recall its etymological descent from a word meaning: beginning, commencement, origin). So diplomats can skirt some commendable but embarrassing proposal by accepting it “in principle,” a stylistic nicety that was once very popular with the League of Nations. Positivists who would discard the category of substance assert that the only meaningful propositions are those which are capable of scientific proof; and having thus outlawed the conveniences of a substantive rhetoric, they next blandly concede that the scientific proof is not always possible *actually*, but must be possible “in principle”—which would leave them pretty much where they began, except that their doctrine won’t allow them to admit it. By this device, we can even characterize as “universally valid” a proposition that may in fact be denied by whole classes of people. As one controversialist has phrased it: “To say that a proposition is valid is to say that *in principle* it can secure the universal agreement of all who abide by scientific method.”

Often, of course, this function of language is preserved when there are no such telltale expressions (such as “substantially,” “essentially,” “in principle,” or “in the long run”) to make it quickly apparent. For instance, a list of citizens’ signatures had been collected for a petition asking that a certain politician’s name be placed on the ballot. In court it was shown that some of these signatures were genuine, but that a great many others were false. Thereupon the judge invalidated the lot on the grounds that, the whole list being a mixture of the false and the genuine, it was “saturated” with fraud. He here ruled in effect that the list was substantially or essentially fraudulent. The judgment was reversed by a higher court which ruled that, since the required number of genuine signatures had been obtained, the false signatures should be simply ignored. That is, the genuine signatures should be considered in themselves, not contextually.

Two Kinds of Departure

Since the five key terms can be considered as “principles,” and since the margins of overlap among them permit a thinker to consider the genius of one term as “substantially” participant in the genius of another, the ambiguity of the substantial makes it possible to use terms as points of departure in two senses. Thus we may speak in the name of God because this expression is the summation of our thinking. Or precisely because we speak in the name of God, we may be freed to develop modes of thought that lead away from supernaturalism, since absolute conviction about religion might serve as ground for a study of nature. And whereas “naturalism” in its beginnings was a consistent title, referring to man in *nature*, it gradually became transformed into a surreptitiously compensatory title, referring to technological methods and ideals that are almost the antithesis of nature, with nature itself seen in terms of technology and the monetary. Thus, ironically, though much of the resonance in the term “nature” derives from the supernaturalist attitude, which thought of natural law as derivative from the divine, in time the *distinction* between the natural and the divine become transformed into a *contrast* between the natural and the divine. Or, if we think of “God” as the whole and “nature” as a part, we could say that the supernaturalist treated nature as a part *synecdochically* related to the whole, whereas in time naturalism treated this as a *divisive* relation. Or, to adopt a very suggestive usage in Charles M. Perry’s *Toward a Dimensional Realism*, the notion of nature as a *part of God* could be converted into the notion of nature as *apart from God*.

But insofar as this divisive emphasis developed, and the secular appeal of “nature” relied less and less upon connotations of the supernatural, “nature” gained resonance from a new source, the romantic reaction against the “unnatural” world progressively created by the technological “conquest” of nature. In this way the selection of “naturalism” as the name for a philosophy of applied science may be *compensatory* rather than *consistent* (somewhat as though one were to call a philosophy “humanistic” because it aimed at the systematic elimina-

tion of traits that were formerly considered characteristically human, or as religious doctrines of “personalism” may be formulated, not because the individual person really is in a position of paramount importance, but precisely because he is *not*).

Such tactics of entitling are as legitimate as any other, once the irony has been made explicit. Indeed, philosophies are never quite “consistent” in this sense. All thought tends to name things not because they are precisely as named, but because they are not quite as named, and the name is designated as a somewhat hortatory device, to take up the slack. As others have pointed out, for instance, if the philosophy of “utilitarianism” were wholly correct, there would be no need for the philosophy. For men would spontaneously and inevitably follow the dictates of utility; whereas in actuality the doctrine proclaiming the ubiquity of the utilitarian motive was formulated to serve as a *plea* for the deliberate consulting of the utilitarian motive.

From such ambiguity is derived that irony of historical development whereby the very strength in the affirming of a given term may the better enable men to make a world that departs from it. For the affirming of the term as their god-term enables men to go far afield without sensing a loss of orientation. And by the time the extent of their departure is enough to become generally obvious, the stability of the new order they have built in the name of the old order gives them the strength to abandon their old god-term and adopt another. Hence, noting that something so highly unnatural as technology developed under the name of naturalism, we might ironically expect that, were “technologism” to become the name for “naturalism,” the philosophy would be the first step towards a development *away from* technology. And as indication that this is no mere improvising, the philosophy of “operationalism,” modeled after technological procedures, embodies a totally different concept of meaning than the one which, we know as a historical fact, figured as an incentive in the *invention* of technological devices and their corresponding mathematical formulae. Hence, if carried out rigorously, it would lead to the *stabilization* of technological operations rather than to the development of new

ones. As “naturalism” would lead us, via technology, away from nature, so perhaps “operationalism” might be a way of leading us, in the name of technological operations, away from technology.

It has been said by one of Descartes’s editors, John Veitch, that when Descartes questioned an old dogma, rather than attacking it head on, he aimed at “sapping its foundations.” And he got rid of traditional principles “not so much by direct attack as by substituting for them new proofs and grounds of reasoning.” Veitch also quotes a defender of Descartes who says ironically that his enemies called him an atheist “apparently because he had given new proofs of the existence of God.” But these new proofs were in effect new qualifications of God. And in this capacity they subtly changed the nature of “God” as a term for motives, so that those who understood by a God only the character possessing the attributes of the old proofs were justified in calling Descartes an “atheist.” Here, subtly, the ambiguous resources in the point of departure were being utilized.

As regards the principles of humanism, we may note that a supernatural grounding of humanism is “consistent” in the sense that a personal principle is ascribed to the ultimate ground of human action. And having thus been put in, it is there for the philosopher to take out, when deriving the principles of specifically human action by deduction from the nature of the universal ground. A naturalistic grounding of humanism, on the other hand, is “compensatory,” in that personal agents are placed in a non-personal scene. The first strategy reasons by a “therefore,” the second by a “however.”

The Centrality of Substance

Contemporary scientific theory, in proposing to abandon the categories of substance and causality, has done speculation a good turn. For it has made clear wherein the difference between philosophic and scientific terminologies of motivation resides. Philosophy, like common sense, must think of human motivation dramatically, in terms of actions and its ends. But a science is freed of philosophic taints only insofar as it confines itself to terms of motion and arrested mo-

tion (figure, structure). This convention, almost Puritanical in its severity (surely we should not be far wrong in calling it a secularized variant of Puritanism) has brought about such magnification of human powers that any “objection” to it would have about as much force as an attempt to “refute” Niagara Falls. But such results, however spectacular, do not justify an attempt to abide by the same terminological conventions when treating of human motives. For one could confine the study of action within the terms of motion only by resigning oneself to gross misrepresentations of life as we normally experience it.

Though we here lay great stress upon the puns and other word play in men’s ideas of motivation, we do not thereby conclude that such linguistic tactics are “nothing but” puns and word play. Rather, we take it that men’s linguistic behavior here reflects real paradoxes in the nature of the world itself—antinomies that could be resolved only if men were able, not in thought, as with the program of Hegelian idealism, but in actual concrete operations, to create an entire universe.

However, strictly for the purposes of our Grammar, we need not defend as much. One might hypothetically grant that the treatment of motives in terms of “action” and “substance” is wholly fallacious, yet defend it as central to the placement of statements about motives. Relinquishing all claims for it as a “philosopher’s stone,” we might then make claims for it secondarily, as “a philosopher’s stone for the synopsis of writings that have sought the philosopher’s stone.” Men have talked about things in many ways, but the pentad offers a synoptic way to talk about their talk-about. For the resources of the five terms figure in the utterances about motives, throughout all human history. And even the most modern of scientific tracts can be adequately placed only as a development in this long line. From this point of view, terminologies of motion and “conditioning” are to be treated as *dialectical* enterprises designed to *transcend* terminologies of action and substance.

At the very best, we admit, each time you scrutinize a concept of substance, it dissolves into thin air. But conversely, the moment you relax your gaze a bit, it reforms again. For things

do have intrinsic natures, whatever may be the quandaries that crowd upon us as soon as we attempt to decide definitively what these intrinsic natures are. And only by systematically dwelling upon the paradoxes of substance could we possibly equip ourselves to guard against the concealment of "substantialist" thought in schemes overtly designed to avoid it. Yet these schemes are usually constructed by men who condemn dialectical operations so thoroughly that, in their aversion, they cannot adequately observe them, and are accordingly prompt to persuade themselves that *their* terminology is not dialectical, whereas every terminology is dialectical by sheer reason of the fact that it is a terminology. If you will, call the category of substance sheer error. Yet it is so fertile a source of error, that only by learning to recognize its nature *from within* could we hope to detect its many disguises from without. Such thoughts apply particularly to Alfred Korzybski's admonitions against Aristotelian "elementalism"; for his aversion leads to so evasive a treatment of the subject that in a very long book he contrives to convey little more than a *negative attitude* towards it.

So, in sum: The transformations which we here study as a Grammar are not "illusions," but citable realities. The structural relations involved are observable realities. Nothing is more imperiously there for observation and study than the tactics people employ when they would injure or gratify one another—and one can readily demonstrate the role of substantiation in such tactics. To call a man a friend or brother is to proclaim him consubstantial with oneself, one's values or purposes. To call a man a bastard is to attack him by attacking his whole line, his "authorship," his "principle" or "motive" (as expressed in terms of the familial). An epithet assigns substance doubly, for in stating the character of the object it at the same time contains an implicit program of action with regard to the object, thus serving as motive.

So, one could, if he wished, maintain that all theology, metaphysics, philosophy, criticism, poetry, drama, fiction, political exhortation, historical interpretation, and personal statements about the lovable and the hateful—one could if he wanted to be as drastically thorough as some of our positivists now seem to want to be—main-

tain that every bit of this is nonsense. Yet these words of nonsense would themselves be real words, involving real tactics, having real demonstrable relationships, and demonstrably affecting relationships. And as such, a study of their opportunities, necessities, and embarrassments would be central to the study of human motives.

The design on a piece of primitive pottery would be wholly symbolic or allegorical. But a drawing that accurately reproduces this design in a scientific treatise would be not symbolic or allegorical, but realistic. And similarly, even when statements about the *nature of the world* are abstractly metaphysical, statements about the *nature of these statements* can be as empirical as the statement, "This is Mr. Smith," made when introducing Mr. Smith in the accepted manner. . . .

Grammatical Steps to Naturalism

There are two primary generalizations that characterize the quality of motives: freedom and necessity. And whenever they appear, we may know that we are in the presence of "God-terms," or names for the ultimates of motivation. Doctrines wherein Creator and Creation are not ontologically collapsed into a unity give us a kind of double genesis for motives. Consideration in terms of the *Creation* leads to "necessity" when, in accordance with the logic of geometric substance, all the parts of nature are treated as necessarily related to one another in their necessary relationship to the whole. For "necessity" names the extrinsic conditions that determine a motion and must be taken into account when one is planning an action. And consideration in terms of the *Creator* leads to "freedom" when, in accordance with the logic of tribal substance, men "substantially" derive freedom (or self-movement) from God as its ancestral source. This double genesis allows for free will *and* determinism simultaneously, rather than requiring a flat choice between them. Also, owing to the ambiguity of substance, it permits men to be "substantially" free even when, as regards their natural conditions, they are actually enslaved or imprisoned.

An ancestral source of freedom is in one sense extrinsic to the individual, inasmuch as progenitor is distinct from offspring. Yet origin is intrinsic

sic to the individual in the sense that this genetic or generic fact about his nature is also possessed *within* him (just as members of a given biological species each possess within them, genitively, the substance or motives proper to the species generally). And as regards the geometric logic, when a thing's intrinsic nature is defined as part of a universal whole, the reference here is to a context, hence extrinsic. Formally, the issue figures in metaphysical speculations as to whether relations are internal or external, an ambiguity which, from the dramatist point of view, is implicit in the fact that one can shift between familial and geometric definition, stressing either person (agent) or ground (scene) as a locus of motives.

In pantheistic schemes, the principles of personal (intrinsic) freedom and scenic (extrinsic) determination must collapse into a unity that corresponds to the ontological merging of Creator and Creation. That is, "freedom" and "necessity" become identical, with each definable in terms of the other. Spinoza's pantheism meets this requirement in defining substance as *causa sui*,⁵ whereby the concepts of freedom and necessity are merged grammatically in the *reflexive*. The reflexive form satisfies the requirement, putting active and passive together, since one can be simultaneously free and constrained if the constraints are those of one's own choosing, an identification of scene and philosopher-agent that is possible inasmuch as both nature and the philosophy are rational.

Spinoza likewise adopts the expressions, *natura naturans* and *natura naturata* (or "naturing nature" and "natured nature"). Grammatically, we could thus treat the ground term, "nature," (which equals "God") as reflexive in form (though one usually reserves the designation for verbs) having active and passive (the *-ans* and the *-ata*) as its dual attributes. And we note a corresponding grammar in his Cartesian expressions, *res cogitans* and *res extensa*, where "thing" (*res*) would be the reflexive ground, with "thinking" (*cogitans*) as its active voice and "extended" (*extensa*) as its passive voice. So we could speak of nature, or thing, naturing, or thinking—and of nature, or thing, natured or ex-

tended. One can discern here the beginnings of the alignment that was to prevail in modern idealism, as the active participle becomes the "subjective" and the passive participle the "objective" (a grammar that is precisely reversed in materialism, where nature in *extension* is treated as the motivational source, while subjective motives are treated as either illusions or reflections).

Or, consider the passages in Aristotle's *Physics* where he is seeking to establish the number of principles required to account for the changes that take place in the natural world. Here we find a paradigm of grammar in his concern with the reduction of such principles to a pair of opposites, with a possible third term that would be their common ground. Grammatically, these principles are reducible to active, passive, and middle, the concept of self-movement containing active and passive ambiguously in one. Nature, Aristotle says at one point, is like a doctor doctoring himself (a figure that could, if we wanted to translate the universal into medical terms, then give us: doctor doctoring and doctor doctored).

The pantheistic moment in philosophy, by producing a merger of personal and impersonal principles (a merger of personal agent and impersonal scene), can serve well as a bridge leading from theology to naturalism. For theologies are "dramatistic" in their stress upon the personalistic, whereas the terminologies typical of natural science would eliminate the concept of the person, in reducing it to purely scenic terms. Hence, a pantheistic merging of person and scene can add up to the dissolution of the personal into the impersonal along naturalistic lines.

We might sum up the matter thus: *Theologically*, nature has attributes derived from its origin in an act of God (the Creation), but God is more than nature. *Dramatistically*, motion involves action, but action is more than motion. Hence, *theologically* and/or *dramatistically*, nature (in the sense of God's Creation) is to nature (in the sense of naturalistic science) as action is to motion, since God's Creation is an *enactment*, whereas nature as conceived in terms of naturalistic science is a sheer concatenation of motions. But inasmuch as the theological ratio between God (Creator) and Nature (Creation) is the same as the dramatistic ratio between action and motion, the *pantheistic*

⁵"Self-caused." [Ed.]

equating of God and Nature would be paralleled by the equating of action and motion. And since action is a personal principle while motion is an impersonal principle, the pantheistic equation leads into the *naturalistic* position which reduces personalistic concepts to depersonalized terms.

If these steps seem to have been too quickly arrived at, let us try approaching the matter from another angle. Indeed, we need not even hang on, but can almost begin anew. . . .

SCENE

The Featuring of the Terms

Our program in this section is to consider seven primary philosophic languages in terms of the pentad, used as a generating principle that should enable us to "anticipate" these different idioms. In treating the various schools as languages, we may define their substantial relationship to one another by deriving them from a common terminological ancestor. This ancestor would be a kind of *lingua Adamica*, an Edenic "prelanguage," in which the seeds of all philosophic languages would be implicit, as in the *panspermia* (or confusion of all future possibilities) that, according to some mystics, prevailed at the beginnings of the world.

In our introduction we noted that the areas covered by our five terms overlap upon one another. And because of this overlap, it is possible for a thinker to make his way continuously from any one of them to any of the others. Or he may use terms in which several of the areas are merged. For any of the terms may be seen in terms of any of the others. And we may even treat all five in terms of one, by "reducing" them all to the one or (what amounts to the same thing) "deducing" them all from the one as their common terminal ancestor. This relation we could express in temporal terms by saying that the term selected as ancestor "came first"; and in timeless or logical terms we could say that the term selected is the "essential," "basic," "logically prior" or "ultimate" term, or the "term of terms," etc.

Dramatically, the different philosophic schools are to be distinguished by the fact that each school features a different one of the five

terms, in developing a vocabulary designed to allow this one term full expression (as regards its resources and its temptations) with the other terms being comparatively slighted or being placed in the perspective of the featured term. Think, for instance, of a philosophy that had been established "in the sign of the agent." It must develop coordinates particularly suited to treat of substance and motive in "subjective," or "psychological" terms (since such terms deal most directly with the attributes of agents). Then think of that stage where the philosopher, proud in the full possession of his coordinates for featuring the realm of the *agent*, turned to consider the areas that fall most directly under the heading of *scene*. Instead of beginning over again, and seeking to analyze the realm of scene in terms that had no relation to the terms he had developed when considering the realm of agent, he might proceed to derive the nature of his terms for the discussion of scene from the nature of his terms for agent. This might well, in fact, be the procedure of a thinker who, instead of using a terminology that was merely slung together, felt the logical and aesthetic (and moral!) desire for an internal consistency among his terms. And it would amount to an "agentification" of scene even though the terms for scene were placed in dialectical opposition to the terms for agent. For a scene conceived antithetically to *agent* would differ from a scene conceived, let us say, antithetically to *act* or *purpose*, the genius of the ancestral term surviving even in its negation.

A rival philosophic terminology might propose to abandon this particular system of terms derived from agent, and to feature instead the area of motives covered by our term, scene. Its propounder would maintain that the terms imported from the area of agent were irrelevant or unwieldy as scenic references. However, principles of internal consistency might lead him to undertake imperialist expansions of his own, as were he to treat in scenic terms the areas directly covered by our terms agent or purpose.

These general examples should be enough, for the time being, to indicate what we mean by the featuring of a term. In this section we shall deal with the subject in some detail. But first survey-

ing the entire field at a glance, let us state simply as propositions:

For the featuring of *scene*, the corresponding philosophic terminology is *materialism*.

For the featuring of *agent*, the corresponding terminology is *idealism*.

For the featuring of *agency*, the corresponding terminology is *pragmatism*.

For the featuring of *purpose*, the corresponding terminology is *mysticism*.

For the featuring of *act*, the corresponding terminology is *realism*.

Nominalism and *rationalism* increase the kinds of terminology to seven. But since we have used up all our terms, we must account for them indirectly.

Historically, nominalism stood in opposition to mediæval realism. It was the individualistic counterpart of realism's "tribal" or "generic" emphasis. We would here widen the concept so as to include a corresponding "atomistic" movement in any of the other philosophies.

Rationalism is, in one sense, intrinsic to philosophy as a medium, since every philosophy attempts to propound a rationale of its position, even if it is a philosophy of the irrational. But more restrictedly, the term can be applied only to philosophies that treat reason as the very ground and substance of reality, somewhat as though, instead of saying, "a philosophy is a universe," one were to say, "the universe is a philosophy." The fact that rationalism, as a special philosophic strain, converts a *method* (i.e., agency) into a substance might well be the "grammatical reason" why our pragmatists descend from Hegel, who treated reason and world substance as so thoroughly identical that he proposed to recreate all history "in principle" by the sheer exercise of his philosophic method.

The addition of *nominalism* and *rationalism* to our list spoils the symmetry somewhat, for the first (as we extend its meaning) applies to all the other six schools insofar as each of them can have either a collectivistic or an individualistic ("nominalist") emphasis; and the second applies to all in the sense that it is the perfection, or logical conclusion, or *reductio ad absurdum* of the

philosophic *métier*. One should also note that a philosophy may be "nominalist" or "rationalist" in one realm without necessarily being so in another—as materialism is usually atomistic in the physical realm, but may be quite collectivistic in the ethical or political realm. Similarly the mystic's merging of the One with the All would often make it difficult to say whether we should call his doctrine collectivistic or atomistic, if we stopped at this point; but there is clearly a great distinction between mystics whose doctrines lead to permanent isolation from other men, and those whose doctrines lead to the founding of religious orders.

The symmetry is also impaired by the fact that there has been much borrowing of terms among the various philosophic schools, so that one cannot always take even key terms at their face value. For instance, we have previously observed that "situation" is a synonym for "scene." Hence one might take it as a rule that philosophies which account for motivations in terms of "the situation" are "materialistic." But the current prestige of the "situational" approach has led to the term's adoption by other schools. A literary critic who spoke of "the literary situation," for instance, meant not the "objective conditions" under which a writer writes, but the motives peculiar to a writer's medium. What looked "scenic" was here actually "pragmatic," since the writer's medium is an *agency*. And similarly, essayists now often speak of "the human situation" when they seem to have in mind the *motives peculiar to men as men*, a usage that would call for the classifying of the expression under the heading of *agent*, hence giving the *apparently* materialistic usage an *essentially* idealistic application (since, as we have said, idealism features the term agent).

Besides the concealments of misnomer and those due to mutual borrowings among the philosophic schools, there is an internal development that causes the nature of philosophy as an assertion to be lost in the problems of demonstration. That is, as soon as a philosopher has begun to investigate the possibilities in whatever term he has selected as his *Ausgangspunkt*,⁶ he finds that the

⁶"Starting point." [Ed.]

term does not merely create other terms in its image. Also, it generates a particular set of *problems*—and the attempt to solve these problems may lead the philosopher far from his beginnings. It is somewhat, alas! as with the design for a perpetual motion machine. Such a design may have been quite simple in its original conception, but it becomes fantastically complex as the inventor finds that each new wheel or trip or pin or cam which he added to solve his problem gave rise to a new problem, and this in turn suggested the need of some other contrivance, which relieves his former embarrassments only by introducing a new embarrassment of its own.

Indeed, since all the terms of the pentad continually press for consideration, and since it is not possible for us, without contradiction, to recreate in words a world which is itself not verbal at all, we can safely accept it as an axiom that the mere attempt to contemplate persistently the

resources of any one term will lead to the discovery of many problems the answers to which will *transcend* the genius of this term. And if a reader comes upon a philosophy after it has been thus sophisticated, he may find himself so caught up in its problems-atop-problems-atop-problems and problems-within-problems-within-problems that he cannot sense the principle of generation behind them. For usually the thinker himself has become similarly intricated.

But with the pentad as a generating principle, we may extricate ourselves from these intricacies, by discovering the kinds of *assertion* which the different schools would exemplify in a hypothetical state of purity. Once this approach is established, problems are much less likely to conceal the underlying design of assertion, or may even serve to assist in the characterizing of a given philosophic work.

From *A Rhetoric of Motives*

INTRODUCTION

The only difficult portion of this book happens, unfortunately, to be at the start. There, selecting texts that are usually treated as pure poetry, we try to show why rhetorical and dialectical considerations are also called for. Since these texts involve an imagery of killing (as a typical text for today should) we note how, behind the surface, lies a quite different realm that has little to do with such motives. An imagery of killing is but one of many terminologies by which writers can represent the process of change. And while recognizing the sinister implications of a preference for homicidal and suicidal terms, we indicate that the principles of development or transformation (“rebirth”) which they stand for are not strictly of such a nature at all.

We emerge from the analysis with the key term, “Identification.” Hence, readers who would prefer to begin with it, rather than to worry a text

until it is gradually extricated, might go lightly through the opening pages, with the intention of not taking hold in earnest until they come to the general topic of *Identification*.

Thereafter, with this term as instrument, we seek to mark off the areas of rhetoric, by showing how a rhetorical motive is often present where it is not usually recognized, or thought to belong. In part, we would but rediscover rhetorical elements that had become obscured when rhetoric as a term fell into disuse, and other specialized disciplines such as esthetics, anthropology, psychoanalysis, and sociology came to the fore (so that esthetics sought to outlaw rhetoric, while the other sciences we have mentioned took over, each in its own terms, the rich rhetorical elements that esthetics would ban).

But besides this job of reclamation, we also seek to develop our subject beyond the traditional bounds of rhetoric. There is an intermediate area of expression that is not wholly deliber-

ate, yet not wholly unconscious. It lies midway between aimless utterance and speech directly purposive. For instance, a man who identifies his private ambitions with the good of the community may be partly justified, partly unjustified. He may be using a mere pretext to gain individual advantage at the public expense; yet he may be quite sincere, or even may willingly make sacrifices in behalf of such identification. Here is a rhetorical area not analyzable either as sheer design or as sheer simplicity. And we would treat of it here.

Traditionally, the key term for rhetoric is not "identification," but "persuasion." Hence, to make sure that we do not maneuver ourselves unnecessarily into a weak position, we review several classic texts which track down all the major implications of that term. Our treatment, in terms of identification, is decidedly not meant as a substitute for the sound traditional approach. Rather, as we try to show, it is but an accessory to the standard lore. And our book aims to make itself at home in both emphases.

Particularly when we come upon such aspects of persuasion as are found in "mystification," courtship, and the "magic" of class relationships, the reader will see why the classical notion of clear persuasive intent is not an accurate fit, for describing the ways in which the members of a group promote social cohesion by acting rhetorically upon themselves and one another. As W. C. Blum has stated the case deftly, "In identification lies the source of dedications and enslavements, in fact of cooperation."

All told, persuasion ranges from the bluntest quest of advantage, as in sales promotion or propaganda, through courtship, social etiquette, education, and the sermon, to a "pure" form that delights in the process of appeal for itself alone, without ulterior purpose. And identification ranges from the politician who, addressing an audience of farmers, says, "I was a farm boy myself," through the mysteries of social status, to the mystic's devout identification with the source of all being.

That the reader might find it gratifying to observe the many variations on our two interrelated themes, at every step we have sought to proceed

by examples. Since we did not aim to write a compendium, we have not tried to cover the field in the way that a comprehensive historical survey might do—and another volume will be needed to deal adequately with the polemic kinds of rhetoric (such as the verbal tactics now called "cold war").

But we have tried to show what portions of other works should be selected as parts of a "course in rhetoric," and how they should be considered for our particular purposes. We have tried to show how rhetorical analysis throws light on literary texts and human relations generally. And while interested always in rhetorical devices, we have sought above all else to write a "philosophy of rhetoric."

We do not flatter ourselves that any one book can contribute much to counteract the torrents of ill will into which so many of our contemporaries have so avidly and sanctimoniously plunged. But the more strident our journalists, politicians, and alas! even many of our churchmen become, the more convinced we are that books should be written for tolerance and contemplation. . . .

PART I

Identification and "Consubstantiality"

A is not identical with his colleague, *B*. But insofar as their interests are joined, *A* is *identified* with *B*. Or he may *identify himself* with *B* even when their interests are not joined, if he assumes that they are, or is persuaded to believe so.

Here are ambiguities of substance. In being identified with *B*, *A* is "substantially one" with a person other than himself. Yet at the same time he remains unique, an individual locus of motives. Thus he is both joined and separate, at once a distinct substance and consubstantial with another.

While consubstantial with its parents, with the "firsts" from which it is derived, the offspring is nonetheless apart from them. In this sense, there is nothing abstruse in the statement that the offspring both is and is not one with its parentage. Similarly, two persons may be identified in terms of some principle they share in common,

an "identification" that does not deny their distinctness.

To identify *A* with *B* is to make *A* "consubstantial" with *B*. Accordingly, since our *Grammar of Motives* was constructed about "substance" as key term, the related rhetoric selects its nearest equivalent in the areas of persuasion and dissuasion, communication and polemic. And our third volume, *Symbolic of Motives*, should be built about *identity* as titular or ancestral term, the "first" to which all other terms could be reduced and from which they could then be derived or generated, as from a common spirit. The thing's *identity* would here be its uniqueness as an entity in itself and by itself, a demarcated unit having its own particular structure.

However, "substance" is an abstruse philosophic term, beset by a long history of quandaries and puzzlements. It names so paradoxical a function in men's systematic terminologies, that thinkers finally tried to abolish it altogether—and in recent years they have often persuaded themselves that they really did abolish it from their terminologies of motives. They abolished the *term*, but it is doubtful whether they can ever abolish the *function* of that term, or even whether they should *want* to. A doctrine of *consubstantiality*, either explicit or implicit, may be necessary to any way of life. For substance, in the old philosophies, was an *act*; and a way of life is an *acting-together*; and in acting together, men have common sensations, concepts, images, ideas, attitudes that make them *consubstantial*.

The *Grammar* dealt with the universal paradoxes of substance. It considered resources of placement and definition common to all thought. The *Symbolic* should deal with unique individuals, each its own peculiarly constructed act, or form. These unique "constitutions" being capable of treatment in isolation, the *Symbolic* should consider them primarily in their capacity as singulars, each a separate universe of discourse (though there are also respects in which they are consubstantial with others of their kind, since they can be classed with other unique individuals as joint participants in common principles, possessors of the same or similar properties).

The *Rhetoric* deals with the possibilities of

classification in its *partisan* aspects; it considers the ways in which individuals are at odds with one another, or become identified with groups more or less at odds with one another.

Why "at odds," you may ask, when the titular term is "identification"? Because, to begin with "identification" is, by the same token, though roundabout, to confront the implications of *division*. And so, in the end, men are brought to that most tragically ironic of all divisions, or conflicts, wherein millions of cooperative acts go into the preparation for one single destructive act. We refer to that ultimate *disease* of cooperation: *war*. (You will understand war much better if you think of it, not simply as strife come to a head, but rather as a disease, or perversion of communion. Modern war characteristically requires a myriad of constructive acts for each destructive one; before each culminating blast there must be a vast network of interlocking operations, directed communally.)

Identification is affirmed with earnestness precisely because there is division. Identification is compensatory to division. If men were not apart from one another, there would be no need for the rhetorician to proclaim their unity. If men were wholly and truly of one substance, absolute communication would be of man's very essence. It would not be an ideal, as it now is, partly embodied in material conditions and partly frustrated by these same conditions; rather, it would be as natural, spontaneous, and total as with those ideal prototypes of communication, the theologian's angels, or "messengers."

The *Grammar* was at peace insofar as it contemplated the paradoxes common to all men, the universal resources of verbal placement. The *Symbolic* should be at peace, in that the individual substances, or entities, or constituted acts are there considered in their uniqueness, hence outside the realm of conflict. For individual universes, as such, do not compete. Each merely *is*, being its own self-sufficient realm of discourse. And the *Symbolic* thus considers each thing as a set of interrelated terms all conspiring to round out their identity as participants in a common substance of meaning. An individual does in actuality compete with other individuals. But within the rules of *Symbolic*, the individual is

treated merely as a self-subsistent unit proclaiming its peculiar nature. It is “at peace,” in that its terms *cooperate* in modifying one another. But insofar as the individual is involved in conflict with other individuals or groups, the study of this same individual would fall under the head of *Rhetoric*. Or considered rhetorically, the victim of a neurotic conflict is torn by parliamentary wrangling; he is heckled like Hitler within. (Hitler is said to have confronted a constant wrangle in his private deliberations, after having imposed upon his people a flat choice between conformity and silence.) Rhetorically, the neurotic’s every attempt to legislate for his own conduct is disorganized by rival factions within his own dissociated self. Yet, considered Symbolically, the same victim is technically “at peace,” in the sense that his identity is like a unified, mutually adjusted set of terms. For even antagonistic terms, confronting each other as parry and thrust, can be said to “cooperate” in the building of an overall form.

The *Rhetoric* must lead us through the Scramble, the Wrangle of the Market Place, the flurries and flare-ups of the Human Barnyard, the Give and Take, the wavering line of pressure and counterpressure, the Logomachy, the onus of ownership, the Wars of Nerves, the War. It too has its peaceful moments: at times its endless competition can add up to the transcending of itself. In ways of its own, it can move from the factional to the universal. But its ideal culminations are more often beset by strife as the condition of their organized expression, or material embodiment. Their very universality becomes transformed into a partisan weapon. For one need not scrutinize the concept of “identification” very sharply to see, implied in it at every turn, its ironic counterpart: division. Rhetoric is concerned with the state of Babel after the Fall. Its contribution to a “sociology of knowledge” must often carry us far into the lugubrious regions of malice and the lie.

The Identifying Nature of Property

Metaphysically, a thing is identified by its *properties*. In the realm of Rhetoric, such identification is frequently by property in the most materi-

alistic sense of the term, economic property, such property as Coleridge, in his “Religious Musings,” calls a

twy-streaming fount,
Whence Vice and Virtue flow, honey and gall.

And later:

From Avarice thus, from Luxury and War
Sprang heavenly Science; and from Science,
Freedom.

Coleridge, typically the literary idealist, goes one step further back, deriving “property” from the workings of “Imagination.” But meditations upon the dual aspects of property as such are enough for our present purposes. In the surrounding of himself with properties that name his number or establish his identity, man is ethical. (“Avarice” is but the scenic word “property” translated into terms of an agent’s attitude, or incipient act.) Man’s moral growth is organized through properties, properties in goods, in services, in position or status, in citizenship, in reputation, in acquaintanceship and love. But however ethical such an array of identifications may be when considered in itself, its relation to other entities that are likewise forming their identity in terms of property can lead to turmoil and discord. Here is *par excellence* a topic to be considered in a rhetoric having “identification” as its key term. And we see why one should expect to get much insight from Marxism, as a study of capitalistic rhetoric. Veblen is also, from this point of view, to be considered a theorist of rhetoric. (And we know of no better way to quickly glimpse the range of rhetoric than to read, in succession, the articles on “Property” and “Propaganda” in *The Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*.)

Bentham’s utilitarian analysis of language, treating of the ways in which men find “eulogistic coverings” for their “material interests,” is thus seen to be essentially rhetorical, and to bear directly upon the motives of property as a rhetorical factor. Indeed, since it is so clearly a matter of rhetoric to persuade a man by identifying your cause with his interests, we note the ingredient of rhetoric in the animal experimenter’s ways of conditioning, as animals that respond avidly at a food signal suggest, underlying even human

motives, the inclination, like a house dog, to seek salvation in the Sign of the Scraped Plate. But the lessons of this "animal rhetoric" can mislead, as we learn from the United States' attempts to use food as an instrument of policy in Europe after the war. These efforts met with enough ill will to suggest that the careful "screening" of our representatives, to eliminate reformist tendencies as far as possible and to identify American aid only with conservative or even reactionary interests, practically *guaranteed* us a dismal rhetoric in our dealings with other nations. And when Henry Wallace, during a trip abroad, began earning for our country the genuine good will of Europe's common people and intellectual classes, the Genius of the Screening came into its own: our free press, as at one signal, began stoutly assuring the citizens of both the United States and Europe that Wallace did not truly represent us. What did represent us, presumably, was the policy of the Scraped Plate, which our officialdom now and then bestirred themselves to present publicly in terms of a dispirited "idealism," as heavy as a dead elephant. You see, we were not to be identified with very resonant things; our press assured our people that the outcome of the last election had been a "popular mandate" to this effect. (We leave this statement unrevised. For the conditions of Truman's reelection, after a campaign in which he out-Wallaced Wallace, corroborated it "in principle.")

In pure identification there would be no strife. Likewise, there would be no strife in absolute separateness, since opponents can join battle only through a mediatory ground that makes this communication possible, thus providing the first condition necessary for their interchange of blows. But put identification and division ambiguously together, so that you cannot know for certain just where one ends and the other begins, and you have the characteristic invitation to rhetoric. Here is a major reason why rhetoric, according to Aristotle, "proves opposites." When two men collaborate in an enterprise to which they contribute different kinds of services and from which they derive different amounts and kinds of profit, who is to say, once and for all, just where "cooperation" ends and one partner's "exploitation"

of the other begins? The wavering line between the two cannot be "scientifically" identified; rival rhetoricians can draw it at different places, and their persuasiveness varies with the resources each has at his command. (Where public issues are concerned, such resources are not confined to the intrinsic powers of the speaker and the speech, but depend also for their effectiveness upon the purely technical means of communication, which can either aid the utterance or hamper it. For a "good" rhetoric neglected by the press obviously cannot be so "communicative" as a poor rhetoric backed nation-wide by headlines. And often we must think of rhetoric not in terms of some one particular address, but as a general *body of identifications* that owe their convincingness much more to trivial repetition and dull daily reënforcement than to exceptional rhetorical skill.)

If you would praise God, and in terms that happen also to sanction one system of material property rather than another, you have forced Rhetorical considerations upon us. If you would praise science, however exaltedly, when that same science is at the service of imperialist-militarist expansion, here again you bring things within the orbit of Rhetoric. For just as God has been identified with a certain worldly structure of ownership, so science may be identified with the interests of certain groups or classes quite *unscientific* in their purposes. Hence, however "pure" one's motives may be actually, the impurities of identification lurking about the edges of such situations introduce a typical Rhetorical wrangle of the sort that can never be settled once and for all, but belongs in the field of moral controversy where men properly seek to "prove opposites."

Thus, when his friend, Preen, wrote of a meeting where like-minded colleagues would be present and would all be proclaiming their praise of science, Prone answered: "You fail to mention another colleague who is sure to be there too, unless you take care to rule him out. I mean John Q. Militarist-Imperialist." Whereat, Preen: "This John Q. Militarist-Imperialist must be quite venerable by now. I seem to have heard of him back in Biblical times, before Roger B. Science was

born. Doesn't he get in everywhere, unless he is explicitly ruled out?" He does, thanks to the ways of identification, which are in accordance with the nature of property. And the rhetorician and the moralist become one at that point where the attempt is made to reveal the undetected presence of such an identification. Thus in the United States after the Second World War, the temptations of such an identification became particularly strong because so much scientific research had fallen under the direction of the military. To speak merely in praise of science, without explicitly dissociating oneself from its reactionary implications, is to identify oneself with these reactionary implications by default. Many reputable educators could thus, in this roundabout way, *function* as "conspirators." In their zeal to get federal subsidies for the science department of their college or university, they could help to shape educational policies with the ideals of war as guiding principle.

Identification and the "Autonomous"

As regards "autonomous" activities, the principle of Rhetorical identification may be summed up thus: The fact that an activity is capable of reduction to intrinsic, autonomous principles does not argue that it is free from identification with other orders of motivation extrinsic to it. Such other orders are extrinsic to it, as considered from the standpoint of the specialized activity alone. But they are not extrinsic to the field of moral action as such, considered from the standpoint of human activity in general. The human agent, *qua* human agent, is not motivated solely by the principles of a specialized activity, however strongly this specialized power, in its suggestive role as imagery, may affect his character. Any specialized activity participates in a larger unit of action. "Identification" is a word for the autonomous activity's place in this wider context, a place with which the agent may be unconcerned. The shepherd, *qua* shepherd, acts for the good of the sheep, to protect them from discomfiture and harm. But he may be "identified" with a project that is raising the sheep for market.

Of course, the principles of the autonomous

activity can be considered irrespective of such identifications. Indeed, two students, sitting side by side in a classroom where the principles of a specialized subject are being taught, can be expected to "identify" the subject differently, so far as its place in a total context is concerned. Many of the most important identifications for the specialty will not be established at all, until later in life, when the specialty has become integrally interwoven with the particulars of one's livelihood. The specialized activity itself becomes a different thing for one person, with whom it is a means of surrounding himself with family and amenities, than it would be for another who, unmarried, childless, loveless, might find in the specialty not so much a means to gratification as a substitute for lack of gratification.

Carried into unique cases, such concern with identifications leads to the sheer "identities" of Symbolic. That is, we are in pure Symbolic when we concentrate upon one particular integrated structure of motives. But we are clearly in the region of rhetoric when considering the identifications whereby a specialized activity makes one a participant in some social or economic class. "Belonging" in this sense is rhetorical. And, ironically, with much college education today in literature and the fine arts, the very stress upon the pure autonomy of such activities is a round-about way of identification with a privileged class, as the doctrine may enroll the student stylistically under the banner of a privileged class, serving as a kind of social insignia promising preferment. (We are here obviously thinking along Veblenian lines.)

The stress upon the importance of autonomous principles does have its good aspects. In particular, as regards the teaching of literature, the insistence upon "autonomy" reflects a vigorous concern with the all-importance of the text that happens to be under scrutiny. This cult of patient textual analysis (though it has excesses of its own) is helpful as a reaction against the excesses of extreme historicism (a leftover of the nineteenth century) whereby a work became so subordinated to its background that the student's appreciation of first-rate texts was lost behind his involvement with the collateral documents of

fifth-rate literary historians. Also, the stress upon the autonomy of fields is valuable methodologically; it has been justly praised because it gives clear insight into some particular set of principles; and such a way of thinking is particularly needed now, when pseudoscientific thinking has become "unprincipled" in its uncritical cult of "facts." But along with these sound reasons for a primary concern with the intrinsic, there are furtive temptations that can figure here too. For so much progressive and radical criticism in recent years has been concerned with the social implications of art, that affirmations of art's autonomy can often become, by antithesis, a roundabout way of identifying oneself with the interests of political conservatism. In accordance with the rhetorical principle of identification, whenever you find a doctrine of "nonpolitical" esthetics affirmed with fervor, look for its politics.

But the principle of autonomy does allow for historical shifts whereby the nature of an identification can change greatly. Thus in his book, *The Genesis of Plato's Thought*, David Winspear gives relevant insight into the aristocratic and conservative political trends with which Plato's philosophy was identified at the time of its inception. The Sophists, on the other hand, are shown to have been more closely allied with the rising business class, then relatively "progressive" from the Marxist point of view, though their position was fundamentally weakened by the fact that their enterprise was based on the acceptance of slavery. Yet at other periods in history the Platonist concern with an ideal state could itself be identified with wholly progressive trends.

During the Second World War many good writers who had previously complained of the Marxist concern with propaganda in art, themselves wrote books in which they identified their esthetic with an anti-Fascist politics. At the very least such literature attributed to Hitlerite Germans and their collaborators the brutal and neurotic motives which in former years had been attributed to "Everyman." (Glenway Wescott's *Apartment in Athens*, for instance.) So the overgeneralized attempt to discredit *Marxist* Rhetoric by discrediting *all* Rhetoric was abandoned, at least by representative reviewers whose criticism

was itself a rhetorical act designed to identify the public with anti-Fascist attitudes and help sell anti-Fascist books (as it later contributed to the forming of anti-Soviet attitudes and the sale of anti-Soviet books). In the light of such developments, many critics have become only too accommodating in their search for covert and overt identifications that link the "autonomous" field of the arts with political and economic orders of motivation. Head-on resistance to the questioning of "purity" in specialized activities usually comes now from another quarter: the liberal apologists of science.

The "Autonomy" of Science

Science, as mere instrument (agency), might be expected to take on the nature of the scenes, acts, agents, and purposes with which it is identified. And insofar as a faulty political structure perverts human relations, we might reasonably expect to find a correspondingly perverted science. Thus, even the apologists of the Church will grant that, in corrupt times, there is a corresponding corruption among churchmen; and it is relevant to recall those specialists whose technical training fitted them to become identified with mass killings and experimentally induced sufferings in the concentration camps of National Socialist Germany. Hence, insofar as there are similar temptations in our own society (as attested by the sinister imagery of its art), might we not expect similar motives to lurk about the edges of our sciences (though tempered in proportion as the sinister political motives themselves are tempered in our society, under our less exacting social and economic conditions)? But liberal apologetics indignantly resists any suggestion that sadistic motives may lurk behind unnecessary animal experiments that cause suffering. The same people who, with reference to the scientific horrors of Hitlerism, admonish against the ingredients of Hitlerite thinking in our own society, will be outraged if you follow out the implications of their own premises, and look for similar temptations among our specialists.

One can sympathize with this anxiety. The liberal is usually disinclined to consider such

possibilities because applied science is for him not a mere set of instruments and methods, whatever he may assert; it is a *good* and *absolute*, and is thus circuitously endowed with the philosophic function of *God* as the grounding of values. His thinking thus vacillates indeterminately between his overt claims for science as sheer method, as sheer coefficient of power, and his covert claims for science as a substance which, like *God*, would be an intrinsically *good* power. Obviously, any purely secular power, such as the applications of technology, would not be simply “good,” but could become identified with motives good, bad, or indifferent, depending upon the uses to which it was put, and upon the ethical attitudes that, as part of the context surrounding it, contributed to its meaning in the realm of motives and action.

The unavowed identification, whereby a theological *function* is smuggled into a term on its face wholly secular, can secretly reenforce the characteristically liberal principle of occupational autonomy, itself reenforced by the naively pragmatist notion that practical specialized work is a sufficient grounding of morality. If the technical expert, as such, is assigned the task of perfecting new powers of chemical, bacteriological, or atomic destruction, his morality *as technical expert* requires only that he apply himself to his task as effectively as possible. The question of what the new force might mean, as released into a social texture emotionally and intellectually unfit to control it, or as surrendered to men whose *specialty is professional killing*—well, that is simply “none of his business,” as specialist, however great may be his misgivings as father of a family, or as citizen of his nation and of the world. The extreme division of labor under late capitalist liberalism having made dispersion the norm and having transformed the state of Babel into an ideal, the true liberal must view almost as an affront the Rhetorical concern with identifications whereby the principles of a specialty cannot be taken on their face, simply as the motives proper to that specialty. They *are* the motives proper to the specialty *as such*, but not to the specialty *as participant in a wider context of motives*.

In sum, as regards tests of “autonomy,” the specialist need only consider, as a disciplinary

factor, the objective resistances supplied by the materials with which he works. The liberal criterion was that propounded by Rousseau in *Émile*: The principle of constraint was to come from the nature of *things*, not from authorities and their precepts. Yet, willy nilly, a science takes on the moral qualities of the political or social movements with which it becomes identified. Hence, a new anguish, a crisis in the liberal theory of science. In his *Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche met the same problem keenly, but perversely, by praising “autonomy” as the *opposite* of the moral. Modern political authoritarianism, like the earlier theocratic kinds, would subordinate the autonomous specialty to overall doctrinal considerations. The rhetorical concept of “identification” does not justify the excesses to which such doctrinaire tendencies can be carried. But it does make clear the fact that one’s morality as a specialist cannot be allowed to do duty for one’s morality as a citizen. Insofar as the two roles are at odds, a specialty at the service of sinister interests will itself become sinister.

“Redemption” in Post-Christian Science

With a culture formed about the idea of redemption by the sacrifice of a Crucified Christ, just what does happen in an era of post-Christian science, when the ways of socialization have been secularized? Does the need for the vicarage of this Sacrificial King merely dwindle away? Or must some other person or persons, individual or corporate, real or fictive, take over the redemptive role? Not all people, perhaps, seek out a Vessel to which will be ritualistically delegated a purgative function, in being symbolically laden with the burdens of individual and collective guilt. But we know, as a lesson of recent history, how anti-Semitism provided the secularized replica of the Divine Scapegoat in the post-Christian rationale of Hitler’s National Socialist militarism; and we know how Jews and other minority groups are thus magically identified by many members of our society. And since we also know that there are at large in the modern world many militaristic and economic trends quite like those of Germany under the Hitlerite “science”

of genocide, we should at least be admonished to expect, in some degree, similar cultural temptations. For the history of the Nazis has clearly shown that there are cultural situations in which scientists, whatever may be their claims to professional austerity, will contrive somehow to identify their specialty with modes of justification, or socialization, not discernible in the sheer motions of the material operations themselves. In its transcendence of natural living, its technical scruples, its special tests of purity, a clinic or laboratory can be a kind of secular temple, in which ritualistic devotions are taking place, however concealed by the terminology of the surface. Unless properly scrutinized for traces of witchcraft, these could furtively become devotions to a satanic order of motives. At least such was the case with the technological experts of Hitlerite Germany. The very scientific ideals of an "impersonal" terminology can contribute ironically to such disaster: for it is but a step from treating inanimate nature as mere "things" to treating animals, and then enemy peoples, as mere things. But they are not mere things, they are persons — and in the systematic denial of what one knows in his heart to be the truth, there is a perverse principle that can generate much anguish.

Dual Possibilities of Science

But one cannot be too careful here. Religion, politics, and economics are notoriously touchy subjects, and with many persons today, the cult of applied science has the animus of all three rolled into one. We should take pains to make this clear: we are most decidedly *not* saying that science *must* take on such malign identifications as it presumably has, for some scientists, when fitted into the motives of a Fascist state. In the United States, for instance, the Federation of American Scientists has been urgently seeking to dissociate the idea of atomic war power from the idea of national security. Thus, the Federation proclaimed, in a statement issued September 1, 1947, on the second anniversary of V-J Day:

Many persons have justified the support of science for its war potential, implying that national security

will result. We hear this justification in Congress. We hear it even from the atomic mission. We assert that national security cannot result from military preparedness or the support of science for its war potential.

When men are of good will, we can always expect many such efforts to break such sinister identifications, which their knowledge of their special field enables them to recognize as false.

Unfortunately, good will as thus circumscribed is not enough. The same statement goes on to say: "Our Government has advocated a sound policy in the United Nations concerning atomic energy." Yet there seems much justice in the complaint of the Soviet delegates that the measures we propose would guarantee the United States perpetual superiority in this field, unless other nations deliberately violated the proposed treaty by finding ways to continue their experiments in secret.

In a speech made before the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission (September 10, 1947), the Soviet representative, Gromyko, came upon some paradoxes in this connection. He was attacking United States' proposals for giving "the right of ownership" to an *international* organ of control. He contended that this arrangement would contradict the principle of state sovereignty. Thus the *socialist* delegate was arguing for the *restriction* of ownership to national boundaries, while the world's greatest *capitalist* country argued for ownership by a *universal* body. *On its face*, the capitalist proposal seems much nearer to the ideal socialist solution than the position of the Soviet Union is.

However, the history of corporate management in the United States, and of political parties everywhere, gives ample evidence of all the devices whereby *actual control* of a property differs from *nominal ownership* of it. And obviously the interests in *actual control* of the agency that allocated the rights and resources of atomic development could have all the advantages of *real* ownership, however international might be the *fictions* of ownership. Where the *control* resides, there resides the *function* of ownership, whatever the *fictions* of ownership may be. It would certainly be no new thing to rhetoric if

highly *discriminatory* claims were here being protected in the name of *universal* rights. And the Soviet delegate was at least justified in calling for measures that *unmistakably* avoid such a possibility, which was not considered in the scientists' statement as published in the press. There was a hint of "maneuvering" in our proposals, maneuvering to put the Russians in the position of seeming to delay an adequate international control over the atomic bomb, when there were strong doubts whether our own Congress would itself have agreed to any such control.

Lying outside the orbit of the scientists' specialty, there are psychological considerations which are nearly always slighted, since they involve identifications manifestly extrinsic to atomic physics in itself. Possibilities of deception arise particularly with those ironies whereby the scientists' truly splendid terminology for the expert smashing of lifeless things can so catch a man's fancy that he would transfer it to the realm of human relations likewise. It is not a great step from the purely professional poisoning of harmful insects to the purely professional blasting and poisoning of human beings, as viewed in similarly "impersonal" terms. And such inducements are particularly there, so long as factional division (of class, race, nationality, and the like) make for the ironic mixture of identification and dissociation that marks the function of the scapegoat. Indeed, the very "global" conditions which call for the greater identification of all men with one another have at the same time increased the range of human conflict, the incentives to division. It would require sustained rhetorical effort, backed by the imagery of a richly humane and spontaneous poetry, to make us fully sympathize with people in circumstances greatly different from our own. Add now the international rivalries that goad to the opposite kind of effort, and that make it easy for some vocalizers to make their style "forceful" by simply playing up these divisive trends, and you see how perverted the austere scientific ideal may become, as released into a social texture unprepared for it.

The good will of scientists is not enough, however genuine it may be. There is the joke of the father who put his little son on the table and,

holding out his arms protectively, said, "Jump." The trusting child jumped; but instead of catching him, the father drew back, and let him fall to the floor. The child was hurt, both physically and in this violation of its confidence. Whereupon the father drove home the moral: "Let that be a lesson to you. Never trust anyone, not even your own father." Now, when the apologists of science teach their subject thus, instead of merely exalting it, we can salute them for truly admonishing us, in being as "scientific" about the criticism of science as in the past they have been about the criticism of religion.

To sum up:

(1) We know, as a matter of record, that science under Fascism became sinister. (2) We are repeatedly being admonished that there is a high percentage of Fascist motivation in our own society. (3) Why, then, should there not be, in our society, a correspondingly high incentive to sinister science? Particularly inasmuch as sinister motives already show in much of our art, both popular and recondite, while the conditions of secrecy imposed upon many experimental scientists today add a "conspiratorial" motive to such "autonomous" activity. In the past, the great *frankness* of science has been its noblest attribute, as judged from the purely humanistic point of view. But any tendency to place scientific development primarily under the heading of "war potential" must endanger this essential moralistic element in science, replacing the norms of *universal clarity* with the divisive demands for *conspiracy*. Insofar as such conditions prevail, science loses the one ingredient that can keep it wholesome: its enrollment under the forces of *light*. To this extent, the scientist must reject and resist in ways that mean the end of "autonomy," or if he accepts, he risks becoming the friend of fiends. Scientific discoveries have always, of course, been used for the purposes of war. But the demand that scientific advance *per se* be guided by military considerations *changes the proportions* of such motivation tremendously. Scientists of good will must then become uneasy, in that the morality of their specialty is no longer enough. The liberal ideal of autonomy is denied them, except insofar as they can contrive to conceal from themselves the true implications of their role.

Ingenuous and Cunning Identifications

The thought of self-deception brings up another range of possibilities here. For there is a wide range of ways whereby the rhetorical motive, through the resources of identification, can operate without conscious direction by any particular agent. Classical rhetoric stresses the element of explicit design in rhetorical enterprise. But one can systematically extend the range of rhetoric, if one studies the persuasiveness of false or inadequate terms which may not be directly imposed upon us from without by some skillful speaker, but which we impose upon ourselves, in varying degrees of deliberateness and unawareness, through motives indeterminately self-protective and/or suicidal.

We shall consider these matters more fully later, when we study the rhetoric of *hierarchy* (or as it is less revealingly named, *bureaucracy*). And our later pages on Marx and Veblen would apply here. But for the present we might merely recall the psychologist's concept of "malingering," to designate the ways of neurotic persons who, though not actually ill, persuade themselves that they are, and so can claim the attentions and privileges of the ill (their feigned illness itself becoming, at one remove, genuine). Similarly, if a social or occupational class is not too exacting in the scrutiny of identifications that flatter its interests, its very philosophy of life is a profitable malingering (profitable at least until its inaccuracies catch up with it)—and as such, it is open to either attack or analysis, Rhetoric comprising both the *use* of persuasive resources (*rhetorica utens*, as with the philippics of Demosthenes) and the *study* of them (*rhetoric docens*, as with Aristotle's treatise on the "art" of Rhetoric).

This aspect of identification, whereby one can protect an interest merely by using terms not incisive enough to criticize it properly, often brings rhetoric to the edge of cunning. A misanthropic politician who dealt in mankind-loving imagery could still think of himself as rhetorically honest, if he meant to do well by his constituents yet thought that he could get their votes only by such display. Whatever the falsity in overplaying a role, there may be honesty in the assuming of that role itself; and the overplaying may be but a

translation into a different medium of communication, a way of amplifying a statement so that it carries better to a large or distant audience. Hence, the persuasive identifications of Rhetoric, in being so directly designed for *use*, involve us in a special problem of *consciousness*, as exemplified in the Rhetorician's particular *purpose* for a given statement.

The thought gives a glimpse into rhetorical motives behind many characters in drama and fiction. Shakespeare's Iago and Molière's Tartuffe are demons of Rhetoric. Every word and act is addressed, being designed to build up false identifications in the minds of their victims. Similarly, there is a notable ingredient of Rhetoric in Stendhal's Julien Sorel, who combines "heightened consciousness" with "freedom" by a perversely frank decision to perfect his own kind of hypocrisy as a means of triumphing over the hypocrisy of others. All his actions thus become rhetorical, framed for their effect; his life is a spellbinding and spellbound address to an audience.

Did you ever do a friend an injury by accident, in all poetic simplicity? Then conceive of this same injury as done by sly design, and you are forthwith within the orbit of Rhetoric. If you, like the Stendhals and Gides, conceive a character by such sophistication, Rhetoric as the speaker's attempt to identify himself favorably with his audience then becomes so transformed that the work may seem to have been written under an esthetic of pure "expression," without regard for communicative appeal. Or it may appeal perversely, to warped motives within the audience. Or it may be but an internalizing of the rhetorical motive, as the very actions of such a representative figure take on a rhetorical cast. Hence, having woven a rhetorical motive so integrally into the very essence of his conception, the writer can seem to have ignored rhetorical considerations; yet, in the sheer effrontery of his protagonist there is embedded, however disguised or transformed, an *anguish* of communication (communication being, as we have said, a generalized form of love).

As regards the rhetorical ways of Stendhal's hero, moving in the perverse freedom of duplicity: After the disclosure of his cunning, Julien

abandons his complex rhetorical morality of hypocrisy-to-outhypocritize-the-hypocrites, and regains a new, suicidally poetic level of simplicity. “*Jamais cette tête n’avait été aussi poétique qu’au moment où elle allait tomber.*”¹ The whole structure of the book could be explained as the account of a hero who, by the disclosure of his Rhetoric, was jolted into a tragically direct poetic. Within the terms of the novel, “hypocrisy” was the word for “rhetoric,” such being the quality of the rhetoric that marked the public life of France under the reign of *Napoléon le Petit*.

Rhetoric of “Address” (to the Individual Soul)

By our arrangement, the individual in his uniqueness falls under the head of Symbolic. But one should not thereby assume that what is known as “individual psychology” wholly meets the same test. Particularly in the Freudian concern with the neuroses of individual patients, there is a strongly rhetorical ingredient. Indeed, what could be more profoundly rhetorical than Freud’s notion of a dream that attains expression by stylistic subterfuges designed to evade the inhibitions of a moralistic censor? What is this but the exact analogue of the rhetorical devices of literature under political or theocratic censorship? The *ego* with its *id* confronts the *superego* much as an orator would confront a somewhat alien audience, whose susceptibilities he must flatter as a necessary step towards persuasion. The Freudian psyche is quite a parliament, with conflicting interests expressed in ways variously designed to take the claims of rival factions into account.

The best evidence of a strongly rhetorical ingredient in Freud’s view of the psyche is in his analysis of *Wit and Its Relation to the Unconscious*. In particular, we think of Freud’s concern with the role of an audience, or “third person,” with whom the speaker establishes rapport, in their common enterprise directed against the butt of tendentious witticisms. Here is the purest rhetorical pattern: speaker and hearer as partners in partisan jokes made at the expense of another. If you “internalize” such a variety of motives, so

¹“Never was that head so poetic as at the moment when it was about to fall.” [Ed.]

that the same person can participate somewhat in all three positions, you get a complex individual of many voices. And though these may be treated, under the heading of Symbolic, as a concerto of principles mutually modifying one another, they may likewise be seen, from the standpoint of Rhetoric, as a parliamentary wrangle which the individual has put together somewhat as he puts together his fears and hopes, friendships and enmities, health and disease, or those tiny rebirths whereby, in being born to some new condition, he may be dying to a past condition, his development being dialectical, a series of terms in perpetual transformation.

Thus by a roundabout route we come upon another aspect of Rhetoric: its nature as *addressed*, since persuasion implies an audience. A man can be his own audience, insofar as he, even in his secret thoughts, cultivates certain ideas or images for the effect he hopes they may have upon him; he is here what Mead would call “an ‘I’ addressing its ‘me’”; and in this respect he is being rhetorical quite as though he were using pleasant imagery to influence an outside audience rather than one within. In traditional Rhetoric, the relation to an external audience is stressed. Aristotle’s *Art of Rhetoric*, for instance, deals with the appeal to audiences in this primary sense: It lists typical beliefs, so that the speaker may choose among them the ones with which he would favorably identify his cause or unfavorably identify the cause of an opponent; and it lists the traits of character with which the speaker should seek to identify himself, as a way of disposing an audience favorably towards him. But a modern “post-Christian” rhetoric must also concern itself with the thought that, under the heading of appeal to audiences, would also be included any ideas or images privately addressed to the individual self for moralistic or incantatory purposes. For you become your own audience, in some respects a very lax one, in some respects very exacting, when you become involved in psychologically stylistic subterfuges for presenting your own case to yourself in sympathetic terms (and even terms that seem harsh can often be found on closer scrutiny to be flattering, as with neurotics who visit sufferings upon themselves in the name of very high-powered motives which, whatever their discomfiture, feed pride).

Such considerations make us alert to the ingredient of rhetoric in all *socialization*, considered as a *moralizing* process. The individual person, striving to form himself in accordance with the communicative norms that match the cooperative ways of his society, is by the same token concerned with the rhetoric of identification. To act upon himself persuasively, he must variously resort to images and ideas that are formative. Education ("indoctrination") exerts such pressure upon him from without; he completes the process from within. If he does not somehow act to tell himself (as his own audience) what the various brands of rhetorician have told him, his persuasion is not complete. Only those voices from without are effective which can speak in the language of a voice within.

Among the Tanala of Madagascar, it is said, most of those tribesmen susceptible to *tromba* ("neurotic seizure indicated by an extreme desire to dance") were found to be among the least favored members of the tribe. Such seizures are said to be a device that makes the possessed person "the center of all the attention." And afterwards, the richest and most powerful members of the sufferer's family foot the bill, so that "the individual's ego is well satisfied and he can get along quite well until the next *tromba* seizure occurs." In sum, "like most hysterical seizures, *tromba* requires an audience."

The citations are from A. Kardiner, *The Individual and His Society* (New York: Columbia University Press). They would suggest that, when asking what all would fall within the scope of our topic, we could also include a "rhetoric of hysteria." For here too are expressions which are *addressed*—and we confront an ultimate irony, in glimpsing how even a catatonic lapse into sheer automatism, beyond the reach of all normally linguistic communication, is in its origins communicative, addressed, though it be a paralogical appeal-that-ends-all-appeals.

Rhetoric and Primitive Magic

The Kardiner citations are taken from a paper by C. Kluckhohn on "Navaho Witchcraft," containing observations that would also bring witchcraft within the range of rhetoric. Indeed, where

witchcraft is imputed as a motive behind the individual search for wealth, power, or vengeance, can we not view it as a primitive vocabulary of *individualism* emerging in a culture where *tribal* thinking had been uppermost, so that the individualist motive would be admitted and suspect? And any breach of identification with the tribal norms being sinister, do we not glimpse rhetorical motives behind the fact that Macbeth's private ambitions were figured in terms of witches?

At first glance we may seem to be straining the conception of rhetoric to the breaking point, when including even a treatise on primitive witchcraft within its range. But look again. Precisely at a time when the term "rhetoric" had fallen into greatest neglect and disrepute, writers in the "social sciences" were, under many guises, making good contributions to the New Rhetoric. As usual with modern thought, the insights gained from *comparative culture* could throw light upon the classic approach to this subject; and again, as usual with modern thought, this light was interpreted in terms that concealed its true relation to earlier work. And though the present writer was strongly influenced by anthropological inquiries into primitive magic, he did not clearly discern the exact relation between the anthropologist's concern with magic and the literary critic's concern with communication until he had systematically worked on this *Rhetoric* for some years. Prior to this discovery, though he persisted in anthropological hankerings, he did so with a bad conscience; and he was half willing to agree with literary opponents who considered such concerns alien to the study of literature proper.

Now, in noting methodically how the anthropologist's account of magic can belong in a rhetoric, we are better equipped to see exactly wherein the two fields of inquiry diverge. Anthropology is a gain to literary criticism only if one knows how to "discount" it from the standpoint of rhetoric. And, ironically, anthropology can be a source of disturbance, not only to literary criticism in particular, but to the study of human relations in general, if one does not so discount it, but allows *its* terms to creep into one's thinking at points where issues *should* be studied explicitly in terms of rhetoric.

We saw both the respects in which the anthropologists' study of magic overlaps upon rhetoric and the respects in which they are distinct when we were working on a review of Ernst Cassirer's *Myth of the State*. The general proposition that exercised us can be stated as follows:

We must begin by confronting the typically scientist view of the relation between science and magic. Since so many apologists of modern science, following a dialectic of simple antithesis, have looked upon magic merely as an early form of bad science, one seems to be left only with a distinction between bad and good science. Scientific knowledge is thus presented as a terminology that gives an accurate and critically tested description of reality; and magic is presented as antithetical to such science. Hence magic is treated as an early uncritical attempt to do what science does, but under conditions where judgment and perception were impaired by the naïvely anthropomorphic belief that the impersonal forces of nature were motivated by personal designs. One thus confronts a flat choice between a civilized vocabulary of scientific description and a savage vocabulary of magical incantation.

In this scheme, "rhetoric" has no systematic location. We recall noting the word but once in Cassirer's *Myth of the State*, and then it is used only in a random way; yet the book is really about nothing more nor less than a most characteristic concern of rhetoric: the manipulation of men's beliefs for political ends.

Now, the basic function of rhetoric, the use of words by human agents to form attitudes or to induce actions in other human agents, is certainly not "magical." If you are in trouble, and call for help, you are no practitioner of primitive magic. You are using the primary resource of human speech in a thoroughly realistic way. Nor, on the other hand, is your utterance "science," in the strict meaning of science today, as a "semantic" or "descriptive" terminology for charting the conditions of nature from an "impersonal" point of view, regardless of one's wishes or preferences. A call for help is quite "prejudiced"; it is the most arrant kind of "wishful thinking"; it is not merely descriptive, it is *hortatory*. It is not just trying to tell how things are, in strictly

"scenic" terms; it is trying to *move people*. A call for help might, of course, include purely scientific statements, or preparations for action, as a person in need might give information about particular dangers to guard against or advantages to exploit in bringing help. But the call, in itself, as such, is not scientific; it is *rhetorical*. Whereas poetic language is a kind of symbolic action, for itself and in itself, and whereas scientific action is a preparation for action, rhetorical language is inducement to action (or to attitude, attitude being an incipient act).

If you have only a choice between magic and science, you simply have no bin in which to accurately place such a form of expression. Hence, since "the future" is not the sort of thing one can put under a microscope, or even test by a knowledge of *exactly equivalent conditions* in the past, when you turn to political exhortation, you are involved in decisions that necessarily lie beyond the strictly scientific vocabularies of description. And since the effective politician is a "spell-binder," it seems to follow by elimination that the hortatory use of speech for political ends can be called "magic," in the discredited sense of that term.

As a result, much analysis of political exhortation comes to look simply like a survival of primitive magic, whereas it should be handled in its own terms, as an aspect of what it really is: rhetoric. The approach to rhetoric in terms of "word magic" gets the whole subject turned backwards. Originally, the magical use of symbolism to affect natural processes by rituals and incantations was a mistaken transference of a proper linguistic function to an area for which it was not fit. The realistic use of addressed language to *induce action in people* became the magical use of addressed language to *induce motion in things* (things by nature alien to purely linguistic orders of motivation). If we then begin by treating this *erroneous* and *derived* magical use as *primary*, we are invited to treat a *proper* use of language (for instance, political persuasion) simply as a vestige of benightedly pre-scientific magic.

To be sure, the rhetorician has the tricks of his trade. But they are not mere "bad science"; they are an "art." And any overly scientist approach to

them (treating them in terms of flat dialectical opposition to modern technology) must make our world look much more “neoprimitive” than is really the case. At the very least, we should note that primitive magic prevailed most strongly under social conditions where the rationalization of social effort in terms of money was negligible; but the rhetoric of modern politics would establish social identifications atop a way of life highly diversified by money, with the extreme division of labor and status which money served to rationalize.

Realistic Functions of Rhetoric

Gaining courage as we proceed, we might even contend that we are not so much proposing to import anthropology into rhetoric as proposing that anthropologists recognize the factor of rhetoric in their own field. That is, if you look at recent studies of primitive magic from the standpoint of this discussion, you might rather want to distinguish between magic as “bad science” and magic as “primitive rhetoric.” You then discover that anthropology does clearly recognize the rhetorical *function* in magic; and far from dismissing the rhetorical aspect of magic merely as bad science, anthropology recognizes in it a pragmatic device that greatly assisted the survival of cultures by promoting social cohesion. (Malinowski did much work along these lines, and the Kluckhohn essay makes similar observations about witchcraft.) But now that we have confronted the term “magic” with the term “rhetoric,” we’d say that one comes closer to the true state of affairs if one treats the socializing aspects of magic as a “primitive rhetoric” than if one sees modern rhetoric simply as a “survival of primitive magic.”

For rhetoric as such is not rooted in any past condition of human society. It is rooted in an essential function of language itself, a function that is wholly realistic, and is continually born anew; the use of language as a symbolic means of inducing cooperation in beings that by nature respond to symbols. Though rhetorical considerations may carry us far afield, leading us to violate the principle of autonomy separating the various disciplines, there is an intrinsically rhetorical motive, situated in the persuasive use of language.

And this persuasive use of language is not derived from “bad science,” or “magic.” On the contrary, “magic” was a faulty derivation from it, “word magic” being an attempt to produce linguistic responses in kinds of beings not accessible to the linguistic motive. However, once you introduce this emendation, you can see beyond the accidents of language. You can recognize how much of value has been contributed to the New Rhetoric by these investigators, though their observations are made in terms that never explicitly confront the rhetorical ingredient in their field of study. We can place in terms of rhetoric all those statements by anthropologists, ethnologists, individual and social psychologists, and the like, that bear upon the *persuasive* aspects of language, the function of language as *addressed*, as direct or roundabout appeal to real or ideal audiences, without or within.

Are we but haggling over a term? In one sense, yes. We are offering a rationale intended to show how far one might systematically extend the term “rhetoric.” In this respect, we are haggling over a term; for we must persist in tracking down the *function* of that term. But to note the ingredient of rhetoric lurking in such anthropologist’s terms as “magic” and “witchcraft” is not to ask that the anthropologist replace his words with ours. We are certainly not haggling over terms in that sense. The term “rhetoric” is no substitute for “magic,” “witchcraft,” “socialization,” “communication,” and so on. But the term rhetoric designates a *function* which is present in the areas variously covered by those other terms. And we are asking only that this *function* be recognized for what it is: a linguistic function by nature as *realistic* as a proverb, though it may be quite far from the kind of realism found in strictly “scientific realism.” For it is essentially a realism of the *act*: moral, persuasive—and acts are not “true” and “false” in the sense that the propositions of “scientific realism” are. And however “false” the “propositions” of primitive magic may be, considered from the standpoint of scientific realism, it is different with the peculiarly *rhetorical* ingredient in magic, involving ways of identification that contribute variously to social cohesion (either for the advantage of the community as a whole, or for the advantage of

special groups whose interests are a burden on the community, or the advantages of special groups whose rights and duties are indeterminately both a benefit and a tax on the community, as with some business enterprise in our society).

The “pragmatic sanction” for this function of magic lies outside the realm of strictly true-or-false propositions; it falls in an area of deliberation that itself draws upon the resources of rhetoric; it is itself a subject matter belonging to an art that can “prove opposites.”

To illustrate what we mean by “proving opposites” here: we read an article, let us say, obviously designed to dispose the reading public favorably towards the “aggressive and expanding” development of American commercial interests in Saudi Arabia. It speaks admiringly of the tremendous changes which our policies of commerce and investment will introduce into a vestigially feudal culture, and of the great speed at which the rationale of finance and technology will accomplish these changes. When considering the obvious rhetorical intent of these “facts,” we suddenly, in a perverse *non sequitur*, remember a passage in the Kluckhohn essay, involving what we would now venture to call “the rhetoric of witchcraft”:

In a society like the Navaho which is competitive and capitalistic, on the one hand, and still familistic on the other, any ideology which has the effect of slowing down economic mobility is decidedly adaptive. One of the most basic strains in Navaho society arises out of the incompatibility between the demands of familism and the emulation of European patterns in the accumulating of capital.

And in conclusion we are told that the “survival of the society” is assisted by “any pattern, such as witchcraft, which tends to discourage the rapid accumulation of wealth” (witchcraft, as an “ideology,” contributing to this end by identifying new wealth with malign witchery). Now, when you begin talking about the optimum rate of speed at which cultural changes should take place, or the optimum proportion between tribal and individualistic motives that should prevail under a particular set of economic conditions, you are talking about something very important indeed, but you will find yourself deep in matters

of rhetoric: for nothing is more rhetorical in nature than a deliberation as to what is too much or too little, too early or too late; in such controversies, rhetoricians are forever “proving opposites.”

Where are we now? We have considered two main aspects of rhetoric: its use of *identification* and its nature as *addressed*. Since identification implies division, we found rhetoric involving us in matters of socialization and faction. Here was a wavering line between peace and conflict, since identification is got by property, which is ambivalently a motive of both morality and strife. And inasmuch as the ultimate of conflict is war or murder, we considered how such imagery can figure as a terminology of reidentification (“transformation” or “rebirth”). For in considering the wavering line between identification and division, we shall always be coming upon manifestations of the logomachy, avowed as in invective, unavowed as in stylistic subterfuges for presenting real divisions in terms that deny division.

We found that this wavering line between identification and division was forever bringing rhetoric against the possibility of malice and the lie; for if an identification favorable to the speaker or his cause is made to seem favorable to the audience, there enters the possibility of such “heightened consciousness” as goes with deliberate cunning. Thus, roundabout, we confronted the nature of rhetoric as *addressed* to audiences of the first, second, or third person. Socialization itself was, in the widest sense, found to be addressed. And by reason of such simultaneous identification-with and division-from as mark the choice of a scapegoat, we found that rhetoric involves us in problems related to witchcraft, magic, spellbinding, ethical promptings, and the like. And in the course of discussing these subjects, we found ourselves running into another term: persuasion. Rhetoric is the art of persuasion, or a study of the means of persuasion available for any given situation. We have thus, deviously, come to the point at which Aristotle begins his treatise on rhetoric.

So we shall change our purpose somewhat. Up to now, we have been trying to indicate what kinds of subject matter not traditionally labeled “rhetoric” should, in our opinion, also fall under this head. We would now consider varying views

of rhetoric that have already prevailed; and we would try to “generate” them from the same basic terms of our discussion.

As for the relation between “identification” and “persuasion”: we might well keep it in mind that a speaker persuades an audience by the use of stylistic identifications; his act of persuasion may be for the purpose of causing the audience to identify itself with the speaker’s interests; and the speaker draws on identification of interests to establish rapport between himself and his audience. So, there is no chance of our keeping apart the meanings of persuasion, identification (“consubstantiality”) and communication (the nature of rhetoric as “addressed”). But, in given in-

stances, one or another of these elements may serve best for extending a line of analysis in some particular direction.

And finally: The use of symbols, by one symbol-using entity to induce action in another (persuasion properly addressed) is in essence not magical but *realistic*. However, the resources of identification whereby a sense of consubstantiality is symbolically established between beings of unequal status may extend far into the realm of the *idealistic*. And as we shall see later, when on the subject of order, out of this idealistic element there may arise a kind of magic or mystery that sets its mark upon all human relations.

From *Language as Symbolic Action*

Terministic Screens

I DIRECTING THE ATTENTION

We might begin by stressing the distinction between a “scientific” and a “dramatistic” approach to the nature of language. A “scientific” approach begins with questions of *naming*, or *definition*. Or the power of language to define and describe may be viewed as derivative; and its essential function may be treated as attitudinal or hortatory: attitudinal as with expressions of complaint, fear, gratitude, and such; hortatory as with commands or requests, or, in general, an instrument developed through its use in the social processes of cooperation and competition. I say “developed”; I do *not* say “originating.” The ultimate *origins* of language seem to me as mysterious as the origins of the universe itself. One must view it, I feel, simply as the “given.” But once an animal comes into being that does happen to have this particular aptitude, the various tribal idioms are unquestionably *developed* by their use as instruments in the tribe’s way of living (the practical role of symbolism in what the anthropologist, Malinowski, has called “context of situ-

ation”). Such considerations are involved in what I mean by the “dramatistic,” stressing language as an aspect of “action,” that is, as “symbolic action.”

The two approaches, the “scientific” and the “dramatistic” (language as definition, and language as act) are by no means mutually exclusive. Since both approaches have their proper uses, the distinction is not being introduced invidiously. Definition itself is a symbolic act, just as my proposing of this very distinction is a symbolic act. But though at this moment of beginning, the overlap is considerable, later the two roads diverge considerably, and direct our attention to quite different kinds of observation. The quickest way to indicate the differences of direction might be by this formula: The “scientific” approach builds the edifice of language with primary stress upon a proposition such as “It *is*, or it *is not*.” The “dramatistic” approach puts the primary stress upon such hortatory expressions as “thou *shalt*, or thou *shalt not*.” And at the other extreme the distinction becomes quite obvious, since the scientific approach culminates in the kinds of speculation we associate with symbolic logic, while the dramatistic culminates in the kinds of speculation that find their handiest material in stories, plays, poems, the rhetoric of ora-

tory and advertising, mythologies, theologies, and philosophies after the classic model.

The dramatic view of language, in terms of “symbolic action,” is exercised about the necessarily *suasive* nature of even the most unemotional scientific nomenclatures. And we shall proceed along those lines; thus:

Even if any given terminology is a *reflection* of reality, by its very nature as a terminology it must be a *selection* of reality; and to this extent it must function also as a *deflection* of reality.

In his seventh *Provincial Letter*, Pascal satirizes a device which the Jesuits of his day called “directing the intention.” For instance, to illustrate satirically how one should “direct the intention,” he used a burlesque example of this sort: Dueling was forbidden by the Church. Yet it was still a prevalent practice. Pascal satirically demonstrated how, by “directing the intention,” one could both take part in a duel and not violate the Church injunctions against it. Thus, instead of intentionally going to take part in a duel, the duelists would merely go for a walk to a place where the duel was to be held. And they would carry guns merely as a precautionary means of self-protection in case they happened to meet an armed enemy. By so “directing the intention,” they could have their duel without having transgressed the Church’s thou-shall-not’s against dueling. For it was perfectly proper to go for a walk; and in case one encountered an enemy bent on murder, it was perfectly proper to protect oneself by shooting in self-defense.

I bring up this satirically excessive account of directing the *intention*, in the hopes that I can thereby settle for less when discussing the ways in which “terministic screens” direct the *attention*. Here the kind of deflection I have in mind concerns simply the fact that any nomenclature necessarily directs the attention into some channels rather than others. In one sense, this likelihood is painfully obvious. A textbook on physics, for instance, turns the *attention* in a different direction from the textbook on law or psychology. But some implications of this terministic incentive are not so obvious.

When I speak of “terministic screens,” I have particularly in mind some photographs I once saw. They were *different* photographs of the

same objects, the difference being that they were made with different color filters. Here something so “factual” as a photograph revealed notable distinctions in texture, and even in form, depending upon which color filter was used for the documentary description of the event being recorded.

Similarly, a man has a dream. He reports his dream to a Freudian analyst, or a Jungian, or an Adlerian, or to a practitioner of some other school. In each case, we might say, the “same” dream will be subjected to a different color filter, with corresponding differences in the nature of the event as perceived, recorded, and interpreted. (It is a commonplace that patients soon learn to have the kind of dreams best suited to the terms favored by their analysts.)

II OBSERVATIONS IMPLICIT IN TERMS

We have now moved things one step further along. Not only does the nature of our terms affect the nature of our observations, in the sense that the terms direct the *attention* to one field rather than to another. Also, *many of the “observations” are but implications of the particular terminology in terms of which the observations are made.* In brief, much that we take as observations about “reality” may be but the spinning out of possibilities implicit in our particular choice of terms.

Perhaps the simplest illustration of this point is to be got by contrasting secular and theological terminologies of motives. If you want to operate, like a theologian, with a terminology that includes “God” as its key term, the only sure way to do so is to put in the term, and that’s that. The Bible solves the problem by putting “God” into the first sentence—and from this initial move, many implications “necessarily” follow. A naturalistic, Darwinian terminology flatly omits the term, with a corresponding set of implications—and that’s that. I have called metaphysics “coy theology” because the metaphysician often introduces the term “God” not outright, as with the Bible, but by beginning with a term that *ambiguously* contains such implications; then he gradually makes these implications explicit. If the term is not introduced thus ambiguously, it

can be introduced only by fiat, either outright at the beginning (like the Bible) or as a *non sequitur* (a break in the argument somewhere along the way). In Platonic dialogues, myth sometimes serves this purpose of a leap en route, a step prepared for by the fact that, in the Platonic dialectic, the methodic progress towards *higher levels of generalization* was in itself thought of as progress towards *the divine*.

But such a terministic situation is not by any means confined to matters of theology or metaphysics. As Jeremy Bentham aptly pointed out, all terms for mental states, sociopolitical relationships, and the like are necessarily "fictions," in the sense that we must express such concepts by the use of terms borrowed from the realm of the physical. Thus, what Emerson said in the accents of transcendental enthusiasm, Bentham said in the accents of "tough-mindedness." In Emerson's "tender-minded" scheme, "nature" exists to provide us with terms for the physical realm that are transferable to the moral realm, as the sight of a straight line gives us our word for "right," and of a crooked or twisted line our word for "wrong"; or as we derived our word for "spirit" from a word for "breath," or as "superciliousness" means literally a raising of the eyebrow. But Bentham would state the same relationship "tough-mindedly" by noting that our words for "right," "wrong," "spirit," etc. are "fictions" carried over from their strictly literal use in the realm of physical sensation. Bentham does not hope that such "fictions" can be avoided. He but asks that we recognize their nature as fictions. So he worked out a technique for helping to disclose the imagery in such ideas, and to discount accordingly. (See C. K. Ogden's book, *Bentham's Theory of Fictions*.)

But though this situation is by no means confined to the terminologies of theology or metaphysics, or even to such sciences as psychology (with terms for the out-going as vs. the in-turning, for dispositions, tendencies, drives, for the workings of the "it" in the Unconscious, and so on), by its very thoroughness theology does have a formula that we can adapt, for purely secular purposes of analysis. I have in mind the injunction, at once pious and methodological, "Believe, that you may understand (*crede, ut intelligas*)." In its theological application, this formula served

to define the relation between faith and reason. That is, if one begins with "faith," which must be taken on authority, one can work out a rationale based on this faith. But the faith must "precede" the rationale. . . .

In my book, *The Rhetoric of Religion*, I have proposed that the word "logology" might be applied in a special way to this issue. By "logology," as so conceived, I would mean the systematic study of theological terms, not from the standpoint of their truth or falsity as statements about the supernatural, but purely for the light they might throw upon the *forms* of language. That is, the tactics involved in the theologian's "words about God" might be studied as "words about words" (by using as a methodological bridge the opening sentence in the Gospel of John: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God").

"Logology" would be a purely empirical study of symbolic action. Not being a theologian, I would have no grounds to discuss the truth or falsity of theological doctrines as such. But I do feel entitled to discuss them with regard to their nature merely as language. And it is my claim that the injunction, "Believe, that you may understand," has a fundamental application to the purely secular problem of "terministic screens."

The "logological," or "terministic" counterpart of "Believe" in the formula would be: *Pick some particular nomenclature, some one terministic screen*. And for "That you may understand," the counterpart would be: *That you may proceed to track down the kinds of observation implicit in the terminology you have chosen, whether your choice of terms was deliberate or spontaneous.*"

III EXAMPLES

I can best state the case by giving some illustrations. But first let me ask you to reconsider a passage from Chapter One which presents the matter in the most general sense:

. . . can we bring ourselves to realize just how overwhelmingly much of what we mean by "reality" has been built up for us through nothing but our

symbol systems? Take away our books, and what little do we know about history, biography, even something so “down to earth” as the relative position of seas and continents? What is our “reality” for today (beyond the paper-thin line of our own particular lives) but all this clutter of symbols about the past, combined with whatever things we know mainly through maps, magazines, newspapers, and the like about the present? In school, as they go from class to class, students turn from one idiom to another. The various courses in the curriculum are in effect but so many different terminologies. And however important to us is the tiny sliver of reality each of us has experienced firsthand, the whole overall “picture” is but a construct of our symbol systems. To meditate on this fact until one sees its full implications is much like peering over the edge of things into an ultimate abyss. And doubtless that’s one reason why, though man is typically the symbol-using animal, he clings to a kind of naïve verbal realism that refuses to let him realize the full extent of the role played by symbolicity in his notions of reality.

I hope the passage can serve at least somewhat to suggest how fantastically much of our “Reality” could not exist for us, were it not for our profound and inveterate involvement in symbol systems. Our presence in a room is immediate, but the room’s relation to our country as a nation, and beyond that, to international relations and cosmic relations, dissolves into a web of ideas and images that reach through our senses only insofar as the symbol systems that report on them are heard or seen. To mistake this vast tangle of ideas for immediate experience is much more fallacious than to accept a dream as an immediate experience. For a dream really is an immediate experience, but the information that we receive about today’s events throughout the world most decidedly is *not*.

But let us consider some examples of terministic screens, in a more specific sense. The child psychologist, John Bowlby, writes a subtle and perceptive paper on “The Nature of the Child’s Ties to Its Mother.” He observes what he calls “five instinctual responses” of infants, which he lists as: crying, smiling, sucking, clinging, following. Surely no one would deny that such responses are there to see. But at the same time, we might recall the observations of the behaviorist,

John B. Watson. He, too, found things that were there to see. For instance, by careful scientific study, he discovered sure ways to make babies cry in fright or shriek with rage.

In contrast with Watson’s terminology of observation regarding the nature of infantile reflexes, note that Bowlby adopted a much more *social* point of view. His terms were explicitly designed to study infantile responses that involved the mother in a reciprocal relationship to the child.

At the time I read Bowlby’s paper, I happened to be doing a monograph on “Verbal Action in St. Augustine’s *Confessions*.” I was struck by the fact that Augustine’s terms for the behavior of infants closely paralleled Bowlby’s. Three were definitely the same: crying, smiling, sucking. Although he doesn’t mention clinging as a particularly notable term with regard to infancy, as the result of Bowlby’s list I noticed, as I might otherwise not have, that he frequently uses the corresponding Latin term (*inhaerere*) regarding his attachment to the Lord. “Following” was not explicitly worked out, as an infantile response, though Augustine does refer to God as his leader. And I began wondering what might be done with Spinoza’s *Ethics* in this connection, whether his persistent concern with what necessarily “follows” what in Nature could have been in part a metaphysician’s transformation of a personal motive strong in childhood. Be that as it may, I was struck by the fact that Augustine made one strategically important addition to Bowlby’s list: rest. Once you mention it, you realize that it is very definitely an instinctual response of the sort that Bowlby was concerned with, since it involves a social relation between mother and child. In Augustine’s scheme, of course, it also allowed for a transformation from resting as an infant to hopes of ultimately “resting in God.”

Our point is: All three terminologies (Watson’s, Bowlby’s, Augustine’s) directed the attention differently, and thus led to a correspondingly different quality of observations. In brief, “behavior” isn’t something that you need but observe; even something so “objectively there” as behavior must be observed through one or another kind of *terministic screen*, that directs the attention in keeping with its nature.

Basically, there are two kinds of terms: terms that put things together, and terms that take things apart. Otherwise put, *A* can feel himself identified with *B*, or he can think of himself as disassociated from *B*. Carried into mathematics, some systems stress the principle of continuity, some the principle of discontinuity, or particles. And since all laboratory instruments of measurement and observation are devices invented by the symbol-using animal, they too necessarily give interpretations in terms of either continuity or discontinuity. Hence, physicists forever keep finding that some sub-sub-sub-subaspect of nature can be again subdivided; whereupon it's only a question of time until they discover that some new cut merges moments previously considered distinct—and so on. Knowing nothing much about physics except the terministic fact that any observation of a physicist must necessarily be stated within the resources and embarrassments of man-made terminologies, I would still dare risk the proposition that Socrates' basic point about dialectic will continue to prevail; namely, there is composition, and there is division.

Often this shows up as a distinction between terministic screens positing differences of *degree* and those based on differences of *kind*. For instance, Darwin sees only a difference of degree between man and other animals. But the theologian sees a difference in kind. That is, where Darwin views man as *continuous* with other animals, the theologian would stress the principle of *discontinuity* in this regard. But the theologian's screen also posits a certain kind of *continuity* between man and God that is not ascribed to the relation between God and other animals.

The logological screen finds itself in a peculiar position here. It holds that, even on the purely secular level, Darwin overstated his case. And as a consequence, in his stress upon the principle of *continuity* between man and the other animals, he unduly slighted the evidence for *discontinuity* here. For he assumed that the principle of discontinuity between man and other animals was necessarily identical with a theological view of man.

Such need not be the case at all. Darwin says astonishingly little about man's special aptitudes as a symbol user. His terministic screen so

stressed the principle of continuity here that he could view the principle of discontinuity only as a case of human self-flattery. Yet, logology would point out: We can distinguish man from other animals without necessarily being over-haughty. For what other animals have yellow journalism, corrupt politics, pornography, stock market manipulators, plans for waging thermonuclear, chemical, and bacteriological war? I think we can consider ourselves different in kind from other animals, without necessarily being overproud of our distinction. We don't need theology, but merely the evidence of our characteristic sociopolitical disorders, to make it apparent that man, the typically symbol-using animal is alas! something special.

IV FURTHER EXAMPLES

Where are we, then?

We *must* use terministic screens, since we can't say anything without the use of terms; whatever terms we use, they necessarily constitute a corresponding kind of screen; and any such screen necessarily directs the attention to one field rather than another. Within that field there can be different screens, each with its ways of directing the attention and shaping the range of observations implicit in the given terminology. All terminologies must implicitly embody choices between the principle of continuity and the principle of discontinuity.

Two other variants of this point about continuity and discontinuity should be mentioned. First, note how it operates in political affairs: During a national election, the situation places great stress upon a *division* between the citizens. But often such divisiveness (or discontinuity) can be healed when the warring factions join in a common cause against an alien enemy (the division elsewhere thus serving to reestablish the principle of continuity at home). It should be apparent how either situation sets up the conditions for its particular kind of scapegoat, as a device that unifies all those who share the same enemy.

For a subtler variant (and here I am somewhat anticipating the specific subject matter of the next chapter) we might cite an observation by D. W. Harding, printed in *Metaphor and Symbol*,

a collection of essays by various writers on literary and psychological symbolism. The author concedes that the Freudian terminology is highly serviceable in calling attention to ideas that are not given full conscious recognition because they are *repressed*. But he asks: Why can there not also be ideas that are unclear simply because we have not yet become familiar enough with a situation to take them adequately into account? Thus, when we see an object at a distance, we do not ordinarily “repress” the knowledge of its identity. We don’t recognize it simply because we must come closer, or use an instrument, before we can see it clearly enough to know precisely what it is. Would not a terminology that features the unconscious *repression* of ideas automatically deflect our attention from symbols that are not *repressed* but merely *remote*? (At this point, of course, a Jungian terministic screen would ascribe the remoteness of many dream-symbols to their misty survival from an earlier stage in man’s development—a terministic device that I have called the “temporizing of essence,” since the nature of conditions *now* is stated quasi-narratively in terms of *temporal priority*, a vestigial derivation from “prehistory.”)

One more point will end this part of our discussion. Recently I read a paper in which one sociologist accused other sociologists of “oversocializing” their terms for the discussion of human motives. (The article, “The Oversocialized Conception of Man in Modern Sociology,” by Dennis H. Wrong, appears in the April 1961 issue of the *American Sociological Review*.)

This controversy brings us to a variant of the terministic situation I discussed in distinguishing between terms for Poetics in particular and terms for Language in General. But the author’s thesis really has a much wider application than he claims for it. To the extent that all scientific terminologies, by their very role in specialized disciplines, are designed to focus attention upon one or another particular field of observation, would it not be technically impossible for any such specialized terminology to supply an adequate definition for the discussion of *man in general*? Each might serve to throw light upon one or another aspect of human motives. But the definition of man in general would be formally possible only

to a *philosophic* terminology of motives (insofar as philosophy is the proper field for thoughts on man in general). Any definition of man in terms of specialized scientific nomenclatures would necessarily be “over-socialized,” or “over-biologized,” or “over-psychologized,” or “over-physicized,” or “over-poetized,” and so on, depending upon which specialized terministic screen was being stretched to cover not just its own special field but a more comprehensive area. Or, if we try to correct the excesses of *one terminology*, by borrowing from several, what strictly *scientific* canon (in the modern sense of scientific specialization) could we adduce as sanction? Would not such an eclectic recipe itself involve a generalized philosophy of some sort?

V

OUR ATTEMPT TO AVOID MERE RELATIVISM

And now where are we? Must we merely resign ourselves to an endless catalogue of terministic screens, each of which can be valued for the light it throws upon the human animal, yet none of which can be considered central? In one sense, yes. For, strictly speaking, there will be as many different world views in human history as there are people. (*Tot homines, tot sententiae.*) We can safely take it for granted that no one’s “personal equations” are quite identical with anyone else’s. In the unwritten cosmic constitution that lies behind all man-made Constitutions, it is decreed by the nature of things that each man is “necessarily free” to be his own tyrant, inexorably imposing upon himself the peculiar combination of insights associated with his peculiar combination of experiences.

At the other extreme, each of us shares with all other members of our kind (the often-inhuman human species) the fatal fact that, however the situation came to be, all members of our species conceive of reality somewhat roundabout, through various *media* of symbolism. Any such medium will be, as you prefer, either a way of “dividing” us from the “immediate” (thereby setting up a kind of “alienation” at the very start of our emergence from infancy into that state of articulacy somewhat misleadingly called the “age of reason”); or it can be viewed as a paradoxical

way of “uniting” us with things on a “higher level of awareness,” or some such. (Here again, we encounter our principles of continuity and discontinuity.)

Whether such proneness to symbolic activity be viewed as a privilege or a calamity (or as something of both), it is a distinguishing characteristic of the human animal in general. Hence it can properly serve as the basis of a general, or philosophic definition of this animal. From this terministic beginning, this intuitive grounding of a position, many observations “necessarily follow.” But are we not here “necessarily” caught in our own net? Must we not concede that a screen built on this basis is just one more screen; and that it can at best be permitted to take its place along with all the others? Can we claim for it special favors?

If I, or any one person, or even one particular philosophic school, had invented it, such doubts would be quite justified. But if we pause to look at it quizzically, I think we shall see that it is grounded in a kind of “collective revelation,” from away back. This “collective revelation” involves the pragmatic recognition of a distinction between persons and things. I say “pragmatic” recognition, because often the distinction has not been *formally* recognized. And all the more so because, if an object is closely associated with some person whom we know intimately, it can readily become infused with the identity of that person.

Reverting now to our original term, “dramatistic,” I would offer this basic proposition for your consideration: Despite the evidences of primitive animism (that endows many sheer things with “souls”) and the opposite modes of contemporary behaviorism (designed to study people as mere things), we do make a pragmatic distinction between the “actions” of “persons” and the sheer “motions” of “things.” The slashing of the waves against the beach, or the endless cycle of births and deaths in biologic organisms would be examples of sheer motion. Yet we, the typically symbol-using animal, cannot relate to one another sheerly as things in motion. Even the behaviorist, who studies man in terms of his laboratory experiments, must treat his colleagues as *persons*, rather than purely and simply as automata responding to stimuli.

I should make it clear: I am not pronouncing on the metaphysics of this controversy. Maybe we are but things in motion. I don’t have to haggle about that possibility. I need but point out that, whether or not we are just things in motion, we think of one another (and especially of those with whom we are intimate) as *persons*. And the difference between a thing and a person is that the one merely *moves* whereas the other *acts*. For the sake of the argument, I’m even willing to grant that the distinction between *things moving* and *persons acting* is but an illusion. All I would claim is that, illusion or not, the human race cannot possibly get along with itself on the basis of any other intuition. The human animal, as we know it, *emerges into personality* by first mastering whatever tribal speech happens to be its particular symbolic environment.

We could not here list even summarily the main aspects of the Dramatistic screen without launching into a whole new project. For present purposes, I must only say enough to indicate my grounds for contending that a Dramatistic screen does possess the philosophic character adapted to the discussion of man in general, as distinct from the kinds of insight afforded by the application of special scientific terminologies.

In behalf of my claim that the “dramatistic screen” is sanctioned by a “collective revelation” of long standing, suffice it to recall such key terms as *tao*, *karma*, *dike*, *energeia*, *hodos*, *actus*—all of them words for *action* (to which we might well add *Islam*, as the name for a submissive *attitude* with its obviously active possibilities). The Bible starts with God’s act, by creative fiat. Contemporary sociological theories of “role-taking” fit into the same general scheme. Terms like “transactions,” “exchange,” “competition,” “cooperation,” are but more specific terms for “action.” And there are countless words for specific acts: give, take, run, think, etc. The contemporary concern with “game theories” is obviously a subdivision of the same term. Add the gloomy thought that such speculative playfulness now is usually concerned with “war games.” But in any case, the concept of such games must involve, in however fragmentary a fashion, the picture of persons acting under stress. And even when the “game” hypothetically reduces most of

the players to terms of mere pawns, we can feel sure in advance that, if the “game” does not make proper allowance for the “human equation,” the conclusions when tested will prove wrong.

But the thought should admonish us. Often it is true that people can be feasibly reduced to terms of sheer motion. About fifty years ago, I was suddenly *startled* into thinking when (encountering experience purely “symbolwise,” purely via the news) I read of the first German attacks against a Belgian fortress in World War I. The point was simply this: The approach to the fortress was known to be mined. And the mines had to be exploded. So wave after wave of human flesh was sent forward, as conditioned cattle, to get blown up, until all the mines had been touched off. Then the next wave, or the next two or three waves thereafter, could take the fort. Granted, that comes pretty close to sheer motion, doubtless conceived in the best war-game tradition.

Basically, the Dramatistic screen involves a methodic tracking down of the implications in

the idea of symbolic action, and of man as the kind of being that is particularly distinguished by an aptitude for such action. To quote from Webster’s *Third New International Dictionary*, which has officially recognized “Dramatism” in my sense of the term, as treated schematically in my *Grammar of Motives*, it is “A technique of analysis of language and thought as basically modes of action rather than as means of conveying information.” I would but note that such an “Ism” can also function as a philosophy of human relations. The main consideration to keep in mind, for present purposes, is that two quite different but equally justifiable positions are implicit in this approach to specifically human motivation.

There is a gloomy route, of this sort: If *action* is to be our key term, then *drama*; for drama is the culminative form of action. . . . But if *drama*, then *conflict*. And if *conflict*, then *victimage*. Dramatism is always on the edge of this vexing problem, that comes to a culmination in tragedy, the song of the scapegoat.

Richard Weaver

1910–1963

“Rhetoric,” says Richard Weaver, “is cognate with language.” This terse formulation neatly characterizes the insight and dilemma of modern rhetorical theory. It is, Weaver remarks, “impossible and even ridiculous that the utterances of men could be neutral.” Rhetoric, hence language, is not neutral; it is a positive act with consequences in the world. Attempts to purify language, to raise it above rhetoric to a scientific standard of objectivity, are misguided. To the contrary, “every use of speech, oral and written, exhibits attitude, and an attitude implies an act.”¹ Even statements of simple fact or logic “can be seen as enclosed in a rhetorical intention.”² Every utterance is an attempt to make others see the world in a particular way and to accept the values implicit in that point of view. For Weaver, language is always rhetorical, always sermonic. Ethics, therefore, is the central concern of his study of rhetoric. Weaver’s elegant presentation of the scope and significance of rhetoric in his 1963 essay “Language Is Sermonic” (included here) comes at the end of his life and summarizes his long and persistent attempt to show the link between values and rhetoric. Weaver made no secret of his own values; indeed, he supported them with his considerable rhetorical powers.

Weaver was born in Asheville, North Carolina. Until his father’s death in 1916, he lived in Weaverville, North Carolina, named after his family, who had first settled there shortly after the Revolutionary War. After his father’s death, his mother moved with her four children to Lexington, Kentucky, where her family ran a prosperous millinery business. Weaver grew up in Lexington but spent the summers in Weaverville. After graduating from the University of Kentucky in 1932, he joined the Socialist party, impressed by its meliorative spirit. In 1933, however, he came under the influence of the extremely conservative Southern Agrarian movement while studying for his master’s degree at Vanderbilt University with John Crowe Ransom. This experience, reinforced by a strong negative reaction to what Weaver saw as the philistine culture of modern technocrats, moved him to become a committed conservative. He became an ardent supporter of the new conservative journals *The National Review* and *Modern Age* and of the Intercollegiate Society of Individualists. After taking his M.A. in 1936, Weaver taught at the college level for a few years before entering the Ph.D. program at Louisiana State University, where he studied with Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren. He received his degree in 1943. In 1944 he took a position at the University of Chicago, where he taught for the rest of his career, living in rented rooms in the city during the school year and returning to a family farm in Weaverville in the summer.

Weaver’s conservatism and ethical orientation to rhetoric are reflected in his firm commitment to Platonic idealism. In *Ideas Have Consequences* (1948), he articulates the notion that there are three levels of knowledge: On the first level, we have

¹For the previous three quotations, see p. 1359 in this book.

²See p. 1359 in this book.

simple awareness of brute facts; on the second level, we make generalizations and theories; and on the third, we find universals and first principles. This third level is the source of value judgments, which are necessarily based on a vision of reality: the metaphysical dream. In essays published posthumously in *Visions of Order* (1964) and *Life without Prejudice* (1965), Weaver laments the decline of Western culture and attributes that decline to a general loss of faith in a proper hierarchy of values. Instead of a belief in true ideals, modern culture fosters scientism and relativism, proclaiming “fact,” “progress,” “science,” and “efficiency” as cultural ideals.

Because rhetoric tries to orient the audience toward a worldview, it is imperative for the study of rhetoric to identify and evaluate the controlling ideas (or “god-terms”) on which the ethics of any discourse is based. In this, Weaver agrees with Kenneth Burke, whose influence on him was considerable, despite their opposing politics. Weaver maintains that the form of an argument represents an ethical orientation: Argument from definition is the most ethical form because it reflects a belief in the existence of ideal orders of being. Argument by analogy is high on his scale because it uses the standard of comparison in much the same way as a class or genre is used in definition. Cause-and-effect arguments, however, are lower on Weaver’s scale because they focus on becoming rather than on being. Such arguments tend to be pragmatic, “devoid of reference to principle or defined ideas.” Finally, arguments from circumstance are lowest, because they have little or no regard for higher orders of argument and higher ideals. Weaver treats these “ethical” argument forms as *topoi* in his textbook *Rhetoric and Composition: A Course in Reading and Writing* (1957). Notably, Weaver was committed to freshman composition, which he taught throughout his long tenure at the University of Chicago.

Weaver, like Aristotle, distinguishes dialectic from rhetoric, defining dialectic as abstract reasoning about doubtful propositions with the goal of establishing the truth. Dialectic thus leads to knowledge of essences and principles, such as “justice” and “goodness.” Dialectic does not, however, produce commitment; rhetoric does. For rhetoric to be ethical, it must be based on dialectically secured principles. Ethical rhetoric has the capacity to “perfect men by showing them better versions of themselves, links in that chain extending up toward the ideal which only the intellect can apprehend and only the soul have affection for.”

Two complete essays are reprinted here. “Language Is Sermonic” is, as noted, Weaver’s own summary of his theory of rhetoric. And in “The *Phaedrus* and the Nature of Rhetoric” (1953), Weaver not only gives an insightful reading of the *Phaedrus* but also establishes the terms of his own Platonic rhetoric.

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Language Is Sermonic

Our age has witnessed the decline of a number of subjects that once enjoyed prestige and general esteem, but no subject, I believe, has suffered more amazingly in this respect than rhetoric. When one recalls that a century ago rhetoric was regarded as the most important humanistic discipline taught in our colleges—when one recalls this fact and contrasts it with the very different situation prevailing today—he is forced to see that a great shift of valuation has taken place. In those days, in the not-so-distant Nineteenth Century, to be a professor of rhetoric, one had to be *somebody*. This was a teaching task that was thought to call for ample and varied resources, and it was recognized as addressing itself to the most important of all ends, the persuading of human beings to adopt right attitudes and act in response to them. That was no assignment for the plodding sort of professor. That sort of teacher might do a middling job with subject matter courses, where the main object is to impart information, but the teacher of rhetoric had to be a person of gifts and imagination who could illustrate, as the need arose, how to make words even in prose take on wings. I remind you of the chairs of rhetoric that still survive in title in some of our older universities. And I should add, to develop the full picture, that literature was then viewed as a subject which practically anyone could teach. No special gift, other than perhaps industry, was needed to relate facts about authors and periods. That was held to be rather pedestrian work. But the instructor in rhetoric was expected to be a man of stature. Today, I scarcely need point out, the situation has been exactly reversed. Today it is the teacher of literature who passes through a long period of training, who is supposed to possess the mysteries of a learned craft, and who is placed by his very speciality on a height of eminence. His knowledge of the intricacies of Shakespeare or Keats or Joyce and his sophistication in the critical doctrines that have been developed bring him the esteem of the academy. We must recognize in all fairness that the elaboration of critical techniques and special ap-

proaches has made the teaching of literature a somewhat more demanding profession, although some think that it has gone in that direction beyond the point of diminishing returns. Still, this is not enough to account for the relegation of rhetoric. The change has gone so far that now it is discouraging to survey the handling of this study in our colleges and universities. With a few honorable exceptions it is given to just about anybody who will take it. The “inferior, unlearned, mechanical, merely instrumental members of the profession”—to recall a phrase of a great master of rhetoric, Edmund Burke—have in their keeping what was once assigned to the leaders. Beginners, part-time teachers, graduate students, faculty wives, and various fringe people, are now the instructional staff of an art which was once supposed to require outstanding gifts and mature experience. (We must note that at the same time the course itself has been allowed to decline from one dealing philosophically with the problems of expression to one which tries to bring below-par students up to the level of accepted usage.) Indeed, the wheel of fortune would seem to have turned for rhetoric; what was once at the top is now at the bottom, and because of its low estate, people begin to wonder on what terms it can survive at all.

We are not faced here, however, with the wheel of fortune; we are faced with something that has come over the minds of men. Changes that come over the minds of men are not inscrutable, but have at some point their identifiable causes. In this case we have to deal with the most potent of cultural causes, an alteration of man's image of man. Something has happened in the recent past to our concept of what man is; a decision was made to look upon him in a new light, and from this decision new bases of evaluation have proceeded, which affect the public reputation of rhetoric. This changed concept of man is best described by the word “scientific,” a term which denotes the application of scientific assumptions to subjects which are not wholly comprised of naturalistic phenomena. Much of this is

a familiar tale, but to understand the effect of the change, we need to recall that the great success of scientific or positivistic thinking in the Nineteenth Century induced a belief that nothing was beyond the scope of its method. Science, and its off-spring applied science, were doing so much to alter and, it was thought, to improve the material conditions of the world, that a next step with the same process seemed in order. Why should not science turn its apparatus upon man, whom all the revelations of religion and the speculations of philosophy seemed still to have left an enigma, with the promise of much better result? It came to be believed increasingly that to think validly was to think scientifically, and that subject matters made no difference.

Now the method of scientific investigation is, as T. H. Huxley reminded us in a lecture which does great credit to him as a rhetorician, merely the method of logic. Induction and deduction and causal inference applied to the phenomena of nature yielded the results with which science was changing the landscape and revolutionizing the modes of industry. From this datum it was an easy inference that men ought increasingly to become scientists, and again, it was a simple derivative from this notion that man at his best is a logic machine, or at any rate an austere unemotional thinker. Furthermore, carried in the train of this conception was the thought, not often expressed of course, that things would be better if men did not give in so far to being human in the humanistic sense. In the shadow of the victories of science, his humanism fell into progressive disparagement. Just what comprises humanism is not a simple matter for analysis. Rationality is an indispensable part to be sure, yet humanity includes emotionality, or the capacity to feel and suffer, to know pleasure, and it includes the capacity for aesthetic satisfaction, and, what can be only suggested, a yearning to be in relation with something infinite. This last is his religious passion, or his aspiration to feel significant and to have a sense of belonging in a world that is productive of much frustration. These at least are the properties of humanity. Well, man had been human for some thousands of years, and where had it gotten him? Those who looked forward to a scientific Utopia were inclined to think that his

humanness had been a drag on his progress; human qualities were weaknesses, except for that special quality of rationality, which might be expected to redeem him.

However curious it may appear, this notion gained that man should live down his humanity and make himself a more efficient source of those logical inferences upon which a scientifically accurate understanding of the world depends. As the impulse spread, it was the emotional and subjective components of his being that chiefly came under criticism, for reasons that have just been indicated. Emotion and logic or science do not consort; the latter must be objective, faithful to what is out there in the public domain and conformable to the processes of reason. Whenever emotion is allowed to put in an oar, it gets the boat off true course. Therefore emotion is a liability.

Under the force of this narrow reasoning, it was natural that rhetoric should pass from a status in which it was regarded as of questionable worth to a still lower one in which it was positively condemned. For the most obvious truth about rhetoric is that its object is the whole man. It presents its arguments first to the rational part of man, because rhetorical discourses, if they are honestly conceived, always have a basis in reasoning. Logical argument is the plot, as it were, of any speech or composition that is designed to persuade. Yet it is the very characterizing feature of rhetoric that it goes beyond this and appeals to other parts of man's constitution, especially to his nature as a pathetic being, that is, a being feeling and suffering. A speech intended to persuade achieves little unless it takes into account how men are reacting subjectively to their hopes and fears and their special circumstances. The fact that Aristotle devotes a large proportion of his *Rhetoric* to how men feel about different situations and actions is an evidence of how prominently these considerations bulked even in the eyes of a master theorist.

Yet there is one further fact, more decisive than any of these, to prove that rhetoric is addressed to man in his humanity. Every speech which is designed to move is directed to a special audience in its unique situation. (We could not except even those radio appeals to "the world.")

Their audience has a unique place in time.) Here is but a way of pointing out that rhetoric is intended for historical man, or for man as conditioned by history. It is part of the *conditio humana* that we live at particular times and in particular places. These are productive of special or unique urgencies, which the speaker has got to recognize and to estimate. Hence, just as man from the point of view of rhetoric is not purely a thinking machine, or a mere seat of rationality, so he is not a creature abstracted from time and place. If science deals with the abstract and the universal, rhetoric is near the other end, dealing in significant part with the particular and the concrete. It would be the height of wishful thinking to say that this ought not be so. As long as man is born into history, he will be feeling and responding to historical pressures. All of these reasons combine to show why rhetoric should be considered the most humanistic of the humanities. It is directed to that part of our being which is not merely rational, for it supplements the rational approach. And it is directed to individual men in their individual situations, so that by the very definitions of the terms here involved, it takes into account what science deliberately, to satisfy its own purposes, leaves out. There is consequently no need for wonder that, in an age that has been influenced to distrust and disregard what is characteristically human, rhetoric should be a prime target of attack. If it is a weakness to harbor feelings, and if furthermore it is a weakness to be caught up in historical situations, then rhetoric is construable as a dealer in weaknesses. That man is in this condition religion, philosophy, and literature have been teaching for thousands of years. Criticism of it from the standpoint of a scientific Utopia is the new departure.

The incompleteness of the image of man as a creature who should make use of reason only can be demonstrated in another way. It is a truism that logic is a subject without a subject matter. That is to say, logic is a set of rules and devices which are equally applicable whatever the data. As the science of the forms of reasoning, it is a means of interpreting and utilizing the subject matters of the various fields which do have their proper contents. Facts from science or history or literature, for example, may serve in the estab-

lishment of an inductive generalization. Similar facts may be fed into a syllogism. Logic is merely the mechanism for organizing the data of other provinces of knowledge. Now it follows from this truth that if a man could convert himself into a pure logic machine or thinking machine, he would have no special relation to any body of knowledge. All would be grist for his mill, as the phrase goes. He would have no inclination, no partiality, no particular affection. His mind would work upon one thing as indifferently as upon another. He would be an eviscerated creature or a depassioned one, standing in the same relationship to the realities of the world as the thinking technique stands to the data on which it is employed. He would be a thinking robot, a concept which horrifies us precisely because the robot has nothing to think about.

A confirmation of this truth lies in the fact that rhetoric can never be reduced to symbology. Logic is increasingly becoming "symbolic logic"; that is its tendency. But rhetoric always comes to us in well-fleshed words, and that is because it must deal with the world, the thickness, stubbornness, and power of it.¹

Everybody recognizes that there is thus a formal logic. A number of eminent authorities have written of rhetoric as if it were formal in the same sense and degree. Formal rhetoric would be a set of rules and devices for persuading anybody about anything. If one desires a certain response, one uses a certain device, or "trick" as the enemies of the art would put it. The set of appeals that rhetoric provides is analogized with the forms of thought that logic prescribes. Rhetoric conceived in this fashion has an adaptability and virtuosity equal to those of logic.

But the comparison overlooks something, for at one point we encounter a significant difference. Rhetoric has a relationship to the world which logic does not have and which forces the rhetorician to keep an eye upon reality as well as upon the character and situation of his audience.

¹I might add that a number of years ago the Mathematics Staff of the College at the University of Chicago made a wager with the English Staff that they could write the Declaration of Independence in mathematical language. They must have had later and better thoughts about this, for we never saw the mathematical rendition. [Au.]

The truth of this is seen when we begin to examine the nature of the traditional “topics.” The topics were first formulated by Aristotle and were later treated also by Cicero and Quintilian and by many subsequent writers on the subject of persuasion. They are a set of “places” or “regions” where one can go to find the substance for persuasive argument. Cicero defines a topic as “the seat of an argument.” In function they are sources of content for speeches that are designed to influence. Aristotle listed a considerable number of them, but for our purposes they can be categorized very broadly. In reading or interpreting the world of reality, we make use of four very general ideas. The first three are usually expressed, in the language of philosophy, as being, cause, and relationship. The fourth, which stands apart from these because it is an external source, is testimony and authority.

One way to interpret a subject is to define its nature—to describe the fixed features of its being. Definition is an attempt to capture essence. When we speak of the nature of a thing, we speak of something we expect to persist. Definitions accordingly deal with fundamental and unchanging properties.

Another way to interpret a subject is to place it in a cause-and-effect relationship. The process of interpretation is then to affirm it as the cause of some effect or as the effect of some cause. And the attitudes of those who are listening will be affected according to whether or not they agree with our cause-and-effect analysis.

A third way to interpret a subject is in terms of relationships of similarity and dissimilarity. We say that it is like something which we know in fuller detail, or that it is unlike that thing in important respects. From such a comparison conclusions regarding the subject itself can be drawn. This is a very common form of argument, by which probabilities can be established. And since probabilities are all we have to go on in many questions of this life, it must be accounted a usable means of persuasion.

The fourth category, the one removed from the others by the fact of its being an external source, deals not with the evidence directly but accepts it on the credit of testimony or authority. If we are not in position to see or examine, but

can procure the deposition of some one who is, the deposition may become the substance of our argument. We can slip it into a syllogism just as we would a defined term. The same is true of general statements which come from quarters of great authority or prestige. If a proposition is backed by some weighty authority, like the Bible, or can be associated with a great name, people may be expected to respond to it in accordance with the veneration they have for these sources. In this way evidence coming from the outside is used to influence attitudes or conduct.

Now we see that in all these cases the listener is being asked not simply to follow a valid reasoning form but to respond to some presentation of reality. He is being asked to agree with the speaker’s interpretation of the world that is. If the definition being offered is a true one, he is expected to recognize this and to say, at least inwardly, “Yes, that is the way the thing is.” If the exposition of cause-and-effect relationship is true, he may be expected to concur that *X* is the cause of such a consequence or that such a consequence has its cause in *X*. And according to whether this is a good or a bad cause or a good or a bad consequence, he is disposed to preserve or remove the cause, and so on. If he is impressed with the similarity drawn between two things, he is as a result more likely to accept a policy which involves treating something in the same way in which its analogue is treated. He has been influenced by a relationship of comparability. And finally, if he has been confronted with testimony or authority from sources he respects, he will receive this as a reliable, if secondary, kind of information about reality. In these four ways he has been persuaded to read the world as the speaker reads it.

At this point, however, I must anticipate an objection. The retort might be made: “These are extremely formal categories you are enumerating. I fail to see how they are any less general or less indifferently applicable than the formal categories of logic. After all, definitions and so on can be offered of anything. You still have not succeeded in making rhetoric a substantive study.”

In replying, I must turn here to what should be called the office of rhetoric. Rhetoric seen in the

whole conspectus of its function is an art of emphasis embodying an order of desire. Rhetoric is advisory; it has the office of advising men with reference to an independent order of goods and with reference to their particular situation as it relates to these. The honest rhetorician therefore has two things in mind: a vision of how matters should go ideally and ethically and a consideration of the special circumstances of his auditors. Toward both of these he has a responsibility.

I shall take up first how his responsibility to the order of the goods or to the hierarchy of realities may determine his use of the topics.

When we think of rhetoric as one of the arts of civil society (and it must be a free society, since the scope for rhetoric is limited and the employment of it constrained under a despotism) we see that the rhetorician is faced with a choice of means in appealing to those whom he can prevail upon to listen to him. If he is at all philosophical, it must occur to him to ask whether there is a standard by which the sources of persuasion can be ranked. In a phrase, is there a preferred order of them, so that, in a scale of ethics, it is nobler to make use of one sort of appeal than another? This is of course a question independent of circumstantial matters, yet a fundamental one. We all react to some rhetoric as “untruthful” or “unfair” or “cheap,” and this very feeling is evidence of the truth that it is possible to use a better or a worse style of appeal. What is the measure of the better style? Obviously this question cannot be answered at all in the absence of some conviction about the nature and destiny of man. Rhetoric inevitably impinges upon morality and politics; and if it is one of the means by which we endeavor to improve the character and the lot of men, we have to think of its methods and sources in relation to a scheme of values.

To focus the problem a little more sharply, when one is asking men to cooperate with him in thinking this or doing that, when is he asking in the name of the highest reality, which is the same as saying, when is he asking in the name of their highest good?

Naturally, when the speaker replies to this question, he is going to express his philosophy, or more precisely, his metaphysics. My personal reply would be that he is making the highest

order of appeal when he is basing his case on definition or the nature of the thing. I confess that this goes back to a very primitive metaphysics, which holds that the highest reality is being, not becoming. It is a quasi-religious metaphysics, if you will, because it ascribes to the highest reality qualities of stasis, immutability, eternal perdurance—qualities that in Western civilization are usually expressed in the language of theism. That which is perfect does not change; that which has to change is less perfect. Therefore, if it is possible to determine unchanging essences or qualities and to speak in terms of these, one is appealing to what is most real in so doing. From another point of view, this is but getting people to see what is most permanent in existence, or what transcends the world of change and accident. The realm of essence is the realm above the flux of phenomena, and definitions are of essences and genera.

I may have expressed this view in somewhat abstruse language in order to place it philosophically, yet the practice I am referring to is everyday enough, as a simple illustration will make plain. If a speaker should define man as a creature with an indefeasible right to freedom and should upon this base an argument that a certain man or group of men are entitled to freedom, he would be arguing from definition. Freedom is an unchanging attribute of his subject; it can accordingly be predicated of whatever falls within the genus man. Stipulative definitions are of the ideal, and in this fact lies the reason for placing them at the top of the hierarchy. If the real progress of man is toward knowledge of ideal truth, it follows that this is an appeal to his highest capacity—his capacity to apprehend what exists absolutely.

The next ranking I offer tentatively, but it seems to me to be relationship or similitude and its subvarieties. I have a consistent impression that the broad resource of analogy, metaphor, and figuration is favored by those of a poetic and imaginative cast of mind. We make use of analogy or comparison when the available knowledge of the subject permits only probable proof. Analogy is reasoning from something we know to something we do not know in one step; hence there is no universal ground for predication. Yet behind every analogy lurks the possibility of a

general term. The general term is never established as such, for that would change the argument to one of deductive reasoning with a universal or distributed middle. The user of analogy is hinting at an essence which cannot at the moment be produced. Or, he may be using an indirect approach for reason of tact; analogies not infrequently do lead to generalizations; and he may be employing this approach because he is respectful of his audience and desires them to use their insight.

I mentioned a moment earlier that this type of argument seems to be preferred by those of a poetic or non-literal sort of mind. That fact suggests yet another possibility, which I offer still more diffidently, asking your indulgence if it seems to border on the whimsical. The explanation would be that the cosmos *is* one vast system of analogy, so that our profoundest intuitions of it are made in the form of comparisons. To affirm that something is like something else is to begin to talk about the unitariness of creation. Everything is like everything else somehow, so that we have a ladder of similitude mounting up to the final oneness—to something like a unity in godhead. Furthermore, there is about this source of argument a kind of decent reticence, a recognition of the unknown along with the known. There is a recognition that the unknown may be continuous with the known, so that man is moving about in a world only partly realized, yet real in all its parts. This is the mood of poetry and mystery, but further adumbration of it I leave to those more gifted than I.

Cause and effect appears in this scale to be a less exalted source of argument, though we all have to use it because we are historical men. Here I must recall the metaphysical ground of this organization and point out that it operates in the realm of becoming. Causes are causes having effect and effects are resulting from causes. To associate this source of argument with its habitual users, I must note that it is heard most commonly from those who are characteristically pragmatic in their way of thinking. It is not unusual today to find a lengthy piece of journalism or an entire political speech which is nothing but a series of arguments from consequence—completely devoid of reference to principle or defined

ideas. We rightly recognize these as sensational types of appeal. Those who are partial to arguments based on effect are under a temptation to play too much upon the fears of their audience by stressing the awful nature of some consequence or by exaggerating the power of some cause. Modern advertising is prolific in this kind of abuse. There is likewise a temptation to appeal to prudential considerations only in a passage where things are featured as happening or threatening to happen.

An even less admirable subvariety of this source is the appeal to circumstance, which is the least philosophical of all the topics of argument. Circumstance is an allowable source when we don't know anything else to plead, in which cases we say, "There is nothing else to be done about it." Of all the arguments, it admits of the least perspicaciousness. An example of this which we hear nowadays with great regularity is: "We must adapt ourselves to a fast-changing world." This is pure argument from circumstance. It does not pretend, even, to offer a cause-and-effect explanation. If it did, the first part would tell us why we must adapt ourselves to a fast-changing world; and the second would tell us the result of our doing so. The usually heard formulation does neither. Such argument is preeminently lacking in understanding, or what the Greeks called *dianoia*. It simply cites a brute circumstance and says, "Step lively." Actually, this argument amounts to a surrender of reason. Maybe it expresses an instinctive feeling that in this situation reason is powerless. Either you change fast or you get crushed. But surely it would be a counsel of desperation to try only this argument in a world suffering from aimlessness and threatened with destruction.

Generally speaking, cause and effect is a lower-order source of argument because it deals in the realm of the phenomenal, and the phenomenal is easily converted into the sensational. Sensational excitements always run the risk of arousing those excesses which we deplore as sentimentality or brutality.

Arguments based on testimony and authority, utilizing external sources, have to be judged in a different way. Actually, they are the other sources seen through other eyes. The question of

their ranking involves the more general question of the status of authority. Today there is a widespread notion that all authority is presumptuous. ("Authority is authoritarian" seems to be the root idea); consequently it is held improper to try to influence anyone by the prestige of great names or of sanctioned pronouncements. This is a presumption itself, by which every man is presumed to be his own competent judge in all matters. But since that is a manifest impossibility, and is becoming a greater impossibility all the time, as the world piles up bodies of specialized knowledge which no one person can hope to command, arguments based on authority are certainly not going to disappear. The sound maxim is that an argument based on authority is as good as the authority. What we should hope for is a new and discriminating attitude toward what is authoritative, and I would like to see some source recognized as having moral authority. This hope will have to wait upon the recovery of a more stable order of values and the re-recognition of qualities in persons. Speaking most generally, arguments from authority are ethically good when they are deferential toward real hierarchy.

With that we may sum up the rhetorical speaker's obligation toward the ideal, apart from particular determinations. If one accepts the possibility of this or any other ranking, one has to concede that rhetoric is not merely formal; it is realistic. It is not playing with counters; its impulses come from insights into actuality. Its topic matter is existential, not hypothetical. It involves more than mere demonstration because it involves choice. Its assertions have ontological claims.

Now I return to the second responsibility, which is imposed by the fact that the rhetorician is concerned with definite questions. These are questions having histories, and history is always concrete. This means that the speaker or writer has got to have a rhetorical perception of what his audience needs or will receive or respond to. He takes into account the reality of man's composite being and his tendency to be swayed by sentiment. He estimates the pressures of the particular situation in which his auditors are found. In the eyes of those who look sourly upon the art, he is a man probing for weaknesses which he means to exploit.

But here we must recur to the principle that rhetoric comprehensively considered is an art of emphasis. The definite situation confronts him with a second standard of choice. In view of the receptivity of his audience, which of the topics shall he choose to stress, and how? If he concludes that definition should be the appeal, he tries to express the nature of the thing in a compelling way. If he feels that a cause-and-effect demonstration would stand the greatest chance to impress, he tries to make this linkage so manifest that his hearers will see an inevitability in it. And so on with the other topics, which will be so emphasized or magnified as to produce the response of assent.

Along with this process of amplification, the ancients recognized two qualities of rhetorical discourse which have the effect of impressing an audience with the reality or urgency of a topic. In Greek these appear as *energia* and *enargia*, both of which may be translated "actuality," though the first has to do with liveliness or animation of action and the second with vividness of scene. The speaker now indulges in actualization to make what he is narrating or describing present to the minds' eyes of his hearers.

The practice itself has given rise to a good deal of misunderstanding, which it would be well to remove. We know that one of the conventional criticisms of rhetoric is that the practitioner of it takes advantage of his hearers by playing upon their feelings and imaginations. He overstates the importance of his topics by puffing them up, dwelling on them in great detail, using an excess of imagery or of modifiers evoking the senses, and so on. He goes beyond what is fair, the critics often allege, by this actualization of a scene about which the audience ought to be thinking rationally. Since this criticism has a serious basis, I am going to offer an illustration before making the reply. Here is a passage from Daniel Webster's famous speech for the prosecution in the trial of John Francis Knapp. Webster is actualizing for the jury the scene of the murder as he has constructed it from circumstantial evidence.

The deed was executed with a degree of steadiness and self-possession equal to the wickedness with which it was planned. The circumstances now

clearly in evidence spread out the scene before us. Deep sleep had fallen upon the destined victim and all beneath his roof. A healthful old man, to whom sleep was sweet, the first sound slumbers of the night held him in their soft but strong embrace. The assassin enters, through a window already prepared, into an unoccupied apartment. With noiseless foot he paces the lonely hall, half-lighted by the moon; he winds up the ascent of the stairs, and reaches the door of the chamber. Of this, he moves the lock by soft and continued pressure, till it turns on its hinges without noise; and he enters, and beholds the victim before him. The room is uncommonly open to the admission of light. The face of the innocent sleeper is turned from the murderer, and the beams of the moon, resting on the gray locks of the aged temple, show him where to strike. The fatal blow is given! and the victim passes, without a struggle or a motion, from the repose of sleep to the repose of death! It is the assassin's purpose to make sure work; and he plies the dagger, though it is obvious that life has been destroyed by the blow of the bludgeon. He even raises the aged arm, that he may not fail in his aim at the heart, and replaces it again over the wound of the poniard! To finish the picture, he explores the wrist for the pulse! He feels for it, and ascertains that it beats no longer! It is accomplished. The deed is done. He retreats, retraces his steps to the window, passes out through it as he came in, and escapes. He has done the murder. No eye has seen him, no ear has heard him. The secret is his own, and it is safe!

By depicting the scene in this fulness of detail, Webster is making it vivid, and "vivid" means "living." There are those who object on general grounds to this sort of dramatization; it is too affecting to the emotions. Beyond a doubt, whenever the rhetorician actualizes an event in this manner, he is making it mean something to the emotional part of us, but that part is involved whenever we are deliberating about goodness and badness. On this subject there is a very wise reminder in Bishop Whately's *Elements of Rhetoric*: "When feelings are strongly excited, they are not necessarily over-excited; it may be that they are only brought to the state which the occasion fully justifies, or even that they fall short of this." Let us think of the situation in which Webster was acting. After all, there is the possibility, or even the likelihood that the murder was committed in this fashion, and that the in-

dicted Knapp deserved the conviction he got. Suppose the audience had remained cold and unmoved. There is the victim's side to consider and the interest of society in protecting life. We should not forget that Webster's "actualization" is in the service of these. Our attitude toward what is just or right or noble and their opposites is not a bloodless calculation, but a feeling for and against. As Whately indicates, the speaker who arouses feeling may only be arousing it to the right pitch and channeling it in the right direction.

To reaffirm the general contention: the rhetorician who practices "amplification" is not thereby misleading his audience, because we are all men of limited capacity and sensitivity and imagination. We all need to have things pointed out to us, things stressed in our interest. The very task of the rhetorician is to determine what feature of a question is most exigent and to use the power of language to make it appear so. A speaker who dwells insistently upon some aspect of a case may no more be hoodwinking me than a policeman or a doctor when he advises against a certain course of action by pointing out its nature or its consequences. He *should* be in a position to know somewhat better than I do.

It is strongly to be suspected that this charge against rhetoric comes not only from the distorted image that makes man a merely rationalistic being, but also from that dogma of an uncritical equalitarianism. The notion of equality has insinuated itself so far that it appears sometimes as a feeling, to which I would apply the name "sentimental plebeianism," that no man is better or wiser than another, and hence that it is usurpation for one person to undertake or instruct or admonish another. This preposterous (and we could add, wholly unscientific judgment, since our differences are manifold and provable) is propagated in subtle ways by our institutions of publicity and the perverse art of demagogic politics. Common sense replies that any individual who advises a friend or speaks up in meeting is exercising a kind of leadership, which may be justified by superior virtue, knowledge, or personal insight.

The fact that leadership is a human necessity is proof that rhetoric as the attempt through lan-

guage to make one's point of view prevail grows out of the nature of man. It is not a reflection of any past phase of social development, or any social institution, or any fashion, or any passing vice. When all factors have been considered, it will be seen that men are born rhetoricians, though some are born small ones and others greater, and some cultivate the native gift by study and training, whereas some neglect it. Men are such because they are born into history, with an endowment of passion and a sense of the *ought*. There is ever some discrepancy, however slight, between the situation man is in and the situation he would like to realize. His life is therefore characterized by movement toward goals. It is largely the power of rhetoric which influences and governs that movement.

For the same set of reasons, rhetoric is cognate with language. Ever since I first heard the idea mentioned seriously it impressed me as impossible and even ridiculous that the utterances of men could be neutral. Such study as I have been able to give the subject over the years has confirmed that feeling and has led me to believe that what is sometimes held up as a desideratum—expression purged of all tendency—rests upon an initial misconception of the nature of language.

The condition essential to see is that every use of speech, oral and written, exhibits an attitude, and an attitude implies an act. "Thy speech bewrayeth thee" is aphoristically true if we take it as saying, "Your speech reveals your disposition," first by what you choose to say, then by the amount you decide to say, and so on down through the resources of linguistic elaboration and intonation. All rhetoric is a rhetoric of motives, as Kenneth Burke saw fit to indicate in the title of his book. At the low end of the scale, one may be doing nothing more than making sounds to express exuberance. But if at the other end one sits down to compose a *Critique of the Pure Reason*, one has the motive of refuting other philosophers' account of the constitution of being and of substituting one's own, for an interest which may be universal, but which nonetheless proceeds from the will to alter something.

Does this mean that it is impossible to be objective about anything? Does it mean that one is

"rhetorical" in declaring that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points? Not in the sense in which the objection is usually raised. There are degrees of objectivity, and there are various disciplines which have their own rules for expressing their laws or their content in the most effective manner for their purpose. But even this expression can be seen as enclosed in a rhetorical intention. Put in another way, an utterance is capable of rhetorical function and aspect. If one looks widely enough, one can discover its rhetorical dimension, to put it in still another way. The scientist has some interest in setting forth the formulation of some recurrent feature of the physical world, although his own sense of motive may be lost in a general feeling that science is a good thing because it helps progress along.²

In short, as long as man is a creature responding to purpose, his linguistic expression will be a carrier of tendency. Where the modern semanticists got off on the wrong foot in their effort to refurbish language lay in the curious supposition that language could and should be outwardly determined. They were positivists operating in the linguistic field. Yet if there is anything that is going to keep on defying positivistic correlation, it is this subjectively born, intimate, and value-laden vehicle which we call language. Language is a system of imputation, by which values and precepts are first framed in the mind and are then imputed to things. This is not an irresponsible imputation; it does not imply, say, that no two people can look at the same clock face and report the same time. The qualities or properties have to be in the things, but they are not in the things in the form in which they are framed by the mind. This much I think we can

²If I have risked confusion by referring to "rhetoricians" and "rhetorical speakers," and to other men as if they were all nonrhetoricians, while insisting that all language has its rhetorical aspect, let me clarify the terms. By "rhetorician" I mean the deliberate rhetor: the man who understands the nature and aim and requirements of persuasive expression and who uses them more or less consciously according to the approved rules of the art. The other, who by his membership in the family of language users, must be a rhetorician of sorts, is an empirical and adventitious one; he does not know enough to keep invention, arrangement, and style working for him. The rhetorician of my reference is thus the educated speaker; the other is an untaught amateur. [Au.]

learn from the great realist-nominalist controversy of the Middle Ages and from the little that contemporary semantics has been able to add to our knowledge.³ Language was created by the imagination for the purposes of man, but it may have objective reference—just how we cannot say until we are in possession of a more complete metaphysics and epistemology.

Now a system of imputation involves the use of predicates, as when we say, “Sugar is sweet” or “Business is good.” Modern positivism and relativism, however, have gone virtually to the point of denying the validity of all conceptual predication. Occasionally at Chicago I purposely needle a class by expressing a general concept in a casual way, whereupon usually I am sternly reminded by some member brought up in the best relativist tradition that “You can’t generalize that way.” The same view can be encountered in eminent quarters. Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes was fond of saying that the chief end of man is to frame general propositions and that no general proposition is worth a damn. In the first of these general propositions the Justice was right, in the sense that men cannot get along without categorizing their apprehensions of reality. In the second he was wrong because, although a great jurist, he was not philosopher enough to think the matter through. Positivism and relativism may have rendered a certain service as devil’s advocates if they have caused us to be more careful about our concepts and our predicates, yet their position in net form is untenable. The battle against general propositions was lost from the beginning, for just as surely as man is a symbol-using animal (and a symbol transcends the thing symbolized), he is a classifying animal. The morality lies in the application of the predicate.

Language, which is thus predicative, is for the same cause sermonic. We are all of us preachers in private or public capacities. We have no sooner uttered words than we have given impulse to other people to look at the world, or some small part of it, in our way. Thus caught up in a great web of inter-communication and inter-

influence, we speak as rhetoricians affecting one another for good or ill. That is why I must agree with Quintilian that the true orator is the good man, skilled in speaking—good in his formed character and right in his ethical philosophy. When to this he adds fertility in invention and skill in the arts of language, he is entitled to that leadership which tradition accords him.

If rhetoric is to be saved from the neglect and even the disrepute which I was deploring at the beginning of this lecture, these primary truths will have to be recovered until they are a part of our active consciousness. They are, in summation, that man is not nor ever can be nor ever should be a depersonalized thinking machine. His feeling is the activity in him most closely related to what used to be called his soul. To appeal to his feeling therefore is not necessarily an insult; it can be a way to honor him, by recognizing him in the fulness of his being. Even in those situations where the appeal is a kind of strategy, it but recognizes that men—all men—are historically conditioned.

Rhetoric must be viewed formally as operating at that point where literature and politics meet, or where literary values and political urgencies can be brought together. The rhetorician makes use of the moving power of literary presentation to induce in his hearers an attitude or decision which is political in the very broadest sense. Perhaps this explains why the successful user of rhetoric is sometimes in bad grace with both camps. For the literary people he is too “practical”; and for the more practical political people he is too “flowery.” But there is nothing illegitimate about what he undertakes to do, any more than it would be illegitimate to make use of the timeless principles of aesthetics in the constructing of a public building. Finally, we must never lose sight of the order of values as the ultimate sanction of rhetoric. No one can live a life of direction and purpose without some scheme of values. As rhetoric confronts us with choices involving values, the rhetorician is a preacher to us, noble if he tries to direct our passion toward noble ends and base if he uses our passion to confuse and degrade us. Since all utterance influences us in one or the other of these directions, it is important that the direction be the right one, and it is better if this lay preacher is a master of his art.

³Realism holds that general properties really exist, while nominalism holds that generalizations are linguistic categories only. [Ed.]

The Phaedrus and the Nature of Rhetoric

Our subject begins with the threshold difficulty of defining the question which Plato's *Phaedrus* was meant to answer.¹ Students of this justly celebrated dialogue have felt uncertain of its unity of theme, and the tendency has been to designate it broadly as a discussion of the ethical and the beautiful. The explicit topics of the dialogue are, in order: love, the soul, speechmaking, and the spoken and written word, or what is generally termed by us "composition." The development looks random, and some of the most interesting passages appear *jeux d'esprit*. The richness of the literary art diverts attention from the substance of the argument.

But a work of art which touches on many profound problems justifies more than one kind of reading. Our difficulty with the *Phaedrus* may be that our interpretation has been too literal and too topical. If we will bring to the reading of it even a portion of that imagination which Plato habitually exercised, we should perceive surely enough that it is consistently, and from beginning to end, about one thing, which is the nature of rhetoric.² Again, that point may have been missed because most readers conceive rhetoric to be a system of artifice rather than an idea,³ and the *Phaedrus*, for all its apparent divagation, keeps very close to a single idea. A study of its rhetorical structure, especially, may give us the insight which has been withheld, while making us feel anew that Plato possessed the deepest divining rod among the ancients.

For the imaginative interpretation which we shall now undertake, we have both general and specific warrant. First, it scarcely needs pointing out that a Socratic dialogue is in itself an example of transcendence. Beginning with something simple and topical, it passes to more general levels of application; and not infrequently, it

must make the leap into allegory for the final utterance. This means, of course, that a Socratic dialogue may be about its subject implicitly as well as explicitly. The implicit rendering is usually through some kind of figuration because it is the nature of this meaning to be ineffable in any other way. It is necessary, therefore, to be alert for what takes place through the analogical mode.

Second, it is a matter of curious interest that a warning against literal reading occurs at an early stage of the *Phaedrus*. Here in the opening pages, appearing as if to set the key of the theme, comes an allusion to the myth of Boreas and Oreithyia. On the very spot where the dialogue begins, Boreas is said to have carried off the maiden. Does Socrates believe that this tale is really true? Or is he in favor of a scientific explanation of what the myth alleges? Athens had scientific experts, and the scientific explanation was that the north wind had pushed her off some rocks where she was playing with a companion. In this way the poetical story is provided with a factual basis. The answer of Socrates is that many tales are open to this kind of rationalization, but that the result is tedious and actually irrelevant. It is irrelevant because our chief concern is with the nature of the man, and it is beside the point to probe into such matters while we are yet ignorant of ourselves. The scientific criticism of Greek mythology, which may be likened to the scientific criticism of the myths of the Bible in our own day, produces at best "a boorish sort of wisdom (*ἀγροίχων τὴν σοφίαν*)." It is a limitation to suppose that the truth of the story lies in its historicity. The "boorish sort of wisdom" seeks to supplant poetic allegation with fact, just as an archaeologist might look for the foundations of the Garden of Eden. But while this sort of search goes on the truth flies off, on wings of imagination, and is not recoverable until the searcher attains a higher level of pursuit. Socrates is satisfied with the parable, and we infer from numerous other passages that he believed that some things are best told by parable and some

¹The *Phaedrus* is included in Part One, pp. 138-68. [Ed.]

²Cf. A. E. Taylor, *Plato: The Man and His Work* (New York, 1936), 300. [Au.]

³Cf. P. Albert Duhamel, "The Concept of Rhetoric as Effective Expression," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, X (June, 1949), 344-56 *passim*. [Au.]

perhaps discoverable only by parable. Real investigation goes forward with the help of analogy. "Freud without Sophocles is unthinkable," a modern writer has said.⁴

With these precepts in mind, we turn to that part of the *Phaedrus* which has proved most puzzling: why is so much said about the absurd relationship of the lover and the nonlover? Socrates encounters Phaedrus outside the city wall. The latter has just come from hearing a discourse by Lysias which enchanted him with its eloquence. He is prevailed upon to repeat this discourse, and the two seek out a shady spot on the banks of the Illissus. Now the discourse is remarkable because although it was "in a way, a love speech," its argument was that people should grant favors to nonlovers rather than to lovers. "This is just the clever thing about it," Phaedrus remarks. People are in the habit of preferring their lovers, but it is much more intelligent, as the argument of Lysias runs, to prefer a nonlover. Accordingly, the first major topic of the dialogue is a eulogy of the nonlover. The speech provides good subject matter for jesting on the part of Socrates, and looks like another exhibition of the childlike ingenuity which gives the Greeks their charm. Is it merely a piece of literary trifling? Rather, it is Plato's dramatic presentation of a major thesis. Beneath the surface of repartee and mock seriousness, he is asking whether we ought to prefer a neuter form of speech to the kind which is ever getting us aroused over things and provoking an expense of spirit.

Sophistications of theory cannot obscure the truth that there are but three ways for language to affect us. It can move us toward what is good; it can move us toward what is evil; or it can, in hypothetical third place, fail to move us at all.⁵ Of course there are numberless degrees of effect under the first two heads, and the third, as will be shown, is an approximate rather than an absolute zero of effect. But any utterance is a major assumption of responsibility, and the assumption that one can avoid that responsibility by doing

⁴James Blish, "Rituals on Ezra Pound," *Sewanee Review*, LVIII (spring, 1950), 223. [Au.]

⁵The various aesthetic approaches to language offer refinements of perception, but all of them can be finally subsumed under the first head above. [Au.]

something to language itself is one of the chief considerations of the *Phaedrus*, just as it is of contemporary semantic theory. What Plato has succeeded in doing in this dialogue, whether by a remarkably effaced design, or unconsciously through the formal pressure of his conception, is to give us embodiments of the three types of discourse. These are respectively the nonlover, the evil lover, and the noble lover. We shall take up these figures in their sequence and show their relevance to the problem of language.

The eulogy of the nonlover in the speech of Lysias, as we hear it repeated to Socrates, stresses the fact that the nonlover follows a policy of enlightened self-interest. First of all, the nonlover does not neglect his affairs or commit extreme acts under the influence of passion. Since he acts from calculation, he never has occasion for remorse. No one ever says of him that he is not in his right mind, because all of his acts are within prudential bounds. The first point is, in sum, that the nonlover never sacrifices himself and therefore never feels the vexation which overtakes lovers when they recover from their passion and try to balance their pains with their profit. And the nonlover is constant whereas the lover is inconstant. The first argument then is that the nonlover demonstrates his superiority through prudence and objectivity. The second point of superiority found in nonlovers is that there are many more of them. If one is limited in one's choice to one's lovers, the range is small; but as there are always more nonlovers than lovers, one has a better chance in choosing among many of finding something worthy of one's affection. A third point of superiority is that association with the nonlover does not excite public comment. If one is seen going about with the object of one's love, one is likely to provoke gossip; but when one is seen conversing with the nonlover, people merely realize that "everybody must converse with somebody." Therefore this kind of relationship does not affect one's public standing, and one is not disturbed by what the neighbors are saying. Finally, nonlovers are not jealous of one's associates. Accordingly they do not try to keep one from companions of intellect or wealth for fear that they may be outshone themselves. The lover, by contrast, tries to draw

his beloved away from such companionship and so deprives him of improving associations. The argument is concluded with a generalization that one ought to grant favors not to the needy or the importunate, but to those who are able to repay. Such is the favorable account of the nonlover given by Lysias.

We must now observe how these points of superiority correspond to those of “semantically purified” speech. By “semantically purified speech” we mean the kind of speech approaching pure notation in the respect that it communicates abstract intelligence without impulsion. It is a simple instrumentality, showing no affection for the object of its symbolizing and incapable of inducing bias in the hearer. In its ideal conception, it would have less power to move than $2 + 2 = 4$, since it is generally admitted that mathematical equations may have the beauty of elegance, and hence are not above suspicion where beauty is suspect. But this neuter language will be an unqualified medium of transmission of meanings from mind to mind, and by virtue of it minds can remain in an unprejudiced relationship to the world and also to other minds.

Since the characteristic of this language is absence of anything like affection, it exhibits toward the thing being represented merely a sober fidelity, like that of the nonlover toward his companion. Instead of passion, it offers the serviceability of objectivity. Its “enlightened self-interest” takes the form of an unvarying accuracy and regularity in its symbolic references, most, if not all of which will be to verifiable data in the extramental world. Like a thrifty burgher, it has no romanticism about it; and it distrusts any departure from the literal and prosaic. The burgher has his feet on the ground; and similarly the language of pure notation has its point-by-point contact with objective reality. As Stuart Chase, one of its modern proponents, says in *The Tyranny of Words*: “If we wish to understand the world and ourselves, it follows that we should use a language whose structure corresponds to physical structure”⁶ (italics his). So this language is mar-

⁶*The Tyranny of Words* (New York, 1938), 80. T. H. Huxley in *Lay Sermons* (New York, 1883), 112, outlined a noticeably similar ideal of scientific communication: “Therefore,

ried to the world, and its marital fidelity contrasts with the extravagances of other languages.

In second place, this language is far more “available.” Whereas rhetorical language, or language which would persuade, must always be particularized to suit the occasion, drawing its effectiveness from many small nuances, a “utility” language is very general and one has no difficulty putting his meaning into it if he is satisfied with a paraphrase of that meaning. The 850 words recommended for Basic English, for example, are highly available in the sense that all native users of English have them instantly ready and learners of English can quickly acquire them.⁷ It soon becomes apparent, however, that the availability is a heavy tax upon all other qualities. Most of what we admire as energy and fullness tends to disappear when mere verbal counters are used. The conventional or public aspect of language can encroach upon the suggestive or symbolical aspect, until the naming is vague or blurred. In proportion as the medium is conventional in the widest sense and avoids all individualizing, personalizing, and heightening terms, it is common, and the commonness constitutes the negative virtue ascribed to the nonlover.

Finally, with reference to the third qualification of the nonlover, it is true that neuter language does not excite public opinion. This fact follows from its character outlined above. Rhetorical language on the other hand, for whatever purpose used, excites interest and with it either pleasure or alarm. People listen instinctively to the man whose speech betrays inclination. It does not matter what the inclination is toward, but we may say that the greater the degree of inclination, the greater the curiosity or response. Hence a “style” in speech always causes one to be a marked man, and the public may not be so

the great business of the scientific teacher is, to imprint the fundamental, irrefragable facts of his science, not only by words upon the mind, but by sensible impressions upon the eye, and ear, and touch of the student in so complete a manner, that every term used, or law enunciated should afterwards call up vivid images of the particular structural, or other, facts which furnished the demonstration of the law, or illustration of the term.” [Au.]

⁷See the headnote on I. A. Richards, p. 1270. [Ed.]

much impressed—at least initially—by what the man is for or against as by the fact that he has a style. The way therefore to avoid public comment is to avoid the speech of affection and to use that of business, since, to echo the original proposition of Lysias, everybody knows that one must do business with others. From another standpoint, then, this is the language of prudence. These are the features which give neuter discourse an appeal to those who expect a scientific solution of human problems.

In summing up the trend of meaning, we note that Lysias has been praising a disinterested kind of relationship which avoids all excesses and irrationalities, all the dementia of love. It is a circumspect kind of relationship, which is preferred by all men who wish to do well in the world and avoid tempestuous courses. We have compared its detachment with the kind of abstraction to be found in scientific notation. But as an earnest of what is to come let us note, in taking leave of this part, that Phaedrus expresses admiration for the eloquence, especially of diction, with which the suit of the nonlover has been urged. This is our warning of the dilemma of the nonlover.

Now we turn to the second major speech of the dialogue, which is made by Socrates. Notwithstanding Phaedrus' enthusiastic praise, Socrates is dissatisfied with the speech of the nonlover. He remembers having heard wiser things on the subject and feels that he can make a speech on the same theme "different from this and quite as good." After some playful exchange, Socrates launches upon his own abuse of love, which centers on the point that the lover is an exploiter. Love (*ἔρως*) is defined as the kind of desire which overcomes rational opinion and moves toward the enjoyment of personal or bodily beauty. The lover wishes to make the object of his passion as pleasing to himself as possible; but to those possessed by this frenzy, only that which is subject to their will is pleasant. Accordingly, everything which is opposed, or is equal or better, the lover views with hostility. He naturally therefore tries to make the beloved inferior to himself in every respect. He is pleased if the beloved has intellectual limitations because they have the effect of making him manageable. For a similar reason he tries to keep him away from all

influences which might "make a man of him," and of course the greatest of these is divine philosophy. While he is working to keep him intellectually immature, he works also to keep him weak and effeminate, with such harmful result that the beloved is unable to play a man's part in crises. The lover is, moreover, jealous of the possession of property because this gives the beloved an independence which he does not wish him to have. Thus the lover in exercising an unremitting compulsion over the beloved deprives him of all praiseworthy qualities, and this is the price the beloved pays for accepting a lover who is "necessarily without reason." In brief, the lover is not motivated by benevolence toward the beloved, but by selfish appetite; and Socrates can aptly close with the quotation: "As wolves love lambs, so lovers love their loves." The speech is on the single theme of exploitation. It is important for us to keep in mind the object of love as here described, because another kind of love with a different object is later introduced into the dialogue, and we shall discuss the counterpart of each.

As we look now for the parallel in language, we find ourselves confronting the second of the three alternatives: speech which influences us in the direction of what is evil. This we shall call base rhetoric because its end is the exploitation which Socrates has been condemning. We find that base rhetoric hates that which is opposed, or is equal or better because all such things are impediments to its will, and in the last analysis it knows only its will. Truth is the stubborn, objective restraint which this will endeavors to overcome. Base rhetoric is therefore always trying to keep its objects from the support which personal courage, noble associations, and divine philosophy provide a man.

The base rhetorician, we may say, is a man who has yielded to the wrong aspects of existence. He has allowed himself to succumb to the sights and shows, to the physical pleasures which conspire against noble life. He knows that the only way he can get a following in his pursuits (and a following seems necessary to maximum enjoyment of the pursuits) is to work against the true understanding of his followers. Consequently the things which would elevate he keeps

out of sight, and the things with which he surrounds his “beloved” are those which minister immediately to desire. The beloved is thus emasculated in understanding in order that the lover may have his way. Or as Socrates expresses it, the selfish lover contrives things so that the beloved will be “most agreeable to him and most harmful to himself.”

Examples of this kind of contrivance occur on every hand in the impassioned language of journalism and political pleading. In the world of affairs which these seek to influence, the many are kept in a state of pupillage so that they will be most docile to their “lovers.” The techniques of the base lover, especially as exemplified in modern journalism, would make a long catalogue, but in general it is accurate to say that he seeks to keep the understanding in a passive state by never permitting an honest examination of alternatives. Nothing is more feared by him than a true dialectic, for this not only endangers his favored alternative, but also gives the “beloved”—how clearly here are these the “lambs” of Socrates’ figure—some training in intellectual independence. What he does therefore is dress up one alternative in all the cheap finery of immediate hopes and fears, knowing that if he can thus prevent a masculine exercise of imagination and will, he can have his way. By discussing only one side of an issue, by mentioning cause without consequence or consequence without cause, acts without agents or agents without agency,⁸ he often successfully blocks definition and cause-and-effect reasoning. In this way his choices are arrayed in such meretricious images that one can quickly infer the juvenile mind which they would attract. Of course the base rhetorician today, with his vastly augmented power of propagation, has means of deluding which no ancient rhetoric in forum or market place could have imagined.

Because Socrates has now made a speech against love, representing it as an evil, the nonlover seems to survive in estimation. We observe, however, that the nonlover, instead of being celebrated, is disposed of dialectically. “So, in a word, I say that the nonlover possesses

⁸That is, by mentioning only parts of the total situation. [Au.]

all the advantages that are opposed to the disadvantages we found in the lover.” This is not without bearing upon the subject matter of the important third speech, to which we now turn.

At this point in the dialogue, Socrates is warned by his monitory spirit that he has been engaging in a defamation of love despite the fact that love is a divinity. “If love is, as indeed he is, a god or something divine, he can be nothing evil; but the two speeches just now said that he was evil.” These discourses were then an impiety—one representing nonlove as admirable and the other attacking love as base. Socrates resolves to make amends, and the recantation which follows is one of the most elaborate developments in the Platonic system. The account of love which emerges from this new position may be summarized as follows.

Love is often censured as a form of madness, yet not all madness is evil. There is a madness which is simple degeneracy, but on the other hand there are kinds of madness which are really forms of inspiration, from which come the greatest gifts conferred on man. Prophecy is a kind of madness, and so too is poetry. “The poetry of the sane man vanishes into nothingness before that of the inspired madman.” Mere sanity, which is of human origin, is inferior to that madness which is inspired by the gods and which is a condition for the highest kind of achievement. In this category goes the madness of the true lover. His is a generous state which confers blessings to the ignoring of self, whereas the conduct of the nonlover displays all the selfishness of business: “the affection of the nonlover, which is alloyed with mortal prudence and follows mortal and parsimonious rules of conduct will beget in the beloved soul the narrowness which common folk praise as virtue; it will cause the soul to be a wanderer upon the earth for nine thousand years and a fool below the earth at last.” It is the vulgar who do not realize that the madness of the noble lover is an inspired madness because he has his thoughts turned toward a beauty of divine origin.

Now the attitude of the noble lover toward the beloved is in direct contrast with that of the evil lover, who, as we have seen, strives to possess and victimize the object of his affections. For once the noble lover has mastered the conflict

within his own soul by conquering appetite and fixing his attention upon the intelligible and the divine, he conceives an exalted attitude toward the beloved. The noble lover now “follows the beloved in reverence and awe.” So those who are filled with this kind of love “exhibit no jealousy or meanness toward the loved one, but endeavor by every means in their power to lead him to the likeness of the god whom they honor.” Such is the conversion by which love turns from the exploitative to the creative.

Here it becomes necessary to bring our concepts together and to think of all speech having persuasive power as a kind of “love.”⁹ Thus, rhetorical speech is madness to the extent that it departs from the line which mere sanity lays down. There is always in its statement a kind of excess or deficiency which is immediately discernible when the test of simple realism is applied. Simple realism operates on a principle of equation or correspondence; one thing must match another, or, representation must tally with thing represented, like items in a tradesman’s account. Any excess or deficiency on the part of the representation invokes the existence of the world of symbolism, which simple realism must deny. This explains why there is an immortal feud between men of business and the users of metaphor and metonymy, the poets and the rhetoricians.¹⁰ The man of business, the narrow and parsimonious soul in the allusion of Socrates, desires a world which is a reliable materiality. But this the poet and rhetorician will never let him have, for each, with his own purpose, is trying to advance the borders of the imaginative world. A primrose by the river’s brim will not remain that in the poet’s account, but is promptly turned into something very much larger and something highly implicative. He who is accustomed to record the world with an abacus cannot follow these transfigurations; and indeed the very occurrence of them subtly undermines the premise of his business. It is the historic tendency of the tradesman,

⁹It is worth recalling that in the Christian New Testament, with its heavy Platonic influence, God is identified both with *logos*, “word, speech” (John 1:1); and with *agape*, “love” (2 John 4:8). [Au.]

¹⁰The users of metaphor and metonymy who are in the hire of businessmen of course constitute a special case. [Au.]

therefore, to confine passion to quite narrow channels so that it will not upset the decent business arrangements of the world. But if the poet, as the chief transformer of our picture of the world, is the peculiar enemy of this mentality, the rhetorician is also hostile when practicing the kind of love proper to him. The “passion” in his speech is revolutionary, and it has a practical end.

We have now indicated the significance of the three types of lovers; but the remainder of the *Phaedrus* has much more to say about the nature of rhetoric, and we must return to one or more points to place our subject in a wider context. The problem of rhetoric which occupied Plato persistently, not only in the *Phaedrus* but also in other dialogues where this art is reviewed, may be best stated as a question: if truth alone is not sufficient to persuade men, what else remains that can be legitimately added? In one of the exchanges with Phaedrus, Socrates puts the question in the mouth of a personified Rhetoric: “I do not compel anyone to learn to speak without knowing the truth, but if my advice is of any value, he learns that first and then acquires me. So what I claim is this, that without my help the knowledge of the truth does not give the art of persuasion.”

Now rhetoric as we have discussed it in relation to the lovers consists of truth plus its artful presentation, and for this reason it becomes necessary to say something more about the natural order of dialectic and rhetoric. In any general characterization rhetoric will include dialectic,¹¹ but for the study of method it is necessary to separate the two. Dialectic is a method of investigation whose object is the establishment of truth about doubtful propositions. Aristotle in the *Topics* gives a concise statement of its nature. “A dialectical problem is a subject of inquiry that contributes either to choice or avoidance, or to truth

¹¹Cf. [*Phaedrus*] 227b: “A man must know the truth about all the particular things of which he speaks or writes, and must be able to define everything separately; then when he has defined them, he must know how to divide them by classes until further division is impossible; and in the same way he must understand the nature of the soul, must find out the class of speech adapted to each nature, and must arrange and adorn his discourse accordingly, offering to the complex soul elaborate and harmonious discourses, and simple talks to the simple soul.” [Au.]

and knowledge, and that either by itself, or as a help to the solution of some other such problem. It must, moreover, be something on which either people hold no opinion either way, or the masses hold a contrary opinion to the philosophers, or the philosophers to the masses, or each of them among themselves.”¹² Plato is not perfectly clear about the distinction between positive and dialectical terms. In one passage¹³ he contrasts the “positive” terms “iron” and “silver” with the “dialectical” terms “justice” and “goodness”; yet in other passages his “dialectical” terms seem to include categorizations of the external world. Thus Socrates indicates that distinguishing the horse from the ass is a dialectical operation,¹⁴ and he tells us later that a good dialectician is able to divide things by classes “where the natural joints are” and will avoid breaking any part “after the manner of a bad carver.”¹⁵ Such, perhaps, is Aristotle’s dialectic which contributes to truth and knowledge.

But there is a branch of dialectic which contributes to “choice or avoidance,” and it is with this that rhetoric is regularly found joined. Generally speaking, this is a rhetoric involving questions of policy, and the dialectic which precedes it will determine not the application of positive terms but that of terms which are subject to the contingency of evaluation. Here dialectical inquiry will concern itself not with what is “iron” but with what is “good.” It seeks to establish what belongs in the category of the “just” rather than what belongs in the genus *Canis*. As a general rule, simple object words such as “iron” and “house” have no connotations of policy, although it is frequently possible to give them these through speech situations in which there is added to their referential function a kind of impulse. We should have to interpret in this way “Fire!” or “Gold!” because these terms acquire something through intonation and relationship which places them in the class of evaluative expressions.

Any piece of persuasion, therefore, will contain as its first process a dialectic establishing

terms which have to do with policy. Now a term of policy is essentially a term of motion, and here begins the congruence of rhetoric with the soul which underlies the speculation of the *Phaedrus*. In his myth of the charioteer, Socrates declares that every soul is immortal because “that which is ever moving is immortal.” Motion, it would appear from this definition, is part of the soul’s essence. And just because the soul is ever tending, positive or indifferent terms cannot partake of this congruence. But terms of tendency—goodness, justice, divinity, and the like—are terms of motion and therefore may be said to comport with the soul’s essence. The soul’s perception of goodness, justice, and divinity will depend upon its proper tendency, while at the same time contacts with these in discourse confirm and direct that tendency. The education of the soul is not a process of bringing it into correspondence with a physical structure like the external world, but rather a process of rightly affecting its motion. By this conception, a soul which is rightly affected calls that good which is good; but a soul which is wrongly turned calls that good which is evil. What Plato has prepared us to see is that the virtuous rhetorician, who is a lover of truth, has a soul of each movement that its dialectical perceptions are consonant with those of a divine mind. Or, in the language of more technical philosophy, this soul is aware of axiological systems which have ontic status. The good soul, consequently, will not urge a perversion of justice as justice in order to impose upon the commonwealth. Insofar as the soul has its impulse in the right direction, its definitions will agree with the true nature of intelligible things.

There is, then, no true rhetoric without dialectic, for the dialectic provides that basis of “high speculation about nature” without which rhetoric in the narrower sense has nothing to work upon. Yet, when the disputed terms have been established, we are at the limit of dialectic. How does the noble rhetorician proceed from this point on? That the clearest demonstration in terms of logical inclusion and exclusion often fails to win assent we hardly need state; therefore, to what does the rhetorician resort at this critical passage? It is the stage at which he passes from the logical to the analogical, or it is where figuration comes into rhetoric.

¹²[Aristotle, *Topics*] 104b. [Au.]

¹³[*Phaedrus*] 263a. [Au.]

¹⁴[*Phaedrus*] 260b. [Au.]

¹⁵[*Phaedrus*] 265a. [Au.]

To look at this for a moment through a practical illustration, let us suppose that a speaker has convinced his listeners that his position is "true" as far as dialectical inquiry may be pushed. Now he sets about moving the listeners toward that position, but there is no way to move them except through the operation of analogy. The analogy proceeds by showing that the position being urged resembles or partakes of something greater and finer. It will be represented, in sum, as one of the steps leading toward ultimate good. Let us further suppose our speaker to be arguing for the payment of a just debt. The payment of the just debt is not itself justice, but the payment of this particular debt is one of the many things which would have to be done before this could be a completely just world. It is just, then, because it partakes of the ideal justice, or it is a small analogue of all justice (in practice it will be found that the rhetorician makes extensive use of synecdoche, whereby the small part is used as a vivid suggestion of the grandeur of the whole). It is by bringing out these resemblances that the good rhetorician leads those who listen in the direction of what is good. In effect, he performs a cure of souls by giving impulse, chiefly through figuration, toward an ideal good.

We now see the true rhetorician as a noble lover of the good, who works through dialectic and through poetic or analogical association. However he is compelled to modulate by the peculiar features of an occasion, this is his method.

It may not be superfluous to draw attention to the fact that what we have here outlined is the method of the *Phaedrus* itself. The dialectic appears in the dispute about love. The current thesis that love is praiseworthy is countered by the antithesis that love is blameworthy. This position is fully developed in the speech of Lysias and in the first speech of Socrates. But this position is countered by a new thesis that after all love is praiseworthy because it is a divine thing. Of course, this is love on a higher level, or love redefined. This is the regular process of transcendence which we have noted before. Now, having rescued love from the imputation of evil by excluding certain things from its definition, what does Socrates do? Quite in accordance with our analysis, he turns rhetorician. He tries to make this

love as attractive as possible by bringing in the splendid figure of the charioteer.¹⁶ In the narrower conception of this art, the allegory is the rhetoric, for it excites and fills us with desire for this kind of love, depicted with many terms having tendency toward the good. But in the broader conception the art must include also the dialectic, which succeeded in placing love in the category of divine things before filling our imaginations with attributes of divinity.¹⁷ It is so regularly the method of Plato to follow a subtle analysis with a striking myth that it is not unreasonable to call him the master rhetorician. This goes far to explain why those who reject his philosophy sometimes remark his literary art with mingled admiration and annoyance.

The objection sometimes made that rhetoric cannot be used by a lover of truth because it indulges in "exaggerations" can be answered as follows. There is an exaggeration which is mere wantonness, and with this the true rhetorician has nothing to do. Such exaggeration is purely impressionistic in aim. Like caricature, whose only object is to amuse, it seizes upon any trait or aspect which could produce titillation and exploits this without conscience. If all rhetoric were like this, we should have to grant that rhetoricians are persons of very low responsibility and their art a disreputable one. But the rhetorician we have now defined is not interested in sensationalism.

The exaggeration which this rhetorician employs is not caricature but prophecy; and it would be a fair formulation to say that true rhetoric is concerned with the potency of things. The literalist, like the anti-poet described earlier, is troubled by its failure to conform to a present reality. What he fails to appreciate is that potentiality is a mode of existence, and that all prophecy is about the tendency of things. The discourse of the noble rhetorician, accordingly, will be about real potentiality or possible actuality, whereas that of the mere exaggerator is about unreal potentiality. Naturally this distinction rests upon a supposal that the rhetorician has insight, and we could not

¹⁶In the passage extending from [*Phaedrus*] 264a to 256d. [Au.]

¹⁷Cf. [*Phaedrus*] 263d ff. [Au.]

defend him in the absence of that condition. But given insight, he has the duty to represent to us the as yet unactualized future. It would be, for example, a misrepresentation of current facts but not of potential ones to talk about the joys of peace in a time of war. During the Second World War, at the depth of Britain's political and military disaster, Winston Churchill likened the future of Europe to "broad sunlit uplands." Now if one had regard only for the hour, this was a piece of mendacity such as the worst charlatans are found committing; but if one took Churchill's premises and then considered the potentiality, the picture was within bounds of actualization. His "exaggeration" was that the defeat of the enemy would place Europe in a position for long and peaceful progress. At the time the surface trends ran the other way; the actuality was a valley of humiliation. Yet the hope which transfigured this to "broad sunlit uplands" was not irresponsible, and we conclude by saying that the rhetorician talks about both what exists simply and what exists by favor of human imagination and effort.¹⁸

This interest in actualization is a further distinction between pure dialectic and rhetoric. With its forecast of the actual possibility, rhetoric passes from mere scientific demonstration of an idea to its relation to prudential conduct. A dialectic must take place *in vacuo*, and the fact alone that it contains contraries leaves it an intellectual thing. Rhetoric, on the other hand, always espouses one of the contraries. This espousal is followed by some attempt at impingement upon actuality. That is why rhetoric, with its passion

¹⁸Indeed, in this particular rhetorical duel we see the two types of lovers opposed as clearly as illustration could desire. More than this, we see the third type, the nonlover, committing his ignominious failure. Britain and France had come to prefer as leaders the rhetoricless businessman type. And while they had thus emasculated themselves, there appeared an evil lover to whom Europe all but succumbed before the mistake was seen and rectified. For while the world must move, evil rhetoric is of more force than no rhetoric at all; and Herr Hitler, employing images which rested on no true dialectic, had persuaded multitudes that his order was the "new order," i.e., the true potentiality. Britain was losing and could only lose until, reaching back in her traditional past, she found a voice which could match his accents with a truer grasp of the potentiality of things. Thus two men conspicuous for passion fought a contest for souls, which the nobler won. But the contest could have been lost by default. [Au.]

for the actual, is more complete than mere dialectic with its dry understanding. It is more complete on the premise that man is a creature of passion who must live out that passion in the world. Pure contemplation does not suffice for this end. As Jacques Maritain has expressed it: "love . . . is not directed at possibilities or pure essences; it is directed at what exists; one does not love possibilities, one loves that which exists or is destined to exist."¹⁹ The complete man, then, is the "lover" added to the scientist; the rhetorician to the dialectician. Understanding followed by actualization seems to be the order of creation, and there is no need for the role of rhetoric to be misconceived.

The pure dialectician is left in the theoretical position of the nonlover, who can attain understanding but who cannot add impulse to truth. We are compelled to say "theoretical position" because it is by no means certain that in the world of actual speech the nonlover has more than a putative existence. We have seen previously that his speech would consist of strictly referential words which would serve only as designata. Now the question arises at what point is motive to come into such language? Kenneth Burke in *A Grammar of Motives* has pointed to "the pattern of embarrassment behind the contemporary ideal of a language that will best promote good action by entirely eliminating the element of exhortation or command. Insofar as such a project succeeded, its terms would involve a narrowing of circumference to a point where the principle of personal action is eliminated from language, so that an act would follow from it only as a non sequitur, a kind of humanitarian afterthought."²⁰

The fault of this conception of language is that scientific intention turns out to be enclosed in artistic intention and not *vice versa*. Let us test this by taking as an example one of those "fact-finding committees" so favored by modern representative governments. A language in which all else is suppressed in favor of nuclear meanings would be an ideal instrumentality for the report

¹⁹"Action: The Perfection of Human Life," *Sewanee Review*, LVI (winter, 1948), 3. [Au.]

²⁰*A Grammar of Motives* (New York, 1945), 90. [Au.]

of such a committee. But this committee, if it lived up to the ideal of its conception, would have to be followed by an "attitude-finding committee" to tell us what its explorations really mean. In real practice the fact-finding committee understands well enough that it is also an attitude-finding committee, and where it cannot show inclination through language of tendency, it usually manages to do so through selection and arrangement of the otherwise inarticulate facts. To recur here to the original situation in the dialogue, we recall that the eloquent Lysias, posing as a nonlover, had concealed designs upon Phaedrus, so that his fine speech was really a sheep's clothing. Socrates discerned in him a "peculiar craftiness." One must suspect the same today of many who ask us to place our faith in the neutrality of their discourse. We cannot deny that there are degrees of objectivity in the reference of speech. But this is not the same as an assurance that a vocabulary of reduced meanings will solve the problems of mankind. Many of those problems will have to be handled, as Socrates well knew, by the student of souls, who must principally make use of the language of tendency. The soul is impulse, not simply cognition; and finally one's interest in rhetoric depends on how much poignancy one senses in existence.²¹

Rhetoric moves the soul with a movement which cannot finally be justified logically. It can only be valued analogically with reference to some supreme image. Therefore when the rhetorician encounters some soul "sinking beneath the double load of forgetfulness and vice" he seeks to re-animate it by holding up to its sight the order of presumptive goods. This order is necessarily a hierarchy leading up to the ulti-

²¹Without rhetoric there seems no possibility of tragedy, and in turn, without the sense of tragedy, no possibility of taking an elevated view of life. The role of tragedy is to keep the human lot from being rendered as history. The cultivation of tragedy and a deep interest in the value-conferring power of language always occur together. The *Phaedrus*, the *Gorgias*, and the *Cratylus*, not to mention the works of many teachers of rhetoric, appear at the close of the great age of Greek tragedy. The Elizabethan age teemed with treatises on the use of language. The essentially tragic Christian view of life begins the long tradition of homiletics. Tragedy and the practice of rhetoric seem to find common sustenance in preoccupation with value, and then rhetoric follows as an analyzed art. [Au.]

mate good. All of the terms in a rhetorical vocabulary are like links in a chain stretching up to some master link which transmits its influence down through the linkages. It is impossible to talk about rhetoric as effective expression without having as a term giving intelligibility to the whole discourse, the Good. Of course, inferior concepts of the Good may be and often are placed in this ultimate position; and there is nothing to keep a base lover from inverting the proper order and saying, "Evil, be thou my good." Yet the fact remains that in any piece of rhetorical discourse, one rhetorical term overcomes another rhetorical term only by being nearer to the term which stands ultimate. There is some ground for calling a rhetorical education necessarily an aristocratic education in that the rhetorician has to deal with an aristocracy of notions, to say nothing of supplementing his logical and pathetic proofs with an ethical proof.

All things considered, rhetoric, noble or base, is a great power in the world; and we note accordingly that at the center of the public life of every people there is a fierce struggle over who shall control the means of rhetorical propagation. Today we set up "offices of information," which like the sly lover in the dialogue, pose as nonlovers while pushing their suits. But there is no reason to despair over the fact that men will never give up seeking to influence one another. We would not desire it to be otherwise; neuter discourse is a false idol, to worship which is to commit the very offense for which Socrates made expiation in his second speech.

Since we want not emancipation from impulse but clarification of impulse, the duty of rhetoric is to bring together action and understanding into a whole that is greater than scientific perception.²² The realization that just as no action is really indifferent, so no utterance is without its re-

²²Cf. Maritain, *op. cit.*, 3-4: "The truth of practical intellect is understood not as conformity to an extramental being but as conformity to a right desire; the end is no longer to know what is, but to bring into existence that which is not yet; further, the act of moral choice is so individualized, both by the singularity of the person from which it proceeds and the context of the contingent circumstances in which it takes place, that the practical judgment in which it is expressed and by which I declare to myself: this is what I must do, can be

sponsibility introduces, it is true, a certain strenuosity into life, produced by a consciousness that “nothing is lost.” Yet this is preferable to that desolation which proceeds from an infinite dispersion or feeling of unaccountability. Even so, the choice between them is hardly ours to make; we did not create the order of things, but being accountable for our impulses, we wish these to be just.

Thus when we finally divest rhetoric of all the notions of artifice which have grown up around it, we are left with something very much like Spinoza’s “intellectual love of God.” This is its essence and the *fons et origo* of its power. It is “intellectual” because, as we have previously seen, there is no honest rhetoric without a preceding dialectic. The kind of rhetoric which is justly condemned is utterance in support of a position before that position has been adjudicated with reference to the whole universe of discourse²³—and of such the world always produces more than enough. It is “love” because it is something in addition to bare theoretical truth. That element in addition is a desire to bring truth into a kind of existence, or to give it an actuality to which theory is indifferent. Now what is to be said about our last expression, “of God”? Echoes

of theological warfare will cause many to desire a substitute for this, and we should not object. As long as we have in ultimate place the highest good man can intuit, the relationship is made perfect. We shall be content with “intellectual love of the Good.” It is still the intellectual love of good which causes the noble lover to desire not to devour his beloved but to shape him according to the gods as far as mortal power allows. So rhetoric at its truest seeks to perfect men by showing them better versions of themselves, links in that chain extending up toward the ideal, which only the intellect can apprehend and only the soul have affection for. This is the justified affection of which no one can be ashamed, and he who feels no influence of it is truly outside the communion of minds. Rhetoric appears, finally, as a means by which the impulse of the soul to be ever moving is redeemed.

It may be granted that in this essay we have gone some distance from the banks of the Ilissus. What began as a simple account of passion becomes by transcendence an allegory of all speech. No one would think of suggesting that Plato had in mind every application which has here been made, but that need not arise as an issue. The structure of the dialogue, the way in which the judgments about speech concentrate, and especially the close association of the true, the beautiful, and the good, constitute a unity of implication. The central idea is that all speech, which is the means the gods have given man to express his soul, is a form of eros, in the proper interpretation of the word. With that truth the rhetorician will always be brought face to face as soon as he ventures beyond the consideration of mere artifice and device.

right only if, *hic et nunc*, the dynamism of my will is right, and tends towards the true goods of human life.

“That is why practical wisdom, *prudentia*, is a virtue indivisibly moral and intellectual at the same time, and why, like the judgment of the conscience itself, it cannot be replaced by any sort of theoretical knowledge or science.” [Au.]

²³Socrates’ criticism of the speech of Lysias (263d ff) is that the latter defended a position without having submitted it to the discipline of dialectic. [Au.]

Chaim Perelman

1912–1984

Chaim Perelman was born in Warsaw and was educated in Belgium, where he took a law degree in 1934 and a doctorate in philosophy in 1938, both from the Free University of Brussels. He was active in the Resistance during the war and afterward became a member of the faculty at Brussels.

Perelman came to the study of rhetoric as a result of his search for “a logic of value judgments” that could serve as the basis of legal philosophy.¹ Extant systems of philosophy, he found, were devoted to formal logic as the foundation of rationality, which relegated any discussion of values to the irrational and subjective. Yet judgments about justice, morality, politics, and religion are of supreme importance in human affairs. It is a fundamental principle of justice, Perelman notes in an early essay, that “beings of one and the same essential category must be treated the same way.”² But what are the essential categories, and what constitutes “the same” treatment? These questions are answered by argument, and, Perelman notes, argument has no standing in philosophy. He was forced to conclude that, in the terms available in mainstream philosophy, “logical value judgments do not exist.”³

To pursue the question of how people reason about values, Perelman and his collaborator, Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca, undertook a study of actual arguments made by judges, philosophers, politicians, and others seeking to make value decisions. Olbrechts-Tyteca, who received a “licenciée” in social sciences and economics from the Free University of Brussels in 1925 (a lesser degree than the doctorate), was well read in the social sciences and European literatures. As rhetoric scholar Barbara Warnick has explained, while Perelman provided the theoretical framework for their research, Olbrechts-Tyteca supplied the extensive examples that fleshed out the theory; these examples constituted a good two-thirds of their major treatise, *The New Rhetoric* (discussed below). Warnick describes Olbrechts-Tyteca’s primary scholarly interest as the analysis of the “argumentative function of stylistic devices and discursive structures,” which she also pursued in several works published alone, notably *Le Comique du discours* (1974), which studies how comic structures rely for their effects on what their audiences already believe to be true or good.⁴

The types of argument that Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca found among those seeking to make value judgments were, they realized, strikingly similar to the classical topics. Moreover, Aristotle’s description of the connection between dialectic

¹Chaim Perelman, “Philosophy, Rhetoric, Commonplaces,” in *The New Rhetoric and the Humanities* (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1979), p. 56 (trans. of “Philosophie, rhétorique, lieux commune,” *Bulletin de l’Académie Royale de Belgique* [1972]: pp. 144–56).

²Chaim Perelman, *The Idea of Justice and the Problem of Argument*, trans. J. Petrie (New York: Humanities Press, 1963), p. 16.

³Chaim Perelman, “Old and New Rhetoric,” in *Practical Reasoning in Human Affairs*, ed. James Golden and Joseph Pilotta (Dordrecht: L. Reidel, 1986), p. 4.

⁴Barbara Warnick, “Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca’s Contribution to *The New Rhetoric*,” in *Listening to Their Voices: The Rhetorical Activities of Historical Women*, ed. Molly Meijer Wertheimer (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1997), p. 71.

and rhetoric spoke to their concerns. Thus they turned to rhetoric, the study of good reasons — of persuasion, of *logos*, of the reasonable and the preferable — and set out to “revive” rhetoric and link it once again to philosophy. It must have seemed to them that they were single-handedly reviving the study of rhetoric as a substantive discipline, with functions beyond mere ornamentation. Only in 1962, when he was invited to teach at Pennsylvania State University, did Perelman discover that there was an active community of rhetoric scholars in departments of speech and communication in the United States.

In Perelman’s view, formal logic is applicable only to well-defined, closed formal systems, like mathematics; in all other matters, reasoning is “informal” or dialectical. In this, Perelman follows Aristotle’s distinction between analytical philosophy on the one hand and dialectic and rhetoric on the other. In *The Realm of Rhetoric* (1977; excerpted here), Perelman traces the problems of philosophy and rhetoric to Peter Ramus and René Descartes. By moving dialectic to the realm of logic and reducing rhetoric to verbal ornamentation, Ramus set for later philosophers the impossible task of applying the truth criteria of logic to questions of value and behavior. And Descartes exacerbated the problem by declaring the “merely plausible” to be effectively false. To correct these mistakes, Perelman rejoins dialectic and rhetoric as methods of using argument to gain adherence to propositions that cannot be demonstrated in the sense of being self-evident or universal.

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca draw a number of conclusions from their study of practical reasoning, set forth in *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation* (1958; excerpted here). Argument, they point out, does not and cannot follow the rules of formal logic, but practical reasoning is a kind of informal logic, akin to Aristotelian dialectic. Moreover, arguments are always addressed to an audience, because the purpose of argument is to win the adherence of the audience, not to demonstrate the truth of propositions. The audience can be defined as the group effectively addressed by the writer or speaker, the community whose adherence the speaker wishes to gain.

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca imagine two types of audience that may be addressed, as rhetoric scholar Alan Gross has explained. “Particular” audiences represent a group of people united by shared values, such as members of a political party. They must be persuaded by appeals to their values. On the other hand, discourse that seeks the status of purely rational argument, such as philosophy, addresses the “universal audience,” an imaginary construct comprising all rational, competent people, who are to be persuaded only by reference to empirically demonstrable facts or absolute truths. The idea of the universal audience has frequently been misunderstood: Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca emphasize that there is no actual universal audience, nor any unimpeachable facts or truths that could be presented to it, but rather, only an idea in the speaker’s mind about what such an audience would be were it to exist. An argument may gain persuasive power by appearing to appeal to this universal audience.

The speaker gains the adherence of any audience by attempting to transfer existing adherence from premises that the audience presumably already accepts to conclusions drawn from those premises. Furthermore, the speaker wins adherence by

creating “presence” for the main premise of the proposition. Presence, or foregrounding, is created by using the topics. The different types of argument create “liaisons” — not necessarily logical connections — between premises and conclusions.

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca also identify the various categories of argument. The “quasi-logical” category is perhaps most important, because the appearance of formal logic in an argument has a profound ideological effect. Perelman summarizes and refines these conclusions in several of his later works, including “The New Rhetoric: A Theory of Practical Reasoning” (included here).

As suggested in the formulation of the universal audience, Perelman’s strongest and most persistent claim is that philosophy itself is a form of rhetoric—a system of argument that tries to win universal adherence, rather than being a pure search for truth. Indeed, he says, there is no such thing as absolute truth, nor is there even any kind of knowledge that is “identical in all normally constituted minds, independently of social and historical contingencies.”⁵ In the powerful conclusion of *The New Rhetoric*, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca insist on this point, arguing that there are no self-evident propositions and no “previously given natural order.”⁶ Ideas about what is self-evident or natural are created by argument, but appeals to self-evidence and nature are dangerous attempts to obscure their basis in argument. To acquiesce to such appeals, they warn, devalues argument itself and thereby threatens our very freedom to argue.

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⁵See p. 1376 in this book.

⁶See p. 1378 in this book.

Olbrechts-Tyteca, "Act and Person in Argument" (rpt. in Dearin, ed.); Johnstone, "A New Theory of Philosophical Argumentation"; and Perelman, "A Reply to Henry W. Johnstone Jr."

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Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca

From *The New Rhetoric*

A Treatise on Argumentation

CONCLUSION

It is not without difficulty that we have kept our treatise on argumentation to its present dimensions. Far from exhausting the subject we have barely scratched its surface and, at times, have done no more than point to its richness. Schematic treatments, some of them old and almost forgotten, others quite recent, have illuminated each other and have been integrated into an ancient discipline that has, however, been distorted for centuries and is neglected today. Problems generally approached from a purely literary viewpoint, together with others that are the concern of the most abstract speculation (derived either from the existentialist wave or from English analytical philosophy), are set in a dynamic context which brings out their significance and permits the vivid apprehension of the dialectical relationship between thought and action.

Each one of the points, which we have done no more than sketch, deserves more thorough study. The various kinds of discourse, their varia-

tion in the different disciplines and with different audiences, the way in which ideas undergo modification and organization, the history of these transformations, the methods and systems that have originated from the adaptation of notional complexes to problems of knowledge—these and many other questions just touched on here provide the study of argumentation with a field of research of incomparable wealth.

Up to now all these questions have either been entirely neglected or have been studied by a method and in a spirit that are foreign to the rhetorical point of view. The effect of restricting logic to the examination of the proofs termed "analytical" by Aristotle, together with the reduction of dialectical proofs—when anyone felt they were worth analyzing—to analytical proofs, was to remove from the study of reasoning all reference to argumentation. We hope that our treatise may provoke a salutary reaction and that the mere fact of its being written may for the future prevent the reduction of all the techniques of proof to formal logic and the habit of seeing nothing in reason except the faculty to calculate.

If a narrow conception of proof and logic has led to a constricted view of reason, the

Translated by John Wilkinson and Purcell Weaver.

broadening of the concept of proof and the resulting enrichment of logic must likewise react on the way in which our reasoning faculty is conceived. For this reason we wish to conclude with some considerations that are too general to fall within a theory of argumentation, but provide it with a framework that emphasizes its philosophical significance. Just as the *Discourse on the Method*, though not a work on mathematics, secures to the “geometrical” method its widest sphere of application (though there is nothing to prevent one from being a geometrician without being a follower of Descartes), so the views we shall advance—though the theory and practice of argumentation are not necessarily bound up with them—accord argumentation a place and importance they in no wise possess in a more dogmatic vision of the universe.

We combat uncompromising and irreducible philosophical oppositions presented by all kinds of absolutism: dualisms of reason and imagination, of knowledge and opinion, of irrefutable self-evidence and deceptive will, of a universally accepted objectivity and an incommunicable subjectivity, of a reality binding on everybody and values that are purely individual.

We do not believe in definitive, unalterable revelations, whatever their nature or their origin. And we exclude from our philosophical arsenal all immediate, absolute data, be they termed sensations, rational self-evidence, or mystical intuitions. This rejection does not, of course, imply that we deny the effect of experience or reasoning on our opinions, but we will stay clear of that exorbitant pretension which would enthrone certain elements of knowledge as definitively clear and solid data, and would hold these elements to be identical in all normally constituted minds, independently of social and historical contingencies, the foundation of necessary and eternal truths.

The purpose of this dissociation of certain irrefutable elements from the sum total of our opinions (the imperfect and perfectible character of which nobody has yet contested), and of making them independent of the conditions of perception and linguistic expression, is to withdraw them beyond the realm of discussion and argu-

mentation. To conceive of all progress in knowledge exclusively as an extension of the sphere occupied by these clear, distinct elements, to the point even of imagining that ultimately, with a perfect thought imitating divine thought, one could eliminate from knowledge everything that does not conform to this ideal of clarity and distinction—this means progressively reducing resort to argumentation up until the moment when its use becomes entirely superfluous. Pending the arrival of this moment, making use of it would stigmatize the branches of knowledge resorting to it as imperfectly constituted fields still in search of their method, and unworthy of the name of *science*. It is not surprising that such an attitude has turned logicians and philosophers away from the study of argumentation as something unworthy of their attention, leaving it in the hands of public-relations and propaganda experts who are generally suspected of lack of scruple and of constant opposition to any sincere search for the truth.

Our own position is quite different. Instead of basing our philosophy on definitive, unquestionable truths, our starting point is that men and groups of men adhere to opinions of all sorts with a variable intensity, which we can only know by putting it to the test. These beliefs are not always self-evident, and they rarely deal with clear and distinct ideas. The most generally accepted beliefs remain implicit and unformulated for a long time, for more often than not it is only on the occasion of a disagreement as to the consequences resulting from them that the problem of their formulation or more precise definition arises.

Common sense regularly opposes facts to theories, truths to opinions, and that which is objective to that which is not. By this opposition it indicates what opinions are to be preferred to others, whether or not the preference be based on generally accepted criteria. John Stuart Mill and André Lalande¹ are hardly saying anything new when they ask that we bring our beliefs face to face with the facts or with true statements, and though it may not be difficult to follow their ad-

¹André Lalande, French philosopher (1867–1964). Lalande, a rationalist, argued that people feel differently but reason in the same way. This was the basis for his belief in rational knowledge and his hope for universal understanding. [Ed.]

vice when the facts and truths are not subjected to challenge, this is unfortunately not always the case. Everyone is disposed to recognize that facts and truths play a normative role in relation to opinion, but the person who challenges a fact or doubts a truth will be reluctant to accord it this favored status, and will qualify the statement he declines to accept quite differently. Similarly, most people are normally disposed to act in accordance with what seems to them logical or reasonable, but will refuse to apply these epithets to solutions they do not recognize as well founded.

Those who hold facts and truths to be the sole norms for guiding opinions will endeavor to attach their convictions to some form of evidence that is indubitable and beyond discussion. There can be no question, with this outlook, of providing in turn a foundation for these self-evident things, for in their absence the very notion of foundation would appear incomprehensible. With these self-evident things as starting point, proof will take the form of a calculation or of resort to experiment.

The increased confidence thus brought about in the procedures and results of the mathematical and natural sciences went hand in hand with the casting aside of all the other means of proof, which were considered devoid of scientific value. Now this attitude was quite justifiable as long as there was the hope of finding a scientifically defensible solution to all actual human problems through an increasingly wide application of the calculus of probabilities. But if essential problems involving questions of a moral, social, political, philosophical, or religious order by their very nature elude the methods of the mathematical and natural sciences, it does not seem reasonable to scorn and reject all the techniques of reasoning characteristic of deliberation and discussion—in a word, of argumentation. It is too easy to disqualify all reasoning that does not conform to the requirements of the proof which Pareto called “logico-experimental” as being “sophistical.”² If all argumentation of this kind must be considered a misleading form of reasoning,

²Vilfredo Pareto (1848–1923), Italian economist, sociologist, and philosopher, sought a scientific basis for sociology in the logico-experimental method and studied the reasons for nonlogical behavior. [Ed.]

then the lack of “logico-experimental” proofs would leave the field wide open, in all the essential spheres of life, to suggestion and violence. The assertion that whatever is not objectively and indisputably valid belongs in the realm of the arbitrary and subjective creates an unbridgeable gulf between theoretical knowledge, which alone is rational, and action, for which motivations would be wholly irrational. Practice ceases to be reasonable in such a perspective, for critical argumentation becomes entirely incomprehensible, and it is no longer even possible to take seriously philosophical reflection itself. For it is only those fields from which all controversy has been eliminated that can thenceforth lay claim to a certain rationality. As soon as a controversy arises, and the agreement of minds cannot be reestablished by “logico-experimental” methods, one would be in the sphere of the irrational—which would be the sphere of deliberation, discussion, and argumentation.

The distinction, so common in twentieth-century philosophy, between judgments of reality and value judgments characterizes an effort—though in this form we feel it is a hopeless one—by those who recognize that scientific investigation enjoys a special, preeminent status, but wish to save the norms of human action from arbitrariness and irrationality. But this distinction, stemming from an absolutist epistemology which tends to sharply separate two sides of human activity, has not given the results for which one hoped. There are two reasons for this. One is the lack of success in developing a logic of value judgments, the other is the difficulty of satisfactorily defining value judgments and judgments of reality.

If it is possible to discern in argumentative practice, as we have done, some statements that relate to facts, and others that relate to values, the distinction between these two forms of statement can never be clear cut: it is the consequence of precarious agreements of varying intensity, agreements which may not be explicitly stated. In order to be able to distinguish clearly between two kinds of judgments criteria enabling them to be identified would have to be put forward and these criteria would themselves have to be beyond discussion. And, more particularly, there

would have to be an agreement about the linguistic elements without which no judgment can be formulated.

If judgments of reality are to provide an indisputable object of common understanding, the terms they contain must be free of all ambiguity, either because it is possible to know their true meaning, or because a unanimously accepted convention does away with all controversy on this subject. These two possibilities, which are respectively the approaches of realism and nominalism in the linguistic field, are both untenable, as they regard language either as a reflection of reality or as an arbitrary creation of an individual, and forget an essential element, the social aspect of language, which is an instrument of communication and influence on others.

All language is the language of a community, be this a community bound by biological ties, or by the practice of a common discipline or technique. The terms used, their meaning, their definition, can only be understood in the context of the habits, ways of thought, methods, external circumstances, and traditions known to the users of those terms. A deviation from usage requires justification, and, in this connection, realism and nominalism are simply two diametrically opposed attempts at justification, both linked to philosophies of language that are equally inadequate.

Adherence to particular linguistic usages normally expresses the explicit or implicit adoption of certain definite positions which are neither the reflection of an objective reality nor the manifestation of individual arbitrariness. Language is part of the traditions of a community, and, like the others, it only undergoes revolutionary modification where there is a radical failure to adapt to a new situation; otherwise its transformation is slow and imperceptible. But an agreement on the use of terms, no less than an agreement about the conception of reality and the vision of the world, even though it may not be disputed, is not indisputable; it is linked to a social and historical situation which fundamentally conditions any dis-

tinction that one might wish to draw between judgments of reality and value judgments.

The transcendence of these social and historical conditions of knowledge, with the transformation of certain *de facto* agreements into agreements *de jure*, is only possible through the adoption of a philosophical position which, if it is rational, is only conceivable as the consequence of a preceding argumentation. The theory and practice of argumentation are, in our view, correlative with a critical rationalism that transcends the duality "judgments of reality [versus] value judgments," and makes both judgments of reality and value judgments dependent on the personality of the scientist or philosopher, who is responsible for his decisions in the field of knowledge as well as in the field of action.

Only the existence of an argumentation that is neither compelling nor arbitrary can give meaning to human freedom, a state in which a reasonable choice can be exercised. If freedom was no more than necessary adherence to a previously given natural order, it would exclude all possibility of choice; and if the exercise of freedom were not based on reasons, every choice would be irrational and would be reduced to an arbitrary decision operating in an intellectual void. It is because of the possibility of argumentation which provides reasons, but not compelling reasons, that it is possible to escape the dilemma: adherence to an objectively and universally valid truth, or recourse to suggestion and violence to secure acceptance for our opinions and decisions. The theory of argumentation will help to develop what a logic of value judgments has tried in vain to provide, namely the justification of the possibility of a human community in the sphere of action when this justification cannot be based on a reality or objective truth. And its starting point, in making this contribution, is an analysis of those forms of reasoning which, though they are indispensable in practice, have from the time of Descartes been neglected by logicians and theoreticians of knowledge.

Chaim Perelman

From *The Realm of Rhetoric*

The relations between philosophy and rhetoric have been essential to the destiny of rhetoric. Whereas rhetoric seeks to have certain opinions prevail over other competing opinions, philosophy, which originally included the individual sciences, is seeking impersonal truths. Parmenides began the competition between philosophers and teachers of rhetoric when, in his famous poem, he opposed the way of truth, as guaranteed by divinity, to that of opinion, which is the way of man. Gorgias' reply was not long in coming; he showed, by a three-part argumentation, that Being is not, that if it existed it would be unknowable, and that if it were known this knowledge would be incommunicable. Hence the importance of rhetoric, of the psychological technique which acts upon the hearer's will in order to obtain his adherence. Similarly, by showing that for any subject there are two opposing discourses (*dissoi logoi*), Protagoras denied the existence of one single truth. In this view, every assertion is subject to controversy, since a person can always argue either for or against it. Consequently, preeminence must be granted to the rhetorician, the controller of opinion.

Plato, on the other hand, to the extent that he believed in the existence in every subject area of a truth which the philosopher must seek above all else, recognized a cleansing role in dialectic—the technique Socrates used to refute his opponent's opinions insofar as he was able to bring out their internal inconsistencies. As soon as they contradict themselves, opinions cannot be simultaneously admitted, and at least one of them has to be abandoned for the sake of truth. In this way Socrates prepares the way for the intuition of truth. When he has perceived the truth, the philosopher can use rhetorical technique to communicate it and to make his audience accept it. The rhetoric that is worthy of the philosopher can

persuade the gods themselves because it seeks acceptance of true theses and not of mere opinions.¹ A rhetoric which neglects truth and is content to get and keep the adherence of the audience through the effects of language, the charm of the word, and a resort to flattery is merely a technique of appearance. Such a rhetoric can be compared to men who, instead of maintaining their bodies by gymnastics and proper medical care, indulge themselves with pleasant food, without concern for the disastrous effects which will result from such gluttony.² Rhetoric, seeking to please, concerned only with appearance, and applying "colors," like makeup, to reality, is the demagogic technique *par excellence* which must be combated by all who are concerned with the triumph of truth. The rhetorician, like the Sophist, is the controller of opinion and hence of appearance, while what matters to the philosopher and the sage is the knowledge of truth and the practice of the good, in conformity to that truth. If dialectic is useful to the philosopher, by allowing him to unsettle erroneous opinions, the perception of truth will come through intuitions; rhetoric will serve to communicate these truths and to gain their acceptance. In this sense, rhetoric is clearly subordinated to philosophy.

Aristotle's conceptions are more nuanced. In separating practical disciplines from theoretical sciences, he stresses the point that the same methods and the same means of proof are not usable in all fields of knowledge. We have already cited the passage from the *Nicomachean Ethics*³ in which Aristotle shows that what is suitable in a mathematical demonstration would be out of place in a speech, and vice versa.

If it is intuition that guarantees the truth of principles in the theoretical sciences, it is recourse

¹Plato *Phaedrus* 273. [Au.]

²Plato *Gorgias* 518. [Au.]

³Aristotle *Nicomachean Ethics* 1094b, 23–25. [Au.]

to deliberation and discussion that gives rationality to practical activities, where one is to decide and choose, after reflection, among possibilities and contingencies. Through dialectical reasoning and rhetoric, one can influence people's judgment and direct them toward taking reasonable positions. In Aristotle's view, every audience is a judge which in the end must decide the superiority of one disputed thesis over the other when neither is obviously compelling.⁴ Since the realm of action is the realm of the contingent, which cannot be governed by scientific truths, the role of dialectical reasoning and rhetorical discourse is essential in order to introduce some rationality into the exercise of the individual and the collective will.

We showed in chapter one how Ramus attributed to dialectic the study of every kind of reasoning, analytical as well as dialectical, and thus reduced rhetoric to elocution, the search for forms of expression that were out of the ordinary, for ornamentation, for figures of style. But Descartes went even further in his desire to eliminate all rhetoric from his philosophy.⁵ His idea of a philosophy *more geometrico* (which was not realized until Spinoza) was to build a system which, moving from one self-evidence to another, would leave no room for any disputable opinion. As Descartes puts it at the beginning of his *First Meditation*:

Since reason already convinces me that I should abstain from the belief in things which are not entirely certain and indubitable no less carefully than from the belief in those which appear to me to be manifestly false, it will be enough to make me reject them all if I can find in each some ground for doubt.⁶

The attempt to elaborate a philosophy wherein all these would be either self-evident or compellingly demonstrated leads to the elimination of all forms of argumentation and to the rejection of rhetoric as an instrument of philosophy.

⁴Aristotle *Rhetoric* 1391b. 7–21. [Au.]

⁵H. Gouhier, "La résistance au vrai et le problème cartésien d'une philosophie sans rhétorique," *Retorico e Barocco*, ed. E. Castelli (Rome: Fratelli Bocca, 1955), pp. 85–97. [Au.]

⁶*Meditations*, p. 17. [Au.]

What are the presuppositions of such a philosophy? In the first place there is the idea that God is not only the source but also the guarantor of all knowledge, because "I must examine whether there is a God, and . . . whether he can be a deceiver; for as long as this is unknown, I do not see that I can ever be certain of anything."⁷ Descartes' method is to discover "a path that will lead us from this contemplation of the true God, in whom all the treasures of science and wisdom are contained, to the knowledge of all other beings."⁸

Scientific knowledge is wholly complete; all we have to do is recover it.

It is necessary to be suspicious of all human initiative, which can only lead to error, since it arises from imagination and prejudice. Human creativity, in scientific work, is completely neglected.

Divine ideas, being completely rational, can only be mathematical. They alone are characterized by self-evidence, which compels every rational being to submit to it. Because of Descartes' philosophic imagination, he generalized the results of the analysis of mathematical reasoning; he required (contrary to Aristotle's advice) that the same demands for rigor which had succeeded so well in mathematics be applied to all other realms. This led him to a methodological doubt concerning opinion:

As far as the opinions which I had been receiving since my birth were concerned, I could not do better than to reject them completely for once in my lifetime, and to resume them afterwards, or perhaps accept better ones in their place, when I had determined how they fitted in a rational scheme.⁹

Many years previously, Lord Bacon, theoretician of the empirical sciences, had also preached Christian humility to the learned, asking them to read carefully the book of nature, by which God revealed himself to man. The inductive method should guard man from formulating any thesis which could not be found in the book of nature, as if all experience had been clearly described in a divine language.

⁷*Ibid.*, p. 35. [Au.]

⁸*Ibid.*, p. 51. [Au.]

⁹*Discourse on Method*, p. 14. [Au.]

Having noted the theological background of the conception of science, both with Bacon and with Descartes, and having underscored the paradoxical and hardly admissible aspect of the Cartesian imagination, which would subject all opinions to the same criterion of self-evidence as mathematical theses, we should point out that even Descartes had to trust opinions for his provisional morality. Before reconstructing a rational science, he had to accept a provisional morality and its maxims. The first of these was "to obey the laws and customs of my country, constantly retaining the religion in which, by God's grace, I had been brought up since childhood, and in all other matters to follow the most moderate and least excessive opinions to be found in the practices of the more judicious part of the community in which I would live."¹⁰

We know that in the course of his life Descartes had to be satisfied with his provisional morality. His concern for generalized self-evidence did not result in the replacement of traditional morality—the expression of the common opinion of his milieu—by a rational, universally valid morality. Rather, it caused him to respect the ruling opinions and regulations scrupulously, and he refused to modify them for any nonself-evident reason. Paradoxically, mathematical rationalism, which went with a rejection of all opinion, of every exchange of opinions, of every recourse to dialectic and rhetoric, led finally to immobility and conformism in law, morality, politics, and religion.

Even today the teaching of the sciences is inspired by the Cartesian approach. In the areas which are free from controversy, it is not customary to refer to the opinion of one or another scholar. The theses which are taught are considered true, or are accepted as hypotheses; but there is hardly any need to justify them.

Thus, although axioms in the mathematical sciences, considered at first self-evident, were subsequently shown to be conventions of language, this change of perspective, however fundamental, has not affected the way in which such formal systems are laid out. In fact, if it is not a question of self-evidence, but of hypotheses or

conventions, why choose this hypothesis or that convention rather than another? Most mathematicians consider such questions foreign to their discipline.

When, under the influence of mathematicians, logic was presented in the form of several formalized systems, logicians with philosophical concerns asked if it were necessary to admit several different kinds of logic, or if a single, natural logic, prior to all formalized systems, existed. If there is a natural logic, how is it to be disengaged from other systems? Would it be drawn from the very structure of natural language?¹¹ Would it be justified by the needs of a methodological discussion?¹² As soon as we pose the problem of a choice of logic and its justification, an impersonal science leads us back to its philosophical and properly human foundations.

Likewise, the natural sciences were for centuries able to do without reference to a human language, situated in a historical and cultural context, by referring to God, to his ideas, and to the manner by which he revealed them to man. Belief in the existence of eternal truths, contained in the divine mind and guaranteed by it, justified the elimination of all personal elements from scientific thought, error alone being attributable to human intervention.

Take away the guarantee which God gives to self-evidence and, suddenly, all thought becomes human and fallible, and no longer sheltered from controversy. The idea that any scientific theory is only a human hypothesis, necessarily surpassing, if it would be fruitful, the data given by experience, and being neither self-evident nor infallible, is a modern conception which Karl Popper has effectively defended.¹³ But, lacking the self-evidence that can be imposed on everyone, a hypothesis, to be accepted, must be supported by good reasons, reorganized as such by other people,

¹¹G. Frey, "Die Logik als Empirische Wissenschaft," *La Théorie de l'argumentation* (Louvain: Nauwelaerts, 1963), pp. 240–62. [Au.]

¹²P. Lorenzen, "Methodisches Denken," *ibid.*, pp. 219–32. See also Lorenzen, *Einführung in die operative Logik* (Berlin: Springer, 1955), and *Formal Logic*, trans. Frederick J. Crosson (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1965). [Au.]

¹³Karl R. Popper, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery* (New York: Basic Books, 1961). [Au.]

¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 15. [Au.]

members of the same scientific community. The status of knowledge thus ceases to be impersonal because every scientific thought becomes a human one, i.e., fallible, situated in and subjected to controversy. Every new idea must be supported by arguments which are relevant to its discipline's proper methodology and which are evaluated in terms of it.

The Cartesian ideal of universally applicable self-evident knowledge leaves no room for rhetoric and dialectic. Their importance increases, however, each time a field of knowledge is no longer dominated by the criterion of self-evidence. A critique of the idea is self-evidence,¹⁴ showing that it vanishes as soon as it is necessary to go beyond subjective intuition—as soon as one wishes to communicate it through a language which is never compelling—tends to show that the choice of a mode of expression, if it is not arbitrary—and it rarely is—is influenced by reasons which come from dialectic and rhetoric. All intellectual activity which is placed between the necessary and the arbitrary is reasonable only to the degree that it is maintained by arguments and eventually clarified by controversies which normally do not lead to unanimity.

Indeed, it happens that, coming to an agreement on a methodology, people can obtain in certain periods and in certain disciplines a unanimity which they may not find again elsewhere; but nothing guarantees its indefinite continuation. Even the Newtonian formula of universal attraction, which was believed to be unshakable, was breached when people were given sufficient reasons to modify it.

Contrary to Descartes, who wanted to build all knowledge on unshakable self-evidence, we must show that the consensus of scientists, based on specific lines of reasoning, is the exception.

In all other fields, whether religion or philosophy, ethics or law, pluralism is the rule. These fields draw their rationality only from the argumentative apparatus, from good reasons which can be offered for or against each presented thesis.

¹⁴Ch. Perelman, "Self-Evidence and Proof," *The Idea of Justice and the Problem of Argument*, pp. 109–25. Also, "De l'évidence en métaphysique," *Le Champ de l'argumentation*, pp. 236–48. [Au.]

Since Hegel, it is hard to deny that any philosophy is both historically situated and subject to controversy. And this affirmation applies to the Hegelian system itself as soon as it is detached from its theological underpinnings. This implies putting classical epistemology and metaphysics into question. Instead of searching for a necessary and self-evident first truth from which all our knowledge would be suspended, let us recast our philosophy in terms of a vision in which people and human societies are in interaction and are solely responsible for their cultures, their institutions, and their future—a vision in which people try hard to elaborate reasonable systems, imperfect but perfectible.

The preeminent realm of argumentation, dialectic, and rhetoric is that in which values come into play. Plato, in his dialogue on piety (the *Euthyphro*) had shown that the privileged realm of dialectic is the one which transcends calculation, weight, and measure, the one in which we deal with the just and the unjust, the beautiful and the ugly, the good and the bad, and in general, with the preferable.¹⁵

The modern conception of philosophy, which distinguishes it from the sciences, considers argumentation in all its forms as the method proper to philosophy.

Indeed, philosophy cannot be limited to what is perceived, for its proper task is to separate the important from the secondary, the essential from the accidental, the construct from the given, all from a perspective whose pertinence and superiority does not compel everyone. Hence the obligation to support the chosen perspective through argumentation, using analogies and metaphors, by which the adequacy and superiority of the one perspective over rival perspectives can be shown.

It is clear that the philosopher's forms of reasoning cannot be limited to deduction and induction. To the extent that philosophers appeal to reason and use, to win over an audience, a whole arsenal of arguments which ought to be accepted by everyone, just so must they broaden their conception of reason so as to demonstrate the rationality of argumentative techniques and rhetoric, as a theory of persuasive discourse.

¹⁵Plato *Euthyphro* 7. [Au.]

We will be helped in this enterprise, inescapable in our time, by the secular experience of the jurists, who, having made human institutions depend upon a natural law of divine inspiration—be it the providence of the Stoics, the living God of the revealed religions, or the rational God of the philosophers—later came to elaborate a theory of “a reasonable law,” an object of the consensus of an organized community.¹⁶

Understandably, treatises on rhetoric in antiquity were essentially works for the use of jurists. But we must not forget in this regard that law, unlike philosophy for example, aims at settling disputes which cannot be prolonged indefinitely. In law a decision must be reached which takes advantage of the authority of legal precedent.¹⁷

Philosophical, like juridical, argumentation constitutes the application to particular fields of a general theory of argumentation which we understand as a new rhetoric. In identifying this rhetoric with the general theory of persuasive discourse, which seeks to gain both the intellectual and the emotional adherence of any sort of audience, we affirm that every discourse which does not claim an impersonal validity belongs to rhetoric. As soon as a communication tries to in-

¹⁶Ch. Perelman, *Logique juridique*, Par. 37, 40, 48, 97. [Au.]

¹⁷Ch. Perelman, *Justice*, p. 87, and “What the Philosopher May Learn from the Study of Law,” Appendix to *Justice*, p. 110. [Au.]

fluence one or more persons, to orient their thinking, to excite or calm their emotions, to guide their actions, it belongs to the realm of rhetoric. Dialectic, the technique of controversy, is included as one part of this larger realm.

Thus rhetoric covers the vast field of nonformalized thought: we can thus speak of “the realm of rhetoric.”¹⁸ It is in this spirit that Professor Jens of the University of Tübingen described rhetoric as “the once and future queen of the human sciences” [*alte und neue Königin der Wissenschaften*].¹⁹

Rhetoric, conceived as the theory of persuasive communication, has aroused growing interest among scholars and philosophers. Things have changed in the last thirty years. Not so long ago, rhetoric was disdained in Europe. In the United States, where speech departments were numerous,²⁰ they were hardly held in esteem by the academic community. Today rhetoric is rehabilitated, contrary to the opinion of the well-known historian Jacob Burckhart, who had called it “a monstrous aberration” of Greco-Roman antiquity.

¹⁸M. Genett, “Le rhétorique restreinte,” *Communications*, 16, 1970, p. 158. [Au.]

¹⁹Walter Jens, *Von Deutscher Rede* (Munich: Piper, 1969), p. 45. [Au.]

²⁰V. Florescu, *La retorica nel suo sviluppo storico* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1971), and Ch. Perelman, “The New Rhetoric, A Theory of Practical Reasoning,” *Great Ideas Today*, pp. 272–312. [Au.]

Chaim Perelman

The New Rhetoric: A Theory of Practical Reasoning

THE LOSS OF A HUMANISTIC TRADITION

The last two years of secondary education in Belgium used to be called traditionally "Poetry" and "Rhetoric." I still remember that, over forty years ago. I had to study the "Elements of Rhetoric" for a final high-school examination, and I learned more or less by heart the contents of a small manual, the first part of which concerned the syllogism and the second the figures of style. Later, at university, I took a course of logic which covered, among other things, the analysis of the syllogism. I then learned that logic is a formal discipline that studies the structure of hypothetico-deductive reasoning. Since then I have often wondered what link a professor of rhetoric could possibly discover between the syllogism and the figures of style with their exotic names that are so difficult to remember.

Lack of clarity concerning the idea of rhetoric is also apparent in the article on the subject in the Encyclopaedia Britannica (1969 ed.), where rhetoric is defined as "the use of language as an art based on a body of organized knowledge." But what does this mean? The technique or art of language in general, or only that of literary prose as distinct from poetry? Must rhetoric be conceived of as the art of oratory—that is, as the art of public speaking? The author of the article notes that for Aristotle rhetoric is the art of persuasion. We are further told that the orator's purpose, according to Cicero's definition, is to instruct, to move, and to please. Quintilian sums up this view in his lapidary style as *ars bene dicendi*, the art of speaking well. This phrase can refer either to the efficacy, or the morality, or the beauty of a speech, this ambiguity being both an advantage and a drawback.

Translated by E. Griffin-Collart and Otto Bird.

For those of us who have been educated at a time when rhetoric has ceased to play an essential part in education, the idea of rhetoric has been definitely associated with the "flowers of rhetoric"—the name used for the figures of style with their learned and incomprehensible names. This tradition is represented by two French authors, César Chesneau, sieur Dumarsais, and Pierre Fontanier, who provided the basic texts for teaching what was taken for rhetoric in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The work of Dumarsais, which first appeared in 1730 and enjoyed an enormous success, is entitled *Concerning Tropes or the Different Ways in Which One Word Can be Taken in a Language*.¹ Fontanier's book, published in 1968 under the title *The Figures of Discourse*, unites in one volume two works, which appeared respectively in 1821 and 1827, under the titles *A Classical Manual for the Study of Tropes* and *Figures Other Than Tropes*.²

These works are the outcome of what might be called the stylistic tradition of rhetoric, which was started by Omer Talon, the friend of Petrus Ramus, in his two books on rhetoric published in 1572. The extraordinary influence of Ramus hindered, and to a large extent actually destroyed, the tradition of ancient rhetoric that had been developed over the course of twenty centuries and with which are associated the names of such writers as Aristotle, Cicero, Quintilian, and St. Augustine.

For the ancients, rhetoric was the theory of persuasive discourse and included five parts: *in-*

¹Dumarsais, *Des tropes ou des différents sens dans lesquels on peut prendre un même mot dans une même langue* (1818; reprint ed., Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1967). [Au.]

²Pierre Fontanier, *Les Figures du discours*, ed. Gérard Genette (Paris: Flammarion, 1968). [Au.]

ventio, dispositio, elocutio, memoria, and actio. The first part dealt with the art of finding the materials of discourse, especially arguments, by using common or specific *loci*—the *topoi* studied in works which, following Aristotle's example, were called Topics. The second part gave advice on the purposive arrangement or order of discourse, the *method*, as the Renaissance humanists called it. The third part dealt mainly with style, the choice of terms and phrases; the fourth with the art of memorizing the speech; while the fifth concerned the art of delivering it.

Ramus worked for the reform of logic and dialectic along the lines laid down by Rodolphus Agricola in his *De Inventione Dialectica* (1479), and by the humanists who followed him, in seeking to break away from scholastic formalism by restoring the union of eloquence and philosophy advocated by Cicero. This reform consisted essentially in rejecting the classical opposition between science and opinion that had led Aristotle to draw a distinction between analytical and dialectical reasoning—the former dealing with necessary reasonings, the latter with probable ones. Analytical reasoning is the concern of Aristotle's *Analytics*, dialectical reasoning that of the *Topics*, *On Sophistical Refutations*, and the *Rhetoric*.

Against this distinction, this is what Ramus has to say in his *Dialectic*:

Aristotle, or more precisely the exponents of Aristotle's theories, thought that there are two arts of discussion and reasoning, one applying to science and called Logic, the other dealing with opinion and called Dialectic. In this—with all due respect to such great masters—they were greatly mistaken. Indeed these two names, Dialectic and Logic, generally mean the very same thing, like the words *dialegethai* and *logizesthai* from which they are derived and descended, that is, dispute or reason. . . . Furthermore, although things known are either necessary and scientific, or contingent and a matter of opinion, just as our sight can perceive all colors, both unchanging and changeable, in the same way the art of knowing, that is Dialectic or Logic, is one and the same doctrine of reasoning well about anything whatsoever . . .³

³Petrus Ramus, *Dialectic*, 1576 edition, pp. 3–4; also in the critical edition of *Dialectique*, 1555, ed. Michel Das-

sonville (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1964), p. 62. Cf. Walter J. Ong, *Ramus: Method, and the Decay of Dialogue* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1958). [Au.]

As a result of this rejection, Ramus unites in his *Dialectic* what Aristotle had separated. He divides his work into two parts, one concerning invention, the other judgment. Further, he includes in dialectic parts that were formerly regarded as belonging to rhetoric: the theory of invention or *loci* and that of disposition, called *method*. Memory is considered as merely a reflection of these first two parts, and rhetoric—the “art of speaking well,” of “eloquent and ornate language”—includes the study of tropes, of figures of style, and of oratorical delivery, all of which are considered as of lesser importance.

Thus was born the tradition of modern rhetoric, better called stylistic, as the study of techniques of unusual expression. For Fontanier, as we have seen, rhetoric is reduced to the study of figures of style, which he defines as “the more or less remarkable traits and forms, the phrases with a more or less happy turn, by which the expression of ideas, thoughts, and feelings removes the discourse more or less far away from what would have been its simple, common expression.”⁴

Rhetoric, on this conception, is essentially an art of expression and, more especially, of literary conventionalized expression; it is an art of style. So is it still regarded by Jean Paulhan in his book *Les Fleurs de Tarbes ou la terreur dans les lettres* (1941, but published first as articles in 1936).

The same view of rhetoric was taken in Italy during the Renaissance, despite the success of humanism. Inspired by the Ciceronian ideal of the union of philosophy with eloquence, humanists such as Lorenzo Valla sought to unite dialectic and rhetoric. But they gave definite primacy to rhetoric, thus expressing their revolt against scholastic formalism.

This humanistic tradition continued for over a century and finally produced in the *De principiis* by Mario Nizolio (1533) its most significant

⁴Fontanier, *Les Figures du discours*, p. 64. See also J. Dubois, F. Edeline, J. M. Klinkenberg, P. Minguet, F. Pire, and H. Trinson, *Rhétorique générale* (Paris: Larousse, 1970). [Au.]

work from a philosophical point of view. Less than ten years later, however, in 1562, Francesco Patrizi published in his *Rhetoric* the most violent attack upon this discipline, to which he denied any philosophical interest whatsoever. Giambattista Vico's reaction came late and produced no immediate result. Rhetoric became a wholly formal discipline—any living ideas that it contained being included in Aesthetics.

Germany is one country where classical rhetoric has continued to be carefully studied, especially by scholars such as Friedrich Blass, Wilhelm Kroll, and Friedrich Solmsen, who devoted most of their lives to this study. Yet, even so, rhetoric has been regarded only as the theory of literary prose. Heinrich Lausberg has produced a most remarkable work, which is the best tool in existence for the study of rhetorical terminology and the structure of discourse, and yet in the author's own eyes it is only a contribution to the study of literary language and tradition.⁵

The old tradition of rhetoric has been kept longest in Great Britain—it is still very much alive among Scots jurists—thanks to the importance of psychology in the empiricism of Bacon, Locke, and Hume, and to the influence of the Scottish philosophy of common sense. This tradition, in which the theory of invention is reduced to a minimum and interest is focused on the persuasive aspect of discourse, is represented by such original works as George Campbell's *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (1776) and Richard Whately's *Elements of Rhetoric* (1828). In this work, Whately, who was a logician, deals with argumentative composition in general and the art of establishing the truth of a proposition so as to convince others, rhetoric being reduced to "a purely managerial or supervisory science."⁶ His disciple, the future Cardinal John Henry Newman, applied Whately's ideas to the problems of faith in his *Grammar of Assent* (1870). This outlook still consists in seeing in rhetoric only a theory of expression. It was the view adopted by Ivor Armstrong Richards in his *Principles of Lit-*

⁵Heinrich Lausberg, *Handbuch der literarischen Rhetorik*, 2 vols. (Munich: M. Hueber, 1960). [Au.]

⁶Douglas Ehninger, ed., Whately's *Elements of Rhetoric* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1963), p. XXVII. [Au.]

erary Criticism (published in 1924) and in his *Philosophy of Rhetoric* (1936).

While in Europe rhetoric has been reduced to stylistics and literary criticism, becoming merely a part of the study of literature insofar as it was taught at all, in the United States the appearance of a speech profession brought about a unique development.

Samuel Silas Curry, in a book entitled *The Province of Expression* (1891), was the first to emphasize spoken discourse and its delivery, rather than the composition of literary prose, and to claim autonomy for speech as opposed to written composition. "Expression," as he understood it, did not mean the way in which ideas and feelings are expressed in a literary form, but instead the manner in which they are communicated by means of an art of "delivery." Concern for this element, apparently one of lesser importance, clearly reveals a renewed interest in the audience, and this interest helped to promote the creation of a new "speech profession," separate from the teaching of English and of English literature. Under the influence of William James, James Albert Winans published a volume entitled *Public Speaking* (1915) that firmly established a union between professors of speech and those of psychology. With the cooperation of specialists in ancient and medieval rhetoric, such as Charles S. Baldwin, Harry Caplan, Lane Cooper, Everett Lee Hunt, and Richard McKeon, the whole tradition of classical rhetoric has been retraced. This study has been continued and further developed in the works of Wilbur Samuel Howell, Donald C. Bryant, Karl R. Wallace, Walter J. Ong, Lloyd F. Bitzer, Douglas Ehninger, and Marie K. Hochmuth. The work of these scholars—the titles of which can be found in the Bibliography that has been regularly published by the Quarterly Journal of Speech since 1915—constitutes a unique achievement which is as yet too little known outside the United States.⁷

⁷Robert T. Oliver and Marvin G. Bauer, eds., *Re-establishing the Speech Profession: The First Fifty Years* (New York: Speech Association of the Eastern States, 1959). See also Frederick W. Haberman and James W. Cleary, eds., *Rhetoric and Public Address: A Bibliography, 1947-1961* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1964). Prof. Carroll C. Arnold of Pennsylvania State University has gra-

AN ORNAMENTAL OR A PRACTICAL ART?

There is nothing of philosophical interest in a rhetoric that has turned into an art of expression, whether literary or verbal.⁸ Hence it is not surprising that the term is missing entirely from both André Lalande's *Vocabulaire technique et critique de la philosophie* and the recent American *Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (1967). In the Western tradition, "Rhetoric" has frequently been identified with verbalism and an empty, unnatural, stilted mode of expression. Rhetoric then becomes the symbol of the most outdated elements in the education of the old regime, the elements that were the most formal, most useless, and most opposed to the needs of an equalitarian, progressive democracy.

This view of rhetoric as declamation—ostentatious and artificial discourse—is not a new one. The same view was taken of the rhetoric of the Roman Empire. Once serious matters, both political and judiciary, had been withdrawn from its influence, rhetoric became perforce limited to school exercises, to set speeches treating either a theme of the past or an imaginary situation, but, in any case, one without any real bearing. Serious people, especially the Stoics, made fun of it. Thus Epictetus declares: "But this faculty of speaking and of ornamenting words, if there is indeed any such peculiar faculty, what else does it do, when there happens to be discourse about a

ciously supplied me the following information: "The statement about the bibliography in *Quarterly Journal of Speech* is not quite correct. The 'Bibliography of Rhetoric and Public Address' first appeared in the *Quarterly Journal of Speech* in 1947 and was published there annually to 1951. From 1952 through 1969, the bibliography was annually published in *Speech Monographs*. As it happens, the bibliography will cease to be published in *Monographs* and, beginning with this year, 1970, will be published in a *Bibliographical Annual*, published by the Speech Association of America. As far as I know, this bibliography remains the only multilingual listing of works (admittedly incomplete) on rhetoric published in the United States." [Au.]

⁸See Vasile Florescu, "Retorica si reabilitarea ei in filozofia contemporana" (Rhetoric and its rehabilitation in contemporary philosophy) in *Studi de istorie a filozofiei universale*, published by the Institute of Philosophy of this Academy of the Socialist Republic of Rumania (Bucharest, 1969), pp. 9–82. [Au.]

thing, than to ornament the words and arrange them as hairdressers do the hair?"⁹

Aristotle would have disagreed with this conception of rhetoric as an ornamental art bearing the same relation to prose as poetics does to verse. For Aristotle, rhetoric is a practical discipline that aims, not at producing a work of art, but at exerting through speech a persuasive action on an audience. Unfortunately, however, those responsible for the confusion between the two have been able to appeal to Aristotle's own authority because of the misleading analysis he gave of the epideictic or ceremonial form of oratory.

In his *Rhetoric* Aristotle distinguishes three genres of oratory: deliberative, forensic, and ceremonial. "Political speaking," he writes, "urges us either to do or not to do something: one of these two courses is always taken by private counsellors, as well as by men who address public assemblies. Forensic speaking either attacks or defends somebody: one or the other of these two things must always be done by the parties in a case. The ceremonial oratory of display either praises or censures somebody." But whereas the audience is supposed to act as a judge and make a decision concerning either the future (deliberative genre) or the past (forensic genre), in the case of an epideictic discourse the task of the audience consists in judging, not about the matter of discourse, but about the orator's skill. In political and forensic discourse the subject of the discourse is itself under discussion, and the orator aims at persuading the audience to take part in deciding the matter, but in epideictic discourse the subject—such as, for example, the praise of soldiers who have died for their country—is not at all a matter of debate. Such set speeches were often delivered before large assemblies, as at the Olympic Games, where competition between orators provided a welcome complement to the athletic contests. On such occasions, the only decision that the audience was called upon to make concerned the talent of the orator, by awarding the crown to the victor.

One might well ask how an oratorical genre

⁹*Discourses* II. 23; *GBWW* [Great Books of the Western World], Vol. 12, pp. 170–71. [Au.]

can be defined by its literary imitation. We know that Cicero, after having lost the suit, rewrote his *Pro Milone* and published it as a literary work. He hoped that by artistically improving the speech, which had failed to convince Milo's judges, he might gain the approbation of lovers of literature. Are those who read this speech long after its practical bearing has disappeared any more than spectators? In that case, all discourses automatically become literature once they cease to exert a persuasive effect, and there is no particular reason to distinguish different genres of oratory. Yet it can be maintained, on the contrary, that the epideictic genre is not only important but essential from an educational point of view, since it too has an effective and distinctive part to play—that, namely, of bringing about a consensus in the minds of the audience regarding the values that are celebrated in the speech.

The moralists rightly satirize the view of epideictic oratory as spectacle. La Bruyère writes derisively of those who “are so deeply moved and touched by Theodorus's sermon that they resolve in their hearts that it is even more beautiful than the last one he preached.” And Bossuet, fearful lest the real point of a sermon be missed, exclaims: “You should now be convinced that preachers of the Gospel do not ascend into pulpits to utter empty speeches to be listened to for amusement.”¹⁰

Bossuet here is following St. Augustine's precepts concerning sacred discourse as set forth in the fourth book of his work *On Christian Doctrine*. The Orator is not content if his listener merely accepts the truth of his words and praises his eloquence, because he wants his full assent:

If the truths taught are such that to believe or to know them is enough, to give one's assent implies nothing more than to confess that they are true. When, however, the truth taught in one that must be carried into practice, and that is taught for the very purpose of being practised, it is useless to be persuaded of the truth of what is said, it is useless

¹⁰Ch. Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric, A Treatise on Argumentation*, trans. John Wilkinson and Purcell Weaver (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969), p. 50. French edition: *La Nouvelle Rhétorique; traité de l'argumentation*. (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1958). [Au.]

to be pleased with the manner in which it is said, if it be not so learnt as to be practised. The eloquent divine, then, when he is urging a practical truth, must not only teach so as to give instruction, and please so as to keep up the attention, but he must also sway the mind so as to subdue the will.

The listener will be persuaded, Augustine also claims,

if he be drawn by your premises, and awed by your threats; if he reject what you condemn, and embrace what you commend; if he grieve when you heap up objects for grief, and rejoice when you point out an object for joy; if he pity those whom you present to him as objects of pity, and shrink from those whom you set before him as men to be feared and shunned.¹¹

The orator's aim in the epideictic genre is not just to gain a passive adherence from his audience but to provoke the action wished for or, at least, to awaken a disposition so to act. This is achieved by forming a community of minds, which Kenneth Burke, who is well aware of the importance of this genre, calls *identification*. As he writes, rhetoric “is rooted in an essential function of language itself, a function that is wholly realistic and is continually born anew; the use of language as a symbolic means of inducing cooperation in beings that by nature respond to symbols.”¹² In fact, any persuasive discourse seeks to have an effect on an audience, although the audience may consist of only one person and the discourse be an inward deliberation.

The distinction of the different genres of oratory is highly artificial, as the study of a speech shows. Mark Antony's famous speech in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*¹³ opens with a funeral eulogy, a typical case of epideictic discourse, and ends by provoking a riot that is clearly political. Its goal is to intensify an adherence to values, to create a disposition to act, and finally to bring people to act. Seen in such a perspective, rhetoric becomes a subject of great philosophical interest.

¹¹*On Christian Doctrine*, IV, 13, 12; *GBWW*, Vol. 18, p. 684. [Au.]

¹²Kenneth Burke, *A Rhetoric of Motives* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1950), p. 43. [Au.]

¹³Act III, scene 2; *GBWW*, Vol. 26, pp. 584c ff. [Au.]

THINKING ABOUT VALUES

In 1945, when I published my first study of justice,¹⁴ I was completely ignorant of the importance of rhetoric. This study, undertaken in the spirit of logical empiricism, succeeded in showing that formal justice is a principle of action, according to which beings of one and the same essential category must be treated in the same way.¹⁵ The application of this principle to actual situations, however, requires criteria to indicate which categories are relevant and how their members should be treated, and such decisions involve a recourse to judgments of value. But, using only positivistic methods, I could not see how such judgments could have any foundation or justification. Indeed, as I entirely accepted the principle that one cannot draw an "ought" from an "is"—a judgment of value from a judgment of fact—I was led inevitably to the conclusion that if justice consists in the systematic implementation of certain value judgments, it does not rest on any rational foundation: "As for the value that is the foundation of the normative system, we cannot subject it to any rational criterion: it is utterly arbitrary and logically indeterminate. . . . The idea of value is, in effect, incompatible both with formal necessity and with experiential universality. There is no value which is not logically arbitrary."¹⁶

I was deeply dissatisfied with this conclusion, however interesting the analysis, since the philosophical inquiry, carried on within the limits of logical empiricism, could not provide an ideal of practical reason, that is, the establishment of rules and models for reasonable action. By admitting the soundness of Hume's analysis, I found myself in a situation similar to Kant's. If Hume is right in maintaining that empiricism cannot provide a basis for either science or morals, must we not then look to other than empirical methods to justify them? Similarly, if experience and calculation, combined according to the precepts of logical empiricism, leave no place

for practical reason and do not enable us to justify our decisions and choices, must we not seek other techniques of reasoning for that purpose? In other words, is there a logic of value judgments that makes it possible for us to reason about values instead of making them depend solely on irrational choices, based on interest, passion, prejudice, and myth? Recent history has shown abundantly the sad excesses to which such an attitude can lead.

Critical investigation of the philosophical literature yielded no satisfactory results. The French logician Edmond Goblots, in his work *La Logique des jugements de valeur*,¹⁷ restricted his analysis to derived or instrumental value judgments, that is, to those judgments that use values as a means to already accepted ends, or as obstacles to their attainment. The ends themselves, however, could not be subjected to deliberation unless they were transformed into instrumental values, but such a transformation only pushes back the problem of ultimate ends. We thus seem to be faced with two extreme attitudes, neither of which is acceptable: subjectivism, which, as far as values are concerned, leads to skepticism for lack of an intersubjective criterion; or an absolutism founded on intuitionism. In the latter case, judgments of value are assimilated to judgments of a reality that is *sui generis*. In other words, must we choose between A. J. Ayer's view in *Language, Truth, and Logic* and G. E. Moore's view in *Principia Ethica*? Both seem to give a distorted notion of the actual process of deliberation that leads to decision making in practical fields such as politics, law, and morals.

Then, too, I agreed with the criticisms made by various types of existentialists against both positivist empiricism and rationalistic idealism, but I could find no satisfaction in their justification of action by purely subjective projects or commitments.

I could see but one way to solve the dilemma to which most currents of contemporary philosophy had led. Instead of working out a priori possible structures for a logic of value judgments, might we not do better to follow the method

¹⁴Ch. Perelman, *The Idea of Justice and the Problem of Argument*, trans. John Petrie (New York: Humanities Press, 1963), pp. 1–60. [Au.]

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 16. [Au.]

¹⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 56–57. [Au.]

¹⁷Edmond Goblots, *La Logique des jugements de valeur* (Paris: Colin, 1927). [Au.]

adopted by the German logician Gottlob Frege, who, to cast new light on logic, decided to analyze the reasoning used by mathematicians? Could we not undertake, in the same way, an extensive inquiry into the manner in which the most diverse authors in all fields do in fact reason about values? By analyzing political discourse, the reasons given by judges, the reasoning of moralists, the daily discussions carried on in deliberating about making a choice or reaching a decision or nominating a person, we might be able to trace the actual logic of value judgments which seems continually to elude the grasp of specialists in the theory of knowledge.

For almost ten years Mme L. Olbrechts-Tyteca and I conducted such an inquiry and analysis. We obtained results that neither of us had ever expected. Without either knowing or wishing it, we had rediscovered a part of Aristotelian logic that had been long forgotten or, at any rate, ignored and despised. It was the part dealing with dialectical reasoning, as distinguished from demonstrative reasoning—called by Aristotle analytics—which is analyzed at length in the *Rhetoric*, *Topics*, and *On Sophistical Refutations*. We called this new, or revived, branch of study, devoted to the analysis of informal reasoning, *The New Rhetoric*.¹⁸

ARGUMENTATION AND DEMONSTRATION

The new rhetoric is a theory of argumentation. But the specific part that is played by argumentation could not be fully understood until the modern theory of demonstration—to which it is complementary—had been developed. In its contemporary form, demonstration is a calculation made in accordance with rules that have been laid down beforehand. No recourse is allowed to evidence or to any intuition other than that of the senses. The only requirement is the ability to distinguish signs and to perform opera-

¹⁸Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric*. See also Olbrechts-Tyteca, "Rencontre avec la rhétorique," in *La Théorie de l'argumentation*, Centre National de Recherches de Logique (Louvain: Editions Nauwelaerts, 1963), 1, pp. 3–18 (reproduces nos. 21–24 of *Logique et Analyse*). [Au.]

tions according to rules. A demonstration is regarded as correct or incorrect according as it conforms, or fails to conform, to the rules. A conclusion is held to be demonstrated if it can be reached by means of a series of correct operations starting from premises accepted as axioms. Whether these axioms be considered as evident, necessary, true or hypothetical, the relation between them and the demonstrated theorems remains unchanged. To pass from a correct inference to the truth or to the computable probability of the conclusion, one must admit both the truth of the premises and the coherence of the axiomatic system.

The acceptance of these assumptions compels us to abandon pure formalism and to accept certain conventions and to admit the reality of certain models or structures. According to the classical theory of demonstration, which is rejected by formalism, the validity of the deductive method was guaranteed by intuition or evidence—by the natural light of reason. But if we reject such a foundation, we are not compelled to accept formalism. It is still insufficient, since we need good reasons to accept the premises from which we start and these reasons can be good only for a mind capable of judging them. However, once we have accepted the framework of a formal system and know that it is free from ambiguity, then the demonstrations that can be made within it are compelling and impersonal; in fact, their validity is capable of being controlled mechanically. It is this specific character of formal demonstration that distinguishes it from dialectical reasoning founded on opinion and concerned with contingent realities. Ramus failed to see this distinction and confused the two by using a faulty analogy with the sight of moving and unmoving colors.¹⁹ It is sometimes possible, by resorting to prior arrangements and conventions, to transform an argument into a demonstration of a more or less probabilistic character. It remains true, nonetheless, that we must distinguish carefully between

¹⁹This identification is faulty, as dialectical reasoning can be reduced to formal calculation no more than commonplaces (topoi). Cf. Otto Bird, "The tradition of the Logical Topics: Aristotle to Ockham," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 23 (1962): 307–23. [Au.]

the two types of reasoning if we want to understand properly how they are related.

An argumentation is always addressed by a person called the orator—whether by speech or in writing—to an audience of listeners or readers. It aims at obtaining or reinforcing the adherence of the audience to some thesis, assent to which is hoped for. The new rhetoric, like the old, seeks to persuade or convince, to obtain an adherence which may be *theoretical* to start with, although it may eventually be manifested through a disposition to act, or *practical*, as provoking either immediate action, the making of a decision, or a commitment to act.

Thus argumentation, unlike demonstration, presupposes a meeting of minds: the will on the part of the orator to persuade and not to compel or command, and a disposition on the part of the audience to listen. Such mutual goodwill must not only be general but must also apply to the particular question at issue; it must not be forgotten that all argumentation aims somehow at modifying an existing state of affairs. This is why every society possesses institutions to further discussion between competent persons and to prevent others. Not everybody can start debating about anything whatever, no matter where. To be a man people listen to is a precious quality and is still more necessary as a preliminary condition for an efficacious argumentation.

In some cases there are detailed rules drawn up for establishing this contact before a question can be debated. The main purpose of procedure in civil and criminal law is to ensure a balanced unfolding of the judicial debate. Even the matters where there are no explicit rules for discussion, there are still customs and habits that cannot be disregarded without sufficient reason.

Argumentation also presupposes a means of communicating, a common language. The use of it in a given situation, however, may admit of variation according to the position of the interlocutors. Sometimes only certain persons are entitled to ask questions or to conduct the debate.

From these specifications it is apparent that the new rhetoric cannot tolerate the more or less conventional, and even arbitrary, limitations traditionally imposed upon ancient rhetoric. For

Aristotle, the similarity between rhetoric and dialectic was all-important.²⁰ According to him, they differ only in that dialectic provides us with techniques of discussion for a common search for truth, while rhetoric teaches how to conduct a debate in which various points of view are expressed and the decision is left up to the audience. This distinction shows why dialectic has been traditionally considered as a serious matter by philosophers, whereas rhetoric has been regarded with contempt. Truth, it was held, presided over a dialectical discussion, and the interlocutors had to reach agreement about it by themselves, whereas rhetoric taught only how to present a point of view—that is to say, a partial aspect of the question—and the decision of the issue was left up to a third person.²¹

It should be noted, however, that for Plato dialectic alone does not attain to metaphysical truth. The latter requires an intuition for which dialectic can only pave the way by eliminating untenable hypotheses.²² However, truth is the keynote for dialectic, which seeks to get as close to the truth as possible through the discursive method. The rhetorician, on the other hand, is described as trying to outdo his rivals in debate, and, if his judges are gross and ignorant, the triumph of the orator who shows the greatest skill in flattery will by no means always be the victory of the best cause. Plato emphasizes this point strongly in the *Gorgias*, where he shows that the demagogue, to achieve victory, will not hesitate to use techniques unworthy of a philosopher. This criticism gains justification from Aristotle's observation, based evidently on Athenian practice, that it belongs to rhetoric "to deal with such matters as we deliberate upon without arts or systems to guide us, in the bearing of persons who cannot take in at a glance a complicated argument, or follow a long chain of reasoning."²³

²⁰See *Rhetoric* I, 1354a 1–6, 1355a 35–36, 1355b 8–10, 1356a 30–35, 1356b 35, 1356b 37–38; *GBWW*, Vol. 9, pp. 593–96. [Au.]

²¹Plato, *Republic* I, 348a–b; *GBWW*, Vol. 7, p. 306. [Au.]

²²Plato, *Republic* 511, *GBWW*, Vol. 7, p. 387. *Seventh Letter* 344b, *GBWW*, Vol. 7, p. 810. [Au.]

²³Aristotle, *Rhetoric* I 1357a 1–4; *GBWW*, Vol. 9, p. 596. [Au.]

For the new rhetoric, however, argumentation has a wider scope as nonformal reasoning that aims at obtaining or reinforcing the adherence of an audience. It is manifest in discussion as well as in debate, and it matters not whether the aim be the search for truth or the triumph of a cause, and the audience may have any degree of competence. The reason that rhetoric has been deemed unworthy of the philosopher's efforts is not because dialectic employs a technique of questions and answers while rhetoric proceeds by speeches from opposing sides.²⁴ It is not this but rather the idea of the unicity of truth that has disqualified rhetoric in the Western philosophical tradition. Thus Descartes declares: "Whenever two men come to opposite decisions about the same matter one of them at least must certainly be in the wrong, and apparently there is not even one of them who knows; for if the reasoning of the second was sound and clear he would be able so to lay it before the other as finally to succeed in convincing his understanding also."²⁵ Both Descartes and Plato hold this idea because of their rejection of opinion, which is variable, and their adoption of an ideal of science based on the model of geometry and mathematical reasoning—the very model according to which the world was supposed to have been created. *Dum Deus calculat, fit mundus* (While God calculates, the world is created) is the conviction not only of Leibniz but of all rationalists.

Things are very different within a tradition that follows a juridical, rather than a mathematical, model. Thus in the tradition of the Talmud, for example, it is accepted that opposed positions can be equally reasonable; one of them does not have to be right. Indeed, "in the Talmud two schools of biblical interpretation are in constant opposition, the school of Hillel and that of Shammai. Rabbi Abba relates that, bothered by these contradictory interpretations of the sacred text, Rabbi Samuel addresses himself to heaven in order to know who speaks the truth. A voice from

²⁴Plato, *Cratylus* 390c; *GBWW*, Vol. 7, pp. 88–89. *Theaetetus* 167e; *GBWW*, Vol. 7, p. 526. [Au.]

²⁵*Rules for the Direction of the Mind*; *GBWW*, Vol. 31, p. 2. [Au.]

above answers him that these two theses both expressed the word of the Living God."²⁶

So too, for Plato, the subject of discussion is always one for which men possess no techniques for reaching agreement immediately:

Suppose for example that you and I, my good friend (Socrates remarks to Euthyphro), differ about a number; do differences of this sort make us enemies and set us at variance with one another? Do we not go at once to arithmetic, and put an end to them by a sum? . . . Or suppose that we differ about magnitudes, do we not quickly end the differences by measuring? . . . And we end a controversy about heavy and light by resorting to a weighing machine? . . . But what differences are there which cannot be thus decided and which therefore make us angry and set us at enmity with one another? I dare say the answer does not occur to you at the moment, and therefore I will suggest that these enmities arise when the matters of difference are the just and unjust, good and evil, honorable and dishonorable.²⁷

When agreement can easily be reached by means of calculation, measuring, or weighing, when a result can be either demonstrated or verified, nobody would think of resorting to dialectical discussion. The latter concerns only what cannot be so decided and, especially, disagreements about values. In fact, in matters of opinion, it is often the case that neither rhetoric nor dialectic can reconcile all the positions that are taken.

Such is exactly how matters stand in philosophy. The philosopher's appeal to reason gives no guarantee whatever that everyone will agree with his point of view. Different philosophies present different points of view, and it is significant that a historian of pre-Socratic philosophy has been able to show that the different points of view can be regarded as antilogies or discourses on opposite sides, in that an antithesis is opposed in each case to a thesis.²⁸ One might even wonder with

²⁶*Babylonian Talmud*, Seder Mo'ed 2. "Erubin" 136 (ed. Epstein). Cf. Ch. Perelman, "What the Philosopher May Learn from the Study of Law," *Natural Law Forum* 11 (1966): 3–4; idem, "Désaccord et rationalité des décisions," in *Droit, morale et philosophie* (Paris: Librairie générale de droit et de jurisprudence, 1968), pp. 103–10. [Au.]

²⁷*Euthyphro* 7; *GBWW*, Vol. 7, pp. 193–94. [Au.]

²⁸See Clemence Ramnoux, "Le développement antilogique des écoles grecques avant Socrate," in *La Dialectique*

Alexandre Kojève, the late expert in Hegelian philosophy, whether Hegelian dialectic did not have its origin, not in Platonic dialectic, but rather in the development of philosophical systems that can be opposed as thesis to antithesis, followed by a synthesis of the two. The process is similar to a lawsuit in which the judge identifies the elements he regards as valid in the claims of the opposed parties. For Kant as well as for Hegel, opinions are supposed to be excluded from philosophy, which aims at rationality. But to explain the divergencies that are systemically encountered in the history of philosophy, we need only call these opinions the natural illusions of reason as submitted to the tribunal of critical reason (as in Kant) or successive moments in the progress of reason toward Absolute Spirit (as in Hegel).

To reconcile philosophic claims to rationality with the plurality of philosophic systems, we must recognize that the appeal to reason must be identified not as an appeal to a single truth but instead as an appeal for the adherence of an audience, which can be thought of, after the manner of Kant's categorical imperative, as encompassing all reasonable and competent men. The characteristic aspect of philosophical controversy and of the history of philosophy can only be understood if the appeal to reason is conceived as an appeal to an ideal audience—which I call the universal audience—whether embodied in God,²⁹ in all reasonable and competent men, in the man deliberating or in an elite.³⁰ Instead of identifying philosophy with a science, which, on the positivist ideal, could make only analytical judgments, both indisputable and empty, we would do better to abandon the ideal of an apodictic philosophy. We would then have to admit that in the discharge of his specific task, the philosopher has at his disposal only an argumentation that he can endeavor to make as reasonable and systematic as possible without ever being able to make it absolutely compelling or a demonstrative proof.

tique (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1969), pp. 40–47. [Au.]

²⁹Plato, *Phaedrus* 273c; *GBWW*, Vol 7, p. 138. [Au.]

³⁰Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric*, Sections 6–9. [Au.]

Besides, it is highly unlikely that any reasoning from which we could draw reasons for acting could be conducted under the sign of truth, for these reasons must enable us to justify our actions and decisions. Thus, indirectly, the analysis of philosophical reasoning brings us back to views that are familiar in existentialism.

Audiences display an infinite variety in both extension and competence: in extent, from the audience consisting of a single subject engaged in inward deliberation up to the universal audience; and in competence, from those who know only *loci* up to the specialists who have acquired their knowledge only through a long and painstaking preparation. By thus generalizing the idea of the audience, we can ward off Plato's attack against the rhetoricians for showing greater concern for success than for the truth. To this criticism we can reply that the techniques suited for persuading a crowd in a public place would not be convincing to a better educated and more critical audience, and that the worth of an argumentation is not measured solely by its efficacy but also by the quality of the audience at which it is aimed. Consequently, the idea of a rational argumentation cannot be defined *in abstracto*, since it depends on the historically grounded conception of the universal audience.

The part played by the audience in rhetoric is crucially important, because all argumentation, in aiming to persuade, must be adapted to the audience and, hence based on beliefs accepted by the audience with such conviction that the rest of the discourse can be securely based upon it. Where this is not the case, one must reinforce adherence to these starting points by means of all available rhetorical techniques before attempting to join the controverted points to them. Indeed, the orator who builds his discourse on premises not accepted by the audience commits a classical fallacy in argumentation—a *petitio principii*. This is not a mistake in formal logic, since formally any proposition implies itself, but it is a mistake in argumentation, because the orator begs the question by presupposing the existence of an adherence that does not exist and to the obtaining of which his efforts should be directed.

THE BASIS OF AGREEMENT

The objects of agreement on which the orator can build his argument are various. On the one hand, there are facts, truths, and presumptions; on the other, values, hierarchies, and *loci* of the preferable.³¹

Facts and truths can be characterized as objects that are already agreed to by the universal audience, and, hence, there is no need to increase the intensity of adherence to them. If we presuppose the coherence of reality and of our truths taken as a whole, there cannot be any conflict between facts and truths on which we would be called to make a decision. What happens when such a conflict seems to occur is that the incompatible element loses its status and becomes either an illusory fact or an apparent truth, unless we can eliminate the incompatibility by showing that the two apparently incompatible truths apply to different fields. We shall return to this argumentative method later when dealing with the dissociation of ideas.

Presumptions are opinions which need not be proved, although adherence to them can be either reinforced, if necessary, or suppressed by proving the opposite. Legal procedure makes abundant use of presumptions, for which it has worked out refined definitions and elaborate rules for their use.

Values are appealed to in order to influence our choices of action. They supply reasons for preferring one type of behavior to another, although not all would necessarily accept them as good reasons. Indeed, most values are particular in that they are accepted only by a particular group. The values that are called universal can be regarded in so many different ways that their universality is better considered as only an aspiration for agreement, since it disappears as soon as one tries to apply one such value to a concrete situation. For argumentation, it is useful to distinguish concrete values, such as one's country, from abstract values, such as justice and truth. It is characteristic of values that they can become the center of conflict without thereby ceasing to be values. This fact explains how real sacrifice is possible, the object renounced being by no means

³¹Ibid., Sections 15–27. [Au.]

a mere appearance. For this reason, the effort to reinforce adherence to values is never superfluous. Such an effort is undertaken in epideictic discourse, and, in general, all education also endeavors to make certain values preferred to others.

After values, we find that accepted hierarchies play a part in argumentation. Such, for example, are the superiority of men over animals and of adults over children. We also find double hierarchies as in the case in which we rank behavior in accordance with an accepted ranking of the agents. For this reason, such a statement as “You are behaving like a beast” is pejorative, whereas an exhortation to “act like a man” calls for more laudable behavior.

Among all the *loci* studied by Aristotle in his *Topics*, we shall consider only those examined in the third book, which we shall call *loci of the preferable*. They are very general propositions, which can serve, at need, to justify values or hierarchies, but which also have as a special characteristic the ability to evaluate complementary aspects of reality. To *loci of quantity*, such as “That which is more lasting is worth more than that which is less so” or “A thing useful for a large number of persons is worth more than one useful for a smaller number,” we can oppose *loci of quality*, which set value upon the unique, the irremediable, the opportune, the rare—that is, to what is exceptional instead of to what is normal. By the use of these *loci*, it is possible to describe the difference between the classical and the romantic spirit.³²

While it establishes a framework for all non-formal reasoning, whatever its nature, its subject, or audience, the new rhetoric does not pretend to supply a list of all the *loci* and common opinions which can serve as starting points for argumentation. It is sufficient to stress that, in all cases, the orator must know the opinion of his audience on all the questions he intends to deal with, the type of arguments and reasons which seem relevant with regard to both subject and audience, what they are likely to consider as a strong or weak ar-

³²Ch. Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca, “Classicisme et Romantisme dans l'argumentation.” *Revue Internationale de Philosophie*, 1958, pp. 47–57. [Au.]

gument, and what might arouse them, as well as what would leave them indifferent.

Quintilian, in his *Institutes of Oratory*, points out the advantage of a public school education for future orators: it puts them on a par and in fellowship with their audience. This advice is sound as regards argumentation on matters requiring no special knowledge. Otherwise, however, it is indispensable for holding an audience to have had a preliminary initiation into the body of ideas to be discussed.

In discussion with a single person or a small group, the establishment of a starting point is very different from before a large group. The particular opinions and convictions needed may have already been expressed previously, and the orator has no reason to believe that his interlocutors have changed their minds. Or he can use the technique of question and answer to set the premises of his argument on firm ground. Socrates proceeded in this way, taking the interlocutor's assent as a sign of the truth of the accepted thesis. Thus Socrates says to Callicles in the *Gorgias*:

If you agree with me in an argument about any point, that point will have been sufficiently tested by us, and will not require to be submitted to any further test. For you could not have agreed with me, either from lack of knowledge or from superfluity of modesty, nor yet from a desire to deceive me, for you are my friend, as you tell me yourself. And therefore when you and I are agreed, the result will be the attainment of perfect truth.³³

It is obvious that such a dialogue is out of the question when one is addressing a numerous assembly. In this case, the discourse must take as premises the presumptions that the orator has learned the audience will accept.³⁴

CREATING "PRESENCE"

What an audience accepts forms a body of opinion, convictions, and commitments that is both vast and indeterminate. From this body the orator must select certain elements on which he focuses

³³Plato, *Gorgias* 487 d-e, *GBWW*, Vol 7, p. 273. [Au.]

³⁴Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric*, p. 104. [Au.]

attention by endowing them, as it were, with a "presence." This does not mean that the elements left out are entirely ignored, but they are pushed into the background. Such a choice implicitly sets a value on some aspects of reality rather than others. Recall the lovely Chinese story told by Meng-Tseu: "A king sees an ox on its way to sacrifice. He is moved to pity for it and orders that a sheep be used in its place. He confesses he did so because he could see the ox, but not the sheep."³⁵

Things present, things near to us in space and time, act directly on our sensibility. The orator's endeavors often consist, however, in bringing to mind things that are not immediately present. Bacon was aware of this function of eloquence:

The affection beholdeth merely the present; reason beholdeth the future and sum of time. And therefore the present filling the imagination more, reason is commonly vanquished; but after that force of eloquence and persuasion hath made things future and remote appear as present, then upon the revolt of the imagination reason prevaieth.³⁶

To make "things future and remote appear as present," that is, to create presence, calls for special efforts of presentation. For this purpose all kinds of literary techniques and a number of rhetorical figures have been developed. *Hypotyposis* or *demonstratio*, for example, is defined as a figure "which sets things out in such a way that the matter seems to unfold, and the thing to happen, before our very eyes."³⁷ Obviously, such a figure is highly important as a persuasive factor. In fact, if their argumentative role is disregarded, the study of figures is a useless pastime, a search for strange names for rather farfetched and affected turns of speech. Other figures, such as *repetition*, *anaphora*, *amplification*, *congerie*, *metabole*, *pseudo direct discourse*, *enallage*, are all various means of increasing the feeling of presence in the audience.³⁸

In his description of facts, truths, and values,

³⁵*Ibid.*, p. 116. [Au.]

³⁶*Advancement of Learning*, Bk II, XVIII; *GBWW*, Vol. 30, p. 67. [Au.]

³⁷*Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4. 68. [Au.]

³⁸Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric*, Section 42. [Au.]

the orator must employ language that takes into account the classifications and valuations implicit in the audience's acceptance of them. For placing his discourse at the level of generality that he considers best adapted to his purpose and his audience, he has at hand a whole arsenal of linguistic categories—substantives, adjectives, verbs, adverbs—and a vocabulary and phrasing that enable him, under the guise of a descriptive narrative, to stress the main elements and indicate which are merely secondary.

In the selection of data and the interpretation and presentation of them, the orator is subject to the accusation of partiality. Indeed, there is no proof that his presentation has not been distorted by a tendentious vision of things. Hence, in law, the legal counsel must reply to the attorney general, while the judge forms an opinion and renders his decision only after hearing both parties. Although his judgment may appear more balanced, it cannot achieve perfect objectivity—which can only be an ideal. Even with the elimination of tendentious views and of errors, one does not thereby reach a perfectly just decision. So too in scientific or technical discourse, where the orator's freedom of choice is less because he cannot depart, without special reason, from the accepted terminology, value judgments are implicit, and their justification resides in the theories, classifications, and methodology that gave birth to the technical terminology. The idea that science consists of nothing but a body of timeless, objective truths has been increasingly challenged in recent years.³⁹

THE STRUCTURE OF ARGUMENT

Nonformal argument consists, not of a chain of ideas of which some are derived from others according to accepted rules of inference, but rather

³⁹To mention only a few works besides Thomas Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1962), there is Michael Polanyi's fascinating work significantly entitled *Personal Knowledge* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1958). The social, persuasive, nay, the rhetorical aspect, of scientific methodology was stressed by the physicist John Ziman in his brilliant book *Public Knowledge* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1968). The latter is dedicated to the late Norwood Russell

of a web formed from all the arguments and all the reasons that combine to achieve the desired result. The purpose of the discourse in general is to bring the audience to the conclusions offered by the orator, starting from premises that they already accept—which is the case unless the orator has been guilty of a *petitio principii*. The argumentative process consists in establishing a link by which acceptance, or adherence, is passed from one element to another, and this end can be reached either by leaving the various elements of the discourse unchanged and associated as they are or by making a dissociation of ideas.

We shall now consider the various types of association and of dissociation that the orator has at his command. To simplify classification, we have grouped the processes of association into three classes: quasi-logical arguments, arguments based upon the structure of the real, and arguments that start from particular cases that are then either generalized or transposed from one sphere of reality to another.⁴⁰

QUASI-LOGICAL ARGUMENTS

These arguments are similar to the formal structures of logic and mathematics. In fact, men apparently first came to an understanding of purely formal proof by submitting quasi-logical arguments, such as many of the *loci* listed in Aristotle's *Topics*, to an analysis that yielded precision and formalization. There is a difference of paramount importance between an argument and a formal proof. Instead of using a natural language in which the same word can be used with different meanings, a logical calculus employs an artificial language so constructed that one sign can have only one meaning. In logic, the principle of identity designates a tautology, an indisputable but empty truth, whatever its formulation. But this is not the case in ordinary language. When I say "business is business," or "boys will be

Hanson, whose *Patterns of Discovery* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1958), and the *Concept of the Position* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1963), gave much weight to the new ideas. [Au.]

⁴⁰Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric*, Sections 45–88. [Au.]

boys,” or “war is war,” those hearing the words give preference, not to the univocity of the statement, but to its significant character. They will never take the statements as tautologies, which would make them meaningless, but will look for different plausible interpretations of the same term that will render the whole statement both meaningful and acceptable. Similarly, when faced with a statement that is formally a contradiction—“When two persons do the same thing it is not the same thing,” or “We step and we do not step twice into the same river,”—we look for an interpretation that eliminates the incoherence.

To understand an orator, we must make the effort required to render his discourse coherent and meaningful. This effort requires goodwill and respect for the person who speaks and for what he says. The techniques of formalization make calculation possible, and, as a result, the correctness of the reasoning is capable of mechanical control. This result is not obtained without a certain linguistic rigidity. The language of mathematics is not used for poetry any more than it is used for diplomacy.

Because of its adaptability, ordinary language can always avoid purely formal contradictions. Yet it is not free from incompatibilities, as, for instance, when two norms are recommended which cannot both apply to the same situation. Thus, telling a child not to lie and to obey his parents lays one open to ridicule if the child asks, “What must I do if my father orders me to lie?” When such an antinomy occurs, one seeks for qualifications or amendments—and recommends the primacy of one norm over the other or points out that there are exceptions to the rule. Theoretically, the most elegant way of eliminating an incompatibility is to have recourse to a dissociation of concepts—but of this, more later. Incompatibility is an important element in Socratic irony. By exposing the incompatibility of the answers given to his insidious questions, Socrates compels his interlocutor to abandon certain commonly accepted opinions.

Definitions play a very different role in argumentation from the one they have in a formal system. There they are mostly abbreviations. But in argumentation they determine the choice of one particular meaning over others—sometimes

by establishing a relation between an old term and a new one. Definition is regarded as a rhetorical figure—the oratorical definition—when it aims, not at clarifying the meaning of an idea, but at stressing aspects that will produce the persuasive effect that is sought. It is a figure relating to choice: the selection of facts brought to the fore in the definition is unusual because the definiens is not serving the purpose of giving the meaning of a term.⁴¹

Analysis that aims at dividing a concept into all its parts and interpretation that aims at elucidating a text without bringing anything new to it are also quasi-logical arguments and call to mind the principle of identity. This method can give way to figures of speech called aggregation and interpretation when they serve some purpose other than clarification and tend to reinforce the feeling of presence.⁴²

These few examples make it clear that expressions are called figures of style when they display a fixed structure that is easily recognizable and are used for a purpose different from their normal one—this new purpose being mainly one of persuasion. If the figure is so closely interwoven into the argumentation that it appears to be an expression suited to the occasion, it is regarded as an argumentative figure, and its unusual character will often escape notice.

Some reasoning processes—unlike definition or analysis, which aim at complete identification—are content with a partial reduction, that is, with an identification of the main elements. We have an example of this in the rule of justice that equals should be treated equally. If the agents and situations were identical, the application of the rule would take the form of an exact demonstration. As this is never the case, however, a decision will have to be taken about whether the differences are to be disregarded. This is why the recourse to precedent in legal matters is not a completely impersonal procedure but always requires the intervention of a judge.

Arguments of reciprocity are those that claim the same treatment for the antecedent as for the consequent of a relation—buyers-sellers, spectators-

⁴¹Ibid., pp. 172–73. [Au.]

⁴²Ibid., p. 176. [Au.]

actors, etc. These arguments presuppose that the relation is symmetrical. Unseasonable use of them is apt to have comic results, such as the following story, known to have made Kant laugh:

At Surat an Englishman is pouring out a bottle of ale which is foaming freely. He asks an Indian who is amazed at the sight what it is that he finds so strange. "What bothers me," replies the native, "isn't what is coming out of the bottle, but how you got it in there in the first place."

Other quasi-logical arguments take the transitivity of a relation for granted, even though it is only probable: "My friends' friends are my friends." Still other arguments apply to all kinds of other relations such as that between part and whole or between parts, relations of division, comparison, probability. They are clearly distinct from exact demonstration, since, in each case, complementary, nonformal hypotheses are necessary to render the argument compelling.⁴³

APPEAL TO THE REAL

Arguments based on the structure of reality can be divided into two groups according as they establish associations of succession or of coexistence.

Among relations of succession, that of causality plays an essential role. Thus we may be attempting to find the causes of an effect, the means to an end, the consequences of a fact, or to judge an action or a rule by the consequences that it has. This last process might be called the pragmatic argument, since it is typical of utilitarianism in morals and of pragmatism in general.⁴⁴

Arguments establishing relations of coexistence are based on the link that unites a person to his actions. When generalized, this argument establishes the relation between the essence and the act, a relation of paramount importance in the social sciences. From this model have come the classification of periods in history (Antiquity, the Middle Ages), all literary classifications (classicism, romanticism), styles (Gothic, baroque), economic or political systems (feudalism, capi-

⁴³Ibid., Sections 45–59. [Au.]

⁴⁴See J. S. Mill, *Utilitarianism*, *GBWW*, Vol. 43, pp. 443 ff. [Au.]

talism, fascism), and institutions (marriage, the church).⁴⁵ Rhetoric, conceived as the theory of argumentation, provides a guidance for the understanding both of the manner in which these categories were constituted and of the reasons for doing so. It helps us grasp the advantages and the disadvantages of using them and provides an insight into the value judgments that were present, explicitly or implicitly, when they took shape. The specificity of the social sciences can be best understood by considering the methodological reasons justifying the constitution of their categories—Max Weber's *Idealtypus*.

Thanks to the relations of coexistence, we are also able to gain an understanding of the argument from authority in all its shapes as well as an appreciation of the persuasive role of *ethos* in argumentation, since the discourse can be regarded as an act on the orator's part.⁴⁶

ESTABLISHING THE REAL

Arguments attempting to establish the structure of reality are first arguments by example, illustration, and model; second, arguments by analogy.

The example leads to the formulation of a rule through generalization from a particular case or through putting a new case on the same footing as an older one. Illustration aims at achieving presence for a rule by illustrating it with a concrete case. The argument from a model justifies an action by showing that it conforms to a model. One should also mention the argument from an antimodel; for example, the drunken Helot to whom the Spartans referred as a foil to show their sons how they should not behave.

In the various religions, God and all divine or quasi-divine persons are obviously preeminent models for their believers. Christian morality can be defined as the imitation of Christ, whereas Buddhist morality consists in imitating Buddha. The models that a culture proposes to its members for imitation provide a convenient way of characterizing it.⁴⁷

⁴⁵Ch. Perelman, ed., *Les Catégories en histoire* (Brussels: Editions de l'Institut de Sociologie, 1969). [Au.]

⁴⁶Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric*, Sections 60–74. [Au.]

⁴⁷Ibid., Sections 78–81. [Au.]

The argument from analogy is extremely important in nonformal reasoning. Starting from a relation between two terms A and B, which we call the *theme* since it provides the proper subject matter of the discourse, we can by analogy present its structure or establish its value by relating it to the terms C and D, which constitute the *phoros* of the analogy, so that A is to B as C is to D. Analogy, which derives its name from the Greek word for proportion, is nevertheless different from mathematical proportion. In the latter the characteristic relation of equality is symmetrical, whereas the *phoros* called upon to clarify the structure or establish the value of the theme must, as a rule, be better known than the theme. When Heraclitus says that in the eyes of God man is as childish as a child is in the eyes of an adult, it is impossible to change the *phoros* for the theme and vice versa, unless the audience is one that knows the relationship between God and man better than that between a child and an adult. It is also worth noting that when man is identified with adult, the analogy reduces to three terms, the middle one being repeated twice: C is to B as B is to A. This technique of argumentation is typical of Plato, Plotinus, and all those who establish hierarchies within reality.

Within the natural sciences the use of analogy is mainly heuristic, and the intent is ultimately to eliminate the analogy and replace it with a formula of a mathematical type. Things are different, however, in the social sciences and in philosophy, where the whole body of facts under study only offers reasons for or against a particular analogical vision of things.⁴⁸ This is one of the differences to which Wilhelm Dilthey refers when he claims that the natural sciences aim at explaining whereas the human sciences seek for understanding.

The metaphor is the figure of style corresponding to the argument from analogy. It consists of a condensed analogy in which one term of the theme is associated with one term of the

⁴⁸Ch. Perelman, "Analogie et métaphore en science, poésie, et philosophie," *Revue Internationale de Philosophie*, 1969, pp. 3–15. See also Hans Blumenberg, *Paradigmen zu einer Metaphorologie* (Bonn: H. Bouvier, 1960), and Enzo Melandri, *La linea e il circolo: Studio logico-filosofico sull'analogia* (Bologna: il Mulino, 1968). [Au.]

phoros. Thus "the morning of life" is a metaphor that summarizes the analogy: Morning is to day what youth is to life. Of course, in the case of a good many metaphors, the reconstruction of the complete analogy is neither easy nor unambiguous. When Berkeley, in his *Dialogues*,⁴⁹ speaks of "an ocean of false learning," there are various ways to supply the missing terms of the analogy, each one of which stresses a different relation unexpressed in the metaphor.

The use of analogies and metaphors best reveals the creative and literary aspects of argumentation. For some audiences their use should be avoided as much as possible, whereas for others the lack of them may make the discourse appear too technical and too difficult to follow. Specialists tend to hold analogies in suspicion and use them only to initiate students into their discipline. Scientific popularization makes extensive use of analogy, and only from time to time will the audience be reminded of the danger of identification of theme and *phoros*.⁵⁰

THE DISSOCIATION OF IDEAS

Besides argumentative associations, we must also make room for the dissociation of ideas, the study of which is too often neglected by the rhetorical tradition. Dissociation is the classical solution for incompatibilities that call for an alteration of conventional ways of thinking. Philosophers, by using dissociation, often depart from common sense and form a vision of reality that is free from the contradictions of opinion.⁵¹ The whole of the great metaphysical tradition, from Parmenides to our own day, displays a succession of dissociations where, in each case, reality is opposed to appearance.

Normally, reality is perceived through appearances that are taken as signs referring to it. When, however, appearances are incompatible—

⁴⁹George Berkeley, *Works*, 2 vols. (London, 1843), 2:259. [Au.]

⁵⁰Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric*, Sections 82–88. [Au.]

⁵¹Ch. Perelman, "Le réel commun et le réel philosophique," in *Etudes sur l'histoire de la philosophie, en hommage à Martial Gueroult* (Paris: Fischbacher, 1964), pp. 127–38. [Au.]

an oar in water looks broken but feels straight to the touch—we must admit, if we are to have a coherent picture of reality, that some appearances are illusory and may lead us to error regarding the real. One is thus brought to the construction of a conception of reality that at the same time is capable of being used as a criterion for judging appearances. Whatever is conformable to it is given value, whereas whatever is opposed is denied value and is considered a mere appearance.

Any idea can be subjected to a similar dissociation. To real justice we can oppose apparent justice and with real democracy contrast apparent democracy, or formal or nominal democracy, or quasi democracy, or even “democracy” (in quotes). What is thus referred to as apparent is usually what the audience would normally call justice, democracy, etc. It only becomes apparent after the criterion of real justice or real democracy has been applied to it and reveals the error concealed under the name. The dissociation results in a depreciation of what had until then been an accepted value and in its replacement by another conception to which is accorded the original value. To effect such a depreciation, one will need a conception that can be shown to be valuable, relevant, as well as incompatible with the common use of the same notion.

We may call “philosophical pairs” all sets of notions that are formed on the model of the “appearance-reality” pair. The use of such pairs makes clear how philosophical ideas are developed and also shows how they cannot be dissociated from the process of giving or denying value that is typical of all ontologies. One thus comes to see the importance of argumentative devices in the development of thought, and especially of philosophy.⁵²

INTERACTION OF ARGUMENTS

An argumentation is ordinarily a spoken or written discourse, of variable length, that combines a great number of arguments with the aim of winning the adherence of an audience to one or more theses. These arguments interact within the

⁵²Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric*, Sections 89–92. [Au.]

minds of the audience, reinforcing or weakening each other. They also interact with the arguments of the opponents as well as with those that arise spontaneously in the minds of the audience. This situation gives rise to a number of theoretical questions.

Are there limits, for example, to the number of arguments that can be usefully accumulated? Does the choice of arguments and the scope of the argumentation raise special problems? What is a weak or an irrelevant argument? What is the effect of a weak argument on the whole argumentation? Are there any criteria for assessing the strength or relevance of an argument? Are such matters relative to the audience, or can they be determined objectively?

We have no general answer to such questions. The answer seems to depend on the field of study and on the philosophy that controls its organization. In any case, they are questions that have seldom been raised and that never have received a satisfactory answer. Before any satisfactory answer can be given, it will be necessary to make many detailed studies in the various disciplines, taking account of the most varied audiences.

Once our arguments have been formulated, does it make any difference what order they are presented in? Should one start, or finish, with strong arguments, or do both by putting the weaker arguments in the middle—the so-called Nestorian order? This way of presenting the problem implies that the force of an argument is independent of its place in the discourse. Yet, in fact, the opposite seems to be true, for what appears as a weak argument to one audience often appears as a strong argument to another, depending on whether the presuppositions rejected by one audience are accepted by the other. Should we present our arguments then in the order that lends them the greatest force? If so, there should be a special technique devoted to the organization of a discourse.

Such a technique would have to point out that an *exordium* is all-important in some cases, while in others it is entirely superfluous. Sometimes the objections of one's opponent ought to be anticipated beforehand and refuted, whereas in other cases it is better to let the objections arise sponta-

neously lest one appear to be tearing down straw men.⁵³

In all such matters it seems unlikely that any hard-and-fast rules can be laid down, since one must take account of the particular character of the audience, of its evolution during the debate, and of the fact that habits and procedures that prove good in one sphere are no good in another. A general rhetoric cannot be fixed by precepts and rules laid down once for all. But it must be able to adapt itself to the most varied circumstances, matters, and audiences.

REASON AND RHETORIC

The birth of a new period of culture is marked by an eruption of original ideas and a neglect of methodological concerns and of academic classifications and divisions. Ideas are used with various meanings that the future will distinguish and disentangle. The fundamental ideas of Greek philosophy offer a good example of this process. One of the richest and most confused of all is that expressed by the term *logos*, which means among other things: word, reason, discourse, reasoning, calculation, and all that was later to become the subject of logic and the expression of reason. Reason was opposed to desire and the passions, being regarded as the faculty that ought to govern human behavior in the name of truth and wisdom. The operation of *logos* takes effect through long speeches or through questions and answers, thus giving rise to the distinction noted above between rhetoric and dialectic, even before logic was established as an autonomous discipline.

Aristotle's discovery of the syllogism and his development of the theory of demonstrative science raised the problem of the relation of syllogistic—the first formal logic—with dialectic and rhetoric. Can any and every form of reasoning be expressed syllogistically? Aristotle is often thought to have aimed at such a result, at least for deductive reasoning, since he was well aware that inductive reasoning and argument by example are entirely different from deduction. He knew too that the dialectical reasoning characteristic of discussion, and essentially critical in

purpose, differed widely from demonstrative reasoning deducing from principles the conclusions of a science. Yet he was content to locate the difference in the kind of premises used in the two cases. In analytical, or demonstrative, reasoning, the premises, according to Aristotle, are true and ultimate, or else derived from such premises, whereas in dialectical reasoning the premises consist of generally accepted opinion. The nature of reasoning in both cases was held to be the same, consisting in drawing conclusions from propositions posited as premises.⁵⁴

Rhetoric, on the other hand, was supposed to use syllogisms in a peculiar way, by leaving some premises unexpressed and so transforming them into enthymemes. The orator, as Aristotle saw, could not be said to use regular syllogisms; hence, his reasoning was said to consist of abbreviated syllogisms and of arguments from example, corresponding to induction.

What are we to think of this reduction to two forms of reasoning of all the wide variety of arguments that men use in their discussions and in pleading a cause or justifying an action? Yet, since the time of Aristotle, logic has confined its study to deductive and inductive reasoning, as though any argument differing from these was due to the variety of its content and not to its form. As a result, an argument that cannot be reduced to canonical form is regarded as logically valueless. What then about reasoning from analogy? What about the *a fortiori* argument? Must we, in using such arguments, always be able to introduce a fictive unexpressed major premise, so as to make them conform to the syllogism?

It can be shown that the practical reasoning involved in choice or decision making can always be expressed in the form of theoretical reasoning by introducing additional premises. But what is gained by such a move? The reasoning by which new premises are introduced is merely concealed, and resort to these premises appears entirely arbitrary, although in reality it too is the outcome of a decision that can be justified only in an argumentative, and not in a demonstrative, manner.⁵⁵

⁵³Ibid., Sections 97–105. [Au.]

⁵⁴*Topics* I, 100a 25–32; *GBWW*, Vol. 8, p. 143. [Au.]

⁵⁵Ch. Perelman, "Le raisonnement pratique," in *Contem-*

At first sight, it appears that the main difference between rhetoric and dialectic, according to Aristotle, is that the latter employs impersonal techniques of reasoning, whereas rhetoric relies on the orator's *ethos* (or character) and on the manner in which he appeals to the passions of his audience (or *pathos*).⁵⁶ For Aristotle, however, the *logos* or use of reasoning is the main thing, and he criticizes those authors before him, who laid the emphasis upon oratorical devices designed to arouse the passions. Thus he writes:

If the rules for trials which are now laid down in some states—especially in well-governed states—were applied everywhere, such people would have nothing to say. All men, no doubt, think that the laws should prescribe such rules, but some, as in the court of Areopagus, give practical effect to their thoughts and forbid talk about nonessentials. This is sound law and custom. It is not right to pervert the judge by moving him to anger or envy or pity—one might as well warp a carpenter's rule before using it.

For this reason, after a long discussion devoted to the role of passion in oratorical art, he concludes: "As a matter of fact, it (rhetoric) is a branch of dialectic and similar to it, as we said at the outset."⁵⁷

To sum up, it appears that Aristotle's conception, which is essentially empirical and based on the analysis of the material he had at his disposal, distinguishes dialectic from rhetoric only by the type of audience and, especially, by the nature of the questions examined in practice. His precepts are easy to understand when we keep in mind that he was thinking primarily of the debates held before assemblies of citizens gathered together either to deliberate on political or legal matters or to celebrate some public ceremony. There is no reason, however, why we should not also consider theoretical and, especially, philosophical questions expounded in unbroken discourse. In

porary Philosophy, ed. Raymond Klibansky (Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1969), 1:168–76. [Au.]

⁵⁶See *Rhetoric I*, 1356a, 15–18; *GBWW*, Vol. 9, p. 595. Paul I. Rosenthal, "The Concept of Ethos and the Structure of Persuasion," *Speech Monographs*, 1966, pp. 114–26. [Au.]

⁵⁷*Rhetoric I*, 1354a 19–27, 1356a 30–31; *GBWW*, Vol. 9, pp. 593, 595–96. [Au.]

this case, the techniques Aristotle would have presumably recommended would be those he himself used in his own work, following the golden rule that he laid down in his *Nicomachean Ethics*, that the method used for the examination and exposition of each particular subject must be appropriate to the matter, whatever its manner of presentation.⁵⁸

After Aristotle, dialectic became identified with logic as a technique of reasoning, due to the influence of the Stoics. As a result, rhetoric came to be regarded as concerned only with the irrational parts of our being, whether will, the passions, imagination, or the faculty for aesthetic pleasure. Those who, like Seneca and Epictetus, believed that the philosopher's role was to bring man to submit to reason were opposed to rhetoric, even when they used it, in the name of philosophy. Those like Cicero, on the other hand, who thought that in order to induce man to submit to reason one had to have recourse to rhetoric, recommended the union of philosophy and eloquence. The thinkers of the Renaissance followed suit, such as Valla, and Bacon too, who expected rhetoric to act on the imagination to secure the triumph of reason.

The more rationalist thinkers, like Ramus, as we have already noted, considered rhetoric as merely an ornament and insisted on a separation of form and content, the latter alone being thought worthy of a philosopher's attention. Descartes adopted the same conception and reinforced it. He regarded the geometrical method as the only method fit for the sciences as well as for philosophy and opposed rhetoric as exerting an action upon the will contrary to reason—thus adopting the position of the Stoics but with a different methodological justification. But to make room for eloquence within this scheme, we need only deny that reason possesses a monopoly of the approved way of influencing the will. Thus, Pascal, while professing a rationalism in a Cartesian manner, does not hesitate to declare that the truths that are most significant for him—that is, the truths of faith—have to be received by the heart before they can be accepted by reason:

⁵⁸*Ethics*, I, 1094b 12–27; *GBWW*, Vol. 9, pp. 339–40. [Au.]

We all know that opinions are admitted into the soul through two entrances, which are its chief powers, understanding and will. The more natural entrance is the understanding, for we should never agree to anything but demonstrated truths, but the more usual entrance, although against nature, is the will; for all men whatsoever are almost always led into belief not because a thing is proved but because it is pleasing. This way is low, unworthy, and foreign to our nature. Therefore everybody disavows it. Each of us professes to give his belief and even his love only where he knows it is deserved.

I am not speaking here of divine truths, which I am far from bringing under the art of persuasion, for they are infinitely above nature. God alone can put them into the soul, and in whatever way He pleases. I know He was willed they should enter into the mind from the heart and not into the heart from the mind, that He might make humble that proud power of reason. . . .⁵⁹

To persuade about divine matters, grace is necessary; it will make us love that which religion orders us to love. Yet it is also Pascal's intention to conduce to this result by his eloquence, although he has to admit that he can lay down the precepts of this eloquence only in a very general way:

It is apparent that, no matter what we wish to persuade of, we must consider the person concerned, whose mind and heart we must know, what principles he admits, what things he loves, and then observe in the thing in question what relations it has to these admitted principles or to these objects of delight. So that the art of persuasion consists as much in knowing how to please as in knowing how to convince, so much more do men follow caprice than reason.

Now of these two, the art of convincing and the art of pleasing, I shall confine myself here to the rules of the first, and to them only in the case where the principles have been granted and are held to unwaveringly; otherwise I do not know whether there would be an art for adjusting the proofs to the inconstancy of our caprices.

But the art of pleasing is incomparably more difficult, more subtle, more useful, and more wonderful, and therefore if I do not deal with it, it is because I am not able. Indeed I feel myself so unequal to its regulation that I believe it to be a thing impossible.

⁵⁹On *Geometrical Demonstration*; *GBWW*, Vol. 33, p. 440. [Au.]

Not that I do not believe there are as certain rules for pleasing as for demonstrating, and that whoever should be able perfectly to know and to practise them would be as certain to succeed in making himself loved by kings and by every kind of person as in demonstrating the elements of geometry to those who have imagination enough to grasp the hypotheses. But I consider, and it is perhaps my weakness that leads me to think so, that it is impossible to lay hold of the rules.⁶⁰

Pascal's reaction here with regard to formal rules of rhetoric already heralds romanticism with its reverence for the great orator's genius. But before romanticism held sway, associationist psychology developed in eighteenth-century England. According to the thinkers of this school, feeling, not reason, determines man's behavior, and books on rhetoric were written based on this psychology. The best known of these is Campbell's *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, noted above.⁶¹ Fifty years later, Whately, following Bacon's lead, defined the subject of logic and of rhetoric as follows:

I remarked in treating of that Science [Logic], that Reasoning may be considered as applicable to two purposes, which I ventured to designate respectively by the terms "Inferring" and "Proving," i.e., the *ascertainment* of the truth by investigation and the *establishment* of it to the satisfaction of another; and I there remarked that Bacon, in his *Organon*, has laid down rules for the conduct of the former of these processes, and that the latter belongs to the province of Rhetoric; and it was added, that to infer, is to be regarded as the proper office of the Philosopher, or the Judge;—to prove, of the Advocate.⁶²

This conception, while stressing the social importance of rhetoric, makes it a negligible factor for the philosopher. This tendency increases under the influence of Kant and of the German idealists, who boasted of removing all matters of opinion from philosophy, for which only apodictic truths are of any importance.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, p. 441. [Au.]

⁶¹Cf. V. M. Bevilacqua, "Philosophical Origins of George Campbell's *Philosophy of Rhetoric*," *Speech Monographs*, 1965, pp. 1–12; and Lloyd F. Bitzer, "Hume's *Philosophy of Rhetoric*," *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 1969, pp. 139–66. [Au.]

⁶²Whately, *Elements of Rhetoric* (1828), pp. 6–7. [Au.]

The relation between the idea that we form of reason and the role assigned to rhetoric is of sufficient importance to deserve studies of all the great thinkers who have said anything about the matter—studies similar to those of Bacon by Prof. Karl Wallace and of Ramus by Prof. Walter J. Ong.⁶³ In what follows, I would like to sketch how the positivist climate of logical empiricism makes possible a new, or renovated, conception of rhetoric.

Within the perspective of neopositivism, the rational is restricted to what experience and formal logic enable us to verify and demonstrate. As a result, the vast sphere of all that is concerned with action—except for the choice of the most adequate means to reach a designated end—is turned over to the irrational. The very idea of a reasonable decision has no meaning and cannot even be defined satisfactorily with respect to the whole action in which it occurs. Logical empiricism has at its disposal no technique of justification except one founded on the theory of probability. But why should one prefer one action to another? Only because it is more efficacious? How can one choose between the various ends that one can aim at? If quantitative measures are the only ones that can be taken into account, the only reasonable decision would seem to be one that is in conformity with utilitarian calculations. If so, all ends would be reduced to a single one of pleasure or utility, and all conflicts of values would be dismissed as based on futile ideologies.

Now if one is not prepared to accept such a limitation to a monism of values in the world of action and would reject such a reduction on the ground that the irreducibility of many values is the basis of our freedom and of our spiritual life; if one considers how justification takes place in the most varied spheres—in politics, morals, law, the social sciences, and, above all, in philosophy—it seems obvious that our intellectual tools cannot all be reduced to formal logic, even when that is enlarged by a theory for the control of induction and the choice of the most effica-

cious techniques. In this situation, we are compelled to develop a theory of argumentation as an indispensable tool for practical reason.

In such a theory, as we have seen, argumentation is made relative to the adherence of minds, that is, to an audience, whether an individual deliberating or mankind as addressed by the philosopher in his appeal to reason. Whately's distinction between logic, as supplying rules of reasoning for the judge, and rhetoric, providing precepts for the counsel, falls to the ground as being without foundation. Indeed, the counsel's speech that aims at convincing the judge cannot rest on any different kind of reasoning than that which the judge uses himself. The judge having heard both parties, will be better informed and able to compare the arguments on both sides, but his judgment will contain a justification in no way different in kind from that of the counsel's argumentation. Indeed, the ideal counsel's speech is precisely one that provides the judge with all the information that he needs to state the grounds for his decision.

If rhetoric is regarded as complementary to formal logic and argumentation as complementary to demonstrative proof, it becomes of paramount importance in philosophy, since no philosophic discourse can develop without resorting to it. This became clear when, under the influence of logical empiricism, all philosophy that could not be reduced to calculation was considered as nonsense and of no worth. Philosophy, as a consequence, lost its status in contemporary culture. This situation can be changed only by developing a philosophy and a methodology of the reasonable. For if the rational is restricted to the field of calculation, measuring, and weighing, the reasonable is left with the vast field of all that is not amenable to quantitative and formal techniques. This field, which Plato and Aristotle began to explore by means of dialectical and rhetorical devices, lies open for investigation by the new rhetoric.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS

I introduced the new rhetoric to the public for the first time over twenty years ago, in a lecture delivered in 1949 at the Institut des Hautes Études de

⁶³Karl Wallace, *Francis Bacon on Communication and Rhetoric* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1943); and Ong, *Ramus: Method, and the Decay of Dialogue*. [Au.]

Belgique.⁶⁴ In the course of the same year, the Centre National de Recherches de Logique was founded with the collaboration of the professors of logic in the Belgian universities. In 1953 this group organized an international colloquium on the theory of proof, in which the use and method of proof was studied in the deductive sciences, in the natural sciences, in law, and in philosophy—that is, in the fields where recourse to reasoning is essential.⁶⁵ On that occasion, Prof. Gilbert Ryle presented his famous paper entitled “Proofs in Philosophy,” which claims that there are no proofs in philosophy: “Philosophers do not provide proofs any more than tennis players score goals. Tennis players do not try in vain to score goals. Nor do philosophers try in vain to provide proofs; they are not inefficient or tentative provers. Goals do not belong to tennis, nor proofs to philosophy.”⁶⁶

What, then, is philosophical reasoning? What are “philosophical arguments”? According to Ryle, “they are operations not with premises and conclusions, but operations upon operations with premises and conclusions. In proving something, we are putting propositions through inference-hoops. In some philosophical arguments, we are matching the hoops through which certain batches of propositions will go against a worded recipe declaring what hoops they should go through. Proving is a one-level business; philosophical arguing is, anyhow sometimes, an inter-level business.”⁶⁷

If the notion of proof is restricted to the operation of drawing valid inferences, it is undeniable that philosophers and jurists only rarely prove what they assert. Their reasoning, however, does aim at justifying the points that they make, and such reasoning provides an example of the argumentation with which the new rhetoric is concerned.⁶⁸

⁶⁴It was published in 1950 in the *Revue philosophique de la France et de l'Étranger* under the title “Logique et Rhétorique,” 75th year, pp. 1–35, and reprinted in Ch. Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca, *Rhétorique et philosophie* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1952), pp. 1–48. [Au.]

⁶⁵The Proceedings appeared in the *Revue Internationale de Philosophie*, 1954, 27–28. [Au.]

⁶⁶Gilbert Ryle, “Proofs in Philosophy,” *Revue Internationale de Philosophie*, 1954, p. 150. [Au.]

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, p. 156. [Au.]

⁶⁸See in this respect Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *Rhétorique et philosophie*, especially “La quête du rationnel,”

The part played by argumentation in philosophy has given rise to numerous discussions and to increasing interest, as is shown by the special issue of the *Revue Internationale de Philosophie* of 1961 devoted to the subject, by the colloquium on philosophical argumentation held in Mexico City in 1963,⁶⁹ by the collection of studies published by Maurice Natanson and Henry W. Johnstone, Jr., entitled *Philosophy, Rhetoric and Argumentation*,⁷⁰ and by the special number of *The Monist* in 1964 on the same subject.

Professor Johnstone has for many years been particularly interested in this topic and has published a book and many papers on it.⁷¹ To further the study of the relation between philosophy and rhetoric, he organized with Prof. Robert T. Oliver, then head of the Speech Department at Pennsylvania State University, a colloquium in which philosophers and members of the speech profession met in equal numbers to discuss the question. The interest aroused by this initiative led to the founding in 1968 of a journal called *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, edited jointly by Professor Johnstone and Prof. Carroll C. Arnold.

That so much attention should be focused on argumentation in philosophical thought cannot be

and “De la preuve en philosophie.” The latter was published in English in the *Hibbert Journal* 52 (1954): 354–59. The same theme was dealt with more fully in the articles “Self-evidence and Proof,” published in Perelman, *The Idea of Justice and the Problem of Argument*, pp. 109–24; and “Self-evidence in Metaphysics,” *International Philosophical Quarterly*, 1964, pp. 1–19. [Au.]

⁶⁹Reports published in the *Symposium Sobre la Argumentación Filosófica*, Mexico, 1963. [Au.]

⁷⁰Maurice Natanson and Henry W. Johnstone, Jr., eds., *Philosophy, Rhetoric and Argumentation* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1965). See also Stanislaw Kaminski, “Argumentacja filozoficzna w ujęciu analitykow. (The Philosophic argumentation in the conception of the analysts) in *Rozprawy Filozoficzne* (Torun, Poland: TNT, 1969), pp. 127–42. [Au.]

⁷¹Henry W. Johnstone, Jr., *Philosophy and Argument* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1959); idem, “Philosophy and Argumentation *ad Hominem*” *Journal of Philosophy* 49 (1952): 489–98; idem, “The Methods of Philosophical Polemic,” *Methodos* 5 (1953): 131–40; idem, “New Outlooks on Controversy,” *Review of Metaphysics* 12 (1958): 57–67; idem, “Can Philosophical Arguments Be Valid,” *Bucknell Review* II (1963): 89–98; idem, “Self-refutation and Validity,” *The Monist*, 1964, pp. 467–85. [Au.]

understood unless one appreciates the paramount importance of practical reason—that is, of finding “good reasons” to justify a decision. In 1954 I drew attention to the role of decision in the theory of knowledge,⁷² and Gidon Gottlieb further developed it, with particular attention to law, in his book *The Logic of Choice*.⁷³

Argumentation concerning decision, choice, and action in general is closely connected with the idea of justification, which also is an important element in the idea of justice. I have attempted to show that the traditional view is mistaken in claiming that justification is like demonstration but based on normative principles.⁷⁴ In fact, justification never directly concerns a proposition but looks instead to an attitude, a decision, or an action. “Justifying a proposition” actually consists in justifying one’s adherence to it, whether it is a statement capable of verification or an unverifiable norm. A question of justification ordinarily arises only in a situation that has given rise to criticism: no one is called upon to justify behavior that is beyond reproach. Such criticism, however, would be meaningless unless some accepted norm, end, or value had been infringed upon or violated. A decision or an action is criticized on the ground that it is immoral, illegal, unreasonable, or inefficient—that is, it fails to respect certain accepted rules or values. It always occurs within a social context; it is always “situated.” Criticism and justification are two forms of argumentation that call for the giving of reasons for or against, and it is these reasons that ultimately enable us to call the action or decision reasonable or unreasonable.

In 1967 a colloquium was held on the subject of demonstration, verification, justification, organized jointly by the Institut International de Philosophie and the Centre National de Re-

⁷²Perelman, *The Idea of Justice and the Problem of Argument*, pp. 88–97. [Au.]

⁷³Gidon Gottlieb, *The Logic of Choice* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1968). [Au.]

⁷⁴See Ch. Perelman, “Jugements de valeur, justification et argumentation,” *Revue Internationale de Philosophie* 58 (1961) 327–35; reprinted in Perelman, *Justice et raison* (Brussels: Presses universitaires de Bruxelles, 1963). Also in Perelman, *Justice* (New York: Random House, 1967), chap. 4. [Au.]

cherches de Logique.⁷⁵ At that meeting I emphasized the central role of justification in philosophy. Among other things, it enables us to understand the part played by the principle of induction in scientific methodology. Prof. A. J. Ayer claimed that the principle of induction cannot be based on probability theory,⁷⁶ yet it did seem possible to give good reasons for using induction as a heuristic principle.⁷⁷ But this is only a particular case of the use of justification in philosophy. It is essential wherever practical reason is involved.

In morals, for example, reasoning is neither deductive nor inductive, but justificative. Lucien Levy-Bruhl, in his famous book *La Morale et la science des moeurs* (1993), criticized the deductive character of much traditional moral philosophy and proposed the conception of the science of morals that made it a sociological discipline, inductive in character. Yet in morals absolute pre-eminence cannot be given either to principles—which would make morals a deductive discipline—or to the particular case—which would make it an inductive discipline. Instead, judgments regarding particulars are compared with principles, and preference is given to one or the other according to a decision that is reached by resorting to the techniques of justification and argumentation.⁷⁸

The idea of natural law is also misconceived when it is posed in ontological terms. Are there rules of natural law that can be known objectively? Or is positive law entirely arbitrary as embodying the lawmaker’s sovereign will? A satisfactory positive answer cannot be given to either question. We know that it is imperative for a lawmaker not to make unreasonable laws; yet we know too that there is no one single manner, objectively given, for making just and reasonable laws. Natural law is better considered as a body

⁷⁵*Entretiens de Liège* (Louvain: Nauwelaerts, 1968). [Au.]

⁷⁶A. J. Ayer, “Induction and the Calculus of Probabilities,” in *Entretiens de Liège*, pp. 95–108. [Au.]

⁷⁷Cf. Ch. Perelman, “Synthèse finale,” in *Entretiens de Liège*, pp. 338–40. [Au.]

⁷⁸See “Jugement moral et principes moraux,” and “Scepticisme moral et philosophie morale,” in Perelman, *Droit, morale et philosophie*. [Au.]

of general principles or loci, consisting of ideas such as “the nature of things,” “the rule of law,” and of rules such as “No one is expected to perform impossibilities,” “Both sides should be heard”—all of which are capable of being applied in different ways. It is the task of the legislator or judge to decide which of the not unreasonable solutions should become a rule of positive law. Such a view, according to Michel Villey, corresponds to the idea of natural law found in Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas—what he calls the classical natural law.⁷⁹

For government to be considered legitimate, to have authority, there must be some way of justifying it. Without some reasonable argumentation for it, political power would be based solely on force. If it is to obtain respect, and not only obedience, and gain the citizen’s acceptance, it must have some justification other than force. All political philosophy, in fact, aims at criticizing and justifying claims to the legitimate exercise of power.⁸⁰

Argumentation establishes a link between political philosophy and law and shows that the legislator’s activity is not merely an expression of unenlightened will. From lack of such a theory, Hume and Kelsen were right in making a sharp distinction between what is and what ought to be and claiming that no inference can be made from one to the other. Things take a different outlook, however, when one recognizes the importance of argumentation in supplying good reasons for establishing and interpreting norms. Kelsen’s pure theory of the law then loses the main part of its logical justification.⁸¹ The same befalls Alf

Ross’s realist theory of the law, as has been shown in the remarkable essay by Prof. Stig Jørgensen.⁸²

The new rhetoric has also been used to throw new light upon the educator’s task, on the analysis of political propaganda, on the process of literary creation, as well as on the reasoning of the historian. But it is in the field of law that it has made the largest impact. Recent studies and colloquia devoted to the logic of law testify to the keen interest that the subject has aroused, especially among French-speaking jurists. The faculty of law at Brussels has just inaugurated a new series of lectures, entitled “Logic and Argumentation.”⁸³

Lawyers and philosophers working in collaboration have shown that the theory of argumentation can greatly illuminate the nature of legal reasoning. The judge is obliged by law to pass sentence on a case that comes before him. Thus Article 4 of the Code Napoleon declares: “The judge, who, under pretext of the silence, the obscurity, or the incompleteness of the law, refuses to pass sentence is liable to prosecution for the denial of justice.” He may not limit himself to declaring that there is an antinomy or *lacuna* in the legal system that he has to apply. He cannot, like the mathematician or formal logician, point

⁸²“Argumentation and Decision,” in *Festkrift Alf Ross*, ed. Mogens Blegvad, Max Sørensen, and Isi Foighel (Copenhagen: Juristforbundets Förlaget, 1969), pp. 261–84 (with numerous bibliographical notes). [Au.]

⁸³See Ch. Perelman, “Droit, logique et argumentation,” *Revue de l’Université de Bruxelles*, 1968, pp. 387–98. The works produced by the legal section of the Centre National de Recherches de Logique have undeniably brought a remarkable contribution to a renewed outlook of the whole subject (see A. Bayart, “le Centre National Belge de Recherches de Logique,” *Archives de Philosophie du Droit*, 1968, pp. 171–80; and Paul Foriers, “L’état des recherches de logique juridique en Belgique,” in *Etudes de Logique Juridique* 2, pp. 23–42). Besides numerous articles written by members and of which several appeared in the *Journal des Tribunaux*, Brussels, the Center has published, since 1961, three large volumes, respectively entitled *Le Fait et le droit* (Brussels: Bruylant, 1961), *Les Antinomies en droit* (Brussels: Bruylant, 1965), and *Le Problème des lacunes en droit* (Brussels: Bruylant, 1968). [Since then the following have been published: *La Règle de droit* (Brussels: Bruylant, 1971), *Les Présomptions et les fictions en droit* (Brussels: Bruylant, 1974), and *La Motivation des décisions de justice* (Brussels: Bruylant, 1978).] [Au.]

⁷⁹Michel Villey, *Leçons d’histoire de la philosophie du droit* (Paris: Dalloz, 1957), and especially, “Questions de logique juridique dans l’histoire de la philosophie du droit,” in *Etudes de Logique Juridique* 2, Centre National de Recherches de Logique (Brussels: Bruylant, 1967), pp. 3–22. [Au.]

⁸⁰Ch. Perelman, “Autorité, idéologie et violence,” in *Annales de l’Institut de Philosophie de l’Université Libre de Bruxelles* (Brussels: Editions de l’Institut de Sociologie, 1969), pp. 9–20. [Au.]

⁸¹Ch. Perelman, “La théorie pure du droit et l’argumentation,” in *Law, State, and International Legal Order: Essays in Honor of Huns Kelsen*, ed. Salo Engel and Rudolf A. Metall (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1964), pp. 225–32. [Au.]

out that the system is incoherent or incomplete. He must himself solve the antinomy or fill in the lacuna. Ordinary logic by itself would suffice to show the existence of either an antinomy or a lacuna, but it cannot get him out of the resulting dilemma: only legal logic based on argumentation can accomplish that.

To conclude this general, but far from exhaustive, survey, it is necessary to stress again the import that the new rhetoric is having for philosophy and the study of its history. Twenty years ago, for example, the *Topics* and *Rhetoric* of Aristotle were completely ignored by philosophers, whereas today they are receiving much attention.⁸⁴ Renewed interest in this hitherto ignored side of Aristotle has thrown new light upon his entire metaphysics⁸⁵ and attached new importance to his notion of *phronesis* or prudence.⁸⁶ Renewed attention is being given to the classical rhetoric of Cicero.⁸⁷ and we are now gaining a better understanding of the historical development of rhetoric and logic during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.⁸⁸

⁸⁴We will mention, in this respect, W. A. de Pater's thesis *Les Topiques d'Aristote et la dialectique platonicienne*, *Etudes Thomistiques*, vol. 10 (Fribourg: Editions St. Paul, 1965), as well as the fact that the 3rd Symposium Aristotelicum of Oxford has been entirely devoted to the Topics (G. E. L. Owen, ed., *Aristotle on Dialectic*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968). [Au.]

⁸⁵Pierre Aubenque, *Le Problème de l'être chez Aristote* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1962). [Au.]

⁸⁶Pierre Aubenque, *La Prudence chez Aristote* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1963). [Au.]

⁸⁷Alain Michel published, in 1960, an essay on the philosophical foundations of the art of persuasion entitled *Rhétorique et philosophie chez Cicéron* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France), while Renato Barilli devoted an important, lively chapter to Cicero in his *Poetica e retorica*. . . [Au.]

⁸⁸We have already mentioned Alessandro Giuliani, whose works cover the period stretching from Aristotle to the Scottish philosophy, without neglecting medieval logic, and shed new light on the history of legal logic. Mention must also be made of G. Chevrier's suggestive study "Sur l'art de l'argumentation chez quelques romanistes médiévaux au XIIIe et au XIIIe siècle," *Archives de Philosophie du Droit*, 1966, pp. 115-48. Finally let us recall the well-known works of Eugenio Garin and of his disciples, which have drawn attention again to the Italian philosophy of the Renaissance and to fifteenth and sixteenth century humanism, in which discussions concerning the relations between philosophy, dialectic, and

It is possible too that the new rhetoric may provoke a reconsideration of the Hegelian conception of dialectic with its thesis and antithesis culminating in a synthesis, which might be compared to a reasonable judge who retains the valid part from antilogies. This new rhetorical perspective may also help us to a better understanding of the American pragmatists, especially of C. S. Peirce, who, in his approximation to Hegel's objective logic, aimed at developing a *rhetorica speculativa*.⁸⁹

For these inquiries to be pursued, however, the theory of argumentation must awaken the interest of philosophers and not merely that of lawyers and members of the speech profession. In a synoptic study of the subject, Professor Johnstone deplores the fact that the theory of argumentation is still little known in the United States, although it is now well known in Europe.⁹⁰ Attention has been focused on the problems raised by the use of practical reason, and the field has been explored and mapped by theoreticians and practitioners of the law. There is much that philosophers could learn from this work if they would cease confining their methodological inquiries to what can be accomplished by formal logic and the analysis of language.⁹¹ A more dynamic approach to the problems of language would also reveal the extent to which language, far from being only an instrument for communication, is also a tool for action and is well adapted

rhetoric occupied a central place: Garin, *Medioevo e Rinascimento* (Bari, Italy: Laterza 1961); and Garin, Paolo Rossi, and Cesare Vasoli, eds., *Testi umanistici sulla retorica* (Rome: Fratelli Bocca, 1953). Besides Garin's own writings, we must mention those of Paolo Rossi: "La celebrazione della retorica e la polemica antimetafisica nel De principiis di Mario Nizolio," in *La crisi dell'uso dogmatico delle ragioni*, ed. Antonio Banfi (Milan, 1953), pp. 99-221; and Cesare Vasoli, *La dialettica e la retorica dell'umanesimo* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1968). [Au.]

⁸⁹C. S. Peirce, *Collected Papers*, 6 vols., ed. Charles Hartshorne and Paul Weiss (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1931-35), 1:444. [Au.]

⁹⁰Klibansky, *Contemporary Philosophy* (see note 55), 1:177-84. [Au.]

⁹¹See my article "What the Philosopher May Learn from the Study of Law," *Natural Law Forum* 11 (1966), 1-12. [Au.]

to such a purpose.⁹² It may even prove possible to achieve a synthesis of the different and seem-

⁹²Cf. Ch. Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca, "Les notions et l'argumentation," *Archivio di filosofia*, Rome, 1955, pp. 249-69; idem, "De la temporalité comme caractère de l'argumentation," *Archivio di filosofia*, 1958, pp. 115-33. L. Olbrechts-Tyteca, "Les définitions des statisticiens," *Logique et Analyse* 3 (1960): 49-60. Ch. Perelman, "Avoir un sens et donner un sens," in *Thinking and Meaning, Entretiens d'Oxford*, in *Logique et Analyse*, 1962, pp. 235-39. [Au.]

ingly opposed tendencies of contemporary philosophy, such as existentialism, pragmatism, analytical philosophy, and perhaps even a new version of Hegelian and Marxist dialectic.⁹³

⁹³Ch. Perelman, "The Dialectical Method and the Part Played by the Interlocutor in the Dialogue," in Perelman, *The Idea of Justice and the Problem of Argument*, pp. 161-67; also, "Dialectique et Dialogue," in *Hermeneutik und Dialektik* (see note 83), 2:77-84. [Au.]

Stephen Toulmin

b. 1922

Stephen Edelson Toulmin was born in London and was educated at Cambridge University, where he took his undergraduate degree in mathematics and science in 1942. He served in several capacities during World War II, first as a scientific officer in radar research and development and later in technical intelligence work. After the war, he earned his master's degree in 1946 and his Ph.D. in 1948, both in philosophy at Cambridge. He has held a variety of academic posts, at Oxford University, New York University, Brandeis University, Michigan State University, and the University of Chicago. After more than twenty years at Chicago, in 1995 he moved to the University of Southern California. He has published voluminously in the history and philosophy of science and has won a number of academic honors. Though his work on the structure of argument has had tremendous influence as a theory of rhetoric, Toulmin has betrayed little interest in the field, directing his work almost exclusively to philosophers.

In *The Uses of Argument* (1958), Toulmin notes that Aristotle conceived of logic as the study of how claims and conclusions of all kinds are proved or justified. But, laments Toulmin, logic became instead a highly abstract and formalized system intended to establish absolute, rational standards for the truth of propositions. Speaking as a philosopher, Toulmin is distressed by the isolation of logic, by its virtual irrelevance to the problems of knowledge in most academic disciplines, and by its separation from the practical reasoning that is essential in law, ethics, and daily life. Chaim Perelman (p. 1372) regrets the Cartesian implication that logic is the only ground of truth and that probabilistic reasoning is therefore essentially false. Toulmin, taking a different perspective, is concerned that logic itself is a solipsistic activity, cut off from the real work of human understanding.

To remedy this situation, Toulmin proposes a formal study of practical reasoning, a "logic" of arguments rather than of propositions. In *The Uses of Argument* (excerpted here), he sets forth a model of the structure of arguments that is remarkable for its clarity, flexibility, and reasonableness. His purpose in constructing this model is to demonstrate, first, that most arguments have a more complex structure than the syllogism and, second, that the syllogism misrepresents the very nature of argument by its arbitrary restriction to a three-part structure.

In Toulmin's scheme, a *claim* is based on *data*. Harry (to take Toulmin's example) is, we claim, a British subject. We base this claim on data—in this instance, that Harry was born in Bermuda. To establish the connection between claim and data, we may cite a *warrant*. Thus Harry is a British citizen (claim) by virtue of being born in Bermuda (data), because Bermudians are legally British (warrant). Often, a warrant needs further support, or *backing*. In Toulmin's example, we would cite British nationality statutes regarding British colonies to back up the warrant. The claim may have a *qualifier*, such as *surely*, *likely*, or *perhaps*; that is, it is likely that Harry is a British subject for the reasons we have given. Finally, there

may be conditions, indicated in the *rebuttal*, that would suspend the claim. Thus Harry was born in Bermuda (data), and so presumably (qualifier) he is a British subject (claim), because a person born in Bermuda will generally be a British subject (warrant), as we know from British nationality statutes regarding British colonies (backing), unless, of course, neither of Harry's parents were British subjects or Harry has become a naturalized citizen of another country (rebuttal).

Toulmin states that his argument model holds across fields (for example, academic disciplines) because the "force" of qualifying terms such as *probably* is the same in all fields, even though the specific criteria for determining what counts as a qualification (that is, what *probably* means) change from field to field. Probability, says Toulmin, has the same rational force in an argument whether it is calculated mathematically, meteorologically, or in any other way. Similarly, all arguments depend on warrants, though the nature of the warrant in a given argument depends on the field. Toulmin concludes that no field is intrinsically more rational or irrational than another. In every field, including formal logic itself, reasons are based on stipulated criteria. Toulmin chides traditional logicians for standing aloof from practical argument and further points out that a number of logical problems might be solved by carefully revising the syllogism along the lines he suggests here.

Like Perelman, Toulmin regrets the division of reasoning into rational and irrational, logical and rhetorical. Both writers try to discover the rationality of arguments about value in law, aesthetics, morals, and politics; Toulmin includes the sciences as well. For Toulmin as for Perelman, knowledge is the product of argument, which therefore deserves the attention of philosophers.

In *Human Understanding* (1972), Toulmin has two aims. First, he challenges Thomas Kuhn's thesis in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1970) that scientific knowledge advances not by accumulation but by revolutions in world view. Toulmin argues that evolution, not revolution, is the proper model for conceptual change in a discipline. Second, he analyzes and rejects both the absolutist and the relativist standards of rationality that have, he claims, dominated philosophy. Whereas absolutism errs in assuming that there are eternal standards of truth that must be the only grounds of knowledge, relativism errs in assuming that there are no standards at all. Toulmin seeks a middle ground, one where the evolution of concepts might be studied and the concepts themselves judged through an analysis of the arguments that constitute them. Seen as an extension of the concerns raised in *The Uses of Argument*, Toulmin's analysis raises the status of argument in defining rationality, though he studiously avoids using the word *argument*, even where it seems clearly called for. Indeed, Toulmin shows little interest in rhetoric as a subject. In his first book, *An Examination of the Place of Reason in Ethics* (1948), he uses the term *rhetoric* to refer to emotional statements about ethical principles. In place of the terms *rhetoric* and *argument*, he clearly prefers the phrase *practical reasoning*.

Toulmin's many books and articles concern the history, philosophy, and sociology of science, with the only exceptions being his textbook *Introduction to*

Reasoning (1979), based on the argument model in *Uses of Argument*, and the published lecture “Logic and the Criticism of Arguments” (1982; excerpted here). In that essay, Toulmin acknowledges the help of American speech communication scholars in showing him the connection between his work and rhetoric. Here, too, he abandons the hope that formal logic will wither away, but he calls for a rapprochement between logic and argument in pursuit of the study of practical reasoning.

Selected Bibliography

The Uses of Argument was published by Cambridge University Press in 1958 and was reprinted in 1964. “Logic and the Criticism of Arguments” was delivered as a lecture at the University of Michigan in 1982 and was printed in J. Golden et al., *The Rhetoric of Western Thought* (4th ed., 1983).

Other works by Toulmin include *An Examination of the Place of Reason in Ethics* (1948), *Human Understanding, Volume 1: The Collective Use and Understanding of Concepts* (1972), and *An Introduction to Reasoning* (1978), with Richard Rieke and Allan Janik. In *Knowing and Acting: An Invitation to Philosophy* (1976), Toulmin recasts his discussion of argument into an analysis of beliefs, reasons, inferences, and the role of philosophy in human affairs. *The Abuse of Casuistry: A History of Moral Reasoning* (1988), coauthored with Albert R. Jonsen, rehabilitates “case ethics” as a valuable form of practical reasoning or phronesis, tracing its history from Cicero to the Jesuits to Pascal and applying it to some modern instances.

The chapter on Toulmin in *Contemporary Perspectives on Rhetoric*, by S. Foss, K. Foss, and R. Trapp (1985), summarizes the argument scheme and the theory of the evolution of concepts. It includes an extensive bibliography of works by and about Toulmin. Wayne Brockriede and Douglas Ehninger compare Toulmin’s argument scheme with traditional models in “Toulmin on Argument: An Interpretation and Application” (*Quarterly Journal of Speech* 46 [February 1960]: 44–53). Their analysis is expanded in their textbook *Decision by Debate* (2nd ed., 1977). Charles Kneupper’s “Teaching Argument: An Introduction to the Toulmin Model” (*College Composition and Communication* 29 [October 1978]: 237–41) articulates the usefulness of Toulmin’s work for teaching argumentative writing to undergraduates; for some comments on the limitations of Toulmin’s model thus used, see Christopher Schroeder’s “Knowledge and Power, Logic and Rhetoric, and Other Reflections in the Toulmin Mirror: A Critical Consideration of Stephen Toulmin’s Contributions to Composition” (*Journal of Advanced Composition* 17 [1997]: 95–107). *The Toulmin Method: Exploration and Controversy* (ed. William E. Tanner and Betty Kay Seibt, 1991) collects essays presented at a 1988 symposium on Toulmin’s work at Texas Women’s University; most focus on his uses in literary study and composition instruction, and a bibliography is included. An interview of Toulmin by Gary A. Olson, in which Olson questions Toulmin about the implications of his work for rhetoric, appeared originally in the *Journal of Advanced Composition* and is reprinted in *Philosophy, Rhetoric, Literary Criticism: (Inter)views*, ed. Olson (1994).

The notion of fields of argument and the question of the field-dependence or field-invariance of the elements of argument sparked the growth of an entire subfield of rhetoric. The range of issues is suggested by Charles Arthur Willard’s *Argumentation and the Social Grounds of Knowledge* (1983) and by the collections of papers published by the National Communication Association in the *Proceedings of the Summer Conference on Argument*.

The *Proceedings*, first published in 1980, have from 1981 usually appeared in alternate years. In addition, the *Journal of the American Forensic Association* has published a large number of articles on argument fields since the 1960s, including a special issue (spring 1982).

From *The Uses of Argument*

For the sake of brevity, it will be convenient to introduce a technical term: let us accordingly talk of a *field* of arguments. Two arguments will be said to belong to the same field when the data and conclusions in each of the two arguments are, respectively, of the same logical type: they will be said to come from different fields when the backing or the conclusions in each of the two arguments are not of the same logical type. The proofs in Euclid's *Elements*, for example, belong to one field, the calculations performed in preparing an issue of the *Nautical Almanac* belong to another. The argument, "Harry's hair is not black, since I know for a fact that it is red," belongs to a third and rather special field—though one might perhaps question whether it really was an argument at all or, rather, a counter-assertion. The argument, "Petersen is a Swede, so he is presumably not a Roman Catholic," belongs to a fourth field; the argument, "This phenomenon cannot be wholly explained on my theory, since the deviations between your observations and my predictions are statistically significant," belongs to yet another; the argument, "This creature is a whale, so it is (taxonomically) a mammal," belongs to a sixth; and the argument, "Defendant was driving at 45 m.p.h. in a built-up area, so he has committed an offence against the Road Traffic Acts," comes from a seventh field, different yet again. The problems to be discussed in these inquiries are those that face us when we try to come to terms with the differences between the various fields of argument here illustrated.

The first problem we have set ourselves can be re-stated in the question, "What things about

the form and merits of our arguments are *field-invariant* and what things about them are *field-dependent*?" What things about the modes in which we assess arguments, the standards by reference to which we assess them and the manner in which we qualify our conclusions about them, are the same regardless of field (field-invariant), and which of them vary as we move from arguments in one field to arguments in another (field-dependent)? How far, for instance, can one compare the standards of argument relevant in a court of law with those relevant when judging a paper in the *Proceedings of the Royal Society*, or those relevant to a mathematical proof or a prediction about the composition of a tennis team?

It should perhaps be said at once that the question is not, how the standards we employ in criticising arguments in different fields compare in stringency, but rather how far there are common standards applicable in the criticism of arguments taken from different fields. Indeed, whether questions about comparative stringency can even be asked about arguments from different fields may be worth questioning. Within a field of arguments, questions about comparative stringency and looseness may certainly arise: we may, for instance, compare the standards of rigour recognised by pure mathematicians at different stages in the history of the subject, by Newton, Euler, Gauss or Weierstrass. How far, on the other hand, it makes sense to compare the mathematical rigour of Gauss or Weierstrass with the judicial rigour of Lord Chief Justice Goddard in another matter, and one whose consideration we must postpone. . . .

FORCE AND CRITERIA

At this point a distinction can be made, which will prove later of great importance. The meaning of a modal term, such as “cannot,” has two aspects: these can be referred to as the *force* of the term and the *criteria* for its use. By the “force” of a modal term I mean the practical implications of its use: the force of the term “cannot” includes, for instance, the implied general injunction that something-or-other has to be ruled out in this-or-that way and for such-a-reason. This force can be contrasted with the criteria, standards, grounds and reasons, by reference to which we decide in any context that the use of a particular modal term is appropriate. We are entitled to say that some possibility has to be ruled out only if we can produce grounds or reasons to justify this claim, and under the term “criteria” can be included the many sorts of things we have then to produce. We say, for instance, that something is physically, mathematically or physiologically impossible, that it is terminologically or linguistically out of order, or else morally or judicially improper: it is to be ruled out, accordingly, *qua* something or other. And when we start explaining “*qua* what” any particular thing is to be ruled out, we show what criteria we are appealing to in this particular situation.

The importance of the distinction between force and criteria will become fully clear only as we go along. It can be hinted at, perhaps, if we look for a moment at the notion of mathematical impossibility. Many theorems in geometry and pure mathematics state impossibilities of one sort or another: they tell us, e.g., that it is impossible to construct a regular heptagon using ruler and compass, and that you cannot find a rational square root of 2. Such a construction or such a square root is, we are told, a mathematical impossibility.

Now what is involved in saying this? What precisely is signified by this phrase “mathematical impossibility?” It is easy to give too simple an answer, and we must not be in a hurry. The natural thing to look at first is the procedure mathematicians have to go through in order to prove a theorem of this sort—to show, for instance, that there cannot be a rational square root

of 2. When we inquire what they establish in such a proof, we find that one thing is of supreme importance. The notion of “a rational square root of 2” leads us into contradictions: from the assumption that a number x is rational and that its square is equal to 2, we can by brief chains of argument reach two mutually contradictory conclusions. This is the reason, the conclusive reason, why mathematicians are led to consider the idea that any actual number x could have both these properties an impossible one.

Having remarked on this, we may be tempted to conclude at once that we have the answer to our question—namely, that the phrase “mathematically impossible” just means “self-contradictory, or leading to self-contradictions.” But this is too simple: to understand the notion properly, one must pay attention, not only to what mathematicians do before reaching the conclusion that something is impossible, but also to what they do after reaching this conclusion and *in consequence* of having reached it. The existence of a mathematical impossibility is not only something which requires proving, it is also something which has implications. To show the presence of the contradictions may be all that is required by a mathematician if he is to be justified in saying that the notion x is a mathematical impossibility—it may, that is, be a conclusive demonstration of its impossibility—but the force of calling it impossible involves more than simply labelling it as “leading to contradictions.” The notion x involves one in contradictions and is *therefore* or *accordingly* an impossibility: it is impossible *on account of* the contradictions, impossible *qua* leading one into contradictions. If “mathematically impossible” meant precisely the same as “contradictory,” the phrase “contradictory and so mathematically impossible” would be tautologous—“contradictory and so contradictory.” But this will not do: to say only, “This supposition leads one into contradictions or, to use another equivalent phrase, is impossible,” is to rob the idea of mathematical impossibility of a crucial part of its force, for it fails to draw the proper moral—it leaves the supposition unruled out.

Even in mathematics, therefore, one can distinguish the criterion or standard by reference to which the rational square root of 2 is dismissed

as impossible from the force of the conclusion that it *is* impossible. To state the presence of the contradictions is not thereby to dismiss the notion as impossible, though from the mathematicians' point of view this may be absolutely all we require in order to *justify* its dismissal. Once again, the force of calling the number *x* an "impossibility" is to dismiss it from consideration and, since we are to dismiss it from consideration from the mathematical standpoint, the grounds for doing so have to be of a kind appropriate to mathematics, e.g., the fact that operating with such a conception leads one into contradictions. Contradictoriness can be, mathematically speaking, a *criterion* of impossibility: the implied *force* or *moral* of such an impossibility is that the notion can have no place in subsequent mathematical arguments.

To insist on this distinction in the case of mathematical impossibility may seem to be mere hair-splitting. Mathematically, the consequences of the distinction may be negligible: philosophically, however, they are considerable, especially when one goes on (as we shall do in a later essay) to make the parallel distinction in the case of "logical impossibility." For this distinction between "force" and "criteria" as applied to modal terms is a near-relation to distinctions which have recently been made in other fields with great philosophical profit.

Let us look at this parallel for a moment. Philosophers studying the general use of evaluative terms have argued as follows:

A word like "good" can be used equally of an apple or an agent or an action, of a volley in tennis, a vacuum cleaner or a Van Gogh: in each case, to call the fruit or the person or the stroke or the painting "good" is to commend it, and to hold it out as being in some respect a praiseworthy, admirable or efficient member of its class—the word "good" is accordingly defined most accurately as "the most general adjective of commendation." But because the word is so general, the things we appeal to in order to justify commending different kinds of things as "good" will themselves be very different. A morally-good action, a domestically-good vacuum cleaner and a pomiculturally-good apple all come up to standard, but the standards they all come up to will be different—indeed, incomparable. So one can distinguish between the commendatory force of labelling a thing as "good," and

the criteria by reference to which we justify a commendation.

Our own discussion has led us to a position which is, in effect, only a special case of this more general one. For the pattern is the same whether the things we are grading or assessing or criticising are, on the one hand, apples or actions or paintings or, on the other, arguments and conclusions. In either case we are concerned with judging or evaluating, and distinctions which have proved fruitful in ethics and aesthetics will do so again when applied to the criticism of arguments. With "impossible" as with "good": the use of the term has a characteristic force, of commending in one case, of rejecting in the other; to commend an apple or an action is one thing, to give your reasons for commending it is another; to reject a suggestion as untenable is one thing, to give your reasons for rejecting it is another, however cogent and relevant these reasons may be.

What is the virtue of such distinctions? If we ignore them in ethics, a number of things may happen. We may, for instance, be tempted to think that the standards which a thing has to reach in order to deserve commendation are all we need point to in explaining what is meant by calling it "good." To call a vacuum cleaner good (we may conclude) is just to say that its efficiency, in terms of cubic-feet-of-dust-sucked-in per kilowatt-of-electricity-consumed and the like, is well above the average for machines of this type. (This is like thinking that the phrase "mathematically impossible" just *means* "involving self-contradictions" and no more.) Such a view, however, leads to unnecessary paradoxes. For it may now seem that the terms of commendation and condemnation in which we so frequently express our judgements of value have as many meanings as there are different sorts of things to evaluate, and this is a very unwelcome suggestion. As a counter to this, it has to be recognised that the *force* of commending something as "good" or condemning it as "bad" remains the same, whatever sort of thing it may be, even though the criteria for judging or assessing the merits of different kinds are very variable.

But this is not the only way in which we may be led astray, or indeed the most serious way.

Having recognised that, in the meaning of evaluative terms, a multiplicity of criteria are linked together by a common force, and that to evaluate something normally involves both grading it in an order of commendability and also referring to the criteria appropriate to things of its kind, we may nevertheless wish to take a further step. For, being preoccupied with some particular type of evaluation, we may come to feel that one particular set of criteria has a unique importance, and accordingly be tempted to pick on the criteria proper for the assessment of things of some one sort as the proper or unique standards of merit for all sorts of thing, so dismissing all other criteria either as misconceived or as unimportant. One may suspect that something of this kind happened to the Utilitarians, who were so wholehearted and single-minded in their concern for questions of legislation and social action that they came to feel that there was only one problem when evaluating things of all kinds: all one had to do was determine the *consequences* which could be associated with or expected from things of any kind.

The dangers of such single-mindedness become apparent when philosophers of this kind begin to generalise: preoccupied as they are with some one type of valuation, they blind themselves to the special problems involved in other sorts—to all the difficulties of aesthetic judgement, and to many of the issues facing one in the course of one's moral life. There are many sorts of assessment and grading besides the appraisal of legislative programmes and social reforms, and standards which may be wholly appropriate when judging the worthiness of a Bill before Parliament can be misleading or out-of-place when we are concerned with a painting, an apple or even our individual moral quandaries.

The same dangers can arise over arguments. The use of a modal term like "cannot" in connection with arguments from quite different fields involves, as we have seen, a certain common force, like the common force recognisable in a wide range of uses of the word "good." Yet the criteria to be invoked to justify ruling out conclusions of different types are very different. Here, as in ethics, two conclusions are tempting, both of which must be avoided. On the one hand, it will be wrong to say, merely on account of this

variation in criteria, that the word "cannot" means quite different things when it figures in different sorts of conclusions: not for nothing are physical, linguistic, moral and conceptual "cannots" linked by the use of a common term. It will also be a mistake, and a more serious one, to pick on some one criterion of impossibility and to elevate it into a position of unique philosophical importance. Yet in the history of recent philosophy both of these conclusions have been influential—the latter, I shall argue, disastrously so.

Before returning to our main question, there is one further caution. We have already, for the purposes of this present investigation, renounced the use of the word "logical"; it will be as well to renounce now the use of the word "meaning" and its associates also. For the distinction which we have here drawn between force and criteria is one which cuts across the common use of the term "meaning," and we need, for our present purposes, to operate with finer distinctions than the term "meaning" ordinarily allows one to draw. It is not enough to speak about the meaning or use of such terms as "good" or "impossible" as though it were an indivisible unit: the use of such terms has a number of distinguishable *aspects*, for two of which we have introduced the words "force" and "criteria." Until we make this distinction, the false trails of which I have spoken will remain tempting, for, when we are asked whether the differences between all the varied uses of the words "good," "cannot" and "possible" do or do not amount to differences in meaning, we shall inevitably find ourselves pulled in opposite directions. If we say that there *are* differences in meaning, we seem committed to making as many different entries in our dictionaries as there are sorts of possibility or impossibility or merit—indeed, as many entries as there are different kinds of thing to be possible or impossible or good—a ridiculous conclusion. On the other hand, to say that there is *no* difference in meaning between these varied uses suggests that we can expect to find our standards of goodness or possibility or impossibility proving field-invariant, and this conclusion is no better. If, however, we make the further distinction between the force of assessments and the criteria or standards applicable in the course of them, we can avoid giving any crude "yes or no" answer to the coarse-

grained question, “Are the meanings the same or different?” As we shift from one use to another, the criteria may change while the force remains the same: whether or not we decide to *call* this a change of meaning will be a matter of comparative indifference. . . .

THE PATTERN OF AN ARGUMENT: DATA AND WARRANTS

“What, then, is involved in establishing conclusions by the production of arguments?” Can we, by considering this question in a general form, build up from scratch a pattern of analysis which will do justice to all the distinctions which proper procedure forces upon us? That is the problem facing us.

Let it be supposed that we make an assertion, and commit ourselves thereby to the claim which any assertion necessarily involves. If this claim is challenged, we must be able to establish it—that is, make it good, and show that it was justifiable. How is this to be done? Unless the assertion was made quite wildly and irresponsibly, we shall normally have some facts to which we can point in its support: if the claim is challenged, it is up to us to appeal to these facts, and present them as the foundation upon which our claim is based. Of course we may not get the challenger even to agree about the correctness of these facts, and in that case we have to clear his objection out of the way by preliminary argument: only when this prior issue or “lemma,” as geometers would call it, has been dealt with, are we in a position to return to the original argument. But this complication we need only mention: supposing the lemma to have been disposed of, our question is how to set the original argument out most fully and explicitly. “Harry’s hair is not black,” we assert. What have we got to go on? we are asked. Our personal knowledge that it is in fact red: that is our datum, the ground which we produce as support for the original assertion. Petersen, we may say, will not be a Roman Catholic: why?: we base our claim on the knowledge that he is a Swede, which makes it very unlikely that he will be a Roman Catholic. Wilkinson, asserts the prosecutor in Court, has committed an offence against the Road Traffic Acts: in support of this claim, two policemen are prepared to testify that

they timed him driving at 45 m.p.h. in a built-up area. In each case, an original assertion is supported by producing other facts bearing on it.

We already have, therefore, one distinction to start with: between the *claim* or conclusion whose merits we are seeking to establish (C) and the facts we appeal to as a foundation for the claim—what I shall refer to as our *data* (D). If our challenger’s question is, “What have you got to go on?” producing the data or information on which the claim is based may serve to answer him; but this is only one of the ways in which our conclusion may be challenged. Even after we have produced our data, we may find ourselves being asked further questions of another kind. We may now be required not to add more factual information to that which we have already provided, but rather to indicate the bearing on our conclusion of the data already produced. Colloquially, the question may now be, not “What have you got to go on?” but “How do you get there?” To present a particular set of data as the basis for some specified conclusion commits us to a certain *step*; and the question is now one about the nature and justification of this step.

Supposing we encounter this fresh challenge, we must bring forward not further data, for about these the same query may immediately be raised again, but propositions of a rather different kind: rules, principles, inference-licences or what you will, instead of additional items of information. Our task is no longer to strengthen the ground on which our argument is constructed, but is rather to show that, taking these data as a starting point, the step to the original claim or conclusion is an appropriate and legitimate one. At this point, therefore, what are needed are general, hypothetical statements, which can act as bridges, and authorise the sort of step to which our particular argument commits us. These may normally be written very briefly (in form “If D, then C”); but, for candour’s sake, they can profitably be expanded, and made more explicit: “Data such as D entitle one to draw conclusions, or make claims, such as C,” or alternatively “Given data D, one may take it that C.”

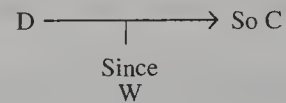
Propositions of this kind I shall call *warrants* (W), to distinguish them from both conclusions and data. (These “warrants,” it will be observed, correspond to the practical standards or canons of

argument referred to in our earlier essays.) To pursue our previous examples: the knowledge that Harry's hair is red entitles us to set aside any suggestion that it is black, on account of the warrant, "If anything is red, it will not also be black." (The very triviality of this warrant is connected with the fact that we are concerned here as much with a counter-assertion as with an argument.) The fact that Petersen is a Swede is directly relevant to the question of his religious denomination for, as we should probably put it, "A Swede can be taken almost certainly not to be a Roman Catholic." (The step involved here is now trivial, so the warrant is not self-authenticating.) Likewise in the third case: our warrant will not be some such statement as that "A man who is proved to have driven at more than 30 m.p.h. in a built-up area can be found to have committed an offence against the Road Traffic Acts."

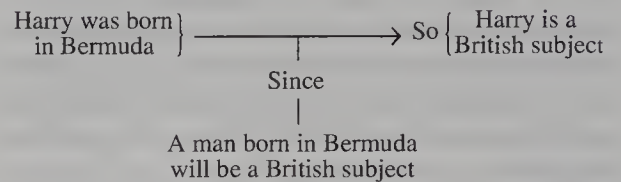
The question will at once be asked, how absolute is this distinction between data, on the one hand, and warrants, on the other. Will it always be clear whether a man who challenges an assertion is calling for the production of his adversary's data, or for the warrants authorising his steps? Can one, in other words, draw any sharp distinction between the force of the two questions, "What have you got to go on?" and "How do you get there?" By grammatical tests alone, the distinction may appear far from absolute, and the same English sentence may serve a double function: it may be uttered, that is, in one situation to convey a piece of information, in another to authorise a step in an argument, and even perhaps in some contexts to do both these things at once. (All these possibilities will be illustrated before too long.) For the moment, the important thing is not to be too cut-and-dried in our treatment of the subject, nor to commit ourselves in advance to a rigid terminology. At any rate we shall find it possible in *some* situations to distinguish clearly two different logical functions; and the nature of this distinction is hinted at if one contrasts the two sentences, "Whenever A, one *has found* that B" and "Whenever A, one *may take it* that B."

We now have the terms we need to compose the first skeleton of a pattern for analysing arguments. We may symbolise the relation between the data and the claim in support of which they

are produced by an arrow, and indicate the authority for taking the step from one to the other by writing the warrant immediately below the arrow:



Or, to give an example:



As this pattern makes clear, the explicit appeal in this argument goes directly back from the claim to the data relied on as foundation: the warrant is, in a sense, incidental and explanatory, its task being simply to register explicitly the legitimacy of the step involved and to refer it back to the larger class of steps whose legitimacy is being presupposed.

This is one of the reasons for distinguishing between data and warrants: data are appealed to explicitly, warrants implicitly. In addition, one may remark that warrants are general, certifying the soundness of *all* arguments of the appropriate type, and have accordingly to be established in quite a different way from the facts we produce as data. This distinction, between data and warrants, is similar to the distinction drawn in the law-courts between questions of fact and questions of law, and the legal distinction is indeed a special case of the more general one—we may argue, for instance, that a man whom we know to have been born in Bermuda is presumably a British subject, simply because the relevant laws give us a warrant to draw this conclusion.

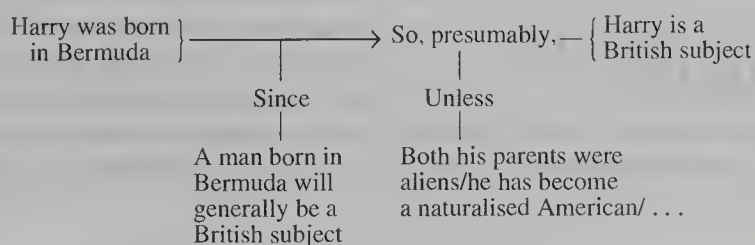
One more general point in passing: unless, in any particular field of argument, we are prepared to work with warrants of *some* kind, it will become impossible in that field to subject arguments to rational assessment. The data we cite if a claim is challenged depend on the warrants we are prepared to operate with in that field, and the warrants to which we commit ourselves are im-

implicit in the particular steps from data to claims we are prepared to take and to admit. But supposing a man rejects all warrants whatever authorising (say) steps from data about the present and past to conclusions about the future, then for him rational prediction will become impossible; and many philosophers have in fact denied the possibility of rational prediction just because they thought they could discredit equally the claims of all past-to-future warrants.

The skeleton of a pattern which we have obtained so far is only a beginning. Further questions may now arise, to which we must pay attention. Warrants are of different kinds, and may confer different degrees of force on the conclusions they justify. Some warrants authorise us to accept a claim unequivocally, given the appropriate data—these warrants entitle us in suitable cases to qualify our conclusion with the adverb “necessarily”; others authorise us to make the step from data to conclusion either tentatively, or else subject to conditions, exceptions, or qualifications—in these cases other modal qualifiers, such as “probably” and “presumably,” are in place. It may not be sufficient, therefore, simply to specify our data, warrant and claim: we may need to add some explicit reference to the degree of force which our data confer on our claim in virtue of our warrant. In a word, we may have to put in a *qualifier*. Again, it is often necessary in the law-courts, not just to appeal to a given statute or common-law doctrine, but to discuss explicitly the extent to which this particular law fits the case under consideration, whether it must inevitably be applied in this particular case, or whether special facts may make the case an exception to the rule or one in which the law can be applied only subject to certain qualifications.

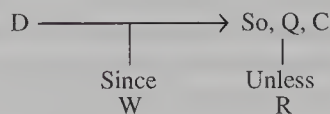
If we are to take account of these features of

i.e.,



our argument also, our pattern will become more complex. Modal qualifiers (Q) and conditions of exception or rebuttal (R) are distinct both from data and from warrants, and need to be given separate places in our layout. Just as a warrant (W) is itself neither a datum (D) nor a claim (C), since it implies in itself something about both D and C—namely, that the step from the one to the other is legitimate; so, in turn, Q and R are themselves distinct from W, since they comment implicitly on the bearing of W on this step—qualifiers (Q) indicating the strength conferred by the warrant on this step, conditions of rebuttal (R) indicating circumstances in which the general authority of the warrant would have to be set aside. To mark these further distinctions, we may write the qualifier (Q) immediately beside the conclusion which it qualifies (C), and the exceptional conditions which might be capable of defeating or rebutting the warranted conclusion (R) immediately below the qualifier.

To illustrate: our claim that Harry is a British subject may normally be defended by appeal to the information that he was born in Bermuda, for this datum lends support to our conclusion on account of the warrants implicit in the British Nationality Acts; but the argument is not by itself conclusive in the absence of assurances about his parentage and about his not having changed his nationality since birth. What our information does do is to establish that the conclusion holds good “presumably,” and subject to the appropriate provisos. The argument now assumes the form:



We must remark, in addition, on two further distinctions. The first is that between a statement of a warrant, and statements about its applicability—between “A man born in Bermuda will be British,” and “This presumption holds good provided his parents were not both aliens, etc.” The distinction is relevant not only to the law of the land, but also for an understanding of scientific laws or “laws of nature”: it is important, indeed, in all cases where the application of a law may be subject to exceptions, or where a warrant can be supported by pointing to a general correlation only, and not to an absolutely invariable one. We can distinguish also two purposes which may be served by the production of additional facts: these can serve as further data, or they can be cited to confirm or rebut the applicability of a warrant. Thus, the fact that Harry was born in Bermuda and the fact that his parents were not aliens are both of them directly relevant to the question of his present nationality; but they are relevant in different ways. The one fact is a datum, which by itself establishes a presumption of British nationality; the other fact, by setting aside one possible rebuttal, tends to confirm the presumption thereby created.

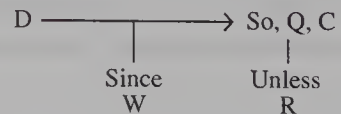
One particular problem about applicability we shall have to discuss more fully later: when we set out a piece of applied mathematics, in which some system of mathematical relations is used to throw light on a question of (say) physics, the correctness of the calculations will be one thing, their appropriateness to the problem in hand may be quite another. So the question “Is this calculation mathematically impeccable?” may be a very different one from the question “Is this the relevant calculation?” Here too, the applicability of a particular warrant is one question: the result we shall get from applying the warrant is another matter, and in asking about the *correctness* of the result we may have to inquire into both these things independently.

THE PATTERN OF AN ARGUMENT: BACKING OUR WARRANTS

One last distinction, which we have already touched on in passing, must be discussed at some

length. In addition to the question whether or on what conditions a warrant is applicable in a *particular* case, we may be asked why *in general* this warrant should be accepted as having authority. In defending a claim, that is, we may produce our data, our warrant, and the relevant qualifications and conditions, and yet find that we have still not satisfied our challenger; for he may be dubious not only about this particular argument but about the more general question whether the warrant (W) is acceptable at all. Presuming the general acceptability of this warrant (he may allow) our argument would no doubt be impeccable—if D-ish facts really do suffice as backing for C-ish claims, all well and good. But does not that warrant in its turn rest on something else? Challenging a particular claim may in this way lead on to challenging, more generally, the legitimacy of a whole range of arguments. “You presume that a man born in Bermuda can be taken to be a British subject,” he may say, “but why do you think that?” Standing behind our warrants, as this example reminds us, there will normally be other assurances, without which the warrants themselves would possess neither authority nor currency—these other things we may refer to as the *backing* (B) of the warrants. This “backing” of our warrants is something which we shall have to scrutinise very carefully: its precise relations to our data, claims, warrants and conditions of rebuttal deserve some clarification, for confusion at this point can lead to trouble later.

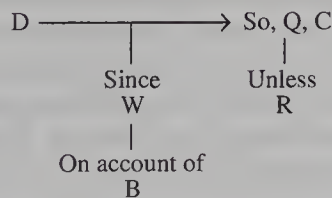
We shall have to notice particularly how the sort of backing called for by our warrants varies from one field of argument to another. The *form* of argument we employ in different fields



need not vary very much as between fields. “A whale will be a mammal,” “A Bermudan will be a Briton,” “A Saudi Arabian will be a Muslim”: here are three different warrants to which we might appeal in the course of a practical argument, each of which can justify the same sort of

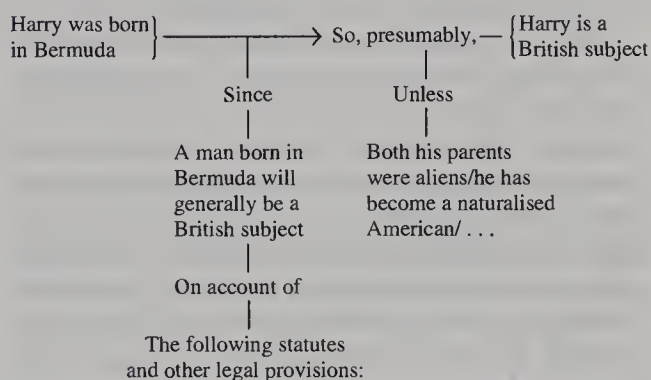
straightforward step from a datum to a conclusion. We might add for variety examples of even more diverse sorts, taken from moral, mathematical or psychological fields. But the moment we start asking about the *backing* which a warrant relies on in each field, great differences begin to appear: the kind of backing we must point to if we are to establish its authority will change greatly as we move from one field of argument to another. “A whale will be (i.e., *is classifiable as*) a mammal,” “A Bermudan will be (*in the eyes of the law*) a Briton,” “A Saudi Arabian will be (*found to be*) a Muslim”—the words in parentheses indicate what these differences are. One warrant is defended by relating it to a system of taxonomical classification, another by appealing to the statutes governing the nationality of people born in the British colonies, the third by referring to the statistics which record how religious beliefs are distributed among people of different nationalities. We can for the moment leave open the more contentious question, how we establish our warrants in the fields of morals, mathematics and psychology: for the moment all we are trying to show is the *variability* or *field-dependence* of the backing needed to establish our warrants.

We can make room for this additional element in our argument-pattern by writing it below the bare statement of the warrant for which it serves as backing (B):



This form may not be final, but it will be complex enough for the purpose of our present discussions. To take a particular example: in support of the claim (C) that Harry is a British subject, we appeal to the datum (D) that he was born in Bermuda, and the warrant can then be stated in the form, “A man born in Bermuda may be taken to be a British subject”: since, however, ques-

tions of nationality are always subject to qualifications and conditions, we shall have to insert a qualifying “presumably” (Q) in front of the conclusion, and note the possibility that our conclusion may be rebutted in case (R) it turns out that both his parents were aliens or he has since become a naturalised American. Finally, in case the warrant itself is challenged, its backing can be put in: this will record the terms and the dates of enactment of the Acts of Parliament and other legal provisions governing the nationality of persons born in the British colonies. The result will be an argument set out as follows:



In what ways does the backing of warrants differ from the other elements in our arguments? To begin with the differences between B and W: statements of warrants, we saw, are hypothetical, bridgelike statements, but the backing for warrants can be expressed in the form of categorical statements of fact quite as well as can the data appealed to in direct support of our conclusions. So long as our statements reflect these functional differences explicitly, there is no danger of confusing the backing (B) for a warrant with the warrant itself (W): such confusions arise only when these differences are disguised by our forms of expression. In our present example, at any rate, there need be no difficulty. The fact that the relevant statutes have been validly passed into law, and contain the provisions they do, can be ascertained simply by going to the records of the parliamentary proceedings concerned and to the relevant volumes in the books of statute law: the resulting discovery, that such-and-such a

statute enacted on such-and-such a date contains a provision specifying that people born in the British colonies of suitable parentage shall be entitled to British citizenship, is a straightforward statement of fact. On the other hand, the warrant which we apply *in virtue* of the statute containing this provision is logically of a very different character—"If a man was born in a British colony, he *may be presumed to be* British." Though the facts about the statute may provide all the backing required by this warrant, the explicit statement of the warrant itself is more than a repetition of these facts: it is a general *moral* of a practical character, about the ways in which we can safely argue in view of these facts.

We can also distinguish backing (B) from data (D). Though the data we appeal to in an argument and the backing lending authority to our warrants may alike be stated as straightforward matters-of-fact, the roles which these statements play in our argument are decidedly different. Data of some kind must be produced, if there is to be an argument there at all: a bare conclusion, without any data produced in its support, is no argument. But the backing of the warrants we invoke need not be made explicit—at any rate to begin with: the warrants may be conceded without challenge, and their backing left understood. Indeed, if we demanded the credentials of all warrants at sight and never let one pass unchallenged, argument could scarcely begin. Jones puts forward an argument invoking warrant W_1 , and Smith challenges that warrant; Jones is obliged, as a lemma, to produce another argument in the hope of establishing the acceptability of the first warrant, but in the course of this lemma employs a second warrant W_2 ; Smith challenges the credentials of this second warrant in turn; and so the game goes on. Some warrants must be accepted provisionally without further challenge, if argument is to be open to us in the field in question: we should not even know what sort of data were of the slightest relevance to a conclusion, if we had not at least a provisional idea of the warrants acceptable in the situation confronting us. The existence of considerations such as would establish the acceptability of the most reliable warrants is something we are entitled to take for granted.

Finally, a word about the ways in which B differs from Q and R: these are too obvious to need expanding upon, since the grounds for regarding a warrant as generally acceptable are clearly one thing, the force which the warrant lends to a conclusion another, and the sorts of exceptional circumstance which may in particular cases rebut the presumptions the warrant creates a third. They correspond, in our example, to the three statements, (i) that the statutes about British nationality *have in fact* been validly passed into law, and say this: . . . , (ii) that Harry *may be presumed* to be a British subject, and (iii) that Harry, having recently become a naturalised American, *is no longer covered* by these statutes.

One incidental point should be made, about the interpretation to be put upon the symbols in our pattern of argument: this may throw light on a slightly puzzling example which we came across when discussing Kneale's views on probability. Consider the arrow joining D and C. It may seem natural to suggest at first that this arrow should be read as "so" in one direction and as "because" in the other. Other interpretations are however possible. As we saw earlier, the step from the information that Jones has Bright's Disease to the conclusion that he cannot be expected to live to eighty does not reverse perfectly: we find it natural enough to say, "Jones cannot be expected to live to eighty, *because* he has Bright's Disease," but the fuller statement, "Jones cannot be expected to live to eighty, *because* the probability of his living that long is low, *because* he has Bright's Disease," strikes us as cumbersome and artificial, for it puts in an extra step which is trivial and unnecessary. On the other hand, we do not mind saying, "Jones has Bright's Disease, *so* the chances of his living to eighty are slight, *so* he cannot be expected to live that long," for the last clause is (so to speak) an *inter alia* clause—it states one of the many particular morals one can draw from the middle clause, which tells us his general expectation of life.

So also in our present case: reading along the arrow from right to left or from left to right we can normally say both "C, because D" and "D, so C." But it may sometimes happen that some more general conclusion than C may be war-

ranted, given D: where this is so, we shall often find it natural to write, not only “D, so C,” but also “D, so C’, so C,” C’ being the more general conclusion warranted in view of data D, from which in turn we infer *inter alia* that C. Where this is the case, our “so” and “because” are no longer reversible: if we now read the argument backwards the statement we get—“C, because C’, because D”—is again more cumbersome than the situation really requires.

AMBIGUITIES IN THE SYLLOGISM

The time has come to compare the distinctions we have found of practical importance in the layout and criticism of arguments with those which have traditionally been made in books on the theory of logic: let us start by seeing how our present distinctions apply to the syllogism or syllogistic argument. For the purposes of our present argument we can confine our attention to one of the many forms of syllogism—that represented by the time-honoured example:

Socrates is a man;
All men are mortal;
So Socrates is mortal.

This type of syllogism has certain special features. The first premiss is “singular” and refers to a particular individual, while the second premiss alone is “universal.” Aristotle himself was, of course, much concerned with syllogisms in which both the premisses were universal, since to his mind many of the arguments within scientific theory must be expected to be of this sort. But we are interested primarily in arguments by which general propositions are applied to justify particular conclusions about individuals; so this initial limitation will be convenient. Many of the conclusions we reach will, in any case, have an obvious application—*mutatis mutandis*—to syllogisms of other types. We can begin by asking the question “What corresponds in the syllogism to our distinction between data, warrant, and backing?” If we press this question, we shall find that the apparently innocent forms used in syllogistic arguments turn out to have a hidden complexity. This internal complexity is comparable with that

we observed in the case of modally-qualified conclusions: here, as before, we shall be obliged to disentangle two distinct things—the force of universal premisses, when regarded as warrants, and the backing on which they depend for their authority.

In order to bring these points clearly to light, let us keep in view not only the two universal premisses on which logicians normally concentrate—“All A’s are B’s” and “No A’s are B’s”—but also two other forms of statement which we probably have just as much occasion to use in practice—“Almost all A’s are B’s” and “Scarcely any A’s are B’s.” The internal complexity of such statements can be illustrated first, and most clearly, in the latter cases.

Consider, for instance, the statement, “Scarcely any Swedes are Roman Catholics.” This statement can have two distinct aspects: both of them are liable to be operative at once when the statement figures in an argument, but they can nevertheless be distinguished. To begin with, it may serve as a simple statistical report: in that case, it can equally well be written in the fuller form, “The proportion of Swedes who are Roman Catholics is less than (say) 2%”—to which we may add a parenthetical reference to the source of our information, “(According to the tables in *Whittaker’s Almanac*).” Alternatively, the same statement may serve as a genuine inference-warrant: in that case, it will be natural to expand it rather differently, so as to obtain the more candid statement, “A Swede can be taken almost certainly not to be a Roman Catholic.”

So long as we look at the single sentence “Scarcely any Swedes are Roman Catholics” by itself, this distinction may appear trifling enough: but if we apply it to the analysis of an argument in which this appears as one premiss, we obtain results of some significance. So let us construct an argument of quasi-syllogistic form, in which this statement figures in the position of a “major premiss.” This argument could be, for instance, the following:

Petersen is a Swede;
Scarcely any Swedes are Roman Catholic;
So, almost certainly, Petersen is not a Roman Catholic.

The conclusion of this argument is only tentative, but in other respects the argument is exactly like a syllogism.

As we have seen, the second of these statements can be expanded in each of two ways, so that it becomes either "The proportion of Swedes who are Roman Catholics is less than 2%," or else, "A Swede can be taken almost certainly not to be a Roman Catholic." Let us now see what happens if we substitute each of these two expanded versions in turn for the second of our three original statements. In one case we obtain the argument:

Petersen is a Swede;
A Swede can be taken almost certainly not to be a Roman Catholic;
So, almost certainly, Petersen is not a Roman Catholic.

Here the successive lines correspond in our terminology to the statement of a datum (D), a warrant (W), and a conclusion (C). On the other hand, if we make the alternative substitution, we obtain:

Petersen is a Swede;
The proportion of Roman Catholic Swedes is less than 2%;
So, almost certainly, Petersen is not a Roman Catholic.

In this case we again have the same datum and conclusion, but the second line now states the backing (B) for the warrant (W), which is itself left unstated.

For tidiness' sake, we may now be tempted to abbreviate these two expanded versions. If we do so, we can obtain respectively the two arguments:

(D) Petersen is a Swede;
(W) A Swede is almost certainly not a Roman Catholic;
So, (C) Petersen is almost certainly not a Roman Catholic;

and,

(D) Petersen is a Swede;
(B) The proportion of Roman Catholic Swedes is minute;

So, (C) Petersen is almost certainly not a Roman Catholic.

The relevance of our distinction to the traditional conception of "formal validity" should already be becoming apparent, and we shall return to the subject shortly.

Turning to the form "No A's are B's" (e.g., "No Swedes are Roman Catholics"), we can make a similar distinction. This form of statement also can be employed in two alternative ways, either as a statistical report, or as an inference-warrant. It can serve simply to report a statistician's discovery—say, that the proportion of Roman Catholic Swedes is in fact zero; or alternatively it can serve to justify the drawing of conclusions in argument, becoming equivalent to the explicit statement, "A Swede can be taken almost certainly not to be a Roman Catholic." Corresponding interpretations are again open to us if we look at an argument which includes our sample statement as the universal premiss. Consider the argument:

Petersen is a Swede;
No Swedes are Roman Catholics;
So, certainly, Petersen is not a Roman Catholic.

This can be understood in two ways; we may write it in the form:

Petersen is a Swede;
The proportion of Roman Catholic Swedes is zero;
So, certainly, Petersen is not a Roman Catholic,

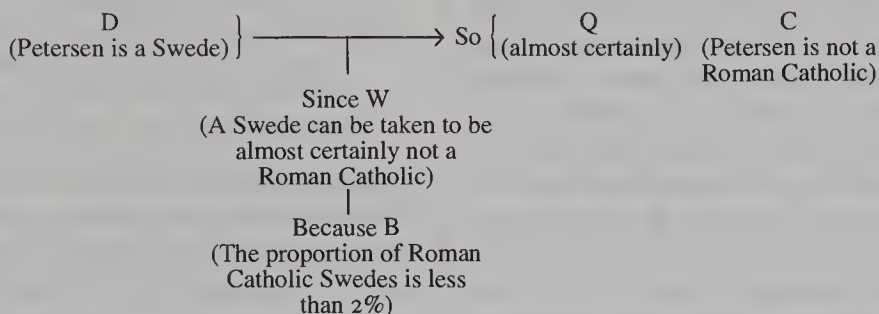
or alternatively in the form:

Petersen is a Swede;
A Swede is certainly not a Roman Catholic;
So, certainly, Petersen is not a Roman Catholic.

Here again the first formulation amounts, in our terminology, to putting the argument in the form "D, B, so C"; while the second formulation is equivalent to putting it in the form "D, W, so C." So, whether we are concerned with a "scarcely any . . ." argument or a "no . . ." argument, the customary form of expression will tend in either case to conceal from us the distinction between an inference-warrant and its backing. The same will be true in the case of "all" and "nearly all": there, too, the distinction between saying "Every, or nearly every single A *has been found* to be a B" and say-

ing “An A *can be taken*, certainly or almost certainly, to be a B” is concealed by the over-simple form of words “All A’s are B’s.” A crucial difference in practical function can in this way pass unmarked and unnoticed.

Our own more complex pattern of analysis, by



contrast, avoids this defect. It leaves no room for ambiguity: entirely separate places are left in the pattern for a warrant and for the backing upon which its authority depends. For instance, our “scarcely any . . .” argument will have to be set out in the following way:

Corresponding transcriptions will be needed for arguments of the other three types.

When we are theorising about the syllogism, in which a central part is played by propositions of the forms “All A’s are B’s” and “No A’s are B’s,” it will accordingly be as well to bear this distinction in mind. The form of statement “All A’s are B’s” is as it stands deceptively simple: it may have in use both the force of a warrant and the factual content of its backing, two aspects which we can bring out by expanding it in different ways. Sometimes it may be used, standing alone, in only one of these two ways at once; but often enough, especially in arguments, we make the single statement do both jobs at once and gloss over, for brevity’s sake, the transition from backing to warrant—from the factual information we are presupposing to the inference-licence which that information justifies us in employing. The practical economy of this habit may be obvious; but for philosophical purposes it leaves the effective structure of our arguments insufficiently candid.

There is a clear parallel between the complexity of “all . . .” statements and that of modal statements. As before, the *force* of the statements is invariant for all fields of argument. When we consider this aspect of the statements, the form “All A’s are B’s” may always be replaced by the form “An A can certainly be taken to be a B”:

this will be true regardless of the field, holding good equally of “All Swedes are Roman Catholics,” “All those born in British colonies are entitled to British citizenship,” “All whales are mammals,” and “All lying is reprehensible”—in each case, the general statement will serve as a warrant authorising an argument of precisely the same form, $D \rightarrow C$, whether the step goes from “Harry was born in Bermuda” to “Harry is a British citizen” or from “Wilkinson told a lie” to “Wilkinson acted reprehensibly.” Nor should there be any mystery about the nature of the step from D to C, since the whole *force* of the general statement “All A’s are B’s,” as so understood, is to authorise just this sort of step.

By contrast, the kind of *grounds* or *backing* supporting a warrant of this form will depend on the field of argument: here the parallel with modal statements is maintained. From this point of view, the important thing is the factual content, not the force of “all . . .” statements. Though a warrant of the form “An A can certainly be taken to be a B” must hold good in any field in virtue of *some* facts, the actual sort of facts in virtue of which any warrant will have currency and authority will vary according to the field of argument within which that warrant operates; so, when we expand the simple form “All A’s are B’s” in order to make explicit the nature of the backing it is used to express, the expansion we

must make will also depend upon the field with which we are concerned. In one case, the statement will become "The proportion of A's found to be B's is 100%"; in another, "A's are ruled by statute to count unconditionally as B's"; in a third, "The class of B's includes taxonomically the entire class of A's"; and in a fourth, "The practice of doing A leads to the following intolerable consequences, etc." Yet, despite the striking differences between them, all these elaborate propositions are expressed on occasion in the compact and simple form "All A's are B's."

Similar distinctions can be made in the case of the forms, "Nearly all A's are B's," "Scarcely any A's are B's," and "No A's are B's." Used to express warrants, these differ from "All A's are B's" in only one respect, that where before we wrote "certainly" we must now write "almost certainly," "almost certainly not" or "certainly not." Likewise, when we are using them to state not warrants but backing: in a statistical case we shall simply have to replace "100%" by (say) "at least 95%," "less than 5%" or "zero"; in the case of a statute replace "unconditionally" by "unless exceptional conditions hold," "only in exceptional circumstances" or "in no circumstances whatever"; and in a taxonomical case replace "the entirety of the class of A's" by "all but a small subclass . . .," "only a small subclass . . ." or "no part of . . ." Once we have filled out the skeletal forms "all . . ." and "no . . ." in this way, the field-dependence of the backing for our warrants is as clear as it could be. . . .

ANALYTIC AND SUBSTANTIAL ARGUMENTS

This distinction is best approached by way of a preamble. We remarked some way back that an argument expressed in the form "Datum; warrant; so conclusion" can be set out in a formally valid manner, regardless of the field to which it belongs; but this could never be done, it appeared, for arguments of the form "Datum; backing for warrant; so conclusion." To return to our stock example: if we are given information about Harry's birthplace, we may be able to draw a conclusion about his nationality, and defend it

with a formally valid argument of the form (D; W; so C). But the warrant we apply in this formally valid argument rests in turn for its authority on facts about the enactment and provisions of certain statutes, and we can therefore write out the argument in the alternative form (D; B; so C), i.e.:

Harry was born in Bermuda;
The relevant statutes (W₁ . . .) provide that people born in the colonies of British parents are entitled to British citizenship;
So, presumably, Harry is a British citizen.

When we choose this form, there is no question of claiming that the validity of the argument is evident simply from the formal relations between the three statements in it. Stating the backing for our warrant in such a case inevitably involves mentioning Acts of Parliament and the like, and these references destroy the formal elegance of the argument. In other fields, too, explicitly mentioning the backing for our warrant—whether this takes the form of statistical reports, appeals to the results of experiments, or references to taxonomical systems—will prevent us from writing the argument so that its validity shall be manifest from its formal properties alone.

As a general rule, therefore, we can set out in a formally valid manner arguments of the form "D; W; so C" alone: arguments of the form "D; B; so C" cannot be so expressed. There is, however, one rather special class of arguments which appears at first sight to break this general rule, and these we shall in due course christen *analytic* arguments. As an illustration we may take the following:

Anne is one of Jack's sisters;
All Jack's sisters have red hair;
So, Anne has red hair.

Arguments of this type have had a special place in the history of logic, and we shall have to pay close attention to them: it has not always been recognised how rare, in practice, arguments having their special characteristics are.

As a first move, let us expand this argument as we have already done those of other types. Writing the major premiss as a statement of backing, we obtain:

Anne is one of Jack's sisters;
Each one of Jack's sisters has (been checked individually to have) red hair;
So, Anne has red hair.

Alternatively, writing warrant in place of backing, we have:

Anne is one of Jack's sisters;
Any sister of Jack's will (i.e., may be taken to) have red hair;
So, Anne has red hair.

This argument is exceptional in the following respect. If each one of the girls has been checked individually to have red hair, then Anne's hair colour has been specifically checked in the process. In this case, accordingly, the backing of our warrant includes explicitly the information which we are presenting as our conclusion: indeed, one might very well replace the word "so" before the conclusion by the phrase "in other words," or "that is to say." In such a case, to accept the datum and the backing is *thereby* to accept implicitly the conclusion also; if we string datum, backing and conclusion together to form a single sentence, we end up with an actual tautology—"Anne is one of Jack's sisters and each one of Jack's sisters has red hair *and also* Anne has red hair." So, for once, not only the (D; W; so C) argument but also the (D; B; so C) argument can—it appears—be stated in a formally valid manner.

Most of the arguments we have practical occasion to make use of are, one need hardly say, not of this type. We make claims about the future, and back them by reference to our experience of how things have gone in the past; we make assertions about a man's feelings, or about his legal status, and back them by references to his utterances and gestures, or to his place of birth and to the statutes about nationality; we adopt moral positions, and pass aesthetic judgements, and declare support for scientific theories or political causes, in each case producing as grounds for our conclusion statements of quite other logical types than the conclusion itself. Whenever we do any of these things, there can be no question of the conclusion's being regarded as a mere restatement in other words of something already stated

implicitly in the datum and the backing: though the argument may be formally valid when expressed in the form "Datum; warrant; so conclusion," the step we take in passing to the conclusion from the information we have to rely on—datum and backing together—is a substantial one. In most of our arguments, therefore, the statement obtained by writing "Datum; backing; *and also* conclusion" will be far from a tautology—obvious it may be, where the legitimacy of the step involved is transparent, but tautological it will not.

In what follows, I shall call arguments of these two types respectively *substantial* and *analytic*. An argument from D to C will be called analytic if and only if the backing for the warrant authorising it includes, explicitly or implicitly, the information conveyed in the conclusion itself. Where this is so, the statement "D, B, and also C" will, as a rule, be tautological. (This rule is, however, subject to some exceptions which we shall study shortly.) Where the backing for the warrant does not contain the information conveyed in the conclusion, the statement "D, B, and also C" will never be a tautology, and the argument will be a substantial one.

The need for some distinction of this general sort is obvious enough, and certain aspects of it have forced themselves on the attention of logicians, yet its implications have never been consistently worked out. This task has been neglected for at least two reasons. To begin with, the internal complexity of statements of the form "All A's are B's" helps to conceal the full difference between analytic and substantial arguments. Unless we go to the trouble of expanding these statements, so that it becomes manifest whether they are to be understood as stating warrants or the backing for warrants, we overlook the great variety of arguments susceptible of presentation in the traditional syllogistic form: we have to bring out the distinction between backing and warrant explicitly in any particular case if we are to be certain what sort of argument we are concerned with on that occasion. In the second place, it has not been recognised how exceptional genuinely analytic arguments are, and how difficult it is to produce an argument which will be analytic

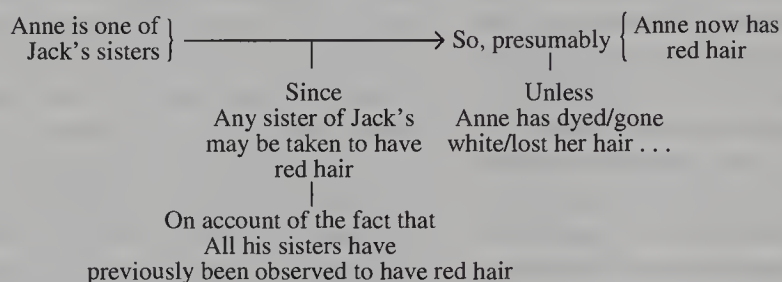
past all question: if logicians had recognised these facts, they might have been less ready to treat analytic arguments as a model which other types of arguments were to emulate.

Even our chosen example, about the colour of Anne's hair, may easily slip out of the analytic into the substantial class. If the backing for our step from datum, "Anne is Jack's sister," to conclusion, "Anne has red hair," is just the information that each of Jack's sisters has *in the past* been observed to have red hair, then—one might argue—the argument is a substantial one even as it stands. After all, dyeing is not unknown. So ought we not to rewrite the argument in such a

way as to bring out its substantial character openly? On this interpretation the argument will become:

Datum—Anne is one of Jack's sisters;
 Backing—All Jack's sisters have previously been observed to have red hair;
 Conclusion—So, presumably, Anne now has red hair.

The warrant relied on, for which the backing is here stated, will be of the form, "Any sister of Jack's may be taken to have red hair": for the reasons given, this warrant can be regarded as establishing no more than a presumption:



It seems, then, that I can defend my conclusion about Anne's hair with an unquestionably analytic argument only if at this very moment I have all of Jack's sisters in sight, and so can back my warrant with the assurance that every one of Jack's sisters has red hair at this moment. But, in such a situation, what need is there of an *argument* to establish the colour of Anne's hair? And of what relevance is the other sisters' hair colour? The thing to do now is use one's eyes, not hunt up a chain of reasoning. If the purpose of an argument is to establish conclusions about which we are not entirely confident by relating them back to other information about which we have greater assurance, it begins to be a little doubtful whether any genuine, practical argument could *ever* be properly analytic.

Mathematical arguments alone seem entirely safe: given the assurance that every sequence of six or more integers between 1 and 100 contains at least one prime number, and also the information that none of the numbers from 62 up to 66 is a prime, I can thankfully conclude that the number 67 is a prime; and that is an argument whose validity neither time nor the flux of change can call in question. This unique character of mathematical arguments is significant. Pure mathematics is possibly the only intellectual activity whose problems and solutions are "above time." A mathematical problem is not a quandary; its solution has no time limit; it involves no steps of substance. As a model argument for formal logicians to analyse, it may be seducingly elegant, but it could hardly be less representative.

From *Logic and the Criticism of Arguments*

It is time to state these points in more constructive terms. For this purpose, let me present three theses.

1. The rational criticism of arguments involves two distinct arts: one “analytical,” the other “topical.” The techniques of the first art are concerned with the question, “Am I arguing *rightly* (or impeccably)?” —i.e., Am I avoiding formal inconsistencies, and other errors of intellectual accountability? Those of the second are concerned with the question, “Are these the *right* (or relevant) arguments to use when dealing with this kind of problem, in this situation?” —i.e., Are they of a kind appropriate to the substantive demands of the problem and situation? The art of reasoning “rightly” is one concern of *formal logic*, with the help of which we recognize internal contradictions and similar formal errors. But the art of identifying and explaining the nature and mode of operation of “right” arguments is a field for which professional philosophers today no longer have a name. Historically, it was called by a dozen different names — among others, *topics*, *argumentation*, *rhetoric*, *organon*, and *method*. Today, this art is coming to be known as “informal” logic; but there are disadvantages to this *negative* name, which defines its scope only by what it is not, viz., “formal.” To make its actual scope and significance clearer, I would for myself prefer a more positive name, such as *substantive* logic.

2. The two arts quite properly employ distinct vocabularies. The language of formal logic comprises terms like “premise” and “conclusion,” “entailment” and “principle of inference,” “valid” and “invalid,” “necessary” and “contradictory”: the language of substantive logic comprises terms like “grounds” and “claim,” “support” and “warrant,” “sound” and “shaky,” “presumably” and “unfounded.” Far from these vocabularies having a significant overlap, it is well to keep them distinct; for, once again, the *arguments* to which they are addressed are not “arguments” in the same sense. The formal con-

nections in a string of propositions are *strong or weak*, in the sense of “valid” or “invalid”; and a string of propositions is an “argument” in my first sense. The substantive support which an attorney or scientist gives a claim, by producing the particular grounds he does, in the forum and at the time he does, is *strong or weak*, in the sense of “sound” or “shaky”; and, by stating his case as he does, each man presents an “argument” in my second, human interaction sense.

There are just a few, very general terms that have a use in both these arts: for example, the term “fallacy.” In thinking about these borderline issues, however, it becomes doubly prudent to keep in mind the differences between formal and substantive criticism. For instance, people writing introductory logic texts are sometimes tempted to equate the term “fallacious” with the term “invalid”; and this confuses the elementary student, by suggesting that fallacies are typically formal blunders, rather than (as they more often are) errors of substance. Scientific arguments may successfully use theoretical “models,” just as legal arguments successfully use theoretical “interpretations.” Yet, in both fields, arguments are also sometimes rejected, as appealing to “false analogies”; and, formally speaking, both the successful and the fallacious arguments are quite similar. What mark fallacious analogies off from fruitful models and theories, in practice, are matter of *substance*: e.g., the fact that the “theory” or “model” in question is *warranted* by deeper underlying principles, whereas by contrast the corresponding appeals to “mere analogy” are “unwarranted.”

3. The art of criticizing arguments on “topical” rather than “analytical” grounds is one in which (as Aristotle insisted from the outset) the central issues can be faced, and formulated, only if we address ourselves to *the nature of the case*: i.e., to the general demands of the problems currently under consideration, and the “forums” that are available for resolving them.

In Aristotelian usage, such issues are issues of *prudence*. In legal contexts, they overlap into *jurisprudence*: there, they are concerned with the “standards of proof” required in judicial proceedings of different kinds, the “rules of evidence” relevant in different branches of law, and the demands of “due process” that govern the conduct of different sorts of cases. As at earlier stages in the field of rhetoric and practical reasoning, lawyers today continue to pay more explicit attention to their methods of arguing than professionals in many other fields; so they have much clearer ideas than (say) scientists or physicians about the substantive tests which must be satisfied, if legal arguments are to serve the goals of the legal enterprise.

Does this mean that the “topical” aspects of legal reasoning can be understood only by trained lawyers? The answer to that question is not entirely obvious. We might equally ask, Can the corresponding aspects of medical and scientific reasoning be understood only by trained physicians and scientists? Just so long as such issues are treated as extensions of formal logic, it can be argued that they are philosophical not professional; but, if we view them rather as matters of substance, it is less clear that philosophers can monopolize them. Indeed, there has been a lively debate between those philosophers of science such as Popper and Lakatos, who still insist on the right to lay down methodological “statute law” to working scientists, and those others, like Polanyi and myself, who see scientific methods of argumentation as requiring more of a “common law” analysis.

While some detailed points of method in both law and science may be too refined for any but professionals, the *general pattern* of reasoning in both fields is quite intelligible to lay people as well. Logicians and philosophers also have something of their own to contribute, to the extent that the substantive merits and defects of disciplinary reasoning is discussed (as in Aristotle’s *Topics*) on a *comparative* basis. In what respects, for instance, do “theories” play the same kinds of part in law as in science? To what extent are appeals to authority admissible or fallacious in different fields of reasoning on the same occasions, and for the same reasons? And on what condi-

tions can arguments about questions of “causation” in medicine be assimilated to those about “causality” in pure science?

None of those questions is “proper to” law or science or medicine taken alone: still, none of them can be answered by someone who has no knowledge whatever (however general) of how people in fact think, argue and resolve problems in those fields. In short, the topical criticism of legal, scientific, and other technical arguments can become the substantive mode of inquiry it needs to be, only if the discussion of practical reasoning is made into a *collaborative* debate: one in which philosophers are prepared to listen to lawyers, scientists, and others, instead of merely lecturing them! Parts of the resulting debate may be somewhat technical: e.g., statistical analyses of the design of experiments, or jurisprudential discussions of the minuter rules of evidence. But a common framework of analysis, at least, covers the whole territory of practical argumentation; and the outcome of such a collaborative analysis would do for us, in our own day, just the kinds of things that Aristotle, Hermagoras and the medieval rhetoricians aimed at in earlier times.

To close, let me speak briefly about the philosophical and educational implications of the positions for which I have been arguing here. First, let me say something about the current controversy over the *rationality* of scientific argument, between Karl Popper and Paul Feyerabend.

1. I hinted earlier that, since the seventeenth century, a revival of the Platonist approach to argumentation has led professional philosophers to expel all the functional aspects of “rationality” from consideration; to equate “rationality” with “logicality”; and to look for *formal* criteria to judge the “rationality” of all arguments.

One glance at the Popper-Feyerabend dispute confirms this reading of the matter. Both men assume that the arguments by which scientists arrive at novel discoveries can be genuinely “rational,” only if they satisfy certain formal conditions, at least of a weak enough kind. Otherwise, such discoveries will merely be the products of good fortune, chance, irrational speculation, or pure intuition. Popper, for his part, still assumes that we can state such formal conditions in ad-

vance; and that scientific knowledge can thus be elevated—however hypothetically and fallibly—to the status of *episteme*: only so can he be satisfied that the procedures of science are truly “rational.”

Underlining the Platonist element in his position, Popper asserts that scientific knowledge is essentially concerned with a Third World of *eternal entities*, which are neither “physical objects,” nor “psychological thoughts” in the scientists’ heads. By contrast, Feyerabend believes that no such conditions can be found, still less imposed on the work of actual scientists; while Popper’s “Third World” is for him a reactionary myth. But, instead of arguing that it was a mistake to look for such formal conditions of rationality, Feyerabend strikes a disillusioned pose, and concludes (in the spirit of Nietzsche) that science can make progress, only if scientists deliberately reject all *method* in favor of an *irrational* “Scientific anarchism.”

Here, Karl Popper once again plays the part of the Utopian: to be a scientist one must believe in the invisible Third World, and only a scientist who shares that belief is truly “rational.” Paul Feyerabend defines a counter-position, but states it in the same terms: only, because (in his eyes) the Third World can have no practical relevance to the actual work of science, he calls on us to give up the idea that science is rational as a comfortable illusion. Both men take it for granted that we know what demands “rationality” makes of science, *in advance* of looking to see how the arguments of science function in actual practice. Neither of them has the patience to wait for a first-hand examination of “the nature of the case” to clarify our ideas about what kind of thing “scientific rationality” could in prac-

tice be. For both of them, Aristotle, Hermagoras and the rhetoricians wrote in vain.

2. Finally, let me turn to the educational implications of my argument. Any revival of “substantive logic,” “rhetoric,” “practical reasoning,” or “theory of argumentation” (call it what you will) requires both philosophers, and those whose work the philosophers reflect on—lawyers and physicians, scientists and critics—to modify their present claims to full disciplinary autonomy. The substantive analysis of practical argumentation is worthwhile only if it is *collaborative*, with philosophers and practitioners working together to establish, firstly, how reasons function in all these different fields of work, secondly, what are the accepted procedures and forums for the resulting arguments and, lastly, what standards are available for judging the “success” and “failure” of work in one field or another.

The differences between the ways we interpret issues, in one field or another, are *ineliminable*, and also *functional*. They cannot be explained away by formal devices: e.g., by inventing separate formal systems of alethic, deontic, or epistemic logic for every purpose and field. Practical argumentation has both field invariant and field dependent features. Some topical terms (e.g., “grounds” and “warrants”) have a use in most fields of argument; more specialized terms (e.g., numerical “probability”) are relevant only in very few fields. In between, a middle category of terms of topical analysis—“kind” and “degree,” “fallacy” and “analogy,” “cause” and “definition”—apply in varying ways as we move from one field to another. These are the notions which philosophers and practitioners can master fully only by pooling their efforts.

Michel Foucault

1926–1984

Michel Foucault was born in Poitiers, France, and was educated in Paris at the École Normale Supérieure and the University of Paris, Sorbonne, where he took degrees in philosophy (1948), psychology (1950), and psychiatry (1952). For the next several years, he worked in psychiatric hospitals and taught psychopathology at the École Normale and elsewhere. In 1961 he published *Madness and Civilization*, which was accepted as his Ph.D. dissertation. In this book, Foucault argues that the source of madness should be sought not in the pathology of the individual but in the history of definitions of reason and in social divisions that follow these stipulations.

Following publication of this book, Foucault served in several prestigious academic posts, which culminated in his election to the Collège de France in 1970, where he served as the chair of History of Systems of Thought until his death. During the 1960s, he wrote extensively about the complex interconnections between the historical development of knowledge, its formulation in discourse, and the effects of knowledge upon social practices. In the 1970s, Foucault shifted his attention to prisons, the treatment of prisoners, and the social history of imprisonment. He was actively involved in the prisoners' rights movement in France and published his study of incarceration, *Discipline and Punish*, in 1975.

Foucault's last major project focuses on the history of sexuality; it studies the ways in which social institutions exercise power over sexual identity and attitudes. Foucault's approach to historiography and his reconceptions of the relationships among language, knowledge, and social organization have made him a central figure in twentieth-century philosophy. Moreover, his work on the effects of discourse raises serious questions for any future definition of rhetoric.

In "The Order of Discourse" (1971; excerpted here), Foucault remarks that the tendency of Western philosophy since the demise of the Sophists has been to deny discourse its own reality and to think of discourse as the dress of thought or the conveyer of preexisting meaning. Foucault calls this tendency the "will to truth." The desire to locate truth in something other than discourse itself has, says Foucault, spawned several mistaken beliefs. One is that the author or speaker is the source of discourse and that the speaker's task is "to animate the empty forms of language." Another is that nature is the source of discourse, which merely names things in the world. Disciplines and institutions founded on such beliefs subscribe to the will to truth and reinforce the idea that the rules of discourse are subsidiary to the expression of thought. Discourse, they say, facilitates the exchange of knowledge but does not create it.

Foucault's project in "The Order of Discourse" and the earlier *Archaeology of Knowledge* (1969; excerpted here) is to question the will to truth and to "restore to discourse its character as an event." To do so, he reverses the order of the relationship between discourse and what is traditionally taken to be its source: That is, he treats author, meaning, and knowledge as a function of discourse, not as its source.

He therefore examines discourse as a practice, a form of action, and not as a reflection of the world.

Foucault's theory of discourse describes the relationship between language and knowledge; the functions of disciplines, institutions, and other discourse communities; the ways that particular statements come to have truth value; the constraints on the production of discourse about objects of knowledge; the effects of discursive practices on social action; and the uses of discourse to exercise power. *The Archaeology of Knowledge* is Foucault's most extensive exposition of this theory. Here, Foucault attempts to describe the methods and assumptions that guided his earlier books and to sketch a theory of discourse and knowledge that will guide his further work. He begins by discussing historiography and the dangers of easy assumptions about the continuity of the development of ideas. He then looks at how knowledge emerges from discourse.

What, Foucault asks, connects statements about an object of knowledge? He rejects the answer that it is the object itself: "It is not enough for us to open our eyes, to pay attention, or to be aware, for new objects suddenly to light up and emerge out of the ground. . . . [T]he object does not await in limbo the order that will free it and enable it to become embodied in a visible and prolix objectivity; it does not preexist itself."¹ Knowledge is created not by the act of observing, Foucault says, but through "relations . . . between institutions, economic and social processes, behavioral patterns, systems of norms, techniques, types of classification, modes of characterization; and these relations are not present in the object."² This is not to deny the existence of phenomena but to say that what we know of them is a function of the needs or desires of society and institutions and of available methods (which may be different in different communities) of coming to know something.

When discourse about knowledge is produced, Foucault asks (echoing Friedrich Nietzsche), who is speaking? What institutional role, legal status, social privilege, or educational or other certification determines who may claim the right to speak authoritatively? Only after we have established the perspective of the discourse community that authorizes such speakers and settings, Foucault says, is it possible to look at the forms of reasoning that may have been used in the statements. To do otherwise would be "to see discourse as a phenomenon of expression—the verbal translation of a previously established synthesis."³ The authority of the speaker, the authorizing powers, and the mode of expression are mutually defining, and all are part of the larger discursive formation that makes it possible to speak of certain objects at all. "Thus conceived, discourse is not the majestically unfolding manifestation of a thinking, knowing, speaking subject," says Foucault, "but, on the contrary, a totality, in which the dispersion of the subject and his discontinuity with himself may be determined."⁴

¹See p. 1439 in this book.

²See p. 1439 in this book.

³See p. 1444 in this book.

⁴See p. 1444 in this book.

Though Foucault seems eager to avoid traditional rhetorical categories, he notes that an analysis of discourse must examine the apparatus of conventions that disciplines and other discourse communities use for defining, comparing, and proving concepts. Such analysis must also look at standards of reasonableness and judgment, at standards of reference to common knowledge and to the history of the community, and at communal rules for the construction of texts.

Foucault also examines the “strategies” of discourse, by which he means the functions of discourse in different periods or communities. Part of the description of discursive practices, for Foucault, must include the effects of discourse in society and the means by which those effects are brought to bear, through teaching, in the formation of laws, or in the creation of disciplines. In *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, Foucault admits that describing the effects of discourse is the most difficult aspect of discursive formations, and in later books he takes up the idea under the rubric of “power,” through which he questions the relation of discourse to objects of observation, judgment, analysis, legal control, physical control, naming, management, regulation, and modification.

Foucault concludes that “there is no knowledge without a particular discursive practice, and any discursive practice may be defined by the knowledge that it forms.”⁵ There is no transcendental continuity to knowledge, in misty origins, in experience, or in the speaker. Knowledge is the function of a material discourse in a social order. Foucault’s project, as he defines it, is

an attempt to reveal discursive practices in their complexity and density; to show that to speak is to do something—something other than to express what one thinks; to translate what one knows, and something other than to play with the structures of a language (*langue*); to show that to add a statement to a pre-existing series of statements is to perform a complicated and costly gesture, which involves conditions (and not only a situation, a context, and motives), and rules (not the logical and linguistic rules of construction); to show that a change in the order of discourse does not presuppose “new ideas,” a little invention and creativity, a different mentality, but transformations in a practice, perhaps also in neighboring practices, and in their common articulation.⁶

Though Foucault avoids talking about rhetoric, preferring *discourse* as his comprehensive term, his theory addresses a number of ideas that are central to modern rhetoric. He makes a powerful argument that discourse (for which we may read *rhetoric*) is epistemic; he forcefully states that discourse is a form of social action; and he enriches and complicates the notion of context with a network of archives, disciplines, institutions, and social practices that control the production of discourse. Finally, he demonstrates the “microphysics of power” that resides in the knowledge that is disseminated in discourse and embodied in laws, regulations, texts, and in the very architecture of hospitals, schools, and prisons, showing how

⁵Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge and The Discourse on Language* (1969; trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith, New York: Harper, 1972), p. 183.

⁶Foucault, p. 209.

seemingly diverse discourses come together in formations that affect social practices and social controls. “It is in discourse,” he says in *The History of Sexuality*, “that power and knowledge are joined together.”⁷

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⁷Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Random House, 1978), p. 100.

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From *The Archaeology of Knowledge*

Part II *The Discursive Regularities*

CHAPTER 3 THE FORMATION OF OBJECTS

We must now list the various directions that lie open to us, and see whether this notion of "rules of formation"¹—of which little more than a rough sketch has so far been provided—can be given real content. Let us look first at the formation of objects. And in order to facilitate our analysis, let us take as an example the discourse of psychopathology from the nineteenth century onwards—a chronological break that is easy enough to accept in a first approach to the subject. There are enough signs to indicate it, but let us take just two of these: the establishment at the beginning of the century of a new mode of exclusion and confinement of the madman in a psychiatric hospital; and the possibility of tracing certain present-day

notions back to Esquirol, Heinroth, or Pinel (paranoia can be traced back to monomania, the intelligence quotient to the initial notion of imbecility, general paralysis to chronic encephalitis, character neurosis to nondelirious madness); whereas if we try to trace the development of psychopathology beyond the nineteenth century, we soon lose our way, the path becomes confused, and the projection of Du Laurens or even Van Swieten on the pathology of Kraepelin or Bleuler provides no more than chance coincidences. The objects with which psychopathology has dealt since this break in time are very numerous, mostly very new, but also very precarious, subject to change and, in some cases, to rapid disappearance: in addition to motor disturbances, hallucinations, and speech disorders (which were already regarded as manifestations of madness, although they were recognized, delimited, described, and analyzed in a different way), objects appeared that belonged to hitherto unused registers: minor behavioral disorders, sexual aberrations and disturbances, the phenomena of suggestion and hypnosis, lesions of the central nervous system, deficiencies of intellectual or motor adaptation, criminality. And on the basis of each of these registers a variety of objects were named, circumscribed, analyzed, then rectified, redefined, challenged, erased. Is it possible to lay down the rule to which their appearance was sub-

Translated by A. M. Sheridan Smith.

¹In the preceding chapters, Foucault rejects the usual ways of talking about the contexts that are called upon to explain the meaning of statements—tradition, discipline, author, and genre, for example. He will try instead, he says, to describe statements, their environments, and "the conditions of existence" for statements in a "discursive formation." He refers to these conditions of existence (which he has not yet discussed) as "rules of formation." [Ed.]

ject? Is it possible to discover according to which nondeductive system these objects could be juxtaposed and placed in succession to form the fragmented field—showing at certain points great gaps, at others a plethora of information—of psychopathology? What has ruled their existence as objects of discourse?

a. First we must map the first *surfaces* of their *emergence*: show where these individual differences, which, according to the degrees of rationalization, conceptual codes, and types of theory, will be accorded the status of disease, alienation, anomaly, dementia, neurosis or psychosis, degeneration, etc., may emerge, and then be designated and analyzed. These surfaces of emergence are not the same for different societies, at different periods, and in different forms of discourse. In the case of nineteenth-century psychopathology, they were probably constituted by the family, the immediate social group, the work situation, the religious community (which are all normative, which are all susceptible to deviation, which all have a margin of tolerance and a threshold beyond which exclusion is demanded, which all have a mode of designation and a mode of rejecting madness, which all transfer to medicine if not the responsibility for treatment and cure, at least the burden of explanation); although organized according to a specific mode, these surfaces of emergence were not new in the nineteenth century. On the other hand, it was no doubt at this period that new surfaces of appearance began to function: art with its own normativity, sexuality (its deviations in relation to customary prohibitions become for the first time an object of observation, description, and analysis for psychiatric discourse), penalty (whereas in previous periods madness was carefully distinguished from criminal conduct and was regarded as an excuse, criminality itself becomes—and subsequent to the celebrated “homicidal monomanias”—a form of deviance more or less related to madness). In these fields of initial differentiation, in the distances, the discontinuities, and the thresholds that appear within it, psychiatric discourse finds a way of limiting its domain, of defining what it is talking about, of giving it the status of an object—and therefore

of making it manifest, nameable, and describable.

b. We must also describe the authorities of delimitation: in the nineteenth century, medicine (as an institution possessing its own rules, as a group of individuals constituting the medical profession, as a body of knowledge and practice, as an authority recognized by public opinion, the law, and government) became the major authority in society that delimited, designated, named, and established madness as an object; but it was not alone in this: the law and penal law in particular (with the definitions of excuse, nonresponsibility, extenuating circumstances, and with the application of such notions as the *crime passionnel*, heredity, danger to society), the religious authority (in so far as it set itself up as the authority that divided the mystical from the pathological, the spiritual from the corporeal, the supernatural from the abnormal, and in so far as it practiced the direction of conscience with a view to understanding individuals rather than carrying out a casuistical classification of actions and circumstances), literary and art criticism (which in the nineteenth century treated the work less and less as an object of taste that had to be judged, and more and more as a language that had to be interpreted and in which the author’s tricks of expression had to be recognized).

c. Lastly, we must analyze the *grids of specification*: these are the systems according to which the different “kinds of madness” are divided, contrasted, related, regrouped, classified, derived from one another as objects of psychiatric discourse (in the nineteenth century, these grids of differentiation were: the soul, as a group of hierarchized, related, and more or less interpenetrable faculties; the body, as a three-dimensional volume of organs linked together by networks of dependence and communication; the life and history of individuals, as a linear succession of phases, a tangle of traces, a group of potential reactivations, cyclical repetitions; the interplays of neuropsychological correlations as systems of reciprocal projections, and as a field of circular causality).

Such a description is still in itself inadequate. And for two reasons. These planes of emergence,

authorities of delimitation, or forms of specification do not provide objects, fully formed and armed, that the discourse of psychopathology has then merely to list, classify, name, select, and cover with a network of words and sentences: it is not the families—with their norms, their prohibitions, their sensitivity thresholds—that decide who is mad, and present the “patients” to the psychiatrists for analysis and judgement; it is not the legal system itself that hands over certain criminals to psychiatry, that sees paranoia beyond a particular murder, or a neurosis behind a sexual offense. It would be quite wrong to see discourse as a place where previously established objects are laid one after another like words on a page. But the above enumeration is inadequate for a second reason. It has located, one after another, several planes of differentiation in which the objects of discourse may appear. But what relations exist between them? Why this enumeration rather than another? What defined and closed group does one imagine one is circumscribing in this way? And how can one speak of a “system of formation” if one knows only a series of different, heterogeneous determinations, lacking attributable links and relations?

In fact, these two series of questions refer back to the same point. In order to locate that point, let us reexamine the previous example. In the sphere with which psychopathology dealt in the nineteenth century, one sees the very early appearance (as early as Esquirol) of a whole series of objects belonging to the category of delinquency: homicide (and suicide), *crimes passionels*, sexual offenses, certain forms of theft, vagrancy—and then, through them, heredity, the neurogenic environment, aggressive or self-punishing behavior, perversions, criminal impulses, suggestibility, etc. It would be inadequate to say that one was dealing here with the consequences of a discovery: of the sudden discovery by a psychiatrist of a resemblance between criminal and pathological behavior, a discovery of the presence in certain delinquents of the classical signs of alienation, or mental derangement. Such facts lie beyond the grasp of contemporary research: indeed, the problem is how to decide what made them possible, and how these “discoveries” could lead to others that took them up, rectified them,

modified them, or even disproved them. Similarly, it would be irrelevant to attribute the appearance of these new objects to the norms of nineteenth-century bourgeois society, to a reinforced police and penal framework, to the establishment of a new code of criminal justice, to the introduction and use of extenuating circumstances, to the increase in crime. No doubt, all these processes were at work; but they could not of themselves form objects for psychiatric discourse; to pursue the description at this level one would fall short of what one was seeking.

If, in a particular period in the history of our society, the delinquent was psychologized and pathologized, if criminal behavior could give rise to a whole series of objects of knowledge, this was because a group of particular relations was adopted for use in psychiatric discourse. The relation between planes of specification like penal categories and degrees of diminished responsibility, and planes of psychological characterization (faculties, aptitudes, degrees of development or involution, different ways of reacting to the environment, character types, whether acquired, innate, or hereditary). The relation between the authority of medical decision and the authority of judicial decision (a really complex relation since medical decision recognizes absolutely the authority of the judiciary to define crime, to determine the circumstances in which it is committed, and the punishment that it deserves; but reserves the right to analyze its origin and to determine the degree of responsibility involved). The relation between the filter formed by judicial interrogation, police information, investigation, and the whole machinery of judicial information, and the filter formed by the medical questionnaire, clinical examinations, the search for antecedents, and biographical accounts. The relation between the family, sexual and penal norms of the behavior of individuals, and the table of pathological symptoms and diseases of which they are the signs. The relation between therapeutic confinement in hospital (with its own thresholds, its criteria of cure, its way of distinguishing the normal from the pathological) and punitive confinement in prison (with its system of punishment and pedagogy, its criteria of good conduct, improvement, and freedom). These are the relations that, oper-

ating in psychiatric discourse, have made possible the formation of a whole group of various objects.

Let us generalize: in the nineteenth century, psychiatric discourse is characterized not by privileged objects, but by the way in which it forms objects that are in fact highly dispersed. This formation is made possible by a group of relations established between authorities of emergence, delimitation, and specification. One might say, then, that a discursive formation is defined (as far as its objects are concerned, at least) if one can establish such a group; if one can show how any particular object of discourse finds in it its place and law of emergence; if one can show that it may give birth simultaneously or successively to mutually exclusive objects, without having to modify itself.

Hence a certain number of remarks and consequences.

1. The conditions necessary for the appearance of an object of discourse, the historical conditions required if one is to “say anything” about it, and if several people are to say different things about it, the conditions necessary if it is to exist in relation to other objects, if it is to establish with them relations of resemblance, proximity, distance, difference, transformation—as we can see, these conditions are many and imposing. Which means that one cannot speak of anything at any time; it is not easy to say something new; it is not enough for us to open our eyes, to pay attention, or to be aware, for new objects suddenly to light up and emerge out of the ground. But this difficulty is not only a negative one; it must not be attached to some obstacle whose power appears to be, exclusively, to blind, to hinder, to prevent discovery, to conceal the purity of the evidence or the dumb obstinacy of the things themselves; the object does not await in limbo the order that will free it and enable it to become embodied in a visible and prolix objectivity; it does not preexist itself, held back by some obstacle at the first edges of light. It exists under the positive conditions of a complex group of relations.

2. These relations are established between institutions, economic and social processes, behav-

ioral patterns, systems of norms, techniques, types of classification, modes of characterization; and these relations are not present in the object; it is not they that are deployed when the object is being analyzed; they do not indicate the web, the immanent rationality, that ideal nervure that reappears totally or in part when one conceives of the object in the truth of its concept. They do not define its internal constitution, but what enables it to appear, to juxtapose itself with other objects, to situate itself in relation to them, to define its difference, its irreducibility, and even perhaps its heterogeneity, in short, to be placed in a field of exteriority.

3. These relations must be distinguished first from what we might call “primary” relations, and which, independently of all discourse or all object of discourse, may be described between institutions, techniques, social forms, etc. After all, we know very well that relations existed between the bourgeois family and the functioning of judicial authorities and categories in the nineteenth century that can be analyzed in their own right. They cannot always be superposed upon the relations that go to form objects: the relations of dependence that may be assigned to this primary level are not necessarily expressed in the formation of relations that makes discursive objects possible. But we must also distinguish the secondary relations that are formulated in discourse itself: what, for example, the psychiatrists of the nineteenth century could say about the relations between the family and criminality does not reproduce, as we know, the interplay of real dependencies; but neither does it reproduce the interplay of relations that make possible and sustain the objects of psychiatric discourse. Thus a space unfolds articulated with possible discourses: a system of *real* or *primary relations*, a system of *reflexive* or *secondary relations*, and a system of relations that might properly be called *discursive*. The problem is to reveal the specificity of these discursive relations, and their interplay with the other two kinds.

4. Discursive relations are not, as we can see, internal to discourse: they do not connect concepts or words with one another; they do not establish a deductive or rhetorical structure between propositions or sentences. Yet they are not

relations exterior to discourse, relations that might limit it, or impose certain forms upon it, or force it, in certain circumstances, to state certain things. They are, in a sense, at the limit of discourse: they offer it objects of which it can speak, or rather (for this image of offering presupposes that objects are formed independently of discourse), they determine the group of relations that discourse must establish in order to speak of this or that object, in order to deal with them, name them, analyze them, classify them, explain them, etc. These relations characterize not the language (*langue*) used by discourse, nor the circumstances in which it is deployed, but discourse itself as a practice.

We can now complete the analysis and see to what extent it fulfills, and to what extent it modifies, the initial project.

Taking those group figures which, in an insistent but confused way, presented themselves as *psychology, economics, grammar, medicine*, we asked on what kind of unity they could be based: were they simply a reconstruction after the event, based on particular works, successive theories, notions and themes some of which had been abandoned, others maintained by tradition, and again others fated to fall into oblivion only to be revived at a later date? Were they simply a series of linked enterprises?

We sought the unity of discourse in the objects themselves, in their distribution, in the interplay of their differences, in their proximity or distance—in short, in what is given to the speaking subject; and, in the end, we are sent back to a setting-up of relations that characterizes discursive practice itself; and what we discover is neither a configuration, nor a form, but a group of *rules* that are immanent in a practice, and define it in its specificity. We also used, as a point of reference, a unity like *psychopathology*: if we had wanted to provide it with a date of birth and precise limits, it would no doubt have been necessary to discover when the word was first used, to what kind of analysis it could be applied, and how it achieved its separation from neurology on the one hand and psychology on the other. What has emerged is a unity of another type, which does not appear to have the same dates, or the

same surface, or the same articulations, but which may take account of a group of objects for which the term psychopathology was merely a reflexive, secondary, classificatory rubric. Psychopathology finally emerged as a discipline in a constant state of renewal, subject to constant discoveries, criticisms, and corrected errors; the system of formation that we have defined remains stable. But let there be no misunderstanding: it is not the objects that remain constant, nor the domain that they form; it is not even their point of emergence or their mode of characterization; but the relation between the surfaces on which they appear, on which they can be delimited, on which they can be analyzed and specified.

In the descriptions for which I have attempted to provide a theory, there can be no question of interpreting discourse with a view to writing a history of the referent. In the example chosen, we are not trying to find out who was mad at a particular period, or in what his madness consisted, or whether his disturbances were identical with those known to us today. We are not asking ourselves whether witches were unrecognized and persecuted madmen and madwomen, or whether, at a different period, a mystical or aesthetic experience was not unduly medicalized. We are not trying to reconstitute what madness itself might be, in the form in which it first presented itself to some primitive, fundamental, deaf, scarcely articulated² experience, and in the form in which it was later organized (translated, deformed, travestied, perhaps even repressed) by discourses, and the oblique, often twisted play of their operations. Such a history of the referent is no doubt possible; and I have no wish at the outset to exclude any effort to uncover and free these “pre-discursive” experiences from the tyranny of the text. But what we are concerned with here is not to neutralize discourse, to make it the sign of something else, and to pierce through its density in order to reach what remains silently anterior to it, but on the contrary to maintain it in its consistency, to make it emerge in its own complexity. What, in short, we wish to do is to dispense with

²This is written against an explicit theme of my book *Madness and Civilization*, and one that recurs particularly in the Preface. [Au.]

“things.” To “depresentify” them. To conjure up their rich, heavy, immediate plenitude, which we usually regard as the primitive law of a discourse that has become divorced from it through error, oblivion, illusion, ignorance, or the inertia of beliefs and traditions, or even the perhaps unconscious desire not to see and not to speak. To substitute for the enigmatic treasure of “things” anterior to discourse, the regular formation of objects that emerge only in discourse. To define these *objects* without reference to the *ground*, the *foundation of things*, but by relating them to the body of rules that enable them to form as objects of a discourse and thus constitute the conditions of their historical appearance. To write a history of discursive objects that does not plunge them into the common depth of a primal soil, but deploys the nexus of regularities that govern their dispersion.

However, to suppress the stage of “things themselves” is not necessarily to return to the linguistic analysis of meaning. When one describes the formation of the objects of a discourse, one tries to locate the relations that characterize a discursive practice, one determines neither a lexical organization, nor the scissions of a semantic field: one does not question the meaning given at a particular period to such words as “melancholia” or “madness without delirium,” nor the opposition of content between “psychosis” and “neurosis.” Not, I repeat, that such analyses are regarded as illegitimate or impossible; but they are not relevant when we are trying to discover, for example, how criminality could become an object of medical expertise, or sexual deviation a possible object of psychiatric discourse. The analysis of lexical contents defines either the elements of meaning at the disposal of speaking subjects in a given period, or the semantic structure that appears on the surface of a discourse that has already been spoken; it does not concern discursive practice as a place in which a tangled plurality—at once superposed and incomplete—of objects is formed and deformed, appears and disappears.

The sagacity of the commentators³ is not mistaken: from the kind of analysis that I have un-

dertaken, *words* are as deliberately absent as *things* themselves; any description of a vocabulary is as lacking as any reference to the living plenitude of experience. We shall not return to the state anterior to discourse—in which nothing has yet been said, and in which things are only just beginning to emerge out of the grey light; and we shall not pass beyond discourse in order to rediscover the forms that it has created and left behind it; we shall remain, or try to remain, at the level of discourse itself. Since it is sometimes necessary to dot the “i”s of even the most obvious absences, I will say that in all these searches, in which I have still progressed so little, I would like to show that “discourses,” in the form in which they can be heard or read, are not, as one might expect, a mere intersection of things and words: an obscure web of things, and a manifest, visible, colored chain of words; I would like to show that discourse is not a slender surface of contact, or confrontation, between a reality and a language (*langue*), the intrication of a lexicon and an experience; I would like to show with precise examples that in analyzing discourses themselves, one sees the loosening of the embrace, apparently so tight, of words and things, and the emergence of a group of rules proper to discursive practice. These rules define not the dumb existence of a reality, nor the canonical use of a vocabulary, but the ordering of objects. “Words and things” is the entirely serious title of a problem; it is the ironic title of a work that modifies its own form, displaces its own data, and reveals, at the end of the day, a quite different task.⁴ A task that consists of not—of no longer—treating discourses as groups of signs (signifying elements referring to contents or representations) but as practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak. Of course, discourses are composed of signs; but what they do is more than use these signs to designate things. It is this *more* that renders them irreducible to the language (*langue*) and to speech. It is this “more” that we must reveal and describe.

⁴“Words and things” is the literal translation of the title of Foucault’s book *Les Mots et les choses*, published in English as *The Order of Things*. [Ed.]

³That is, critics of Foucault’s earlier books. [Ed.]

CHAPTER 4

THE FORMATION OF ENUNCIATIVE MODALITIES

Qualitative descriptions, biographical accounts, the location, interpretation, and cross-checking of signs, reasonings by analogy, deduction, statistical calculations, experimental verifications, and many other forms of statement are to be found in the discourse of nineteenth-century doctors. What is it that links them together? What necessity binds them together? Why these and not others? Before attempting an answer to such questions, we must first discover the law operating behind all these diverse statements, and the place from which they come.

a. First question: who is speaking? Who, among the totality of speaking individuals, is accorded the right to use this sort of language (*langage*)? Who is qualified to do so? Who derives from it his own special quality, his prestige, and from whom, in return, does he receive if not the assurance, at least the presumption that what he says is true? What is the status of the individuals who—alone—have the right, sanctioned by law or tradition, juridically defined or spontaneously accepted, to proffer such a discourse? The status of doctor involves criteria of competence and knowledge; institutions, systems, pedagogic norms; legal conditions that give the right—though not without laying down certain limitations—to practice and to extend one's knowledge. It also involves a system of differentiation and relations (the division of attributions, hierarchical subordination, functional complementarity, the request for and the provision and exchange of information) with other individuals or other groups that also possess their own status (with the state and its representatives, with the judiciary, with different professional bodies, with religious groups and, at times, with priests). It also involves a number of characteristics that define its functioning in relation to society as a whole (the role that is attributed to the doctor according to whether he is consulted by a private person or summoned, more or less under compulsion, by society, according to whether he practices a profession or carries out a function; the right to intervene or make decisions that is ac-

corded him in these different cases; what is required of him as the supervisor, guardian, and guarantor of the health of a population, a group, a family, an individual; the payment that he receives from the community or from individuals; the form of contract, explicit or implicit, that he negotiates either with the group in which he practices, or with the authority that entrusts him with a task, or with the patient who requests advice, treatment, or cure). This status of the doctor is generally a rather special one in all forms of society and civilization: he is hardly ever an undifferentiated or interchangeable person. Medical statements cannot come from anybody; their value, efficacy, even their therapeutic powers, and, generally speaking, their existence as medical statements cannot be dissociated from the statutorily defined person who has the right to make them, and to claim for them the power to overcome suffering and death. But we also know that this status in western civilization was profoundly modified at the end of the eighteenth century when the health of the population became one of the economic norms required by industrial societies.

b. We must also describe the institutional *sites* from which the doctor makes his discourse, and from which this discourse derives its legitimate source and point of application (its specific objects and instruments of verification). In our societies, these sites are: the hospital, a place of constant, coded, systematic observation, run by a differentiated and hierarchized medical staff, thus constituting a quantifiable field of frequencies; private practice, which offers a field of less systematic, less complete, and far less numerous observations, but which sometimes facilitates observations that are more far-reaching in their effects, with a better knowledge of the background and environment; the laboratory, an autonomous place, long distinct from the hospital, where certain truths of a general kind, concerning the human body, life, disease, lesions, etc., which provides certain elements of the diagnosis, certain signs of the developing condition, certain criteria of cure, and which makes therapeutic experiment possible; lastly, what might be called the "library" or documentary field, which includes not only the books and treatises tradition-

ally recognized as valid, but also all the observations and case histories published and transmitted, and the mass of statistical information (concerning the social environment, climate, epidemics, mortality rates, the incidence of diseases, the centers of contagion, occupational diseases) that can be supplied to the doctor by public bodies, by other doctors, by sociologists, and by geographers. In this respect, too, these various "sites" of medical discourse were profoundly modified in the nineteenth century: the importance of the document continues to increase (proportionately diminishing the authority of the book or tradition); the hospital, which had been merely a subsidiary site for discourse on diseases, and which took second place in importance and value to private practice (in which diseases left in their natural environment were, in the eighteenth century, to reveal themselves in their vegetal truth), then becomes the site of systematic, homogeneous observations, large-scale confrontations, the establishment of frequencies and probabilities, the annulation of individual variants, in short, the site of the appearance of disease, not as a particular species, deploying its essential features beneath the doctor's gaze, but as an average process, with its significant guidelines, boundaries, and potential development. Similarly, it was in the nineteenth century that daily medical practice integrated the laboratory as the site of a discourse that has the same experimental norms as physics, chemistry, or biology.

c. The positions of the subject are also defined by the situation that it is possible for him to occupy in relation to the various domains or groups of objects: according to a certain grid of explicit or implicit interrogations, he is the questioning subject and, according to a certain program of information, he is the listening subject; according to a table of characteristic features, he is the seeing subject, and, according to a descriptive type, the observing subject; he is situated at an optimal perceptual distance whose boundaries delimit the wheat of relevant information; he uses instrumental intermediaries that modify the scale of the information, shift the subject in relation to the average or immediate perceptual level, ensure his movement from a superficial to a deep level, make him circulate in the interior space of

the body—from manifest symptoms to the organs, from the organs to the tissues, and finally from the tissues to the cells. To these perceptual situations should be added the positions that the subject can occupy in the information networks (in theoretical teaching or in hospital training; in the system of oral communication or of written document: as emitter and receiver of observations, case histories, statistical data, general theoretical propositions, projects, and decisions). The various situations that the subject of medical discourse may occupy were redefined at the beginning of the nineteenth century with the organization of a quite different perceptual field (arranged in depth, manifested by successive recourse to instruments, deployed by surgical techniques or methods of autopsy, centered upon lesional sites), and with the establishment of new systems of registration, notation, description, classification, integration in numerical series and in statistics, with the introduction of new forms of teaching, the circulation of information, relations with other theoretical domains (sciences or philosophy) and with other institutions (whether administrative, political, or economic).

If, in clinical discourse, the doctor is in turn the sovereign, direct questioner, the observing eye, the touching finger, the organ that deciphers signs, the point at which previously formulated descriptions are integrated, the laboratory technician, it is because a whole group of relations is involved. Relations between the hospital space as a place of assistance, of purified, systematic observation, and of partially proved, partially experimental therapeutics, and a whole group of perceptual codes of the human body—as it is defined by morbid anatomy; relations between the field of immediate observations and the domain of acquired information; relations between the doctor's therapeutic role, his pedagogic role, his role as an intermediary in the diffusion of medical knowledge, and his role as a responsible representative of public health in the social space. Understood as a renewal of points of view, contents, the forms and even the style of description, the use of inductive or probabilistic reasoning, types of attribution of causality, in short, as a renewal of the modalities of enunciation, clinical

medicine must not be regarded as the result of a new technique of observation—that of autopsy, which was practiced long before the advent of the nineteenth century; nor as the result of the search for pathogenic causes in the depths of the organism—Morgagni was engaged in such a search in the middle of the eighteenth century; nor as the effect of that new institution, the teaching hospital—such institutions had already been in existence for some decades in Austria and Italy; nor as the result of the introduction of the concept of tissue in Bichat's *Traité des membranes*. But as the establishment of a relation, in medical discourse, between a number of distinct elements, some of which concerned the status of doctors, others the institutional and technical site from which they spoke, others their position as subjects perceiving, observing, describing, teaching, etc. It can be said that this relation between different elements (some of which are new, while others were already in existence) is effected by clinical discourse: it is this, as a practice, that establishes between them all a system of relations that is not “really” given or constituted *a priori*; and if there is a unity, if the modalities of enunciation that it uses, or to which it gives place, are not simply juxtaposed by a series of historical contingencies, it is because it makes constant use of this group of relations.

One further remark. Having noted the disparity of the types of enunciation in clinical discourse, I have not tried to reduce it by uncovering the formal structures, categories, modes of logical succession, types of reasoning and induction, forms of analysis and synthesis that may have operated in a discourse; I did not wish to reveal the rational organization that may provide statements like those of medicine with their element of intrinsic necessity. Nor did I wish to reduce to a single founding act, or to a founding consciousness the general horizon of rationality against which the progress of medicine gradually emerged, its efforts to model itself upon the exact sciences, the contraction of its methods of observation, the slow, difficult expulsion of the images or fantasies that inhabit it, the purification of its system of reasoning. Lastly, I have not tried to describe the empirical genesis, nor the various component elements of the medical mentality:

how this shift of interest on the part of the doctors came about, by what theoretical or experimental model they were influenced, what philosophy or moral thematics defined the climate of their reflection, to what questions, to what demands, they had to reply, what efforts were required of them to free themselves from traditional prejudices, by what ways they were led towards a unification and coherence that were never achieved, never reached, by their knowledge. In short, I do not refer the various enunciative modalities to the unity of the subject—whether it concerns the subject regarded as the pure founding authority of rationality, or the subject regarded as an empirical function of synthesis. Neither the “knowing” (*le “connaître”*), nor the “knowledge” (*les “connaissances”*).

In the proposed analysis, instead of referring back to *the synthesis or the unifying function of a subject*, the various enunciative modalities manifest his dispersion.⁵ To the various statuses, the various sites, the various positions that he can occupy or be given when making a discourse. To the discontinuity of the planes from which he speaks. And if these planes are linked by a system of relations, this system is not established by the synthetic activity of a consciousness identical with itself, dumb and anterior to all speech, but by the specificity of a discursive practice. I shall abandon any attempt, therefore, to see discourse as a phenomenon of expression—the verbal translation of a previously established synthesis; instead, I shall look for a field of regularity for various positions of subjectivity. Thus conceived, discourse is not the majestically unfolding manifestation of a thinking, knowing, speaking subject, but, on the contrary, a totality, in which the dispersion of the subject and his discontinuity with himself may be determined. It is a space of exteriority in which a network of distinct sites is deployed. I showed earlier that it was neither by “words” nor by “things” that the regulation of the objects proper to a discursive formation should be defined; similarly, it must now be recognized that it is neither by recourse to a transcendental

⁵In this respect, the term “*regard médical*” used in my *Naissance de la clinique* [*The Birth of the Clinic*] was not a very happy one. [Au.]

subject nor by recourse to a psychological subjectivity that the regulation of its enunciations should be defined.

Part III

The Statement and the Archive

CHAPTER 1

DEFINING THE STATEMENT

I suppose that by now we have accepted the risk; that we are now willing, in order to articulate the great surface of discourse, to posit the existence of those somewhat strange, somewhat distant figures that I have called discursive formations; that we have put to one side, not in a definitive way, but for a time and out of methodological rigor, the traditional unities of the book and the *œuvre*; that we have ceased to accept as a principle of unity the laws of constructing discourse (with the formal organization that results), or the situation of the speaking subject (with the context and the psychological nucleus that characterize it); that we no longer relate discourse to the primary ground of experience, nor to the *a priori* authority of knowledge; but that we seek the rules of its formation in discourse itself. I suppose that we have agreed to undertake these long inquiries into the system of emergence of objects, the system of the appearance and distribution of enunciative modes, the system of the placing and dispersion of concepts, the system of the deployment of strategic choices. I suppose that we are willing to construct such abstract, problematic unities, instead of welcoming those that presented themselves as being more or less perceptually familiar, if not as self-evident realities.

But what, in fact, have I been speaking about so far? What has been the object of my inquiry? And what did I intend to describe? “Statements”—both in that discontinuity that frees them from all the forms in which one was so ready to allow them to be caught, and in the general, unlimited, apparently formless field of discourse. But I refrained from providing a preliminary definition of the statement. Nor did I try to construct one as I proceeded in order to justify the naivete of my starting point. Moreover—and this no doubt is the reason for so much unconcern—I wonder

whether I have not changed direction on the way; whether I have not replaced my first quest with another; whether, while analyzing “objects” or “concepts,” let alone “strategies,” I was in fact still speaking of statements; whether the four groups of rules by which I characterized a discursive formation really did define groups of statements. Lastly, instead of gradually reducing the rather fluctuating meaning of the word “discourse,” I believe that I have in fact added to its meanings: treating it sometimes as the general domain of all statements, sometimes as an individualizable group of statements, and sometimes as a regulated practice that accounts for a certain number of statements; and have I not allowed this same word “discourse,” which should have served as a boundary around the term “statement,” to vary as I shifted my analysis or its point of application, as the statement itself faded from view?

This, then, is the task that now confronts me: to take up the definition of the statement at its very root. And to see whether that definition really was present in my earlier descriptions; to see whether I really was dealing with the statement in my analysis of discursive formations.

On several occasions I have used the term “statement,” either to speak of a population of statements (as if I were dealing with individuals or isolated events), or in order to distinguish it from the groups that I called “discourses” (as the part is distinguished from the whole). At first sight, the statement appears as an ultimate, undecomposable element that can be isolated and introduced into a set of relations with other similar elements. A point without a surface, but a point that can be located in planes of division and in specific forms of groupings. A seed that appears on the surface of a tissue of which it is the constituent element. The atom of discourse.

And the problem soon arises: if the statement really is the elementary unit of discourse, what does it consist of? What are its distinctive features? What boundaries must one accord to it? Is this unity identical with that to which logicians have given the term “proposition,” and that which grammarians call a “sentence,” or that which “analysts” try to map by the term “speech act”? What place does it occupy among all those unities that the investigation of language (*langage*) has

already revealed? (Even though the theory of these unities is so often incomplete, on account of the difficulty of the problems that they present, and the difficulty in many cases of delimiting them with any degree of rigor.)

I do not think that the necessary and sufficient condition of a statement is the presence of a defined propositional structure, or that one can speak of a statement only when there is a proposition. In fact, one can have two perfectly distinct statements, referring to quite different discursive groupings, when one finds only one proposition, possessing only one value, obeying only one group of laws for its construction, and involving the same possibilities of use. "No one heard" and "It is true that no one heard" are indistinguishable from a logical point of view, and cannot be regarded as two different propositions. But in so many statements, these two formations are not equivalent or interchangeable. They cannot occupy the same place on the plane of discourse, nor can they belong to exactly the same group of statements. If one finds the formulation "No one heard" in the first line of a novel, we know, until a new order emerges, that it is an observation made either by the author, or by a character (aloud or in the form of an interior monologue); if one finds the second formulation, "It is true that no one heard," one can only be in a group of statements constituting an interior monologue, a silent discussion with oneself, or a fragment of dialogue, a group of questions and answers. In each case, there is the same propositional structure, but there are distinct enunciative characteristics. There may, on the other hand, be complex and doubled propositional forms, or, on the contrary, fragmentary, incomplete propositions, when one is quite obviously dealing with a simple, complete, autonomous statement (even if it is part of a group of other statements): the example "The present king of France is bald" is well known (it can be analyzed from a logical point of view only if one accepts, in the form of a single statement, two distinct propositions, each of which may be true or false on its own account), or again there is a proposition like "I am lying," which can be true only in relation to an assertion on a lower level. The criteria by which one can define the identity of a proposition, dis-

tinguish several of them beneath the unity of a formulation, characterize its autonomy or its completion are not valid when one comes to describe the particular unity of a statement.

And what of the sentence? Should we not accept an equivalence between sentence and statement? Wherever there is a grammatically isolable sentence, one can recognize the existence of an independent statement; but, on the other hand, one cannot speak of statement when, beneath the sentence itself, one reaches the level of its constituents. It would be pointless to object, against such an equivalence, that some statements may be composed, outside the canonical form of subject-copula-predicate, of a simple nominal syntagma ("That man!") or an adverb ("Absolutely"), or a personal pronoun ("You!"). For the grammarians themselves recognize such formulations as independent sentences, even if those formulations have been obtained through a series of transformations on the basis of the subject-predicate schema. Moreover: they recognize as "acceptable" sentences groups of linguistic elements that have not been correctly constructed, providing they are interpretable; on the other hand, they accord the status of grammatical sentences to interpretable groups on condition however that they are correctly formed. With so broad—and, in a sense, so lax—a definition of the sentence, it is difficult to see how one is to recognize sentences that are not statements, or statements that are not sentences.

Yet the equivalence is far from being a total one; and it is relatively easy to cite statements that do not correspond to the linguistic structure of sentences. When one finds in a Latin grammar a series of words arranged in a column: *amo*, *amas*, *amat*, one is dealing not with a sentence, but with the statement of the different personal inflections of the present indicative of the verb *amare*. One may find this example debatable; one may say that it is a mere artifice of presentation, that this statement is an elliptical, abbreviated sentence, spatialized in a relatively unusual mode, that should be read as the sentence "The present indicative of the verb *amare* is *amo* for the first person," etc. Other examples, in any case, are less ambiguous: a classificatory table of the botanical species is made up of statements,

not sentences (Linnaeus's *Genera Plantarum* is a whole book of statements, in which one can recognize only a small number of sentences); a genealogical tree, an accounts book, the calculations of a trade balance are statements; where are the sentences? One can go further: an equation of the n th degree, or the algebraic formula of the law of refraction must be regarded as statements: and although they possess a highly rigorous grammaticality (since they are made up of symbols whose meaning is determined by rules of usage, and whole succession is governed by laws of construction), this grammaticality cannot be judged by the same criteria that, in a natural language (*langue*), make it possible to define an acceptable, or interpretable sentence. Lastly, a graph, a growth curve, an age pyramid, a distribution cloud are all statements: any sentences that may accompany them are merely interpretation or commentary; they are in no way an equivalent: this is proved by the fact that, in a great many cases, only an infinite number of sentences could equal all the elements that are explicitly formulated in this sort of statement. It would not appear to be possible, therefore, to define a statement by the grammatical characteristics of the sentence.

One last possibility remains: at first sight, the most likely of all. Can one not say that there is a statement wherever one can recognize and isolate an act of formulation—something like the speech act referred to by English analysts?⁶ This term does not, of course, refer to the material act of speaking (aloud or to oneself) or of writing (by hand or typewriter); nor does it refer to the intention of the individual who is speaking (the fact that he wants to convince someone else, to be obeyed, to discover the solution to a problem, or to communicate information); nor does it refer to the possible result of what he has said (whether he has convinced someone or aroused his suspicion; whether he was listened to and whether his orders were carried out; whether his prayer was heard); what one is referring to is the operation that has been carried out by the formula itself, in its emergence: promise, order, decree, contract, agreement, observation. The speech act is not

⁶See *How to Do Things with Words* (2nd ed., Cambridge, Mass., 1975) by J. L. Austin, the "English analyst." [Ed.]

what took place just prior to the moment when the statement was made (in the author's thought or intentions); it is not what might have happened, after the event itself, in its wake, and the consequences that it gave rise to; it is what occurred by the very fact that a statement was made—and precisely this statement (and no other) in specific circumstances. Presumably, therefore, one individualization of statements refers to the same criteria as the location of acts of formulation: each act is embodied in a statement and each statement contains one of those acts. They exist through one another in an exact reciprocal relationship.

Yet such a correlation does not stand up to examination. For one thing, more than a statement is often required to effect a speech act: an oath, a prayer, a contract, a promise, or a demonstration usually require a certain number of distinct formulas or separate sentences: it would be difficult to challenge the right of each of these formulas and sentences to be regarded as a statement on the pretext that they are all imbued with one and the same speech act. In that case, it might be said that the act itself does not remain the same throughout the series of statements; that in a prayer there are as many limited, successive, and juxtaposed acts of prayer as demands formulated by distinct statements; and that in a promise there are as many engagements as sequences that can be individualized into separate statements. But one cannot be satisfied with this answer: first because the act of formulation would no longer serve to define the statement, but, on the contrary, the act of formulation would be defined by the statement—which raises problems, and requires criteria of individualization. Moreover, certain speech acts can be regarded as complete in their particular unity only if several statements have been made, each in its proper place. These acts are not constituted, therefore, by the series or sum of these statements, by their necessary juxtaposition; they cannot be regarded as being present whole and entire in the least of them, and as renewing themselves with each one. So one cannot establish a bi-univocal relation between the group of statements and that of speech acts either.

When one wishes to individualize statements,

one cannot therefore accept unreservedly any of the models borrowed from grammar, logic, or “analysis.” In all three cases, one realizes that the criteria proposed are too numerous and too heavy, that they limit the extent of the statement, and that although the statement sometimes takes on the forms described and adjusts itself to them exactly, it does not always do so: one finds statements lacking in legitimate propositional structure; one finds statements where one cannot recognize a sentence; one finds more statements than one can isolate speech acts. As if the statement were more tenuous, less charged with determinations, less strongly structured, more omnipresent, too, than all these figures; as if it had fewer features, and ones less difficult to group together; but as if, by that very fact, it rejected all possibility of describing anything. And this is all the more so, in that it is difficult to see at what level it should be situated, and by what method it should be approached: for all the analyses mentioned above, there is never more than a support, or accidental substance; in logical analysis, it is what is left when the propositional structure has been extracted and defined; for grammatical analysis, it is the series of linguistic elements in which one may or may not recognize the form of a sentence; for the analysis of speech acts, it appears as the visible body in which they manifest themselves. In relation to all these descriptive approaches, it plays the role of a residual element, of a mere fact, of irrelevant raw material.

Must we admit in the end that the statement cannot possess a character of its own and that it cannot be adequately defined, in so far as it is, for all analyses of language (*langage*), the extrinsic material on the basis of which they determine their own object? Must we admit that any series of signs, figures, marks, or traces—whatever their organization or probability may be—is enough to constitute a statement; and that it is the role of grammar to say whether or not it is a sentence, the role of logic to decide whether or not it contains a propositional form, the role of Analysis to determine what speech act it may embody? In which case, we would have to admit that there is a statement whenever a number of signs are juxtaposed—or even, perhaps—when there is a single sign. The threshold of the statement is the

threshold of the existence of signs. Yet even here, things are not so simple, and the meaning of a term like “the existence of signs” requires elucidation. What does one mean when one says that there are signs, and that it is enough for there *to be* signs for there *to be* a statement? What special status should be given to that verb *to be*?

For it is obvious that statements do not exist in the same sense in which a language (*langue*) exists, and, with that language, a collection of signs defined by their contrasting characteristics and their rules of use; a language in fact is never given in itself, in its totality; it could only be so in a secondary way, in the oblique form of a description that would take it as its object; the signs that make up its elements are forms that are imposed upon statements and control them from within. If there were no statements, the language (*langue*) would not exist; but no statement is indispensable for a language to exist (and one can always posit, in place of any statement, another statement that would in no way modify the language). The language exists only as a system for constructing possible statements; but in another respect, it exists only as a (more or less exhaustive) description obtained from a collection of real statements. Language (*langue*) and statement are not at the same level of existence; and one cannot say that there are statements in the same way as one says that there are languages (*langues*). But is it enough, then, that the signs of a language constitute a statement, if they were produced (articulated, drawn, made, traced) in one way or another, if they appeared in a moment of time and in a point in space, if the voice that spoke them or the gesture that formed them gave them the dimensions of a material existence? Can the letters of the alphabet written by me haphazardly on to a sheet of paper, as an example of what is not a statement, can the lead characters used for printing books—and one cannot deny their materiality, which has space and volume—can these signs, spread out, visible, manipulable, be reasonably regarded as statements?

When looked at more closely, however, these two examples (the lead characters and the signs that I wrote down on the sheet of paper) are seen to be not quite superposable. This pile of printer’s characters, which I can hold in my hand,

or the letters marked on the keyboard of a typewriter are not statements: at most they are tools with which one can write statements. On the other hand, what are the letters that I write down haphazardly on to a sheet of paper, just as they come to mind, and to show that they cannot, in their disordered state, constitute a statement? What figure do they form? Are they not a table of letters chosen in a contingent way, the statement of an alphabetical series governed by other laws than those of chance? Similarly, the table of random numbers that statisticians sometimes use is a series of numerical symbols that are not linked together by any syntactical structure; and yet that series is a statement: that of a group of figures obtained by procedures that eliminate everything that might increase the probability of the succeeding issues. Let us look at the example again: the keyboard of a typewriter is not a statement; but the same series of letters, A, Z, E, R, T, listed in a typewriting manual, is the statement of the alphabetical order adopted by French typewriters. So we are presented with a number of negative consequences: a regular linguistic construction is not required in order to form a statement (this statement may be made up of a series possessing a minimal probability); but neither is it enough to have any material effectuation of linguistic elements, any emergence of signs in time and space, for a statement to appear and to begin to exist. The statement exists therefore neither in the same way as a language (*langue*) (although it is made up of signs that are definable in their individuality only within a natural or artificial linguistic system), nor in the same way as the objects presented to perception (although it is always endowed with a certain materiality, and can always be situated in accordance with spatio-temporal coordinates).

This is not the place to answer the general question of the statement, but the problem can be clarified: the statement is not the same kind of unit as the sentence, the proposition, or the speech act; it cannot be referred therefore to the same criteria; but neither is it the same kind of unit as a material object, with its limits and independence. In its way of being unique (neither entirely linguistic, nor exclusively material), it is indispensable if we want to say whether or not

there is a sentence, proposition, or speech act; and whether the sentence is correct (or acceptable, or interpretable), whether the proposition is legitimate and well constructed, whether the speech act fulfills its requirements, and was in fact carried out. We must not seek in the statement a unit that is either long or short, strongly and weakly structured, but one that is caught up, like the others, in a logical, grammatical, locutory nexus. It is not so much one element among others, a division that can be located at a certain level of analysis, as a function that operates vertically in relation to these various units, and which enables one to say of a series of signs whether or not they are present in it. The statement is not therefore a structure (that is, a group of relations between variable elements, thus authorizing a possible infinite number of concrete models); it is a function of existence that properly belongs to signs and on the basis of which one may then decide, through analysis or intuition, whether or not they "make sense," according to what rule they follow one another or are juxtaposed, of what they are the sign, and what sort of act is carried out by their formulation (oral or written). One should not be surprised, then, if one has failed to find structural criteria of unity for the statement; this is because it is not in itself a unit, but a function that cuts across a domain of structures and possible unities, and which reveals them, with concrete contents, in time and space.

It is this function that we must now describe as such, that is, in its actual practice, its conditions, the rules that govern it, and the field in which it operates.

CHAPTER 2 THE ENUNCIATIVE FUNCTION

It is useless therefore to look for the statement among unitary groups of signs. The statement is neither a syntagma, nor a rule of construction, nor a canonic form of succession and permutation; it is that which enables such groups of signs to exist, and enables these rules or forms to become manifest. But although it enables them to exist, it does so in a special way—a way that must not be confused with the existence of signs as elements of a language (*langue*), or with the

material existence of those marks that occupy a fragment of space or last for a variable length of time. It is this special mode of existence, characteristic of every series of signs, providing it is stated, that we must now examine.

a. So let us take once again the example of those signs made or drawn in a defined materiality, and grouped in a particular way, which may or may not be arbitrary, but which, in any case, is not grammatical: the keyboard of a typewriter, or a handful of printer's characters. All that is required is that the signs be given, that I copy them on to a sheet of paper (in the same order in which they appear, but without producing a word) for a statement to emerge: the statement of the letters of the alphabet in an order that makes the typing of them easier, and the statement of a random group of letters. What has happened, then, that a statement should have been made? What can the second group possess that is not possessed by the first? Reduplication, the fact that it is a copy? Certainly not, since the keyboards of typewriters all copy a certain model and are not, by that very fact, statements. The intervention of a subject? This answer is inadequate for two reasons: it is not enough that the reiteration of a series be due to the initiative of an individual for it to be transformed, by that very fact, into a statement; and, in any case, the problem does not lie in the cause or origin of the reduplication, but in the special relation between the two identical series. The second series is not a statement because and only because a biunivocal relation can be established between each of its elements in the first series (this relation characterizes either the fact of duplication if it is simply a copy, or the exactitude of the statement if one has in fact crossed the threshold of enunciation; but it does not allow us to define this threshold and the very fact of the statement). A series of signs will become a statement on condition that it possesses "something else" (which may be strangely similar to it, and almost identical as in the example chosen), a specific relation that concerns itself—and not its cause, or its elements.

It may be objected that there is nothing enigmatic about this relation; that, on the contrary, it is a very familiar one, which is constantly being

analyzed: that, in fact, it concerns the relation of the signifier (*signifiant*) to the signified (*signifié*), of the name to what it designates; the relation of the sentence to its meaning; the relation of the proposition to its referent (*réfèrent*). But I believe that one can show that the relation of the statement to what it states is not superposable on any of these relations.

The statement, even if reduced to a nominal syntagma ("The boat!"), even if it is reduced to a proper noun ("Peter!"), does not have the same relation with what it states as the name with what it designates or signifies. The name or noun is a linguistic element that may occupy different places in grammatical groups: its meaning is defined by its rules of use (whether these concern individuals who may be validly designated by it, or syntactical structures in which it may correctly participate); a noun is defined by its possibility of recurrence. A statement exists outside any possibility of reappearing; and the relation that it possesses with what it states is not identical with a group of rules of use. It is a very special relation: and if in these conditions an identical formulation reappears, with the same words, substantially the same names—in fact, exactly the same sentence—it is not necessarily the same statement.

Nor should the relation between a statement and what it states be confused with the relation between a proposition and its referent. We know that logicians say that a proposition like "The golden mountain is in California" cannot be verified because it has no referent: its negation is therefore neither more nor less true than its affirmation. Should we say similarly that a statement refers to nothing if the proposition, to which it lends existence, has no referent? Rather the reverse. We should say not that the absence of a referent brings with it the absence of a correlate for the statement, but that it is the correlate of the statement—that to which it refers, not only what is said, but also what it speaks of, its "theme"—which makes it possible to say whether or not the proposition has a referent: it alone decides this in a definitive way. Let us suppose in fact that the formulation "The golden mountain is in California" is found not in a geography book, nor in a travel book, but in a novel, or in some fictional

context or other, one could still accord it a value of truth or error (according to whether the imaginary world to which it refers does or does not authorize such a geological and geographical fantasy). We must know to what the statement refers, what is its space of correlations, if we are to say whether a proposition has or has not a referent. "The present king of France is bald" lacks a referent only if one supposes that the statement refers to the world of contemporary historical information. The relation of the proposition to the referent cannot serve as a model or as a law for the relation of the statement to what it states. The latter relation not only does not belong to the same level as the former, but it is anterior to it.

Nor is it superposable to the relation that may exist between a sentence and its meaning. The gap between these two forms of relation appears clearly in the case of two famous sentences that are meaningless, in spite of their perfectly correct grammatical structure (as in the example: "Colorless green ideas sleep furiously"). In fact, to say that a sentence like this is meaningless presupposes that one has already excluded a number of possibilities—that it describes a dream, that it is part of a poetic text, that it is a coded message, that it is spoken by a drug addict—and that one assumes it to be a certain type of statement that must refer, in a very definite way, to some visible reality. The relation of a sentence with its meaning resides within a specific, well-stabilized enunciative relation. Moreover, even if these sentences are taken at an enunciative level at which they are meaningless, they are not, as statements, deprived of correlations: there are those that enable one to say, for example, that ideas are never either colored or colorless, and therefore that the sentence is meaningless (and these correlations concern a level of reality in which ideas are invisible, and in which colors can be seen, etc.); there are also those correlations that validate the sentence in question as a mention of a type of correct syntactical organization that was also meaningless (and these correlations concern the level of the language [*langue*], with its laws and properties). A sentence cannot be nonsignificant; it refers to something, by virtue of the fact that it is a statement.

How, then, can we define this relation that

characterizes the statement as statement—a relation that seems to be implicitly presupposed by the sentence or the proposition, and which is anterior to it? How can we disentangle it from those relations of meaning or those values of truth, with which it is usually confused? Any statement, as simple a statement as one can imagine, does not have as its *correlate* an individual or a particular object that is designated by this or that word in the sentence: in the case of a statement like "The golden mountain is in California," the *correlate* is not the formation, real or imaginary, possible or absurd, that is designated by the nominal syntagma that serves as the subject. But nor is the *correlate* of the statement a state of things or a relation capable of verifying the proposition (in the example chosen this would be the spatial inclusion of a particular mountain in a particular region). On the other hand, what might be defined as the *correlate* of the statement is a group of domains in which such objects may appear and to which such relations may be assigned: it would, for example, be a domain of material objects possessing a certain number of observable physical properties, relations of perceptible size—or, on the contrary, it would be a domain of fictitious objects, endowed with arbitrary properties (even if they have a certain constancy and a certain coherence), without any authority of experimental or perceptive verification; it would be a domain of spatial and geographical localizations, with coordinates, distances, relations of proximity and of inclusion—or, on the contrary, a domain of symbolic appurtenances and secret kinships; it would be a domain of objects that exist at the same moment and on the same time scale as the statement is formulated, or it would be a domain of objects that belongs to a quite different present—that indicated and constituted by the statement itself, and not that to which the statement also belongs. A statement is not confronted (face to face, as it were) by a *correlate*—or the absence of a *correlate*—as a proposition has (or has not) a referent, or as a proper noun designates someone (or no one). It is linked rather to a "referential" that is made up not of "things," "facts," "realities," or "beings," but of laws of possibility, rules of existence for the objects that are named, designated, or described

within it, and for the relations that are affirmed or denied in it. The referential of the statement forms the place, the condition, the field of emergence, the authority to differentiate between individuals or objects, states of things and relations that are brought into play by the statement itself; it defines the possibilities of appearance and delimitation of that which gives meaning to the sentence, a value as truth to the proposition. It is this group that characterizes the *enunciative* level of the formulation, in contrast to its grammatical and logical levels: through the relation with these various domains of possibility the statement makes of a syntagma, or a series of symbols, a sentence to which one may or may not ascribe a meaning, a proposition that may or may not be accorded a value as truth.

One can see in any case that the description of this enunciative level can be performed neither by a formal analysis, nor by a semantic investigation, nor by verification, but by the analysis of the relations between the statement and the spaces of differentiation, in which the statement itself reveals the differences.

b. A statement also differs from any series of linguistic elements by virtue of the fact that it possesses a particular relation with a subject. We must now define the nature of this relation, and, above all, distinguish it from other relations with which it might be confused.

We must not, in fact, reduce the subject of the statement to the first-person grammatical elements that are present within the sentence. First because the subject of the sentence is not within the linguistic syntagma; secondly because a statement that does not involve a first person nevertheless has a subject; lastly and above all, all statements that have a fixed grammatical form (whether in the first or second person) do not have the same type of relation with the subject of the statement. It is easy to see that this relation is not the same in a statement of the type "Night is falling," and "Every effect has a cause"; while in the case of a statement of the type "Longtemps, je me suis couché de bonne heure" ("For a long time I used to go to bed early"), the relation to the enunciating subject is not the same if one hears it spoken in the course of a conversation,

and if one reads it at the beginning of Proust's *A la recherche du temps perdu*.

Is not this subject exterior to the sentence quite simply the individual who spoke or wrote those words? As we know, there can be no signs without someone, or at least something, to emit them. For a series of signs to exist, there must—in accordance with the system of causality—be an "author" or a transmitting authority. But this "author" is not identical with the subject of the statement; and the relation of production that he has with the formulation is not superposable to the relation that unites the enunciating subject and what he states. Let us ignore the oversimple case of a group of signs that have been materially fashioned or traced: their production implies an author even though there is neither a statement nor a subject of a statement. One might also mention, by way of showing the dissociation between the transmitter of signs and the subject of a statement, the case of a text read by a third person, or that of an actor speaking his part. But these are extreme cases. Generally speaking, it would seem, at first sight at least, that the subject of the statement is precisely he who has produced the various elements, with the intention of conveying meaning. Yet things are not so simple. In a novel, we know that the author of the formulation is that real individual whose name appears on the title page of the book (we are still faced with the problem of the dialogue, and sentences purporting to express the thoughts of a character; we are still faced with the problem of texts published under a pseudonym: and we know all the difficulties that these duplications raise for practitioners of interpretative analysis when they wish to relate these formulations, *en bloc*, to the author of the text, to what he wanted to say, to what he thought, in short, to that great silent, hidden, uniform discourse on which they build that whole pyramid of different levels); but, even apart from those authorities of formulation that are not identical with the individual/author, the statements of the novel do not have the same subject when they provide, as if from the outside, the historical and spatial setting of the story, when they describe things as they would be seen by an anonymous, invisible, neutral individual who moves magi-

cally among the characters of the novel, or when they provide, as if by an immediate, internal decipherment, the verbal version of what is silently experienced by a character. Although the author is the same in each case, although he attributes them to no one other than himself, although he does not invent a supplementary link between what he is himself and the text that one is reading, these statements do not presuppose the same characteristics for the enunciating subject; they do not imply the same relation between this subject and what is being stated.

It might be said that the often quoted example of the fictional text has no conclusive validity; or rather that it questions the very essence of literature, and not the status of the subject of statements in general. According to this view, it is in the nature of literature that the author should appear to be absent, conceal himself within it, delegate his authority, or divide himself up; and one should not draw a general conclusion from this dissociation that the subject of the statement is distinct in everything—in nature, status, function, and identity—from the author of the formulation. Yet this gap is not confined to literature alone. It is absolutely general in so far as the subject of the statement is a particular function, but is not necessarily the same from one statement to another; in so far as it is an empty function, that can be filled by virtually any individual when he formulates the statement; and in so far as one and the same individual may occupy in turn, in the same series of statements, different positions, and assume the role of different subjects. Take the example of a mathematical treatise. In the sentence in the preface in which one explains why this treatise was written, in what circumstances, in response to what unsolved problems, or with what pedagogical aim in view, using what methods, after what attempts and failures, the position of the enunciative subject can be occupied only by the author, or authors, of the formulation: the conditions of individualization of the subject are in fact very strict, very numerous, and authorize in this case only one possible subject. On the other hand, if in the main body of the treatise, one meets a proposition like “Two quantities equal to a third quantity are equal to each

other,” the subject of the statement is the absolutely neutral position, indifferent to time, space, and circumstances, identical in any linguistic system, and in any code of writing or symbolization, that any individual may occupy when affirming such a proposition. Moreover, sentences like “We have already shown that . . .” necessarily involve statements of precise contextual conditions that were not implied by the preceding formulation: the position is then fixed within a domain constituted by a finite group of statements; it is localized in a series of enunciative events that must already have occurred; it is established in a demonstrative time whose earlier stages are never lost, and which do not need therefore to be begun again and repeated identically to be made present once more (a mention is enough to reactivate them in their original validity); it is determined by the prior existence of a number of effective operations that need not have been performed by one and the same individual (he who is speaking now), but which rightfully belong to the enunciating subject, which are at his disposal, and of which he may avail himself when necessary. The subject of such a statement will be defined by these requisites and possibilities taken together; and he will not be described as an individual who has really carried out certain operations, who lives in an unbroken, never forgotten time, who has interiorized, in the horizon of his consciousness, a whole group of true propositions, and who retains, in the living present of his thought, their potential reappearance (this is merely, in the case of individuals, the psychological, “lived” aspect of their position as enunciating subjects).

Similarly, one might describe the specific position of the enunciating subject in sentences like “I call straight any series of points that . . .” or “Let there be a finite series of any elements,” in each case the position of the subject is linked to the existence of an operation that is both determined and present; in each case, the subject of the statement is also the subject of the operation (he who establishes the definition of a straight line is also he who states it; he who posits the existence of a finite series is also, and at the same time, he who states it); and in each case, the

subject links, by means of this operation and the statement in which it is embodied, his future statements and operations (as an enunciating subject, he accepts this statement as his own law). There is a difference however: in the first case, what is stated is a convention of language (*langage*)—of that language that the enunciating subject must use, and within which he is defined: the enunciating subject and what is stated are therefore at the same level (whereas for a formal analysis a statement like this one implies the difference of level proper to metalanguage); in the second case, on the other hand, the enunciating subject brings into existence outside himself an object that belongs to a previously defined domain, whose laws of possibility have already been articulated, and whose characteristics precede the enunciation that posits it. We saw above that the position of the enunciating subject is not always identical in the affirmation of a true proposition; we now see that it is also not identical when an operation is carried out within the statement itself.

So the subject of the statement should not be regarded as identical with the author of the formulation—either in substance, or in function. He is not in fact the cause, origin, or starting point of the phenomenon of the written or spoken articulation of a sentence; nor is it that meaningful intention which, silently anticipating words, orders them like the visible body of its intuition; it is not the constant, motionless, unchanging focus of a series of operations that are manifested, in turn, on the surface of discourse through the statements. It is a particular, vacant place that may in fact be filled by different individuals; but, instead of being defined once and for all, and maintaining itself as such throughout a text, a book, or an *œuvre*, this place varies—or rather it is variable enough to be able either to persevere, unchanging, through several sentences, or to alter with each one. It is a dimension that characterizes a whole formulation *qua* statement. It is one of the characteristics proper to the enunciative function and enables one to describe it. If a proposition, a sentence, a group of signs can be called “statement,” it is not therefore because, one day, someone happened to speak them or put them into some concrete form of writing; it is because the

position of the subject can be assigned. To describe a formulation *qua* statement does not consist in analyzing the relations between the author and what he says (or wanted to say, or said without wanting to); but in determining what position can and must be occupied by any individual if he is to be the subject of it.

c. The third characteristic of the enunciative function: it cannot operate without the existence of an associated domain. This makes the statement something other, something more, than a mere collection of signs, which, in order to exist, need only a material base—a writing surface, sound, malleable material, the hollowed incision of a trace. But this also, and above all, distinguishes it from the sentence and the proposition.

Take a group of words or symbols. In order to decide whether they constitute a grammatical unit like the sentence or a logical unit like the proposition, it is necessary, and enough, to determine the rules according to which it was constructed. “Peter arrived yesterday” forms a sentence, but “Yesterday arrived Peter” does not; $A + B = C + D$ constitutes a proposition, but $ABC + = D$ does not. Only an examination of the elements and of their distribution, in reference to the system—natural or artificial—of the language (*langue*) enables us to distinguish between what is and what is not a proposition, between what is a sentence and what is merely an accumulation of words. Moreover, this examination is enough to determine to what type of grammatical structure the sentence in question belongs (affirmative sentence, in the past tense, containing a nominal subject, etc.), or to what type of proposition the series of signs in question belongs (an equivalence between two additions). One can even conceive of a sentence or a proposition that is “self-determining,” that requires no other sentence or proposition to serve as a context, no other associated sentences or propositions: that such a sentence or proposition would, in such conditions, be useless and unusable, does not mean that one would not be able to recognize it, even in its singularity.

One could no doubt make a number of objections to this. One might say, for example, that a proposition can be established and individualized as such only if one knows the system of axioms

that it obeys; do not those definitions, those rules, those conventions of writing form an associated field inseparable from the proposition (similarly, the rules of grammar, implicitly at work in the competence of the subject, are necessary if one is to recognize a sentence, and a sentence of a certain type)? It should be noted however that this group—actual or potential—does not belong to the same level as the proposition or the sentence: but that it has a bearing on their possible elements, succession, and distribution. The group is not associated with them: it is presupposed by them. One might also object that many (nontautological) propositions cannot be verified on the basis of their rules of construction alone, and that recourse to the referent is needed if one is to decide whether they are true or false: but true or false, a proposition remains a proposition, and it is not recourse to the referent that decides whether or not it is a proposition. The same goes for sentences; in many cases, they can yield their meaning only in relation to the context (whether they contain “deictic” elements that refer to a concrete situation; or make use of first- or second-person pronouns that designate the speaking subject and his interlocutors; or make use of pronominal elements or connecting particles that refer to earlier or later sentences); but the fact that its meaning cannot be completed does not prevent the sentence from being grammatically complete and autonomous. Certainly, one is not very sure what a group of words like “I’ll tell you that tomorrow” means; in any case, one can neither date this “tomorrow,” nor name the interlocutors, nor guess what is to be said. Nevertheless, it is a perfectly delimited sentence, obeying the rules of construction of the language (*langue*) in which it is written. Lastly, one might object that, without a context, it is sometimes difficult to define the structure of a sentence (I shall never know if he is dead” may be construed: “I shall never know whether or not he is dead” or “I shall never be informed of his death when this event occurs”). But this ambiguity is perfectly definable, simultaneous possibilities can be posited that belong to the structure proper of the sentence. Generally speaking, one can say that a sentence or a proposition—even when isolated, even divorced from the natural context that could

throw light on to its meaning, even freed or cut off from all the elements to which, implicitly or not, it refers—always remains a sentence or a proposition and can always be recognized as such.

On the other hand, the enunciative function—and this shows that it is not simply a construction of previously existing elements—cannot operate on a sentence or proposition in isolation. It is not enough to say a sentence, it is not even enough to say it in a particular relation to a field of objects or in a particular relation to a subject, for a statement to exist: it must be related to a whole adjacent field. Or rather, since this is not some additional relation that is superimposed on the others, one cannot say a sentence, one cannot transform it into a statement, unless a collateral space is brought into operation. A statement always has borders peopled by other statements. These borders are not what is usually meant by “context”—real or verbal—that is, all the situational or linguistic elements, taken together, that motivate a formulation and determine its meaning. They are distinct from such a “context” precisely in so far as they make it possible: the contextual relation between one sentence and those before and after it is not the same in the case of a novel and in that of a treatise in physics; the contextual relation between a formulation and the objective environment is not the same in a conversation and in the account of an experiment. It is against the background of a more general relation between the formulations, against the background of a whole verbal network, that the effect of context may be determined. Nor are these borders identical with the various texts and sentences that the subject may be conscious of when he speaks; again they are more extensive than such a psychological setting; and to a certain extent they determine that setting, for according to the position, status, and role of one formulation among others—according to whether it belongs to the field of literature or as an isolated remark, whether it is part of a narrative or the account of a demonstration—the way in which other statements are present in the mind of the subject will not be the same: neither the same level, nor the same form of linguistic experience, of verbal memory, of reference to what has already been

said, is operating in each case. The psychological halo of a formulation is controlled from afar by the arrangement of the enunciative field.

The associated field that turns a sentence or a series of signs into a statement, and which provides them with a particular context, a specific representative content, forms a complex web. It is made up first of all by the series of other formulations within which the statement appears and forms one element (the network of spoken formulations that make up a conversation, the architecture of a demonstration, bound on the one side by its premises and on the other by its conclusion, the series of affirmations that make up a narrative). The associated field is also made up of all the formulations to which the statement refers (implicitly or not), either by repairing them, modifying them, or adapting them, or by opposing them, or by commenting on them; there can be no statement that in one way or another does not reactualize others (ritual elements in a narrative; previously accepted propositions in a demonstration; conventional sentences in a conversation). The associated field is also made up of all the formulations whose subsequent possibility is determined by the statement, and which may follow the statement as its consequence, its natural successor, or its conversational retort (an order does not open up the same enunciative possibilities as the propositions of an axiomatic or the beginning of a narrative). Lastly, the associated field is made up of all the formulations whose status the statement in question shares, among which it takes its place without regard to linear order, with which it will fade away, or with which, on the contrary, it will be valued, preserved, sacralized, and offered, as a possible object, to a future discourse (a statement is not dissociable from the status that it may receive as "literature," or as an unimportant remark that is barely worthy of being forgotten, or as a scientific truth valid for all time, or as prophetic words, etc.). Generally speaking, one can say that a sequence of linguistic elements is a statement only if it is immersed in an enunciative field, in which it then appears as a unique element.

The statement is not the direct projection on to the plane of language (*langage*) of a particular situation or a group of representations. It is not

simply the manipulation by a speaking subject of a number of elements and linguistic rules. At the very outset, from the very root, the statement is divided up into an enunciative field in which it has a place and a status, which arranges for its possible relations with the past, and which opens up for it a possible future. Every statement is specified in this way: there is no statement in general, no free, neutral, independent statement; but a statement always belongs to a series or a whole, always plays a role among other statements, deriving support from them and distinguishing itself from them: it is always part of a network of statements, in which it has a role, however minimal it may be, to play. Whereas grammatical construction needs only elements and rules in order to operate; whereas one might just conceive of a language (*langue*)—an artificial one, of course—whose only purpose is the construction of a single sentence; whereas the alphabet, the rules of construction and transformation of a formal system being given, one can perfectly well define the first proposition of this language (*langage*), the same cannot be said of the statement. There is no statement that does not presuppose others; there is no statement that is not surrounded by a field of coexistences, effects of series and succession, a distribution of functions and roles. If one can speak of a statement, it is because a sentence (a proposition) figures at a definite point, with a specific position, in an enunciative network that extends beyond it.

Against this background of enunciative coexistence, there stand out, at an autonomous and describable level, the grammatical relations between sentences, the logical relations between propositions, the metalinguistic relations between an object language and one that defines the rules, the rhetorical relations between groups (or elements) of sentences. It is permissible, of course, to analyze all these relations without taking as one's theme the enunciative field itself, that is, the domain of coexistence in which the enunciative function operates. But they can exist and are analyzable only to the extent that these sentences have been "enunciated"; in other words, to the extent that they are deployed in an enunciative field that allows them to follow one another, order one another, coexist with one an-

other, and play roles in relation to one another. Far from being the principle of individualization of groups of “signifiers” (the meaningful “atom,” the minimum on the basis of which there is meaning), the statement is that which situates these meaningful units in a space in which they breed and multiply.

d. Lastly, for a sequence of linguistic elements to be regarded and analyzed as a statement, it must fulfill a fourth condition: it must have a material existence. Could one speak of a statement if a voice had not articulated it, if a surface did not bear its signs, if it had not become embodied in a sense-perceptible element, and if it had not left some trace—if only for an instant—in someone’s memory or in some space? Could one speak of a statement as an ideal, silent figure? The statement is always given through some material medium, even if that medium is concealed, even if it is doomed to vanish as soon as it appears. And the statement not only needs this materiality; its materiality is not given to it, in addition, once all its determinations have been fixed: it is partly made up of this materiality. Even if a sentence is composed of the same words, bears exactly the same meaning, and preserves the same syntactical and semantic identity, it does not constitute the same statement if it is spoken by someone in the course of a conversation, or printed in a novel; if it was written one day centuries ago, and if it now reappears in an oral formulation. The coordinates and the material status of the statement are part of its intrinsic characteristics. That is an obvious fact. Or almost. For as soon as one examines it a little more closely, things begin to blur and the problems increase.

Of course, it is tempting to say that if a statement is characterized, partly at least, by its material status, and if its identity is susceptible to a modification of that status, the same can be said of sentences and propositions: the materiality of signs is not, in fact, entirely indifferent to grammar or even to logic. We know what theoretical problems are presented to logic by the material constancy of the symbols used (how to define the identity of a symbol through the various substances in which it may be embodied and the variations of form that it can tolerate? How to

recognize it and make certain that it is the same, if it must be defined as “a concrete physical form”?); we know too what problems are presented to logic by the very notion of a series of symbols (what do “precede” and “follow” mean? Come “before” and “after”? In what space is such an order situated?). Much better known still are the relations of materiality and the language (*langue*)—the role of writing and the alphabet, the fact that neither the same syntax, nor the same vocabulary operate in a written text and in a conversation, in a newspaper and in a book, in a letter and on a poster; moreover, there are series of words that form perfectly individualized and acceptable sentences if they feature as newspaper headlines, and which, nevertheless, in the course of a conversation, could never stand as meaningful sentences. Yet the materiality plays a much more important role in the statement: it is not simply a principle of variation, a modification of the criteria of recognition, or a determination of linguistic subgroups. It is constitutive of the statement itself: a statement must have a substance, a support, a place, and a date. And when these requisites change, it too changes identity. At this point, a host of questions arises: Does the same sentence repeated very loudly and very softly form one or more statements? When one learns a text by heart, does each recitation constitute a statement, or should one regard it as a repetition of the same statement? A sentence is faithfully translated into a foreign language: two distinct statements or one? And in a collective recitation—a prayer or a lesson—how many statements are produced? How can one establish the identity of the statement through all these various forms, repetitions, and transcriptions?

The problem is no doubt obscured by the fact that there is often a confusion of different levels. To begin with, we must set aside the multiplicity of enunciations. We will say that an enunciation takes place whenever a group of signs is emitted. Each of these articulations has its spatio-temporal individuality. Two people may say the same thing at the same time, but since there are two people there will be two distinct enunciations. The same person may repeat the same sentence several times; this will produce the same number of enunciations distinct in time. The enunciation

is an unrepeatable event; it has a situated and dated uniqueness that is irreducible. Yet this uniqueness allows of a number of constants—grammatical, semantic, logical—by which one can, by neutralizing the moment of enunciation and the coordinates that individualize it, recognize the general form of a sentence, a meaning, a proposition. The time and place of the enunciation, and the material support that it uses, then become, very largely at least, indifferent: and what stands out is a form that is endlessly repeatable, and which may give rise to the most dispersed enunciations. But the statement itself cannot be reduced to this pure event of enunciation, for, despite its materiality, it cannot be repeated: it would not be difficult to say that the same sentence spoken by two people in slightly different circumstances constitutes only one statement. And yet the statement cannot be reduced to a grammatical or logical form because, to a greater degree than that form, and in a different way, it is susceptible to differences of material, substance, time, and place. What, then, is that materiality proper to the statement, and which permits certain special types of repetition? How is it that one can speak of the same statement when there are several distinct enunciations of it, yet must speak of several statements when one can recognize identical forms, structures, rules of construction, and intentions? What, then, is this rule of *repeatable materiality* that characterizes the statement?

This may not be a perceptible, qualitative materiality, expressed in the form of color, sound, or solidity, and divided up by the same spatio-temporal observation as the perceptual space. Let us take a very simple example: a text reproduced several times, the successive editions of a book, or, better still, the different copies of the same printing, do not give rise to the same number of distinct statements: in all the editions of *Les Fleurs du mal* (variants and rejected versions apart), we find the same set of statements; yet neither the characters, nor the ink, nor the paper, nor even the placing of the text and the positions of the signs, are the same: the whole texture of the materiality has changed. But in this case these “small” differences are not important enough to alter the identity of the statement and to bring about another: they are all neutralized in

the general element—material, of course, but also institutional and economic—of the “book”: a book, however many copies or editions are made of it, however many different substances it may use, is a locus and exact equivalence for the statements—for them it is an authority that permits repetition without any change of identity. We see from this first example that the materiality of the statement is not defined by the space occupied or the date of its formulation; but rather by its status as a thing or object. A status that is never definitive, but modifiable, relative, and always susceptible of being questioned: we know for example that, for literary historians, the edition of a book published with the agreement of the author does not have the same status as posthumous editions, that the statements in it have a unique value, that they are not one of the manifestations of one and the same whole, that they are that by relation to which there is and must be repetition. Similarly, between the text of a Constitution, or a will, or a religious revelation, and all the manuscripts or printed copies that reproduce them exactly, with the same writing, in the same characters, and on similar substances, one cannot say that there is an equivalence: on the one hand there are the statements themselves, and on the other their reproduction. The statement cannot be identified with a fragment of matter; but its identity varies with a complex set of material institutions.

For a statement may be the same, whether written on a sheet of paper or published in a book; it may be the same spoken, printed on a poster, or reproduced on a tape recorder; on the other hand, when a novelist speaks a sentence in daily life, then reproduces the same sentence in the manuscript that he is writing, attributing it to one of his characters, or even allowing it to be spoken by that anonymous voice that passes for that of the author, one cannot say that it is the same statement in each case. The rule of materiality that statements necessarily obey is therefore of the order of the institution rather than of the spatio-temporal localization; it defines *possibilities of reinscription and transcription* (but also thresholds and limits), rather than limited and perishable individualities.

The identity of a statement is subjected to a

second group of conditions and limits: those that are imposed by all the other statements among which it figures, by the domain in which it can be used or applied, by the role and functions that it can perform. The affirmation that the earth is round or that species evolve does not constitute the same statement before and after Copernicus, before and after Darwin; it is not, for such simple formulations, that the meaning of the words has changed; what changed was the relation of these affirmations to other propositions, their conditions of use and reinvestment, the field of experience, of possible verifications, of problems to be resolved, to which they can be referred. The sentence “dreams fulfill desires” may have been repeated throughout the centuries; it is not the same statement in Plato and in Freud. The schemata of use, the rules of application, the constellations in which they can play a part, their strategic potentialities constitute for statements a *field of stabilization* that makes it possible, despite all the differences of enunciation, to repeat them in their identity; but this same field may also, beneath the most manifest semantic, grammatical, or formal identities, define a threshold beyond which there can be no further equivalence, and the appearance of a new statement must be recognized. But it is possible, no doubt, to go further: there are cases in which one may consider that there is only one statement, even though the words, the syntax, and the language (*langue*) itself are not identical. Such cases are a speech and its simultaneous translation; a scientific text in English and its French version; a notice printed in three columns in three different languages: there are not, in such cases, the same number of statements as there are languages used, but a single group of statements in different linguistic forms. Better still: a given piece of information may be retransmitted with other words, with a simplified syntax, or in an agreed code; if the information content and the uses to which it could be put are the same, one can say that it is the same statement in each case.

Here too, we are concerned not with a criterion of individualization for the statement, but rather with its principle of variation: it is sometimes more diverse than the structure of the sentence (and its identity is then finer, more fragile,

more easily modifiable than that of a semantic or grammatical whole), sometimes more constant than that structure (and its identity is then broader, more stable, more susceptible to variations). Moreover, not only can this identity of the statement not be situated once and for all in relation to that of the sentence, but it is itself relative and oscillates according to the use that is made of the statement and the way in which it is handled. When one uses a statement in such a way as to reveal its grammatical structure, its rhetorical configuration, or the connotations that it may carry, it is obvious that one cannot regard it as being identical in its original language (*langue*) and in a translation. On the other hand, if it is intended as part of a procedure of experimental verification, then text and translation constitute a single enunciative whole. Or again, at a certain scale of macro-history, one may consider that an affirmation like “species evolve” forms the same statement in Darwin and in Simpson; at a finer level, and considering more limited fields of use (“neo-Darwinism” as opposed to the Darwinian system itself), we are presented with two different statements. The constancy of the statement, the preservation of its identity through the unique events of the enunciations, its duplications through the identity of the forms, constitute the function of the *field of use* in which it is placed.

The statement, then, must not be treated as an event that occurred in a particular time and place, and that the most one can do is recall it—and celebrate it from afar off—in an act of memory. But neither is it an ideal form that can be actualized in any body, at any time, in any circumstances, and in any material conditions. Too repeatable to be entirely identifiable with the spatio-temporal coordinates of its birth (it is more than the place and date of its appearance), too bound up with what surrounds it and supports it to be as free as a pure form (it is more than a law of construction governing a group of elements), it is endowed with a certain modifiable heaviness, a weight relative to the field in which it is placed, a constancy that allows of various uses, a temporal permanence that does not have the inertia of a mere trace or mark, and which does not sleep on its own past. Whereas an enunciation may be *begun again* or *re-evoked*, and a

(linguistic or logical) form may be *reactualized*, the statement may be *repeated*—but always in strict conditions.

This repeatable materiality that characterizes the enunciative function reveals the statement as a specific and paradoxical object, but also as one of those objects that men produce, manipulate, use, transform, exchange, combine, decompose and recompose, and possibly destroy. Instead of being something said once and for all—and lost in the past like the result of a battle, a geological

catastrophe, or the death of a king—the statement, as it emerges in its materiality, appears with a status, enters various networks and various fields of use, is subjected to transferences or modifications, is integrated into operations and strategies in which its identity is maintained or effaced. Thus the statement circulates, is used, disappears, allows or prevents the realization of a desire, serves or resists various interests, participates in challenge and struggle, and becomes a theme of appropriation or rivalry.

From *The Order of Discourse*

I

I wish I could have slipped surreptitiously into this discourse which I must present today, and into the ones I shall have to give here, perhaps for many years to come. I should have preferred to be enveloped by speech, and carried away well beyond all possible beginnings, rather than have to begin it myself. I should have preferred to become aware that a nameless voice was already speaking long before me, so that I should only have needed to join in, to continue the sentence it had started and lodge myself, without really being noticed, in its interstices, as if it had signalled to me by pausing, for an instant, in suspense. Thus there would be no beginning, and instead of being the one from whom discourse proceeded, I should be at the mercy of its chance unfolding, a slender gap, the point of its possible disappearance.

I should have liked there to be a voice behind me which had begun to speak a very long time before, doubling in advance everything I am going to say, a voice which would say: “You must go on, I can’t go on, you must go on, I’ll go on, you must say words, as long as there are any, until they find me, until they say me, strange pain, strange sin, you must go on, perhaps it’s done already, perhaps they have said me already, perhaps they have carried me to the threshold of

my story, before the door that opens on my story, that would surprise me, if it opens.”¹

I think a good many people have a similar desire to be freed from the obligation to begin, a similar desire to be on the other side of discourse from the outset, without having to consider from the outside what might be strange, frightening, and perhaps maleficent about it. To this very common wish, the institution’s reply is ironic, since it solemnizes beginnings, surrounds them with a circle of attention and silence, and imposes ritualized forms on them, as if to make them more easily recognizable from a distance.

Desire says: “I should not like to have to enter this risky order of discourse; I should not like to be involved in its peremptoriness and decisiveness; I should like it to be all around me like a calm, deep transparence, infinitely open, where others would fit in with my expectations, and from which truths would emerge one by one; I should only have to let myself be carried, within it and by it, like a happy wreck.” The institution replies: “You should not be afraid of beginnings; we are all here in order to show you that discourse belongs to the order of laws, that we have long been looking after its appearances; that a place has been made ready for it, a place which honors it but disarms it; and that if discourse may

Translated by Ian McLeod.

¹Samuel Beckett, *The Unnameable*, in *Three Novels by Samuel Beckett* (New York, 1955), p. 414. [Ed.]

sometimes have some power, nevertheless it is from us and us alone that it gets it.”

But perhaps this institution and this desire are nothing but two contrary replies to the same anxiety: anxiety about what discourse is in its material reality as a thing pronounced or written; anxiety about this transitory existence which admittedly is destined to be effaced, but according to a time scale which is not ours; anxiety at feeling beneath this activity (despite its grayness and ordinariness) powers and dangers that are hard to imagine; anxiety at suspecting the struggles, victories, injuries, dominations and enslavements, through so many words even though long usage has worn away their roughness.

What, then, is so perilous in the fact that people speak, and that their discourse proliferates to infinity? Where is the danger in that?

II

Here is the hypothesis which I would like to put forward tonight in order to fix the terrain—or perhaps the very provisional theater—of the work I am doing: that in every society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organized, and redistributed by a certain number of procedures whose role is to ward off its powers and dangers, to gain mastery over its chance events, to evade its ponderous, formidable materiality.

In a society like ours, the procedures of exclusion are well known. The most obvious and familiar is the prohibition. We know quite well that we do not have the right to say everything, that we cannot speak of just anything in any circumstances whatever, and that not everyone has the right to speak of anything whatever. In the taboo on the object of speech, and the ritual of the circumstances of speech, and the privileged or exclusive right of the speaking subject, we have the play of three types of prohibition which intersect, reinforce, or compensate for each other, forming a complex grid which changes constantly. I will merely note that at the present time the regions where the grid is tightest, where the black squares are most numerous, are those of sexuality and politics; as if discourse, far from being that transparent or neutral element in which sexuality

is disarmed and politics pacified, is in fact one of the places where sexuality and politics exercise in a privileged way some of their most formidable powers. It does not matter that discourse appears to be of little account, because the prohibitions that surround it very soon reveal its link with desire and with power. There is nothing surprising about that, since, as psychoanalysis has shown, discourse is not simply that which manifests (or hides) desire—it is also the object of desire; and since, as history constantly teaches us, discourse is not simply that which translates struggles or systems of domination, but is the thing for which and by which there is struggle, discourse is the power which is to be seized.

There exists in our society another principle of exclusion, not another prohibition but a division and a rejection. I refer to the opposition between reason and madness. Since the depths of the Middle Ages, the madman has been the one whose discourse cannot have the same currency as others. His word may be considered null and void, having neither truth nor importance, worthless as evidence in law, inadmissible in the authentication of deeds or contracts, incapable even of bringing about the transubstantiation of bread into body at Mass. On the other hand, strange powers not held by any other may be attributed to the madman's speech: the power of uttering a hidden truth, of telling the future, of seeing in all naivete what the others' wisdom cannot perceive. It is curious to note that for centuries in Europe the speech of the madman was either not heard at all or else taken for the word of truth. It either fell into the void, being rejected as soon as it was proffered, or else people deciphered in it a rationality, naive or crafty, which they regarded as more rational than that of the sane. In any event, whether excluded, or secretly invested with reason, the madman's speech, strictly, did not exist. It was through his words that his madness was recognized; they were the place where the division between reason and madness was exercised, but they were never recorded or listened to. No doctor before the end of the eighteenth century had ever thought of finding out what was said, or how and why it was said, in this speech which nonetheless determined the difference. This whole immense discourse of the madman was

taken for mere noise, and he was only symbolically allowed to speak, in the theater, where he would step forward, disarmed and reconciled, because there he played the role of truth in a mask.

You will tell me that all this is finished today or is coming to an end; that the madman's speech is no longer on the other side of the divide: that it is no longer null and void; on the contrary, it puts us on the alert; that we now look for a meaning in it, for the outline or the ruins of some *oeuvre*; and that we have even gone so far as to come across this speech of madness in what we articulate ourselves, in that slight stumbling by which we lose track of what we are saying. But all this attention to the speech of madness does not prove that the old division is no longer operative. You have only to think of the whole framework of knowledge through which we decipher that speech, and of the whole network of institutions which permit someone—a doctor or a psychoanalyst—to listen to it, and which at the same time permit the patient to bring along his poor words or, in desperation, to withhold them. You have only to think of all this to become suspicious that the division, far from being effaced, is working differently along other lines, through new institutions, and with effects that are not at all the same. And even if the doctor's role were only that of lending an ear to a speech that is free at last, he still does this listening in the context of the same division. He is listening to a discourse which is invested with desire, and which—for its greater exaltation or its greater anguish—thinks it is loaded with terrible powers. If the silence of reason is required for the curing of monsters, it is enough for that silence to be on the alert, and it is in this that the division remains.

It is perhaps risky to consider the opposition between true and false as a third system of exclusion, along with those just mentioned. How could one reasonably compare the constraint of truth with divisions like those, which are arbitrary to start with or which at least are organized around historical contingencies; which are not only modifiable but in perpetual displacement; which are supported by a whole system of institutions which impose them and renew them; and which act in a constraining and sometimes violent way?

Certainly, when viewed from the level of a

proposition, on the inside of a discourse, the division between true and false is neither arbitrary nor modifiable nor institutional nor violent. But when we view things on a different scale, when we ask the question of what this will to truth has been and constantly is, across our discourses, this will to truth which has crossed so many centuries of our history; what is, in its very general form, the type of division which governs our will to know (*notre volonté de savoir*), then what we see taking shape is perhaps something like a system of exclusion, a historical, modifiable, and institutionally constraining system.

There is no doubt that this division is historically constituted. For the Greek poets of the sixth century B.C., the true discourse (in the strong and valorized sense of the word), the discourse which inspired respect and terror, and to which one had to submit because it ruled, was the one pronounced by men who spoke as of right and according to the required ritual; the discourse which dispensed justice and gave everyone his share; the discourse which in prophesying the future not only announced what was going to happen but helped to make it happen, carrying men's minds along with it and thus weaving itself into the fabric of destiny. Yet already a century later the highest truth no longer resided in what discourse was or did, but in what it said: a day came when truth was displaced from the ritualized, efficacious, and just act of enunciation, towards the utterance itself, its meaning, its form, its object, its relation to its reference. Between Hesiod and Plato a certain division was established, separating true discourse from false discourse: a new division because henceforth the true discourse is no longer precious and desirable, since it is no longer the one linked to the exercise of power. The sophist is banished.

This historical division probably gave our will to know its general form. However, it has never stopped shifting: sometimes the great mutations in scientific thought can perhaps be read as the consequences of a discovery, but they can also be read as the appearance of new forms in the will to truth. There is doubtless a will to truth in the nineteenth century which differs from the will to know characteristic of Classical culture in the forms it deploys, in the domains of objects to

which it addresses itself, and in the techniques on which it is based. To go back a little further: at the turn of the sixteenth century (and particularly in England), there appeared a will to know which, anticipating its actual contents, sketched out schemas of possible, observable, measurable, classifiable objects; a will to know which imposed on the knowing subject, and in some sense prior to all experience, a certain position, a certain gaze and a certain function (to see rather than to read, to verify rather than to make commentaries on); a will to know which was prescribed (but in a more general manner than by any specific instrument) by the technical level where knowledges had to be invested in order to be verifiable and useful. It was just as if, starting from the great Platonic division, the will to truth had its own history, which is not that of constraining truths: the history of the range of objects to be known, of the functions and positions of the knowing subject, of the material, technical, and instrumental investments of knowledge.

This will to truth, like the other systems of exclusion, rests on an institutional support; it is both reinforced and renewed by whole strata of practices, such as pedagogy, of course; and the system of books, publishing, libraries; learned societies in the past and laboratories now. But it is also renewed, no doubt more profoundly, by the way in which knowledge is put to work, valorized, distributed, and in a sense attributed, in a society. Let us recall at this point, and only symbolically, the old Greek principle: though arithmetic may well be the concern of democratic cities, because it teaches about the relations of equality, geometry alone must be taught in oligarchies, since it demonstrates the proportions within inequality.

Finally, I believe that this will to truth—leaning in this way on a support and an institutional distribution—tends to exert a sort of pressure and something like a power of constraint (I am still speaking of our own society) on other discourses. I am thinking of the way in which for centuries Western literature sought to ground itself on the natural, the “*vraisemblable*,” on sincerity, on science as well—in short, on “true” discourse. I am thinking likewise of the manner in which economic practices, codified as precepts or

recipes and ultimately as morality, have sought since the sixteenth century to ground themselves, rationalize themselves, and justify themselves in a theory of wealth and production. I am also thinking of the way in which a body as prescriptive as the penal system sought its bases or its justification, at first of course in a theory of justice, then, since the nineteenth century, in a sociological, psychological, medical, and psychiatric knowledge: it is as if even the word of the law could no longer be authorized, in our society, except by a discourse of truth.

Of the three great systems of exclusion which forge discourse—the forbidden speech, the division of madness, and the will to truth, I have spoken of the third at greatest length. The fact is that it is towards this third system that the other two have been drifting constantly for centuries. The third system increasingly attempts to assimilate the others, both in order to modify them and to provide them with a foundation. The first two are constantly becoming more fragile and more uncertain, to the extent that they are now invaded by the will to truth, which for its part constantly grows stronger, deeper, and more implacable.

And yet we speak of the will to truth no doubt least of all. It is as if, for us, the will to truth and its vicissitudes were masked by truth itself in its necessary unfolding. The reason is perhaps this: although since the Greeks “true” discourse is no longer the discourse that answers to the demands of desire, or the discourse which exercises power, what is at stake in the will to truth, in the will to utter this “true” discourse, if not desire and power? “True” discourse, freed from desire and power by the necessity of its form, cannot recognize the will to truth which pervades it; and the will to truth, having imposed itself on us for a very long time, is such that the truth it wants cannot fail to mask it.

Thus all that appears to our eyes is a truth conceived as a richness, a fecundity, a gentle and insidiously universal force, and in contrast we are unaware of the will to truth, that prodigious machinery designed to exclude. All those who, from time to time in our history, have tried to dodge this will to truth and to put it into question against truth, at the very point where truth undertakes to justify the prohibition and to define madness, all

of them, from Nietzsche to Artaud and Bataille, must now serve as the (no doubt lofty) signs for our daily work.

III

There are, of course, many other procedures for controlling and delimiting discourse. Those of which I have spoken up to now operate in a sense from the exterior. They function as systems of exclusion. They have to do with the part of discourse which puts power and desire at stake.

I believe we can isolate another group: internal procedures, since discourses themselves exercise their own control; procedures which function rather as principles of classification, of ordering, of distribution, as if this time another dimension of discourse had to be mastered: that of events and chance.

In the first place, commentary. I suppose—but without being very certain—that there is scarcely a society without its major narratives, which are recounted, repeated, and varied; formulae, texts, and ritualized sets of discourses which are recited in well-defined circumstances; things said once and preserved because it is suspected that behind them there is a secret or a treasure. In short, we may suspect that there is in all societies, with great consistency, a kind of gradation among discourse: those which are said in the ordinary course of days and exchanges, and which vanish as soon as they have been pronounced; and those which give rise to a certain number of new speech acts which take them up, transform them or speak of them, in short, those discourses which, over and above their formulation, are said indefinitely, remain said, and are to be said again. We know them in our own cultural system: they are religious or juridical texts, but also those texts (curious ones, when we consider their status) which are called “literary”; and to a certain extent, scientific texts.

This differentiation is certainly neither stable, nor constant, nor absolute. There is not, on the one side, the category of fundamental or creative discourses, given for all time, and on the other, the mass of discourses which repeat, gloss, and comment. Plenty of major texts become blurred and disappear, and sometimes commentaries

move into the primary position. But though its points of application may change, the function remains; and the principle of a differentiation is continuously put back in play. The radical effacement of this gradation can only ever be play, utopia, or anguish. The Borges-style play of a commentary which is nothing but the solemn and expected reappearance word for word of the text that is commented on; or the play of a criticism that would speak forever of a work which does not exist.² The lyrical dream of a discourse which is reborn absolutely new and innocent at every point, and which reappears constantly in all freshness, derived from things, feelings, or thoughts. The anguish of that patient of Janet’s for whom the least utterance was gospel truth, concealing inexhaustible treasures of meaning and worthy to be repeated, recommenced, and commented on indefinitely: “When I think,” he would say when reading or listening, “when I think of this sentence which like the others will go off into eternity, and which I have perhaps not yet fully understood.”³

But who can fail to see that this would be to annul one of the terms of the relation each time, and not to do away with the relation itself? It is a relation which is constantly changing with time; which takes multiple and divergent forms in a given epoch. The juridical exegesis is very different from the religious commentary (and this has been the case for a very long time). One and the same literary work can give rise simultaneously to very distinct types of discourse: the *Odyssey* as a primary text is repeated, in the same period, in the translation by Bérard, and in the endless “*explications de texte*,” and in Joyce’s *Ulysses*.

For the moment I want to do no more than indicate that, in what is broadly called commentary, the hierarchy between primary and secondary text plays two roles which are in solidarity with each other. On the one hand it allows the (endless) construction of new discourses: the dominance of the primary text, its permanence, its status as a discourse which can always be re-actualized, the multiple or hidden meaning with

²See Borges’s story, “Pierre Menard’s *Don Quixote*.” [Ed.]

³Pierre Janet (1859–1947), French psychologist. [Ed.]

which it is credited, the essential reticence and richness which is attributed to it, all this is the basis for an open possibility of speaking. But on the other hand the commentary's only role, whatever the techniques used, is to say at last what was silently articulated "beyond," in the text. By a paradox which it always displaces but never escapes, the commentary must say for the first time what had, nonetheless, already been said, and must tirelessly repeat what had, however, never been said. The infinite rippling of commentaries is worked from the inside by the dream of a repetition in disguise: at its horizon there is perhaps nothing but what was at its point of departure—mere recitation. Commentary exorcises the chance element of discourse by giving it its due; it allows us to say something other than the text itself, but on condition that it is this text itself which is said, and in a sense completed. The open multiplicity, the element of chance, are transferred, by the principle of commentary, from what might risk being said, on to the number, the form, the mask, and the circumstances of the repetition. The new thing here lies not in what is said but in the event of its return.

I believe there exists another principle of rarefaction of a discourse, complementary to the first, to a certain extent: the author. Not, of course, in the sense of the speaking individual who pronounced or wrote a text, but in the sense of a principle of grouping of discourses, conceived as the unity and origin of their meanings, as the focus of their coherence. This principle is not everywhere at work, nor in a constant manner: there exist all around us plenty of discourses which circulate without deriving their meaning or their efficacy from an author to whom they could be attributed: everyday remarks, which are effaced immediately; decrees or contracts which require signatories but no author; technical instructions which are transmitted anonymously. But in the domains where it is the rule to attribute things to an author—literature, philosophy, science—it is quite evident that this attribution does not always play the same role. In the order of scientific discourse, it was indispensable, during the Middle Ages, that a text should be attributed to an author, since this was an index of truthfulness. A proposition was considered as drawing even its

scientific value from its author. Since the seventeenth century, this function has steadily been eroded in scientific discourse: it now functions only to give a name to a theorem, an effect, an example, a syndrome. On the other hand, in the order of literary discourse, starting from the same epoch, the function of the author has steadily grown stronger: all those tales, poems, dramas, or comedies which were allowed to circulate in the Middle Ages in at least a relative anonymity are now asked (and obliged to say) where they come from, who wrote them. The author is asked to account for the unity of the texts which are placed under his name. He is asked to reveal or at least carry authentication of the hidden meaning which traverses them. He is asked to connect them to his lived experiences, to the real history which saw their birth. The author is what gives the disturbing language of fiction its unities, its nodes of coherence, its insertion in the real.

I know that I will be told: "But you are speaking there of the author as he is reinvented after the event by criticism, after he is dead and there is nothing left except for a tangled mass of scribbles; in those circumstances a little order surely has to be introduced into all that, by imagining a project, a coherence, a thematic structure that is demanded of the consciousness or the life of an author who is indeed perhaps a trifle fictitious. But that does not mean he did not exist, this real author, who bursts into the midst of all these worn-out words, bringing to them his genius or his disorder."

It would of course be absurd to deny the existence of the individual who writes and invents. But I believe that—at least since a certain epoch—the individual who sets out to write a text on the horizon of which a possible *oeuvre* is prowling, takes upon himself the function of the author: what he writes and what he does not write, what he sketches out, even by way of provisional drafts, as an outline of the *oeuvre*, and what he lets fall by way of commonplace remarks—this whole play of differences is prescribed by the author-function, as he receives it from his epoch, or as he modifies it in his turn. He may well overturn the traditional image of the author; nevertheless, it is from some new author-position that he will cut out, from everything he

could say and from all that he does say every day at any moment, the still trembling outline of his *oeuvre*.

The commentary-principle limits the chance-element in discourse by the play of an identity which would take the form of repetition and sameness. The author-principle limits this same element of chance by the play of an identity which has the form of individuality and the self.

We must also recognize another principle of limitation in what is called, not sciences but “disciplines”: a principle which is itself relative and mobile; which permits construction, but within narrow confines.

The organization of disciplines is just as much opposed to the principle of commentary as to that of the author. It is opposed to the principle of the author because a discipline is defined by a domain of objects, a set of methods, a corpus of propositions considered to be true, a play of rules and definitions, of techniques and instruments: all this constitutes a sort of anonymous system at the disposal of anyone who wants to or is able to use it, without their meaning or validity being linked to the one who happened to be their inventor. But the principle of a discipline is also opposed to that of commentary: in a discipline, unlike a commentary, what is supposed at the outset is not a meaning which has to be rediscovered, nor an identity which has to be repeated, but the requisites for the construction of new statements. For there to be a discipline, there must be the possibility of formulating new propositions, *ad infinitum*.

But there is more; there is more, no doubt, in order for there to be less: a discipline is not the sum of all that can be truthfully said about something; it is not even the set of all that can be accepted about the same data in virtue of some principle of coherence or systematicity. Medicine is not constituted by the total of what can be truthfully said about illness; botany cannot be defined by the sum of all the truths concerning plants. There are two reasons for this: first of all, botany and medicine are made up of errors as well as truths, like any other discipline—errors which are not residues or foreign bodies but which have positive functions, a historical efficacy, and a role that is often indissociable from that of the truths. And besides, for a proposition

to belong to botany or pathology, it has to fulfill certain conditions, in a sense stricter and more complex than pure and simple truth: but in any case, other conditions. It must address itself to a determinate plane of objects: from the end of the seventeenth century, for example, for a proposition to be “botanical” it had to deal with the visible structure of the plant, the system of its close and distant resemblances or the mechanism of its fluids; it could no longer retain its symbolic value, as was the case in the sixteenth century, nor the set of virtues and properties which were accorded to it in antiquity. But without belonging to a discipline, a proposition must use conceptual or technical instruments of a well-defined type; from the nineteenth century, a proposition was no longer medical—it fell “outside of medicine” and acquired the status of an individual phantasm or popular imagery—if it used notions that were at the same time metaphorical, qualitative, and substantial (like those of engorgement, of overheated liquids or of dried-out solids). In contrast it could and had to make use of notions that were equally metaphorical but based on another model, a functional and physiological one (that of the irritation, inflammation, or degeneration of the tissues). Still further: in order to be part of a discipline, a proposition has to be able to be inscribed on a certain type of theoretical horizon: suffice it to recall that the search for the primitive language, which was a perfectly acceptable theme up to the eighteenth century, was sufficient, in the second half of the nineteenth century, to make any discourse fall into—I hesitate to say error—chimera and reverie, into pure and simple linguistic monstrosity.

Within its own limits, each discipline recognizes true and false propositions; but it pushes back a whole teratology of knowledge beyond its margins. The exterior of a science is both more and less populated than is often believed: there is of course immediate experience, the imaginary themes which endlessly carry and renew immemorial beliefs; but perhaps there are no errors in the strict sense, for error can only arise and be decided inside a definite practice; on the other hand, there are monsters on the prowl whose form changes with the history of knowledge. In short, a proposition must fulfill complex and

heavy requirements to be able to belong to the grouping of a discipline: before it can be called true or false, it must be "in the true," as Canguilhem would say.

People have often wondered how the botanists or biologists of the nineteenth century managed not to see that what Mendel was saying was true. But it was because Mendel was speaking of objects, applying methods, and placing himself on a theoretical horizon which were alien to the biology of his time. Naudin, before him, had of course posited the thesis that hereditary traits are discrete; yet, no matter how new or strange this principle was, it was able to fit into the discourse of biology, at least as an enigma. What Mendel did was to constitute the hereditary trait as an absolutely new biological object, thanks to a kind of filtering which had never been used before: he detached the trait from the species, and from the sex which transmits it; the field in which he observed it being the infinitely open series of the generations, where it appears and disappears according to statistical regularities. This was a new object which called for new conceptual instruments and new theoretical foundations. Mendel spoke the truth, but he was not "within the true" of the biological discourse of his time: it was not according to such rules that biological objects and concepts were formed. It needed a complete change of scale, the deployment of a whole new range of objects in biology for Mendel to enter into the true and for his propositions to appear (in large measure) correct. Mendel was a true monster, which meant that science could not speak of him; whereas about thirty years earlier, at the height of the nineteenth century, Scheiden, for example, who denied plant sexuality, but in accordance with the rules of biological discourse, was merely formulating a disciplined error.

It is always possible that one might speak the truth in the space of a wild exteriority, but one is "in the true" only by obeying the rules of a discursive "policing" which one has to reactivate in each of one's discourses.

The discipline is a principle of control over the production of discourse. The discipline fixes limits for discourse by the action of an identity which takes the form of a permanent re-actuation of the rules.

We are accustomed to see in an author's fecundity, in the multiplicity of the commentaries, and in the development of a discipline so many infinite resources for the creation of discourses. Perhaps so, but they are nonetheless principles of constraint; it is very likely impossible to account for their positive and multiplicatory role if we do not take into consideration their restrictive and constraining function.

IV

There is, I believe, a third group of procedures which permit the control of discourses. This time it is not a matter of mastering their powers or averting the unpredictability of their appearance, but of determining the condition of their application, of imposing a certain number of rules on the individuals who hold them, and thus of not permitting everyone to have access to them. There is a rarefaction, this time, of the speaking subjects; none shall enter the order of discourse if he does not satisfy certain requirements or if he is not, from the outset, qualified to do so. To be more precise: not all the regions of discourse are equally open and penetrable; some of them are largely forbidden (they are differentiated and differentiating), while others seem to be almost open to all winds and put at the disposal of every speaking subject, without prior restrictions.

In this regard I should like to recount an anecdote which is so beautiful that one trembles at the thought that it might be true. It gathers into a single figure all the constraints of discourse: those which limit its powers, those which master its aleatory appearances, those which carry out the selection among speaking subjects. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Shogun heard tell that the Europeans' superiority in matters of navigation, commerce, politics, and military skill was due to their knowledge of mathematics. He desired to get hold of so precious a knowledge. As he had been told of an English sailor who possessed the secret of these miraculous discourses, he summoned him to his palace and kept him there. Alone with him, he took lessons. He learned mathematics. He retained power, and lived to a great old age. It was not until the nineteenth century that there were

Japanese mathematicians. But the anecdote does not stop there: it has its European side too. The story has it that this English sailor, Will Adams, was an autodidact, a carpenter who had learned geometry in the course of working in a shipyard. Should we see this story as the expression of one of the great myths of European culture? The universal communication of knowledge and the infinite free exchange of discourses in Europe, against the monopolized and secret knowledge of Oriental tyranny?

This idea, of course, does not stand up to examination. Exchange and communication are positive figures working inside complex systems of restriction, and probably would not be able to function independently of them. The most superficial and visible of these systems of restriction is constituted by what can be gathered under the name of ritual. Ritual defines the qualification which must be possessed by individuals who speak (and who must occupy such-and-such a position and formulate such-and-such a type of statement, in the play of a dialogue, of interrogation or recitation); it defines the gestures, behavior, circumstances, and the whole set of signs which must accompany discourse; finally, it fixes the supposed or imposed efficacy of the words, their effect on those to whom they are addressed, and the limits of their constraining value. Religious, judicial, therapeutic, and in large measure also political discourses can scarcely be dissociated from this deployment of a ritual which determines both the particular properties and the stipulated roles of the speaking subjects.

A somewhat different way of functioning is that of the "societies of discourse," which function to preserve or produce discourses, but in order to make them circulate in a closed space, distributing them only according to strict rules, and without the holders being dispossessed by this distribution. An archaic model for this is provided by the groups of rhapsodists who possessed the knowledge of the poems to be recited or potentially to be varied and transformed. But though the object of this knowledge was after all a ritual recitation, the knowledge was protected, defended and preserved within a definite group by the often very complex exercises of memory which it implied. To pass an apprenticeship in it allowed one to enter both a group and a secret

which the act of recitation showed but did not divulge; the roles of speaker and listener were not interchangeable.

There are hardly any such "societies of discourse" now, with their ambiguous play of the secret and its divulgation. But this should not deceive us: even in the order of "true" discourse, even in the order of discourse that is published and free from all ritual, there are still forms of appropriation of secrets, and noninterchangeable roles. It may well be that the act of writing as it is institutionalized today, in the book, the publishing-system and the person of the writer, takes place in a "society of discourse," which though diffuse is certainly constraining. The difference between the writer and any other speaking or writing subject (a difference constantly stressed by the writer himself), the intransitive nature (according to him) of his discourse, the fundamental singularity which he has been ascribing for so long to "writing," the dissymmetry that is asserted between "creation" and any use of the linguistic system—all this shows the existence of a certain "society of discourse," and tends moreover to bring back its play of practices. But there are many others still, functioning according to entirely different schemas of exclusivity and disclosure: e.g., technical or scientific secrets, or the forms of diffusion and circulation of medical discourse, or those who have appropriated the discourse of politics or economics.

At first glance, the "doctrines" (religious, political, philosophical) seem to constitute the reverse of a "society of discourse," in which the number of speaking individuals tended to be limited even if it was not fixed; between those individuals, the discourse could circulate and be transmitted. Doctrine, on the contrary, tends to be diffused, and it is by the holding in common of one and the same discursive ensemble that individuals (as many as one cares to imagine) define their reciprocal allegiance. In appearance, the only prerequisite is the recognition of the same truths and the acceptance of a certain rule of (more or less flexible) conformity with the validated discourses. If doctrines were nothing more than this, they would not be so very different from scientific disciplines, and the discursive control would apply only to the form or the content of the statement, not to the speaking subject.

But doctrinal allegiance puts in question both the statement and the speaking subject, the one by the other. It puts the speaking subject in question through and on the basis of the statement, as is proved by the procedures of exclusion and the mechanisms of rejection which come into action when a speaking subject has formulated one or several unassimilable statements; heresy and orthodoxy do not derive from a fanatical exaggeration of the doctrinal mechanisms, but rather belong fundamentally to them. And conversely the doctrine puts the statements in question on the basis of the speaking subjects, to the extent that the doctrine always stands as the sign, manifestation, and instrument of a prior adherence to a class, a social status, a race, a nationality, an interest, a revolt, a resistance or an acceptance. Doctrine binds individuals to certain types of enunciation and consequently forbids them all others; but it uses, in return, certain types of enunciation to bind individuals amongst themselves, and to differentiate them by that very fact from all others. Doctrine brings about a double subjection: of the speaking subjects to discourses, and of discourses to the (at least virtual) group of speaking individuals.

On a much broader scale, we are obliged to recognize large cleavages in what might be called the social appropriation of discourses. Although education may well be, by right, the instrument thanks to which any individual in a society like ours can have access to any kind of discourse whatever, this does not prevent it from following, as is well known, in its distribution, in what it allows and what it prevents, the lines marked out by social distances, oppositions, and struggles. Any system of education is a political way of maintaining or modifying the appropriation of discourses, along with the knowledges and powers which they carry.

I am well aware that it is very abstract to separate speech-rituals, societies of discourse, doctrinal groups, and social appropriations, as I have just done. Most of the time, they are linked to each other and constitute kinds of great edifices which ensure the distribution of speaking subjects into the different types of discourse and the appropriation of discourses to certain categories of subject. Let us say, in a word, that those are the major procedures of subjection used by dis-

course. What, after all, is an education system, other than a ritualization of speech, a qualification and a fixing of the roles for speaking subjects, the constitution of a doctrinal group, however diffuse, a distribution and an appropriation of discourse with its powers and knowledges? What is “*écriture*” (the writing of the “writers”) other than a similar system of subjection, which perhaps takes slightly different forms, but forms whose main rhythms are analogous? Does not the judicial system, does not the institutional system of medicine likewise constitute, in some of their aspects at least, similar systems of subjection of and by discourse?

V

I wonder whether a certain number of themes in philosophy have not come to correspond to these activities of limitation and exclusion, and perhaps also to reinforce them.

They correspond to them first of all by proposing an ideal truth as the law of discourse and an immanent rationality as the principle of their unfolding, and they reintroduce an ethic of knowledge, which promises to give the truth only to the desire for truth itself and only to the power of thinking it.

Then they reinforce the limitations and exclusions by a denial of the specific reality of discourse in general.

Ever since the sophists’ tricks and influence were excluded and since their paradoxes have been more or less safely muzzled, it seems that Western thought has taken care to ensure that discourse should occupy the smallest possible space between thought and speech. Western thought seems to have made sure that the act of discoursing should appear to be no more than a certain bridging (*apport*) between thinking and speaking—a thought dressed in its signs and made visible by means of words, or conversely the very structures of language put into action and producing a meaning-effect.

This very ancient elision of the reality of discourse in philosophical thought has taken many forms in the course of history. We have seen it again quite recently in the guise of several familiar themes.

Perhaps the idea of the founding subject is a

way of eliding the reality of discourse. The founding subject, indeed, is given the task of directly animating the empty forms of language with his aims; it is he who in moving through the density and inertia of empty things grasps by intuition the meaning lying deposited within them; it is likewise the founding subject who founds horizons of meaning beyond time which history will henceforth only have to elucidate and where propositions, sciences, and deductive ensembles will find their ultimate grounding. In his relation to meaning, the founding subject has at his disposal signs, marks, traces, letters. But he does not need to pass via the singular instance of discourse in order to manifest them.

The opposing theme, that of originating experience, plays an analogous role. It supposes that at the very basis of experience, even before it could be grasped in the form of a cogito, there were prior significations—in a sense, already said—wandering around in the world, arranging it all around us and opening it up from the outset to a sort of primitive recognition. Thus a primordial complicity with the world is supposed to be the foundation of our possibility of speaking of it, in it, or indicating it and naming it, or judging it and ultimately of knowing it in the form of truth. If there is discourse, then, what can it legitimately be other than a discreet reading? Things are already murmuring meanings which our language has only to pick up; and this language, right from its most rudimentary project, was already speaking to us of a being of which it is like the skeleton.

The idea of universal mediation is yet another way, I believe, of eliding the reality of discourse, and despite appearances to the contrary. For it would seem at first glance that by rediscovering everywhere the movement of a *logos* which elevates particularities to the status of concepts and allows immediate consciousness to unfurl in the end the whole rationality of the world, one puts discourse itself at the center of one's speculation. But this *logos*, in fact, is only a discourse that has already been held, or rather it is things themselves, and events, which imperceptibly turn themselves into discourse as they unfold the secret of their own essence. Thus discourse is little more than the gleaming of a truth in the process of being born to its own gaze; and when every-

thing finally can take the form of discourse, when everything can be said and when discourse can be spoken about everything, it is because all things, having manifested and exchanged their meaning, can go back into the silent interiority of their consciousness of self.

Thus in a philosophy of the founding subject, in a philosophy of originary experience, and in a philosophy of universal mediation alike, discourse is no more than a play, of writing in the first case, of reading in the second, and of exchange in the third, and this exchange, this reading, this writing never put anything at stake except signs. In this way, discourse is annulled in its reality and put at the disposal of the signifier.

What civilization has ever appeared to be more respectful of discourse than ours? Where has it ever been more honored, or better honored? Where has it ever been, seemingly, more radically liberated from its constraints, and universalized? Yet it seems to me that beneath this apparent veneration of discourse, under this apparent logophilia, a certain fear is hidden. It is just as if prohibitions, barriers, thresholds, and limits had been set up in order to master, at least partly, the great proliferation of discourse, in order to remove from its richness the most dangerous part, and in order to organize its disorder according to figures which dodge what is most uncontrollable about it. It is as if we had tried to efface all trace of its irruption into the activity of thought and language. No doubt there is in our society, and, I imagine, in all others, but following a different outline and different rhythms, a profound logophobia, a sort of mute terror against these events, against this mass of things said, against the surging-up of all these statements, against all that could be violent, discontinuous, pugnacious, disorderly as well, and perilous about them—against this great incessant and disordered buzzing of discourse.

And if we want to—I would not say, efface this fear, but—analyze it in its conditions, its action, and its effects, we must, I believe, resolve to take three decisions which our thinking today tends to resist and which correspond to the three groups of functions which I have just mentioned: we must call into question our will to truth, restore to discourse its character as an event, and finally throw off the sovereignty of the signifier.

Jacques Derrida

b. 1930

Jacques Derrida was born in Algiers in 1930. He was educated in Algeria and in France; in France, he studied philosophy at the *École Normale Supérieure* (1952–1956) and at the University of Paris, Sorbonne, earning his doctoral degree in 1967. Derrida also studied at Harvard for a year (1956–1957) and in the sixties was associated with the avant-garde journal *Tel Quel*. He taught for four years at the Sorbonne and then, since 1964, at the *École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales*, becoming *directeur d'études* (director of studies) in 1984. He has also served as visiting professor at Yale, Johns Hopkins, the University of California at Irvine, and Cornell.

In his many books and articles, Derrida persistently attacks the idea that language is or can be referential. He finds this idea an active premise in philosophy, in most discussions of language, and in everyday thought. For Derrida, as for Friedrich Nietzsche, Michel Foucault, and others, including the Sophists, language does not mediate our relationship to a more or less knowable world. Rather, Derrida maintains that “*il n’y a pas de hors-texte*”—there is nothing outside of the text.¹ By this he means that our knowledge of the world is constructed from language, and language is not a transparent medium of reference or of thought. Language cannot be transcended to reach the thing *signified* while disposing of the *signifier*. This effort to reach past language to the reality it names is what Derrida calls “the metaphysics of presence.”

In his attack on the metaphysics of presence that dominates philosophy, Derrida focuses on the notion that speech is prior to and somehow superior to writing. He points out that Plato was the first of many philosophers who distrusted writing. Speech, those philosophers claimed, is immediate, in the sense that it takes place at the moment of interaction between people who are exchanging their thoughts. Thus it is an expression of thought. It is clearly the expression of the speaker, who is, of course, present, and it is directed to the interlocutor, who is also present. Speech is an attempt to represent something else, to transfer thoughts, to communicate ideas. In this sense, it is an attempt to overcome language. Plato distrusted both rhetoric and writing because they subverted the attempt of speech to transcend itself. Rhetoric focused on motives for speaking that were not intended to reach the absolute truth. Moreover, it made a virtue of linguistic facility, attending to the material effects of style and structure. Plato similarly distrusted writing, which compounded the problems introduced by rhetoric in that it allowed the writer to manage the language, to review and revise, to polish—and then to disappear. Because the author of written discourse does not utter the words, complains Plato, the speech situation is absent; therefore, also absent is the possibility of the kind of dialogue that prompts clarification, probing of premises, corrections, and so on.

¹Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. G. Spivak (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), p. 158.

Derrida finds this sort of argument repeated frequently through the history of philosophy: Writing is taken to be a representation of speech, but even if it is a faithful representation, writing somehow falsifies speech, simply by being at a further remove from the “original” signifying intention.

Derrida attacks this presumption by reversing the argument. Writing, he claims, is prior to speech—not historically, of course, but conceptually, in that writing shows more clearly than speech does how language is different from what it supposedly represents. Writing is undeniably a sign function, representing sounds and words. But the very fact that writing is at one remove from speech, that it escapes the speech situation, draws attention to the fact that speech, too, is a sign function. Writing is both distant from the moment of “utterance” and different in form from the utterance it supposedly represents. But in speech, too, verbal signs are distant and different from what they signify. Once the distance and difference are acknowledged, speech can be seen as a form of writing. Language itself operates by distance and difference, functions that Derrida combines in his coinage *différance*, “different and deferred.” Thus “writing” serves for Derrida the purpose that “rhetoric” served for Nietzsche: All language is writing (or rhetoric). There is no speech that effaces itself in the presence of truth. The metaphysics of presence is, says Derrida, the manifestation of a desire to hide or repress the absence of knowable referents for language, the gap or *différance* that constitutes language.

In his own writing, Derrida makes this argument in two principal ways: (a) by analyzing or “deconstructing” texts that contribute to the metaphysics of presence and (b) by adopting a style that resists the habit of assuming truth’s presence behind language. In deconstructing texts, Derrida finds and analyzes presuppositions about or arguments for the priority of speech and the fundamental referentiality of language. Here he reveals contradictions, betrayals of the premise by the premise itself, and evidence of absence in assertions about presence. In *Of Grammatology* (1967), for example, Derrida finds that Jean-Jacques Rousseau, for all his insistence on the primacy of speech, relies on the distance he can attain through writing in order to represent his ideas “truthfully.” In *Dissemination* (1972), Derrida analyzes the *Phaedrus* to show how far language always remains from any clear representation of ideas. But in constructing his analyses, Derrida resists the trap of claiming that he has at last found the right way to understand the relationship of language to idea. He avoids the binary oppositions that are, he says, manifestations of the metaphysics of presence: good/evil, nature/culture, speech/writing, man/woman—all versions of presence/absence. Instead, Derrida tends to rely on exorbitantly extended metaphors, elaborate and ambiguous syntax, and a special vocabulary (*différance*, for example) that emphasizes, problematizes, and finally collapses (or so he claims) binary distinctions.

Derrida is at once rhetorical and antirhetorical, as “Signature Event Context” (included here) demonstrates. On the rhetorical side, Derrida argues that language is neither referential nor transparent; it is, rather, always metaphorical and ambiguous, always in need of interpretation. Ultimately, there is nothing (no knowledge, that is) beyond this “text” of language. We might expect Derrida to conclude, then, that knowledge depends not on logic or reason that reaches through or past language to the truth but on the negotiated meanings brought by persuasion and interpretation. But Derrida does not draw this conclusion. He does not concern himself with lan-

guage as purposeful discourse. Indeed, Michel Foucault and others have criticized Derrida for neglecting the political, social, and historical circumstances that contribute to the formation of particular interpretations or methods of persuasion. The rhetorical situation that might *explain* a particular interpretation is not Derrida's topic. He seeks instead to reveal the way in which any explanation tends toward the metaphysics of presence.

In "Signature Event Context," Derrida in fact attacks the idea that "context" can help to account for meaning. How, he asks, can we specify the context without recourse to some settled notions about the conditions of meaning? In this discussion, he concisely summarizes his argument about the "primacy" of writing over speech. Even in the speech situation, he maintains, the meaning of an utterance is undecidable. The same holds true for a reader reading written discourse. In this sense, writing always escapes context. Derrida then criticizes speech-act theory for relying on this exploded notion of context. A number of critics have pointed out that Derrida is not as far from speech-act theory as he seems to suggest here. He appears to accept the general idea that there are "performative" utterances—that is, statements that are in and of themselves actions or necessary parts of actions with legal, social, and ethical consequences—even though he rejects what he takes to be an absolute belief in the availability of context or intention as specifiable conditions for these acts.

Derrida's work has been tremendously influential, not only in philosophy but also in literary criticism. His method of deconstructing texts has become a popular critical approach, and his speculations about language have stimulated a number of related theoretical projects. Despite Derrida's general avoidance of the term *rhetoric*, several commentators have seen his critique of philosophy as part of the long-standing conflict between philosophy and rhetoric as ways of knowing. By rhetoric, Derrida means, primarily, tropes and figures. Here is how he begins his essay "White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy": "From philosophy, rhetoric. That is, here, to make from a volume, approximately, more or less, a flower, to extract a flower, to mount it, or rather to have it mount itself, bring itself to light—and turning away, as if from itself, come round again."² Rhetoric is the flower, the ornament, one that turns away, in the (dare we say) literal meaning of *trope*. Derrida's hesitation with these notions is understandable: "The opposition of meaning . . . to its metaphorical signifier . . . is sedimented—another metaphor—by the entire history of philosophy."³ The danger of using rhetoric to designate an alternative to philosophy is that the terminology and categories of rhetoric have already been colonized by philosophy. Derrida's work, however, is one of the signs of liberation.

Selected Bibliography

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²Jacques Derrida, "White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy," in *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), p. 209.

³Derrida, p. 228.

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Signature Event Context

Still confining ourselves for simplicity to spoken utterance.

—AUSTIN, *How to Do Things with Words*

Is it certain that to the word *communication* corresponds a concept that is unique, univocal, rigorously controllable, and transmittable: in a word, communicable? Thus, in accordance with a strange figure of discourse, one must first of all ask oneself whether or not the word or signifier “communication” communicates a determinate content, an identifiable meaning, or a describable value. However, even to articulate and to propose this question I have had to anticipate the meaning of the word *communication*: I have been constrained to predetermine communication as a vehicle, a means of transport or transitional medium of a *meaning*, and moreover of a *unified* meaning. If *communication* possessed several meanings and if this plurality should prove to be irreducible, it would not be justifiable to define communication *a priori* as the transmission of a *meaning*, even supposing that we could agree on what each of these words (transmission, meaning, etc.) involved. And yet, we have no prior authorization for neglecting *communication* as a word, or for impoverishing its polysemic aspects; indeed, this word opens up a semantic domain that precisely does not limit itself to semantics, semiotics, and even less to linguistics. For one characteristic of the semantic field of the word *communication* is that it designates nonsemantic movements as well. Here, even a provisional recourse to ordinary language and to the equivocations of natural language instructs us that one can, for instance, *communicate a movement* or that a tremor [*ébranlement*], a shock, a displacement of force can be communicated—that is, propagated, transmitted. We also speak of different or remote places communicating with each other by means of a passage or opening. What takes place, in this sense, what is transmitted, communicated, does not involve phenomena of meaning or signification. In such cases we are

dealing neither with a semantic or conceptual content, nor with a semiotic operation, and even less with a linguistic exchange.

We would not, however, assert that this non-semiotic meaning of the word *communication*, as it works in ordinary language, in one or more of the so-called natural languages, constitutes the *literal* or *primary* [*primitif*] meaning and that consequently the semantic, semiotic, or linguistic meaning corresponds to a derivation, extension, or reduction, a metaphoric displacement. We would not assert, as one might be tempted to do, that semio-linguistic communication acquired its title *more metaphorico*, by analogy with “physical” or “real” communication, inasmuch as it also serves as a passage, transporting and transmitting something, rendering it accessible. We will not assert this for the following reasons:

1. because the value of the notion of *literal meaning* [*sens propre*] appears more problematical than ever, and

2. because the value of displacement, of transport, etc., is precisely constitutive of the concept of metaphor with which one claims to comprehend the semantic displacement that is brought about from communication as a non-semio-linguistic phenomenon to communication as a semio-linguistic phenomenon.

(Let me note parenthetically that this communication is going to concern, indeed already concerns, the problem of polysemy and of communication, of dissemination—which I shall oppose to polysemy—and of communication. In a moment a certain concept of writing cannot fail to arise that may transform itself and perhaps transform the problematic under consideration).

It seems self-evident that the ambiguous field of the word “communication” can be massively reduced by the limits of what is called a *context* (and I give notice, again parenthetically, that this particular communication will be concerned with the problem of context and with the question of determining exactly how writing relates to

Translated by Samuel Weber and Jeffrey Mehlman.

context in general). For example, in a philosophical *colloquium* on philosophy in the *French language*, a conventional context—produced by a kind of consensus that is implicit but structurally vague—seems to prescribe that one propose “communications” concerning communication, communications in a discursive form, colloquial communications, oral communications destined to be listened to, and to engage or to pursue dialogues within the horizon of an intelligibility and truth that is meaningful, such that ultimately general agreement may, in principle, be attained. These communications are supposed to confine themselves to the element of a determinate, “natural” language, here designated as French, which commands certain very particular uses of the word *communication*. Above all, the object of such communications is supposed, by priority or by privilege, to organize itself around communication *qua discourse*, or in any case *qua signification*. Without exhausting all the implications and the entire structure of an “event” such as this one, an effort that would require extended preliminary analysis, the conditions that I have just recalled seem to be evident; and those who doubt it need only consult our program to be convinced.

But are the conditions [*les réquisits*] of a context ever absolutely determinable? This is, fundamentally, the most general question that I shall endeavor to elaborate. Is there a rigorous and scientific concept of *context*? Or does the notion of context not conceal, behind a certain confusion, philosophical presuppositions of a very determinate nature? Stating it in the most summary manner possible, I shall try to demonstrate why a context is never absolutely determinable, or rather, why its determination can never be entirely certain or saturated. This structural nonsaturation would have a double effect:

1. it would mark the theoretical inadequacy of the *current concept of context* (linguistic or nonlinguistic), as it is accepted in numerous domains of research, including all the concepts with which it is systematically associated;
2. it would necessitate a certain generalization and a certain displacement of the concept of writing. This concept would no longer be com-

prehensible in terms of communication, at least in the limited sense of a transmission of meaning. Inversely, it is within the general domain of writing, defined in this way, that the effects of semantic communication can be determined as effects that are particular, secondary, inscribed, and supplementary.

WRITING AND TELECOMMUNICATION

If we take the notion of writing in its currently accepted sense—one which should not—and that is essential—be considered innocent, primitive, or natural, it can only be seen as a *means of communication*. Indeed, one is compelled to regard it as an especially potent means of communication, *extending* enormously, if not infinitely, the domain of oral or gestural communication. This seems obvious, a matter of general agreement. I shall not describe all the *modes* of this extension in time and in space. I shall, however, pause for a moment to consider the import [*valeur*] of *extension* to which I have just referred. To say that writing *extends* the field and the powers of locutory or gestural communication presupposes, does it not, a sort of *homogeneous* space of communication? Of course the compass of voice or of gesture would encounter therein a factual limit, an empirical boundary of space and of time; while writing, in the same time and in the same space, would be capable of relaxing those limits and of opening the *same field* to a very much larger scope. The meaning or contents of the semantic message would thus be transmitted, *communicated*, by different *means*, by more powerful technical mediations, over a far greater distance, but still within a medium that remains fundamentally continuous and self-identical, a homogeneous element through which the unity and wholeness of meaning would not be affected in its essence. Any alteration would therefore be accidental.

The system of this interpretation (which is also, in a certain manner, *the* system of interpretation, or in any case of all hermeneutical interpretation), however currently accepted it may be, or inasmuch as it is current, like common sense, has been *represented* through the history of philosophy. I would even go so far as to say that it is

the interpretation of writing that is peculiar and proper to philosophy. I shall limit myself to a single example, but I do not believe that a single counter-example can be found in the entire history of philosophy as such; I know of no analysis that contradicts, essentially, the one proposed by Condillac, under the direct influence of Warburton, in the *Essay on the Origin of Human Knowledge* (*Essai sur l'origine des connaissances humaines*). I have chosen this example because it contains an *explicit* reflection on the origin and function of the written text (this explicitness is not to be found in every philosophy, and the particular conditions both of its emergence and of its eclipse must be analyzed) which organizes itself here within a philosophical discourse that, in this case and throughout philosophy, presupposes the simplicity of the origin, the continuity of all derivation, of all production, of all analysis, and the homogeneity of all dimensions [*orders*]. Analogy is a major concept in the thought of Condillac. I have also chosen this example because the analysis, “retracing” the origin and function of writing, is placed, in a rather uncritical manner, *under the authority of the category of communication*.¹ If men write it is: (1) because they have to communicate; (2) because what they have to communicate is their “thought,” their “ideas,” their representations. Thought, as representation, precedes and governs communication, which transports the “idea,” the signified content; (3) because men are *already* in a state that allows them to communicate their thought to themselves and to each other when, in a continuous manner, they invent the particular means of communication, writing. Here is a passage from Chapter XIII of the Second Part (“On Language and Method”), First Section (“On the Origins and Progress of Language”; writing is thus a modality of language and marks a continual progression in an essentially linguistic communication), paragraph XIII, “On Writing”: “Men in a state of communicating their thoughts by means of sounds, felt the necessity of imagining new signs capable of perpetuating those

¹The Rousseauist theory of language and of writing is also introduced under the general title of *communication* (“On the diverse means of communicating our thoughts” is the title of the first chapter of the *Essay on the Origin of Languages*). [Au.]

thoughts and of making them *known* to persons who are *absent*” (I underscore this value of *absence*, which, if submitted to renewed questioning, will risk introducing a certain break in the homogeneity of the system). Once men are already in the state of “communicating their thoughts,” and of doing it by means of sounds (which is, according to Condillac, a second step, when articulated language has come to “supplant” [*suppléer*] the language of action, which is the single and radical principle of all language), the birth and progress of writing will follow in a line that is direct, simple, and continuous. The history of writing will conform to a law of mechanical economy: to gain or save the most space and time possible by means of the most convenient abbreviation; hence writing will never have the slightest effect on either the structure or the contents of the meaning (the ideas) that it is supposed to transmit [*véhiculer*]. The same content, formerly communicated by gestures and sounds, will henceforth be transmitted by writing, by successively different modes of notation, from pictographic writing to alphabetic writing, collaterally by the hieroglyphic writing of the Egyptians and the ideographic writing of the Chinese. Condillac continues: “Thus the imagination will represent to them only the very *same* images that they had already expressed through actions and words, and which had, from the very beginning, rendered language figural and metaphorical. *The most natural means* was thus to depict [*dessiner*] images of things. To *express the idea* of a man or of a horse, one represented the form of the one or of the other, and the first attempt at writing was nothing but a simple painting” (my emphasis—J. D.).

The representational character of the written communication—writing as picture, reproduction, imitation of its content—will be the invariant trait of all progress to come. The concept of *representation* is here indissociable from those of *communication* and of *expression* that I have emphasized in Condillac’s text. Representation, of course, will become more complex, will develop supplementary ramifications and degrees; it will become the representation of a representation in various systems of writing, hieroglyphic, ideographic, or phonetic-alphabetical, but the representative structure which marks the first degree

of expressive communication, the relation idea/sign, will never be either annulled or transformed. Describing the history of the types of writing, their continuous derivation from a common root that is never displaced and which establishes a sort of community of analogical participation among all the species of writing, Condillac concludes (in what is virtually a citation of Warburton, as is most of this chapter): "Thus, the general history of writing proceeds by simple gradation from the state of painting to that of the letter; for letters are the final steps that are left to be taken after the Chinese marks which, on the one hand, participate in the nature of Egyptian hieroglyphics, and on the other, participate in that of letters just as the hieroglyphs participate both in Mexican paintings and Chinese characters. These characters are so close to our writing that an alphabet simply diminishes the inconvenience of their great number and is their succinct abbreviation."

Having thus confirmed the motif of economic reduction in its *homogeneous and mechanical* character, let us now return to the notion of *absence* that I underscored, in passing, in the text of Condillac. How is that notion determined there?

1. It is first of all the absence of the addressee. One writes in order to communicate something to those who are absent. The absence of the sender, of the receiver [*destinateur*], from the mark that he abandons, and which cuts itself off from him and continues to produce effects independently of his presence and of the present actuality of his intentions [*vouloir-dire*], indeed even after his death, his absence, which moreover belongs to the structure of all writing—and I shall add further on, of all language in general—this absence is not examined by Condillac.

2. The absence of which Condillac speaks is determined in the most classic manner as a continuous modification and progressive extenuation of presence. Representation regularly *supplants* [*supplée*] presence. However, articulating all the moments of experience insofar as it is involved in signification ("to supplant," *suppléer*, is one of the most decisive and most frequent operational

concepts in Condillac's *Essay*²), this operation of supplementation is not exhibited as a break in presence but rather as a continuous and homogeneous reparation and modification of presence in the representation.

I am not able to analyze, here, everything presupposed in Condillac's philosophy and elsewhere, by this concept of absence as the modification of presence. Let us note only that this concept governs another operational notion (for the sake of convenience I invoke the classical opposition between *operational* and *thematic*) which is no less decisive for the *Essay: tracing and retracing*. Like the concept of supplanting [*suppléance*], the concept of trace would permit an interpretation quite different from Condillac's. According to him, tracing means "expressing," "representing," "recalling," "rendering present" ("Thus painting probably owes its origin to the necessity of tracing our thoughts in the manner described, and this necessity has doubtless contributed to reserving the language of action as that which is most readily depictable" ["On Writing," p. 128]). The sign comes into being at the same time as imagination and memory, the moment it is necessitated by the absence of the object from present perception [*la perception présente*] ("Memory, as we have seen, consists in nothing but the power of recalling the signs of our ideas, or the circumstances that accompanied them; and this power only takes place by virtue of the *analogy* of the signs [my emphasis—J. D.: the concept of analogy, which organizes the entire system of Condillac, provides the general guarantee of all the continuities and in particular that linking presence to absence] that we have chosen; and by the order that we have instituted among our ideas, the objects that we wish to retrace are bound up with several of our present needs" I, II Ch. iv, #39). This holds true for all the orders of signs distinguished by Condillac (arbitrary, accidental, and even natural, distinctions that Condillac qual-

²Language supplants action or perception: articulated language supplants the language of action: writing supplants articulated language, etc. [Au.] [The word, *supplée*, used by Derrida and here by Rousseau, implies the double notion of supplanting, replacing, and also supplementing, bringing to completion, remedying.—Tr.]

ifies and, on certain points, even calls into question in his letters to Cramer). The philosophical operation that Condillac also calls “retracing” consists in reversing, by a process of analysis and continuous decomposition, the movement of genetic derivation that leads from simple sensation and present perception to the complex edifice of representation: from ordinary presence to the language of the most formal calculus [*calcul*].

It would be easy to demonstrate that, fundamentally, this type of analysis of written signification neither begins nor ends with Condillac. If I call this analysis “ideological,” I do so neither to oppose its notions to “scientific” concepts nor to appeal to the dogmatic—one might also say ideological—usage to which the term “ideology” is often put, while seldom subjecting either the various possibilities or the history of the word to serious consideration. If I define notions such as those of Condillac as “ideological” it is because, against the background [*sur le fond*] of a vast, powerful, and systematic philosophical tradition dominated by the prominence of the *idea* (*eidos, idea*), they delineate the field of reflection of the French “ideologues,” who in the wake of Condillac elaborated a theory of the sign as representation of the idea which itself represented the object perceived. From that point on, communication is that which circulates a representation as an ideal content (meaning); and writing is a species of this general communication. A species: a communication admitting a relative specificity within a genre.

If we now ask ourselves what, in this analysis, is the essential predicate of this *specific difference*, we rediscover *absence*.

I offer here the following two propositions or hypotheses:

1. since every sign, whether in the “language of action” or in articulated language (before even the intervention of writing in the classical sense), presupposes a certain absence (to be determined), the absence within the particular field of writing will have to be of an original type if one intends to grant any specificity whatsoever to the written sign;

2. if perchance the predicate thus introduced to characterize the absence peculiar and proper to

writing were to find itself no less appropriate to every species of sign and of communication, the consequence would be a general shift: writing would no longer be one species of communication, and all the concepts to whose generality writing had been subordinated (including the *concept* itself *qua* meaning, idea or grasp of meaning and of idea, the concept of communication, of the sign, etc.) would appear to be noncritical, ill-formed, or destined, rather, to insure the authority and the force of a certain historical discourse.

Let us attempt, then, while still continuing to take this classical discourse as our point of departure, to characterize the absence that seems to intervene in a specific manner in the functioning of writing.

A written sign is proffered in the absence of the receiver. How to style this absence? One could say that at the moment when I am writing, the receiver may be absent from my field of present perception. But is not this absence merely a distant presence, one which is delayed or which, in one form or another, is idealized in its representation? This does not seem to be the case, or at least this distance, divergence, delay, this deferral [*différance*] must be capable of being carried to a certain absoluteness of absence if the structure of writing, assuming that writing exists, is to constitute itself. It is at that point that the *différance* [difference and deferral, *trans.*] as writing could no longer (be) an (ontological) modification of presence. In order for my “written communication” to retain its function as writing, i.e., its readability, it must remain readable despite the absolute disappearance of any receiver, determined in general. My communication must be repeatable—iterable—in the absolute absence of the receiver or of any empirically determinable collectivity of receivers. Such iterability—(*iter*, again, probably comes from *itara, otha* in Sanskrit, and everything that follows can be read as the working out of the logic that ties repetition to alterity) structures the mark of writing itself, no matter what particular type of writing is involved (whether pictographical, hieroglyphic, ideographic, phonetic, alphabetic, to cite the old categories). A writing that is

not structurally readable—iterable—beyond the death of the addressee would not be writing. Although this would seem to be obvious, I do not want it accepted as such, and I shall examine the final objection that could be made to this proposition. Imagine a writing whose code would be so idiomatic as to be established and known, as secret cipher, by only two “subjects.” Could we maintain that, following the death of the receiver, or even of both partners, the mark left by one of them is still writing? Yes, to the extent that, organized by a code, even an unknown and nonlinguistic one, it is constituted in its identity as mark by its iterability, in the absence of such and such a person, and hence ultimately of every empirically determined “subject.” This implies that there is no such thing as a code—organon of iterability—which could be structurally secret. The possibility of repeating and thus of identifying the marks is implicit in every code, making it into a network [*une grille*] that is communicable, transmittable, decipherable, iterable for a third, and hence for every possible user in general. To be what it is, all writing must, therefore, be capable of functioning in the radical absence of every empirically determined receiver in general. And this absence is not a continuous modification of presence, it is a rupture in presence, the “death” or the possibility of the “death” of the receiver inscribed in the structure of the mark (I note in passing that this is the point where the value or the “effect” of transcendentalism is linked necessarily to the possibility of writing and of “death” as analyzed). The perhaps paradoxical consequence of my here having recourse to iteration and to code: the disruption, in the last analysis, of the authority of the code as a finite system of rules; at the same time, the radical destruction of any context as the protocol of code. We will come to this in a moment.

What holds for the receiver holds also, for the same reasons, for the sender or the producer. To write is to produce a mark that will constitute a sort of machine which is productive in turn, and which my future disappearance will not, in principle, hinder in its functioning, offering things and itself to be read and to be rewritten. When I say “my future disappearance” [*disparition*: also, demise, *trans.*], it is in order to render this propo-

sition more immediately acceptable. I ought to be able to say my disappearance, pure and simple, my non-presence in general, for instance the non-presence of my intention of saying something meaningful [*mon vouloir-dire, mon intention-designification*], of my wish to communicate, from the emission or production of the mark. For a writing to be a writing it must continue to “act” and to be readable even when what is called the author of the writing no longer answers for what he has written, for what he seems to have signed, be it because of a temporary absence, because he is dead, or, more generally, because he has not employed his absolutely actual and present intention or attention, the plenitude of his desire to say what he means, in order to sustain what seems to be written “in his name.” One could repeat at this point the analysis outlined above this time with regard to the addressee. The situation of the writer and of the underwriter [*du souscripteur*: the signatory, *trans.*] is, concerning the written text, basically the same as that of the reader. This essential drift [*dérive*] bearing on writing as an iterative structure, cut off from all absolute responsibility, from *consciousness* as the ultimate authority, orphaned and separated at birth from the assistance of its father, is precisely what Plato condemns in the *Phaedrus*. If Plato’s gesture is, as I believe, the philosophical movement par excellence, one can measure what is at stake here.

Before elaborating more precisely the inevitable consequences of these nuclear traits of all writing (that is: [1] the break with the horizon of communication as communication of consciousness or of presences and as linguistic or semantic transport of the desire to mean what one says [*vouloir-dire*]; [2] the disengagement of all writing from the semantic or hermeneutic horizons which, inasmuch as they are horizons of meaning, are riven [*crever*] by writing; [3] the necessity of disengaging from the concept of polysemics what I have elsewhere called *dissemination*, which is also the concept of writing; [4] the disqualification or the limiting of the concept of context, whether “real” or “linguistic,” inasmuch as its rigorous theoretical determination as well as its empirical saturation is rendered impossible or insufficient by writing), I would like to demonstrate that the traits that can be recog-

nized in the classical, narrowly defined concept of writing, are generalizable. They are valid not only for all orders of “signs” and for all languages in general but moreover, beyond semio-linguistic communication, for the entire field of what philosophy would call experience, even the experience of being: the above-mentioned “presence.”

What are in effect the essential predicates in a minimal determination of the classical concept of writing?

1. A written sign, in the current meaning of this word, is a mark that subsists, one which does not exhaust itself in the moment of its inscription and which can give rise to an iteration in the absence and beyond the presence of the empirically determined subject who, in a given context, has emitted or produced it. This is what has enabled us, at least traditionally, to distinguish a “written” from an “oral” communication.

2. At the same time, a written sign carries with it a force that breaks with its context, that is, with the collectivity of presences organizing the moment of its inscription. This breaking force [*force de rupture*] is not an accidental predicate but the very structure of the written text. In the case of a so-called “real” context, what I have just asserted is all too evident. This allegedly real context includes a certain “present” of the inscription, the presence of the writer to what he has written, the entire environment and the horizon of his experience, and above all the intention, the wanting-to-say-what-he-means, which animates his inscription at a given moment. But the sign possesses the characteristic of being readable even if the moment of its production is irrevocably lost and even if I do not know what its alleged author-scriptor consciously intended to say at the moment he wrote it, i.e., abandoned it to its essential drift. As far as the internal semiotic context is concerned, the force of the rupture is no less important: by virtue of its essential iterability, a written syntagma can always be detached from the chain in which it is inserted or given without causing it to lose all possibility of functioning, if not all possibility of “communicating,” precisely. One can perhaps come to recognize other possibilities in it by inscribing it or *grafting* it into other chains. No context can en-

tirely enclose it. Nor any code, the code here being both the possibility and impossibility of writing, of its essential iterability (repetition/alterity).

3. This force of rupture is tied to the spacing [*espacement*] that constitutes the written sign: spacing which separates it from other elements of the internal contextual chain (the always open possibility of its disengagement and graft), but also from all forms of present reference (whether past or future in the modified form of the present that is past or to come), objective or subjective. This spacing is not the simple negativity of a lacuna but rather the emergence of the mark. It does not remain, however, as the labor of the negative in the service of meaning, of the living concept, of the *telos*, supersedable and reducible in the *Aufhebung* of a dialectic.

Are these three predicates, together with the entire system they entail, limited, as is often believed, strictly to “written” communication in the narrow sense of this word? Are they not to be found in all language, in spoken language for instance, and ultimately in the totality of “experience” insofar as it is inseparable from this field of the mark, which is to say, from the network of effacement and of difference, of units of iterability, which are separable from their internal and external context and also from themselves, inasmuch as the very iterability which constituted their identity does not permit them ever to be a unity that is identical to itself?

Let us consider any element of spoken language, be it a small or large unit. The first condition of its functioning is its delineation with regard to a certain code; but I prefer not to become too involved here with this concept of code which does not seem very reliable to me; let us say that a certain self-identity of this element (mark, sign, etc.) is required to permit its recognition and repetition. Through empirical variations of tone, voice, etc., possibly of a certain accent, for example, we must be able to recognize the identity, roughly speaking, of a signifying form. Why is this identity paradoxically the division or dissociation of itself, which will make of this phonic sign a grapheme? Because this unity of the signifying form only constitutes itself by

virtue of its iterability, by the possibility of its being repeated in the absence not only of its “referent,” which is self-evident, but in the absence of a determinate signified or of the intention of actual signification, as well as of all intention of present communication. This structural possibility of being weaned from the referent or from the signified (hence from communication and from its context) seems to me to make every mark, including those which are oral, a grapheme in general; which is to say, as we have seen, the non-present *remainder* [*restance*] of a differential mark cut off from its putative “production” or origin. And I shall even extend this law to all “experience” in general as it is conceded that there is no experience consisting of *pure* presence but only of chains of differential marks.

Let us dwell for a moment on this point and return to that absence of the referent and even of the signified meaning, and hence of the correlative intention to signify. The absence of referent is a possibility easily enough admitted today. This possibility is not only an empirical eventuality. It constructs the mark; and the potential presence of the referent at the moment it is designated does not modify in the slightest the structure of the mark, which implies that the mark can do without the referent. Husserl, in his *Logical Investigations*, analyzed this possibility very rigorously, and in a two-fold manner:

1. An utterance [*énoncé*] whose object is not impossible but only possible can very well be made and understood without its real object (its referent) being present, either to the person who produced the statement or to the one who receives it. If while looking out the window, I say: “The sky is blue,” this utterance will be intelligible (let us say, provisionally if you like, communicable) even if the interlocutor does not see the sky; even if I do not see it myself, if I see it badly, if I am mistaken or if I wish to mislead my interlocutor. Not that this is always the case; but the structure of possibility of this utterance includes the capability to be formed and to function as a reference that is empty or cut off from its referent. Without this possibility, which is also that of iterability in general, “generable,” and generative of all marks, there would be no utterance.

2. The absence of the signified. Husserl analyzes this as well. He judges it to be always possible even if, according to the axiology and teleology that governs his analysis, he judges this possibility to be inferior, dangerous, or “critical”: it opens the phenomenon of the *crisis* of meaning. This absence of meaning can take three forms:

- a. I can manipulate symbols without animating them, in an active and actual manner, with the attention and intention of signification (crisis of mathematical symbolism, according to Husserl). Husserl insists on the fact that this does not prevent the sign from functioning: the crisis or the emptiness of mathematical meaning does not limit its technical progress (the intervention of writing is decisive here, as Husserl himself remarks in *The Origin of Geometry*).
- b. Certain utterances can have a meaning although they are deprived of *objective* signification. “The circle is squared” is a proposition endowed with meaning. It has sufficient meaning at least for me to judge it false or contradictory (*widersinnig* and not *sinnlos*, Husserl says). I place this example under the category of the absence of the signified, although in this case the tripartite division into signifier/signified/referent is not adequate to a discussion of the Husserlian analysis. “Squared circle” marks the absence of a referent, certainly, as well as that of a certain signified, but not the absence of meaning. In these two cases, the crisis of meaning (nonpresence in general, absence as the absence of the referent—of the perception—or of the meaning—of the intention of actual signification) is still bound to the essential possibility of writing; and this crisis is not an accident, a factual and empirical anomaly of spoken language, it is also its positive possibility and its “internal” structure, in the form of a certain outside [*dehors*].
- c. Finally there is what Husserl calls *Sinnlosigkeit* or agrammaticality. For instance, “the green is either” or “abracadabra” [*le vert est ou; the ambiguity of ou or où is noted below, trans.*]. In such cases Husserl

considers that there is no language any more, or at least no “logical” language, no cognitive language such as Husserl construes in a teleological manner, no language accorded the possibility of the intuition of objects given in person and signified in *truth*. We are confronted here with a decisive difficulty. Before stopping to deal with it, I note a point that touches our discussion of communication, namely that the primary interest of the Husserlian analysis to which I am referring here (while precisely detaching it up to a certain point, from its context or its teleological and metaphysical horizon, an operation which itself ought to provoke us to ask how and why it is always possible), is its claim rigorously to dissociate (not without a certain degree of success) from every phenomenon of communication the analysis of the sign or the expression (*Ausdruck*) as signifying sign, the seeking to say something (*bedeutsames Zeichen*).³

Let us return to the case of agrammatical *Sinnlosigkeit*. What interests Husserl in the *Logical Investigations* is the system of rules of a universal grammar, not from a linguistic point of view but from a logical and epistemological one. In an important note to the second edition,⁴ he

³“Up to now, we have considered expressions in their communicative function. This derives essentially from the fact that expressions operate as indexes. But a large role is also assigned to expressions in the life of the soul inasmuch as it is not engaged in a relation of communication. It is clear that this modification of the function does not affect what makes expressions expressions. They have, as before, their *Bedeutungen* and the same *Bedeutungen* as in collocation.” (*Logical Investigations I*, Ch. I, #8). What I assert here implies the interpretation that I have offered of the Husserlian procedure on this point. I therefore refer the reader to *Speech and Phenomenon (La Voix et le phénomène)*. [Au.]

⁴“In the first edition I spoke of ‘pure grammar,’ a name that was conceived on the analogy of ‘pure science of nature’ in Kant, and expressly designated as such. But to the extent that it cannot be affirmed that the pure morphology of *Bedeutungen* englobes all grammatical a priori in their universality, since for example relations of communication between psychic subjects, which are so important for grammar, entail their own a priori, the expression of *pure logical grammar* deserves priority . . .” (*LI II*, Part 2, Ch. iv). [Au.]

specifies that his concern is with a pure *logical* grammar, that is, with the universal conditions of possibility for a morphology of significations in their cognitive relation to a possible object, not with a pure grammar in *general*, considered from a psychological or linguistic point of view. Thus, it is solely in a context determined by a will to know, by an epistemic intention, by a conscious relation to the object as cognitive object within a horizon of truth, solely in this oriented contextual field is “the green is either” unacceptable. But as “the green is either” or “abracadabra” do not constitute their context by themselves, nothing prevents them from functioning in another context as signifying marks (or indices, as Husserl would say). Not only in contingent cases such as a translation from German into French, which would endow “the green is either” with grammaticality, since “either” (*oder*) becomes for the ear “where” [*où*] (a spatial mark). “Where has the green gone (of the lawn: the green is where),” “Where is the glass gone in which I wanted to give you something to drink?” [*Où est passé le verre dans lequel je voulais vous donner à boire?*] But even “the green is either” itself still signifies an *example of agrammaticality*. And this is the possibility on which I want to insist: the possibility of disengagement and citational graft which belongs to the structure of every mark, spoken or written, and which constitutes every mark in writing before and outside of every horizon of semio-linguistic communication; in writing, which is to say in the possibility of its functioning being cut off, at a certain point, from its “original” desire-to-say-what-one-means [*vouloir-dire*] and from its participation in a saturable and constraining context. Every sign, linguistic or nonlinguistic, spoken or written (in the current sense of this opposition), in a small or large unit, can be *cited*, put between quotation marks; in so doing it can break with every given context, engendering an infinity of new contexts in a manner which is absolutely illimitable. This does not imply that the mark is valid outside of a context, but on the contrary that there are only contexts without any center or absolute anchoring [*ancrage*]. This citationality, this duplication or duplicity, this iterability of the mark is neither an accident nor an anomaly, it is that (normal/

abnormal) without which a mark could not even have a function called "normal." What would a mark be that could not be cited? Or one whose origins would not get lost along the way?

PARASITES. ITER, OF WRITING: THAT IT PERHAPS DOES NOT EXIST

I now propose to elaborate a bit further this question with special attention to—but in order, as well, to pass beyond—the problematic of the *performative*. It concerns us here for several reasons:

1. First of all, Austin, through his emphasis on an analysis of perlocution and above all of illocution, appears to consider speech acts only as acts of communication. The author of the introduction to the French edition of *How to Do Things with Words*, quoting Austin, notes as much: "It is by comparing *constative* utterances (i.e., classical "assertions," generally considered as true or false "descriptions" of facts) with *performative* utterances (from the English "performative," i.e., allowing to accomplish something through speech itself) that Austin is led to consider *every* utterance worthy of the name (i.e., intended to communicate—thus excluding, for example, reflex-exclamations) as being primarily and above all a speech act produced in the *total* situation in which the interlocutors find themselves" (*How to Do Things with Words*, p. 147, G. Lane, Introduction to the French translation, p. 19).

2. This category of communication is relatively new. Austin's notions of illocution and perlocution do not designate the transference or passage of a thought-content, but, in some way, the communication of an original movement (to be defined within a *general theory of action*), an operation and the production of an effect. Communicating, in the case of the performative, if such a thing, in all rigor and in all purity, should exist (for the moment, I am working within that hypothesis and at that stage of the analysis), would be tantamount to communicating a force through the impetus [*impulsion*] of a mark.

3. As opposed to the classical assertion, to the constative utterance, the performative does

not have its referent (but here that word is certainly no longer appropriate, and this precisely is the interest of the discovery) outside of itself or, in any event, before and in front of itself. It does not describe something that exists outside of language and prior to it. It produces or transforms a situation, it effects; and even if it can be said that a constative utterance also effectuates something and always transforms a situation, it cannot be maintained that that constitutes its internal structure, its manifest function or destination, as in the case of the performative.

4. Austin was obliged to free the analysis of the performative from the authority of the truth *value*, from the true/false opposition,⁵ at least in its classical form, and to substitute for it at times the value of force, of difference of force (*illocutionary* or *perlocutionary* force). (In this line of thought, which is nothing less than Nietzschean, this in particular strikes me as moving in the direction of Nietzsche himself, who often acknowledged a certain affinity for a vein of English thought.)

For these four reasons, at least, it might seem that Austin has shattered the concept of communication as a purely semiotic, linguistic, or symbolic concept. The performative is a "communication" which is not limited strictly to the transference of a semantic content that is already constituted and dominated by an orientation toward truth (be it the *unveiling* of what is in its being or the *adequation-congruence* between a judicative utterance and the thing itself).

And yet—such at least is what I should like to attempt to indicate now—all the difficulties encountered by Austin in an analysis which is patient, open, aporetical, in constant transformation, often more fruitful in the acknowledgement of its impasses than in its positions, strike me as having a common root. Austin has not taken account of what—in the structure of *locution* (thus before any illocutory or perlocutory determination)—already entails that system of predicates I call *graphematic in general* and consequently

⁵Austin names the "two fetishes which I admit to an inclination to play Old Harry with, viz., (1) the true/false fetish, (2) the value/fact fetish" (p. 150). [Au.]

blurs [*brouille*] all the oppositions which follow, oppositions whose pertinence, purity, and rigor Austin has unsuccessfully attempted to establish.

In order to demonstrate this, I shall take for granted the fact that Austin's analyses at all times require a value of *context*, and even of a context exhaustively determined, in theory or teleologically; the long list of "infelicities" which in their variety may affect the performative event always comes back to an element in what Austin calls the total context.⁶ One of those essential elements—and not one among others—remains, classically, consciousness, the conscious presence of the intention of the speaking subject in the totality of his speech act. As a result, performative communication becomes once more the communication of an intentional meaning,⁷ even if that meaning has no referent in the form of a thing or of a prior or exterior state of things. The conscious presence of speakers or receivers participating in the accomplishment of a performative, their conscious and intentional presence in the totality of the operation, implies teleologically that no *residue* [*reste*] escapes the present totalization. No residue, either in the definition of the requisite conventions, or in the internal and linguistic context, or in the grammatical form, or in the semantic determination of the words employed; no irreducible polysemy, that is, no "dissemination" escaping the horizon of the unity of meaning. I quote from the first two lectures of *How to Do Things with Words*:

Speaking generally, it is always necessary that the *circumstances* in which the words are uttered should be in some way, or ways, *appropriate*, and it is very commonly necessary that either the speaker himself or other persons should *also* perform certain *other* actions, whether "physical" or "mental" actions or even acts of uttering further words. Thus, for naming the ship, it is essential that I should be the person appointed to name her; for (Christian) marrying, it is essential that I should not

⁶He says, for example, that "The total speech act in the total speech situation is the *only actual* phenomenon which, in the last resort, we are engaged in elucidating" (p. 147). [Au.]

⁷Which occasionally required Austin to reintroduce the criterion of truth in his description of performatives. Cf., for example, pp. 50–52 and pp. 89–90. [Au.]

be already married with a wife living, sane and undivorced, and so on; for a bet to have been made, it is generally necessary for the offer of the bet to have been accepted by a taker (who must have done something, such as to say "Done"), and it is hardly a gift if I say "I give it you" but never hand it over.

So far, well and good. (pp. 8–9)

In the Second Lecture, after eliminating the grammatical criterion in his customary manner, Austin examines the possibility and the origin of failures or "infelicities" of performative utterance. He then defines the six indispensable—if not sufficient—conditions of success. Through the values of "conventional procedure," "correctness," and "completeness," which occur in the definition, we necessarily find once more those of an exhaustively definable context, of a free consciousness present to the totality of the operation, and of absolutely meaningful speech [*vouloir-dire*] master of itself: the teleological jurisdiction of an entire field whose organizing center remains *intention*.⁸ Austin's procedure is rather remarkable and typical of that philosophical tradition with which he would like to have so few ties. It consists in recognizing that the possibility of the negative (in this case, of infelicities) is in fact a structural possibility, that failure is an essential risk of the operations under consideration; then, in a move which is almost *immediately simultaneous*, in the name of a kind of ideal regulation, it excludes that risk as accidental, exterior, one which teaches us nothing about the linguistic phenomenon being considered. This is all the more curious—and strictly speaking, untenable—in view of Austin's ironic denunciation of the "fetishized" opposition: *valueffect*.

Thus, for example, concerning the conventionality without which there is no performative, Austin acknowledges that *all* conventional acts are exposed to failure: "it seems clear in the first place that, although it has excited us (or failed to excite us) in connexion with certain facts which are or are in part acts of *uttering words*, infelicity is an ill to which *all* acts are heir which have the general character of ritual or ceremonial, all *conventional* acts: not indeed that *every* ritual is

⁸Pp. 10–15. [Au.]

liable to every form of infelicity (but then nor is every performative utterance)" (pp. 18–19, Austin's emphasis).

In addition to the questions posed by a notion as historically sedimented as "convention," it should be noted at this point:

1. that Austin, at this juncture, appears to consider solely the conventionality constituting the *circumstance* of the utterance [*énoncé*], its contextual surroundings, and not a certain conventionality intrinsic to what constitutes the speech act [*locution*] itself, all that might be summarized rapidly under the problematical rubric of "the arbitrary nature of the sign," which extends, aggravates, and radicalizes the difficulty. "Ritual" is not a possible occurrence [*éventualité*], but rather, *as* iterability, a structural characteristic of every mark.

2. that the value of risk or exposure to infelicity, even though, as Austin recognizes, it can affect *a priori* the totality of conventional acts, is not interrogated as an essential predicate or as a *law*. Austin does not ponder the consequences issuing from the fact that a possibility—a possible risk—is *always* possible, and is in some sense a necessary possibility. Nor whether—once such a necessary possibility of infelicity is recognized—infelicity still constitutes an accident. What is a success when the possibility of infelicity [*échec*] continues to constitute its structure?

The opposition success/failure [*échec*] in illocution and in perlocution thus seems quite insufficient and extremely secondary [*dérivée*]. It presupposes a general and systematic elaboration of the structure of locution that would avoid an endless alternation of essence and accident. Now it is highly significant that Austin rejects and defers that "general theory" on at least two occasions, specifically in the Second Lecture. I leave aside the first exclusion.

I am not going into the general doctrine here: in many such cases we may even say the act was "void" (or voidable for duress or undue influence) and so forth. Now I suppose some very general high-level doctrine might embrace both what we have called infelicities *and* these other "unhappy" features of the doing of actions—in our case ac-

tions containing a performative utterance—in a single doctrine: but we are not including this kind of unhappiness—we must just remember, though, that features of this sort can and do constantly obtrude into any case we are discussing. Features of this sort would normally come under the heading of "extenuating circumstances" or of "factors reducing or abrogating the agent's responsibility," and so on. (p. 21, my emphasis)

The second case of this exclusion concerns our subject more directly. It involves precisely the possibility for every performative utterance (and *a priori* every other utterance) to be "quoted." Now Austin excludes this possibility (and the general theory which would account for it) with a kind of lateral insistence, all the more significant in its off-handedness. He insists on the fact that this possibility remains *abnormal, parasitic*, that it constitutes a kind of extenuation or agonized succumbing of language that we should strenuously distance ourselves from and resolutely ignore. And the concept of the "ordinary," thus of "ordinary language," to which he has recourse is clearly marked by this exclusion. As a result, the concept becomes all the more problematical, and before demonstrating as much, it would no doubt be best for me simply to read a paragraph from the Second Lecture:

ii. Secondly, as *utterances* our performances are *also* heir to certain other kinds of ill, which infect *all* utterances. And these likewise though again they might be brought into a more general account, we are deliberately at present excluding. I mean, for example, the following: a performative utterance will, for example, be *in a peculiar way* hollow or void if said by an actor on the stage, or if introduced in a poem, or spoken in a soliloquy. This applies in a similar manner to any and every utterance—a sea-change in special circumstances. Language in such circumstances is in special ways—intelligibly—used not *seriously*, [my emphasis, J. D.] but in many ways *parasitic* upon its normal use—ways which fall under the doctrine of the *etiologies* of language. All this we are *excluding* from consideration. Our performative utterances, felicitous or not, are to be understood as issued in ordinary circumstances. (pp. 21–22)

Austin thus excludes, along with what he calls a "sea-change," the "nonserious," "parasitism."

“etiolation,” “the nonordinary” (along with the whole general theory which, if it succeeded in accounting for them, would no longer be governed by those oppositions), all of which he nevertheless recognizes as the possibility available to every act of utterance. It is as just such a “parasite” that writing has always been treated by the philosophical tradition, and the connection in this case is by no means coincidental.

I would therefore pose the following question: is this general possibility necessarily one of a failure or trap into which language may *fall* or lose itself as in an abyss situated outside of or in front of itself? What is the status of this *parasitism*? In other words, does the quality of risk admitted by Austin *surround* language like a kind of *ditch* or external place of perdition which speech [*la locution*] could never hope to leave, but which it can escape by remaining “at home,” by and in itself, in the shelter of its essence or *telos*? Or, on the contrary, is this risk rather its internal and positive condition of possibility? Is that outside its inside, the very force and law of its emergence? In this last case, what would be meant by an “ordinary” language defined by the exclusion of the very law of language? In excluding the general theory of this structural parasitism, does not Austin, who nevertheless claims to describe the facts and events of ordinary language, pass off as ordinary an ethical and teleological determination (the univocity of the utterance [*énoncé*]—that he acknowledges elsewhere [pp. 72–73] remains a philosophical “ideal”—, the presence to self of a total context, the transparency of intentions, the presence of meaning [*vouloir-dire*] to the absolutely singular uniqueness of a speech act, etc.)?

For, ultimately, isn’t it true that what Austin excludes as anomaly, exception, “nonserious,”⁹ *citation* (on stage, in a poem, or a soliloquy) is the determined modification of a general citationality—or rather, a general iterability—without which there would not even be a “successful” performative? So that—a paradoxical but un-

avoidable conclusion—a successful performative is necessarily an “impure” performative, to adopt the word advanced later on by Austin when he acknowledges that there is no “pure” performative.¹⁰

I take things up here from the perspective of positive possibility and not simply as instances of failure or infelicity: would a performative utterance be possible if a citational doubling [*doublure*] did not come to split and dissociate from itself the pure singularity of the event? I pose the question in this form in order to prevent an objection. For it might be said: you cannot claim to account for the so-called graphematic structure of locution merely on the basis of the occurrence of failures of the performative, however real those failures may be and however effective or general their possibility. You cannot deny that there are also performatives that succeed, and one has to account for them: meetings are called to order (Paul Ricoeur did as much yesterday); people say: “I pose a question”; they bet, challenge, christen ships, and sometimes even marry. It would seem that such events have occurred. And even if only one had taken place only once, we would still be obliged to account for it.

I’ll answer: “Perhaps.” We should first be clear on what constitutes the status of “occurrence” or the eventhood of an event that entails in its allegedly present and singular emergence the intervention of an utterance [*énoncé*] that in itself can be only repetitive or citational in its structure, or rather, since those two words may lead to confusion: iterable. I return then to a point that strikes me as fundamental and that now concerns the status of events in general, of events of speech or by speech, of the strange logic they entail and that often passes unseen.

Could a performative utterance succeed if its formulation did not repeat a “coded” or iterable

¹⁰From this standpoint, one might question the fact, recognized by Austin, that “very commonly the *same* sentence is used on different occasions of utterance in *both ways*, performative and constative. The thing seems hopeless from the start, if we are to leave utterances *as they stand* and seek for a criterion.” The graphematic root of citationality (iterability) is what creates this embarrassment and makes it impossible, as Austin says, “to lay down even a list of all possible criteria.” [Au.]

⁹Austin often refers to the suspicious status of the “nonserious” (cf., for example, pp. 104, 121). This is fundamentally linked to what he says elsewhere about *oratio obliqua* (pp. 70–71) and mime. [Au.]

utterance, or in other words, if the formula I pronounce in order to open a meeting, launch a ship or a marriage were not identifiable as *conforming* with an iterable model, if it were not then identifiable in some way as a “citation.” Not that citationality in this case is of the same sort as in a theatrical play, a philosophical reference, or the recitation of a poem. That is why there is a relative specificity, as Austin says, a “relative purity” of performatives. But this relative purity does not emerge *in opposition to* citationality or iterability, but in opposition to other kinds of iteration within a general iterability which constitutes a violation of the allegedly rigorous purity of every event of discourse or every *speech act*. Rather than oppose citation or iteration to the non-iteration of an event, one ought to construct a differential typology of forms of iteration, assuming that such a project is tenable and can result in an exhaustive program, a question I hold in abeyance here. In such a typology, the category of intention will not disappear; it will have its place, but from that place it will no longer be able to govern the entire scene and system of utterance [*l’énunciation*]. Above all, at that point, we will be dealing with different kinds of marks or chains of iterable marks and not with an opposition between citational utterances, on the one hand, and singular and original event-utterances, on the other. The first consequence of this will be the following: given that structure of iteration, the intention animating the utterance will never be through and through present to itself and to its content. The iteration structuring it *a priori* introduces into it a dehiscence and a cleft [*brisure*] which are essential. The “non-serious,” the *oratio obliqua* will no longer be able to be excluded, as Austin wished, from “ordinary” language. And if one maintains that such ordinary language, or the ordinary circumstances of language, excludes a general citationality or iterability, does that not mean that the “ordinariness” in question—the thing and the notion—shelter a lure, the teleological lure of consciousness (whose motivations, indestructible necessity, and systematic effects would be subject to analysis)? Above all, this essential absence of intending the actuality of utterance, this structural unconsciousness, if you like, prohibits any saturation of

the context. In order for a context to be exhaustively determinable, in the sense required by Austin, conscious intention would at the very least have to be totally present and immediately transparent to itself and to others, since it is a determining center [*foyer*] of context. The concept of—or the search for—the context thus seems to suffer at this point from the same theoretical and “interested” uncertainty as the concept of the “ordinary,” from the same metaphysical origins: the ethical and teleological discourse of consciousness. A reading of the connotations, this time, of Austin’s text, would confirm the reading of the descriptions; I have just indicated its principle.

Différance, the irreducible absence of intention or attendance to the performative utterance, the most “event-ridden” utterance there is, is what authorizes me, taking account of the predicates just recalled, to posit the general graphematic structure of every “communication.” By no means do I draw the conclusion that there is no relative specificity of effects of consciousness, or of effects of speech (as opposed to writing in the traditional sense), that there is no performative effect, no effect of ordinary language, no effect of presence or of discursive event (speech act). It is simply that those effects do not exclude what is generally opposed to them, term by term; on the contrary, they presuppose it, in an asymmetrical way, as the general space of their possibility.

SIGNATURES

That general space, is first of all spacing as a disruption of presence in a mark, what I here call writing. That all the difficulties encountered by Austin intersect in the place where both writing and presence are in question is for me indicated in a passage such as that in Lecture V in which the divided instance of the juridic signature [*seing*] emerges.

Is it an accident if Austin is there obliged to note: “I must explain again that we are floundering here. To feel the firm ground of prejudice slipping away is exhilarating, but brings its revenges” (p. 61). Shortly before, an “impasse” had appeared, resulting from the search for “any *single simple* criterion of grammar and vocabulary” in distinguishing between performative or

constative utterances. (I should say that it is this critique of linguisticism and of the authority of the code, a critique based on an analysis of language, that most interested and convinced me in Austin's undertaking). He then attempts to justify, with non-linguistic reasons, the preference he has shown in the analysis of performatives for the forms of the first person, the present indicative, the active voice. The justification, in the final instance, is the reference made therein to what Austin calls the *source* (p. 60)¹¹ of the utterance. This notion of *source*—and what is at stake in it is clear—frequently reappears in what follows and governs the entire analysis in the phase we are examining. Not only does Austin not doubt that the source of an oral utterance in the present indicative active is *present* to the utterance [*énonciation*] and its statement [*énoncé*] (I have attempted to explain why we had reasons not to believe so), but he does not even doubt that the equivalent of this tie to the source utterance is simply evident in and assured by a *signature*:

Where there is *not*, in the verbal formula of the utterance, a reference to the person doing the uttering, and so the acting, by means of the pronoun "I" (or by his personal name), then in fact he will be "referred to" in one of two ways:

- a. In verbal utterances, *by his being the person who does* the uttering—what we may call the *utterance-origin* which is used generally in any system of verbal reference-coordinates.
- b. In written utterances (or "inscriptions"), *by his appending his signature* (this has to be done because, of course, written utterances are not tethered to their origin in the way spoken ones are). (pp. 60–61)

An analogous function is attributed by Austin to the formula "hereby" in official documents.

From this point of view, let us attempt to analyze signatures, their relation to the present and to the source. I shall consider it as an implication of the analysis that every predicate established will be equally valid for that oral "signature" constituted—or aspired to—by the presence of the "author" as a "person who utters," as a "source," to the production of the utterance.

¹¹Austin's term is "utterance-origin"; Derrida's term (*source*) is hereafter translated as "source." [Tr.]

By definition, a written signature implies the actual or empirical nonpresence of the signer. But, it will be claimed, the signature also marks and retains his having been present in a past *now* or present [*maintenant*] which will remain a future *now* or present [*maintenant*], thus in a general *maintenant*, in the transcendental form of presentness [*maintenance*]. That general *maintenance* is in some way inscribed, pinpointed in the always evident and singular present punctuality of the form of the signature. Such is the enigmatic originality of every paraph. In order for the tethering to the source to occur, what must be retained is the absolute singularity of a signature-event and a signature-form: the pure reproducibility of a pure event.

Is there such a thing? Does the absolute singularity of signature as event ever occur? Are there signatures?

Yes, of course, every day. Effects of signature are the most common thing in the world. But the condition of possibility of those effects is simultaneously, once again, the condition of their impossibility, of the impossibility of their rigorous purity. In order to function, that is, to be readable, a signature must have a repeatable, iterable, imitable form; it must be able to be detached from the present and singular intention of its production. It is its sameness which, by corrupting its identity and its singularity, divides its seal [*sceau*]. I have already indicated above the principle of this analysis.

To conclude this very *dry* discussion:

1. as writing, communication, if we retain that word, is not the means of transference of meaning, the exchange of intentions and meanings [*vouloir-dire*], discourse and the "communication of consciousness." We are witnessing not an end of writing that would restore, in accord with McLuhan's ideological representation, a transparency or an immediacy to social relations; but rather the increasingly powerful historical expansion of a general writing, of which the system of speech, consciousness, meaning, presence, truth, etc., would be only an effect, and should be analyzed as such. It is the exposure of this effect that I have called elsewhere logocentrism;

2. the semantic horizon that habitually gov-

erns the notion of communication is exceeded or split by the intervention of writing, that is, by a *dissemination* irreducible to *polysemy*. Writing is read; it is not the site, "in the last instance," of a hermeneutic deciphering, the decoding of a meaning or truth;

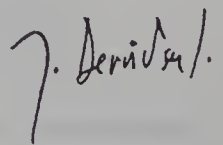
3. despite the general displacement of the classical, "philosophical," occidental concept of writing, it seems necessary to retain, provisionally and strategically, *the old name*. This entails an entire logic of *paleonymics* that I cannot develop here.¹² Very schematically: an opposition of metaphysical concepts (e.g., speech/writing, presence/absence, etc.) is never the confrontation of two terms, but a hierarchy and the order of subordination. Deconstruction cannot be restricted or immediately pass to a neutralization: it must, through a double gesture, a double science, a double writing—put into practice a *reversal* of the classical opposition *and* a general *displacement* of the system. It is on that condition alone that deconstruction will provide the means of *intervening* in the field of oppositions it criticizes and that is also a field of nondiscursive forces. Every concept, moreover, belongs to a systematic chain and constitutes in itself a system of predicates. There is no concept that is metaphysical in itself. There is a labor—metaphysical or not—performed on conceptual systems. Deconstruction does not consist in moving from one concept to another, but in reversing and displacing a conceptual order as well as the nonconceptual order with which it is articulated. For example, writing, as a classical concept, entails predicates that have been subordinated, excluded, or held in abeyance by forces and according to

¹²Cf. *La Dissémination and Positions*. [Au.]

necessities to be analyzed. It is those predicates (I have recalled several of them) whose force of generality, generalization, and generativity is liberated, grafted onto a "new" concept of writing that corresponds as well to what has always *resisted* the prior organization of forces, always constituted the *residue* irreducible to the dominant force organizing the hierarchy that we may refer to, in brief, as logocentric. To leave to this new concept the old name of writing is tantamount to maintaining the structure of the *graft*, the transition and indispensable adherence to an effective *intervention* in the constituted historical field. It is to give to everything at stake in the operations of deconstruction the chance and the force, the power of *communication*.

But this will have been understood, as a matter of course, especially in a philosophical colloquium: a disseminating operation *removed* from the presence (of being) according to all its modifications: writing, if there is any, perhaps communicates, but certainly does not exist. Or barely, hereby, in the form of the most improbable signature.

(Remark: the—written—text of this—oral—communication was to be delivered to the *Association des sociétés de philosophie de langue française* before the meeting. That dispatch should thus have been signed. Which I do, and counterfeit, here. Where? There. J. D.)



J. DERRIDA.

Wayne C. Booth

b. 1921

Wayne C. Booth was born in American Fork, Utah, and was educated at Brigham Young University and the University of Chicago. He returned to Chicago in 1962 as professor of English and sometime dean, remaining at Chicago through a long and distinguished career. He cofounded the influential journal *Critical Inquiry* and served as the president of the Modern Language Association in 1982.

Booth's prominence as a literary critic and rhetorical theorist began with the publication of *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (1961), which advanced the idea that authors imagined ideal audiences for their works and readers generally were willing to take on the role assigned to them. The rhetoric of fiction—or at least of nondidactic fiction—was thus a collaborative effort at communication. Much of Booth's work continued his analysis of rhetorical force in literature and art, notably in *The Rhetoric of Irony* and in the work excerpted here, *Modern Dogma and the Rhetoric of Assent*. Booth's commitment to the collaborative and communicative ideal of rhetoric may be found again in his brief memoir, "Confessions of an Aging, Hypocritical Ex-Missionary":

I've been learning the kind of rhetorical practice that these days I risk labeling with a neologism, "rhetorology": not rhetorical persuasion but rather a systematic, ecumenical probing of the essentials shared by rival rhetorics in any dispute—whether about religion or about other important matters. Though rhetorology shares many features with other "dialogical" efforts, what it perhaps most resembles is political diplomacy. But unlike skillful diplomats, rhetorologists do not just try to discover the rival basic commitments and then "bargain." Nor do they just tolerate, in a spirit of benign relativism. Instead, they search together for true grounds, then labor to decide how those grounds dictate a change of mind about more superficial beliefs. Any genuine rhetorologist entering any fray is committed to the possibility of conversion to the "enemy" camp.¹

The beginnings of this view of rhetoric can be seen in *Modern Dogma and the Rhetoric of Assent*.

Modern Dogma and the Rhetoric of Assent is the published version of four lectures delivered by Booth at Notre Dame in 1971. In the introduction to the volume, Booth explains that he was moved to the analysis offered in the lectures by his reflections on the protest movements of the late sixties. On both sides of the issues, he discovered deeply held assumptions about truth and reason that obviated fruitful engagement. These assumptions, which he calls the "dogmas of modernism," are founded on a deep distrust of reason itself, leaving on the one hand a reliance on scientific "fact" as the only real truth and on the other a reliance on baldly expressed—or demonstrated, as in the political demonstrations of the time—assertions of belief. The former Booth labels "scientism" and the latter "irrationalism." Against these assumptions, Booth asks whether it is possible to know, in a rational way, when we should change our minds, or how we should talk about what to believe.

¹"Confessions of an Aging, Hypocritical Ex-Missionary," *Sunstone* 21:1 (March/April 1998): 25–36.

These are issues that require rhetoric, and particularly a rhetoric of systematic assent that recognizes good reasons of many kinds.

Booth distinguishes five dogmas that arise from accepting the fact-value (or object-subject) split that underlies scientism and irrationalism. *Motivism* regards all reasons as determined by innate drives or prior conditioning. Thus there are no real reasons, only rationalizations. The second dogma holds that *humans are atomic mechanisms* and are therefore purposeless from the ethical or moral point of view. The third follows, namely, that *the universe itself is value-free* and that nature is therefore indifferent to human values. The fourth is the belief that the proper activity of the intellect is *systematic doubt*, a position advanced by many influential philosophical systems. From these dogmas derives the fifth, that *the purpose of argument is to win*. That is, if no proof can be brought for values, if rational argument is impossible or irrelevant, then one's convictions may be defended by any means, from exhortation to demonstration to violence.

Booth carefully dissects the dogmas and the underlying fact-value division to show their development and motives, their internal contradictions and their intolerable consequences in the world. He argues vigorously against the fact-value or object-subject split and is at pains, particularly in the extensive footnotes of the published version, to show the strength and appeal of the arguments opposing the split, arguments to be found particularly in philosophy and the social sciences. Booth thus pushes for a renewed respect for reasoning and rhetoric, which he defines as "the art of discovering warrantable beliefs and improving these beliefs in shared discourse."² Thus, like Chaim Perelman (whom he cites several times) and Stephen Toulmin, Booth fills in the areas of probability and good reasons that are denigrated by the search for certainty.

Our excerpt comprises most of Lecture 3 and part of Lecture 4. Lecture 1 elaborates the problem of the fact-value rift, particularly the problem of motivism. Lecture 2 analyzes Bertrand Russell as a main promulgator of the dogma of systematic doubt. The latter part of Lecture 4 deals with the uses of literature and the arts as argument. (We have excluded a number of the very long footnotes that provide bibliographic references to the philosophical sources of Booth's arguments against the dogmas.)

Selected Bibliography

Our excerpt is from *Modern Dogma and the Rhetoric of Assent* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974). Booth's other main works dealing with rhetoric are *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (University of Chicago Press, 1961), *Now Don't Try to Reason with Me: Essays and Ironies for a Credulous Age* (University of Chicago Press, 1970), *A Rhetoric of Irony* (University of Chicago Press, 1974), and *Vocation of a Teacher: Rhetorical Occasions, 1967-1988* (University of Chicago Press, 1989). In this last book, Booth argues, as a teacher of literature and composition, for the centrality of rhetoric in liberal education. Booth has written frequently about composition: See, for example, "The Rhetorical Stance," in *College*

²Wayne C. Booth, *Modern Dogma and the Rhetoric of Assent* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), p. xiii.

Composition and Communication 14 (October 1963): 139–45, an article that exerted real influence to renew interest in rhetoric in departments of English. He develops the rhetorical stance further in “LITCOMP: Some Rhetoric Addressed to Cryptorhetoricians about a Rhetorical Solution to a Rhetorical Problem,” in *Composition and Literature: Bridging the Gap*, ed. W. B. Horner (University of Chicago Press, 1983).

Booth’s career and influence are examined in *Rhetoric and Pluralism: Legacies of Wayne Booth*, ed. Frederick J. Antczak (Ohio State University Press, 1995). These fifteen essays appreciate and challenge Booth’s work in literary criticism and rhetorical theory, recognize his influence in other fields such as music and economics, and seek to extend his key ideas about assent, ethics, and pluralism. In a charming afterword, Booth himself reflects on the essays, demonstrating his sense of “rhetorology.” This book also provides a complete bibliography of Booth’s works and reviews of his works.

From *Modern Dogma and the Rhetoric of Assent*

THREE: THE DOGMAS QUESTIONED

In my first lecture I promised to grapple with the highly general question of when we should change our minds, not just about what people call matters of fact or about what is “scientifically proved” but about value questions—about what we should admire, what we should do, what political protests we should support, and what institutions reject. I then described a great world religion, modernism, the dogmas of which, if accepted uncritically, make my promise absurd. If man is essentially and adequately defined as an accidental collocation of atoms in a value-free universe, if he can in no sense be said to choose among more or less good reasons but rather is always simply driven or motivated or conditioned, and if the only method for discovering knowledge about such matters is to apply the universal solvent of doubt in order to prove what cannot be doubted, then the purpose of offering reasons, in all nonscientific domains, cannot be to change men’s minds in the sense of showing that one view is genuinely superior to another. It can only be to trick or sway or condition or force or woo men to believe or do what the persuader desires.

Men will in fact continue, in this view, to

“change each others’ minds” in another sense, even in that part of life in which scientific proofs are not available: they will produce changes in what men do and in what they say they believe. But the difference between good and bad persuasion will become simply a difference in skill, not knowledge or wisdom. Except in scientific matters, education and mutual inquiry will become indistinguishable from propaganda or “mere rhetoric.”

The test of any mode of influence now becomes whether it works; the whole range of ways to influence men becomes a single indiscriminate conglomeration of devices, to be chosen simply on the basis of likely effectiveness in gaining agreement or compliance. Brainwashing, subliminal advertising, operant conditioning will be only technically different from each other and from psychoanalysis; reasoning with an opponent will be always seen as disguised trickery or, at best, “control.”

In this view the how and the what of mental change can still be studied rationally, meaning scientifically: sciences of information theory, group dynamics, propaganda analysis, behavioral therapy, and semantics will be devised to explain how men in fact are conditioned to change. All of these will have ethical commands built into them,

some of them openly, more of them in disguised form: “men *ought* to be logical”; “men *ought not* to be swayed by anything but scientific proof”; “thinking straight is a kind of defensive study, a way of keeping your dukes up at all times”; “men ought to be trained to recognize irrelevant emotional appeals”; and so on. B. F. Skinner, the best known scientismist of our time, often tells us how we *ought* to think about so-called values: “We do not say that simple biological reinforcers are effective because of self-love, and we *should not* attribute behaving for the good of others to a love of others”¹ (my italics).

Many freshman English texts—those new mass media studied by hundreds of thousands of Americans—have in the past several decades been defensive rhetorics in this sense. Accepting without question the dogmas of scientism, they have taught—as I accuse myself of having taught, during my first losing battles with freshman composition—that the goal of all thought and argument is to emulate the purity and objectivity and rigor of science, in order to protect oneself from the errors that passion and desire

¹*Beyond Freedom and Dignity* (New York, 1971), p. 110. Skinner protects himself from the charge of inconsistency in his use of value terms in two ways: “The text will often seem inconsistent. English, like all languages, is full of prescientific terms which usually suffice for purposes of casual discourse. . . . The book could have been written for a technical reader without expressions of that sort [even without the implicit *oughts*?], but the issues are important to the nonspecialist” (pp. 23–24). More important, he would say that his moral imperatives are all conditionals; *If* you think that people ought to behave as I say, *then* you ought to follow my program (see chap. 6, “Values,” esp. p. 112).

Needless to say, such protective coloration will not work for anyone reading him from nonbehaviorist points of view: the scholarly surface cannot conceal the presence of hundreds of unargued preachments. For example: (1) “These reactions to a scientific conception of man are certainly unfortunate. They immobilize *men of good will*, and anyone concerned with the future of his culture will do what he can to correct them” (pp. 212–13; my italics). (2) Mentalist explanations are bad, he tells us, because they bring “curiosity to an end” (p. 12). Leaving aside the obvious objection that *curiosity*, like *good will*, is certainly a mentalist term, why should I, in his terms, care? His formal answer, not provided when the term is used, would be that without curiosity my culture cannot survive. But it is clear that Skinner would, like the rest of us, value curiosity even if it had no survival value, and for reasons he does not mention. [Au.]

and metaphor and authority and all those logical fallacies lead us into.

As a teacher of literature I naturally lived an entirely different and more romantic life, asserting values aggressively and cheerfully, though often becoming cross with my students if they denied—using principles derived from my scientism—the literary values I tried to educate them to embrace. It should have been clear to me that the very word *educate* was suspect, if modernism were right: whenever I touched on values, all I could do was indoctrinate, unless in some sense the pursuit of literary values is reasonable.

Taken at face value, modernism thus sharply divorces all genuine thought or knowledge from those faiths we find in all nonscientific discourse. What had once been a domain with many grades of dubiety and credibility now becomes simply the dubious (for scientism) or the arena of conflicting faiths (for irrationalism). Where classical philosophers and rhetoricians saw gradations from ignorance to wisdom, we are given only a vast domain of ignorance or glorious personal preference. Where they saw a need for eloquence in the service of wisdom, so that moral and political and even metaphysical truth might be given its best chance for success in the world, we are given only a contest of skills and devices in the service of warring preferences and impulses and desires. Rhetorical probability, based on what is “commonly sensed,” becomes propagandistic plausibility.

Such disastrous consequences of modernist dogmas could not be considered, for modernists, as genuine reasons for rejecting those dogmas. Irrationalists will gladly accept the license to reject any doctrines that are inconvenient or unpleasant, seeking rather truths of the “heart” or “body.” And of course scientismists expected from the beginning that the objectivity² they sought would

²Though many now argue that such objectivity is impossible, since even the physical sciences and mathematics depend—and not just logically—on assumptions and values that cannot be objectively demonstrated, it is still often expressed as the ideal of human inquiry. C. C. Gillispie, for example, includes, along with a serious and sound account of how human desires have often delayed particular discoveries in the physical sciences, a completely nonscientific and unar-

disregard human results and follow only where the evidence leads. I could therefore go on till doomsday showing that, as “everyone already knows,” modernism is intellectually and morally and politically intolerable; I would not, according to the dogmas themselves, have said anything against them, only against our failure to face unpleasant truths.

But consider once again just how strange a thing it is that we should feel no *argumentative* force in disastrous consequences. To show that a given truth destroys the possibility of life, and indeed, if taken with full seriousness, turns on itself and denies the possibility of truth itself, surely should constitute some reason for reconsidering such a “truth.” But I know better than to rest with this argument today: as modernists all, we know that such thinking is not thinking but “wishful thinking,” “rationalization.” Indeed we often act as if the painfulness of a conclusion should reinforce our conviction: if it hurts it must be true.

gued running polemic for objectivity and impersonality in all things—except perhaps art. “The Latin genius speaks out in Galileo. His is the passionate objectivity of Machiavelli, which says that wishes do not signify—this is how the world works. He stripped from the skeleton of the cosmos the obscuring layers of sentience and pious moral and edifying lesson, and left as object of the search the hard, straight bones of Euclidean dimension” *The Edge of Objectivity* [Princeton, N.J., 1960], p. 40; see also pp. 197–201).

For social scientists, the questions are usually more complex—not only whether this or that kind of objectivity is desirable or possible in any science but also whether studying human beings requires a different method from that used in natural science. The issues are far trickier than I have been able to suggest here (see, for example, Dorothy Emmet and Alasdair MacIntyre, eds., *Sociological Theory and Philosophical Analysis* [London, 1970], esp. articles by Alfred Schutz, Sidney Morgenbesser, and Jürgen Habermas). The whole phenomenological movement could be described as an effort to show that man can make an end run around the forces of scientific objectivity and come out on the other side whole. A good introduction to the issues now being debated in this immensely diverse movement can be found in two books edited by James M. Edie, *Phenomenology in America* (Chicago 1967) and *New Essays in Phenomenology* (Chicago 1969). It is significant, I think, that in the second volume, one whole section is devoted to repudiating the irrationalism that threatens on the left flank whenever scientism is repudiated on the right (pt. 2, “Nihilism and the Absurd”). [Au.]

Changes of Scene and Dramatis Personae

I am not attempting in these lectures a direct and full disproof of any of the dogmas; the effort would be futile, because according to the dogmas themselves such matters are not amenable to proof. My hope is only to cast some doubt on doubt and to suggest grounds for confidence in exploring some forms of assent that have been suspect. But I think it is important to remind ourselves, as we begin, of how many major figures over the past three hundred years have attempted a systematic disproof of one or more of the dogmas.

To describe the full range of their attacks would require a lengthy history of thought from Descartes to the present. Perhaps I should say several histories, because the results would look very different depending on the historian’s assumptions about the history of ideas. The history would differ, for example, depending on whether the historian thought it possible to deal with individual dogmas, or subdogmas, in isolation (Arthur Lovejoy, for example) or believed on the contrary that no idea can be caught alive except in its original context (for example, Harry Prosch). But what is a proper context for an idea? Very different histories will result, depending on whether we seek to relate a given refutation of a given dogma to the complete philosophic statement in which it is found (in which case, for example, we would give a full account of Kant’s philosophy in order to show how Kant refutes the notion of a cold, hostile, and indifferent universe); or seek rather to relate each idea to the social and artistic currents and political forces surrounding it (for example, Marxists or Hegelians); or to the whole symbolic life of man (for example, Kenneth Burke, *A Grammar of Motives*, pt. 2). Further differences would depend upon whether the historian was more interested in metaphysical questions of substance or in epistemology or in questions about language or action.

Even if one narrows the field, as I am now going to do, to questions of how the mind is defined and how its works are divided, complexities still abound. The divorce between the logical or calculating or experimenting mind, the sole producer of *knowledge*, and the valuing organism

that irresponsibly commits itself to *all the rest* will be attacked in different ways, depending on convictions about what *the rest* amounts to. To choose terms for what is left over after the certainly provable has been deducted is already to commit oneself to some possibilities and to rule out others. It makes a great difference, for example, whether one's description of "the rest" distinguishes or lumps together terms like *intuition, will, action, choice, value, feeling, motive, drive, emotion, experience, wisdom, eloquence, the heart*, and so on. And as polemicists on all sides too frequently forget, the same word can cover contradictory concepts in two different systems; *reason*, for example, sometimes appears on the scientifically proved side and sometimes in opposition to it, and *knowledge* is sometimes contracted to mean only what is empirically known, sometimes expanded to include the statistically probable, or even the intuitively probable.

Aware of such complex differences among both philosophers and historians of thought, I offer the following "reminder of authorities on my side" with fingers crossed. As history it is surely useless. As classification of philosophers it is dangerously misleading. But as serious rhetoric, offering the good reasons of expert testimony, it can be taken as a preliminary effort at shaking confidence: look at all these major figures who have chosen *not* to divide up the mind, and hence the world, as modernists tell me I must if I am to qualify as thoroughly modern. (I do not really get around to establishing testimony as a valid kind of reasoning until the next lecture, yet I need it here; that's how life is in the domains of rhetoric. I ask the reader to add to the experts I now call to the stand, those I cite in Appendix B).

I have accused modernism of dividing man's responses to the world into two unequal parts, one of hard knowing and the other of soft faith or commitment. As we turn to refutations, it will be useful to divide the second part once again, into commitments or purposes on the one hand and feelings or passions on the other. We now have a tripartite picture of the human organism that is presumed to experience a change of mind, and the word *mind* has been immeasurably extended beyond the narrow calculator praised by scientismists or damned by irrationalists. Every human

being believes certain things to be true, acts for certain ends, and feels in certain ways, but we attach feelings to thoughts and actions in diverse ways. Belief or thought or knowledge, action or will or choice, feeling or emotion or passion occur in every theory of thinking, acting, or feeling; and though the terms shift, each of the three domains always appears somewhere, even if only for long enough to be dismissed as illusory or irrelevant. In this view, the challenge presented by the successive real triumphs of science, and by the related depredations of scientism and the defensive wails of irrationalism, was that of an arbitrary and destructive divorce of man's powers of thought from his necessity to act and his inescapable emotive life.

For scientismists, there has always been the promise of an ultimate reunion off somewhere in the future, when science will have been able to re-ingest all those other matters and then finally explain them. Behaviorism has only made explicit what all scientismists have hoped for: a way of reuniting science and values and feelings and actions under a scientific aegis. Both the enthusiasm and the hostility aroused by behaviorism result from its power as a representative extreme. We saw that Bertrand Russell at one time felt that he ought to be a behaviorist but couldn't quite make the grade. Russell was able to live with the resulting cognitive discord, though he struggled against it. Less protean minds have tried harder for harmony, either going all the way—behaviorism is perhaps now more widely espoused than ever before—or seeking for some other harmony between nature and value.³

Nature and Knowledge Revivified

One obvious possibility is to develop a religious or metaphysical counterpart to behaviorism—that is, to try to build new pictures of man-in-nature that will see men's values as in-

³I must repeat that what follows is, like almost everything in my absurdly brief encyclopaedia of all thought since God died, a terrible oversimplification. My truncated catalog of harmonies lumps together philosophers with many different languages and methods, and it thus distorts each of them. I take little comfort in knowing that everybody else's classification seems to me unfair to most or all of the views classified. [Au.]

separable from God's or nature's values. To the claim, "All values and emotions and preferences are simply the result of environmental controls that can be described in the language of scientific fact," many have replied, "The universe is made of, or permeated by, values; all (or many) facts can and should be described in the language of value or purpose." All of man's ethical and political and aesthetic and emotive life is thus taken back into the natural, and new ways are sought for talking about the old scholastic notion of an analogy of being between God and man.

Thus the reduction to the physical is countered by an elevation to the metaphysical. To see nature or "the way things are" or—in Wittgenstein's words—what "the case is" as essentially including human processes and values leads to new speculations, now to be found in great numbers, about how values are embedded in reality. This was, as I understand it, the major effort of Whitehead: "It should be the task of the philosophical schools of this century," he said, "to bring together the two streams (the one from Descartes and the other from Leibnitz) into an expression of the world-picture derived from science, and thereby end the divorce of science from the affirmations of our aesthetic and ethical experiences." By changing one's picture of the natural world from the mechanical, value-indifferent thing that Russell clung to, despite his many reservations, to a picture of the world as a collection of self-fulfilling (and hence valuable) processes or "procedures of organization," one can import values back into the domain of knowledge. In this view it is naturally good for all natural processes to be fulfilled; if the universe is, in its ultimate constitution, a pattern of purposes—directed processes and relations—value is inextricably bound in its workings, and man's valuing can be as rational as his most scientific endeavors.

Whitehead's process philosophy is only one of many efforts in this direction, though perhaps the most impressive. One could even describe Marx's scientific materialism as a redefinition of reality that makes possible a science of ethics and politics without reducing them to physics; and the Hegelian idealism that Russell first embraced and then rejected could equally be described as a

grand effort to reunify, under scientific laws of how the world really acts, parts of the world and of man's nature that had been alienated from each other.

Recent decades have seen many further attempts to reconstitute a universe in which values inhere in the nature of the facts. Revivals of Thomistic metaphysical inquiries in the work of Étienne Gilson, Jacques Maritain, and Bernard Lonergan; phenomenological inquiries into our modes of knowing facts in feeling and value, and feeling and values in the factual; and logical inquiries into "good reasons" by recent inheritors of the "ordinary language" tradition; these and many others have been challenging the divorce of fact from value, of the subjective from the objective, of the world of inert and value-free nature from the world of man's desires.

Nature as Will or Act

A second possibility is to expand the domain of action or will to repudiate or encompass the scientific picture of a value-free world. We find innumerable modern existentialisms claiming that though the universe, scientifically considered, may be absurd or unknowable, we can honestly affirm our purposes, and thus escape the trap of meaninglessness. What we *know* is our own existence, and we can *will* that existence to be whatever we want it to be, in opposition to the absurdity of the universe that created us. We need not worry over rational doubts about free will or the objectivity of values: we can simply affirm ourselves and thus in a sense come to know our freedom.

It has seemed clear to many philosophers, though perhaps not to many lay intellectuals grasping at straws, that this existentialist affirmation leaves us in a sense right back where we started, with our minds divided. Though our human dignity and freedom are in one sense restored, an essential part of the mind has been violated. Popular existentialism has always been full of shrill attacks on reason and the mind, and the shrillness springs, I think, from a sense that something is wrong somewhere still: Bertrand Russell¹⁴ and B. F. Skinner are laughing at us up

¹⁴In Lecture 2, Booth distinguishes three contradictory

their sleeves. What fools these affirmers of absurdity be, not to recognize as we do that these affirmings are logically—and thus rationally, and thus finally—undefensible.

To me a much more satisfactory effort at reunification under “will” was that of the pragmatists, especially Peirce, Dewey, and James. Our *purposes* and their fulfillment are here taken as something we really know, and scientific knowledge becomes a special case of fulfillment of human purpose—the purpose to know. Logic is no longer here an abstract propositional logic seeking truths that are certain, objective, divorced from man’s needs and desires: it becomes instead the logic of inquiry, and inquiry is a process informed by purpose and hence by human values. That I desire certain qualities, know and pursue certain relations, and “live my purposes” can here no longer be relegated to epiphenomena—purposes are as real and known as anything can be, and the world and nature are thus transformed.

Reality as Feeling: The Wisdom of the Body

A third possibility is to expand the domain of feeling to absorb all of what is called thinking and all other grounds for action. Sometimes the new center is an undefined feeling, as in Hemingway’s repeated formula that what is good is what feels good, or Lawrence’s attacks on the murderous intellect in the name of the darker gods. Sometimes it is art or a metaphysic of art, as in Wallace Stevens’ notion of a supreme fiction, or Nietzsche’s early claim “that art, rather than ethics, constituted the essential metaphysical activity of man, . . . [and] that existence could be justified only in esthetic terms. . . . God as the supreme artist, amoral, recklessly creating and destroying, realizing himself in-

positions espoused at different times by Russell, or as Booth puts it, three roles in which Russell cast himself. These Booth calls Russell I, II, and III. Russell I “sought certain knowledge about what he called ‘matters of fact’ or ‘the world’” (p. 46). Russell II, “the ‘man of reason,’ often of rational protest, tried to disestablish certain past beliefs and establish the more adequate beliefs taught, so he said, by science” (p. 47). And Russell III was “the man of action and passion, the poet and mystic” who fought for political causes (p. 47). Page references are to Wayne C. Booth, *Modern Dogma and the Rhetoric of Assent* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974). [Ed.]

differently in whatever he does or undoes.”⁵ Or it becomes some physiological center of wisdom, as in Wilhelm Reich’s offering of salvation through orgasm, or Norman O. Brown’s celebration of the “polymorphous perverse.” And sometimes it has been a carefully articulated philosophy in which Platonic identities of truth and goodness with beauty (or art) are explored, as in the work of George Santayana.

In all these views, taste or sensibility or—as in Henry James—“quality of consciousness” becomes the supreme arbiter; art can become the last, best schoolmaster or legislator of the world. What we call wrong is simply what is ugly; the final test of truth, even in the sciences, becomes elegance or harmonious simplicity. The arbiter is not what we cannot doubt, as in scientism, nor what we can know of totality, as in metaphysical renovations, nor what we find has instrumental value, as in pragmatism, but what we find gratifies our most delicate sensing apparatus.

There is no theoretical reason why such views must lead to extreme expressions of irrationalism; it can be as reasonable (as I shall suggest later on) to follow the reasons of art as the reasons of scientific inquiry. But in practice the hyperrationality of scientism, of reducing the world to nature, has been countered by the two branches of the countermovement of the late ’60s: the political activists, reducing the world to blind will; and the counterculturalists, reducing it to blind feeling. A leader of the Weathermen group cries, “principles-schminciples,” in the name of action without thought or feeling, and Leary cries, “Tune in, turn on, drop out,” in the name of feeling as against either thought or action.

Divers Orders, Divers “Logics”

All three of these directions have thus yielded, I think, both philosophically cogent refutations of the modernist slicings and popular reductions that restore the slicings and fight for the superiority of this or that slice. The philosophers would be decisive for anyone who took the trouble (sometimes immense, as in the case of White-

⁵“A Critical Backward Glance” (1886), commenting on *The Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music* (1871), as translated by Francis Golfing in *The Birth of Tragedy and The Genealogy of Morals* (New York, 1956), p. 9. [Au.]

head, and always great for anyone who begins with different presuppositions) to understand them. If my goal were to find a single systematic philosophy that could be embraced once and for all, I clearly ought to choose one of the three and develop—from a conflation of “the genuinely known” or the “validly willed” or the “truly felt”—my alternative to modernism. But it is immediately clear, when I say that all three have yielded decisive alternatives, that I am exploring a different, pluralistic direction. My goal is (once again) not to establish a philosophy: my concern is with a befouled rhetorical climate which prevents our meeting to discover and pursue common interests. What we must find, I think, are grounds for confidence in a multiplicity of ways of knowing. Such grounds need not be what was sought by philosophers who based themselves in science: a theory providing fixed and proved principles from which all genuine reasoning could proceed. It need only be a revitalization of what we naturally assume as we go about our intellectual and practical business in the world: namely, that there are many logics, and that each of the domains of the mind (or person) has its own kind of knowing.

There have been comprehensive philosophies built on just this assumption. For Aristotle (and Aquinas and Maritain), there is first the domain of theoretical truth, which can be sought in every subject matter but which can yield “positive” knowledge only in natural, mathematical, and logical inquiry; in other subjects we can have probable or useful knowledge but not certainty. There is, secondly, the domain of practical deliberation, which must take into account whatever scientific knowledge is available but which in itself must at best be imprecise and chancy; still, as everyone knows, there really is a difference between a wise man and a fool, or between a good senator and a bad; and part of the difference is in what they know. Finally, there is productive activity and thought about it, yielding a knowledge of how to make and enjoy the graces of life that life’s other natural processes fail to provide; the arts are created and enjoyed not in a meaningless, relativized bedlam of “what each person happens to like” but in communities that share, through direct experience and through talk about it, the knowledge of good makings.

What I am attempting here is, however, a considerably looser assemblage of good reasons than such systematic philosophers construct. There may be, though I doubt it, a grand new philosophical synthesis hiding in the wings somewhere, or looming over the horizon—some smooth beast ready to stride proudly toward the twenty-first century to be born. But even if there is, we will not be in a condition to attend to it until we can once more believe in the ultimate value of attending. If finding such a belief depends on establishing a single philosophy, the history of ideas would seem to teach that we are doomed. But if there are good reasons for confidence in the values of discoursing together, then we can get about our business, whatever that may be: philosophers disputing the merits of rival philosophies, the rest of us finding other rhetorical communities that will differ from problem to problem, discipline to discipline, political and social need to political and social need. If we can find some way to rely on our common sense—what we “sense” and know in common—we can once again trust whatever standards of validation our reasonings together lead us to.

We do not begin, then, with theories about the mind or knowledge or the universe or semantics. Instead we remind ourselves of our experience—good empiricists all—and of the fact that when we make mistakes, whether in political and ethical choices or in aesthetic judgment, we find that they always include bad thinking as well as “feeling.” When we look at either the fanatics or the hyperrationalists who seem to us most threatening in what they do to their fellow men, we find as many signs of bad thinking and corrupted emotion in one group as the other. Fanatics are always “reasonable” in the sense of seeing rational connections between their abstract principles and their conclusions; their irrationality often consists in choosing the wrong principles validated by an inadequately considered group of “significant others.” They have lost their “common sense”—they do not test their commitments by seeking a genuinely common ground shared with the relevant fellow creatures. And the value-free scientismist is from this point of view equally irrational, because he too has chosen, on abstract principles, a validating group that ignores

what the common sense he shares with his fellows would teach.

Let us forget, then, for a while, the strangely compelling, seemingly self-evident notion that we know with one part of our minds or souls or selves or bodies, and will or feel with some other part. We can then search for what we agree on, what we meet in, where we *are* together.

Doubt and Assent

The full meaning of the choice I am making, with its deliberate embrace of circularity, will be clearer as I go along. For now it is enough if you will entertain the possibility of a kind of social test for truth: "It is reasonable to grant (one *ought* to grant) some degree of credence to whatever qualified men and women agree on, *unless* one has specific and stronger reasons to disbelieve." Abstract commands to "doubt pending proof" are now to be replaced with the ancient and natural command to "assent pending disproof." We will weigh many kinds of evidence, including testimony and authority; we will work as hard at discovering good witnesses as Russell would work at spotting logical fallacies. We will thus appraise more or less dubious reasons, assenting to the degree that *in the particular case* seems warranted.

You will remember that the dogma I am here proposing to replace teaches that we have no justification for asserting what can be doubted, and we are commanded by it to doubt whatever cannot be proved. In that view one never is advised (except by those who have an axe to grind—disreputable pushers of values, religious or political fanatics, mere rhetoricians) to see the capacity to believe as itself an intellectual virtue. Though few have ever put it quite so bluntly as the young Russell in his more prophetic moments, to doubt is taken as the supreme achievement of thought. The burden of proof is thus always placed on assent: to say, "I will believe unless I am given a *reason* to doubt" is self-evidently absurd.

The Criterion of Falsifiability

In its most sophisticated form, the principle of doubt becomes, in Karl Popper's widely influential development, the "criterion of falsifiability."

We do not know anything, Popper says, unless we know the operations that might disprove it if it were untrue, and unless we know that those operations do not in fact falsify it. Popper's criterion, already implicit in much intellectual activity, rapidly became a commonplace; it seemed to provide the most precise formulation of the only good way to rid the world of its intellectual rubbish. Notice how Edmund Leach assumes that an appeal to it will buttress his unsympathetic account of Freud and his questions about Lévi-Strauss's theories:

Lévi-Strauss on Myth has much the same fascination as Freud on the Interpretation of Dreams, and the same kind of weaknesses too. A first encounter with Freud is usually persuasive; it is all so neat, it simply must be right. But then you begin to wonder. Supposing the whole Freudian argument about symbolic associations and layers of conscious, unconscious and pre-conscious were entirely false, would it ever be possible to *prove* that it is false? And if the answer to that question is "No," you then have to ask yourself whether psycho-analytic arguments about symbol formation and free association can ever be anything better than clever talk.⁶

Here there are only two choices: either a doctrine passes this test, or it is nothing but "clever talk."

The test is a powerful one, in dealing with certain problems; I use it myself in trying to test my own guesses about how literary works are put together. But stated as a universal dogma it is highly questionable, as Popper himself sometimes seems to acknowledge. How, we may ask, does one know that *it* is true or valid? Can the criterion itself be put in falsifiable terms according to its own dictum? I would say that it cannot—that it claims status as knowledge without satisfying its own demands. (It is also, by the way, a value judgment on human intellectual operations, put in the form of a factual claim, and as a value judgment it is not, according to the dogmas, falsifiable.)

Aside from presenting this logical difficulty, the test is obviously crippling when applied to

⁶Frank Kermode, ed., *Lévi-Strauss* (London, 1970), chap. 4, p. 54. Popper's basic formulation, modified in later works, is in *Logik der Forschung*, trans. as *The Logic of Scientific Discovery* (London, 1959; 2d ed., 1968). [Au.]

our practical lives. If we know only what survives after we have done our best to doubt, we are driven to conclude that most of our action has no cognitive base, since we must almost always act on propositions that have not been proved in this sense. "How can you argue that men should be reasonable," a colleague asks, "when you know that we never have enough information to be *sure* about anything. I take a stand, on this or that war, on this or that act of injustice, and my choices cannot be rational because I simply cannot know enough." He is right, if "to know" must mean to be certain, to have scientific proof, to have propositions that have been tested by the criterion of falsifiability. But this is not in fact the choice we make.

Being reasonable in practical affairs is more like a process of systematic assent than systematic doubt. If my wife says, "I have a sudden terrible pain. Call a doctor quick!" I must and will act at once. Only if I have specific reasons to doubt her—if I know, let us say, that she is a notorious and sadistic practical joker—do I have warrant to intrude doubt into the process of assent. I do not and should not pause for skeptical probings, for proof; and I certainly should not take time to rephrase my hypothesis, "she is suffering," in falsifiable form.

Nor do I take time to bring to conscious testing the moral principle, "When my wife suffers, I ought to try to help." If I know anything, if *anything* about my life and the world makes sense, I know that this principle holds. Yet if I did pause to see whether it could survive the tests of systematic doubt, I would have great difficulty even in phrasing it in a form that could be falsified by any standard empirical test.

How could one do so, even if one had time for prolonged testing? "If it is true that one ought to help a loved one or friend in pain, *then* I should call the doctor." No empirical tests seem to follow from any version I can devise. "If it is not true that I ought to help a loved one in pain, *then* I have no moral command to help my wife now." The conclusion is absurd, but only because its absurdity follows from my knowledge that the premise is absurd, and *that* knowledge comes from principles of assent that cannot be stated in falsifiable form. Even if, as I believe, they are

principles that will finally withstand the most aggressive philosophical probing—like that, for example, of Plato, Kant, or the recent analytical philosophers I have mentioned—they will not withstand the scientific test of falsifiability. As Popper says of various faiths held by science, there are no strictly empirical observations (as even Bertrand Russell finally admitted) that could falsify either the proposition "Thou shalt help thy neighbor" or its opposite, "Thou shalt ignore thy neighbor's pain."

But let us push a bit further. "If it is true that one ought to help a friend in pain, *then* it must be true that if I do not help him, I will suffer, in my conscience." Here at last is a proposition in testable form: if it is false, my conscience won't hurt, and I know that my conscience usually, perhaps always, hurts when I act against the proposition. But I have really made no progress in satisfying empirical demands, because I will be told that the evidence is subjective and that therefore it does not hold. Besides, my conscience is simply the product of conditioning. Factual statements cannot, the dogma runs, validate normative statements—the question remains whether my conscience *ought* to hurt. Thus the proposition is not really falsifiable. "If . . . , then it must be true that she will not help me when I am in need," or "if . . . , then it must be true that society will fall apart, because it depends on people helping each other." Both of these might conceivably be tested, but not *until it is too late*. Besides, I know (on other grounds) that these consequences are not my main reasons but secondary arguments I fall back on only because men working with systematic doubt have put me on the defensive.

Finally, "if . . . , then it must be true that I would find life intolerable in a world in which husbands ignored their wives' needs." Again the experiment cannot be performed, and even if it were performed, it would yield only subjective "nonreplicable" results. ("What does *intolerable* mean, scientifically speaking?") If the principle turned out to be true and the experiment replicable—in the sense that what I found subjectively intolerable everyone else found subjectively intolerable—the result would still come too late: society would already have become intolerable for everyone.

Meanwhile, of course, the doctor has not been called, because I have pretended not to know something I know very well: that I ought to try to help when I encounter pain in a loved one.⁷ I know this through the way I know the world in the first place, that is, through a willing assent to the process of making an intelligible world with my fellow creatures. Together we have constructed and named a world, and just as I know what doubt means only through assent to other men's namings, so I know what at least some of my responsibilities are.

We have learned, we moderns, to chant the qualifications: "there are many borderline cases"; "the circle of my duties is not clearly defined in advance"; "I cannot possibly respond adequately to all the pain of all my friends, let alone my neighbors"; "men seem more often than not to deny my knowledge by hurting each other, and the proposition thus seems to be 'falsified' daily, hourly." But how strange it is that such qualifications, real and troublesome as they can be, should have been allowed to obscure the essential ground that is being qualified. None of the qualifications makes any sense unless the original process of knowing-through-assent makes sense, because each of them depends on assent to communal definitions and norms which if tested by systematic doubt can be quickly destroyed.

Systematic Assent

In view of these troubles with systematic doubt, it scarcely seems unreasonable to try out other ways of looking at what we know. Instead of making doubt primary, let us see what happens if we know whatever we can agree together that we have no good reason to doubt, whether or not we can apply other more formal tests of doubt. In this view, assent becomes the prior act of knowing: what we believe together with sureness is given "the benefit of the doubt"; the doubts I en-

⁷The principle of course applies to all fellow creatures, not just to those we love; in some ways the argument is cleaner, as Kant taught the world, when affection is not involved and duty counters other inclinations. My more sentimental example is chosen to represent a kind of knowledge that even the least altruistic reader will share. [Au.]

tain must offer reasons for themselves at least as good as I have for the initial belief.

The differences between the two formulations may not at first seem great, but their consequences differ tremendously, as would be shown if I paused here to listen to the chorus of objections that have occurred to some of you. Am I not now forced to accept any piece of silliness that any fanatic wants to advance, provided only that he can get somebody to assent to it and that it cannot be clearly refuted with particular disproofs? Charles Manson will be confirmed by the assent of his witches, Hitler by his SS troops, every Christian sect by its hundreds or millions of adherents, and indeed every political and religious program by its ability to present witnesses.

There is a kind of plausibility conferred on this objection by the widespread conviction that you can't "prove" a general negative. "You can't *prove* that there are not ghosts." "You can't prove that alchemy is a false system, or that astrology doesn't work." "You can't even disprove the existence of God." We would be left floundering in conflicting nonsensical schemes if we accepted all the views that we can't really disprove.

If giving up the principle that doubt is the essential, primary tool of thought meant embracing everything not refutable in this scientismist sense, I would thus be forced to accept abstract doubt in self-defense. But it is clear that we are again here victimized by a needlessly narrow definition of proof and disproof. As William James said in "The Will to Believe," when we decide to believe pending disproof we are not suddenly flooded with every belief that anyone offers. We begin only with those beliefs that really recommend themselves to us, wherever we are and wherever we find ourselves. We are all moderns or postmoderns here, and most of us have as part of our structures of perception a belief in natural law as firm as Hume's or Bertrand Russell's. Though we may not be as sure of what the laws of the universe are as Hume the skeptic seemed to be, we needn't give ready credence to any report—of ghosts or astral projection or flying saucers—that does not in some degree fit our own experience. Since I have never seen a ghost and do not even know anyone personally who

has claimed to see a ghost, and since most people I know who have thought about it do not believe in ghosts, I give my tentative assent to our collective experience. I need no disproof, though at the same time I see quite clearly that all of us could easily turn out to be wrong on this one; there are so many countervailing “experts” claiming to be heard. When I meet, as I did last year, a young Forest Service employee who believes that men on earth can project themselves instantaneously to Venus and back again, I do not grant assent pending disproof; I have no impulse to assent at all, since the claim runs counter to all of my experience. Similarly, I have very good specific reasons to doubt many of the claims of alchemy and astrology and phrenology, and I can therefore doubt them, for those reasons; on the other hand, if I find, as I do with the alchemical “humours,” a certain kind of poetic truth overlooked in simpler modern psychologies, I needn’t embrace all the chemical guesses simply because I have demoted the criteria I use in rejecting them. I have no need for a supreme, abstract command to doubt whatever has not been proved, as long as I am ready to reject whatever *has* been disproved. The geology of the Old Testament and the physiology of (say) Descartes have been disproved; I reject them. But I do not as a result leap, like Bertrand Russell cataloging the “intellectual rubbish” of the past, on every Biblical or Cartesian claim to truth that I cannot specifically prove.

Thus nonsense is no more threatening in this view than in any other, so long as I do not require scientific *disproof* of what is nonsensical. If “we” know that a belief is nonsense, we will not believe it, even if we cannot disprove it in any scientismist sense: in this respect, my new formulation simply accepts what is in fact our practice when faced with absurd doctrines that we cannot disprove.⁸

⁸The process is nicely illustrated whenever anyone advances an irrefutable but implausible hypothesis. When P. H. Gosse, Edmund’s father, tried to refute evolutionary theory with his *Omphalos* (London, 1857), he argued that the world had indeed been created all at once, about 4004 B.C., but that of course it had been created with all of the geological strata and fossil records that it would have had if it had evolved through endless time. At the moment of creation everything had to be in order for a going universe, right down to faecal

What is thus demanded by the principle of systematic assent is more rigorous thought than is customary about who “we” are, the group of relevant judges, the axiological experts whose shared experience confirms what we know together. Nobody ever gives equal weight to every voice. What satisfies us in practice, though the practice always can and should be refined, is the discovery that a given belief that fits our own structures of perception and belief is supported by those qualified to know. It is true that we often make the mistake of reversing the process, conferring the status of qualified expert on someone because he agrees with us. But this elementary human error, found in all groups, does not invalidate the conviction that a belief is confirmed *in some degree* whenever “someone who knows” shares it.

This is in formal structure—as Michael Polanyi among others has shown—the process of validation used even by scientists for a great share of their scientific beliefs. No scientist has ever performed experiments or calculations providing more than a tiny fraction of all the scientific beliefs he holds; the whole edifice of science depends on faith in witnesses, past and present—

matter in Adam’s colon. Now there is simply nothing in logic or in empirical science that could ever refute that position. It cannot be falsified, but neither can the scientific belief that it was designed to combat. Those who believe in a single natural order would of course say that Gosse violates the law of parsimony, that to invent the hypothesis of such a whimsical God is to complicate the world rather than explain it. But every man prefers his own way of applying Ockham’s razor, and it is clear that no theory of evolution has ever been as simple and efficient and parsimonious as Gosse’s, judged from his own point of view. With it he can account for any future scientific discovery about the world, while his opponents must go on debating about spontaneous mutation and natural selection and percentages and missing links. If scientists really believed only what they can state in falsifiable form, they would have struggled—hopelessly—to devise crucial experiments that would test Gosse’s views as against their own anticatastrophism. Or they would have felt driven to show that Gosse’s theory was in fact untestable and therefore meaningless.

But nothing so absurd happened. Though there were some negative reviews, Gosse was mainly refuted by the old-fashioned method of silence and indifference. Nobody felt the least bit threatened, and since he could get nobody else to take his views seriously, they were by that fact alone “refuted” and properly ignored. [Au.]

on testimony and tradition. There is nothing wrong in this, Polanyi argues; indeed, science would grind to a halt were it not so. Though scientific traditions of faith often support errors, making it difficult for new and sounder ideas to be embraced, no one could begin or carry through any experiment, to say nothing of writing a paper or attending a scientific conference, without relying (blindly?) on the traditions that make such errors inevitable.

Thus science is, in its larger structures, validated by the same social processes that I am arguing for in "all the rest." Even when we look in detail at how an individual scientist thinks when he is testing his ideas, we find, Polanyi suggests, that the appeal is more to an ideal "universal scientist" than to any particular person or group.⁹ The scientist is most convinced that he is right when he is most nearly convinced that *any* thoroughly informed and rational—that is, any thoroughly qualified—human being would agree with him.

We will follow the same rule. Needless to say, the various fanatical defenders of nonsense or viciousness, even if backed by millions of SS troops, cannot claim that kind of support. The Nazis, for example, could never claim that all reasonable and informed men would be forced by reason to agree to the extermination of all

⁹See, for example, *The Tacit Dimension* (Garden City, N.Y., 1966), esp. pp. 63–64: "The popular conception of science teaches that science is a collection of observable facts, which anybody can verify for himself. . . . But it is not true. . . . In the first place, you cannot possibly get hold of the equipment for testing, for example, a statement of astronomy or of chemistry. And supposing you could somehow get the use of an observatory or a chemical laboratory, you would probably damage their instruments beyond repair before you ever made an observation. . . . Scientists must rely heavily for their facts on the authority of fellow scientists." See also *ibid.*, pp. 67, 80.

For a perceptive account of some of the problems encountered when scientists attempt "persuasion" and "conversion" in matters not amenable to what they think of as proof, see Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2d ed. (Chicago, 1970), esp. chap. 12 and "Postscript," secs. 5–7. For Kuhn there can be no proof except empirical, logical, or mathematical proof. Nevertheless, in matters not amenable to such proof there can be "good reasons for being persuaded," and we need, if we are to understand this kind of reason, "a sort of study that has not previously been undertaken" (p. 152). A new rhetoric?

Jews: self-evidently, the Jews must be included in any reasonable decision about their fate, and self-evidently, without even the need for consultation, they will be known to disagree with any attempt at a consensus about their extermination.

But we need not go so far from this room to illustrate the procedures I am playing with. Suppose we say that we here "know"—that is, have good warrant to assent to—whatever *everyone in this hall* really believes, regardless of whether we can think of abstract arguments about why his belief is not proved by other tests. Instantaneously our domain of knowledge is immeasurably increased, just as it was immeasurably decreased by the slow triumph of scientism from Descartes to Russell. Our knowledge is of "whatever we have good reason to believe," in the sense of "having no good reason to doubt." There will of course be gradations of such knowledge—truth will no longer be made up of what is certain, in contrast to "all the rest." When any belief seems self-evident and we find empirically that we can think of nobody who in fact doubts it, we will be sure about it; when we find, as we usually will, that some men deny what we all agree to, we will be less sure but still able to act on our knowledge with confidence, so long as we

In my judgment, Kuhn fumbles the question of "good reasons," because he is unwilling to question his assumptions that in choices of values and paradigms, neither party to a dispute can be "convicted of a mistake. . . . There is no neutral algorithm for theory-choice, no systematic decision procedure which, properly applied, *must* lead each individual in the group to the same decision" (pp. 199–200; my italics). In other words, unless absolute proof, decisive for all inquirers, is available, one cannot speak of mistakes or of correctness of choice. One is either totally, demonstrably mistaken, in a scientific sense, or no correction is possible. And yet "good reasons" are somehow possible, and in the truncated rhetoric that Kuhn offers, it is clear that he is moving toward a notion of a reasonable persuasion that would be as respectable, in its way, as scientific proof (see pp. 153–59). But despite his awareness that the fact-value and objective-subjective distinction have become mere tags and can sometimes be destructive of thought, he allows himself to imply, again and again, that most of the reasons scientists might offer in debate about theories and values are necessarily more subjective and hence somehow less respectable than their scientific endeavors (see esp. p. 156). [Au.]

think we could persuade any reasonable person. But when we find ourselves or the postulated experts disagreeing, we will become more tentative in proportion to their qualifications and our own sense of where the good reasons lead us. And finally, we will be aware that there can be a genuine conflict of this kind of knowledge, in those areas where genuine values in fact clash: we have no reason to assume that the world is rational in the sense of harmonizing all of our “local” values; in fact we know that at every moment it presents—as in the conflict of values exhibited by every slaughterhouse and every feeling time in the wilderness—sharp clashes among good reasons. The sparrow and the sparrow hawk each has its reasons which reason, with a little effort, can ferret out, but we need not expect to find, at this local level, a Reason that will persuade the hawk to starve itself or the sparrow to sacrifice itself joyously to the hawk’s noonday meal.¹⁰

¹⁰See Alan Gewirth, “Categorical Consistency in Ethics,” *Philosophical Quarterly* 17 (October 1967): 289–99; idem, “Positive ‘Ethics’ and Normative ‘Science,’” *Philosophical Review* 69 (July 1960): 311–30. Those who know classical rhetoric will be aware that I am experimenting with the old notion of the *topoi*, those places, *loci*, or shared “standpoints” where good arguments could be found because in them men did in fact discover warrantable beliefs. The *topoi* have often been treated as simple devices of trickery: you probe around in a “place” until you find some assumption, however ridiculous in your own view, that your opponent will accept, and then you argue from it to conclusions you want him to adopt. But what would happen if you probed and found what assumptions your own intellectual convictions *really rest on*, then tested them against other people’s assumptions, and finally concluded with more or less confidence, depending on who agrees with you and for what proffered reasons. You would thus be developing as you went along a collection—or perhaps to be fashionable I should say a “structure”—of more or less probable (*probe*-able, *provable*) assumptions, assumptions that become principles usable not only in argument but in your own inquiry.

The collection of *topoi* from which such principles come would have become an organon, always to some degree shifting and uncertain, but reliable in discovering not only what you yourself believe but what you *should* believe: you should accept whatever you discover in testing discourse with others who are reasonable and in any sense qualified.

Instead of making an a priori list of topics at a high level of generality, as those who revive classical rhetoric sometimes do, I shall pursue the consequences of this notion inductively, as we inquire here together into our shared beliefs. [Au.]

In short, there is no assumption here like the one found in that growing cult of so-called reason, the Ayn Rand objectivists, that all truly reasonable men will always finally agree. On the contrary, it is assumed that reasonable men of differing interests, experience, and vocabulary will disagree about some questions to which reason, nevertheless, must apply. Consequently they not only can but must, by virtue of their common problems, search for meeting places where they can stand together and explore their differences about the choices life presents.

What Do We Know about Ourselves and Our “World”?

What do we know about the *arena of change*, the mind or self, if we know whatever no one in this hall seriously doubts? Remember: we must not cheat and fall back into modernism. It will not do to say, “Of course I can doubt that, if I put my mind to it.” In this game you are allowed to doubt only what you cannot *not* doubt, only what you have persuasive reason *to* doubt. If I seem to repeat myself, it is partly because I know from my own experience how hard it will be for some of us not to claim doubt except when we *really* doubt.

1. You and I and Bertrand Russell know, as surely as we know anything, that men are characteristically users of language. Though we don’t know much about the language of other animals, we do know, more surely than we know anything about the stars or the nucleus, and immeasurably more surely than we know about the chemistry of man’s brain, that men in all ages and cultures have employed symbols—not just the grunt language of immediate signs or pointing, but modes of referring both to particulars not present to the senses and to concepts that generalize intelligibly about particulars. We know this is not simply by a tautological use of definition: “What I mean by man is a symbol-using animal.” We know it from innumerable observations and reports of all known human cultures: all have language. In other words, we know that what we are doing at this moment—discursing together, trying to understand each other—is done in some form by every man and woman in all cultures in all ages.

Even the deaf and dumb “become human,” as Helen Keller and others have argued, the moment when language in this sense enters their lives. I am hungry; let’s go hunting. I think it will rain; let’s build a shelter. I love you; let us mate. I have just discovered that the sum of the angles of a triangle will always be 180 degrees; let me show you.

2. Not only do we talk and write and create art and mathematical systems and act as if we shared them: we really do share them, sometimes. Sometimes we *understand* each other. That is, we are often successful in exchanging ideas, emotions, and purposes, using not only words but a fantastically rich set of symbolic devices, ranging from facial expressions that seem much more resourceful than those available to other animals, bodily stances, dancing, music, mathematics, painting, sculpture, stories, rituals, and manipulation of social groups in war and politics. Except for occasional monstrous births, each man born of woman infers grief, anger, love, through symbolic interchange. Even madmen go on, for the most part, talking and painting and singing; those who recover usually report that even in the depths of madness the process of inferring other people’s conditions through symbolic clues goes on at a great pace. Some investigators would even argue that human madness consists precisely in this process running to riot; though animals can be conditioned to various forms of breakdown, only human beings can suffer from a wild excess of symbolic activity, with too little exchange and too much private inference. What we ordinarily mean when we say that a deformed birth is a “mere puppy” or “only a vegetable” is at the other end of the scale of normality: symbolic interchange as we know it is impossible, and the condition of being fully human has not been attained.

In short, we know other minds, sometimes, to some degree. That we often do not, and that the knowledge is never complete, is at this point irrelevant, though it has been sometimes talked about as if it proved that we are all hopelessly alone.

3. Not only do human beings successfully infer other human beings’ states of mind from symbolic clues; we know that they characteristi-

cally, in all societies, *build* each other’s minds. This is obvious knowledge—all the more genuine for being obvious. What an adult man or woman is, in all societies, is in large degree what other men and women have created through symbolic exchange. Each of us “takes in” other selves to build a self.

Other animals, too, are to some degree formed by their fellows, but the difference between the power of symbolic influence in man and in all other creatures is—as all students of society and culture have noted—tremendous. It is true that we all have some sort of common genetic base, and that base *may* include, as some recent theories would suggest, a kind of universal determination of the basic patterns of human speech, in all languages. But the existence of language and hence of a greatly enriched power for symbolic influence has meant that men are fantastically malleable by their fellows.

4. What is more, we know that we characteristically *intend* to change our fellows by symbolic devices, to “make them” or at least make them different. Though it is true that much of the cultural molding of minds that goes on, especially in childhood, is quite habitual or unconscious, people universally intend meanings, and hence intend changes of mind in other people (perhaps I should remind you once again that I am using the word *mind* much more broadly than is often the case: it includes those operations of the brain that are often attributed to the “gut” and “heart”; intentions in this sense need not be conscious).

5. Further, we are endowed with the capacity to infer intentions, not just in the linguistic sense of meanings but in the sense of purpose. One of the most curious impoverishments in the long retreat I have described is the exclusion of intentions from knowledge. At first, in the seventeenth century, intentions were excluded from the heavens, but as in all the other progressions of scientism, what was first denied to God was later denied to man: purposes became unknown and unknowable. And they are unknowable, if one accepts from the beginning that one knows only what one can prove by observation. I can observe only actions and physical processes: nobody has ever observed a purpose direct, except in himself,

“subjectively.” But we all know (in our new sense of the word) that everyone can sometimes “read” intentions successfully.

This point is sufficiently important to justify spending a bit of time on it. There has been a good deal of work on intentions and how we know them, but for the most part it has been ignored, until very recently, by modernists attempting to be rigorous about what we really know.¹¹ We really know only facts, and intentions are not facts but states of mind. We do not *know* them, even in ourselves: they are intuitive states of consciousness. We certainly do not know them in others; rather, we infer them and our inferences have at best a very low level of probability. Or so one tradition says.

I would like to suggest, in contrast, that of all things I know, some intentions, both of myself and of other persons, are what I know most surely. We should not allow ourselves to be confused because we often are mistaken about intentions; they are of course easily faked, as con men teach us daily. But to admit that we make mistakes about some intentions no more rules intentions from the realms of knowledge than to say that we make mistakes about the physical world forbids knowledge about the physical world. The question is whether in knowing intentions we ever know something that is real, whether they are, as William James and other pragmatists insisted, matters of fact, even though clearly they are also in one sense subjective. If we do, then I think we not only have good reason to repudiate the hard distinction between objective and subjective worlds, but we also have a major step in the discovery of how facts and values are combined.

Of all the kinds of intention, the most revealing to us here are those found in works of art.

¹¹See, for example, G. E. M. Anscombe, *Intention* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1957); and E. D. Hirsch Jr., *Validity in Interpretation* (New Haven, Conn., 1967). The first is in the tradition of linguistic analysis; the second is strongly influenced by the phenomenologists, especially Husserl and Gadamer. Both would agree (though in different languages) with my elementary claim that we know intentions. For a careful account of current debate about intentions as causes, see Georg Henrik von Wright, *Explanation and Understanding* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1971), esp. ch. iii. I deal with intentions more fully in *A Rhetoric of Irony* (Chicago, 1974). [Au.]

When someone paints a picture or tells me a joke, when someone writes or performs a tragedy, when someone recounts the Passion according to St. Matthew in a Gospel or in an oratorio, I can sometimes come to understand and share his intentions and the shared intentions of others participating with me; and I sometimes know them with a sureness that has often been overlooked. That the resulting knowledge is a kind of indwelling (as Polanyi calls it), that it includes subjective states not provable or demonstrable by ordinary hard tests should not trouble us by now in the least.

Suppose I were to violate decorum by telling a joke at this solemn moment, and suppose further—oh, fond fantasy!—that it is as uproariously successful as the best joke you’ve heard in the last year. And then suppose a critic were to tell you that you do not know whether I was joking or not, that for all you really can prove, I was intending to communicate my tragic sense of life. What we know, in his view, is what we can prove, in his notion of proof. I submit that we would have every right to call him unreasonable, dogmatic, and in fact a bit foolish, because our communally shared knowledge of joke telling, its purposes, its conventions, its effects, is very secure stuff indeed. My joke would of course reveal other intentions than merely to make you laugh: you would know, at this stage of my third lecture, that I intended the joke and the laughter as illustrative. If the critic tried to convince you that I intended anything else by it than to make you laugh in order to illustrate our communal understanding, you would have every right to call him unreasonable, or even—if you wanted to be playfully contentious—unscientific.

But let us rise to more formal literary jesting, choosing as a second illustration a piece of the kind of stuff that some modernists like to say demonstrates how ambiguous everything is and how impossibly isolated we all are: of course I mean irony. You will look for a long time in scientific treatises on communication without finding any analysis of even the simplest ironies. Indeed, even in the philosophers who specialize in “ordinary language” one finds almost nothing about a symbolic practice that is so ordinary that you and I experience dozens of instances of it

daily; I have searched with reasonable diligence through the works of Wittgenstein, for example, and with all his talk about language games, I find almost nothing that even approaches an account of the intricate game you and I securely play when we open, let us say, that marvelous novel, *Pride and Prejudice*: "It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife."

We experience this sentence—that is, we take it in as a complex ironic meaning, a very special kind of indirect and intricate kind of unspoken point. We reconstruct an elaborate set of meanings quite different from the surface meaning of the words, and we conclude that we have understood Jane Austen's special brand of irony. She does not think that all wealthy bachelors are seeking wives; she knows that it is *not* a truth *universally* acknowledged but a belief held only by a very special kind of social group. In fact, her point includes the notion that some people, especially needy and greedy mothers with unmarried daughters, are eager to find wealthy sons-in-law; it also includes the extraordinarily complex notion—one that you and I have not the slightest difficulty with—that such people are proper objects of ridicule. What is more, it includes Jane Austen's inference about *us*, a flattering but justified conception of our powers to reconstruct unstated subtleties! Our performance together is, like mental meetings through other kinds of figurative language, too intricate to allow for brief explanation. But even without the full account that I have recently attempted in *A Rhetoric of Irony*, we can see that to claim to reconstruct such an intention is to claim an important and neglected kind of knowing.

I say that I know Jane Austen's intentions with the sentence, at least in its main lines. But can I really call what I know in this sense knowledge? It is clearly subjective, it cannot be proved by any deductive chain of reasoning or by any ordinary laboratory experiment, and it is obviously doubtful both in the sense that many readers will not see it and can doubt it honestly and in the sense that anyone who is determined to doubt what cannot be demonstrated can *say* he doubts it.

Yet if I remember that the dogmas of scientism are themselves unproved by observation and

then ask whether I have good and adequate reasons for my conclusions, I see at once that I *know* what Jane Austen intended with the sentence far more solidly than I know many conclusions dignified with the name of knowledge—for example, that the universe is ten or twelve billion years old, or that Shakespeare wrote *Romeo and Juliet*, or that energy equals mass times the speed of light squared. All of my reasons are what some objectivists would call subjective, but they provide, when added together, a very solid platform indeed. Here are the main ones that occur to me, but there are undoubtedly others:

a. First, I have my own strength of conviction. As everyone knows, and as Russell never tired of saying, "subjective certainty" is no criterion of truth. But of course "everyone" has been wrong: it is *one* criterion, though one that is, like all the others, unreliable. My conviction is in itself worth something, though not a great deal until it is challenged and I have a chance to see how strongly it can stand up under probing. Convictions vary in intensity, and thought about them reveals that some which feel certain are in fact only hopes and wishes (though the *only* should not be used to mean *necessarily* false) while others, like my conviction that Jane Austen's intent is ironic, look stronger and stronger the more I push at them with further tests of their strength.

b. Agreement with other "subjects." If I have read a sentence as ironic and I find that all about me readers are taking it literally and defending their view with confidence, my degree of conviction should diminish—though only to the degree that I have good reason to trust their judgment; it can never be a matter of simple democratic vote.¹² About this sentence I have in fact never

¹²My statement ignores the complicating fact that all of us can apparently be shaken out of our firmest convictions, including those we think of as scientific, by mere social pressure, if it is heavy and prolonged. Experiments proving such malleability, which have been often used as shocking evidence for the relativity of values, can be read as showing that we are indeed made in symbolic exchange and that our moral and aesthetic worlds are constructed by the same processes of validation as our scientific worlds. See Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (Garden City, N.Y., 1966), esp. part 1, "The Foundations of Knowledge in Everyday Life."

met anyone except totally inexperienced readers who saw no ironic joke, and even they were easily persuaded that they had missed the point.

Let us take a vote, by show of hands, of those who have read *Pride and Prejudice*: How many of you think you know that an ironic jest was not intended? (Pause.) Well, the level of intersubjective agreement shown by your unanimity about the sentence is, I would say, at least as high as about any current scientific proposition except the almost universally accepted (though unprovable) assumption that nature will somehow always and everywhere be the same. I read in the morning paper, under the headline “Laws of Universe Put into Question,” that “rarely in history have theorists [in the physical sciences] questioned so fundamentally the precepts of their time”—this in a report from an international conference. I am not surprised. But you could shock me into catatonia with the headline, “Majority of Experts at Annual MLA Convention Deny Irony in Austen’s Works.”

I am not making the foolish claim that the

The fact that one or a million voters have been persuaded is never in itself adequate reason for concluding that they are right. In rhetorical inquiry we must always take into account both the reasons and the voters’ qualifications. Aristotle makes this point partly by his way of defining rhetoric. It is not the art of persuading, or of winning in an argument. It is the “faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion” (*Rhetoric*, 1355b–25; Rhys translation). The best rhetorician who ever lived might easily fail in a given “impossible” situation, as Burke failed to persuade the British parliament to change their policies toward the American colonies. My definition, of course, goes further in the direction of evaluation even than Aristotle’s; if rhetoric is the art of discovering warrants for assent, the notion of finding good reasons, not just what look like reasons, is built in from the beginning.

Confusion about this point is as widespread as the sharp and simple distinction between “factual” and “evaluative” statements. Consider for example what a student will learn from the following exercise, given by Young, Becker, and Pike (*Rhetoric: Discovery and Change* [New York, 1970], p. 211): “Classify the following statements as either descriptive or evaluative. Descriptive statements usually can be verified empirically; evaluations usually cannot. As a guide, ask yourself whether it would make sense to vote on each statement. An evaluation, being a matter of opinion, can be voted on; to vote on a descriptive statement, however, would be absurd, since it can be verified empirically.

1. John lives at 25 Avon Street.
2. The food was poor.

level of agreement will be similarly high about all other literary interpretations; naturally I have chosen what I take to be a clear and simple case, since if I can earn the right to call even one act of subjective literary interpretation *knowledge*, I have broken, irremediably, the hard division between the subjective, personal world of feeling and value and the objective, impersonal world of knowledge and truth or reality.

c. Coherence with other kinds of knowledge. The circularity of all proof about anything becomes highly evident here—but with no resulting scandal. My conviction that the sentence is ironic was arrived at in a “flash of intuition,” as I found its literal meaning incompatible with many things that I know and then discovered a new ironic meaning compatible with everything I know. Now, testing the truth in the hard light of good reasons, moving around the circle in the opposite direction, I find that the intuition was indeed coherent with every relevant piece of knowledge I can think of, whether I look at the work itself or at so-called external evidence.

3. I am a freshman.
4. I am only a freshman.
5. He’s a beatnik.”

Quite aside from the point that both (1) and (3) *could* be highly charged with value in certain contexts, what is the validity of saying that (2), (4), and (5) might be voted on? Their validity or falsehood is of course established communally, in some kind of intersubjective agreement. But does it make sense to say that they are in no way descriptive? If I am served spoiled meat, or concentration-camp soup, and I say, “The food is poor,” my statement is as factual, as descriptive, as (1) or (3). Moving to less extreme examples the same claim can hold: “The soufflé is poor” will be descriptive of a fallen soufflé, among those who know what a good soufflé is. Soufflé experts and concentration-camp inmates, both served the same poor soufflé, will probably vote differently; the latter might say, “The food today was marvelous,” meaning “by comparison.” Both groups would be right, but again their conflicting descriptions are both factual and evaluative; the rightness is not found in a vote but in a discussion that shares understandings. (A group of experts might of course properly vote on two excellent soufflés.) Finally, it is not hard to think of contexts in which a jury might find itself voting on (1), or a panel of deans voting on the truth of (3).

The authors go on to suggest that the student make comparable lists and explain “the basis of your classification. Are any of your statements difficult to classify? If so, why?” One hopes that many students will finally see that the reason for difficulty lies in the original disjunction. [Au.]

Looking at the rest of the novel, we find that it fits the sentence only if I read the sentence as ironic. Within a few lines, for example, I find Mr. Bennet refusing to acknowledge the “truth *universally* acknowledged”; unless Jane Austen is a slovenly novelist—and everything in my field of awareness tells me that she is not—the incongruity between literal statement and literal fact must be intended. Therefore: irony. Secondly—and here feeling becomes an inescapable part of hard knowledge—the sentence and many others like it (“Wickham is my favorite son-in-law”) give delight in themselves and as a growing pattern of human vision *if* they are read as I have read them, ironically. They yield nothing but insipidity if read otherwise. These are value judgments, of course, and we all have been told that value judgments are one thing, and knowledge and fact quite another. But again we see the claims as flatly wrong. My knowledge is inextricably bound with my conviction that this kind of pleasure is valued by myself and other readers, and that our valuing was intended by Jane Austen. (That she shared it is perhaps less sure but still highly probable; what *she* felt and valued is harder to know than what she intended *me* to feel and value.)

It would be tedious to run over all of the good external reasons I have for thinking that the sentence is ironic: what Jane Austen said about her work; what every critic says about Jane Austen or about this novel or about this sentence; what expectations are built by her other works; and so forth. If I find—as I do when I come to other sentences in Austen—that some experienced critics see them as ironic and some do not, my confidence about them should diminish, but only to the degree that is required by the reasons given. I will call my convictions knowledge only when I have good reasons shared—or at least shareable—with weighty witnesses. And I will expect, as in even the “hardest” of the scientific fields, that there will be borderline cases in which the intersubjective sharing of reasons yields no resolution.

d. A final criterion is teachability or corrigibility. If we know what we can teach other men to know, by showing how we correct mistakes about it, my knowledge of Jane Austen’s irony is

knowledge. Every English teacher has had the experience of difficulty in teaching ironic works. But no teacher has ever had more difficulty teaching students to see this kind of irony than every science teacher has had in teaching the elementary concepts in his field. There are perhaps some readers who are irony blind, just as there are many students who cannot seem to grasp simple mathematics or simple physical processes. But their errors are corrigible, if they will attend to arguments of correction. I’ll warrant that a larger percentage of your students will share your knowledge of Jane Austen’s intention in that opening sentence—and without unfair bludgeoning—than all but the best science teachers can get to understand the second law of thermodynamics.

6. A sixth kind of knowledge we share is inseparable from what has gone before: in knowing intentions we often know them under the aspect of values. (Perhaps we always do, but that step is not essential to us here.) My knowledge that Austen is teasing is apprehended as a set of shared values—both the values that are being played with and the value of the act of play. To ask whether my propositions are propositions of fact or propositions of value is meaningless, because they are inextricably both.

If a skeptic says that though I can infer Austen’s intentions, I know nothing about their value, since other men might value them differently, particularly if they were from another culture, I can reply that such disagreements, though real, have nothing to do with the claim. The question is whether anyone whose opinion the skeptic respects *on this subject* would quarrel with the claim. If there is anyone here today, at this hour, who thinks that the world would not lose an important value if it lost Jane Austen’s kind of irony, let him speak up now.

To clarify this point about our inference of value *as we infer intention to create value*, here are two more examples:

a. It is Easter time, 1971, and I am sitting in Orchestra Hall in Chicago, listening to Bach’s *St. Matthew Passion*. After the final grand chorus, climaxing more than three hours of listening, I sit in the silence—we have been asked not to applaud—with tears in my eyes. As I recover what

we call my “self” slightly, I become aware that my wife on one side and my sixteen-year-old daughter on the other are weeping too, and that in fact handkerchiefs are visibly and audibly at work all over the hall. As we get up to leave, I meet a friend who is ordinarily loquacious; he lowers his reddened eyes and does not speak. Later in the corridor, another friend, ordinarily fluent, says, “That was really . . .” and bogs down, unable to say what it was, really.

Now I ask you, what do I *know* about the various persons and acts implicated in this “sentimental” experience? I am not asking you only what I feel (though it is true that part of what I know is what I feel) but what I know, using standards as rigorous as you care to devise. I submit that I know a good deal about Bach’s artistic intentions across the gap of nearly two hundred and fifty years—not of course his motives, in the sense of my first lecture, but his artistic reasons, what his art was designed to do or be. If someone says to me, “Bach really intended to make you laugh, not weep, with that final chorus,” or, “The whole thing was in fact an elaborate parody or put-on—in fact a satire composed to attack the foolish pretensions of believing Christians as well as the conventions of baroque choral music,” I know that he is wrong. I may still be wrong in many details of my “reading,” but if so it will not be because he is right—the issue cannot be resolved by saying that his opinion is right for him and mine is right for me.

(My sense of sureness is partly a product of my intense feeling, and I must consequently be cautious. A questioner after this lecture said that all of this was mistaken because he sees the *St. Matthew Passion* as a grotesque piece of sentimentality, a work that could never move *him* to a deep emotional or spiritual experience, though it tries hard enough. But it seemed to me that the objection itself confirmed my point: he did not and could not doubt that the work intended an effect in that general range of effects. Even the skeptic thus knew something about the music that we sentimental weepers also knew. What is more, I’m sure that he would concede if pressed that Bach’s attempt, though for him a relative failure, was not worthless. If I gave him a choice between attending to it for three hours and at-

tending to my own soulful rendition of “Red Sails in the Sunset” repeated steadily for the same period, we know that he and every music lover in the history of man would choose Bach. Here’s consensus enough for my purposes.)

My confidence about shared intentions and values is thus a product of my final feeling multiplied by the conviction that all other listeners who have ever qualified themselves by really listening to that music would agree with me, regardless of whether they shared the feelings on a particular hearing: nobody has in fact ever suggested the interpretation of Bach as satirist of Christianity or of musical conventions and we can say with great confidence that no informed listener ever will.

What is more, I can say roughly the same about the meanings of the tears in my wife’s and daughter’s eyes, as also of what they report about the concert afterwards. They have shared with me Bach’s intentions and my valuing of those intentions, and we thus know a great deal about each other through the sharing. If a skeptic suggested to me that my daughter was faking the tears in order to gain credit with Daddy, I would safely bet far more on my reply than on the conclusion of most arguments in the latest copy of *Science*. It is by no means certain, and I cannot prove it to you. But I would be mad indeed if I refused to credit it as knowledge, just because it is not subject to standard empirical tests.

There will of course be loose edges about this knowledge—the total content of her response will be much different from mine, and mine will have elements in it that Bach could not have intended. What is more, different conductors will read the score somewhat differently. But such peripheral vaguenesses affect this conclusion in no degree whatsoever. There are simply vast numbers of moments, most of them less complex than this, about which I can be sure that the central intentions of other minds are what I in fact receive.

b. I shall now create an art work, a neatly turned couplet:

The Beatles are greater than Bach
And Einstein is smarter than Mach.

Is there anyone here who would like to argue that my artistic achievement and the intentions you

infer behind it are superior or equal in value to any famous poem I might now quote—say Blake’s “London”? (Long pregnant pause!) But if we all agree, as we seem to, surely we have again found a value judgment that is factual—subjective, yes, but not in the old sense; artistic values can be known, at least some of them can be, and judgments about them *can* be factual, in precisely the sense that a judgment that Arnold Palmer is a better golfer than I am is a value judgment and a factual judgment simultaneously: we know the criteria and the achievement, and though the act of relating the two can be more difficult and hence more often controversial in artistic and moral matters than in sports or mouse-trap making, the process of mutual validation by qualified judges can be as valid in one case as the other. The whole problem is reduced, as Hume said, to determining who are the qualified judges.

Many of us here have qualified ourselves in some degree in the judgment of poetry. It is easy to imagine a challenger who will say that he knows as much about poetry as we do and that we are wrong: Booth’s simplicity and clarity are better than Blake’s metaphoric fuzziness. Is the question of our comparative expertise subjective or is it “a matter of fact”? Clearly the dichotomy has become meaningless. Nobody here, we know, will accept the skeptic’s preference for Booth’s poem. We have known many instances of consummate skill in poetry, and the question of whether our skeptic’s experience qualifies him as a challenger is a question of fact—regardless of how difficult it is to determine. If he is to persuade us to reconsider, he must, in practice (and in our rhetorical theory), win adherents who seem to us qualified as experts in the question. And this is just another way of saying that he must convince us that he knows the facts about what words like *better*, *skill*, *couplet*, and *art* mean.

It is important to be clear that we are not agreeing merely to the fact that we all agree, or that we all prefer Blake to Booth. You and I know that the difference in quality is not merely a matter of preference or a matter to be settled by vote; except when we are being doctrinaire skeptics, we know that the one is a better work of art,

according to every criterion except usefulness as an example in this lecture. In other words, some preferences are merely subjective, in the old sense, and some are also objective—intersubjectively validated, as some sociologists put it. They can, like judgments of other factual matters, be right or wrong; they are corrigible in responsible discourse.

7. Finally, we know that despite these many agreements, men’s firmly held values, known and tested in these ways, often conflict; we produce a great flood of value-ridden rhetoric directed, as it were, against one another. We talk ceaselessly to each other—and quite evidently have done so from the beginning—trying to show that *this* value is genuinely superior to *that*. And we all do so as if persuasion really mattered, and as if choices among values could be judged as really right or wrong. Rhetoric in this sense is not something that was invented at an advanced stage of civilization when men began to make highly formalized speeches in law courts and public assemblies. It was practiced when the inventor of the wheel said, “Hey, fellows, here’s something interesting I want to show you—it’s more important than your dice game.” It was practiced when the first mother or father went beyond simply caressing or physical restraint and managed to convey, in sound or picture or sign language, “No, *because . . .*” or “Good *because . . .*,” completing the primitive sentence with a reason not present to the senses at the moment.

This speculative point about the origins of language in opinion exchange is usually made about material objects and the words that stand for them symbolically; we all know about Helen Keller and her leap into the human community when she learned that the letters traced on her hand meant *water*. But it is impossible, I think, to separate the first real symbolic usage—the first time even a seemingly neutral word like *water* or *fire* was used to stand for water or fire not present—from intentions to assert value (and thus, potentially, to change other minds about value). That’s precisely what such usage is—an intention to “call to mind” and thus place some sort of value on what is not sensibly present. When anything is called to mind, in this sense, mind is

changed. There is always an implicit “ought,” if only “You ought to attend to *my* way of perceiving and naming.” . . .

The Purposes of Rhetoric

It remains only to consider what is perhaps the most significant change made by this redefinition of man as rhetorical animal, what it does to our view of the purpose of trying to change other men’s minds. In the scientismist view, you’ll remember, the only conceivable purpose of changing minds was to implant our pre-formed views by any available means: force, conditioning, brainwashing, trickery, or at best what Kant calls “wooing.” Except in scientific matters, rational persuasion was impossible, because proof was impossible, and persuaders could only propagandize their view of the world.

But if all men make each other in symbolic interchange, then by implication they *should* make each other, and it is an inescapable value in their lives that it is good to do it well—whatever that will mean—and bad to do it badly. If even the most austere, isolated laboratory scientist cannot even claim to exist except as a social self who was made and is still being made in symbolic exchange with others (or the totality of “the other,” including the symbolically responsive nature that answers his questions), then his very existence depends on the many values he affirms when he respects the truth, refuses to cook his evidence, relies on the traditions and methods taught him by his mentors, and so on. The supreme purpose of persuasion in this view could not be to talk someone else into a preconceived view; rather it must be to engage in mutual inquiry or exploration. In such a world, our rhetorical purpose must always be to perform as well as possible in the same primal symbolic dance which makes us able to dance at all. If it is good for men to attend to each other’s reasons—and we all know that it is, because without such attending none of us could come to be and questions about value could not even be asked—it is also good to work for whatever conditions make such mutual inquiry possible. Whatever imposes belief without personal engagement becomes inferior to whatever makes mutual exchange more likely.

The purpose of mental change is thus to fulfill one’s nature as a creature capable of responding to symbolic offerings. The *process* of inquiry through discourse thus becomes more important than any possible conclusions, and whatever stultifies such fulfillment becomes demonstrably wrong. But this is not quite the same as the popular irrationalist claim that conclusions do not matter, or the favorite dodge of social scientists when their data won’t jell: “To raise questions is more important than to try for answers.” The process fulfills itself only when the reasons are as good and the conclusions thus as solid as the problems and circumstances allow for. Rhetoric is a supremely self-justifying activity for man only when those engaged in it fully respect the rules and the steps of inquiry. And this holds as much for a “primitive” priestess persuading with myth, ritual, and omens as for a modern scientist who knows that his conclusions are at best tentative.

How then should men change each other’s minds? If fact and value are not implacably separated but inextricably intertwined in man’s nature, we can feel free to seek the answer to our “ought” question by looking at the facts of what we do and at what we say about persuasion. Just as all of us knew, in advance of my arguments here, that other men ought to change their minds when we give them good reasons, we know now that this is not just a personal preference. The very process that led men to the modernist dogmas depends for its validity on denying those dogmas.

If a committed doubter says to us that he will not accept the valued fact of man’s rhetorical nature, we see now that he cannot avoid illustrating it as he tries to argue against it: we discuss our doubt together, therefore *we are*. If he chooses to deny the value we are placing on the fact that this is how we are made, we cannot, it is true, offer him any easy disproof, in his sense of the word. But we can point out that to be consistent he must apply his doubt to the value of everything, including every scientific pursuit, every mathematical proof, every thought or private experience that is in any sense derived from human converse—every act, in short, except blank silence

or suicide. And if he persists, we have only to ask him, "What are your reasons? Give us good ones for believing that we should not seek good reasons and attend to them when they are given." If he offers reasons, we ask him whether we *should accept* them. Does he feel any argumentative force in them? If he says yes, he has accepted our premises. If he says no, his direct challenge to our claims is of course removed, though we may well continue to worry—as in effect I have been doing here—about the intellectual climate that can make his kind of intellectual game seem less in need of defense than our own.

By this route, as by many another, we are forced to recognize—though without quite as much anguish as modernist discoveries of man's "absurd" plight have produced—what looks like an absolute limitation on our mental powers. Augustine says, "Unless you believe, you shall not understand." For Aristotle no science can prove its own first principles, and some principles can be discerned only by the intuitive reason. Gödel proved that no system can prove all the premises it needs. In our rhetorical terms, we can't get anywhere on any problem unless *we agree* on some knowledge for which the best proof is that *we agree* about it. In any formulation, it is just as irrational to shut oneself off from discourse about other men's affirmations of value as to ignore their skeptical doubts about logical proofs or "the facts."

That disputes about values often seem more difficult to resolve than disputes about fact should no longer mislead us; some disputes about what we call fact are harder to resolve than some disputes about more obviously value-laden assertions: (a) Is it a *fact* that space is curved? (b) Would it be *right* for me to conduct an experiment on a group of orphan children who are in my charge, blinding them slowly to observe the effects on their perceptual worlds? Except when we are victimized by dogmatic doubt, it is clearly much easier to settle the second of these questions.

Besides, "all of us here would surely agree that there is something wrong"—note my formula again—about refusing to wrestle with hard questions. So long as we have good reason to

know that disputes about values can *sometimes* be debated productively and resolved, we have good reason to tackle any dispute that seems to us, jointly, worth bothering about, no matter how hard it is.

To talk in this way is to leave a lot of questions unanswered. Tomorrow I shall try to give some examples, both of difficult cases when values conflict, and of some forms of warranted assent that are opened up to us through this view of things. If I am right, forms of assent that are often called irrational—assent to religious groups, to dramatic and fictional appeals, to music, to political leaders—are in this view restored to potential intellectual respectability and thus to meaningful debate.

FOUR: SOME WARRANTS OF ASSENT WITH NOTES ON THE TOPICS OF PROTEST

Rejecting the dogmas of modernism can in itself settle no questions; indeed, for a true believer it can be positively unsettling. For the scientismist who has clung to the dogmas as his last hold on reason in a world gone mad, questioning them will seem just one more failure of nerve. For the irrationalist who has relied on them as his license for unbridled romantic assertion and thoughtless action, the questioning can threaten a return to chains. In one sense a rhetoric of assent attempts merely to be a commonsensical defense of the way we naturally, inescapably, work upon each other, because we are made in rhetoric. But for an age of dogma—and that is what I am calling our open-minded, tolerant time—it will have far more wrenching implications than any one of us can foresee.

If the whole "scene" of the atomic self, isolated in a cold universe, is undermined, the great liberal, critical fiat, "Make up your own mind," no longer quite makes sense. If the self is in fact a kind of value-permeated field in which a value-permeated universe creates and is in turn "processed" by what is really a history of selves in interaction with selves, the handbooks of logical and rhetorical proofs and fallacies must be

rewritten.¹³ If systematic doubt is to be replaced by systematic assent among such selves, the whole history of Western thought begins to shift under one's gaze, and the lines between friends and enemies become blurred. If language is not a means of communication but the source of our being, and if the purpose of rhetoric is not to persuade but to meet other minds in the best possible symbolic exchange—that is, to maintain or improve the “source” itself—then a very great deal that is conventionally said about improving communication begins to look highly questionable. If there is, finally, an inescapable, natural command to “make minds meet,” then suddenly a host of commandments that men have said were simply

¹³In a quick check through several elementary handbooks that include lists of fallacies, I find that each author has inevitably committed a fair share of the fallacies he lists, most notably that prop without which all of us would fall, *petitio principii*.

Monroe C. Beardsley's *Thinking Straight* (1950; 3d ed., New York, 1966), one of the best and most widely used handbooks to clear thinking, relies on a model of logical thinking which would preclude much of Beardsley's own argument. He tells us, for example, that argument from analogy is “an unsound form of the inductive argument” (pp. 130–36, 284). But he himself often and inevitably argues from analogy, most notably the analogy of straightness or clean linearity dramatized in his title. Though much of what such books have taught (see, for examples of the best, L. Susan Stebbing, *Thinking to Some Purpose* [Harmondsworth, Middlesex, Eng., 1938]; and Robert H. Thouless, *Straight and Crooked Thinking* [New York, 1932]) must still be learned by every serious student of thought, their almost complete denigration of argument from authority, witnesses, and testimony, and their uncritical divorce of thought and emotion (the latter almost always for them suspect) will have to be revised. They further illustrate the belief that the chief task is seeing through other men's fallacies and confusions: “Analyze the fallacies and confusions in the following passage.” Beardsley tells the student again and again. These authors do not dwell on human failures caused by “correct” thought purified of emotion.

Max Black is open about this deficiency: “But what are we to say about the criticism of *feeling*? When is a man justified in expressing hate, indignation, approval, etc.? These questions, important as they are, take us out of the subject matter of this book into the fields of ethics and aesthetics. They illustrate the limitations of logic” (*Critical Thinking*, 2d ed. [New York, 1952], p. 176). They do indeed, but these books all imply that *here* is how we *think*—and then there are all those other things that somehow get in the way of thinking. [Au.]

an interesting, perhaps precious but finally indefensible heritage from this or that tradition become genuine imperatives again. If existence is unthinkable without the struggle to make minds meet, everything we value, including the achievement of science and mathematics, depends on this fact which is a value: men ought to attend to whatever good reasons are offered them by other men.

In short, if good reasons apply, many of those views that we have conveniently explained away with this or that form of motivism come flooding back in upon us, demanding a fair hearing. But the question of what is a fair hearing is now more open than any book of rules for clear thinking has ever suggested.

I don't know whether this position—many aspects of it are new to me in the past year, though some are old as the hills—will make me seem a flaming revolutionary or a last-ditch traditionalist. What I do know is that the questioning I have here traced has been for me enormously unsettling, and that the chapter of consequences I turn to now thus seems a deeply unsatisfying though at the same time exhilarating collection of hints and guesses.

The Great Reservoir of Good Reasons

A satisfactory account of good reasons in any one domain of life would necessarily require a sizable book. The repertory of good reasons could never be constructed by any one person, since it would include all good discourse about the grounds of valid discourse in any subject. What I do here should thus be viewed as an invitation to push even further the many recent efforts to develop methods of pluralism and manifold logics of inquiry, and to oppose assimilating all proof to a single paradigm.

Classical rhetoric, following Aristotle, distinguished three kinds of proof: (1) substantive arguments about the case to be established; for example, to say that we are not as well prepared for war as our enemy can be a cogent argument for not going to war at this time; (2) “ethical proof”—arguments based on the character of the speaker or his opponent; for example, to say that the king's counselor has lied to you frequently in

the past is reason for you to disbelieve his claim that we are not ready to wage war; (3) “emotional proof”—arguments appealing to the special emotions or attitudes of the audience; for example, to argue for peace before a group of middle-aged mothers I will stress “death of our sons” more strongly than I would when speaking to senators.

Almost everyone has agreed with Aristotle that the first kind, if available, is somehow superior as proof to the other two. Example and enthymeme, the rhetorical versions of induction and deduction used in dialectic, are the core of persuasion; and Aristotle often implies that whatever is not valid under one of these heads is very weak proof indeed. And even these as used in rhetoric are inferior to positive proof: “The duty of rhetoric is to deal with such matters as we deliberate upon without arts or systems to guide us”—so far so good—“in the hearing of persons who cannot take in at a glance a complicated argument, or follow a long chain of reasoning.”¹⁴ Other and better audiences would clearly be preferred if life could only be managed that way. It should be evident by now that for a rhetoric of assent, these priorities are questioned and perhaps in a sense even reversed; ethical proof—the art of taking in by contagion—now looks much more important.

Aristotle at least knew that practical life required rhetoric and that rhetoric could not be reduced to logic. But many modernists have moved in the contrary direction, not only making logical proof prior but, as we have seen, eliminating all other kinds entirely. The history of rhetoric since the seventeenth century could be described as a mounting suspicion and final rejection of ethical

¹⁴My quotations are from the W. Rhys Roberts translation. I am not following Aristotle strictly (*Rhetoric* 1357a and *passim*) but rather what seems to me the most common Aristotelian tradition. Perhaps I should add, for those who care about such matters and who are therefore likely to wander into a footnote this far along in a book like this, that the rhetoric of assent is not by any means Aristotelian; for my purposes here, Aristotle is much too interested in being scientific. Though I have resisted the temptation to attack him as the first scientist, there is a sense in which he seems to say: Oh, yes, indeed there *are* many other forms of proof besides the apodictic proof that scientific demonstration affords, and I will deign to give you a book about them; but isn't it, after all, a pity that it cannot all be done with greater rigor. [Au.]

and emotional proof and then a progressive narrowing of the range of what is accepted as substantive proof.

To reconstruct our languages according to a rhetoric of assent will be an immense task, as the efforts of the last two decades have shown. The reconstruction will not, if we do it honestly, lead to any comfortable set of rules for clear or straight thinking, though some rules will still be useful for limited cases (presumably physicists will still work at ruling out their emotions and preferences when assessing theories about black holes and quasars, even when they have recognized that they cannot do so in assessing their theories about big bangs and continuous states). It will not even lead to a reconstruction of a clear distinction among the three kinds of classical proof. Emotional and ethical proof will often turn out to be “substantive,” and logical proof useless and misleading. But if we recognize that the distinctions will now be hazier than in any traditional rhetoric, it is still useful to discuss our restored reasons under the three traditional heads, substantive or logical, ethical, and emotional. I can only hint, with an example or two in each case, at what a world of reconsiderations we now face.

Value Terms and Substantive Proofs

If what we have said about the potential status of value judgments is true, efforts to establish value through discourse can no longer be dismissed, in Russell's language, as “mere preaching.” Values can in some sense be demonstrated.

In classical rhetoric, three kinds of persuasion about values were usually distinguished: judicial or forensic, about the value-ridden facts of guilt or innocence concerning past actions; deliberative, about policy for the future; and demonstrative, praising or blaming persons or institutions in the present.¹⁵ In such a scheme, our modern

¹⁵The best discussion of these kinds is still the source itself: Aristotle, esp. bk. I, chaps. iii–x. For a rhetoric of assent the three types addressed to issues in past, present, and future would, I think, be supplemented by a rhetoric of ultimate values: the rhetoric of sciences and philosophy, inquiring into what was once called “eternal truth.” In such a scheme, much

demonstrations, designed to protest this or that evil or to demand this or that good, take on a special interest. If value can in fact be demonstrated in ways other than by public demonstrations of force or violence, it is also true that extreme public displays of commitment always say something real to anyone seriously inquiring into the values at stake in any conflict. To pretend that a display of commitment, even an extreme act of violence, is necessarily unrelated to how we think about such matters is, in our present view, to forget that the way we establish values is the way we establish anything: by earning communal validation through trying them out on other men.

To try them out in simple direct acts of physical protest has become a national habit partly because people seem convinced that they cannot try them out meaningfully in other ways. Thus we once again polarize ourselves, rationalists claiming that demonstrations demonstrate nothing, irrationalists claiming that nothing can be demonstrated without power or violence. The former talk of blind passion, senseless destructiveness, and fascist oppression by self-intoxicated and self-righteous mobs; the latter talk of inhuman and unfeeling machines, of bureaucrats rationalizing the status quo, and of fascist oppression by the entrenched elite. I scarcely expect that anything I say here will transform such groups into mutual inquirers; name-calling, like war, often achieves what we call results, and most men most of the time will probably fail to see the good reasons for rising above their local interests. But those who prefer to use their heads as well as their mouths and bodies need have no shame, if fact-values or valued-facts are accessible to reason.

Example 1: Finding a Concurring Public vs. Getting on the Bandwagon

Modern rhetorics have often listed the bandwagon technique as one fallacious kind of argument. In deciding what I want to believe or do, it is said, I must not be swayed by the fact that everyone's doing it. "Everyone" does a lot of

music and some literature (for example, poems like Eliot's *Four Quartets* that explicitly address metaphysical or religious truths) would become a "rhetoric of the timeless." [Au.]

crazy things; fads and fancies fill the air. Clearly the man who respects his mind will make his own decisions and not follow wherever the winds of group assent would carry him.

But of course one man's bandwagon is another man's reasoned consensus. A teacher may find himself arguing against the bandwagon technique in his composition course and then feeling annoyed when students in literature courses refuse to respect what *his* bandwagon says about the importance of literature or of critical thought. "Why should I think Shakespeare is great just because everybody says so?" the student asks, and the liberal teacher says, "Oh, of course you shouldn't; you should make up your own mind"—even while thinking that perhaps something has gone wrong if the weight of generations of thoughtful and sensitive critics counts for absolutely nothing as against the opinion of a green, arrogant, and alphabetic youth.

We should now be able to see (and to seek ways of teaching) that to resist one bandwagon is often to embrace another—possibly but not necessarily one that is older and "better established." The young student cannot make up his own mind about Shakespeare, if by that is meant coming to an opinion about Shakespeare uninfluenced by one tradition or another—even if it is only the tradition of taking TV shows as a standard of dramatic value. And to tell him not to jump on bandwagons because he should think for himself is once again to define his self negatively, as what is left over after all influences have been discounted. No wonder so many of his kind finally tell us, in effect, that whatever bandwagon comes along—Jesus freaks, Devil's Disciples, Hell's Angels, Children of God—is better than no bandwagon at all. After all, we have taught that there's no disputing about taste in bandwagons.

When established universities and their critics have clashed in recent years, the defense has often been in the name of a dispassionate neutrality, while the attackers have claimed, quite rightly, that the universities and colleges are not neutral, that they are defending their own commitments and interests. Professors and administrators have argued, again with justice, that they cannot pursue truth if the truth is prejudged by

political or social commitments of the kinds sought by protesting students. And students then have replied—after more or less perfunctory efforts to discuss matters—that “we tried to reason with you, but you wouldn’t listen, so we were forced to resort to sit-ins or violence.” (The same pattern of argument is heard, needless to say, in national disputes about racial injustice or the Vietnam war or women’s rights.) Again and again I’ve heard people on both sides say, “Well, of course, you can’t deal rationally with differences about values.” The academic defenders then go on to argue, in an obvious circle, that it is highly important to humanity to preserve institutions which pursue questions in an objective spirit, untainted with values. And the students, having heard the message that values are beyond dispute, grasp the other horn of the false dilemma, and say, “Since according to your own teachings, O my mentors, we cannot hope to deal rationally with our value differences, and since values matter to us more than they do to you, let us then deal with them irrationally: burn it down!” Or words to that effect.

But having examined critically the dogmas of modernism, we can rediscover what never should have been forgotten: that some values are in fact better-grounded than others, and that disputes about them can yield results that *ought* to be accepted by all parties to the dispute, even though they cannot be called certain or positive. A rational protest is possible, in short, about any violation of any value we hold dear. When I enter into the lists, I cannot be sure, it is true, that I will come out unchanged, since my protest may be invalidated—now that I have learned that listening is important—by the reasons offered by my opponents. But I have no good reason to believe, in advance of a conflict, that reasons will prove irrelevant simply because values are at stake. It is not only that most disputes about values turn out, on examination, to be about means and not ends (even the dogmatic modernists admit, most of them, that dispute about means can be rational). It is also that ends are themselves subject to meaningful communal inquiry.

I think, for example, that in pursuing a rhetoric of assent we have at the same time been discoursing about ends and pursuing the grounds

for a rationally legitimated protest. Or, to put it another way, *I* have been making what I take to be a reasonable protest against many of the modernist assumptions (and the practices that those assumptions imply) that have been felt to be dehumanizing and soul-destroying by some of the irrationalists who have protested in less discursive ways.

Since I know that I cannot disprove the dogmas in a positivist sense, one way to proceed might have been to organize a sit-in at my university, demanding that all dogmatic modernists be fired. But so long as I believe that the dogmas can and should be tested in another sense, by this kind of discourse, I could never resort to a kind of action that in effect proclaimed reason to be helpless and precluded my discovering how and where I am wrong. A protest, even the most violent protest, becomes legitimated when and only when the affirmations on which it is based are *in fact* (not just in personal conviction) supported by good reasons, good reasons shared or potentially sharable by the community that is relevant.

It is often said, by those who want to defend the rightness of individual protest, that one man plus God makes a majority. The formulation ignores the opposite truth, that one man plus the devil can make a hell on earth. If we are to make our protests not just self-satisfying, not just “sincere,” not just desperate and ineffectual last-ditch stands, we must validate them in the courts of communal exchange.

But if there really are such things as good reasons about ends, this is not so difficult a thing as we have often been led to believe. Whenever any person or institution violates the inherent values of free human exchange among persons, imposing upon anyone a diminution of his nature as a rhetorical animal, he is now shown, in this view, to be wrong—not just inconvenient or unpleasant but wrong. There are genuine values, intersubjectively demonstrable, that judge his wrongness. Those same values will of course sit in judgment on any mode of protest against the violation. I am not free to choose whether it is right to silence you because you would silence me: of course it will be wrong to silence you. I may of course be forced to do so in opposing a greater wrong, even knowing that my means are evil, as

we had to work at silencing the Nazis once they had set out to use force to silence the rest of us. But as I do so I will know that the justice of my action is determined by whether what *look like* good reasons for the employment of warfare are *in fact* good reasons. And that can only be determined in social or potentially social converse with reasonable men, not in private, isolated, “logical” consultation of my atomic self and its wisdom: as ethical theorists are fond of saying, I must act so that the principles of my conduct are reversible, against myself, universally applicable. Rhetorically speaking, this means that I must have good reason to believe that if my opponent would open his mind to full rhetorical exchange, he would be led, by good reasons, either to come to my view or at least to tolerate it as one reasonable view.

In some such way as this the philosophy of good reasons leads us to a reaffirmation of those central human values that other philosophies and religions have reached by other routes: of tolerance, of justice or fairness, of “democratic” equality of vote in all matters that concern all men equally. Kant once remarked that the result of all his philosophizing was to establish a rational basis for the pious beliefs of his ancestors: the golden rule reappears for him as the categorical imperative, and it reappears in our rhetorical view as the command to pay as much attention to your opponent’s reasons as you expect him to pay to yours. This traditionalism of our results doesn’t bother me: I revel in it, partly because it is so radical. Here we depend on the obvious and age-old belief that if there is any hope for man it can be found neither in repudiating all past truths nor in repudiating all revolutions. We must select, as always, from old and new by testing in

discourse which truths meet circumstances that are always both novel and precedented.

A society cannot exist, the past seems to teach us, unless it can somehow constitute itself as a rhetorical field, as what Dewey called “a public,”¹⁶ and this means that *we* cannot exist without recognizing that *some* of our shared values carry an inescapable weight for all of us. Too often our way of talking about the increasing fragmentation of publics is to throw up our hands: “You can’t talk with them because they have gone beyond the pale.” In other words, we decide to declare war. Though I hold no great hope that a revitalized rhetoric can ever eliminate “warfare”—lying, trickery, blackmail, and physical persuasions—I think the command upon us is inescapable: we must build new rhetorical communities, we must find a common faith in modes of argument, or every institution we care about will die. . . .

¹⁶See Dewey’s *The Public and Its Problems* (New York, 1927), esp. final chap. The point has of course been made by many sociologists, though in recent years it seems to have become more and more “anthropologized”—see Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (Garden City, N.Y., 1966), esp. sec. 2, “Society as Objective Reality.” I cannot trace here what seems to be a general infiltration of the social sciences with “the rhetoric of structuralism,” according to which—to put it crudely—everything relates to everything else: every belief in a given culture will rely for its credibility on the total structure of beliefs and practices. All societies are in this view rational, in one sense, but no element can be proved outside its context unless, as many structuralists assume, all societies are *au fond* alike, in which case a Supreme Anthropologist could discern a Supreme Public and its Problems, and He could write—that ultimate Lévi-Strauss—an ultimate rhetoric of assent. Lacking such, we can still work with confidence as we assent to more localized publics. [Au.]

Hélène Cixous

b. 1937

Hélène Cixous (pronounced sik-soo) was born to Jewish parents in Oran, Algeria, when the country was still a French colony. From the beginning, her linguistic environment was complex: Her father, a Sephardic Jew from Morocco, spoke Spanish as his first language, and her mother and grandmother, from Austria, spoke German. Cixous studied Hebrew and Arabic with her father and learned French and English in school. This mixture of languages may help to explain why Cixous has been drawn to fiction written in several tongues; among her favorite authors are Shakespeare, Joyce, Rimbaud, Rilke, Kafka, and the Brazilian writer Clarice Lispector. It may also explain why her own written French is so verbally complex, so full of allusions, wit, and word play. Cixous has also suggested that her background as a Jewish woman and as a colonial has given her a critical perspective on French history and culture:

So I am three or four years old and the first thing I see in the street is that the world is divided in half, organized hierarchically, and that it maintains this distribution through violence. . . . The routine “our ancestors, the Gauls” was pulled on me. But I was born in Algeria, and my ancestors lived in Spain, Morocco, Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Germany; my brothers by birth are Arab. So where are we in history? I side with those who are injured, trespassed upon, colonized. I am (not) Arab. Who am I? I am “doing” French history. I am a Jewish woman.¹

Cixous has concentrated on siding with women.

Cixous’s earliest education took place in a school for Jewish children, who were not allowed to study with non-Jews. She was a brilliant student, traveling to France to finish her lycée work (at the high school level), receiving her license-ès-lettres (equivalent to a B.A.) in English literature in 1957, and, in 1968, at the age of 31, becoming the youngest person ever to receive the docteur-ès-lettres degree (equivalent to a Ph.D.), with a dissertation on James Joyce. Cixous also married at a young age, giving birth to a daughter in 1959 and a son in 1961 before her divorce in 1964.

While completing her doctoral work, Cixous taught in French universities, and by 1968 she had moved to the University of Nanterre. This was the most radical of French universities and the site of much of the action during the student uprisings of 1968, in which Cixous participated. In response to student demands for reform, the French government appointed Cixous to establish an experimental branch of the University of Paris at Vincennes. Here the hierarchy of professor over student was to be undermined by admitting students who did not have traditional academic preparation, allowing them to organize their studies across academic disciplines, and evaluating them more informally, without career-determining exams. Although Cixous would now say that not all of these reforms were successful—and most notably, that the professor-student hierarchy cannot really be dismantled—she has

¹Hélène Cixous, “Sorties,” in Hélène Cixous and Catherine Clément, *The Newly Born Woman*, trans. Betsy Wing (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), pp. 70–71.

continued to teach English literature at the University of Paris-VIII (now located in Saint Denis). In 1974 she began the first women's studies program in France at Paris-VIII (there are still very few such programs).

Cixous's thought has been strongly influenced by Jacques Derrida (p. 1471)—like her, a Jew from Algeria—and by other poststructuralists. She analyzes Western culture in terms of binaries, such as France and colonial Algeria, or men and women, in which the dominant term defines itself by putting the other in a subordinate position. To attack these oppressive binaries, Cixous takes a two-pronged approach. She deconstructs them as she encounters them in literature, calling their seeming inevitability into question, and she also attempts to develop a nonhierarchical writing practice, which she calls “feminine,” that offers a way out of binary thinking. Cixous sees masculinity and femininity as culturally constructed for each individual from birth, and hence as having profound psychological implications that she is most interested to explore. Indeed, questions concerning the psychological impact of culturally defined gender identities are central to the work of the Paris-VIII Centre d'Études Féminines.

Cixous is known in France primarily as a writer of experimental fiction and drama, in which she attempts to develop nonhierarchical and psychologically nuanced writing practices. Her first novel, *Dedans (Within)*, published in 1969, won the prestigious Prix Médicis. She has since published more than forty books, most of which are difficult to categorize because they consistently employ poetic language whether her intent is primarily to create fiction or to pursue critical analysis. In her approach to writing, Cixous has been particularly interested in Freudian and post-Freudian psychoanalysis as a method of interpretation. She treats the texts of other writers as expressing their inner lives, whether consciously or unconsciously, and she attempts to represent her own inner life in her novels. Her earliest works were the most autobiographical, focusing on what the loss of the father does to the female narrative voice (Cixous's own father died when she was eleven years old) and making use of dream imagery and highly allusive, sensual language. Gradually her fiction focused more generally on “écriture féminine,” a kind of writing that aims to reflect women's sexuality and awareness of their own bodies. Most recently, Cixous's work has incorporated both introspective and historical elements; her plays focus on actual historical people such as Prince Norodom Sihanouk of Cambodia and Phoolan Devi, a low-caste Indian woman who became a bandit leader and political rebel. Little of this work has been translated into English, and indeed, it would be difficult to do so, given that her French is full of metaphors, word play, cryptic allusions, and esoteric wit. French literature scholar Lynn Penrod recommends reading *Vivre l'orange/To Live the Orange* (1979) to get a sense of Cixous's fiction; this book prints the French text on pages facing an English translation prepared under Cixous's direction by two long-time collaborators of hers, Sarah Cornell and Ann Liddle.

Cixous is best known to Anglophone readers as a theorist of *écriture féminine*. Her ideas on this kind of writing are found in a 1975 essay, “Le Rire de la Méduse,” translated in 1976 as “The Laugh of the Medusa” (included here), and in *La Jeune Née* (1975), translated as *The Newly Born Woman* (1986; includes “A Woman

Mistress,” included here). Cixous’s collaborator on *The Newly Born Woman* is Catherine Clément, a French intellectual in charge of cultural exchanges at the Ministry of External Relations. “The Laugh of the Medusa” both calls for and demonstrates what Cixous hopes is a new way of using language, specifically female but also powerful. This writing avoids linear and hierarchical textual structures and rather organizes itself diffusely around key themes. It provides a generous flow of allusive language and remains open to many viewpoints without trying to enforce just one. Cixous suggests that such diffuse, flowing, open writing parallels the ways women experience erotic sexuality.

Cixous is concerned to rebut French intellectual Jacques Lacan’s notion that women lack some key ability to use language because they lack a penis. The title of her essay alludes to the monster from ancient Greek mythology that has been taken as a negative image of the female sex. The Medusa’s beautiful female face, surrounded by hair made of poisonous snakes, grimaces horribly. To see the Medusa is to be turned to stone. In the Freudian interpretation, the Medusa’s open mouth ringed with curling “hair” resembles the female genitalia, at once arousing and terrifying because no penis is there. The viewer turned to stone is a man with an erection, or a man struck dead with horror. Cixous refashions the grimacing lips into a laugh and the threatening void into a mouth filled with beautiful language. She hopes to bring about, by celebrating in this essay, a rejection of male-dominated systems of interpretation that classify female bodies, mouths, and words as inferior. Hence Cixous is said to advocate women’s “writing their bodies.”

At the same time, Cixous has cautioned against thinking that *écriture féminine* is the exclusive province of those who are biologically female. Indeed, in her view, French writer Jean Genet is one of its chief practitioners. She has said that she “would like to rid us of words like ‘feminine’ and ‘masculine’” because they refer “to a classical vision of sexual opposition between men and women . . . that is what burdens us.” A more careful terminology, she suggests, would be “writing said to be feminine or masculine” because for her, *écriture féminine* denotes “a decipherable libidinal femininity which can be located in a writing that can have been produced by a male or a female.”²

Cixous explores the difficulties of employing such women’s writing in all kinds of discourse in *The Newly Born Woman*. Included here is the brief concluding dialogue, “A Woman Mistress,” by Cixous and Clément commenting on the stylistic “dialogue” set up by their two essays, which constitute the bulk of the book. Clément is aware that her essay (“The Guilty One,” a critique of Freud’s treatment of hysterics) could be considered complicit with an oppressive society—she nominates herself for the “dunce cap” of the academic style—but Cixous says that she too will use what she calls “the discourse of mastery” to assert her authority over her students. Cixous also terms this a rhetorical discourse, though not because she imagines it as employing classical devices. Rather, it is “rhetorical” in trying to master or control the audience, a power Cixous seeks for women while at the same time re-

²Hélène Cixous, “voice i . . .” [interview with Verena Andermatt Conley], *boundary 2* 12 (winter 1984): 51–52.

maintaining wary of its potential dangers of co-optation. If there is to be a “Woman Mistress,” as the title of the dialogue suggests, she must ultimately wield a new, less imperious kind of rhetorical power.

Cixous has been cautious about identifying herself as a feminist, and critics have argued that she does not go far enough. The feminist movement in France began as part of the 1968 uprisings, and Cixous has said that at that time she was not attracted to the movement because “it seemed violent, hard, aggressive.”³ She rejected political feminism because it merely attempted to reform existing patriarchal structures and hence was in danger of reproducing their inequalities. Even though she was criticized for thus neglecting action against women’s social problems, such as sexual abuse, Cixous concentrated on defining a sort of psychological feminism that would explore the inner bases for men’s sexism and women’s complicity in their own oppression, especially as these are expressed in literature. Cixous now describes herself as being “in complete solidarity” with the women’s movement, a phrasing that carefully avoids claiming membership in this movement.⁴ She thus distances herself from political feminism’s tendency to adopt what she sees as a typically male dualistic stance toward its opponents—an “us or them” mentality. Cixous has implied that she would like to see a politics based on attempting to understand and collaborate with others, which could address not only women’s issues but also other inequalities. In general, Cixous has been in favor of pluralism and multiple viewpoints, and against attempts to establish a dominant power, whether the field is literary interpretation, personal interactions, or political struggle. She values poetic language, as literary critic Susan Sellers has explained, because it resists single interpretations and calls attention to its resistance.

Selected Bibliography

Hélène Cixous’s “Le Rire de la Méduse” (1975) has been translated by Keith Cohen and Paula Cohen as “The Laugh of the Medusa” (*Signs* 1 [1976]: 875–93), from which the text printed here is taken. *La Jeune Née*, by Cixous and Catherine Clément (1975), has been translated by Betsy Wing as *The Newly Born Woman* (1986). The essay reprinted here, “A Woman Mistress,” is taken from this edition, which includes an introduction by Sandra M. Gilbert and a glossary by the translator. An interview with Cixous, as well as several of her texts in French and English, can be found in *boundary 2* (12 [winter 1984]), a special issue edited by Verena Andermatt Conley and William V. Spanos, entitled “On Feminine Writing: a Boundary 2 Symposium.” See also “Castration or Decapitation?,” trans. Annette Kuhn (*Signs* 7 [1981]: 41–55); Kuhn’s introduction gives some helpful bibliography that includes Cixous’s fiction. *The Hélène Cixous Reader* (ed. Susan Sellers, foreword by Jacques Derrida, 1994) collects excerpts from a number of her texts over her entire career to the date of publication. Cixous’s book on James Joyce is available in English (*The Exile of James Joyce*, 1976).

For overviews of Cixous’s thought, see the chapter on her in Toril Moi’s *Sexual/Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Theory* (1985), which is especially helpful on her apparent

³Lynn Penrod, *Hélène Cixous* (New York: Twayne, 1996), p. 7.

⁴Penrod, p. 8.

contradictions; Susan Sellers's introduction to her edited volume, *Writing Differences: Readings from the Seminar of Hélène Cixous* (1988); and Morag Shiach's *Hélène Cixous: A Politics of Writing* (1991). To consider the question of how feminist *écriture féminine* really is, see Domna Stanton, "Difference on Trial: A Critique of the Maternal Metaphor in Cixous, Irigaray, and Kristeva" (in *The Poetics of Gender*, ed. N. K. Miller, 1986). The *boundary 2* number edited by Conley and Spanos (cited above) includes essays that show how concepts of *écriture féminine* can be used to analyze other writers; examples are Judith Wilt on Emily Dickinson and Carol Mastrangelo Bové on Julia Kristeva. A good introduction to Cixous's fiction, which also provides much helpful biographical information, is Lynn Penrod's *Hélène Cixous* (1996).

The Laugh of the Medusa

I shall speak about women's writing: about *what it will do*. Woman must write her self: must write about women and bring women to writing, from which they have been driven away as violently as from their bodies—for the same reasons, by the same law, with the same fatal goal. Woman must put herself into the text—as into the world and into history—by her own movement.

The future must no longer be determined by the past. I do not deny that the effects of the past are still with us. But I refuse to strengthen them by repeating them, to confer upon them an irremovability the equivalent of destiny, to confuse the biological and the cultural. Anticipation is imperative.

Since these reflections are taking shape in an area just on the point of being discovered, they necessarily bear the mark of our time—a time during which the new breaks away from the old, and, more precisely, the (feminine) new from the old (*la nouvelle de l'ancien*). Thus, as there are no grounds for establishing a discourse, but rather an arid millennial ground to break, what I say has at least two sides and two aims: to break up, to destroy; and to foresee the unforeseeable, to project.

I write this as a woman, toward women. When

Translated by Keith Cohen and Paula Cohen. This is a revised version of "Le Rire de la Méduse," which appeared in *L'Arc* (1975), pp. 39–54.

I say "woman," I'm speaking of woman in her inevitable struggle against conventional man; and of a universal woman subject who must bring women to their senses and to their meaning in history. But first it must be said that in spite of the enormity of the repression that has kept them in the "dark"—that dark which people have been trying to make them accept as their attribute—there is, at this time, no general woman, no one typical woman. What they have *in common* I will say. But what strikes me is the infinite richness of their individual constitutions: you can't talk about *a* female sexuality, uniform, homogeneous, classifiable into codes—any more than you can talk about one unconscious resembling another. Women's imaginary is inexhaustible, like music, painting, writing: their stream of phantasms is incredible.

I have been amazed more than once by a description a woman gave me of a world all her own which she had been secretly haunting since early childhood. A world of searching, the elaboration of a knowledge, on the basis of a systematic experimentation with the bodily functions, a passionate and precise interrogation of her erogeneity. This practice, extraordinarily rich and inventive, in particular as concerns masturbation, is prolonged or accompanied by a production of forms, a veritable aesthetic activity, each stage of rapture inscribing a resonant vision, a composition, something beautiful. Beauty will no longer be forbidden.

I wished that that woman would write and

proclaim this unique empire so that other women, other unacknowledged sovereigns, might exclaim: I, too, overflow; my desires have invented new desires, my body knows unheard-of songs. Time and again I, too, have felt so full of luminous torrents that I could burst—burst with forms much more beautiful than those which are put up in frames and sold for a stinking fortune. And I, too, said nothing, showed nothing; I didn't open my mouth, I didn't repaint my half of the world. I was ashamed. I was afraid, and I swallowed my shame and my fear. I said to myself: You are mad! What's the meaning of these waves, these floods, these outbursts? Where is the ebullient, infinite woman who, immersed as she was in her naiveté, kept in the dark about herself, led into self-disdain by the great arm of parental-conjugal phallocentrism, hasn't been ashamed of her strength? Who, surprised and horrified by the fantastic tumult of her drives (for she was made to believe that a well-adjusted normal woman has a . . . divine composure), hasn't accused herself of being a monster? Who, feeling a funny desire stirring inside her (to sing, to write, to dare to speak, in short, to bring out something new), hasn't thought she was sick? Well, her shameful sickness is that she resists death, that she makes trouble.

And why don't you write? Write! Writing is for you, you are for you; your body is yours, take it. I know why you haven't written. (And why I didn't write before the age of twenty-seven.) Because writing is at once too high, too great for you, it's reserved for the great—that is, for "great men"; and it's "silly." Besides, you've written a little, but in secret. And it wasn't good, because it was in secret, and because you punished yourself for writing, because you didn't go all the way; or because you wrote, irresistibly, as when we would masturbate in secret, not to go further, but to attenuate the tension a bit, just enough to take the edge off. And then as soon as we come, we go and make ourselves feel guilty—so as to be forgiven; or to forget, to bury it until the next time.

Write, let no one hold you back, let nothing stop you: no man; not the imbecilic capitalist machinery, in which publishing houses are the crafty, obsequious relayers of imperatives handed down

by an economy that works against us and off our backs; and not *yourself*. Smug-faced readers, managing editors, and big bosses don't like the true texts of women—female-sexed texts. That kind scares them.

I write woman: woman must write woman. And man, man. So only an oblique consideration will be found here of man; it's up to him to say where his masculinity and femininity are at: this will concern us once men have opened their eyes and seen themselves clearly.¹

Now women return from afar, from always: from "without," from the heath where witches are kept alive; from below, from beyond "culture"; from their childhood which men have been trying desperately to make them forget, condemning it to "eternal rest." The little girls and their "ill-mannered" bodies immured, well-preserved, intact unto themselves, in the mirror. Frigidified. But are they ever seething underneath! What an effort it takes—there's no end to it—for the sex cops to bar their threatening return. Such a display of forces on both sides that the struggle has for centuries been immobilized in the trembling equilibrium of a deadlock.

Here they are, returning, arriving over and again, because the unconscious is impregnable. They have wandered around in circles, confined to the narrow room in which they've been given a deadly brainwashing. You can incarcerate them, slow them down, get away with the old Apartheid routine, but for a time only. As soon as they begin to speak, at the same time as they're taught their name, they can be taught that their

¹Men still have everything to say about their sexuality, and everything to write. For what they have said so far, for the most part, stems from the opposition activity/passivity, from the power relation between a fantasized obligatory virility meant to invade, to colonize, and the consequential phantasm of woman as a "dark continent" to penetrate and to "pacify." (We know what "pacify" means in terms of scotomizing the other and misrecognizing the self.) Conquering her, they've made haste to depart from her borders, to get out of sight, out of body. The way man has of getting out of himself and into her whom he takes not for the other but for his own, deprives him, he knows, of his own bodily territory. One can understand how man, confusing himself with his penis and rushing in for the attack, might feel resentment and fear of being "taken" by the woman, of being lost in her, absorbed, or alone. [Au.]

territory is black: because you are Africa, you are black. Your continent is dark. Dark is dangerous. You can't see anything in the dark, you're afraid. Don't move, you might fall. Most of all, don't go into the forest. And so we have internalized this horror of the dark.

Men have committed the greatest crime against women. Insidiously, violently, they have led them to hate women, to be their own enemies, to mobilize their immense strength against themselves, to be the executants of their virile needs. They have made for women an antinarcissism! A narcissism which loves itself only to be loved for what women haven't got! They have constructed the infamous logic of antilove.

We the precocious, we the repressed of culture, our lovely mouths gagged with pollen, our wind knocked out of us, we the labyrinths, the ladders, the trampled spaces, the bebies—we are black and we are beautiful.

We're stormy, and that which is ours breaks loose from us without our fearing any debilitation. Our glances, our smiles, are spent; laughs exude from all our mouths; our blood flows and we extend ourselves without ever reaching an end; we never hold back our thoughts, our signs, our writing; and we're not afraid of lacking.

What happiness for us who are omitted, brushed aside at the scene of inheritances; we inspire ourselves and we expire without running out of breath, we are everywhere!

From now on, who, if we say so, can say no to us? We've come back from always.

It is time to liberate the New Woman from the Old by coming to know her—by loving her for getting by, for getting beyond the Old without delay, by going out ahead of what the New Woman will be, as an arrow quits the bow with a movement that gathers and separates the vibrations musically, in order to be more than her self.

I say that we must, for, with a few rare exceptions, there has not yet been any writing that inscribes femininity; exceptions so rare, in fact, that, after plowing through literature across languages, cultures, and ages,² one can only be startled at this vain scouting mission. It is well known that the

²I am speaking here only of the place "reserved" for women by the Western world. [Au.]

number of women writers (while having increased very slightly from the nineteenth century on) has always been ridiculously small. This is a useless and deceptive fact unless from their species of female writers we do not first deduct the immense majority whose workmanship is in no way different from male writing, and which either obscures women or reproduces the classic representations of women (as sensitive—intuitive—dreamy, etc.)³

Let me insert here a parenthetical remark. I mean it when I speak of male writing. I maintain unequivocally that there is such a thing as *marked* writing; that, until now, far more extensively and repressively than is ever suspected or admitted, writing has been run by a libidinal and cultural—hence political, typically masculine—economy; that this is a locus where the repression of women has been perpetuated, over and over, more or less consciously, and in a manner that's frightening since it's often hidden or adorned with the mystifying charms of fiction; that this locus has grossly exaggerated all the signs of sexual opposition (and not sexual difference), where woman has never *her* turn to speak—this being all the more serious and unpardonable in that writing is precisely *the very possibility of change*, the space that can serve as a springboard for subversive thought, the precursory movement of a transformation of social and cultural structures.

Nearly the entire history of writing is confounded with the history of reason, of which it is at once the effect, the support, and one of the privileged alibis. It has been one with the phallogocentric tradition. It is indeed that same self-admiring, self-stimulating, self-congratulatory phallogocentrism.

With some exceptions, for there have been failures—and if it weren't for them, I wouldn't

³Which works, then, might be called feminine? I'll just point out some examples: one would have to give them full readings to bring out what is pervasively feminine in their significance. Which I shall do elsewhere. In France (have you noted our infinite poverty in this field?—the Anglo-Saxon countries have shown resources of distinctly greater consequence), leafing through what's come out of the twentieth century—and it's not much—the only inscriptions of femininity that I have seen were by Colette, Marguerite Duras, . . . and Jean Genêt. [Au.]

be writing (I-woman, escapee)—in that enormous machine that has been operating and turning out its “truth” for centuries. There have been poets who would go to any lengths to slip something by at odds with tradition—men capable of loving love and hence capable of loving others and of wanting them, of imagining the woman who would hold out against oppression and constitute herself as a superb, equal, hence “impossible” subject, untenable in a real social framework. Such a woman the poet could desire only by breaking the codes that negate her. Her appearance would necessarily bring on, if not revolution—for the bastion was supposed to be immutable—at least harrowing explosions. At times it is in the fissure caused by an earthquake, through that radical mutation of things brought on by a material upheaval when every structure is for a moment thrown off balance and an ephemeral wildness sweeps order away, that the poet slips something by, for a brief span, of woman. Thus did Kleist⁴ expend himself in his yearning for the existence of sister-lovers, maternal daughters, mother-sisters, who never hung their heads in shame. Once the palace of magistrates is restored, it’s time to pay: immediate bloody death to the uncontrollable elements.

But only the poets—not the novelists, allies of representationism. Because poetry involves gaining strength through the unconscious and because the unconscious, that other limitless country, is the place where the repressed manage to survive: women, or as Hoffmann would say, fairies.⁵

She must write her self, because this is the invention of a *new insurgent* writing which, when the moment of her liberation has come, will allow her to carry out the indispensable ruptures and transformations in her history, first at two levels that cannot be separated.

⁴B. Heinrich W. von Kleist (1777–1811), a German Romantic writer, whom Cixous admires. Among his works is a tragic play *Penthesilea*, referring to the mythic Amazon queen. [Ed.]

⁵E. T. A. Hoffman (1776–1822) was a German Romantic writer and composer known for his tales of the supernatural and fantastic, many of which feature magical female characters who both threaten the hero and seem to offer him prodigious creative powers. [Ed.]

a. Individually. By writing her self, woman will return to the body which has been more than confiscated from her, which has been turned into the uncanny stranger on display—the ailing or dead figure, which so often turns out to be the nasty companion, the cause and location of inhibitions. Censor the body and you censor breath and speech at the same time.

Write your self. Your body must be heard. Only then will the immense resources of the unconscious spring forth. Our naphtha will spread, throughout the world, without dollars—black or gold—nonassessed values that will change the rules of the old game.

To write. An act which will not only “realize” the decensored relation of woman to her sexuality, to her womanly being, giving her access to her native strength; it will give her back her goods, her pleasures, her organs, her immense bodily territories which have been kept under seal; it will tear her away from the superegoized structure in which she has always occupied the place reserved for the guilty (guilty of everything, guilty at every turn: for having desires, for not having any; for being frigid, for being “too hot”; for not being both at once; for being too motherly and not enough; for having children and for not having any; for nursing and for not nursing . . .)—tear her away by means of this research, this job of analysis and illumination, this emancipation of the marvelous text of her self that she must urgently learn to speak. A woman without a body, dumb, blind, can’t possibly be a good fighter. She is reduced to being the servant of the militant male, his shadow. We must kill the false woman who is preventing the live one from breathing. Inscribe the breath of the whole woman.

b. An act that will also be marked by woman’s *seizing* the occasion to *speak*, hence her shattering entry into history, which has always been based *on her suppression*. To write and thus to forge for herself the antilogos weapon. To become *at will* the taker and initiator, for her own right, in every symbolic system, in every political process.

It is time for women to start scoring their feats in written and oral language.

Every woman has known the torment of get-

ting up to speak. Her heart racing, at times entirely lost for words, ground and language slipping away—that's how daring a feat, how great a transgression it is for a woman to speak—even just open her mouth—in public. A double distress, for even if she transgresses, her words fall almost always upon the deaf male ear, which hears in language only that which speaks in the masculine.

It is by writing, from and toward women, and by taking up the challenge of speech which has been governed by the phallus, that women will confirm women in a place other than that which is reserved in and by the symbolic, that is, in a place other than silence. Women should break out of the snare of silence. They shouldn't be conned into accepting a domain which is the margin or the harem.

Listen to a woman speak at a public gathering (if she hasn't painfully lost her wind). She doesn't "speak," she throws her trembling body forward; she lets go of herself, she flies; all of her passes into her voice, and it's with her body that she vitally supports the "logic" of her speech. Her flesh speaks true. She lays herself bare. In fact, she physically materializes what she's thinking; she signifies it with her body. In a certain way she *inscribes* what she's saying, because she doesn't deny her drives the intractable and impassioned part they have in speaking. Her speech, even when "theoretical" or political, is never simple or linear or "objectified," generalized: she draws her story into history.

There is not that scission, that division made by the common man between the logic of oral speech and the logic of the text, bound as he is by his antiquated relation—servile, calculating—to mastery. From which proceeds the niggardly lip service which engages only the tiniest part of the body, plus the mask.

In women's speech, as in their writing, that element which never stops resonating, which, once we've been permeated by it, profoundly and imperceptibly touched by it, retains the power of moving us—that element is the song: first music from the first voice of love which is alive in every woman. Why this privileged relationship with the voice? Because no woman stockpiles as many defenses for countering the drives as does a

man. You don't build walls around yourself, you don't forego pleasure as "wisely" as he. Even if phallic mystification has generally contaminated good relationships, a woman is never far from "mother" (I mean outside her role functions: the "mother" as nonname and as source of goods). There is always within her at least a little of that good mother's milk. She writes in white ink.

Woman for women.—There always remains in woman that force which produces/is produced by the other—in particular, the other woman. *In* her, matrix, cradler; herself giver as her mother and child; she is her own sister-daughter. You might object, "What about she who is the hysterical offspring of a bad mother?" Everything will be changed once woman gives woman to the other woman. There is hidden and always ready in woman the source; the locus for the other. The mother, too, is a metaphor. It is necessary and sufficient that the best of herself be given to woman by another woman for her to be able to love herself and return in love the body that was "born" to her. Touch me, caress me, you the living no-name, give me my self as myself. The relation to the "mother," in terms of intense pleasure and violence, is curtailed no more than the relation to childhood (the child that she was, that she is, that she makes, re-makes, undoes, there at the point where, the same, she others herself). Text: my body—shot through with streams of song; I don't mean the overbearing, clutchy "mother" but, rather, what touches you, the equivocal that affects you, fills your breast with an urge to come to language and launches your force; the rhythm that laughs you; the intimate recipient who makes all metaphors possible and desirable; body (body? bodies?), no more describable than god, the soul, or the Other; that part of you that leaves a space between yourself and urges you to inscribe in language your woman's style. In women there is always more or less of the mother who makes everything all right, who nourishes, and who stands up against separation; a force that will not be cut off but will knock the wind out of the codes. We will rethink womankind beginning with every form and every period of her body. The Americans remind us, "We are all Lesbians"; that is, don't denigrate woman, don't make of her what men have made of you.

Because the "economy" of her drives is prodigious

gious, she cannot fail, in seizing the occasion to speak, to transform directly and indirectly *all* systems of exchange based on masculine thrift. Her libido will produce far more radical effects of political and social change than some might like to think.

Because she arrives, vibrant, over and again, we are at the beginning of a new history, or rather of a process of becoming in which several histories intersect with one another. As subject for history, woman always occurs simultaneously in several places. Woman un-thinks⁶ the unifying, regulating history that homogenizes and channels forces, herding contradictions into a single battlefield. In woman, personal history blends together with the history of all women, as well as national and world history. As a militant, she is an integral part of all liberations. She must be farsighted, not limited to a blow-by-blow interaction. She foresees that her liberation will do more than modify power relations or toss the ball over to the other camp; she will bring about a mutation in human relations, in thought, in all praxis: hers is not simply a class struggle, which she carries forward into a much vaster movement. Not that in order to be a woman-in-struggle(s) you have to leave the class struggle or repudiate it; but you have to split it open, spread it out, push it forward, fill it with the fundamental struggle so as to prevent the class struggle, or any other struggle for the liberation of a class or people, from operating as a form of repression, pretext for postponing the inevitable, the staggering alteration in power relations and in the production of individualities. This alteration is already upon us—in the United States, for example, where millions of night crawlers are in the process of undermining the family and disintegrating the whole of American sociality.

The new history is coming; it's not a dream, though it does extend beyond men's imagination, and for good reason. It's going to deprive them of their conceptual orthopedics, beginning with the destruction of their enticement machine.

It is impossible to *define* a feminine practice of writing, and this is an impossibility that will

⁶“*Dé-pense*,” a neologism formed on the verb *penser*, hence “unthinks,” but also “spends” (from *dépenser*). [Tr.]

remain, for this practice can never be theorized, enclosed, coded—which doesn't mean that it doesn't exist. But it will always surpass the discourse that regulates the phallogocentric system; it does and will take place in areas other than those subordinated to philosophico-theoretical domination. It will be conceived of only by subjects who are breakers of automatisms, by peripheral figures that no authority can ever subjugate.

Hence the necessity to affirm the flourishes of this writing, to give form to its movement, its near and distant byways. Bear in mind to begin with (1) that sexual opposition, which has always worked for man's profit to the point of reducing writing, too, to his laws, is only a historicocultural limit. There is, there will be more and more rapidly pervasive now, a fiction that produces irreducible effects of femininity. (2) That it is through ignorance that most readers, critics, and writers of both sexes hesitate to admit or deny outright the possibility or the pertinence of a distinction between feminine and masculine writing. It will usually be said, thus disposing of sexual difference: either that all writing, to the extent that it materializes, is feminine; or, inversely—but it comes to the same thing—that the act of writing is equivalent to masculine masturbation (and so the woman who writes cuts herself out a paper penis); or that writing is bisexual, hence neuter, which again does away with differentiation. To admit that writing is precisely working (in) the in-between, inspecting the process of the same and of the other without which nothing can live, undoing the work of death—to admit this is first to want the two, as well as both, the ensemble of the one and the other, not fixed in sequences of struggle and expulsion or some other form of death but infinitely dynamized by an incessant process of exchange from one subject to another. A process of different subjects knowing one another and beginning one another anew only from the living boundaries of the other: a multiple and inexhaustible course with millions of encounters and transformations of the same into the other and into the in-between, from which woman takes her forms (and man, in his turn; but that's his other history).

In saying “bisexual, hence neuter,” I am referring to the classic conception of bisexuality,

which, squashed under the emblem of castration fear and along with the fantasy of a “total” being (though composed of two halves), would do away with the difference experienced as an operation incurring loss, as the mark of dreaded secularity.

To this self-effacing, merger-type bisexuality, which would conjure away castration (the writer who puts up his sign: “bisexual written here, come and see,” when the odds are good that it’s neither one nor the other), I oppose the *other bisexuality* on which every subject not enclosed in the false theater of phallogocentric representationalism has founded his/her erotic universe. Bisexuality: that is, each one’s location in self (*répérage en soi*) of the presence—variously manifest and insistent according to each person, male or female—of both sexes, nonexclusion either of the difference or of one sex, and, from this “self-permission,” multiplication of the effects of the inscription of desire, over all parts of my body and the other body.

Now it happens that at present, for historico-cultural reasons, it is women who are opening up to and benefiting from this vatic bisexuality which doesn’t annul differences but stirs them up, pursues them, increases their number. In a certain way, “woman is bisexual”; man—it’s a secret to no one—being poised to keep glorious phallic monosexuality in view. By virtue of affirming the primacy of the phallus and of bringing it into play, phallogocentric ideology has claimed more than one victim. As a woman, I’ve been clouded over by the great shadow of the scepter and been told: idolize it, that which you cannot brandish. But at the same time, man has been handed that grotesque and scarcely enviable destiny (just imagine) of being reduced to a single idol with clay balls. And consumed, as Freud and his followers note, by a fear of being a woman! For, if psychoanalysis was constituted from woman, to repress femininity (and not so successful a repression at that—men have made it clear), its account of masculine sexuality is now hardly refutable; as with all the “human” sciences, it reproduces the masculine view, of which it is one of the effects.

Here we encounter the inevitable man-with-rock, standing erect in his old Freudian realm, in

the way that, to take the figure back to the point where linguistics is conceptualizing it “anew,” Lucan preserves it in the sanctuary of the phallos (φ) “sheltered” from *castration’s lack!* Their “symbolic” exists, it holds power—we, the sowers of disorder, know it only too well. But we are in no way obliged to deposit our lives in their banks of lack, to consider the constitution of the subject in terms of a drama manglingly restaged, to reinstate again and again the religion of the father. Because we don’t want that. We don’t fawn around the supreme hole. We have no womanly reason to pledge allegiance to the negative. The feminine (as the poets suspected) affirms: “. . . And yes,” says Molly, carrying *Ulysses* off beyond any book and toward the new writing; “I said yes, I will Yes.”

The Dark Continent is neither dark nor unexplorable.—It is still unexplored only because we’ve been made to believe that it was too dark to be explorable. And because they want to make us believe that what interests us is the white continent, with its monuments to Lack. And we believed. They riveted us between two horrifying myths: between the Medusa and the abyss. That would be enough to set half the world laughing, except that it’s still going on. For the phallogocentric sublation⁷ is with us, and it’s militant, regenerating the old patterns, anchored in the dogma of castration. They haven’t changed a thing: they’ve theorized their desire for reality! Let the priests tremble, we’re going to show them our sexts!

Too bad for them if they fall apart upon discovering that women aren’t men, or that the mother doesn’t have one. But isn’t this fear convenient for them? Wouldn’t the worst be, isn’t the worst, in truth, that women aren’t castrated, that they have only to stop listening to the Sirens (for the Sirens were men) for history to change its meaning? You only have to look at the Medusa straight on to see her. And she’s not deadly. She’s beautiful and she’s laughing.

Men say that there are two unrepresentable things: death and the feminine sex. That’s because they need femininity to be associated with

⁷Standard English term for the Hegelian *Aufhebung*, the French *la relève*. [Au.]

death; it's the jitters that gives them a hard-on! for themselves! They need to be afraid of us. Look at the trembling Perseuses moving backward toward us, clad in apotropes. What lovely backs! Not another minute to lose. Let's get out of here.

Let's hurry: the continent is not impenetrably dark. I've been there often. I was overjoyed one day to run into Jean Genêt. It was in *Pompes funèbres*.⁸ He had come there led by his Jean. There are some men (all too few) who aren't afraid of femininity.

Almost everything is yet to be written by women about femininity: about their sexuality, that is, its infinite and mobile complexity, about their eroticization, sudden turn-ons of a certain minuscule-immense area of their bodies; not about destiny, but about the adventure of such and such a drive, about trips, crossings, trudges, abrupt and gradual awakenings, discoveries of a zone at one time timorous and soon to be forthright. A woman's body, with its thousand and one thresholds of ardor—once, by smashing yokes and censors, she lets it articulate the profusion of meanings that run through it in every direction—will make the old single-grooved mother tongue reverberate with more than one language.

We've been turned away from our bodies, shamefully taught to ignore them, to strike them with that stupid sexual modesty; we've been made victims of the old fool's game: each one will love the other sex. I'll give you your body and you'll give me mine. But who are the men who give women the body that women blindly yield to them? Why so few texts? Because so few women have as yet won back their body. Women must write through their bodies, they must invent the impregnable language that will wreck partitions, classes, and rhetorics, regulations and codes, they must submerge, cut through, get beyond the ultimate reserve-discourse, including the one that laughs at the very idea of pronouncing the word "silence," the one that, aiming for the impossible, stops short before the word "impossible" and writes it as "the end."

Such is the strength of women that, sweeping

away syntax, breaking that famous thread (just a tiny little thread, they say) which acts for men as a surrogate umbilical cord, assuring them—otherwise they couldn't come—that the old lady is always right behind them, watching them make phallus, women will go right up to the impossible.

When the "repressed" of their culture and their society returns, it's an explosive, *utterly* destructive, staggering return, with a force never yet unleashed and equal to the most forbidding of suppressions. For when the Phallic period comes to an end, women will have been either annihilated or borne up to the highest and most violent incandescence. Muffled throughout their history, they have lived in dreams, in bodies (though muted), in silences, in aphonic revolts.

And with such force in their fragility; a fragility, a vulnerability, equal to their incomparable intensity. Fortunately, they haven't sublimated; they've saved their skin, their energy. They haven't worked at liquidating the impasse of lives without futures. They have furiously inhabited these sumptuous bodies: admirable hysterics who made Freud succumb to many voluptuous moments impossible to confess, bombarding his Mosaic statue with their carnal and passionate body words, haunting him with their inaudible and thundering denunciations, dazzling, more than naked underneath the seven veils of modesty. Those who, with a single word of the body, have inscribed the vertiginous immensity of a history which is sprung like an arrow from the whole history of men and from biblico-capitalist society, are the women, the supplicants of yesterday, who come as forebears of the new women, after whom no intersubjective relation will ever be the same. You, Dora, you the indomitable, the poetic body, you are the true "mistress" of the Signifier.⁹ Before long your efficacy will be seen at work when your speech is no longer suppressed, its point turned in against your breast, but written out over against the other.

⁹Dora is the name given to the young woman who figures in Freud's classic 1905 account of female hysteria. Dora claimed to have been molested by a family friend, Mr. K. Freud traced this fantasy to Dora's erotic attachment to

⁸Jean Genêt, *Pompes funèbres* (Paris, 1948), p. 185. [Au.]

In body.—More so than men who are coaxed toward social success, toward sublimation, women are body. More body, hence more writing. For a long time it has been in body that women have responded to persecution, to the familial-conjugal enterprise of domestication, to the repeated attempts of castrating them. Those who have turned their tongues 10,000 times seven times before not speaking are either dead from it or more familiar with their tongues and their mouths than anyone else. Now, I-woman am going to blow up the Law: an explosion henceforth possible and ineluctable; let it be done, right now, *in language*.

Let us not be trapped by an analysis still encumbered with the old automatisms. It's not to be feared that language conceals an invincible adversary, because it's the language of men and their grammar. We mustn't leave them a single place that's any more theirs alone than we are.

If woman has always functioned "within" the discourse of man, a signifier that has always referred back to the opposite signifier which annihilates its specific energy and diminishes or stifles its very different sounds, it is time for her to dislocate this "within," to explode it, turn it around, and seize it; to make it hers, containing it, taking it in her own mouth, biting that tongue with her very own teeth to invent for herself a language to get inside of. And you'll see with what ease she will spring forth from that "within"—the "within" where once she so drowsily crouched—to overflow at the lips she will cover the foam.

Nor is the point to appropriate their instruments, their concepts, their places, or to begrudge them their position of mastery. Just because there's a risk of identification doesn't mean that we'll succumb. Let's leave it to the worriers, to masculine anxiety and its obsession with how to dominate the way things work—knowing "how it works" in order to "make it work." For us the point is not to take possession in order to inter-

her father, whom she knew was having an affair with Mrs. K. Recent revisionist studies of this case have suggested that Dora was in fact molested by Mr. K., and that Freud's treatment of her confession as a fantasy constituted enforcement of the patriarchal or phallogocentric order. [Ed.]

nalize or manipulate, but rather to dash through and to "fly."¹⁰

Flying is woman's gesture—flying in language and making it fly. We have all learned the art of flying and its numerous techniques; for centuries we've been able to possess anything only by flying; we've lived in flight, stealing away, finding, when desired, narrow passages, hidden crossovers. It's no accident that *voler* has a double meaning, that it plays on each of them and thus throws off the agents of sense. It's no accident: women take after birds and robbers just as robbers take after women and birds. They (*illes*)¹¹ go by, fly the coop, take pleasure in jumbling the order of space, in disorienting it, in changing around the furniture, dislocating things and values, breaking them all up, emptying structures, and turning propriety upside down.

What woman hasn't flown/stolen? Who hasn't felt, dreamt, performed the gesture that jams sociality? Who hasn't crumbled, held up to ridicule, the bar of separation? Who hasn't inscribed with her body the differential, punctured the system of couples and opposition? Who, by some act of transgression, hasn't overthrown successiveness, connection, the wall of circumfession?

A feminine text cannot fail to be more than subversive. It is volcanic; as it is written it brings about an upheaval of the old property crust, carrier of masculine investments; there's no other way. There's no room for her if she's not a he. If she's a her-she, it's in order to smash everything, to shatter the framework of institutions, to blow up the law, to break up the "truth" with laughter.

For once she blazes *her* trail in the symbolic, she cannot fail to make of it the chaosmos of the "personal"—in her pronouns, her nouns, and her clique of referents. And for good reason. There will have been the long history of gynocide. This is known by the colonized peoples of yesterday, the workers, the nations, the species off whose backs the history of men has made its gold; those

¹⁰Also, "to steal." Both meanings of the verb *voler* are played on, as the text itself explains in the following paragraph. [Tr.]

¹¹*Illes* is a fusion of the masculine pronoun *ils*, which refers back to birds and robbers, with the feminine pronoun *elles*, which refers to women. [Tr.]

who have known the ignominy of persecution derive from it an obstinate future desire for grandeur; those who are locked up know better than their jailers the taste of free air. Thanks to their history, women today know (how to do and want) what men will be able to conceive of only much later. I say woman overturns the “personal,” for if, by means of laws, lies, blackmail, and marriage, her right to herself has been extorted at the same time as her name, she has been able, through the very movement of mortal alienation, to see more closely the inanity of “propriety,” the reductive stinginess of the masculine-conjugal subjective economy, which she doubly resists. On the one hand she has constituted herself necessarily as that “person” capable of losing a part of herself without losing her integrity. But secretly, silently, deep down inside, she grows and multiplies, for, on the other hand, she knows far more about living and about the relation between the economy of the drives and the management of the ego than any man. Unlike man, who holds so dearly to his title and his titles, his pouches of value, his cap, crown, and everything connected with his head, woman couldn’t care less about the fear of decapitation (or castration), adventuring, without the masculine temerity, into anonymity, which she can merge with without annihilating herself: because she’s a giver.

I shall have a great deal to say about the whole deceptive problematic of the gift. Woman is obviously not that woman Nietzsche dreamed of who gives only in order to.¹² Who could ever think of the gift as a gift-that-takes? Who else but man, precisely the one who would like to take everything?

If there is a “propriety of woman,” it is paradoxically her capacity to deappropriate unselfishly: body without end, without appendage, without principal “parts.” If she is a whole, it’s a whole composed of parts that are wholes, not simple partial objects but a moving, limitlessly changing

¹²Reread Derrida’s text, “Le Style de la femme,” in *Nietzsche aujourd’hui* (Paris: Union Générale d’Editions, Coll. 10/18), where the philosopher can be seen operating an *Aufhebung* of all philosophy in its systematic reducing of woman to the place of seduction; she appears as the one who is taken for; the bait in person, all veils unfurled, the one who doesn’t give but who gives only in order to (take). [Au.]

ensemble, a cosmos tirelessly traversed by Eros, an immense astral space not organized around any one sun that’s any more of a star than the others.

This doesn’t mean that she’s an undifferentiated magma, but that she doesn’t lord it over her body or her desire. Though masculine sexuality gravitates around the penis, engendering that centralized body (in political anatomy) under the dictatorship of its parts, woman does not bring about the same regionalization which serves the couple head/genitals and which is inscribed only within boundaries. Her libido is cosmic, just as her unconscious is worldwide. Her writing can only keep going, without ever inscribing or discerning contours, daring to make these vertiginous crossings of the other(s) ephemeral and passionate sojourns in him, her, them, whom she inhabits long enough to look at from the point closest to their unconscious from the moment they awaken, to love them at the point closest to their drives; and then further, impregnated through and through with these brief, identificatory embraces, she goes and passes into infinity. She alone dares and wishes to know from within, where she, the outcast, has never ceased to hear the resonance of fore-language. She lets the other language speak—the language of 1,000 tongues which knows neither enclosure nor death. To life she refuses nothing. Her language does not contain, it carries; it does not hold back, it makes possible. When *id* is ambiguously uttered—the wonder of being several—she doesn’t defend herself against these unknown women whom she’s surprised at becoming, but derives pleasure from this gift of alterability. I am spacious, singing flesh, on which is grafted no one knows which I, more or less human, but alive because of transformation.

Write! and your self-seeking text will know itself better than flesh and blood, rising, insurrectionary dough kneading itself, with sonorous, perfumed ingredients, a lively combination of flying colors, leaves, and rivers plunging into the sea we feed. “Ah, there’s her sea,” he will say as he holds out to me a basin full of water from the little phallic mother from whom he’s inseparable. But look, our seas are what we make of them, full of fish or not, opaque or transparent, red or

black, high or smooth, narrow or bankless; and we are ourselves sea, sand, coral, seaweed, beaches, tides, swimmers, children, waves. . . . More or less wavyly sea, earth, sky—what matter would rebuff us? We know how to speak them all.

Heterogeneous, yes. For her joyous benefit she is erogenous; she is the erotogeneity of the heterogeneous: airborne swimmer, in flight, she does not cling to herself; she is dispersible, prodigious, stunning, desirous and capable of others, of the other woman that she will be, of the other woman she isn't, of him, of you.

Woman be unafraid of any other place, of any same, or any other. My eyes, my tongue, my ears, my nose, my skin, my mouth, my body-for-(the)-other—not that I long for it in order to fill up a hole, to provide against some defect of mine, or because, as fate would have it, I'm spurred on by feminine "jealousy"; not because I've been dragged into the whole chain of substitutions that brings that which is substituted back to its ultimate object. That sort of thing you would expect to come straight out of "Tom Thumb," out of the *Penisneid* whispered to us by old grandmother ogresses, servants to their fathersons. If they believe, in order to muster up some self-importance, if they really need to believe that we're dying of desire, that we are this hole fringed with desire for their penis—that's their immemorial business. Undeniably (we verify it at our own expense—but also to our amusement), it's their business to let us know they're getting a hard-on, so that we'll assure them (we the maternal mistresses of their little pocket signifier) that they still can, that it's still there—that men structure themselves only by being fitted with a feather. In the child it's not the penis that the woman desires, it's not that famous bit of skin around which every man gravitates. Pregnancy cannot be traced back, except within the historical limits of the ancients, to some form of fate, to those mechanical substitutions brought about by the unconscious of some eternal "jealous woman"; not to penis envies; and not to narcissism or to some sort of homosexuality linked to the ever-present mother! Begetting a child doesn't mean that the woman or the man must fall in-

eluctably into patterns or must recharge the circuit of reproduction. If there's a risk there's not an inevitable trap: may women be spared the pressure, under the guise of consciousness-raising, of a supplement of interdictions. Either you want a kid or you don't—*that's your business*. Let nobody threaten you; in satisfying your desire, let not the fear of becoming the accomplice to a sociality succeed the old-time fear of being "taken." And man, are you still going to bank on everyone's blindness and passivity, afraid lest the child make a father and, consequently, that in having a kid the woman land herself more than one bad deal by engendering all at once child—mother—father—family? No; it's up to you to break the old circuits. It will be up to man and woman to render obsolete the former relationship and all its consequences, to consider the launching of a brand-new subject, alive, with defamialization. Let us demater-paternalize rather than deny woman, in an effort to avoid the co-optation of procreation, a thrilling era of the body. Let us defetishize. Let's get away from the dialectic which has it that the only good father is a dead one, or that the child is the death of his parents. The child is the other, but the other without violence, bypassing loss, struggle. We're fed up with the reuniting of bonds forever to be severed, with the litany of castration that's handed down and genealogized. We won't advance backward anymore; we're not going to repress something so simple as the desire for life. Oral drive, anal drive, vocal drive—all these drives are our strengths, and among them is the gestation drive—just like the desire to write: a desire to live self from within, a desire for the swollen belly, for language, for blood. We are not going to refuse, if it should happen to strike our fancy, the unsurpassed pleasures of pregnancy which have actually been always exaggerated or conjured away—or cursed—in the classic texts. For if there's one thing that's been repressed here's just the place to find it: in the taboo of the pregnant woman. This says a lot about the power she seems invested with at the time, because it has always been suspected, that, when pregnant, the woman not only doubles her market value, but—what's more important—takes on intrinsic value as a woman in her own eyes and, undeniably, acquires body and sex.

There are thousands of ways of living one's pregnancy; to have or not to have with that still invisible other a relationship of another intensity. And if you don't have that particular yearning, it doesn't mean that you're in any way lacking. Each body distributes in its own special way, without model or norm, the nonfinite and changing totality of its desires. Decide for yourself on your position in the arena of contradictions, where pleasure and reality embrace. Bring the other to life. Women know how to live detachment; giving birth is neither losing nor increasing. It's adding to life an other. Am I dreaming? Am I mis-recognizing? You, the defenders of "theory," the sacrosanct yes-men of Concept, enthroners of the phallus (but not of the penis):

Once more you'll say that all this smacks of "idealism," or what's worse, you'll sputter that I'm a "mystic."

And what about the libido? Haven't I read the "Signification of the Phallus"? And what about separation, what about that bit of self for which, to be born, you undergo an ablation—an ablation, so they say, to be forever commemorated by your desire?

Besides, isn't it evident that the penis gets around in my texts, that I give it a place and appeal? Of course I do. I want all. I want all of me with all of him. Why should I deprive myself of a part of us? I want all of us. Woman of course has a desire for a "loving desire" and not a jealous one. But not because she is gelded; not because she's deprived and needs to be filled out, like some wounded person who wants to console herself or seek vengeance: I don't want a penis to decorate my body with. But I do desire the other for the other, whole and entire, male or female; because living means wanting everything that is, everything that lives, and wanting it alive. Castration? Let others toy with it. What's a desire originating from a lack? A pretty meager desire.

The woman who still allows herself to be threatened by the big dick, who's still impressed by the commotion of the phallic stance, who still leads a loyal master to the beat of the drum: that's the woman of yesterday. They still exist, easy and numerous victims of the oldest of farces: either they're cast in the original silent version in which, as titanesses lying under the

mountains they make with their quivering, they never see erected that theoretic monument to the golden phallus looming, in the old manner, over their bodies. Or, coming today out of their *infans* period and into the second, "enlightened" version of their virtuous debasement, they see themselves suddenly assaulted by the builders of the analytic empire and, as soon as they've begun to formulate the new desire, naked, nameless, so happy at making an appearance, they're taken in their bath by the new old men, and then, whoops! Luring them with flashy signifiers, the demon of interpretation—oblique, decked out in modernity—sells them the same old handcuffs, baubles, and chains. Which castration do you prefer? Whose degrading do you like better, the father's or the mother's? Oh, what pwetty eyes, you pwetty little girl. Here, buy my glasses and you'll see the Truth-Me-Myself tell you everything you should know. Put them on your nose and take a fetishist's look (you are me, the other analyst—that's what I'm telling you) at your body and the body of the other. You see? No? Wait, you'll have everything explained to you, and you'll know at last which sort of neurosis you're related to. Hold still, we're going to do your portrait, so that you can begin looking like it right away.

Yes, the naives to the first and second degree are still legion. If the New Women, arriving now, dare to create outside the theoretical, they're called in by the cops of the signifier, fingerprinted, remonstrated, and brought into the line of order that they are supposed to know; assigned by force of trickery to a precise place in the chain that's always formed for the benefit of a privileged signifier. We are pieced back to the string which leads back, if not to the Name-of-the-Father, then, for a new twist, to the place of the phallic-mother.

Beware, my friend, of the signifier that would take you back to the authority of a signified! Beware of diagnoses that would reduce your generative powers. "Common" nouns are also proper nouns that disparage your singularity by classifying it into species. Break out of the circles; don't remain within the psychoanalytic closure. Take a look around, then cut through!

And if we are legion, it's because the war of liberation has only made as yet a tiny break-

through. But women are thronging to it. I've seen them, those who will be neither dupe nor domestic, those who will not fear the risk of being a woman; will not fear any risk, any desire, any space still unexplored in themselves, among themselves and others or anywhere else. They do not fetishize, they do not deny, they do not hate. They observe, they approach, they try to see the other woman, the child, the lover—not to strengthen their own narcissism or verify the solidity or weakness of the master, but to make love better, to invent

Other love.—In the beginning are our differences. The new love dares for the other, wants the other, makes dizzying, precipitous flights between knowledge and invention. The woman arriving over and over again does not stand still; she's everywhere, she exchanges, she is the desire-that-gives. (Not enclosed in the paradox of the gift that takes nor under the illusion of unitary fusion. We're past that.) She comes in, comes-in-between herself me and you, between the other me where one is always infinitely more than one and more than me, without the fear of ever reaching a limit; she thrills in our becoming. And we'll keep on becoming! She cuts through defensive loves, motherages, and devourations: beyond selfish narcissism, in the moving, open, transitional space, she runs her risks. Beyond the struggle-to-the-death that's been removed to the bed, beyond the love-battle that claims to represent exchange, she scorns at an Eros dynamic that would be fed by hatred. Hatred: a heritage, again, a remainder, a duping subservience to the phallus. To love, to watch-think-see the other in

the other, to despecularize, to unhoard. Does this seem difficult? It's not impossible, and this is what nourishes life—a love that has no commerce with the apprehensive desire that provides against the lack and stultifies the strange; a love that rejoices in the exchange that multiplies. Wherever history still unfolds as the history of death, she does not tread. Opposition, hierarchizing exchange, the struggle for mastery which can end only in at least one death (one master—one slave, or two nonmasters \neq two dead)—all that comes from a period in time governed by phallogocentric values. The fact that this period extends into the present doesn't prevent woman from starting the history of life somewhere else. Elsewhere, she gives. She doesn't "know" what she's giving, she doesn't measure it; she gives, though, neither a counterfeit impression nor something she hasn't got. She gives more, with no assurance that she'll get back even some unexpected profit from what she puts out. She gives that there may be life, thought, transformation. This is an "economy" that can no longer be put in economic terms. Wherever she loves, all the old concepts of management are left behind. At the end of a more or less conscious computation, she finds not her sum but her differences. I am for you what you want me to be at the moment you look at me in a way you've never seen me before: at every instant. When I write, it's everything that we don't know we can be that is written out of me, without exclusions, without stipulation, and everything we will be calls us to the unflagging, intoxicating, unappeasable search for love. In one another we will never be lacking.

Hélène Cixous and Catherine Clément

A Woman Mistress

If the position of mastery culturally comes back to men, what will become of (our) femininity when we find ourselves in this position?

When we use a master-discourse?

Mastery-knowledge, mastery-power: ideas demanding an explanation from us.

Other discourses?

CATHERINE: Let's start out with the difference between our discourses. Yours is a writing halfway between theory and fiction. Whereas my discourse is, or tries to be, more demonstrative and discursive, following the most traditional method of rhetorical demonstration. That doesn't bother me; I accept that method: it is the method of teaching and of transmitting ideas. We see there can be two women in the same space who are *differently* engaged, speaking of almost exactly the *same things*, investing in two or three different kinds of discourse and going from one to the other and then on to the spoken exchange.

HÉLÈNE: I distrust the identification of a subject with a single discourse. First, there is the discourse that suits the occasion. I use rhetorical discourse, the discourse of mastery, orally, for example, with my students, and obviously I do it on purpose; it is a refusal on my part to leave organized discourse entirely in men's power. I never fell for that sort of bait.

CATHERINE: There is no reason at all not to steal that discourse from men. . . . Besides, that doesn't mean anything; we don't steal anything at all—we are within the same cultural system. Granted it is a phallogocentric cultural system but trying to make another in advance is unfounded; perhaps we can think that, hypothetically, one day there might be another system but to will that it suddenly be there—at any minute—is utopian.

HÉLÈNE: There will not be *one* feminine dis-

course, there will be thousands of different kinds of feminine words, and then there will be the code for general communication, philosophical discourse, rhetoric like now but with a great number of subversive discourses in addition that are somewhere else entirely. That is what is going to happen. Until now women were not speaking out loud, were not writing, not creating their tongues—plural, but they will create them, which doesn't mean that the others (either men or tongues) are going to die off.

CATHERINE: In any case, there is no reason for women not to assume that transmission of knowledge. The term causing a problem is the word *mastery* in the phrase “discourse of mastery.” If inspired by Lacan, it refers to a relationship between mastery and university, which is such that the master's discourse—from the point of view of its political and economic power—is transferred onto and shapes any discourse dealing with knowledge to be transmitted.

HÉLÈNE: It think one has a hard time escaping the discourse of mastery when using, for example, as a teacher, discourse I'll call “objective”; by that I mean a discourse that does not involve an easily located subject of enunciation, that speaks at that particular moment not just in the name of but as universal knowledge itself.

The law does not exist.

In the little chapter “The Dawn of Phallogocentrism,” I took, on the one hand, a text by Freud on the origin of patriarchy, and I compared it with a Kafka text called *Before the Law*. It is a story that is both extraordinarily clear and as unclear as the question that is its crux: “What is the law?” There is a peasant who was an honest man: he was the only one who could have gone to the other side and seen the law—seen, therefore, that it doesn't exist. Because the door could be opened only for him. He didn't go in there. How

Translated by Betsy Wing.

could he have gone “there” since the law that doesn’t exist was himself? All that was needed was a door and a doorkeeper: he was the one who constantly fabricated the law, and he never saw that the law did not exist.

CATHERINE: Do you know what that story makes me think of? The mirror stage—the fact that the chimpanzee looks behind the mirror to see who is there, another chimpanzee, itself, or nobody—whereas man identifies and constitutes himself with the mirror. It reflects his image to him, *fixes* it as a subject and subjects it to the law, to the symbolic order, to language, and does it in a way that is both inalienable and alienating. The law exists.

HÉLÈNE: Except that the chimpanzee actually is the chimpanzee and we are the result of our relationship to the door. What is the discourse of mastery? There is one. It is what calls itself “the law” but is presented as “the open door” in precisely such a way that you never go to the other side of the door, that you never go to see “what is mastery?” So you never will know that there is no law and no mastery. That there is no master. The paradox of mastery is that it is made up of a sort of complex ideological secretion produced by an infinite quantity of doorkeepers.

Mastery ensures the transmission of knowledge.

CATHERINE: I wouldn’t say that in the same terms. It has to be said straight out: for me mastery is fundamental and necessary. I don’t particularly think one can transmit certain knowl-

Culture, which is superstructure, must not be considered as a thing, a good, the result of an evolution, a stock converted into intellectual luxury, but rather as a factor in evolution (which cannot be solely a factor of income) and especially as a process. (Brecht, *Writings on Politics and Society*)

One can say that general culture is what permits the individual to fully feel his solidarity with other men, in space and in time, with the men of his generation as well as with the generations which have preceded him and those yet to follow. To be cultivated, then, is to have received and constantly developed an initiation to different forms of human activity independently of those which correspond to a profession, so as to be able to enter into contact and communion with other men. (Paul Langevin)

edges—the knowledges—except through mastery. That involves everything having to do with democratic transmission. Paradoxically, information contained in a system of knowledge cannot be transmitted outside of mastery. It is dependent on the “law” of the Symbolic, like the doorkeeper, like the honest man. Subjectivity can be taken in, deluded, by it, of course, but it can also find there an explicit coherence, a certain number of connections shared by all, so that when the statement is transmitted, the receiver has access to it either immediately or through mediation.

Transmitting.

What is at stake is connection and consistency. I know perfectly well you are not about to tell me that truth sticks to what is consistent and that you are going to call into question the existence of other consistencies. As for me, the discourse of mastery exists; of course, it is ambivalent and full of traps as far as subjectivity is concerned: subjectivity finds the positions of psychoanalyst and professor to be almost equally untenable. But despite that, it is through the discourse of mastery that knowledge of the analytic act *is transmitted*. I am not talking about the rest of it.

HÉLÈNE: I can’t go along with you there. Your position, which I understand, disposes of a problem that is fundamental and primary for me: how is one to think and struggle against what mastery inevitably entails as a form of repression? A mastery’s contradiction, if it isn’t thought differently, is that, far from transmitting knowledge, it makes it still more inaccessible, makes it sacred. That is

Common public instruction for all citizens is to be created and organized and to be free with regard to those fields of instruction which are indispensable to all men. ([French] Constitution of 1791)

The institutions of instruction in their entirety were opened up to the people free of charge, and, at the same time they were cleared of any interference by the Church and the State. Thus, not only was instruction made accessible for everyone, but knowledge itself was set free of the chains which class prejudices and governmental power had laid on it. (Karl Marx, *On the Commune*)

The peoples whose women must work much more than is proper according to our ideas often have much more real consideration for women than our European populations. Civiliza-

Law's dirty trick. Only those people who already have a relationship of mastery, who already have dealings with culture, who are saturated with culture, have ever dared have access to the discourse that the master gives.

CATHERINE: Now, in this social and cultural system. But certainly you can conceive of societies structured differently, in which the conditions of access to knowledge would be profoundly different.

HÉLÈNE: That's why I believe one has to take a thousand precautions. At the present time, it is impossible for me to use the term "mastery" as it is currently used because of the repression it implies. Does someone already allied with a certain knowledge want to communicate it to others? Why does one want to communicate it to others? It's the usual question—"what's the use?" Does it serve any purpose? I would say yes, obviously, it has to serve—not serve itself and not serve a superior cause, et cetera. There is a drawback we all know as teachers, which is the almost insurmountable difficulty of occupying a position of mastery.

Giving.

The one who is in the master's place, even if not the master of a knowledge, is in a position of power. The only way to bar that is to execute the master, kill him, eliminate him, so that what he has to say can get through, so that he himself is not the obstacle, so it will be *given*. Something on the order of a personal gift, a subjective one.

CATHERINE: I don't like that term—personal gift, it tends toward oblation and sacrifice. . . .

tion's "lady," who is surrounded by feigned respect and who has become a stranger to any real work, has a far lower social position than the woman who is a barbarian, who worked hard, who counted as a real lady (*dame, froxa, Frau: domina*) and who, moreover, was one because of her character. . . .

We are confronted with this new form of family in all its severity among the Greeks. As Marx noted the position of the goddesses in mythology represents an earlier period, when women still occupied a freer and more respected place, in the Heroic Age, we already find women degraded owing to the predominance of the man and the competition of female slaves. . . . The modern conjugal family is based on . . . admitted or masked domestic slavery of woman, and modern society is a mass made up exclusively of conjugal families, like so

What one knows. . . . What one doesn't know.

HÉLÈNE: Giving isn't sacrificing. The person who transmits has to be able to function on the level of knowledge without knowing. I'm not at all referring to Socrates now. Just that one should be in a state of weakness, as we all are, and that *it be evident*. That one have the guts to occupy the position one has no right to occupy and that one show precisely how and why one occupies it. I set my sights high: I demand that love struggle within the master against the will for power.

Mistress woman or woman master?

CATHERINE: Just the same it will be mastery. When I hear *mastery*, I think of the present meaning of the word, which must come more or less from Hegel. Mastery, in Lacan, is inseparable from something fundamentally bound up with woman, with the hysteric, her referential figure. The hysteric puts the master and the academic, both power and knowledge, in check. What's more, this conjunction "power-knowledge" and this division between the two seem to me to be on the order of myth, with its mythic power and arbitrary nature. Admitting these terms for what they are, would that mean that the hysteric and hence, somehow, the woman does not have the right to move in the direction of mastery or academics or perhaps even toward the position of analyst? She has only one position, she "puts in check." That is inadmissible—grotesque. But the way you have defined a knowledge expounded with limits and holes is no longer, in

many molecules. In this day and age, man in the great majority of cases, must support and nourish the family, at least in the propertied classes; and this gives him a sovereign authority which does not need legal privilege to back it up. Within the family man is the bourgeois; woman plays the part of proletariat. But in the industrial sphere, the specific character of economic oppression that weighs on the proletariat is only manifested in all its severity after all the legal privileges of the capitalist class have been suppressed and complete legal equality of the two classes has been established; the democratic republic does not suppress the antagonism between the two classes, the contrary is true: that is what, first of all, provides the ground where the struggle is going to be resolved. (F. Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*)

effect, entirely mastery. It does correspond just the same to what I meant just now, that is to say, a discourse that—for its own subject, for what concerns knowledge—offers some connections, punctuations, scansions, demonstrations—through which the data of knowledge are transmitted. I see no way to conceive of a cultural system in which there would be no transmission of knowledge in the form of a coherent statement. Right now, for social and ideological reasons, this coincides with a position of mastery.

HÉLÈNE: I don't know what you call "right now"; it has always been like that in our western societies. In our own history, the one we are still reacting to, that is what has happened and keeps on happening.

CATHERINE: That's not entirely true. There is a history of mastery, for us among others, that runs through the history of national education, via the major schools of teacher instruction, via Jules Ferry, via the struggles for a state school, et cetera. And I really think that, from women's point of view, there have been some rays of light in that history and some moments when women had mastery. Not that they have had economic mastery, of course, but it has come about that they had symbolic management of an intellectual activity. An example would be the time of the *trouvères* and *troubadours* . . . at the same time, what's more, as a mythology of the "inspiring woman" opposing this mastery.

I believe that *cultural* oppression of women coincides with economic evolution and is accentuated by the development of capitalism. Think of the "précieuses," who are not at all well known or well liked. There have sometimes been women in possession of knowledge.

HÉLÈNE: There has always been a split between those who are in possession of knowledge and culture and who occupy a position of mastery and the others. I don't rule out women's having been on that side, but even then they are not in the masters' position. I am not saying that knowledge is always associated with power, or that it must be: but that is its danger. And I am not saying women are never on the side of knowledge-power. But in the majority of cases in their history, one finds

them aligned with no knowledge or knowledge-without-power.

CATHERINE: By *power* you don't mean political power, you mean that scrap, that reflection of political power that the teacher exercises metaphorically and imaginarily. What exactly is the teacher's "power"?

HÉLÈNE: Where is the division between "powers"? It's impossible to separate them. I believe teaching goes hand in hand with ideology.

CATHERINE: I don't think so. If that was true, there would be no reason at all to struggle for a truly democratic transmission of knowledge—on the contrary! It is true that whole segments of knowledge are "trapped" in the dominant ideology, but still they are conveyed. There are, for example, Marxist historians: they teach history in a "history" program. It is not because they are in a position of mastery within the teaching structure as it is now that the *content* of their knowledge goes hand in hand with ideology. The division is more complex: it is between the subject's position in relation to knowledge and *the specific effects of the knowledge itself*. The transmission is effective in any kind of structure; even if it is attenuated by the instructional system, it is not *wiped out*.

HÉLÈNE: It is almost wiped out. Thank god there is always a tremendous resistance—young people's flexibility, for instance. Take people when they get out of high school, private schools, no matter what school, and see what you get. Zero.

CATHERINE: But they are receivers and under difficult conditions. . . .

HÉLÈNE: Receivers are what they have received. Certainly there are always tightly held lines, like a certain type of philosophical instruction. But that never has more than limited and postponed effectiveness. Despite absolutely incredible setbacks, it does keep alive a certain kind of spirit of change. But that's not what has taken power. Power lies always in the same direction. It always has.

CATHERINE: In the same direction because the bourgeoisie, the dominant class, is in power. But you can't say that on one side there is the dominant class with its power, its system of transmission and the content of that system—and that is

ideology, and on the other side is everything else. I don't think that is an actual split.

HÉLÈNE: That there could be a culture without culture or a world, a society without education is something I never thought.

CATHERINE: At the moment, it seems to me, you are making mastery absolutely coincide with knowledge, except in a few exceptional cases.

HÉLÈNE: Sure. But rather than mastery coinciding with knowledge, I would say that, with few exceptions, knowledge is constantly caught up in, is entrapped by a will for power. I know which people conveying knowledge don't seem to be dealing with the exercise of power. There are very few. In reality, most of the people I know make use of knowledge, consciously or unconsciously, and use it for something else or for themselves.

CATHERINE: It is inevitable on a certain level that they make it serve themselves; nothing can ever be done about that. Satisfaction is essential to avoid falling into what I've called "oblativity." The desire to teach has to find some satisfaction!

The non-master must be imagined.

HÉLÈNE: It's a question of quantity. I'm saying that people for whom the process of return is a normal process of revenue are rare. They get a certain satisfaction, of course, that's normal, but that satisfaction can take any form. You can be gratified by the feeling of drawing others to your high level or, on the contrary, of going down to their level, et cetera. The most usual satisfaction is not generous. "Masters," in general, try to really obtain an increase in value from mastery, a feeling of accrued superiority, an inflated narcissism. . . .

CATHERINE: Partly that's true. But all the more so when the knowledge has less support. It is particularly true, therefore, of the literary person—for example, where a personal gloss has considerable importance just now, where the discourse has progressed so slightly into theory that it is upheld only by a huge amount of inspiration, whose coherence is literally neurotic and which has no other way to defend itself. It is not knowledge that is being conveyed there but something

on the order of the poetic. Perhaps the misunderstanding is about the idea of knowledge. When it is a question of knowledge, I am talking about a body of coherent statements that is not a neurotic coherence, hence one that isn't held together by the *singular* phantasmic specialty of the one who does the conveying.

Cultural prohibition.

HÉLÈNE: Mastery is at play in the Imaginary as well, where interpretation plays a part and is always cropping up. When one talks about mastery, it is a mastery that can very easily become permeated with something going beyond the object, something that is a mythical power, an Imaginary power that is held sacred and that adjoins a scene of a different sort from knowledge. Everything on the order of culture and cultural objects has a prohibition placed on it, which causes class positions in relation to culture. Likewise, woman is uneasy in relation to a certain sort of production—the production of signs. . . . We don't go straight for it. We even wonder if we *can* go there. We say to ourselves: that possession is not for me. All that has been internalized for ever so long. What would this kind of power, belonging to the mastery of knowledge and, moreover, concealed, be in a field that doesn't pass through discourse? If, instead, it went through concrete practices, like manual work or even in the business world where there are mechanisms you can really dominate, where things probably don't escape you. Always for us, working in humanities and literature, there is a part that is uncontrollable. Mastery goes through real concrete power, in that case, political power, money, all the possible forms of power that are the equivalents of the sacred power of the master's word.

CATHERINE: What bothers me is this collusion between power/knowledge, invested with an effectiveness that I don't believe it has. The power to change—or to inhibit—knowledge comes through mediations that are too complex for us to judge what they might be. The power of power is first of all economic. What you describe is true on the level of a sort of huge, imaginary, mythical,

ideological space. It is not true for things that are part of the real functioning of those structures.

What remains of me at the university, within the university?

HÉLÈNE: For me ideology is a kind of vast membrane enveloping everything. We have to know that this skin exists even if it encloses us like a net or like closed eyelids. We have to know that, to change the world, we must constantly try to scratch and tear it. We can never rip the whole thing off, but we must never let it stick or stop being suspicious of it. It grows back and you start again.

CATHERINE: Let's go back to the discourse of knowledge, the discourse of the university; as for myself I'm hanging on to it, I accept the dunce cap so readily put on the academic's head at the moment, but can I say that it is as a woman that I hold on to it, or not? I don't think the question is at all pertinent.

HÉLÈNE: You're right that it has no pertinence in that instance. As a subject, I always suffered from being made inferior or was crushed by what comes through the surrounding knowledge, even if, to defend myself and out of curiosity, I said to myself: "I'm going to go see what it is." I didn't do as Kafka's peasant did; I went to see, but that comes from the fact that when I was in ignorance—which I was for a very long time—when I was "theoretically naive," as they say, I felt myself constantly under attack, aggressed, because it is very hard for people with a knowledge at their disposal not to be aggressive sometimes, even the best of masters. I'm thinking of B. . . ., who is a very intelligent woman with extraordinary talent. Recently I saw she was deeply troubled; a few people whom she had just seen had told her, "You know, women don't have to enter the Symbolic anyhow." It's ridiculous. For her it didn't mean anything, and for good reason—how could one expect her to know what "enter into the Symbolic" meant? The people she was talking to didn't even bother to say to themselves: she doesn't know what the Lacanian concept of the Symbolic is. It's not exactly your everyday word after all. From the moment one begins to *use* what can be called a concept, when it is mastered and enters your discourse and gets lost, it becomes an ordinary word; but that isn't

true at all for everybody else. That is mastery's trap. Being so much a master that you forget you are one.

Give me the password.

CATHERINE: What you said was "the best of masters," but then you described a mockery of a master. In other respects, however, I gladly invest a positive value in aggressivity, even that of the master, even that of the best of masters. Being aggressive is also allowing the other self-definition, it is *showing* oneself as a subject.

HÉLÈNE: Being able to organize or give order to a discourse and being able to make progress are absolutely indispensable, but there are opposite, negative effects as well. For example—controlling and censoring imagination, free production, other forms, et cetera. As a writer, even though I don't know very much, I'm already saying to myself, "That's enough, I know almost too much about it. Let's not slow down."

CATHERINE: With that, let's get back to writing, words, thought, feminine thought processes, whether there is coherence or not. You and I immediately agreed that when one made use of this discourse for transmitting, it didn't matter whether one was a man or a woman. Why did we agree so easily about that? Why is that so obvious?

HÉLÈNE: Because, precisely, I think it is a discourse that annihilates sexual difference—where there is no question of it.

CATHERINE: So—in other discourses it could be a question?

HÉLÈNE: It is a discourse agreeing more with masculinity than with femininity.

CATHERINE: We don't have any way to know that.

HÉLÈNE: Yes, I have ideas about it. There is something in woman's libidinal organization that doesn't enjoy this kind of discourse. . . .

CATHERINE: When you say that, you are moving in the direction of the women who say that feminine discourse can come only from splitting?

HÉLÈNE: No. I was very exact. I said, "Woman doesn't enjoy herself in it." I never said she was incapable of it. And I am sure of it—femininity doesn't enjoy itself there. I keep coming back to this: we are all bisexual. The problem is, what have we done with our bisexuality? What is becoming of it?

Henry Louis Gates Jr.

b. 1950

In the twentieth century, African Americans have continued to be eloquent public speakers, as they were in the nineteenth century, and they have continued to effect change in the structure of American society. Powerful leaders such as the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. have followed in the footsteps of Frederick Douglass in activism for African American civil rights and human rights generally. At the same time, increasing educational opportunities for African Americans have meant that more have attained college-level and postgraduate schooling, and more have become academic researchers. Not surprisingly, among the many areas to which African American academics have contributed is the scholarly study of African American languages and rhetorics. Henry Louis Gates Jr. is among the most influential of these scholars, perhaps because he has combined a distinguished academic career with effective work as a public intellectual and cultural critic.

Gates grew up in Piedmont, a small town in West Virginia, where his father worked as a truck loader at the local paper mill and as a janitor for the telephone company. Gates much admired his older brother, who was an accomplished athlete. His mother, who sometimes worked as a domestic, was a community leader active in the local black church and the PTA. She came from a large extended family who, as Gates tells it in his memoir, *Colored People* (1994), surrounded him with warmth. His childhood was relatively happy, even though he grew up during the era of strict segregation and underwent the stresses and trials of the civil rights movement and other political upheavals of the 1960s and 1970s.

Gates took his B.A. in English language and literature summa cum laude at Yale University and worked for a while in London as a correspondent for *Time* magazine before taking his M.A. and Ph.D. in English literature at Clare College of the University of Cambridge. He has held academic appointments at Yale, Cornell, and Duke Universities. In 1991 he joined the faculty at Harvard University, where he is W. E. B. Du Bois Professor of the Humanities, chair of Afro-American Studies, and director of the W. E. B. Du Bois Institute for Afro-American Research. Gates's scholarly publications include *The Signifying Monkey: A Theory of Afro-American Literary Criticism* (1988), which won the American Book Award in 1989 and from which the chapter included here is taken; *Figures in Black: Words, Signs, and the "Racial" Self* (New York, 1986); and *Loose Canons: Notes on the Culture Wars* (1992). He has also edited several scholarly anthologies, including the multivolume *Schomburg Library of Nineteenth-Century Black Women Writers* (1991), the *Norton Anthology of Afro-American Literature* (1996), and, with Kwame Anthony Appiah, an encyclopedia about the African Diaspora published on CD-ROM as *Encarta Africana* and in a print edition as *Africana: The Encyclopedia of Africa and the African-American Experience* (1999). Among his publications as a cultural critic are *Colored People: A Memoir* (1994); *The Future of the Race* (1996), co-authored with Cornell West; and numerous articles for *The New Yorker*.

In *The Signifying Monkey*, Gates analyzes some rhetorical forms of Black English as part of an investigation of the forms of experience and interaction embodied in black speech and writing. Gates's work on Black English, built on earlier research by sociolinguists, extends rhetorical analysis to an area of communication that attracted little attention from academic rhetoricians before the twentieth century. Moreover, Gates's discussion has important implications for the development of rhetorical theory because it suggests that Black English is a fertile field for studying the ideological and epistemological powers of rhetoric conceived as a general theory of language.

BLACK ENGLISH

The distinctive qualities of African American language as a cultural phenomenon have been explored by linguists more than by rhetoricians, as Gates's research shows. However, that situation has changed recently, as noted below. The features of the black dialect of English have long been studied and have been found to be a completely grammatical and internally consistent version of the language of which Standard English is also a dialect, albeit a socially privileged one. Black English comes from the melding of several African languages and English. Thus, although it is clearly English, the black dialect retains some lexical, grammatical, and syntactic features of African languages.

But that is by no means the whole story. A complete description of Black English cannot be limited to linguistic analysis. Language and culture are inseparable, and though it is common practice to forget the cultural forces at work in descriptions of Standard English—that is, white English—it is impossible to forget, when examining the development of Black English, the often agonized relationship between white people and black people in the United States. Working out the connections among language, culture, and history has been the job of scholars in history and literature as well as of sociolinguists and folklorists.

BLACK RHETORIC

As noted in Part Five of this book, many African Americans became important public speakers in the nineteenth-century United States, and some of them, such as Maria W. Stewart (p. 1031) and Frederick Douglass (p. 1061), discussed the tensions they faced as speakers from a socially marginalized group attempting to persuade diverse audiences, both black and white. They began to articulate the special qualities of what might be called “black rhetoric” in its broad outlines (see the Stewart and Douglass headnotes and the introduction to Part Five). African American scholars also began to study the phenomenon of black rhetoric, for example, in historian William C. Nell's ground-breaking work, *Colored Patriots of the American Revolution* (1855), which examines rhetorical activities as well as military service, political leadership, and more.

In addition, twentieth-century scholars have collected the speeches of African Americans from both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and black and white

historians, rhetoricians, and literary critics have begun to analyze African American rhetorical practices from the early nineteenth century to the present. They have analyzed individual works by noted orators from both centuries, and some scholars have also published studies in which larger patterns of concerns have begun to emerge. African American studies specialist Wilson Jeremiah Moses has chronicled how black orators transformed the European American genre of the jeremiad for their own purposes of social criticism, and David Howard-Pitney has extended this analysis. Bradford Stull, trained in theology as well as rhetorical analysis, has shown how the three most powerful African American leaders of the twentieth century, W. E. B. Du Bois, Martin Luther King Jr., and Malcolm X, drew on European American cultural images of the Fall, the Orient, Africa, and Eden to enrich their critiques of American racism and their visions of a better world.

Rhetoric has also been treated by the folklorists and sociolinguists who have studied Black English. In studies of nonstandard dialects, however, sociolinguists have made only modest use of rhetoric as a theory of language, in contrast with the broader analyses of the humanistic scholars noted above. Rhetoric tends to mean, for the social scientists, figurative language and occasionally speech in a formalized or ritualized setting. Sociolinguist Geneva Smitherman, for example, relies on the term *semantics* to emphasize the deep connection between language and the contexts of its development and use. But even if sociolinguists seldom use rhetoric as an analytic tool, within the sociolinguistic analyses of Black English is a rhetorical analysis—not only of tropes and ritualized speech interactions but also of the range of speech and writing occasions, the intended ends of those forms of discourse, the appeals that speakers use to achieve those ends, and other features of language use that rhetorical theory can account for.

Where Smitherman uses the term *semantics* to suggest that language must be studied in use, Henry Louis Gates turns to rhetoric to suggest the same. Gates combines rhetoric with sociolinguistic analyses of black discourse, though he, too, uses rhetoric in a somewhat limited and specialized way. Rhetoric, for Gates, means tropes, but following Nietzsche and Derrida, Gates regards tropes as constitutive of language. He analyzes the discourse form that black dialect speakers call “signifying,” treating it as the “master trope” of black rhetoric, a trope that embodies cultural meanings and represents a complex set of social interactions. In the chapter from his book *The Signifying Monkey* that is excerpted here, Gates reviews much of the sociolinguistic research from the viewpoint of a rhetorical analysis of tropes. To set his study in perspective, it is worthwhile to outline the other features of black rhetoric that sociolinguists have suggested. Their detailed analyses of what might be called the micro-level of black rhetoric complement the macro-level studies of the humanists.

SETTING, AUDIENCE, AND PERFORMANCE

In the black communities cited in published studies, there appear to be three main settings for speech interactions: (1) the church, where speaking includes both sermons and responses by congregants; (2) the street, where talk is an interaction between equals; and (3) the home, where talk is dominated by the mother.

It seems obvious that an effective message will take the audience into account. Traditional rhetoric assumes that, to the extent that the audience can be characterized by age, gender, class, political or religious beliefs, ethnicity, region, and so on, the speaker or writer can tailor a message to increase its appeal. The same considerations apply in black communities. But a distinct difference between black rhetoric and what we might call white rhetoric is the typical relationship between speaker and audience. In most white speech interactions, as in traditional classical rhetoric, the speaker speaks and the audience listens; in black speech interactions, the audience responds almost constantly, with set responses, encouragement, suggestions, and nonverbal signals. Indeed, black discourse encourages such participation. Black discourse is (to borrow a term from Mikhail Bakhtin [p. 1206]) highly “dialogic.” Successful performance stimulates and can be measured by audience responses.

A corollary to this kind of speaker-audience relationship is the nature of the speech performance itself. There is less difference between performance and conversation in black discourse than in white. On the one hand, formal black speech situations, such as sermons, lectures, and political oratory, are marked by audience participation, and on the other hand, informal conversation is characterized by the stylized performances of the interlocutors. In white discourse, conversation generally is unstructured and informal. But black conversation uses many of the forms, tropes, and responses found in the formal speech types. And whereas in white discourse formal speeches are highly structured, in black discourse speeches and sermons are structured more loosely.

Thus black rhetoric usually tries to stir the audience to verbal response. Moreover, even the most casual interactions have a performance quality. Some exceptions exist. In the home, for example, parental discourse is not intended to elicit interactive response. And sermons typically have formal introductions, identifying the text and theme, during which there is not supposed to be any response. Beyond the introduction, however, the sermon’s purpose is both to exhort and to create solidarity, and participation is a sign that its purposes are being achieved.

The street is the scene of the most complex conversation-performance exchanges, which have at least three purposes: to exchange information; to enact social relationships of friendship, kinship, and business; and to establish the speaker’s social status. The street is the scene of verbal play (mostly male), which, even when it creates solidarity, has a competitive edge. Street exchanges establish the speaker’s reputation in the community. Where status based on economic or educational achievement is problematic, especially for men, the ability to rap, to establish dominance, camaraderie, solidarity, and opposition to white hegemony, as well as to entertain, is the measure of communal admiration. In black communities, linguistic virtuosity is highly prized, and as Gates emphasizes, there is a considerable body of black metadiscourse that identifies the forms and tropes that make up black rhetoric.

As for formal political speeches, analyses of the speeches of Frederick Douglass, Malcolm X, Martin Luther King Jr., Jesse Jackson, and others have amply shown that traditional rhetoric can be applied to the formal speeches of black leaders to explain some of their power. Black rhetoric is not utterly divorced from white rhetoric. The proofs and evidence, the appeals to ethos and pathos, the virtues of

metaphor and antithesis that work in white speeches also work in black ones. Shirley Wilson Logan (1999) has shown how African American women orators from Maria Stewart to Victoria Earle Matthews employed traditional classical figures of speech to enrich their persuasive discourse. Scholarship on black rhetoric will continue to specify distinctive forms of argument or particularly apposite tropes.

FORMS OF DISCOURSE

The forms of discourse are less formally distinct in black speech than in white. Formal speeches and conversation, as noted, are much more similar in black speech than in white speech. Moreover, prose in black speech often shades over into verse and back to prose. Talking may modulate into singing, and singing will stimulate dancing. Thus nonverbal responses might be categorized as forms of discourse along with verbal responses.

The sociolinguists, seconded by Gates, identify a large number of black speech forms as “tropes.” Many of these forms, like repetition, rhyming, and hyperbole, are similar or identical to traditional rhetorical tropes. Others, like *signifying*, which Gates calls the master trope of black rhetoric, seem more like genres or modes of discourse. Perhaps Bakhtin’s phrase *speech genres* would best identify them. Signifying, for example, is the general term for several forms of persuasion, insult, boasting, or lying, all by innuendo or indirection. This trope may be verbal, in prose or verse, or nonverbal, using gesture. And with signifying goes *sounding*, which refers to any of several forms of direct insult, boast, or lie. Other such forms are listed below. There is as yet no clear theoretical division between these speech genres or large-scale tropes and the more familiar small-scale figures of speech. With this proviso, then, some of the speech genres of black rhetoric appear to be as follows:

- sounding (direct insult, boast, and so on)
- signifying (indirect insult, boast, and so on)
- rapping (general ability to use rhetorical devices)
- narrative toasting (narrative verse)
- hipping (exposition; running it down)
- sweet-talk (courtship rapping)
- poetry
- testimony
- responding
- Standard (white) English (often used ironically)

Nonverbal forms

- singing
- dancing
- hand gesturing (giving skin, and so on)

This list is not intended to be exhaustive of either the terminology (which is detailed in the sources listed in the bibliography for this headnote) or of the forms of dis-

course used by blacks, since such familiar terms as *referential* or *ejaculative* might be applied to black discourse as well as to white.

It is important to note that black discourse names a great many rhetorical devices. There is, in other words, already a rhetorical terminology in black discourse, a great self-consciousness about the elaborate forms of language use in black speech. *Logos* in black discourse is often an appeal not to logic in the traditional sense but to language itself. *Ethos* is often established by linguistic heroism. Black culture is an oral culture, one that has internalized its oppositional status in the surrounding dominant culture, and one whose distinctive discourse is almost Sophistic in its displacement of cultural knowledge into language. Thus the metalinguistic terminology of black discourse is a significant part of the discourse itself.

TROPES

Although the word *trope* has some currency among sociolinguists as a general term for identifiable speech patterns, there are no category terms in black metalinguistic terminology. In addition, some disagreement about descriptive terminology and level of abstraction exists among reporters in different communities. Playing the dozens, for example, could as easily be a *form* as a trope. We place it here because it is a bit more specific in application than the general forms of insult under which it might be categorized.

A trope is, literally, a turn. In traditional rhetoric, tropes turn words away from their “literal” meaning to a metaphorical one. Thus Gates makes signifying a master trope in the sense that it embodies indirection or turning in black rhetoric (just as metaphoric comparison is the master trope of white rhetoric).

Verbal tropes

- signifying (as a master trope)
- playing the dozens (insulting someone’s mama)
- naming and nickname using
- jargon (of music, cars, drugs, sex, clothes, and so on)
- speech-action metaphor (run it by me; run it down)
- hyperbole
- repetition
- rhyming
- meaning reversal (bad = good)
- defiance (low-status usage to needle whitey)
- marking (mocking, imitation)
- tomming (as accommodation or irony)
- woofing (lying)
- yo’ mama (or “ask yo’ mama” — stock responses)

Nonverbal tropes

- pitch
- cadence

emphasis (accent shift on big words)
loud talking (stage whisper to convey innuendo)
giving skin (an approving response)
marking (imitating by gesture)

With tropes as with forms, this list is not exhaustive of either available terminology or of figurative types used by blacks. Of course, black rhetoric and white rhetoric share forms that are fairly common in discourse, such as alliteration.

Although most of the forms and tropes are adaptable to both church and street uses, there is a distinct difference in register in their sacred versus secular use. Signifying may appear in a sermon, but it will do so without the casual obscenity that usually accompanies it on the street. Moreover, a sermon may well include signifying but not playing the dozens. Similarly, the forms and tropes can shift in attitude from playful to serious. In playful insults or dozens, the accusations are so fanciful that the interlocutors are not personally attacked. The contest is to be witty, not destructive. Real personal remarks are serious, with corresponding consequences.

Generational markers may also appear as a kind of register. Jive, for example, is a form of social defiance that is regarded as adolescent when used to distance the family. And finally, in a double bind that undercuts the self-image of black men, the official standards of the community may characterize the whole assemblage of street forms and tropes as adolescent—or at least rude.

THE SIGNIFYING MONKEY

The linguistic features of Black English have been documented by sociolinguists like Smitherman, William Labov, and others, all of whom show that Black English is not incorrect Standard English, as white teachers have often thought, but a consistent system with a coherent and regular grammar. But more than that, these researchers identify the distinctive cultural content and relations that inhere in black speech forms: the background not only of African languages but also of tribal culture and social structures, myths, and music. They also note the effects of slavery and discrimination, the conflicted self-images of the oppressed and powerless, the succoring milieu of the church, and the push-pull relationship with the white world.

Gates's work focuses on the distinctive qualities of black language and literature as an expression of black experience. In studying black language in its social uses and communal behavior, Gates thus studies not linguistics but rhetoric. This is a rhetoric of speech genres, of literature and conversation, of social interaction and enabling cultural content. In some ways, such as in the naming of tropes, Gates's use of rhetoric is quite traditional. But his analysis is located at a critical juncture of culture, linguistic operation, social interaction, and political marginality. Gates is forced to be inclusive, to see rhetoric as the connective force and to see tropes as cognitive and epistemic forms of language. Here, rhetoric means daily speech as a form of action.

Gates traces the black rhetorical fascination with word magic back to the pan-African myths of the trickster god Esu-Elegbara, messenger of the gods, speaker of

all tongues, and sexual hero. Language for him and his admirers is a grand performance with strong effects. Gates finds in Esu-Elegbara the forerunner of the Signifying Monkey of Afro-American folklore. The Monkey figures in some of the Esu-Elegbara stories as a secondary character, but in the translation to the United States, the god disappears and the Monkey takes the primary role. The Monkey is the champion signifier, fomenting strife between others by clever innuendo and escaping blame by sophistry. Gates's examples make it quite clear how this operation works.

Gates notes that signifying, the act of linguistic misdirection, ironically redirects the white word for the passive act of representation. Black rhetoric seems to say (as modern literary and rhetorical theory says) that representing meaning is not passive, that it is the greatest trickery of all.

Selected Bibliography

Henry Louis Gates's essay reprinted here, "The Signifying Monkey and the Language of Signifyin(g): Rhetorical Difference and the Orders of Meaning," is the second chapter of *The Signifying Monkey: A Theory of Afro-American Literary Criticism* (New York, 1988).

The extensive notes provided by Gates in the excerpt printed here constitute an excellent bibliography of sources in black linguistics and protorhetoric. The richest of these sources are Geneva Smitherman's *Talkin and Testifyin: The Language of Black America* (Boston, 1977), Smitherman's *Talkin That Talk: Language, Culture and Education in African America* (London and New York, 2000), Roger Abrahams's *Talking Black* (Rowley, Mass., 1976), J. L. Dillard's *Lexicon of Black English* (New York, 1977), and the superb collection edited by Alan Dundes, *Mother Wit from the Laughing Barrel: Readings in the Interpretation of Afro-American Folklore* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1973). Gates emphasizes his debt to *Blues, Ideology, and Afro-American Literature: A Vernacular Theory* (Chicago, 1984), by Houston A. Baker Jr. The bibliographies in Smitherman's books are quite extensive and helpful, though not annotated. Dundes discusses some of the bibliographic resources in black language and folklore at the end of his volume. *Talkin That Talk*, a collection of twenty-three of Smitherman's essays, reveals the political controversies that can ensue when teachers and administrators are not conversant with this sociolinguistic research. This collection includes several penetrating essays on the Ebonics uproar as well as the important article "'What Go Round Come Round': King in Perspective."

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well into the twentieth century, such as Anna Julia Cooper and Fannie Barrier Williams. Wilson Jeremiah Moses's *Black Messiahs and Uncle Toms: Social and Literary Manipulations of a Religious Myth* (1982) traces the African American jeremiad from the nineteenth century to the rhetoric of Marcus Garvey, Martin Luther King Jr., Ralph Ellison, and other twentieth-century figures. David Howard-Pitney's *The Afro-American Jeremiad: Appeals for Justice in America* (1990) builds on Moses's work and focuses on major figures, beginning with Frederick Douglass and concluding with W. E. B. Du Bois, Mary McLeod Bethune, and King. King, Du Bois, and Malcolm X as proponents of what Bradford Stull calls "emancipatory composition" are the focus of Stull's *Amid the Fall, Dreaming of Eden* (1999).

For additional references on nineteenth-century African American rhetoric, see the bibliographies accompanying the Introduction to Part Five and the headnotes for Maria W. Stewart and Frederick Douglass.

From *The Signifying Monkey* and the Language of Signifyin(g): Rhetorical Difference and the Orders of Meaning

Some of the best dozens players were girls. . . . before you can signify you got to be able to rap. . . . Signifying allowed you a choice—you could either make a cat feel good or bad. If you had just destroyed someone or if they were down already, signifying could help them over. Signifying was also a way of expressing your own feelings. . . . Signifying at its best can be heard when the brothers are exchanging tales.

—H. RAP BROWN

*And they asked me right at Christmas
If my blackness, would it rub off?
I said, ask your Mama.*

—LANGSTON HUGHES

I

If Esu-Elegbara¹ stands as the central figure of the Ifa system of interpretation,² then his Afro-American relative, the Signifying Monkey, stands as the

¹In the pan-African Yoruba mythologies, Esu-Elegbara is the messenger-god. Esu speaks the languages of gods and men; he is a trickster and a self-consciously rhetorical verbal virtuoso. [Ed.]

²Ifa is the Yoruba god who gave men the cryptic verses that bear his name. The priests divine the will of the gods by chanting the Odu Ifa, the divination poems. [Ed.]

rhetorical principle in Afro-American vernacular discourse. Whereas my concern in Chapter 1 was with the elaboration of an indigenous black hermeneutical principle, my concern in this chapter is to define a carefully structured system of rhetoric, traditional Afro-American figures of signification, and then to show how a curious figure becomes the trope of literary revision itself. My movement, then, is from hermeneutics to rhetoric and semantics, only to return to hermeneutics once again.

Thinking about the black concept of Signifyin(g) is a bit like stumbling unaware into a hall of mirrors: the sign itself appears to be doubled, at the very least, and (re)doubled upon ever closer examination. It is not the sign itself, however, which has multiplied. If orientation prevails over madness, we soon realize that only the signifier has been doubled and (re)doubled, a signifier in this instance that is silent, a "sound-image" as Saussure defines the signifier, but a "sound-image" *sans* the sound. The difficulty that we experience when thinking about the nature of the visual (re)doubling at work in a hall of mirrors is analogous to the difficulty we shall encounter in relating the black linguistic sign, "Signification," to the standard English sign,

“signification.” This level of conceptual difficulty stems from—indeed, seems to have been intentionally inscribed within—the selection of the signifier “Signification” to represent a concept remarkably distinct from that concept represented by the standard English signifier, “signification.” For the standard English word is a homonym of the Afro-American vernacular word. And, to compound the dizziness and the giddiness that we must experience in the vertiginous movement between these two “identical” signifiers, these two homonyms have everything to do with each other and, then again, absolutely nothing.³

In the extraordinarily complex relationship between the two homonyms, we both enact and recapitulate the received, classic confrontation between Afro-American culture and American culture. This confrontation is both political and metaphysical. We might profit somewhat by thinking of the curiously ironic relationship between these signifiers as a confrontation defined by the politics of semantics, semantics here defined as the study of the classification of changes in the signification of words, and more especially the relationships between theories of denotation and naming, as well as connotation and ambiguity. The relationship that black “Signification” bears to the English “signification” is, paradoxically, a relation of difference inscribed within a relation of identity. That, it seems to me, is inherent in the nature of metaphorical substitution and the pun, particularly those rhetorical tropes dependent on the repetition of a word with a change denoted by a difference in sound or in a letter (agnominatio), and in homonymic puns (antanaclasis). These tropes luxuriate in the chaos of ambiguity that repetition and difference (be that apparent difference centered in the signifier or in the signified, in the “sound-image” or in the concept) yield in either an aural or a visual pun.

This dreaded, if playful, condition of ambiguity would, of course, disappear in the instance at hand if the two signs under examination did not bear the same signifier. If the two signs were designated by two different signifiers, we could es-

cape our sense of vertigo handily. We cannot, however, precisely because the antanaclasis that I am describing turns upon the very identity of these signifiers, and the play of differences generated by the unrelated concepts (the signifieds) for which they stand.

What we are privileged to witness here is the (political, semantic) confrontation between two parallel discursive universes: the black American linguistic circle and the white. We see here the most subtle and perhaps the most profound trace of an extended engagement between two separate and distinct yet profoundly—even inextricably—related orders of meaning dependent precisely as much for their confrontation on relations of identity, manifested in the signifier, as on their relations of difference, manifested at the level of the signified. We bear witness here to a protracted argument over the nature of the sign itself, with the black vernacular discourse proffering its critique of the sign as the difference that blackness makes within the larger political culture and its historical unconscious.

“Signification” and “signification” create a noisy disturbance in silence, at the level of the signifier. Derrida’s neologism, “différance,” in its relation to “difference,” is a marvelous example of agnominatio, or repetition of a word with an alteration of both one letter and a sound. In this clever manner, Derrida’s term resists reduction to self-identical meaning. The curiously suspended relationship between the French verbs *to differ* and *to defer* both defines Derrida’s revision of Saussure’s notion of language as a relation of differences and embodies his revision which “in its own unstable meaning [is] a graphic example of the process at work.”⁴

I have encountered great difficulty in arriving at a suitably similar gesture. I have decided to signify the difference between these two signifiers by writing the black signifier in upper case (“Signification”) and the white signifier in lower case (“signification”). Similarly, I have selected to write the black term with a bracketed final g (“Signifyin[g]”) and the white term as “signify-

³Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, ed. Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye, trans. Wade Baskin (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966). p. 66ff. [Au.]

⁴For a superbly lucid discussion, see Christopher Norris, *Deconstruction: Theory and Practice* (New York: Methuen, 1982), p. 32. [Au.]

ing.” The bracketed *g* enables me to connote the fact that this word is, more often than not, spoken by black people without the final *g* as “signifyin’.” This arbitrary and idiosyncratic convention also enables me to recall the fact that whatever historical community of Afro-Americans coined this usage did so in the vernacular as spoken, in contradistinction to the literate written usages of the standard English “shadowed” term. The bracketed or aurally erased *g*, like the discourse of black English and dialect poetry generally, stands as the trace of black difference in a remarkably sophisticated and fascinating (re)naming ritual graphically in evidence here. Perhaps replacing with a visual sign the *g* erased in the black vernacular shall, like Derrida’s neologism, serve both to avoid confusion and the reduction of these two distinct sets of homonyms to a false identity and to stand as the sign of a (black) Signifyin[*g*] difference itself. The absent *g* is a figure for the Signifyin[*g*] black difference.

Let me attempt to account for the complexities of this (re)naming ritual, which apparently took place anonymously and unrecorded in antebellum America. Some black genius or a community of witty and sensitive speakers emptied the signifier “signification” of its received concepts and filled this empty signifier with their own concepts. By doing so, by supplanting the received, standard English concept associated by (white) convention with this particular signifier, they (un)wittingly disrupted the nature of the sign = *signified/signifier* equation itself. I bracket *wittingly* with a negation precisely because origins are always occasions for speculation. Nevertheless, I tend to think, or I wish to believe, that this guerrilla action occurred intentionally on this term, because of the very concept with which it is associated in standard English.

“Signification,” in standard English, denotes the meaning that a term conveys, or is intended to convey. It is a fundamental term in the standard English semantic order. Since Saussure, at least, the three terms *signification*, *signifier*, *signified* have been fundamental to our thinking about general linguistics and, of late, about criticism specifically. These neologisms in the academic-critical community are homonyms of terms in the black vernacular tradition perhaps two cen-

turies old. By supplanting the received term’s associated concept, the black vernacular tradition created a homonymic pun of the profoundest sort, thereby making its sense of difference from the rest of the English community of speakers. Their complex act of language Signifies upon both formal language use and its conventions, conventions established, at least officially, by middle-class white people.

This political offensive could have been mounted against all sorts of standard English terms—and, indeed, it was. I am thinking here of terms such as *down*, *nigger*, *baby*, and *cool*, which snobbishly tend to be written about as “dialect” words or “slang.” There are scores of such revised words. But to revise the term *signification* is to select a term that represents the nature of the process of meaning-creation and its representation. Few other selections could have been so dramatic, or so meaningful. We are witnessing here a profound disruption at the level of the signifier, precisely because of the relationship of identity that obtains between the two apparently equivalent terms. This disturbance, of course, has been effected at the level of the conceptual, or the signified. How accidental, unconscious, or unintentional (or any other code-word substitution for the absence of reason) could such a brilliant challenge at the semantic level be? To revise the received sign (quotient) literally accounted for in the relation represented by *signified/signifier* at its most apparently denotative level is to critique the nature of (white) meaning itself, to challenge through a literal critique of the sign the meaning of meaning. What did/do black people signify in a society in which they were intentionally introduced as the subjugated, as the enslaved cipher? Nothing on the *x* axis of white signification, and everything on the *y* axis of blackness.⁵

It is not sufficient merely to reveal that black people colonized a white sign. A level of meta-discourse is at work in this process. If the signifier stands disrupted by the shift in concepts denoted and connoted, then we are engaged at the

⁵See my discussion of the word “down” in *Figures in Black: Words, Signs, and the Racial Self* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986). [Au.]

level of meaning itself, at the semantic register. Black people vacated this signifier, then—incredibly—substituted as its concept a signified that stands for the system of rhetorical strategies peculiar to their own vernacular tradition. Rhetoric, then, has supplanted semantics in this most literal meta-confrontation within the structure of the sign. Some historical black community of speakers most certainly struck directly at the heart of the matter, on the ground of the referent itself, thereby demonstrating that even (or especially) the concepts signified by the signifier are themselves arbitrary. By an act of will, some historically nameless community of remarkably self-conscious speakers of English defined their ontological status as one of profound differences vis-à-vis the rest of society. What's more, they undertook this act of self-definition, implicit in a (re)naming ritual, within the process of signification that the English language had inscribed for itself. Contrary to an assertion that Saussure makes in his *Course*, “the masses” did indeed “have [a] voice in the matter” and replaced the sign “chosen by language.” We shall return to Saussure’s discussion of the “Immutability and Mutability of the Sign” below.⁶

Before critiquing Saussure’s discussion of signification, however, perhaps I can help to clarify an inherently confusing discussion by representing the black critique of the sign, the replacement of the semantic register by the rhetorical, in Chart 1.

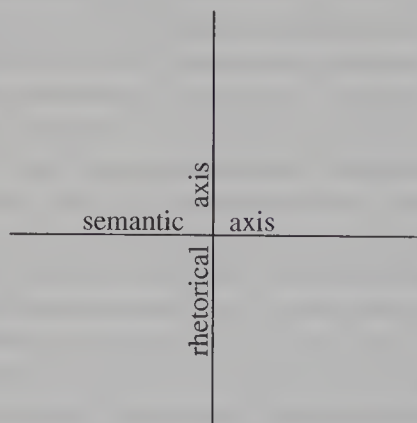


Chart 1. The Sign, “Signification”

⁶Saussure, *Course*, p. 71. [Au.]

Whereas in standard English usage signification can be represented *signified/signifier* and that which is signified is a concept, or concepts, in the black homonym, this relation of semantics has been supplanted by a relation of rhetoric, wherein the signifier “Signification” is associated with a concept that stands for the rhetorical structures of the black vernacular, the trope of tropes that is Signifyin(g). Accordingly, if in standard English

$$\text{signification} = \frac{\text{signified}}{\text{signifier}} = \frac{\text{concept}}{\text{sound-image}},$$

then in the black vernacular,

$$\text{Signification} = \frac{\text{rhetorical figures}}{\text{signifier}}.$$

In other words, the relation of signification itself has been critiqued by a black act of (re)doubling. The black term of *Signifyin(g)* has as its associated concept all of the rhetorical figures subsumed in the term *Signify*. To Signify, in other words, is to engage in certain rhetorical games, which I shall define and then compare to standard Western figures [later], in Chart 4.

It would be erroneous even to suggest that a concept can be erased from its relation to a signifier. A signifier is never, ultimately, able to escape its received meanings, or concepts, no matter how dramatically such concepts might change through time. In fact, homonymic puns antanacsis, turn precisely upon received meanings and their deferral by a vertical substitution. All homonyms depend on the absent presence of received concepts associated with a signifier.

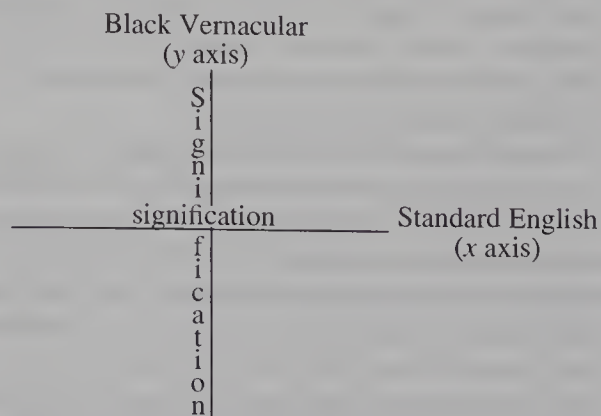


Chart 2. Black and Standard English

What does this mean in the instance of the black homonym *Signifyin(g)*, the shadowy revision of the white term? It means, it seems to me, that the signifier “Signification” has remained identical in spelling to its white counterpart to demonstrate, first, that a simultaneous, but negated, parallel discursive (ontological, political) universe exists within the larger white discursive universe, like the matter-and-antimatter fabulations so common to science fiction. It also seems apparent that retaining the identical signifier argues strongly that the most poignant level of black-white differences is that of meaning, of “signification” in the most literal sense. The play of doubles here occurs precisely on the axes, on the threshold or at Esu’s crossroads, where black and white semantic fields collide. We can imagine the relationship of these two discursive universes as depicted in Chart 2. Parallel universes, then, is an inappropriate metaphor; *perpendicular* universes is perhaps a more accurate visual description.

The English-language use of *signification* refers to the chain of signifiers that configure horizontally, on the syntagmatic axis. Whereas signification operates and can be represented on a syntagmatic or horizontal axis, *Signifyin(g)* operates and can be represented on a paradigmatic or vertical axis. *Signifyin(g)* concerns itself with that which is suspended, vertically: the chaos of what Saussure calls “associative relations,” which we can represent as the playful puns on a word that occupy the paradigmatic axis of language and which a speaker draws on for figurative substitutions. These substitutions in *Signifyin(g)* tend to be humorous, or function to name a person or a situation in a telling manner. Whereas signification depends for order and coherence on the exclusion of unconscious associations which any given word yields at any given time, *Signification* luxuriates in the inclusion of the free play of these associative rhetorical and semantic relations. Jacques Lacan calls these vertically suspended associations “a whole articulation of relevant contexts,” by which he means all of the associations that a signifier carries from other contexts, which must be deleted, ignored, or censored “for this signifier to be lined up with a signified to produce a specific

meaning.”⁷ Everything that must be excluded for meaning to remain coherent and linear comes to bear in the process of *Signifyin(g)*. As Anthony Easthope puts the matter in *Poetry as Discourse*,

All of these absences and dependencies which have to be barred in order for meaning to take place constitute what Lacan designates as the *Other*. The presence of meaning along the syntagmatic chain necessarily depends upon the absence of the Other, the rest of language, from the syntagmatic chain.⁸

Signifyin(g), in Lacan’s sense, is the Other of discourse; but it also constitutes the black Other’s discourse as its rhetoric. Ironically, rather than a proclamation of emancipation from the white person’s standard English, the symbiotic relationship between the black and white, between the syntagmatic and paradigmatic axes, between black vernacular discourse and standard English discourse, is underscored here, and signified, by the vertiginous relationship between the terms *signification* and *Signification*, each of which is dependent on the other. We can, then, think of American discourse as both the opposition between and the ironic identity of the movement, the very vertigo, that we encounter in a mental shift between the two terms.

The process of semantic appropriation in evidence in the relation of *Signification* to *signification* has been aptly described by Mikhail Bakhtin as a double-voiced word, that is, a word or utterance, in this context, decolonized for the black’s purposes “by inserting a new semantic orientation into a word which already has—and retains—its own orientation.” Although I shall return later in this chapter to a fuller consideration of this notion of double-voiced words and double-voiced discourse, Gary Saul Morson’s elaboration on Bakhtin’s concept helps to clarify what Bakhtin implies:

The audience of a double-voiced word is therefore meant to hear both a version of the original utterance as the embodiment of its speaker’s point of view (or “semantic position”) and the second speaker’s evaluation of that utterance from a different point of

⁷Jacques Lacan, *Ecrits: A Selection*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Norton, 1977), p. 154. [Au.]

⁸Anthony Easthope, *Poetry as Discourse* (New York: Methuen, 1983), p. 37. [Au.]

view. I find it helpful to picture a double-voiced word as a special sort of palimpsest in which the uppermost inscription is a commentary on the one beneath it, which the reader (or audience) can know only by reading through the commentary that obscures in the very process of evaluating.⁹

The motivated troping effect of the disruption of the semantic orientation of signification by the black vernacular depends on the homonymic relation of the white term to the black. The sign, in other words, has been demonstrated to be mutable.

Bakhtin's notion, then, implicitly critiques Saussure's position that

the signifier . . . is fixed, not free, with respect to the linguistic community that uses it. The masses have no voice in the matter, and the signifier chosen by language could be replaced by no other. . . . [The] community itself cannot control so much as a single word; it is bound to the existing language.¹⁰

Saussure, of course, proceeds to account for "shift(s) in the relationship between the signified and the signifier," shifts in time that result directly from "the arbitrary nature of the sign." But, simultaneously, Saussure denies what he terms to be "arbitrary substitution": "A particular language-state is always the product of historical forces, and these forces explain why the sign is unchangeable, i.e., why it resists any arbitrary substitution." The double-voiced relation of the two terms under analysis here argues forcefully that "the masses," especially in a multiethnic society, draw on "arbitrary substitution" freely, to disrupt the signifier by displacing its signified in an intentional act of will. Signifyin(g) is black double-voicedness; because it always entails formal revision and an intertextual relation, and because of Esu's double-voiced representation in art, I find it an ideal metaphor for black literary criticism, for the formal manner in which texts seem concerned to address their antecedents. Repetition, with a signal difference, is fundamental to the nature of Signifyin(g), as we shall see.¹¹

⁹Quoted in Gary Saul Morson, *The Boundaries of Genre: Dostoevsky's "Diary of a Writer" and the Traditions of Literary Utopia* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), p. 108. [Au.]

¹⁰Saussure, *Course*, p. 71. [Au.]

¹¹*Ibid.*, pp. 75, 72. [Au.]

II

The Poetry of Signification

The literature or tales of the Signifying Monkey and his peculiar language, Signifyin(g), is both extensive and polemical, involving as it does assertions and counterassertions about the relationship that Signifyin(g) bears to several other black tropes. I am not interested in either recapitulating or contributing to this highly specialized debate over whether or not speech act *x* is an example of this black trope or that. On the contrary, I wish to argue that Signifyin(g) is the black trope of tropes, the figure for black rhetorical figures. I wish to do so because this represents my understanding of the value assigned to Signifyin(g) by the members of the Afro-American speech community, of which I have been a signifier for quite some time. While the role of a certain aspect of linguistics study is to discern the shape and function of each tree that stands in the verbal terrain, my role as a critic, in this book at least, is to define the contours of the discursive forest or, perhaps more appropriately, of the jungle.¹²

Tales of the Signifying Monkey seem to have had their origins in slavery. Hundreds of these have been recorded since the early twentieth century. In black music, Jazz Gillum, Count Basie, Oscar Peterson, the Big Three Trio, Oscar Brown, Jr., Little Willie Dixon, Snatch and the Poontangs, Otis Redding, Wilson Pickett, Smokey Joe Whitfield, and Johnny Otis—among others—have recorded songs about either the Signifying Monkey or, simply, Signifyin(g). The theory of Signifyin(g) is arrived at by explicating these black cultural forms. Signifyin(g) in jazz performances and in the play of black language games is a mode of formal revision, it depends for its effects on troping, it is often characterized by pastiche, and, most crucially, it turns on repetition of formal structures and their differences. Learning how to Signify is often part of our adolescent education.

¹²See, for example, Claudia Mitchell-Kernan, *Language Behavior in a Black Urban Community* (Monographs of the Language-Behavior Laboratory, University of California, Berkeley, No. 2), pp. 88–90; and Roger D. Abrahams, *Talking Black* (Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House Publishers, 1976), pp. 50–51. [Au.]

Of the many colorful figures that appear in black vernacular tales, perhaps only Tar Baby is as enigmatic and compelling as is that oxymoron, the Signifying Monkey.¹³ The ironic reversal of a received racist image of the black as simianlike, the Signifying Monkey, he who dwells at the margins of discourse, ever punning, ever troping, ever embodying the ambiguities of language, is our trope for repetition and revision, indeed our trope of chiasmus, repeating and reversing simultaneously as he does in one deft discursive act. If Vico and Burke, or Nietzsche, de Man, and Bloom, are correct in identifying four and six “master tropes,” then we might think of these as the “master’s tropes,” and of Signifyin(g) as the slave’s trope, the trope of tropes, as Bloom characterizes metalepsis, “a trope-reversing trope, a figure of a figure.” Signifyin(g) is a trope in which are subsumed several other rhetorical tropes, including metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, and irony (the master tropes), and also hyperbole, litotes, and metalepsis (Bloom’s supplement to Burke). To this list we could easily add aporia, chiasmus, and catechresis, all of which are used in the ritual of Signifyin(g).

Signifyin(g), it is clear, means in black discourse modes of figuration themselves. When one Signifies, as Kimberly W. Benston puns, one “tropes-a-dope.” Indeed, the black tradition itself has its own subdivision of Signifyin(g), which we could readily identify with the figures of signification received from classical and medieval rhetoric, as Bloom has done with his “map of misprision” and which we could, appropriately enough, label a “rap of misprision.” The black rhetorical tropes, subsumed under Signifyin(g), would include marking, loud-talking, testifying, calling out (of one’s name), sounding, rapping, playing the dozens, and so on.¹⁴ [See Chart 4, p. 1580.]

¹³On Tar Baby, see Ralph Ellison, “Hidden Name and Complex Fate: A Writer’s Experience in the United States,” *Shadow and Act* (New York: Random House, 1964), p. 147; and Toni Morrison, *Tar Baby* (New York: Knopf, 1981). [Au.]

¹⁴Geneva Smitherman defines these and other black tropes, then traces their use in several black texts. Smitherman’s work, like that of Mitchell-Kernan and Abrahams, is especially significant for literary theory. See Geneva Smitherman, *Talkin and Testifyin: The Language of Black America* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977), pp. 101–67. And on signi-

The Esu figures, among the Yoruba systems of thought in Benin and Nigeria, Brazil and Cuba, Haiti and New Orleans, are divine: they are gods who function in sacred myths, as do characters in a narrative. Esu’s functional equivalent in Afro-American profane discourse is the Signifying Monkey, a figure who would seem to be distinctly Afro-American, probably derived from Cuban mythology which generally depicts Echu-Elegua¹⁵ with a monkey at his side. Unlike his Pan-African Esu cousins, the Signifying Monkey exists not primarily as a character in a narrative but rather as a vehicle for narration itself. Like Esu, however, the Signifying Monkey stands as the figure of an oral writing within black vernacular language rituals. It is from the corpus of mythological narratives that Signifyin(g) derives. The Afro-American rhetorical strategy of Signifyin(g) is a rhetorical practice that is not engaged in the game of information-giving, as Wittgenstein said of poetry. Signifyin(g) turns on the play and chain of signifiers, and not on some supposedly transcendent signified. As anthropologists demonstrate, the Signifying Monkey is often called the Signifier, he who wreaks havoc upon the Signified. One is signified upon by the signifier. He is indeed the “signifier as such,” in Kristeva’s phrase, “a presence that precedes the signification of object or emotion.”

fying as a rhetorical trope, see Smitherman, *Talkin and Testifyin*, pp. 101–67; Thomas Kochman, *Rappin’ and Stylin’ Out: Communication in Urban Black America* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1972); Thomas Kochman, “Rappin’ in the Black Ghetto,” *Trans-Action* 6 (February 1969): 32; Alan Dundes, *Mother Wit from the Laughing Barrel: Readings in the Interpretation of Afro-American Folklore* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1973), p. 310; Ethen M. Albert, “‘Rhetoric,’ ‘Logic,’ and ‘Poetics’ in Burundi: Culture Patterning of Speech Behavior,” in John J. Gumperz and Dell Hymes, eds., *The Ethnography of Communication, American Anthropologist* 66 (1964): 35–54. One example of signifying can be gleaned from the following anecdote. While writing this essay, I asked a colleague, Dwight Andrews, if he had heard of the Signifying Monkey as a child. “Why, no,” he replied intently. “I never heard of the Signifying Monkey until I came to Yale and read about him in a book.” I had been signified upon. If I had responded to Andrews, “I know what you mean: your Mama read to me from that same book the last time I was in Detroit.” I would have signified upon him in return. [Au.]

¹⁵The Cuban variant of Esu-Elegbara. [Ed.]

Alan Dundes's suggestion that the origins of Signifyin(g) could "lie in African rhetoric" is not as far-fetched as one might think. I have argued for a consideration of a line of descent for the Signifying Monkey from his Pan-African cousin, Esu-Elegbara. I have done so not because I have unearthed archeological evidence of a transmission process, but because of their functional equivalency as figures of rhetorical strategies and of interpretation. Esu, as I have attempted to show in Chapter 1, is the Yoruba figure of writing within an oral system. Like Esu, the Signifying Monkey exists, or is figured, in a densely structured discursive universe, one absolutely dependent on the play of differences. The poetry in which the Monkey's antics unfold is a signifying system: in marked contrast to the supposed transparency of normal speech, the poetry of these tales turns upon the free play of language itself, upon the displacement of meanings, precisely because it draws attention to its rhetorical structures and strategies and thereby draws attention to the force of the signifier.¹⁶

In opposition to the apparent transparency of speech, this poetry calls attention to itself as an extended linguistic sign, one composed of various forms of the signifiers peculiar to the black vernacular. Meaning, in these poems, is not proffered; it is deferred, and it is deferred because the relationship between intent and meaning, between the speech act and its comprehension, is skewed by the figures of rhetoric or signification of which these poems consist. This set of skewed relationships creates a measure of undecidability within the discourse, such that it must be interpreted or decoded by careful attention to its play of differences. Never can this interpretation be definitive, given the ambiguity at work in its rhetorical structures. The speech of the Monkey exists as a sequence of signifiers, effecting meanings through their differential relation and calling attention to itself by rhyming, repetition, and several of the rhetorical figures used in larger cultural language games. Signifyin(g) epitomizes all

¹⁶Julia Kristeva, *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), p. 31; Dundes, editor's note, *Mother Wit from the Laughing Barrel*, p. 310. [Au.]

of the rhetorical play in the black vernacular. Its self-consciously open rhetorical status, then, functions as a kind of writing, wherein rhetoric is the writing of speech, of oral discourse. If Esu is the figure of writing in Ifa, the Signifying Monkey is the figure of a black rhetoric in the Afro-American speech community. He exists to embody the figures of speech characteristic to the black vernacular. He is the principle of self-consciousness in the black vernacular, the meta-figure itself. Given the play of doubles at work in the black appropriation of the English-language term that denotes relations of meaning, the Signifying Monkey and his language of Signifyin(g) are extraordinary conventions, with Signification standing as the term for black rhetoric, the obscuring of apparent meaning.

Scholars have for some time commented on the peculiar use of the word *Signifyin(g)* in black discourse. Though sharing some connotations with the standard English-language word, *Signifyin(g)* has rather unique definitions in black discourse. While we shall consider these definitions later in this chapter, it is useful to look briefly at one suggested by Robert D. Abrahams:

Signifying seems to be a Negro term, in use if not in origin. It can mean any of a number of things; in the case of the toast about the signifying monkey, it certainly refers to the trickster's ability to talk with great innuendo, to carp, cajole, needle, and lie. It can mean in other instances the propensity to talk around a subject, never quite coming to the point. It can mean making fun of a person or situation. Also it can denote speaking with the hands and eyes, and in this respect encompasses a whole complex of expressions and gestures. Thus it is signifying to stir up a fight between neighbors by telling stories; it is signifying to make fun of a policeman by parodying his motions behind his back; it is signifying to ask for a piece of cake by saying, "my brother needs a piece a cake."¹⁷

¹⁷Roger D. Abrahams, *Deep Down in the Jungle: Negro Narrative Folklore from the Streets of Philadelphia* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing, 1970), pp. 51-52, 66-67, 264. Abrahams's awareness of the need to define uniquely black significations is exemplary. As early as 1964, when he published the first edition of *Deep Down in the Jungle*, he saw fit to add a glossary, as an appendix of "Unusual Terms and Expressions," a title which unfortunately suggests the social scientist's apologia. [Au.]

Essentially, Abrahams continues, Signifyin(g) is a “*technique* of indirect argument or persuasion,” “a language of implication,” “to imply, goad, beg, boast, by *indirect* verbal or gestural means.” “The name ‘signifying,’” he concludes, “shows the monkey to be a trickster, signifying being the language of trickery, that set of words or gestures achieving Hamlet’s ‘direction through indirection.’” The Monkey, in short, is not only a master of technique, as Abrahams concludes; he *is* technique, or style, or the literariness of literary language; he is the great Signifier. In this sense, one does not signify something; rather, one signifies in *some way*.¹⁸

The Signifying Monkey poems, like the *ese* of the Yoruba *Odu*,¹⁹ reward careful explication; this sort of extensive practical criticism, however, is outside the scope of this book, as fascinating as it might be. The stanzaic form of this poetry can vary a great deal, as is readily apparent from the selections listed in this book’s appendix. The most common structure is the rhyming couplet in an a-a-b-b pattern. Even within the same poem, however, this pattern can be modified, as in the stanzas cited below, where an a-a-b-c-b and an a-b-c-b pattern obtain (followed in the latter example by an a-b-a concluding “moral”). Rhyming is extraordinarily important in the production of the humorous effect that these poems have and has become the signal indication of expertise among the street poets who narrate them. The rhythm of the poems is also crucial to the desired effect, an effect in part reinforced by their quasimusical nature of delivery.

The Monkey tales generally have been recorded from male poets, in predominantly male settings such as barrooms, pool halls, and street corners. Accordingly, given their nature as rituals of insult and naming, recorded versions have a phallogocentric bias. As we shall see below, however, Signifyin(g) itself can be, and is, undertaken with equal facility and effect by women as well as men.²⁰

Whereas only a relatively small number of people are accomplished narrators of Signifying Monkey tales, a remarkably large number of Afro-Americans are familiar with, and practice, modes of Signifyin(g), defined in this instance as the rubric for various sorts of playful language games, some aimed at reconstituting the subject while others are aimed at demystifying a subject. The poems are of interest to my argument primarily in three ways: as the source of the rhetorical act of Signification, as examples of the black tropes subsumed within the trope of Signifyin(g), and, crucially, as evidence for the valorization of the signifier. One of these subsumed tropes is concerned with repetition and difference; it is the trope, that of naming, which I have drawn upon as a metaphor for black intertextuality and, therefore, for formal literary history. Before discussing this process of revision, however, it is useful to demonstrate the formulaic structure of the Monkey tales and then to compare several attempts by linguists to define the nature and function of Signifyin(g). While other scholars have interpreted the Monkey tales against the binary opposition between black and white in American society, to do so is to ignore the *trinary* forces of the Monkey, the Lion, and the Elephant. To read the Monkey tales as a simple allegory of the black’s political oppression is to ignore the hulking presence of the Elephant, the crucial third term of the depicted action. To note this is not to argue that the tales are not allegorical or that their import is not political. Rather, this is to note that to reduce such complex structures of meaning to a simple two-term opposition (white versus black) is to fail to account for the strength of the Elephant.

There are many versions of the toasts of the Signifying Monkey, most of which commence with a variant of the following formulaic lines:

Deep down in the jungle so they say
 There’s a signifying monkey down the way
 There hadn’t been no disturbin’ in the jungle for
 quite a bit,
 For up jumped the monkey in the tree one day and
 laughed
 “I guess I’ll start some shit.”²¹

²¹Abrahams, p. 113. In the second line of the stanza, “motherfucker” is often substituted for “monkey.” [Au.]

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 66–67, 264. (Emphasis added.) [Au.]

¹⁹The *Odu Ifa* are the 256 cryptic verses given by the god Ifa. These are arranged into *ese*, the poems uttered by the priests in a divination session. [Ed.]

²⁰Gloria Hall is a well-known professional storyteller, and she includes in her repertoire the Signifying Monkey poems. [Au.]

Endings, too, tend toward the formulaic, as in the following:

“Monkey,” said the Lion
Beat to his unbooted knees,
“You and your signifying children
Better stay up in the trees.”
Which is why today
Monkey does his signifying
A-way-up out of the way.²²

In the narrative poems, the Signifying Monkey invariably repeats to his friend, the Lion, some insult purportedly generated by their mutual friend, the Elephant. The Monkey, however, speaks figuratively. The Lion, indignant and outraged, demands an apology of the Elephant, who refuses and then trounces the Lion. The Lion, realizing that his mistake was to take the Monkey literally, returns to trounce the Monkey. It is this relationship between the literal and the figurative, and the dire consequences of their confusion, which is the most striking repeated element of these tales. The Monkey’s trick depends on the Lion’s inability to mediate between these two poles of signification, of meaning. There is a profound lesson about reading here. While we cannot undertake a full reading of the poetry of the Signifying Monkey, we can, however, identify the implications for black vernacular discourse that are encoded in this poetic diction.

Signifyin(g) as a rhetorical strategy emanates directly from the Signifying Monkey tales. The relationship between these poems and the related, but independent, mode of formal language use must be made clear. The action represented in Monkey tales turns upon the action of three stock characters—the Monkey, the Lion, and the Elephant—who are bound together in a trinary relationship. The Monkey—a trickster figure, like Esu, who is full of guile, who tells lies,²³ and who is a rhetorical genius—is intent on demystifying the Lion’s self-imposed status as King of the Jungle. The Monkey, clearly, is no match for the Lion’s physical prowess: the Elephant is,

²²“The Signifying Monkey,” *Book of Negro Folklore*, ed. Langston Hughes and Arna Bontemps (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1958), pp. 365–66. [Au.]

²³*Lies* is a traditional Afro-American word for figurative discourse, tales, or stories. [Au.]

however. The Monkey’s task, then, is to trick the Lion into tangling with the Elephant, who is the true King of the Jungle for everyone else in the animal kingdom. This the Monkey does with a rhetorical trick, a trick of mediation. Indeed, the Monkey is a term of (anti)mediation, as are all trickster figures, between two forces he seeks to oppose for his own contentious purposes, and then to reconcile.

The Monkey’s trick of mediation—or, more properly, antimeditation—is a play on language use. He succeeds in reversing the Lion’s status by supposedly repeating a series of insults purportedly uttered by the Elephant about the Lion’s closest relatives (his wife, his “mama,” his “grandmama, too!”). These intimations of sexual use, abuse, and violation constitute one well-known and commonly used mode of Signifyin(g).²⁴ The Lion, who perceives his shaky, self-imposed status as having been challenged, rushes off in outrage to find the Elephant so that he might redress his grievances and preserve appearances. The self-confident but unassuming Elephant, after politely suggesting to the Lion that he must be mistaken, proceeds to trounce the Lion firmly. The Lion, clearly defeated and dethroned from his self-claimed title, returns to find the Monkey so that he can at the very least exact some sort of physical satisfaction and thereby restore his image somewhat as the impregnable fortress-in-waiting that he so urgently wishes to be. The Monkey, absolutely ecstatic at the success of his deception, commences to Signify upon the Lion, as in the following exchange:

Now the Lion come back more dead than alive,
that’s when the Monkey started some more of his
old signifying.

He said, “King of the Jungles, ain’t you a bitch,
you look like someone with the seven-year-itch.”

He said, “When you left [me earlier in the narra-
tive] the lightning’ flashed and the bells rung,
you look like something been damn near hung.”

He said, “Whup! Motherfucker, don’t you roar,
I’ll jump down on the ground and beat your funky
ass some more.”

Say, “While I’m swinging around in my tree,”
say, “I ought to swing over your chickenshit head
and pee.”

²⁴Also known as “the dozens.” [Au.]

Say, "Everytime me and my old lady be tryin' to get a little bit, here you come down through the jungle with that old 'Hi Ho' shit."²⁵

This is a salient example of Signifyin(g), wherein a verbal fusilade of insults spews forth in a structure of ritual rhetorical exchanges.

What happens next is also fascinating. The Monkey, at this point in the discourse deliriously pleased with himself, slips and falls to the ground:

Now the little old Monkey was dancing all around his feet slipped and his ass must have hit the ground.

The startled Monkey, now vulnerable, seeks to repair his relationship with the Lion in the most urgent manner. So he begs initially:

Like a streak of lightning and a bolt of white heat, the Lion was on the Monkey with all four feet. Monkey looks up with tears in his eyes, he says, "I'm sorry, brother Lion," say, "I apologize."

The Lion says, "Apologize, shit," say "I'm gonna stop you from your signifyin'." (p. 165)

The Lion now turns on the Monkey (only, incidentally, to be tricked rhetorically again), not because he has been severely beaten but because he has been beaten, then Signified upon. Another text substitutes the following direct speech of the Lion for that quoted immediately above:

[The Lion say], "I'm not gonna whip your ass 'cause that Elephant whipped mine, I'm gonna whip your ass for signifyin'." (p. 168)

The Monkey's trick of Signification has been to convince the hapless Lion that he has spoken literally, when all along he has spoken figuratively. The Lion, though slow-witted enough to repeat his misreading through the eternity of discourse, realizes that his status has been deflated, not because of the Elephant's brutal self-defense but because he fundamentally misunderstood the sta-

tus of the Monkey's statements. As still another poem represents this moment of clarity:

Said, "Monkey, I'm not kicking your ass for lyin', I'm kicking your hairy ass for signifyin'." (p. 172)²⁶

The black term *to lie*, as J. L. Dillard, Sterling A. Brown, and Zora Neale Hurston amply demonstrate, signifies tale-telling and constitutes a signal form of Signifyin(g).²⁷ But it is the naming ritual, in which the Monkey speaks aloud his editorial recapitulation of the previous events and their import, which even the dense Lion recognizes to be his most crucial threat, and against which he must defend himself, especially since the Lion returns to the Monkey's tree initially, at least, to impose *his* interpretation on his interchange with the Elephant:

Now the Lion looked up to the Monkey, "You know I didn't get beat."

He said, "You're a lyin' motherfucker, I had a ring-side seat."

The Lion looked up out of his one good eye, said, "Lord, let that skinny bastard fall out of that tree before I die." (p. 172)

Which he, of course, does, only (in most cases) to escape once again, to return to Signify on another day:

He said, "You might as well stop, there ain't no use tryin'

because no motherfucker is gonna stop me from signifyin'." (p. 163)

While the insult aspect of the Monkey's discourse is important to the tales, linguists have often failed to recognize that insult is not at all central to the nature of Signifyin(g); it is merely one mode of a rhetorical strategy that has several other modes, all of which share the use of troping. They have, in other words, mistaken the trees for the forest. For Signifyin(g) constitutes

²⁶A clear example of paradigmatic contiguity is the addition of the metonym "hairy" as an adjective for "ass" in the second quoted line. [Au.]

²⁷J. L. Dillard, *Lexicon of Black English* (New York: Continuum, 1977), pp. 130-41; Zora Neale Hurston, *Mules and Men* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1935), p. 37; Sterling A. Brown, "Folk Literature," in *The Negro Caravan* (1941; New York: Arno, 1969), p. 433. [Au.]

all of the language games, the figurative substitutions, the free associations held in abeyance by Lacan's or Saussure's paradigmatic axis, which disturb the seemingly coherent linearity of the syntagmatic chain of signifiers, in a way analogous to Freud's notion of how the unconscious relates to the conscious. The black vernacular trope of Signifyin(g) exists on this vertical axis, wherein the materiality of the signifier (the use of words as things, in Freud's terms of the discourse of the unconscious) not only ceases to be disguised but comes to bear prominently as the dominant mode of discourse.

I do not cite Freud idly here. *Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious* and *The Interpretation of Dreams* have informed my reading of Signifyin(g), just as have Lacan's reading of Freud and Saussure, and Derrida's emphasis on the "graphematic" aspect of even oral discourse. Just as jokes often draw upon the sounds of words rather than their meanings, so do the poetry of the Signifying Monkey and his language of Signifyin(g). Directing, or redirecting, attention from the semantic to the rhetorical level defines the relationship, as we have seen, between signification and Signification. It is this redirection that allows us to bring the repressed meanings of a word, the meanings that lie in wait on the paradigmatic axis of discourse, to bear upon the syntagmatic axis. This redirection toward sound, without regard for the scrambling of sense that it entails, defines what is meant by the materiality of the signifier, its thingness. As Freud explained, there is nothing necessarily infantile about this, although infants, of course, engage in such paradigmatic substitutions gleefully. Similarly, there is absolutely nothing infantile about Signifyin(g) either, except perhaps that we learn to use language in this way in adolescence, despite the strangely compulsive repetition of this adjective as a pejorative in the writings of linguists about Signifyin(g).

If Freud's analysis of the joke mechanism is a useful analogue for Signifyin(g), then so too is his analysis of the "dream-work," which by now is so familiar as not to warrant summary here. The Signifying Monkey poems can usefully be thought of as quasi-dreams, or daydreams, dream narratives in which monkeys, lions, and ele-

phants manifest their feelings in direct speech. Animals, of course, do not speak, except in dreams or in mythological discourse. As Freud puts it in *The Interpretation of Dreams*,

this symbolism is not peculiar to dreams, but is characteristic of unconscious ideation, in particular among the people, and it is to be found in *folklore*, and in popular myths, legends, linguistic idioms, proverbial wisdom and current jokes, to a *more complete extent* than in dreams.²⁸ (emphasis added)

The Signifying Monkey tales, in this sense, can be thought of as versions of daydreams, the Daydream of the Black Other, chiasitic fantasies of reversal of power relationships. One of the traditional Signifying poems names this relationship explicitly:

The Monkey laid up in a tree and he thought up a scheme,
and thought he'd try one of his fantastic dreams.
(p. 167)

To dream the fantastic is to dream the dream of the Other.

Because these tales originated in slavery, we do not have to seek very far to find typological analogues for these three terms of an allegorical structure. Since to do so, inescapably, is to be reductive, is to redirect attention away from the materiality of the signifier toward its supposed signified, I shall avoid repeating what other scholars have done at such great length. For the importance of the Signifying Monkey poems is their repeated stress on the sheer materiality, and the willful play, of the signifier itself. . . .

III

Signifyin(g): Definitions

Signifyin(g) is so fundamentally black, that is, it is such a familiar rhetorical practice, that one encounters the great resistance of inertia when writing about it. By inertia I am thinking here of the difficulty of rendering the implications of a concept that is so shared in one's culture as to have long ago become second nature to its users. The

²⁸Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, trans. James Strachey (1953; New York: Avon, 1965), p. 386. [Au.]

critic is bound to encounter Ralph Ellison's "Little Man at Chehaw Station."²⁹

Who is he? Ellison tells a marvelous story about himself when he was a student of music at Tuskegee. Having failed at an attempt to compensate for a lack of practice with a virtuoso style of performance, Ellison had sought some solace from the brilliant Hazel Harrison, one of his professors, with whom he had a sustained personal relationship. Instead of solace, however, his friend and mentor greeted his solicitation with a riddle. The exchange is relevant here:

"All right," she said, "you must *always* play your best, even if it's only in the waiting room at Chehaw Station, because in this country there'll always be a little man hidden behind the stove."

"A what?"

She nodded. "That's right," she said, "there'll always be the little man whom you don't expect, and he'll know the *music*, and the *tradition*, and the standards of *musicianship* required for whatever you set out to perform!"³⁰

This little man, who appears at such out-of-the-way places as the Chehaw Railroad Station, is, of course, a trickster figure surfacing when we least expect him, at a crossroads of destiny. This particular little man evokes Esu, the little man whose earthly dwelling place is the crossroads, as indicated in the following excerpts from a Yoruba poem:

Latopa, Esu little man
Latopa, Esu little man

Short, diminutive man
Tiny, little man.
He uses both hands to sniffle!
We call him master
He who sacrifices without inviting the manumitter
Will find his sacrifice unacceptable
Manumitter, I call on you.
Man by the roadside, bear our sacrifice to heaven
directly

²⁹Houston A. Baker's reading of Ellison's essay suggested the alternative reading that I am giving it here. See Baker, *Blues, Ideology and Afro-American Literature: A Vernacular Theory*, pp. 12–13, 64, 66. [Au.]

³⁰Ralph Ellison, "The Little Man at Chehaw Station," *The American Scholar* (winter 1977–78): 26. [Au.]

Master, and son of the owner of Idere
Who came from Idere to found the town,
The son of the energetic small fellow
The little man who cleans the gates for the masquerade.
Elderly spirit deity!³¹

The "little man" or woman is bound to surface when the literary critic begins to translate a signal concept from the black vernacular milieu into the discourse of critical theory. While critics write for writers and other critics, they also write—in this instance—for "little" men and women who dwell at the crossroads.

The critic of comparative black literature also dwells at a sort of crossroads, a discursive crossroads at which two languages meet, be these languages Yoruba and English, or Spanish and French, or even (perhaps especially) the black vernacular and standard English. This sort of critic would seem, like Esu, to live at the intersection of these crossroads. When writing a book that lifts one concept from two discrete discursive realms, only to compare them, the role of the critic as the trickster of discourse seems obvious. The concept of Signification is such an instance.

What Ellison's professor did to him was a salient example of Signifyin(g). His professor, subtle and loving as she must have been, Signified upon her young protégé so that he would never allow himself to succumb to the lure of the temptation to skip the necessary gates placed in the apprentice's path, gates which must somehow be opened or hurdled. Ellison was Signified upon because his dilemma was resolved through an allegory. This mode of rhetorical indirection, as Roger D. Abrahams and Claudia Mitchell-Kernan have defined it, is a signal aspect of Signifyin(g). Despite its highly motivated, often phallogocentric orientation, then, Signifyin(g), it is clear, can mean any number of modes of rhetorical play.

An article printed in the *New York Times* on April 17, 1983, entitled "Test on Street Language Says It's Not Grant in That Tomb," affords an

³¹*Oriki Esu*, quoted by Ayodele Ogundipe, *Esu Elegbara, the Yoruba God of Chance and Uncertainty: A Study in Yoruba Mythology*, 2 vols. Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University, 1978, Vol. II, pp. 12, 77. [Au.]

opportunity to expand somewhat on received definitions of Signifyin(g). The test referred to in the story's title is one created by "some high school students" in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, "who were dismayed at [McGraw-Hill's] own standardized tests." The examination, a multiple-choice intelligence test, is entitled "The In Your Face Test of No Certain Skills." It was created shortly after the students told their teacher, Rob Slater, that "they had trouble relating to a standardized achievement test." As Slater explains, "They were taking one of these tests one day and one of my students looked up and asked what the reason for the test was, because all it did to him was make him feel academically inferior. After the test was over," Slater concludes, "I asked them if they wanted to get even. They took it from there."³²

The students devised a test to measure vocabulary mastery in street language. They sent ten copies to McGraw-Hill, where eight employees took the test, only to score C's and D's. One of the test's questions, to which the *Times's* article title refers, is an example of the most familiar mode of Signifyin(g). The question reads, "Who is buried in Grant's tomb?" The proper response to this question is, "Your mama." It is difficult to explain why this response is so funny and why it is an example of Signifyin(g). "Your mama" jokes abound in black discourse, all the way from the field and the street to Langston Hughes's highly accomplished volume of poems, *Ask Your Mama*, from which an epigraph to this chapter has been taken. The presence in the students' test of this centuries-old black joke represents an inscription of the test's Signifyin(g) nature, because it serves as an echo of the significance of the test's title, "The In Your Face Test of No Certain Skills." The title Signifies in two ways. First, "In your face" is a standard Signifyin(g) retort, meaning that by which you intend to confine (or define) me I shall return to you squarely in your face. And second, the title is a parody (repetition motivated to underscore irony) of test titles such as "The Iowa Test of Basic Skills," which my generation was made to suffer through from the fourth grade through high school. The test it-

³²"Test on Street Language Says It's Not Grant in That Tomb," *New York Times*, April 17, 1983, p. 30. [Au.]

self, then, is an extended Signifyin(g) sign of repetition and reversal, a chiasmic slaying at the crossroads where two discursive units meet. As the *Times* article observes, "The students' point was that they did not look at things in the same way as the people at McGraw-Hill. The results of the 'In Your Face' test clearly show that McGraw-Hill and the ninth-graders at Hill High *do not speak the same language.*"³³

The language of blackness encodes and names its sense of independence through a rhetorical process that we might think of as the Signifyin(g) black difference. As early as the eighteenth century, commentators recorded black usages of Signification. Nicholas Cresswell, writing between 1774 and 1777, made the following entry in his journal: "In [the blacks'] songs they generally relate the usage they have received from their Masters or Mistresses in a very satirical stile [*sic*] and manner."³⁴ Cresswell strikes at the heart of the matter when he makes explicit "the usage" that the black slaves "have received," for black people frequently "enounce" their sense of difference by repetition with a signal difference. The eighteenth century abounds in comments from philosophers such as David Hume in "Of National Characters" and statesmen such as Thomas Jefferson in *Notes on the State of Virginia*, who argued that blacks were "imitative" rather than "creative." All along, however, black people were merely Signifyin(g) through a motivated repetition.

Frederick Douglass, a masterful Signifier himself, discusses this use of troping in his *Narrative* of 1845. Douglass, writing some seventy years after Cresswell, was an even more acute observer. Writing about the genesis of the lyrics of black song, Douglass noted the crucial role of the signifier in the determination of meaning:

[The slaves] would compose and sing as they went along, consulting neither time nor tune. The thought that came up, came out—if not in the *word*, in the *sound*;—and as frequently in the one

³³Langston Hughes, *Ask Your Mama: 12 Moods for Jazz* (New York: Knopf, 1971), p. 8; "Test on Street Language," p. 30. (Emphasis added.) [Au.]

³⁴*Journal of Nicholas Cresswell, 1774-1777*, ed. L. MacVeigh (New York: Dial Press, 1924), pp. 17-19. [Au.]

as in the other . . . they would sing, as a chorus, to words which to many seem *unmeaning jargon*, but which, nevertheless, were *full of meaning* to themselves.³⁵

Meaning, Douglass writes, was as determined by sound as by sense, whereby phonetic substitutions determined the shape of the songs. Moreover, the neologisms that Douglass's friends created, "unmeaning jargon" to standard English speakers, were "full of meaning" to the blacks, who were literally defining themselves in language, just as did Douglass and hundreds of other slave narrators. This, of course, is an example of both sorts of signification, black vernacular and standard English. Douglass continues his discussion by maintaining that his fellow slaves "would sing the most pathetic sentiment in the most rapturous tone, and the most rapturous sentiment in the most pathetic tone," a set of oppositions which led to the song's misreading by nonslaves. As Douglass admits,

I have often been utterly astonished, since I came to the north, to find persons who could speak of the singing, among slaves, as evidence of their contentment and happiness. It is impossible to conceive of a greater mistake.³⁶

This great mistake of interpretation occurred because the blacks were using antiphonal structures to reverse their apparent meaning, as a mode of encoding for self-preservation. Whereas black people under Cresswell's gaze Signified openly, those Douglass knew Signified protectively, leading to the misreading against which Douglass rails. As Douglass writes in his second autobiography, however, blacks often Signified directly, as in the following lyrics:

We raise de wheat,
Dey gib us de corn;
We bake de bread,
Dey gib us de cruss;
We sif de meal,
Dey gib us de huss;
We peal de meat,

³⁵Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave, Written by Himself* (1845; New York: Doubleday, 1963), pp. 13–14. (Emphasis added.) [Au.]

³⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 13, 15. [Au.]

Dey gib us de skin
And dat's de way
Dey takes us in.³⁷

As William Faux wrote in 1819, slaves commonly used lyrics to Signify upon their oppressors: "Their verse was their own, and abounding either in praise or satire intended for kind and unkind masters."³⁸

I cite these early references to motivated language use only to emphasize that black people have been Signifyin(g), without explicitly calling it that, since slavery, as we might expect. One ex-slave, Wash Wilson, in an interview he granted a member of the Federal Writers Project in the 1930s, implies that "sig'fication" was an especial term and practice for the slaves:

When de niggers go round singin' "Steal Away to Jesus," dat mean dere gwine be a 'ligious meetin' dat night. Dat de *sig'fication* of a meetin'. De masters 'fore and after freedom didn't like dem 'ligious meetin's, so us natcherly slips off at night, down in de bottoms or somewheres. Sometimes us sing and pray all night.³⁹

This usage, while close to its standard English shadow, recalls the sense of Signification as an indirect form of communication, as a troping. The report of Wilson's usage overlaps with Zora Neale Hurston's definition of *signify* in *Mules and Men*, published in 1935. These two usages of the words are among the earliest recorded; Wilson's usage argues for an origin of "sig'fication" in slavery, as does the allegorical structure of the Monkey poems and the nature of their figuration, both of which suggest a nineteenth-century provenance. I shall defer a fuller examination of Hurston's sense of Signification to Chapter 5. I wish to explore, in the remainder of this section of this chapter, received definitions of Signifyin(g) before elaborating my own use of this practice in literary criticism.

³⁷Frederick Douglass, *My Bondage and My Freedom* (New York: Orton & Mulligan, 1855), p. 253. [Au.]

³⁸William Faux, *Memorable Days in America* (London: W. Simpkins and R. Marshall, 1823), pp. 77–78. See also John Dixon Long, *Pictures of Slavery in Church and State* (Philadelphia: the author, 1857), pp. 197–98. [Au.]

³⁹George P. Rawick, ed., *The American Slave: A Composite Autobiography*, Vol. 5, Part 4, p. 198. [Au.]

We can gain some appreciation of the complexity of Signifyin(g) by examining various definitions of the concept. Dictionary definitions give us an idea of how unstable the concepts are that can be signified by Signifyin(g). Clarence Major's *Dictionary of Afro-American Slang* says that "Signify" is the "same as the *Dirty Dozens*; to censure in 12 or fewer statements," and advises the reader to see "Cap on." The "Dirty Dozens" he defines as "a very elaborate game traditionally played by black boys, in which the participants insult each other's relatives, especially their mothers. The object of the game is to test emotional strength. The first person to give in to anger is the loser." To "Cap on" is "to censure," in the manner of the dozens. For Major, then, to Signify is to be engaged in a highly motivated rhetorical act, aimed at figurative, ritual insult.⁴⁰

Hermese E. Roberts, writing in *The Third Ear: A Black Glossary*, combines Major's emphasis on insult and Roger D. Abrahams's emphasis on implication. Roberts defines "signifying," or "siggin(g)," as "language behavior that makes direct or indirect implications of baiting or boasting, the essence of which is making fun of another's appearance, relatives, or situation." For Roberts, then, a signal aspect of Signifyin(g) is "making fun of" as a mode of "baiting" or "boasting." It is curious to me how very many definitions of Signifyin(g) share this stress on what we might think of as the black person's symbolic aggression, enacted in language, rather than upon the play of language itself, the metarhetorical structures in evidence. "Making fun of" is a long way from "making fun," and it is the latter that defines Signifyin(g).⁴¹

Roberts lists as subcategories of Signifyin(g) the following figures: "joning, playing the dozens, screaming on, sounding." Under "joning" and "sounding," Roberts asks the reader to "See signifying." "Screaming on" is defined as "telling someone off; i.e., to get on someone's case," "case" meaning among other things "an imagi-

nary region of the mind in which is centered one's vulnerable points, eccentricities, and sensitivities." "Screaming on" also means "embarrassing someone publicly." "Playing the dozens" Roberts defines as "making derogatory, often obscene, remarks about another's mother, parents, or family members. ('Yo' mama' is an expression used as retribution for previous vituperation.)" Roberts, in other words, consistently groups Signifyin(g) under those tropes of contention wherein aggression and conflict predominate. Despite this refusal to transcend surface meaning to define its latent meaning, Roberts's decision to group joning, playing the dozens, screaming on, and sounding as synonyms of Signifyin(g) is exemplary for suggesting that Signifyin(g) is the trope of tropes in the black vernacular.

Mezz Mezzrow, the well-known jazz musician, defines "Signify" in the glossary of his autobiography, *Really the Blues*, as "hint, to put on an act, boast, make a gesture." In the body of his text, however, Mezzrow implicitly defines signifying as the homonymic pun. In an episode in which some black people in a bar let some white gangsters know that their identity as murderers is common knowledge, the blacks, apparently describing a musical performance, use homonyms such as "killer" and "murder" to Signify upon the criminals. As Mezzrow describes the event:

He could have been talking about the music, but everybody in the room knew different. Right quick another cat spoke up real loud, saying, "That's murder man, really murder," and his eyes were *signifying* too. All these gunmen began to shift from foot to foot, fixing their ties and scratching their noses, faces red and Adam's apples jumping. Before we knew it they had gulped their drinks and beat it out the door, saying good-bye to the bartender with their hats way down over their eyebrows and their eyes gunning the ground. That's what Harlem thought of the white underworld.⁴²

Signifying here connotes the play of language—both spoken and body language—drawn upon to name something figuratively.

Mezzrow's definitions are both perceptive and

⁴⁰Clarence Major, *Dictionary of Afro-American Slang* (New York: International Publishers, 1970), pp. 104, 46, 34. [Au.]

⁴¹Hermese E. Roberts, *The Third Ear: A Black Glossary*, entry on signifying. [Au.]

⁴²Mezz Mezzrow and Bernard Wolfe, *Really the Blues* (New York: Random House, 1946), pp. 378, 230. [Au.]

subtle. Signifyin(g) for him is one mode of “verbal horseplay,” designed to train the subject “to think faster and be more nimble-witted.” Mezzrow, then, is able to penetrate the content of this black verbal horseplay to analyze the significance of the rhetorical structures that transcend any fixed form of Signifyin(g), such as the verbal insult rituals called the dozens. Indeed, Mezzrow was one of the first commentators to recognize that Signifyin(g) as a structure of performance could apply equally to verbal texts and musical texts. As he summarizes:

Through all these friendly but lively competitions you could see the Negro’s appreciation of real talent and merit, his demand for fair play, and his ardor for the best man wins and don’t you come around here with no jive. Boasting doesn’t cut any ice; if you think you’ve got something, don’t waste time talking yourself up, go to work and prove it. If you have the stuff the other cats will recognize it frankly, with solid admiration. That’s especially true in the field of music, which has a double importance to the Negro because that’s where he really shines, where his inventiveness and artistry come through in full force. The colored boys prove their musical talents in those competitions called cutting contests, and there it really is the best man wins, because the Negro audience is extra critical when it comes to music and won’t accept anything second-rate. These cutting contests are just a musical version of the verbal duels. They’re staged to see which performer can snag and cap all the others *musically*. And by the way, these battles have helped to produce some of the race’s greatest musicians.⁴³

Signifyin(g) for Mezzrow is not what is played or said; it is rather a form of rhetorical training, an on-the-streets exercise in the use of troping, in which the play is the thing—not specifically what is said, but how. All definitions of Signifyin(g) that do not distinguish between manner and matter succumb, like the Lion, to serious misreading.

Malachi Andrews and Paul T. Owens, in *Black Language*, acutely recognize two crucial aspects of Signifyin(g): first, that the signifier invents a myth to commence the ritual and, second, that in the Monkey tales at least, trinary structure

prevails over binary structure: “To Signify,” they write,

is to tease, to provoke into anger. The *signifier* creates a myth about someone and tells him a *third* person started it. The *signified* person is aroused and seeks that person. . . . Signifying is completely successful when the *signifier* convinces the chump he is working on, that what he is saying is true and that it gets him angered to wrath.⁴⁴

Andrews and Owens’s definition sticks fairly closely to the action of the Signifying Monkey tales. While Signifyin(g) can, and indeed does, occur between two people, the three terms of the traditional mythic structure serve to dispel a simple relation of identity between the allegorical figures of the poem and the binary political relationship, outside the text, between black and white. The third term both critiques the idea of the binary opposition and demonstrates that Signifyin(g) itself encompasses a larger domain than merely the political. It is a game of language, independent of reaction to white racism or even to collective black wish-fulfillment vis-à-vis white racism. I cannot stress too much the import of the presence of this third term, or in Hermese E. Roberts’s extraordinarily suggestive phrase, “The Third Ear,” an intraracial ear through which encoded vernacular language is deciphered.

J. L. Dillard, who along with William Labov and William A. Stewart is one of the most sensitive observers of black language use, defines Signifyin(g) as “a familiar discourse device from the inner city, [which] tends to mean ‘communicating (often an obscene or ridiculing message) by indirection.’”⁴⁵ Dillard here is elaborating somewhat upon Zora Neale Hurston’s gloss printed in *Mules and Men*, where she writes that to signify is to “show off.”⁴⁶ This definition seems to be an anomalous one, unless we supply Hurston’s missing, or implied, terms: to show off *with*

⁴⁴Malachi Andrews and Paul T. Owens, *Black Language* (West Los Angeles: Seymour-Smith, 1973), p. 95. (Emphasis added.) See also their entry on “Wolf,” p. 106. [Au.]

⁴⁵Dillard, *Lexicon of Black English*, pp. 154, 177. [Au.]

⁴⁶Hurston, *Mules and Men*, p. 161. See also C. Merton Babcock, “A Word List from Zora Neale Hurston,” *Publications of the American Dialect Society*, No. 40 (University, Ala.: University of Alabama Press, 1963), pp. 1–12. I analyze Hurston’s uses of Signifyin(g) in Chapter 5. [Au.]

⁴³*Ibid.*, pp. 230–31. [Au.]

language use. Dillard, however, is more concerned with the dozens than he is with Signifyin(g). In an especially perceptive chapter entitled “Discourse Distribution and Semantic Difference in Homophonous Items,” Dillard ignores the homophone *signify* but suggests that so-called inner-city verbal rituals, such as the dozens, could well be contemporary revisions of “the ‘lies’ told by Florida Blacks studied by Hurston and the Anansi stories of the southern plantations,” sans the “sex and scatology.” “Put those elements back,” Dillard continues, “and you have something like the rhymed ‘toasts’ of the inner city.”⁴⁷ The “toasts,” as Bruce Jackson has shown, include among their types the Signifying Monkey tales.⁴⁸ There can be little doubt that Signifyin(g) was found by linguists in the black urban neighborhoods in the fifties and sixties because black people from the South migrated there and passed the tradition along to subsequent generations.

We can see the extremes of dictionary and glossary definitions of *Signify* in two final examples, one taken from *The Psychology of Black Language*, by Jim Haskins and Hugh F. Butts, and the other from the *Dictionary of American Slang*, compiled by Harold Wentworth and Stuart Berg Flexner. Haskins and Butts, in a glossary appended to their text, define “to signify” as “To berate, degrade.”⁴⁹ In their text, however, they define “signifying” as “a more humane form of verbal bantering” than the dozens, admitting, however, that Signifyin(g) “has many meanings,” including meanings that contradict their own glossary listing: “It is, again, the clever and humorous use of words, but it can be used for many purposes—‘putting down’ another person, making another person feel better, or simply expressing one’s feelings.”⁵⁰ Haskins and Butts’s longer definition seems to contradict their glossary listing—unless we recall that Signifyin(g) can mean all of these meanings, and more, precisely be-

⁴⁷Dillard, *Lexicon of Black English*, p. 134. [Au.]

⁴⁸See Jackson, *Get Your Ass in the Water*, esp. pp. 161–80. [Au.]

⁴⁹Jim Haskins and Hugh F. Butts, *The Psychology of Black Language* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1973), p. 86. [Au.]

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, p. 51. [Au.]

cause so many black tropes are subsumed within it. Signifyin(g) does not, on the other hand, mean “To pretend to have knowledge; to pretend to be hip, esp. when such pretensions cause one to trifle with an important matter,” as Wentworth and Flexner would have it.⁵¹ Indeed, this definition sounds like a classic black Signification, in which a black informant, as it were, Signified upon either Wentworth or Flexner, or lexicographers in general who “pretend to have knowledge.”

There are several other dictionary definitions that I could cite here. My intention, however, has been to suggest the various ways in which Signifyin(g) is (mis)understood, primarily because few scholars have succeeded in defining it as a full concept. Rather, they often have taken the part—one of its several tropes—as its whole. The delightfully “dirty” lines of the dozens seem to have generated far more interest from scholars than has Signifyin(g), and perhaps far more heat than light. The dozens are an especially compelling subset of Signifyin(g), and its name quite probably derives from an eighteenth-century meaning of the verb *dozen*, “to stun, stupefy, daze,” in the black sense, through language.⁵² Let us examine more substantive definitions of Signifyin(g) by H. Rap Brown, Roger D. Abrahams, Thomas Kochman, Claudia Mitchell-Kernan, Geneva Smitherman, and Ralph Ellison. . . .

H. Rap Brown earned his byname because he was a master of black vernacular rhetorical games and their attendant well-defined rhetorical strategies. Brown’s understanding of Signifyin(g) is unsurpassed by that of any scholar. In the second chapter of his autobiography, *Die Nigger Die!*, Brown represents the scenes of instruction by which he received his byname. “I learned to talk in the street,” he writes, “not from reading about Dick and Jane going to the zoo and all that simple shit.” Rather, Brown continues, “we exercised our minds,” not by studying arithmetic but “by playing the Dozens”:

⁵¹Harold Wentworth and Stuart Berg Flexner, comp. and ed., *Dictionary of American Slang*, Second Supplemental Edition (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1975), p. 477. [Au.]

⁵²Peter Tamary, quoted in Robert S. Gold, *Jazz Talk* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1975), p. 76. [Au.]

I fucked your mama
Till she went blind.
Her breath smells bad,
But she sure can grind.

I fucked your mama
For a solid hour.
Baby came out
Screaming, Black Power.

Elephant and the Baboon
Learning to screw.
Baby came out looking
Like Spiro Agnew.

Brown argues that his teachers sought to teach him “poetry,” meaning poems from the Western tradition, when he and his fellows were *making* poetry in the streets. “If anybody needed to study poetry,” he maintains, “my teacher needed to study mine. We played the Dozens,” he concludes, “like white folks play Scrabble.” “[They] call me Rap,” he writes humorously if tautologically, “’cause I could rap.” To rap is to use the vernacular with great dexterity. Brown, judging from his poetry printed in this chapter of his autobiography, most certainly earned his by-name.⁵³

Brown’s definitions and examples are as witty as they are telling. He insists, as does Claudia Mitchell-Kernan, that both men and women can play the dozens and Signify: “Some of the best Dozens players,” he writes, “were girls.” Whereas the dozens were an unrelentingly “mean game because what you try to do is totally destroy somebody else with words,” Signifyin(g) was “more humane”: “Instead of coming down on somebody’s mother, you come down on them.” Brown’s account of the process of Signifyin(g) is especially accurate:

A session would start maybe by a brother saying, “Man, before you mess with me you’d rather run rabbits, eat shit and bark at the moon.” Then, if he was talking to me, I’d tell him:

Man, you must don’t know who I am.
I’m sweet peeter jeeter the womb beater
The baby maker the cradle shaker

⁵³H. Rap Brown, *Die Nigger Die!* (New York: Dial Press, 1969), pp. 25–26. [Au.]

The deerslayer the buckbinder the women finder
Known from the Gold Coast to the rocky shores of
Maine

Rap is my name and love is my game.
I’m the bed tucker the cock plucker the mother-
fucker

The milkshaker the record breaker the population
maker

The gun-slinger the baby bringer

The hum-dinger the pussy ringer

The man with the terrible middle finger.

The hard hitter the bullshitter the poly-nussy
getter

The beast from the East the Judge the sludge

The women’s pet the men’s fret and the punks’ pin-
up boy

They call me Rap the dicker the ass kicker

The cherry picker the city slicker the titty licker

And I ain’t giving up nothing but bubble gum and
hard times and I’m fresh out of bubble gum.

I’m giving up wooden nickels ’cause I know they
won’t spend

And I got a pocketful of splinter change.

I’m a member of the bathtub club: I’m seeing a
whole lot of ass but I ain’t taking no shit.

I’m the man who walked the water and tied the
whale’s tail in a knot

Taught the little fishes how to swim

Crossed the burning sands and shook the devil’s
hand

Rode round the world on the back of a snail carry-
ing a sack saying AIR MAIL.

Walked 49 miles of barbed wire and used a Cobra
snake for a necktie

And got a brand new house on the roadside made
from a cracker’s hide,

Got a brand new chimney setting on top made from
the cracker’s skull

Took a hammer and nail and built the world and
calls it “THE BUCKET OF BLOOD.”

Yes, I’m hemp the demp the women’s pimp

Women fight for my delight.

I’m a bad motherfucker. Rap the rip-saw the devil’s
brother’n law.

I roam the world I’m known to wander and this .45
is where I get my thunder.

I’m the only man in the world who knows why
white milk makes yellow butter.

I know where the lights go when you cut the switch
off.

I might not be the best in the world, but I’m in the
top two and my

brother’s getting old.

And ain’t nothing bad ’bout you but your breath.

Whereas the dozens were structured to make one's subject feel bad, "Signifying allowed you a choice—you could either make a cat feel good or bad. If you had just destroyed someone [verbally] or if they were just down already, signifying could help them over."⁵⁴

Few scholars have recognized this level of complexity in Signifyin(g), which Brown argues implicitly to be the rhetorical structures at work in the discourse, rather than a specific content uttered. In addition to making "a cat feel good or bad," Brown continues, "Signifying was also a way of expressing your own feelings," as in the following example:

Man, I can't win for losing.
 If it wasn't for bad luck, I wouldn't have no luck at all.
 I been having buzzard luck
 Can't kill nothing and won't nothing die
 I'm living on the welfare and things is stormy
 They borrowing their shit from the Salvation Army
 But things bound to get better 'cause they can't get no worse
 I'm just like the blind man, standing by a broken window
 I don't feel no pain.
 But it's your world
 You the man I pay rent to
 If I had you hands I'd give 'way both my arms.
 Cause I could do without them
 I'm the man but you the main man
 I read the books you write
 You set the pace in the race I run
 Why, you always in good form
 You got more foam than Alka Seltzer . . .⁵⁵

Signifyin(g), then, for Brown, is an especially expressive mode of discourse that turns upon forms of figuration rather than intent or content. Signifyin(g), to cite Brown, is "what the white folks call verbal skills. We learn how to throw them words together." Signifying, "at its best," Brown concludes, "can be heard when brothers are exchanging tales." It is this sense of storytelling, repeated and often shared (almost communal canonical stories, or on-the-spot recountings of current events) in which Signifyin(g) as a rhetorical strategy can most clearly be seen. We shall

⁵⁴Ibid., pp. 26–29. [Au.]

⁵⁵Ibid., pp. 29–30. [Au.]

return to Brown's definition in the next section of this chapter.⁵⁶

One of the most sustained attempts to define Signifyin(g) is that of Roger D. Abrahams, a well-known and highly regarded literary critic, linguist, and anthropologist. Abrahams's work in this area is seminal, as defined here as a work against which subsequent works must, in some way, react. Between 1962 and 1976, Abrahams published several significant studies of Signifyin(g). To tract Abrahams's interpretative evolution helps us to understand the complexities of this rhetorical strategy but is outside the scope of this book.⁵⁷

Abrahams in 1962 brilliantly defines Signifyin(g) in terms that he and other subsequent scholars shall repeat:

The name "Signifying Monkey" shows [the hero] to be a trickster, "signifying" being the language of trickery, that set of words or gestures which arrives at "direction through indirection."⁵⁸

Signifyin(g), Abrahams argues implicitly, is the black person's use of figurative modes of language use. The word *indirection* hereafter recurs in the literature with great, if often unacknowledged, frequency. Abrahams expanded on this theory of Signifyin(g) in two editions of *Deep Down in the Jungle* (1964, 1970). It is useful to list the signal aspects of his extensive definitions:

1. Signifyin(g) "can mean any number of things."
2. It is a black term and a black rhetorical device.
3. It can mean the "ability to talk with great innuendo."
4. It can mean "to carp, cajole, needle, and lie."
5. It can mean "the propensity to talk around a subject, never quite coming to the point."
6. It can mean "making fun of a person or situation."

⁵⁶Ibid. [Au.]

⁵⁷See Roger D. Abrahams, "The Changing Concept of the Negro Hero," in *The Golden Log*, ed. Mody C. Boatright, Wilson M. Hudson, and Allen Maxwell (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1962), pp. 119–34; Abrahams, *Deep Down in the Jungle*, esp. "Introduction to the Second Edition" (1970). [Au.]

⁵⁸Abrahams, "The Changing Concept," p. 125. [Au.]

7. It can “also denote speaking with the hands and eyes.”
8. It is “the language of trickery, that set of words achieving Hamlet’s ‘direction through indirection.’”
9. The Monkey “is a ‘signifier,’ and the Lion, therefore, is the signified.”

Finally, in his appended glossary of “Unusual Terms and Expressions,” Abrahams defines “Signify” as “To imply, goad, beg, boast by indirect verbal or gestural means. A language of implication.”⁵⁹

These definitions are exemplary insofar as they emphasize “indirection” and “implication,” which we can read as synonyms of *figurative*. Abrahams was the first scholar, to my knowledge, to define Signifyin(g) as a language, by which he means a particular rhetorical strategy. Whereas he writes that the Monkey is a master of this technique, it is even more accurate to write that he *is* technique, the literariness of language, the ultimate source for black people of the figures of signification. If we think of rhetoric as the “writing” of spoken discourse, then the Monkey’s role as the source and encoded keeper of Signifyin(g) helps to reveal his functional equivalency with his Pan-African cousin, *Esu-Elegbara*, the figure of writing in Ifa.

Abrahams’s work helps us to understand that Signifyin(g) is an adult ritual, which black people learn as adolescents, almost exactly like children learned the traditional figures of signification in classically structured Western primary and secondary schools, training one hopes shall be returned to contemporary education. As we shall see below, Claudia Mitchell-Kernan, an anthropologist-linguist, shares an anecdote that demonstrates, first, how Signifyin(g) truly is a conscious rhetorical strategy and, second, how adult black people implicitly instruct a mature child in its most profound and subtle uses by an indirect mode of narration only implicitly related in form to the Monkey tales, perhaps as extract relates to the vanilla bean, or as sand relates to the pearl, or, as Esu might add, as palm wine relates to the

palm tree. Black adults teach their children this exceptionally complex system of rhetoric, almost exactly like Richard A. Lanham describes a generic portrait of the teaching of the rhetorical *paideia* to Western schoolchildren. The mastery of Signifyin(g) creates *homo rhetoricus Africanus*, allowing—through the manipulation of these classic black figures of Signification—the black person to move freely between two discursive universes. This is an excellent example of what I call linguistic masking, the verbal sign of the mask of blackness that demarcates the boundary between the white linguistic realm and the black, two domains that exist side by side in a homonymic relation signified by the very concept of Signification. To learn to manipulate language in such a way as to facilitate the smooth navigation between these two realms has been the challenge of black parenthood, and remains so even today. Teaching one’s children the fine art of Signifyin(g) is to teach them about this mode of linguistic circumnavigation, to teach them a second language that they can share with other black people.⁶⁰ Black adolescents engaged in the dozens and in Signifyin(g) rituals to learn the classic black figures of Signification. As H. Rap Brown declares passionately, his true school was the street. Richard Lanham’s wonderful depiction of the student passing through the rhetorical *paideia* reads like a description of vernacular black language training:

Start your student young. Teach him a minute concentration on the word, how to write it, speak it, remember it. . . . From the beginning, stress behavior as performance, reading aloud, speaking with gesture, a full range of histrionic adornment. . . . Develop elaborate memory schemes to keep them readily at hand. Teach, as theory of personality, a

⁶⁰Richard A. Lanham, *The Motives of Eloquence: Literary Rhetoric in the Renaissance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), pp. 2–3. See also Abrahams, *Deep Down in the Jungle*, p. 17; and Edith A. Folb, *Runnin’ Down Some Lines: The Language and Culture of Black Teenagers* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980), p. 90: “Young people growing up in the black community play endless verbal games with one another, much as their mainstream white counterparts play games of war, cops and robbers, or cowboys and Indians. Like skilled musicians, children early on learn to refine their verbal skills, to develop their instrument so that it can play a variety of songs.” [Au.]

⁵⁹Abrahams, *Deep Down in the Jungle*, pp. 51–53, 66–70, 113–19, 142–47, 153–56, 264. [Au.]

corresponding set of accepted personality types, a taxonomy of impersonation. . . . Nourish an acute sense of social situation. . . . Stress, too, the need for improvisation, ad-lib quickness, the coaxing of chance. Hold always before the student rhetoric's practical purpose: to win, to persuade. But train for this purpose with continual verbal play, rehearsal for the sake of rehearsal.

Use the "case" method. . . . Practice this recreation always in an agnostic context. The aim is scoring. Urge the student to go into the world and observe its doings from this perspective. And urge him to continue his rehearsal method all his life, forever rehearsing a spontaneous real life. . . . Training in the word thus becomes a badge, as well as a diversion, of the leisure class.⁶¹

This reads very much like a black person's training in Signifyin(g). Lanham's key words—among which are "a taxonomy of impersonation," "improvisation," "ad-lib quickness," "to win," "to persuade," "continual verbal play," "the 'case' method," "the aim is scoring"—echo exactly the training of blacks to Signify. Even Lanham's concept of a "leisure" class applies ironically here, since blacks tend in capitalist societies to occupy a disproportionate part of the "idle" unemployed, a leisure-class with a difference. To Signify, then, is to master the figures of black Signification.

Few black adults can recite an entire Monkey tale; black adults, on the other hand, can—and do—Signify. The mastering of the Monkey tales corresponds to this early part of Lanham's account of Western rhetorical training. Words are looked at in the Monkey tales because the test of this form of *poesis* is to arrive at a phonetic coincidence of similar parts of speech, as I have shown above. The splendid example of Signifyin(g) that I have cited in Ralph Ellison's anecdote about Hazel Harrison, and the anecdote of Claudia Mitchell-Kernan's that I shall discuss below, conform to Lanham's apt description of the mature capacity to look through words for their full meaning. Learning the Monkey tales, then, is somewhat akin to attending troping school, where one learns to "trope-a-dope."

The Monkey is a hero of black myth, a sign of the triumph of wit and reason, his language of

Signifyin(g) standing as the linguistic sign of the ultimate triumph of self-consciously formal language use. The black person's capacity to create this rich poetry and to derive from these rituals a complex attitude toward attempts at domination, which can be transcended in and through language, is a sign of their originality, of their extreme consciousness of the metaphysical. Abrahams makes these matters clear.

In *Talking Black*, published in 1976, Abrahams's analysis of Signifyin(g) as an act of language is even more subtle than his earlier interpretations. Abrahams repeats his insightful definition that Signifyin(g) turns upon indirection. Black women, he maintains, and "to a certain extent children," utilize "more indirect methods of signifying." His examples are relevant ones:

These range from the most obvious kinds of indirection, like using an unexpected pronoun in discourse ("Didn't *we* come to shine, today?" or "Who thinks his drawers don't stink?"), to the more subtle technique, of *louding* or *loud-talking* in a different sense from the one above. A person is loud-talking when he says something of someone just loud enough for that person to hear, but indirectly, so he cannot properly respond (Mitchell-Kernan). Another technique of signifying through indirection is making reference to a person or group not present, in order to start trouble between someone present and the ones who are not. An example of this technique is the famous toast, "The Signifying Monkey."⁶²

These examples are salient for two reasons: first, because he has understood that adults use the modes of signification commonly, even if they cannot recite even one couplet from the Monkey tales, and, second, because he has realized that other tropes, such as loud-talking, are subtropes of Signifyin(g). His emphasis on the mature forms of Signifyin(g)—that is, the indirect modes—as more common among women and children does not agree with my observations. Indeed, I have found that black men and women use indirection with each other to the same degree.

Next, Abrahams states that Signifyin(g) can also be used "in recurrent black-white encounters

⁶¹Lanham, *The Motives of Eloquence*, pp. 2–3. [Au.]

⁶²Roger D. Abrahams, *Talking Black* (Rawley, Mass.: Newbury House, 1976), p. 19. [Au.]

as masking behavior.” Since the full effectiveness of Signifyin(g) turns upon all speakers possessing the mastery of reading, what Abrahams calls “intergroup” Signifyin(g) is difficult to effect, if only because the inherent irony of discourse most probably will not be understood. Still, Signifyin(g) is one significant mode of verbal masking or troping.⁶³

Abrahams’s most important contribution to the literature on Signifyin(g) is his discovery that Signifyin(g) is primarily a term for rhetorical strategies, which often is called by other names depending on which of its several forms it takes. As he concludes, “with *signifying* we have a term not only for a way of speaking but for a rhetorical strategy that may be characteristic of a number of other designated events.”⁶⁴ I would add to this statement that, for black adults, Signifyin(g) is the name for the figures of rhetoric themselves, the figure of the figure. Abrahams lists the following terms as synonyms of Signifyin(g), as derived from several other scholars, and which I am defining to be black tropes as subsumed within the trope of Signifyin(g): *talking shit, woofing, spouting, mucky muck, boogerbang, beating your gums, talking smart, putting down, putting on, playing, sounding, telling lies, shaglag, marking, shucking, jiving, jitterbugging, bugging, mounting, charging, cracking, harping, rapping, bookooing, low-rating, hoorawing, sweet-talking, smart-talking*, and no doubt a few others that I have omitted.⁶⁵ This is a crucial contribution to our understanding of this figure because it transcends the disagreements, among linguists, about whether trope *x* or *y* is evidenced by speech act *a* or *b*. What’s more, Abrahams reveals, by listing its synonyms, that black people can mean at least twenty-eight figures when they call something Signifyin(g). He represents a few of the figures embedded in Signifyin(g) in Chart 3. He could have listed several others. When black people say that “Signification is the Nigger’s occupation,” we can readily see what

they mean, since mastering all of these figures of Signification is a lifetime’s work!

When a black person speaks of Signifyin(g), he or she means a “style-focused message . . . styling which is *foregrounded* by the devices of making a point by indirection and wit.” What is foregrounded, of course, is the signifier itself, as we have seen in the rhyme scheme of the Monkey tales. The Monkey is called the signifier because he foregrounds the signifier in his use of language. Signifyin(g), in other words, turns on the sheer play of the signifier. It does not refer primarily to the signified; rather, it refers to the style of language, to that which transforms ordinary discourse into literature. Again, one does not Signify some thing; one Signifies in *some way*.⁶⁶

The import of this observation for the study of black literature is manifold. When I wrote earlier that the black tradition theorized about itself in the vernacular, this is what I meant in part. Signifyin(g) is the black rhetorical difference that negotiates the language user through several orders of meaning. In formal literature, what we commonly call figuration corresponds to Signification. Again, the originality of so much of the black tradition emphasizes refiguration, or repetition and difference, or troping, underscoring the foregrounding of the chain of signifiers, rather than the mimetic representation of a novel content. Critics of Afro-American, Caribbean, and African literatures, however, have far more often than not directed their attention to the signified, often at the expense of the signifier, as if the latter were transparent. This functions contrary to the principles of criticism inherent in the concept of Signifyin(g).

Thomas Kochman’s contribution to the literature on Signifyin(g) is the recognition that the Monkey is the Signifier, and that one common form of this rhetorical practice turns upon repetition and difference. Kochman also draws an important distinction between directive and expressive modes of Signification. Directive Signifyin(g), paradoxically, turns upon an indirective strategy:

⁶⁶Abrahams, *Talking Black*, p. 52. (Emphasis added.) “Duke Ellington and John Coltrane,” Impulse Records, AS-30. [Au.]

⁶³Ibid., p. 33. [Au.]

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 51. [Au.]

⁶⁵Ibid., pp. 49, 46, 53, 56, 73–76, 50. See also Roger D. Abrahams, *The Man-of-Words in the West Indies: Performance and the Emergence of Creole Culture* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), pp. 56–57. [Au.]

Chart 3. Roger D. Abrahams's Figure 1 in *Talking Black*, p. 46.

CONVERSATION ON THE STREETS; WAYS OF SPEAKING BETWEEN EQUALS				
informational; content focus <i>running it down</i>	aggressive, witty performance talk <i>signifying</i>			
	serious, clever conflict talk "me-and-you and no one else" focus <i>talking smart</i>		nonserious contest talk "any of us here" focus <i>talking shit</i>	
	overtly aggressive talk <i>putting down</i>	covertly aggressive, manipulative talk <i>putting on</i>	nondirective <i>playing</i>	directive <i>sounding</i>
conversational (apparently spontaneous)	arises within conversational context, yet judged in performance (stylistic) terms		performance interaction, yet built on model of conversational back-and-forth	

... when the function of signifying is *directive*, and the *tactic* which is employed is one of *indirection*—i.e., the signifier reports or repeats what someone has said about the listener; the "report" is couched in plausible language designed to compel belief and arouse feelings of anger and hostility.⁶⁷

Kochman argues that the function of this sort of claim to repetition is to challenge and reverse the status quo:

There is also the implication that if the listener fails to do anything about it—what has to be "done" is usually quite clear—his status will be seriously compromised. Thus the lion is compelled to vindicate the honor of his family by fighting or else leave the impression that he is afraid, and that he is not "king of the jungle." When used to direct action, signifying is like shucking in also being deceptive and subtle in approach and depending for success on the naïveté or gullibility of the person being put on.⁶⁸

⁶⁷Thomas Kochman, "Towards an Ethnography of Black American Speech Behavior," in *Rappin' and Stylin' Out: Communication in Urban Black America* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1972), p. 257. See also Kochman's "'Rapping' in the Black Ghetto," *Trans-action* 6 (February 1969): 26–35. Kochman's "Towards an Ethnography" was originally published in *Afro-American Anthropology: Contemporary Perspectives*, ed. Norman E. Whitten, Jr., and John F. Swzed (New York: Free Press, 1970), pp. 145–63. [Au.]

⁶⁸Kochman, "Ethnography," p. 257. [Au.]

Kochman's definition of expressive Signifyin(g), while useful, is less inclusive than that proposed by H. Rap Brown, including as it does only negative intentions: "to arouse feelings of embarrassment, shame, frustration, or futility, for the purpose of diminishing someone's status, but without directive implication." Expressive Signifyin(g), Kochman continues, employs "direct" speech tactics "in the form of a taunt, as in the ... example where the monkey is making fun of the lion." For Kochman, Signifyin(g) implies an aggressive mode of rhetoric, a form of symbolic action that yields catharsis.⁶⁹

While several other scholars have discussed the nature and function of Signifyin(g), the theories of Claudia Mitchell-Kernan and Geneva Smitherman are especially useful for the theory of revision that I am outlining in this chapter.⁷⁰ Mitchell-Kernan's theory of Signifyin(g) is among the most thorough and the most subtle in the linguistic literature, while Smitherman's

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 258. [Au.]

⁷⁰See also Herbert L. Foster, *Ribbin', Jivin', and Playin' the Dozens: The Unrecognized Dilemma of Inner City Schools* (Cambridge: Ballinger, 1974), pp. 203–10; and Edith A. Folb, *Runnin' Down Some Lines: The Language and Culture of Black Teenagers* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980), esp. pp. 69–131. [Au.]

work connects linguistic analysis with the Afro-American literary tradition. . . .

Mitchell-Kernan is quick to demonstrate that Signifyin(g) has received most scholarly attention as “a tactic employed in game activity—verbal dueling—which is engaged in as an end in itself,” as if this one aspect of the rhetorical concept amounted to its whole. In fact, however, “*Signifying* . . . also refers to a way of encoding messages or meanings which involves, in most cases, an element of indirection.” This alternative definition amounts to nothing less than a polite critique of the linguistic studies of Signifyin(g), since the subtleties of this rhetorical strategy somehow escaped most other scholars before Mitchell-Kernan. As she expands her definition, “This kind of *signifying* might be best viewed as an alternative message form, selected for its artistic merit, and may occur embedded in a variety of discourse. Such *signifying* is not focal to the linguistic interaction in the sense that it does not define the entire speech event.”⁷¹

I cannot stress too much the importance of this definition, for it shows that Signifyin(g) is a pervasive mode of language use rather than merely one specific verbal game, an observation that somehow escaped the notice of every other scholar before Mitchell-Kernan. This definition alone serves as a corrective to what I think of as the tendency among linguists who have fixed their gaze upon the aggressive ritual part and thereby avoided seeing the concept as a whole. What’s more, Mitchell-Kernan’s definition points to the implicit parallels between Signifyin(g) and the use of language that we broadly define to be figurative, by which I mean in this context an intentional deviation from the ordinary form or syntactical relation of words.⁷²

⁷¹See Claudia Mitchell-Kernan, *Language Behavior in a Black Urban Community*, Monographs of the Language-Behavior Laboratory, University of California, Berkeley, No. 2 (February 1971), esp. pp. 87–129, reprinted as “Signifying as a Form of Verbal Art” in *Mother Wit from the Laughing Barrel: Readings in the Interpretation of Afro-American Folklore*, ed. Alan Dundes (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1973), pp. 310–28; and Kochman, *Rappin’ and Stylin’ Out*, pp. 315–36. These quotations appear on p. 311 of the Dundes reprint. All subsequent page numbers refer to this volume. [Au.]

⁷²Mitchell-Kernan, “Signifying,” p. 311. [Au.]

Signifyin(g), in other words, is synonymous with figuration. Mitchell-Kernan’s work is so rich because she studied the language behavior of adults as well as adolescents, and of women as well as men. Whereas her colleagues studied lower-class male language use, then generalized from this strictly limited sample, Mitchell-Kernan’s data are derived from a sample more representative of the black speech community. Hers is a sample that does not undermine her data because it accounts for the role of age and sex as variables in language use. In addition, Mitchell-Kernan refused to be captivated by the verbal insult rituals, such as sounding, playing the dozens, and Signifyin(g), as ritual speech events, unlike other linguists whose work suffers from an undue attention to the use of words such as *mother-fucker*, to insults that turn on sexual assertions about someone’s mama, and to supposed Oedipal complexes that arise in the literature only because the linguist is reading the figurative as a literal statement, like our friend, the Signified Lion.

These scholars, unlike Mitchell-Kernan, have mistaken the language games of adolescents as an end rather than as the drills common to classical rhetorical study as suggested in Lanham’s hypothetical synopsis quoted earlier in this chapter. As Mitchell-Kernan concludes, both the sex and the age of the linguist’s informants “may slant interpretation, particularly because the insult dimension [of Signifyin(g)] looms large in contexts where verbal dueling is focal.” In the neighborhood in which she was raised, she argues, whereas “*Sounding and Playing the Dozens* categorically involved verbal insult (typically joking behavior); *signifying* did not.” Mitchell-Kernan is declaring, most unobtrusively, that, for whatever reasons, linguists have misunderstood what Signifyin(g) means to black people who practice it. While she admits that one relatively minor aspect of this rhetorical principle involves the ritual of insult, the concept is much more profound than merely this. Indeed, Signifyin(g) alone serves to underscore the uniqueness of the black community’s use of language: “the terminological use of *signifying* to refer to a particular kind of language specialization defines the Black community as a speech community in contrast to non-Black communities.” Mitchell-Kernan here both

critiques the work of other linguists who have wrestled unsuccessfully with this difficult concept (specifically Abrahams and Kochman) and provides an ardently needed corrective by defining Signifyin(g) as a way of figuring language. Mitchell-Kernan's penetrating work enables Signifyin(g) to be even further elaborated upon for use in literary theory.⁷³

Because it is difficult to arrive at a consensus of definitions of Signifyin(g), as this chapter already has made clear, Mitchell-Kernan proceeds "by way of analogy to inform the reader of its various meanings as applied in interpretation." This difficulty of definition is a direct result of the fact that Signifyin(g) is the black term for what in classical European rhetoric are called the figures of signification. Because to Signify is to be figurative, to define it in practice is to define it through any number of its embedded tropes. No wonder even Mitchell-Kernan could not arrive at a consensus among her informants—except for what turns out to be the most crucial shared aspects of all figures of speech, an indirect use of words that changes the meaning of a word or words. Or, as Quintilian put it, figuration turns on some sort of "change in signification." While linguists who disagree about what it means to Signify all repeat the role of indirection in this rhetorical strategy, none of them seems to have understood that the ensuing alteration or deviation of meaning makes Signifyin(g) the black trope for all other tropes, the trope of tropes, the figure of figures. Signifyin(g) *is* troping.⁷⁴

Mitchell-Kernan begins her elaboration of the concept by pointing to the unique usage of the word in black discourse:

What is unique in Black English usage is the way in which signifying is extended to cover a range of meanings and events which are not covered in its Standard English usage. In the Black community it is possible to say, "He is signifying" and "Stop signifying"—sentences which would be anomalous elsewhere.⁷⁵

⁷³Ibid., pp. 312–13, 311–12, 322–23. [Au.]

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 313. See Richard A. Lanham, *A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), pp. 101–3, 52. [Au.]

⁷⁵Mitchell-Kernan, "Signifying," p. 313. [Au.]

Because in standard English signification denotes meaning and in the black tradition it denotes ways of meaning, Mitchell-Kernan argues for discrepancies between meanings of the same term in two distinct discourses:

The Black concept of *signifying* incorporates essentially a folk notion that dictionary entries for words are not always sufficient for interpreting meanings or messages, or that meaning goes beyond such interpretations. Complimentary remarks may be delivered in a left-handed fashion. A particular utterance may be an insult in one context and not another. What pretends to be informative may intend to be persuasive. The hearer is thus constrained to attend to all potential meaning carrying symbolic systems in speech events—the total universe of discourse.⁷⁶

Signifyin(g), in other words, is the figurative difference between the literal and the metaphorical, between surface and latent meaning. Mitchell-Kernan calls this feature of discourse an "implicit content or function, which is potentially obscured by the surface content or function." Finally, Signifyin(g) presupposes an "encoded" intention to say one thing but to mean quite another.⁷⁷

Mitchell-Kernan presents several examples of Signifyin(g), as she is defining it. Her first example is a conversation among three women about the meal to be served at dinner. One woman asks the other two to join her for dinner, that is, if they are willing to eat "chit'lins." She ends her invitation with a pointed rhetorical question: "Or are you one of those Negroes who don't eat chit'lins?" The third person, the woman not addressed, responds with a long defense of why she prefers "prime rib and T-bone" to "chit'lins," ending with a traditional ultimate appeal to special pleading, a call to unity within the ranks to defeat white racism. Then she leaves. After she has gone, the initial speaker replies to her original addressee in this fashion: "Well, I wasn't signifying at her, but like I always say, if the shoe fits wear it." Mitchell-Kernan concludes that while the manifest subject of this exchange was dinner, the latent subject was the political orientation of two black people vis-à-vis cultural

⁷⁶Ibid., p. 314. [Au.]

⁷⁷Ibid. [Au.]

assimilation or cultural nationalism, since many middle-class blacks refuse to eat this item from the traditional black cuisine. Mitchell-Kernan labels this form of Signifyin(g) “allegory,” because “the significance or meaning of the words must be derived from known symbolic values.”⁷⁸

This mode of Signifyin(g) is commonly practiced by Afro-American adults. It is functionally equivalent to one of its embedded tropes, often called louding or loud-talking, which as we might expect connotes exactly the opposite of that which it denotes: one successfully loud-talks by speaking to a second person remarks in fact directed to a third person, at a level just audible to the third person. A sign of the success of this practice is an indignant “What?” from the third person, to which the speaker responds, “I wasn’t talking to you.” Of course, the speaker was, yet simultaneously was not. Loud-talking is related to Mitchell-Kernan’s second figure of Signification, which she calls “obscuring the addressee” and which I shall call naming. Her example is one commonly used in the tradition, in which “the remark is, on the surface, directed toward no one in particular”:

I saw a woman the other day in a pair of stretch pants, she must have weighed 300 pounds. If she knew how she looked she would burn those things.⁷⁹

If a member of the speaker’s audience is overweight and frequently wears stretch pants, then this message could well be intended for her. If she protests, the speaker is free to maintain that she was speaking about someone else and to ask why her auditor is so paranoid. Alternatively, the speaker can say, “if the shoe fits. . . .” Mitchell-Kernan says that a characteristic of this form of Signifyin(g) is the selection of a subject that is “selectively relevant to the speaker’s audience.”⁸⁰ I once heard a black minister name the illicit behavior of specific members of his congregation by performing a magnificent reading of “The Text of the Dry Bones,” which is a reading or gloss upon Ezekiel 37:1–14. Following this sermon, a prayer was offered by Lin Allen. As

⁷⁸Ibid., pp. 314–15. [Au.]

⁷⁹Ibid. [Au.]

⁸⁰Ibid., p. 316. [Au.]

“Mr. Lin,” as we called him, said, “Dear Lord, go with the gambling man . . . not forgetting the gambling woman,” the little church’s eerie silence was shattered by the loud-talking voice of one of my father’s friends (Ben Fisher, rest his soul), whom the congregation “overheard” saying, “Got *you* that time, Gates, got *you* that time, Newtsy!” My father and one of our neighbors, Miss Newtsy, had been Signified upon.

Mitchell-Kernan presents several examples of Signifyin(g) that elaborate on its subtypes.⁸¹ Her conclusion is crucial to the place of her research in the literature of Signification. “*Signifying*,” she declares as conclusion, “does not . . . always have negative valuations attached to it; it is clearly thought of as a kind of art—a clever way of conveying messages.”⁸² A literary critic might call this troping, an interpretation or mistaking of meaning, to paraphrase Harold Bloom, because, as Mitchell-Kernan maintains, “*signifying* . . . alludes to and implies things which are never made explicit.”⁸³ Let me cite two brief examples. In the first, “Grace” introduces the exchange by defining its context:

(After I had my little boy, I swore I was not having any more babies. I thought four kids was a nice-sized family. But it didn’t turn out that way. I was a little bit disgusted and didn’t tell anybody when I discovered I was pregnant. My sister came over one day and I had started to show by that time.) . . .

ROCHELLE: Girl, you sure do need to join the Metrecal for lunch bunch.

GRACE: (noncommittally) Yes, I guess I am putting on a little weight.

ROCHELLE: Now look here, girl, we both standing here soaking wet and you still trying to tell me it ain’t raining.⁸⁴

This form of Signifyin(g) is obviously a long way from the sort usually defined by scholars. One final example of the amusing, troping exchange follows, again cited by Mitchell-Kernan:

⁸¹Ibid., pp. 316–21. [Au.]

⁸²Ibid., p. 318. [Au.]

⁸³Harold Bloom, *A Map of Misreading* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 93, esp. pp. 83–105; Mitchell-Kernan, “Signifying,” p. 319. [Au.]

⁸⁴Mitchell-Kernan, “Signifying,” pp. 318–19. [Au.]

I. Man, when you gon pay me my five dollars?

II: Soon as I get it.

I: (to audience) Anybody want to buy a five dollar nigger? I got one to sell.

II: Man, if I gave you five dollars, you wouldn't have nothing to signify about.

I: Nigger, long as you don't change, I'll always have me a subject.⁸⁵

This sort of exchange is common in the black community and represents Signifyin(g) at its more evolved levels than the more obvious examples (characterized by confrontation and insult) discussed by linguists other than Mitchell-Kernan.

The highly evolved form of Signifyin(g) that H. Rap Brown defines and that Ralph Ellison's anecdote about Hazel Harrison epitomizes is represented in a wonderful anecdote that Mitchell-Kernan narrates. This tale bears repeating to demonstrate how black adults teach their children to "hold a conversation":

At the age of seven or eight I encountered what I believe was a version of the tale of the "Signifying Monkey." In this story a monkey reports to a lion that an elephant has been maligning the lion and his family. This stirs the lion into attempting to impose sanctions against the elephant. A battle ensues in which the elephant is victor and the lion returns extremely chafed at the monkey. In this instance, the recounting of this story is a case of signifying for directive purposes. I was sitting on the stoop of a neighbor who was telling me about his adventures as a big game hunter in Africa, a favorite tall-tale topic, unrecognized by me as tall-tale at the time. A neighboring woman called to me from her porch and asked me to go to the store for her. I refused, saying that my mother had told me not to, a lie which Mr. Waters recognized and asked me about. Rather than simply saying I wanted to listen to his stories, I replied that I had refused to go because I hated the woman. Being pressured for a reason for my dislike, and sensing Mr. Waters's disapproval, I countered with another lie, "I hate her because she say you were lazy," attempting, I suppose, to regain his favor by arousing ire toward someone else. Although I had heard someone say that he was lazy, it

had not been this woman. He explained to me that he was not lazy and that he didn't work because he had been laid-off from his job and couldn't find work elsewhere, and that if the lady had said what I reported, she had not done so out of meanness but because she didn't understand. Guilt-ridden, I went to fetch the can of Milnot milk. Upon returning, the tale of the "Signifying Monkey" was told to me, a censored prose version in which the monkey is rather brutally beaten by the lion after having suffered a similar fate in the hands of the elephant. I liked the story very much and righteously approved of its ending, not realizing at the time that he was *signifying* at me. Mr. Waters reacted to my response with a great deal of amusement. It was several days later in the context of retelling the tale to another child that I understood its timely telling. My apology and admission of lying were met by affectionate humor, and I was told that I was finally getting to the age where I could "hold a conversation," i.e., understand and appreciate implications.⁸⁶

Black people call this kind of lesson "schooling," and this label denotes its function. The child must learn to hold a conversation. We cannot but recall Richard Lanham's ideal presentation of rhetorical training and conclude that what Mr. Waters says to the child, Claudia, is analogous to an adult teacher of rhetoric attempting to show his pupils how to employ the tropes that they have memorized in an act of communication and its interpretation. This subtle process of instruction in the levels of Signification is related to, but far removed from, adolescent males insulting each other with the Signifying Monkey tales. The language of Signifyin(g), in other words, is a strategy of black figurative language use.

I have been drawing a distinction between the ritual of Signifyin(g), epitomized in the Monkey tales, and the language of Signifyin(g), which is the vernacular term for the figurative use of language. These terms correspond to what Mitchell-Kernan calls "third-party signifying" and "metaphorical signifying." Mitchell-Kernan defines their distinction as follows:

In the metaphorical type of *signifying*, the speaker attempts to transmit his message indirectly and it is

⁸⁵Ibid., pp. 320-21. [Au.]

⁸⁶Ibid., pp. 321-22. [Au.]

only by virtue of the hearers defining the utterance as *signifying* that the speaker's intent (to convey a particular message) is realized. In third-party signifying, the speaker may realize his aim only when the converse is true, that is, if the addressee fails to recognize the speech act as *signifying*. In [the Signifying Monkey toast] the monkey succeeds in goading the lion into a rash act because the lion does not define the monkey's message as *signifying*.⁸⁷

In other words, these two dominant modes of Signification function conversely, another sign of the maturation process demanded to move, as it were, from the repetition of tropes to their application.

The Monkey tales inscribe a dictum about interpretation, whereas the language of Signifyin(g) addresses the nature and application of rhetoric. The import of the Monkey tales for the interpretation of literature is that the Monkey dethrones the Lion only because the Lion cannot read the nature of his discourse. As Mitchell-Kernan argues cogently, "There seems something of symbolic relevance from the perspective of language in this poem. The monkey and lion do not speak the same language; the lion is not able to interpret the monkey's use of language, he is an outsider, un-hip, in a word." In other words, the Monkey speaks figuratively, while the Lion reads his discourse literally. For his act of misinterpretation, he suffers grave consequences. This valorization of the figurative is perhaps the most important moral of these poems, although the Monkey's mastery of figuration has made him one of the canonical heroes in the Afro-American mythic tradition, a point underscored by Mitchell-Kernan.⁸⁸

Mitchell-Kernan's summary of the defining characteristics of "Signifying as a Form of Verbal Art" helps to clarify this most difficult, and elusive, mode of rhetoric. We can outline these characteristics for convenience. The most important defining features of Signifyin(g) are "indirect intent" and "metaphorical reference." This aspect of indirection is a formal device, and "appears to be almost purely stylistic"; moreover, "its art characteristics remain in the forefront."

Signifyin(g), in other words, turns upon the foregrounding of the Signifier. By "indirection" Mitchell-Kernan means

that the correct semantic (referential interpretation) or signification of the utterance cannot be arrived at by a consideration of the dictionary meaning of the lexical items involved and the syntactic rules for their combination alone. The apparent significance of the message differs from its real significance. *The apparent meaning of the sentence signifies its actual meaning.*⁸⁹

The relationship between latent and manifest meaning is a curious one, as determined by the formal properties of the Signifyin(g) utterance. In one of several ways, manifest meaning directs attention away from itself to another, latent level of meaning. We might compare this relationship to that which obtains between the two parts of a metaphor, tenor (the inner meaning) and vehicle (the outer meaning).

Signifyin(g), according to Mitchell-Kernan, operates so delightfully because "apparent meaning serves as a key which directs hearers to some shared knowledge, attitudes, and values or signals that reference must be produced metaphorically." The decoding of the figurative, she continues, depends "upon shared knowledge . . . and this shared knowledge operates on two levels." One of these two levels is that the speaker and his audience realize that "*signifying* is occurring and that the dictionary-syntactical meaning of the utterance is to be ignored." In addition, a silent second text, as it were, which corresponds rightly to what Mitchell-Kernan is calling "shared knowledge," must be brought to bear upon the manifest content of the speech act and "employed in the reinterpretation of the utterance." Indeed, this element is of the utmost importance in the esthetics of Signifyin(g), for "it is the cleverness used in directing the attention of the hearer and audience to this shared knowledge upon which a speaker's artistic talent is judged." Signifyin(g), in other words, depends on the success of the signifier at invoking an absent meaning ambiguously "present" in a carefully wrought statement.⁹⁰

⁸⁹Ibid., p. 325. (Emphasis added.) [Au.]

⁹⁰Ibid. For an excellent summary of the literature of Signifyin(g), see Lawrence W. Levine, *Black Culture and Black*

⁸⁷Ibid., p. 322. [Au.]

⁸⁸See *ibid.*, pp. 322-23. [Au.]

Chart 4. The Figures of Signification

RHETORICAL TROPE	BLOOM'S REVISIONARY RATIO	AFRO-AMERICAN SIGNIFYIN(G) TROPE	CLASSICAL YORUBA	LEXICALLY BORROWED YORUBA
Irony	Clinamen	Signifyin(g) ("Nigger business" in the West Indies)	<i>Ríràn (èràn)</i>	<i>Áírónì</i>
Synecdoche	Tessera	Calling out of one's name		<i>Mètónímì</i>
Metonymy	Kenosis			
Hyperbole, litotes	Daemonization	Stylin' or woofing ("Flash" in the West Indies)	<i>Ìhàlè (Èpón)</i>	
Metaphor	Askesis	Naming	{ <i>Àfiwé (elélòó)</i> <i>Àfiwé gaan</i>	<i>Métáfò</i> (indirect "naming") ¹ <i>Símìlì</i> (direct "naming") ¹
Metalepsis	Apophrades	Capping	<i>Afikún; Àjámó;</i> <i>Ènì</i>	

¹N.B. "Naming" is an especially rich trope in Yoruba. Positive naming is called *Oriki*, while negative naming is called *Inagije*. Naming is also an especially luxurious (if potentially volatile) trope in the Afro-American vernacular tradition. "Naming" someone and "Calling [someone] Out of [his] name" are among the most commonly used tropes in Afro-American vernacular discourse. Scores of proverbs and epigrams in the black tradition turn upon figures for naming.

As I have attempted to show, there is much confusion and disagreement among linguists about the names and functions of the classical black tropes. While the specific terminology may vary from scholar to scholar, city to city, or generation to generation, however, the rhetorical functions of these tropes remain consistent. It is a fairly straightforward exercise to compare the black slave tropes to the master tropes identified by Vico, Nietzsche, Burke, and Bloom, and to map a black speech act, such as Signifyin(g), into its component Western tropes. Chart 4 is intended to Signify upon Harold Bloom's "map of misprision."⁹¹ I echo the essence of this map here, adding columns that list the Yoruba and

Afro-American tropes that correspond to their Western counterparts.

We can, furthermore, chart our own map, in which we graph the separate lines of a "Signifyin(g) Riff," as follows:⁹²

Slave Trope of Tropes, Signifyin(g)	
Your mama's a man	(metaphor)
Your daddy's one too	(irony)
They live in a tin can	(metonymy)
That smells like a zoo	(synecdoche)

The fact that the street rhymes of blacks and their received rhetorical tropes configure into the categories of classical Western rhetoric should come as no surprise. Indeed, this aspect of black language use recalls Montaigne's statement, in "Of the Vanity of Words," that "When you hear people

Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought from Slavery to Freedom (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp. 346, 378–80, 483, 498–99. [Au.]

⁹¹Harold Bloom, *A Map of Misreading*, p. 84. [Au.]

⁹²The source for this riff and its analysis is a personal conversation with Kimberly W. Benston. [Au.]

talk about metonymy, metaphor, allegory, and other such names in grammar, doesn't it seem that they mean some rare and exotic form of language?" Rather, Montaigne concludes, "They are terms that apply to the babble of your chambermaid."⁹³ We can add that these terms also apply to the rapping of black kids on street corners, who recite and thereby preserve the classical black rhetorical structures.

Signification is a complex rhetorical device that has elicited various, even contradictory, definitions from linguists, as should be apparent from this summary of its various definitions. While many of its manifestations and possibilities are figured in the tales of the Signifying Monkey, most people who Signify do not engage in the narration of these tales. Rather, the Monkey tales stand as the canonical poems from which what I am calling the language of Signifyin(g) extends.

⁹³Montaigne, "Of the Vanity of Words," in *The Complete Essays of Montaigne*, trans. Donald M. Frame (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1965), p. 223. [Au.]

The degree to which the figure of the Monkey is anthropologically related to the figure of the Pan-African trickster, Esu-Elegbara, shall most probably remain a matter of speculation.

Nevertheless, the two figures are related as functional equivalents because each in its own way stands as a moment of consciousness of black formal language use, of rhetorical structures and their appropriate modes of interpretation. As I have argued, both figures connote what we might think of as the writing implicit in an oral literature, and both figures function as repositories for a tradition's declarations about how and why formal literary language departs from ordinary language use. The metaphor of a double-voiced Esu-Elegbara corresponds to the double-voiced nature of the Signifyin(g) utterance. When one text Signifies upon another text, by tropological revision or repetition and difference, the double-voiced utterance allows us to chart discrete formal relationships in Afro-American literary history. Signifyin(g), then, is a metaphor for textual revision.

Gloria Anzaldúa

b. 1942

Gloria Anzaldúa was born on the ranch settlement of Jesus Maria of the Valley in south Texas, where her parents, Mexican Americans Urbano and Amalia Garcia Anzaldúa, farmed with several other families. She has a sister and two brothers. As she explains in her book *Borderlands/La frontera* (1987; excerpted here), Anzaldúa grew up in a linguistically rich environment, learning several dialects of Spanish and English and some Nahuatl, an indigenous language of Mexico. In 1953 the family moved to Hargill, Texas, a tiny farming community, to look for better employment. Anzaldúa's parents had no more than an elementary school education. However, her father valued education highly, especially for his sons, and he refused migrant farm work because he did not want his children to miss school. Anzaldúa's father died when she was fifteen. While her mother held a job as a nurse's aide, Anzaldúa worked in the fields to help support the family, continuing through high school and through college at Pan American University, where she took a B.A. in 1969. Anzaldúa has said that from an early age, she felt at odds with her family, who did not approve of her love for reading, writing, and drawing and who were shocked by her emerging lesbian identity. Her family opposed her seeking higher education, believing that it was not appropriate for women and that she could provide more financial help to the family by staying at work full time. Anzaldúa explains: "I was the only woman, not just the only woman, the only person from the area who ever went to college."¹

Anzaldúa persevered, going on to earn an M.A. in English and art education from the University of Texas at Austin in 1972. She then began teaching the children of migrant workers in Texas and Indiana who traveled a route between the two states. From 1974 to 1977 she enrolled in the comparative literature program at the University of Texas at Austin but left without completing her Ph.D. because she was not allowed to write her thesis on feminist Chicana literature. While at the University of Texas, Anzaldúa studied with rhetorician James Sledd, who first encouraged her to write in the mixture of languages and styles found in *Borderlands* and who, she says, also served as a role model for her of someone "who crosses back and forth between insider and outsider" in the academy.² So that she could pursue graduate work in Chicana studies, Anzaldúa moved to the University of California at Santa Cruz in 1979. She still lives in Santa Cruz and has taught at the university and various other schools in California and at Vermont College of Norwich University, where, she has said, the experience of feeling like a "foreigner" in New England prompted her to write *Borderlands*.³

¹Quoted in Héctor A. Torres, "Gloria Anzaldúa (26 September 1942–)," in *Dictionary of Literary Biography: Chicano Writers, Second Series*, volume 122, ed. Francisco A. Lomeli and Carl R. Shirley (Detroit, London: Gale Research Company, 1992), p. 9.

²Quoted in Andrea Lunsford, "Toward a Mestiza Rhetoric: Gloria Anzaldúa on Composition and Postcoloniality," *Journal of Advanced Composition* 18, no. 1 (1998): 23.

³Quoted in Torres, p. 10.

Anzaldúa has become a well-known poet and woman of letters, frequently reading her work around the country and publishing numerous essays and poems in literary journals such as *Sinister Wisdom*, a periodical focusing on lesbian issues. She has served on the editorial board of that journal since 1984. Anzaldúa has also edited two collections of writing by women of color, *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*, coedited with Cherríe Moraga (1981), which won the 1986 Before Columbus Foundation American Book Award, and *Making Face, Making Soul/Haciendo Caras: Creative and Critical Perspectives by Feminists of Color* (1990). Both anthologies have become standard texts in women's studies courses. Her 1987 collection of her own essays and poems, *Borderlands/La frontera: The New Mestiza*, is generally considered to be her most important work and one of the most important works in twentieth-century feminist theory. Scholars are beginning to recognize this book's significance for women's language and rhetoric.

In *Borderlands*, Anzaldúa pioneers the use of new discursive resources for women writers, particularly women of color, by mixing dialects of English and Spanish, analytic and autobiographical material, and formal and informal genres. Chicano scholar Héctor Torres characterizes the mix in this way: "Anzaldúa shows herself conversant in several of the standard academic "codes"—such as critical theory, history, and sociolinguistics—but, not satisfied with any single one of them, she chooses to blend them into her own polyvalent voice. The result is an autobiographical work that, in suspending the traditional prohibition against mixing genres, functions as both literary and referential discourse."⁴ Rhetorician and composition scholar Andrea Lunsford has called this mixed discourse a "mestiza rhetoric," with "mestiza" referring not only to the specific racial and cultural mixing that has produced the Mexican American people, but also to a more generalized concept of internal multiplicity, or complex identity, that is expressed in language drawn from a variety of cultural sources.⁵ Lunsford describes Anzaldúa's "new kind of writing style" in this way: "She shifts from poetry to reportorial prose to autobiographical stream of consciousness to incantatory mythic chants to sketches and graphs—and back again, weaving images from her multiple selves and from many others into a kind of tapestry or patchwork quilt of language."⁶ Mestiza rhetoric deals with a condition Anzaldúa analyzes as "nepantilism," from an Aztec word meaning "torn between ways": She sees mestiza rhetoric as a way to repair, without erasing, the internal rips, that is, to make internal multiplicity into a positive discursive resource. As Anzaldúa explains it, "It's a hybridity, a mixture, because I live in this liminal state in between worlds, in between realities, in between systems of knowledge, in between symbology systems. This liminal, borderland, terrain or passageway, this interface, is what I call *Nepantla*."⁷

Chicana studies scholar Yvonne Yarbro-Bejarano and women's studies scholar Jane Hedley both defend Anzaldúa from the charges leveled by some Chicano and Chicana critics that her project in *Borderlands* is not sufficiently political. Hedley

⁴Torres, p. 13.

⁵Lunsford, p. 2.

⁶Lunsford, p. 2.

⁷Lunsford, p. 17, emphasis in original.

and Yarbrow-Bejarano both argue that Anzaldúa describes and fosters a process of self-formation that treats cultural multiplicity, however painful at times, as a discursive resource, and further, that she presents this kind of self-formation as a necessary prerequisite to the self-confidence needed for collective political action against racism, sexism, and homophobia. Literary scholar AnaLouise Keating would agree; she finds many similarities between Anzaldúa's work and that of Hélène Cixous (p. 1520)—terming Anzaldúa's concept a “mestizaje écriture”⁸—but sees Anzaldúa as more free than Cixous from charges of essentialism because of the political slant of her work. At the same time, Yarbrow-Bejarano has warned against detaching Anzaldúa from her specific Chicana context, because white feminists must acknowledge the sorts of racial loyalties that inform her work and because to detach her would be irresponsible scholarship given the influences on her of earlier women thinkers of color who have articulated concepts of multiple identity. Nevertheless, scholars agree that Anzaldúa calls for coalitions among all people who want to fight oppression, whether they are gay or straight, white or of color, and that she also allows her theory of mestiza consciousness to be used to help explicate the socially constructed nature of all identity and the implications of such constructed identities for language use.

Anzaldúa is committed to mixing art and politics and very aware that this agenda highlights the need to communicate effectively across cultural, sexual, and class boundaries. She understands that mestiza rhetoric must be deployed tactically:

OK, if I write in this style and I code-switch too much and I go into Spanglish too much and I do an associative kind of logical progression in a composition, am I going to lose those people that I want to affect, to change? Am I going to lose the respect of my peers—who are other writers and other artists and other academicians—when I change too much? When I change not only the style, but also the rhetoric, the way that this is done?⁹

As Andrea Lunsford has said, “One of the reasons work like yours is so important to the future of composition studies is that it gives concrete evidence of many voices in a text, many voices speaking out of who you are, many voices that you allow to speak.”¹⁰ Anzaldúa has shown that one can do such switching and mixing while communicating very powerfully.

Selected Bibliography

Anzaldúa's major publications are her two anthologies, *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color* (1981), coedited with Cherríe Moraga, and *Making Face, Making Soul/Haciendo Caras: Creative and Critical Perspectives by Feminists of Color* (1990), and the collection of her own work, *Borderlands/La frontera: The New Mestiza* (1987), from which the excerpts printed here are taken.

Biographical information on Anzaldúa can be gained from her essay, “La Prieta,” in *This Bridge Called My Back*; from Héctor A. Torres's entry on her in the *Dictionary of Literary*

⁸See AnaLouise Keating, *Women Reading Women Writing* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996).

⁹Lunsford, p. 7.

¹⁰Lunsford, p. 12.

Biography: Chicano Writers, Second Series (ed. Francisco A. Lomeli and Carl R. Shirley, 1992); and from her interview with Andrea Lunsford, "Toward a Mestiza Rhetoric: Gloria Anzaldúa on Composition and Postcoloniality" (*Journal of Advanced Composition* 18 [1998]: 1–27; rpt. in *Race, Rhetoric, and the Postcolonial*, ed. Gary A. Olson and Lynn Worsham, 1999).

Andrea Lunsford's introduction to the interview cited above explains the significance of Anzaldúa's work to rhetoric. For commentary on Chicano and Chicana responses to Anzaldúa's work, and for analysis of the relationship between mixed internal identity and mixed discourse, see Yvonne Yarbro-Bejarano, "Gloria Anzaldúa's *Borderlands/La frontera*: Cultural Studies, 'Difference,' and the Non-Unitary Subject" (*Cultural Critique* 28 [fall 1994]: 5–28), and Jane Hedley, "Nepantlist Poetics: Narrative and Cultural Identity in the Mixed-Language Writings of Irena Klepfisz and Gloria Anzaldúa" (*Narrative* 4 [January 1996]: 35–54). Comparing Anzaldúa's work to that of Paula Gunn Allen and Audre Lorde, two other feminists of color with similar "border-crossing" theoretical concerns, as well as to the work of Hélène Cixous, is AnaLouise Keating's *Women Reading Women Writing* (1996).

From *Borderlands/La frontera*

HOW TO TAME A WILD TONGUE

"We're going to have to control your tongue," the dentist says, pulling out all the metal from my mouth. Silver bits plop and tinkle into the basin. My mouth is a motherlode.

The dentist is cleaning out my roots. I get a whiff of the stench when I gasp. "I can't cap that tooth yet, you're still draining," he says.

"We're going to have to do something about your tongue," I hear the anger rising in his voice. My tongue keeps pushing out the wads of cotton, pushing back the drills, the long thin needles. "I've never seen anything as strong or as stubborn," he says. And I think, how do you tame a wild tongue, train it to be quiet, how do you bridle and saddle it? How do you make it lie down?

Who is to say that robbing a people of its language is less violent than war?

—RAY GWYN SMITH¹

I remember being caught speaking Spanish at recess—that was good for three licks on the

¹Ray Gwyn Smith, *Moorland is Cold Country*, unpublished book. [Au.]

knuckles with a sharp ruler. I remember being sent to the corner of the classroom for "talking back" to the Anglo teacher when all I was trying to do was tell her how to pronounce my name. "If you want to be American, speak 'American.' If you don't like it, go back to Mexico where you belong."

"I want you to speak English. *Pa' hallar buen trabajo tienes que saber hablar el inglés. Qué vale toda tu educación si todavía hablas inglés con un 'accent,'*" my mother would say, mortified that I spoke English like a Mexican. At Pan American University, I, and all Chicano students were required to take two speech classes. Their purpose: to get rid of our accents.

Attacks on one's form of expression with the intent to censor are a violation of the First Amendment. *El Anglo con cara de inocente nos arrancó la lengua.* Wild tongues can't be tamed, they can only be cut out.

Overcoming the Tradition of Silence

*Ahogadas, escupimos el oscuro.
Peleando con nuestra propia sombra
el silencio nos sepulta.*

En boca cerrada no entran moscas. "Flies don't enter a closed mouth" is a saying I kept hearing

when I was a child. *Ser habladora* was to be a gossip and a liar, to talk too much. *Muchachitas bien criadas*, well-bred girls don't answer back. *Es una falta de respeto* to talk back to one's mother or father. I remember one of the sins I'd recite to the priest in the confession box the few times I went to confession: talking back to my mother, *hablar pa' tras*, *repelar*. *Hociconas*, *repelona*, *chismosa*, having a big mouth, questioning, carrying tales are all signs of being *mal criada*. In my culture they are all words that are derogatory if applied to women—I've never heard them applied to men.

The first time I heard two women, a Puerto Rican and a Cuban, say the word "*nosotras*," I was shocked. I had not known the word existed. Chicanas use *nosotras* whether we're male or female. We are robbed of our female being by the masculine plural. Language is a male discourse.

And our tongues have become
dry the wilderness has
dried out our tongues and
we have forgotten speech.

—IRENA KLEPFISZ²

Even our own people, other Spanish speakers *nos quieren poner candados en la boca*. They would hold us back with their bag of *reglas de academia*.

Oyé como ladra: el lenguaje de la frontera

Quien tiene boca se equivoca.

—Mexican saying

"*Pocho*, cultural traitor, you're speaking the oppressor's language by speaking English, you're ruining the Spanish language," I have been accused by various Latinos and Latinas. Chicano Spanish is considered by the purist and by most Latinos deficient, a mutilation of Spanish.

But Chicano Spanish is a border tongue which developed naturally. Change, *evolución*, *enriquecimiento de palabras nuevas por invención o adopción* have created variants of Chicano Spanish, *un nuevo lenguaje*. *Un lenguaje que corre-*

²Irena Klepfisz, "*Di rayze aheym/The Journey Home*," in *The Tribe of Dina: A Jewish Women's Anthology*, Melanie Kaye/Kantrowitz and Irena Klepfisz, eds. (Montpelier, VT: Sinister Wisdom Books, 1986), 49. [Au.]

sponde a un modo de vivir. Chicano Spanish is not incorrect, it is a living language.

For a people who are neither Spanish nor live in a country in which Spanish is the first language; for a people who live in a country in which English is the reigning tongue but who are not Anglo; for a people who cannot entirely identify with either standard (formal, Castillian) Spanish nor standard English, what recourse is left to them but to create their own language? A language which they can connect their identity to, one capable of communicating the realities and values true to themselves—a language with terms that are neither *español ni inglés*, but both. We speak a patois, a forked tongue, a variation of two languages.

Chicano Spanish sprang out of the Chicanos' need to identify ourselves as a distinct people. We needed a language with which we could communicate with ourselves, a secret language. For some of us, language is a homeland closer than the Southwest—for many Chicanos today live in the Midwest and the East. And because we are a complex, heterogeneous people, we speak many languages. Some of the languages we speak are:

1. Standard English
2. Working class and slang English
3. Standard Spanish
4. Standard Mexican Spanish
5. North Mexican Spanish dialect
6. Chicano Spanish (Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California have regional variations)
7. Tex-Mex
8. *Pachuco* (called *caló*)

My "home" tongues are the languages I speak with my sister and brothers, with my friends. They are the last five listed, with 6 and 7 being closest to my heart. From school, the media and job situations, I've picked up standard and working class English. From Mamagrande Locha and from reading Spanish and Mexican literature, I've picked up Standard Spanish and Standard Mexican Spanish. From *los recién llegados*, Mexican immigrants, and *braceros*, I learned the North Mexican dialect. With Mexicans I'll try to speak either Standard Mexican Spanish or the North Mexican dialect. From my parents and Chicanos living in the Valley, I picked up Chicano Texas Spanish, and I speak it with my mom,

younger brother (who married a Mexican and who rarely mixes Spanish with English), aunts and older relatives.

With Chicanas from *Nuevo México* or *Arizona* I will speak Chicano Spanish a little, but often they don't understand what I'm saying. With most California Chicanas I speak entirely in English (unless I forget). When I first moved to San Francisco, I'd rattle off something in Spanish, unintentionally embarrassing them. Often it is only with another Chicana *tejana* that I can talk freely.

Words distorted by English are known as anglicisms or *pochismos*. The *poch* is an anglicized Mexican or American of Mexican origin who speaks Spanish with an accent characteristic of North Americans and who distorts and reconstructs the language according to the influence of English.³ Tex-Mex, or Spanglish, comes most naturally to me. I may switch back and forth from English to Spanish in the same sentence or in the same word. With my sister and my brother Nune and with Chicano *tejano* contemporaries I speak in Tex-Mex.

From kids and people my own age I picked up *Pachuco*. *Pachuco* (the language of the zoot suiters) is a language of rebellion, both against Standard Spanish and Standard English. It is a secret language. Adults of the culture and outsiders cannot understand it. It is made up of slang words from both English and Spanish. *Ruca* means girl or woman, *vato* means guy or dude, *chale* means no, *simón* means yes, *churro* is sure, talk is *periquiar*, *pigionear* means petting, *que gacho* means how nerdy, *ponte águila* means watch out, death is called *la pelona*. Through lack of practice and not having others who can speak it, I've lost most of the *Pachuco* tongue.

Chicano Spanish

Chicanos, after 250 years of Spanish/Anglo colonization have developed significant differences in the Spanish we speak. We collapse two adjacent vowels into a single syllable and sometimes shift the stress in certain words such as *maíz/maiz*, *co-*

hete/cuete. We leave out certain consonants when they appear between vowels: *lado/lao*, *majado/mojao*. Chicanos use "archaisms," words that are no longer in the Spanish language, words that have been evolved out. We say *semos*, *truje*, *haiga*, *ansina*, and *naiden*. We retain the "archaic" *j*, as in *jalar*, that derives from an earlier *h*, (the French *halar* or the Germanic *halon* which was lost to standard Spanish in the 16th century), but which is still found in several regional dialects such as the one spoken in South Texas. (Due to geography, Chicanos from the Valley of South Texas were cut off linguistically from other Spanish speakers. We tend to use words that the Spaniards brought over from Medieval Spain. The majority of the Spanish colonizers in Mexico and the Southwest came from Extremadura—Hernán Cortés was one of them—and Andalucía. Andalusians pronounce *ll* like a *y*, and their *d*'s tend to be absorbed by adjacent vowels: *tirado* becomes *tirao*. They brought *el lenguaje popular, dialectos y regionalismos*.⁴)

Chicanos and other Spanish speakers also shift *ll* to *y* and *z* to *s*.⁵ We leave out initial syllables, saying *tar* for *estar*, *toy* for *estoy*, *hora* for *ahora* (*cubanos* and *puertorriqueños* also leave out initial letters of some words.) We also leave out the final syllable such as *pa* for *para*. The intervocalic *y*, the *ll* as in *tortilla*, *ella*, *botella*, gets replaced by *tortia* or *tortiya*, *ea*, *botea*. We add an additional syllable at the beginning of certain words: *atocar* for *tocar*, *agastar* for *gastar*. Sometimes we'll say *lavaste las vacijas*, other times *lavates* (substituting the *ates* verb endings for the *aste*).

We use anglicisms, words borrowed from English: *bola* from ball, *carpeta* from carpet, *máquina de lavar* (instead of *lavadora*) from washing machine. Tex-Mex argot, created by adding a Spanish sound at the beginning or end of an English word such as *cookiari* for cook, *watchari* for watch, *parkari* for park, and *rapiari* for rape, is the result of the pressures on Spanish speakers to adapt to English.

⁴Eduardo Hernández-Chávez, Andrew D. Cohen, and Anthony F. Beltramo, *El Lenguaje de los Chicanos: Regional and Social Characteristics of Language Used By Mexican Americans* (Arlington, VA: Center for Applied Linguistics, 1975), 39. [Au.]

⁵Hernández-Chávez, xvii. [Au.]

³R. C. Ortega, *Dialectología Del Barrio*, trans. Hortencia S. Alwan (Los Angeles, CA: R. C. Ortega Publisher & Bookseller, 1977), 132. [Au.]

We don't use the word *vosotros/as* or its accompanying verb form. We don't say *claro* (to mean yes), *imagínate*, or *me emociona*, unless we picked up Spanish from Latinas, out of a book, or in a classroom. Other Spanish-speaking groups are going through the same, or similar, development in their Spanish.

Linguistic Terrorism

Deslenguadas. Somos los del español deficiente. We are your linguistic nightmare, your linguistic aberration, your linguistic *mestisaje*, the subject of your *burla*. Because we speak with tongues of fire we are culturally crucified. Racially, culturally and linguistically *somos huérfanos*—we speak an orphan tongue.

Chicanas who grew up speaking Chicano Spanish have internalized the belief that we speak poor Spanish. It is illegitimate, a bastard language. And because we internalize how our language has been used against us by the dominant culture, we use our language differences against each other.

Chicana feminists often skirt around each other with suspicion and hesitation. For the longest time I couldn't figure it out. Then it dawned on me. To be close to another Chicana is like looking into the mirror. We are afraid of what we'll see there. *Pena*. Shame. Low estimation of self. In childhood we are told that our language is wrong. Repeated attacks on our native tongue diminish our sense of self. The attacks continue throughout our lives.

Chicanas feel uncomfortable talking in Spanish to Latinas, afraid of their censure. Their language was not outlawed in their countries. They had a whole lifetime of being immersed in their native tongue; generations, centuries in which Spanish was a first language, taught in school, heard on radio and TV, and read in the newspaper.

If a person, Chicana or Latina, has a low estimation of my native tongue, she also has a low estimation of me. Often with *mexicanas y latinas* we'll speak English as a neutral language. Even among Chicanas we tend to speak English at parties or conferences. Yet, at the same time, we're afraid the other will think we're *agringadas* because we don't speak Chicano Spanish. We op-

press each other trying to out-Chicano each other, vying to be the "real" Chicanas, to speak like Chicanos. There is no one Chicano language just as there is no one Chicano experience. A monolingual Chicana whose first language is English or Spanish is just as much a Chicana as one who speaks several variants of Spanish. A Chicana from Michigan or Chicago or Detroit is just as much a Chicana as one from the Southwest. Chicano Spanish is as diverse linguistically as it is regionally.

By the end of this century, Spanish speakers will comprise the biggest minority group in the U.S., a country where students in high schools and colleges are encouraged to take French classes because French is considered more "cultured." But for a language to remain alive it must be used.⁶ By the end of this century English, and not Spanish, will be the mother tongue of most Chicanos and Latinos.

So, if you want to really hurt me, talk badly about my language. Ethnic identity is twin skin to linguistic identity—I am my language. Until I can take pride in my language, I cannot take pride in myself. Until I can accept as legitimate Chicano Texas Spanish, Tex-Mex and all the other languages I speak, I cannot accept the legitimacy of myself. Until I am free to write bilingually and to switch codes without having always to translate, while I still have to speak English or Spanish when I would rather speak Spanglish, and as long as I have to accommodate the English speakers rather than having them accommodate me, my tongue will be illegitimate.

I will no longer be made to feel ashamed of existing. I will have my voice: Indian, Spanish, white. I will have my serpent's tongue—my woman's voice, my sexual voice, my poet's voice. I will overcome the tradition of silence.

My fingers
move sly against your palm
Like women everywhere, we speak in code. . . .
—MELANIE KAYE/KANTROWITZ⁷

⁶Irena Klepfisz, "Secular Jewish Identity: Yidishkayt in America," in *The Tribe of Dina*, Kaye/Kantrowitz and Klepfisz, eds., 43. [Au.]

⁷Melanie Kaye/Kantrowitz, "Sign," in *We Speak in Code*:

“Vistas,” corridos, y comida:
My Native Tongue

In the 1960s, I read my first Chicano novel. It was *City of Night* by John Rechy, a gay Texan, son of a Scottish father and a Mexican mother. For days I walked around in stunned amazement that a Chicano could write and could get published. When I read *I am Joaquín*⁸ I was surprised to see a bilingual book by a Chicano in print. When I saw poetry written in Tex-Mex for the first time, a feeling of pure joy flashed through me. I felt like we really existed as a people. In 1971, when I started teaching High School English to Chicano students, I tried to supplement the required texts with works by Chicanos, only to be reprimanded and forbidden to do so by the principal. He claimed that I was supposed to teach “American” and English literature. At the risk of being fired, I swore my students to secrecy and slipped in Chicano short stories, poems, a play. In graduate school, while working toward a Ph.D., I had to “argue” with one advisor after the other, semester after semester, before I was allowed to make Chicano literature an area of focus.

Even before I read books by Chicanos or Mexicans, it was the Mexican movies I saw at the drive-in—the Thursday night special of \$1.00 a carload—that gave me a sense of belonging. “*Vámonos a las vistas*,” my mother would call out and we’d all—grandmother, brothers, sister and cousins—squeeze into the car. We’d wolf down cheese and bologna white bread sandwiches while watching Pedro Infante in melodramatic tear-jerkers like *Nosotros los pobres*, the first “real” Mexican movie (that was not an imitation of European movies). I remember seeing *Cuando los hijos se van* and surmising that all Mexican movies played up the love a mother has for her children and what ungrateful sons and daughters suffer when they are not devoted to their mothers. I remember the singing-

type “westerns” of Jorge Negrete and Miquel Aceves Mejía. When watching Mexican movies, I felt a sense of homecoming as well as alienation. People who were to amount to something didn’t go to Mexican movies, or *bailes* or tune their radios to *bolero*, *rancherita*, and *corrido* music.

The whole time I was growing up, there was *norteño* music sometimes called North Mexican border music, or Tex-Mex music, or Chicano music, or *cantina* (bar) music. I grew up listening to *conjuntos*, three- or four-piece bands made up of folk musicians playing guitar, *bajo sexto*, drums and button accordion, which Chicanos had borrowed from the German immigrants who had come to Central Texas and Mexico to farm and build breweries. In the Rio Grande Valley, Steve Jordan and Little Joe Hernández were popular, and Flaco Jiménez was the accordion king. The rhythms of Tex-Mex music are those of the polka, also adapted from the Germans, who in turn had borrowed the polka from the Czechs and Bohemians.

I remember the hot, sultry evenings when *corridos*—songs of love and death on the Texas-Mexican borderlands—reverberated out of cheap amplifiers from the local *cantinas* and wafted in through my bedroom window.

Corridos first became widely used along the South Texas/Mexican border during the early conflict between Chicanos and Anglos. The *corridos* are usually about Mexican heroes who do valiant deeds against the Anglo oppressors. Pancho Villa’s song, “*La cucaracha*,” is the most famous one. *Corridos* of John F. Kennedy and his death are still very popular in the Valley. Older Chicanos remember Lydia Mendoza, one of the great border *corrido* singers who was called *la Gloria de Tejas*. Her “*El tango negro*,” sung during the Great Depression, made her a singer of the people. The everpresent *corridos* narrated one hundred years of border history, bringing news of events as well as entertaining. These folk musicians and folk songs are our chief cultural myth-makers, and they made our hard lives seem bearable.

I grew up feeling ambivalent about our music. Country-western and rock-and-roll had more status.

Poems and Other Writings (Pittsburgh, PA: Motherroot Publications, Inc., 1980), 85. [Au.]

⁸Rodolfo Gonzales, *I Am Joaquín/Yo Soy Joaquín* (New York, NY: Bantam Books, 1972). It was first published in 1967. [Au.]

In the 50s and 60s, for the slightly educated and *agringado* Chicanos, there existed a sense of shame at being caught listening to our music. Yet I couldn't stop my feet from thumping to the music, could not stop humming the words, nor hide from myself the exhilaration I felt when I heard it.

There are more subtle ways that we internalize identification, especially in the forms of images and emotions. For me food and certain smells are tied to my identity, to my homeland. Woodsmoke curling up to an immense blue sky; woodsmoke perfuming my grandmother's clothes, her skin. The stench of cow manure and the yellow patches on the ground; the crack of a .22 rifle and the reek of cordite. Homemade white cheese sizzling in a pan, melting inside a folded *tortilla*. My sister Hilda's hot, spicy *menudo*, *chile colorado* making it deep red, pieces of *panza* and hominy floating on top. My brother Carlito barbecuing *fajitas* in the backyard. Even now and 3,000 miles away, I can see my mother spicing the ground beef, pork and venison with *chile*. My mouth salivates at the thought of the hot steaming *tamales* I would be eating if I were home.

Si le preguntas a mi mamá, "¿Qué eres?"

Identity is the essential core of who we are as individuals, the conscious experience of the self inside.

—KAUFMAN⁹

Nosotros los Chicanos straddle the borderlands. On one side of us, we are constantly exposed to the Spanish of the Mexicans, on the other side we hear the Anglos' incessant clamoring so that we forget our language. Among ourselves we don't say *nosotros los americanos*, *o nosotros los españoles*, *o nosotros los hispanos*. We say *nosotros los mexicanos* (by *mexicanos* we do not mean citizens of Mexico; we do not mean a national identity, but a racial one). We distinguish between *mexicanos del otro lado* and *mexicanos de este lado*. Deep in our hearts we believe that being Mexican has

⁹Gerшен Kaufman, *Shame: The Power of Caring* (Cambridge, MA: Schenkman Books, Inc., 1980), 68. [Au.]

nothing to do with which country one lives in. Being Mexican is a state of soul—not one of mind, not one of citizenship. Neither eagle nor serpent, but both. And like the ocean, neither animal respects borders.

Dime con quien andas y te diré quien eres.

(Tell me who your friends are and I'll tell you who you are.)

—Mexican saying

Si le preguntas a mi mamá, "¿Qué eres?" te dirá, "Soy mexicana." My brothers and sisters say the same. I sometimes will answer "*soy mexicana*" and at others will say "*soy Chicana*" or "*soy tejana*." But I identified as "*Raza*" before I ever identified as "*mexicana*" or "*Chicana*."

As a culture, we call ourselves Spanish when referring to ourselves as a linguistic group and when copping out. It is then that we forget our predominant Indian genes. We are 70–80% Indian.¹⁰ We call ourselves Hispanic¹¹ or Spanish-American or Latin American or Latin when linking ourselves to other Spanish-speaking peoples of the Western hemisphere and when copping out. We call ourselves Mexican-American¹² to signify we are neither Mexican nor American, but more the noun "American" than the adjective "Mexican" (and when copping out).

Chicanos and other people of color suffer economically for not acculturating. This voluntary (yet forced) alienation makes for psychological conflict, a kind of dual identity—we don't identify with the Anglo-American cultural values and we don't totally identify with the Mexican cultural values. We are a synergy of two cultures with various degrees of Mexicanness or Angloness. I have so internalized the borderland conflict that sometimes I feel like one cancels out the other and we are zero, nothing, no one. *A veces*

¹⁰John R. Chávez, *The Lost Land: The Chicano Images of the Southwest* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1984), 88–90. [Au.]

¹¹"Hispanic" is derived from *Hispanis* (*España*, a name given to the Iberian Peninsula in ancient times when it was a part of the Roman Empire) and is a term designated by the U.S. government to make it easier to handle us on paper. [Au.]

¹²The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo created the Mexican-American in 1848. [Au.]

no soy nada ni nadie. Pero hasta cuando no lo soy, lo soy.

When not copping out, when we know we are more than nothing, we call ourselves Mexican, referring to race and ancestry; *mestizo* when affirming both our Indian and Spanish (but we hardly ever own our Black ancestry); Chicano when referring to a politically aware people born and/or raised in the U.S.; *Raza* when referring to Chicanos; *tejanos* when we are Chicanos from Texas.

Chicanos did not know we were a people until 1965 when Cesar Chavez and the farmworkers united and *I Am Joaquín* was published and *la Raza Unida* party was formed in Texas. With that recognition, we became a distinct people. Something momentous happened to the Chicano soul—we became aware of our reality and acquired a name and a language (Chicano Spanish) that reflected that reality. Now that we had a name, some of the fragmented pieces began to fall together—who we were, what we were, how we had evolved. We began to get glimpses of what we might eventually become.

Yet the struggle of identities continues, the struggle of borders is our reality still. One day the inner struggle will cease and a true integration take place. In the meantime, *tenemos que hacer la lucha. ¿Quién está protegiendo los ranchos de mi gente? ¿Quién está tratando de cerrar la fisura entre la india y el blanco en nuestra sangre? El Chicano, sí, el Chicano que anda como un ladrón en su propia casa.*

Los Chicanos, how patient we seem, how very patient. There is the quiet of the Indian about us.¹³ We know how to survive. When other races have given up their tongue, we've kept ours. We know what it is to live under the hammer blow of the dominant *norteamericano* culture. But more than we count the blows, we count the days the weeks the years the centuries the eons until the white laws and commerce and customs will rot in the deserts they've created, lie bleached. *Humildes*

¹³Anglos, in order to alleviate their guilt for dispossessing the Chicano, stressed the Spanish part of us and perpetrated the myth of the Spanish Southwest. We have accepted the fiction that we are Hispanic, that is Spanish, in order to accommodate ourselves to the dominant culture and its abhorrence of Indians. Chávez, 88–91. [Au.]

yet proud, *quietos* yet wild, *nosotros los mexicanos-Chicanos* will walk by the crumbling ashes as we go about our business. Stubborn, persevering, impenetrable as stone, yet possessing a malleability that renders us unbreakable, we, the *mestizas* and *mestizos*, will remain.

TLILLI, TLAPALLI

THE PATH OF THE RED AND BLACK INK

Out of poverty, poetry;
out of suffering, song.
—a Mexican saying

When I was seven, eight, nine, fifteen, sixteen years old, I would read in bed with a flashlight under the covers, hiding my self-imposed insomnia from my mother. I preferred the world of the imagination to the death of sleep. My sister, Hilda, who slept in the same bed with me, would threaten to tell my mother unless I told her a story.

I was familiar with *cuentos*—my grandmother told stories like the one about her getting on top of the roof while down below rabid coyotes were ravaging the place and wanting to get at her. My father told stories about a phantom giant dog that appeared out of nowhere and sped along the side of the pickup no matter how fast he was driving.

Nudge a Mexican and she or he will break out with a story. So, huddling under the covers, I made up stories for my sister night after night. After a while she wanted two stories per night. I learned to give her installments, building up the suspense with convoluted complications until the story climaxed several nights later. It must have been then that I decided to put stories on paper. It must have been then that working with images and writing became connected to night.

Invoking Art

In the ethno-poetics and performance of the shaman, my people, the Indians, did not split the artistic from the functional, the sacred from the

secular, art from everyday life. The religious, social and aesthetic purposes of art were all intertwined. Before the Conquest, poets gathered to play music, dance, sing and read poetry in open-air places around the *Xochicuauhitl, el Árbol Florido*, Tree-in-Flower. (The *Coaxihuítl* or morning glory is called the snake plant and its seeds, known as *ololiuhqui*, are hallucinogenic.¹⁴) The ability of story (prose and poetry) to transform the storyteller and the listener into something or someone else is shamanistic. The writer, as shape-changer, is a *nahual*, a shaman.

In looking at this book that I'm almost finished writing, I see a mosaic pattern (Aztec-like) emerging, a weaving pattern, thin here, thick there. I see a preoccupation with the deep structure, the underlying structure, with the gesso underpainting that is red earth, black earth. I can see the deep structure, the scaffolding. If I can get the bone structure right, then putting flesh on it proceeds without too many hitches. The problem is that the bones often do not exist prior to the flesh, but are shaped after a vague and broad shadow of its form is discerned or uncovered during beginning, middle and final stages of the writing. Numerous overlays of paint, rough surfaces, smooth surfaces make me realize I am preoccupied with texture as well. Too, I see the barely contained color threatening to spill over the boundaries of the object it represents and into other "objects" and over the borders of the frame. I see a hybridization of metaphor, different species of ideas popping up here, popping up there, full of variations and seeming contradictions, though I believe in an ordered, structured universe where all phenomena are interrelated and imbued with spirit. This almost finished product seems an assemblage, a montage, a beaded work with several leitmotifs and with a central core, now appearing, now disappearing in a crazy dance. The whole thing has had a mind of its own, escaping me and insisting on putting together the pieces of its own puzzle with minimal direction from my will. It is a rebellious, willful entity, a precocious girl-child

¹⁴R. Gordon Wasson, *The Wondrous Mushroom: Mycolatry in Mesoamerica* (New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1980), 59, 103. [Au.]

forced to grow up too quickly, rough, unyielding, with pieces of feather sticking out here and there, fur, twigs, clay. My child, but not for much longer. This female being is angry, sad, joyful, is *Coatlicue*, dove, horse, serpent, cactus. Though it is a flawed thing—a clumsy, complex, groping blind thing—for me it is alive, infused with spirit. I talk to it; it talks to me.

I make my offerings of incense and cracked corn, light my candle. In my head I sometimes will say a prayer—an affirmation and a voicing of intent. Then I run water, wash the dishes or my underthings, take a bath, or mop the kitchen floor. This "induction" period sometimes takes a few minutes, sometimes hours. But always I go against a resistance. Something in me does not want to do this writing. Yet once I'm immersed in it, I can go fifteen to seventeen hours in one sitting and I don't want to leave it.

My "stories" are acts encapsulated in time, "enacted" every time they are spoken aloud or read silently. I like to think of them as performances and not as inert and "dead" objects (as the aesthetics of Western culture think of art works). Instead, the work has an identity; it is a "who" or a "what" and contains the presences of persons, that is, incarnations of gods or ancestors or natural and cosmic powers. The work manifests the same needs as a person, it needs to be "fed," *la tengo que bañar y vestir*.

When invoked in rite, the object/event is "present"; that is, "enacted," it is both a physical thing and the power that infuses it. It is metaphysical in that it "spins its energies between gods and humans" and its task is to move the gods. This type of work dedicates itself to managing the universe and its energies. I'm not sure what it is when it is at rest (not in performance). It may or may not be a "work" then. A mask may only have the power of presence during a ritual dance and the rest of the time it may merely be a "thing." Some works exist forever invoked, always in performance. I'm thinking of totem poles, cave paintings. Invoked art is communal and speaks of everyday life. It is dedicated to the validation of humans; that is, it makes people

hopeful, happy, secure, and it can have negative effects as well, which propel one towards a search for validation.¹⁵

The aesthetic of virtuosity, art typical of Western European cultures, attempts to manage the energies of its own internal system such as conflicts, harmonies, resolutions and balances. It bears the presences of qualities and internal meanings. It is dedicated to the validation of itself. Its task is to move humans by means of achieving mastery in content, technique, feeling. Western art is always whole and always “in power.” It is individual (not communal). It is “psychological” in that it spins its energies between itself and its witness.¹⁶

Western cultures behave differently toward works of art than do tribal cultures. The “sacrifices” Western cultures make are in housing their art works in the best structures designed by the best architects; and in servicing them with insurance, guards to protect them, conservators to maintain them, specialists to mount and display them, and the educated and upper classes to “view” them. Tribal cultures keep art works in honored and sacred places in the home and elsewhere. They attend them by making sacrifices of blood (goat or chicken), libations of wine. They bathe, feed, and clothe them. The works are treated not just as objects, but also as persons. The “witness” is a participant in the enactment of the work in a ritual, and not a member of the privileged classes.¹⁷

Ethnocentrism is the tyranny of Western aesthetics. An Indian mask in an American museum is transposed into an alien aesthetic system where what is missing is the presence of power invoked through performance ritual. It has become a conquered thing, a dead “thing” separated from nature and, therefore, its power.

Modern Western painters have “borrowed,” copied, or otherwise extrapolated the art of tribal cultures and called it cubism, surrealism, symbolism. The music, the beat of the drum, the

¹⁵Robert Plant Armstrong, *The Powers of Presence: Consciousness, Myth, and Affecting Presence* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981), 11, 20. [Au.]

¹⁶Armstrong, 10. [Au.]

¹⁷Armstrong, 4. [Au.]

Blacks’ jive talk. All taken over. Whites, along with a good number of our own people, have cut themselves off from their spiritual roots, and they take our spiritual art objects in an unconscious attempt to get them back. If they’re going to do it, I’d like them to be aware of what they are doing and to go about doing it the right way. Let’s all stop importing Greek myths and the Western Cartesian split point of view and root ourselves in the mythological soil and soul of this continent. White America has only attended to the body of the earth in order to exploit it, never to succor it or to be nurtured in it. Instead of surreptitiously ripping off the vital energy of people of color and putting it to commercial use, whites could allow themselves to share and exchange and learn from us in a respectful way. By taking up *curanderismo*, Santeria, shamanism, Taoism, Zen and otherwise delving into the spiritual life and ceremonies of multi-colored people, Anglos would perhaps lose the white sterility they have in their kitchens, bathrooms, hospitals, mortuaries and missile bases. Though in the conscious mind, black and dark may be associated with death, evil and destruction, in the subconscious mind and in our dreams, white is associated with disease, death and hopelessness. Let us hope that the left hand, that of darkness, of femaleness, of “primitiveness,” can divert the indifferent, right-handed, “rational” suicidal drive that, unchecked, could blow us into acid rain in a fraction of a millisecond.

Ni cuicani: I, the Singer

For the ancient Aztecs, *tlilli, tlapalli, la tinta negra y roja de sus códices* (the black and red ink painted on codices) were the colors symbolizing *escritura y sabiduría* (writing and wisdom).¹⁸ They believed that through metaphor and symbol, by means of poetry and truth, communication with the Divine could be attained, and *topan* (that which is above—the gods and spirit world) could be bridged with *mictlán* (that which is below—the underworld and the region of the dead).

¹⁸Miguel Leon-Portilla, *Los Antiguos Mexicanos: A través de sus crónicas y cantares* (México, D.F.: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1961), 19, 22. [Au.]

Poet: she pours water from the mouth of the pump, lowers the handle then lifts it, lowers, lifts. Her hands begin to feel the pull from the entrails, the live animal resisting. A sigh rises up from the depths, the handle becomes a wild thing in her hands, the cold sweet water gushes out, splashing her face, the shock of nightlight filling the bucket.

An image is a bridge between evoked emotion and conscious knowledge; words are the cables that hold up the bridge. Images are more direct, more immediate than words, and closer to the unconscious. Picture language precedes thinking in words; the metaphorical mind precedes analytical consciousness.

The Shamanic State

When I create stories in my head, that is, allow the voices and scenes to be projected in the inner screen of my mind, I “trance.” I used to think I was going crazy or that I was having hallucinations. But now I realize it is my job, my calling, to traffic in images. Some of these film-like narratives I write down; most are lost, forgotten. When I don’t write the images down for several days or weeks or months, I get physically ill. Because writing invokes images from my unconscious, and because some of the images are residues of trauma which I then have to reconstruct, I sometimes get sick when I *do* write. I can’t stomach it, become nauseous, or burn with fever, worsen. But, in reconstructing the traumas behind the images, I make “sense” of them, and once they have “meaning” they are changed, transformed. It is then that writing heals me, brings me great joy.

To facilitate the “movies” with soundtracks, I need to be alone, or in a sensory-deprived state. I plug up my ears with wax, put on my black cloth eye-shades, lie horizontal and unmoving, in a state between sleeping and waking, mind and body locked into my fantasy. I am held prisoner by it. My body is experiencing events. In the beginning it is like being in a movie theater, as pure spectator. Gradually I become so engrossed with the activities, the conversations, that I become a participant in the drama. I have to struggle to “disengage” or escape from my “animated story,” I have to get some sleep so I can write tomorrow. Yet I am gripped by a story which won’t let me go. Outside the frame, I am film di-

rector, screenwriter, camera operator. Inside the frame, I am the actors — male and female — I am desert sand, mountain, I am dog, mosquito. I can sustain a four- to six-hour “movie.” Once I am up, I can sustain several “shorts” of anywhere between five and thirty minutes. Usually these “narratives” are the offspring of stories acted out in my head during periods of sensory deprivation.

My “awakened dreams” are about shifts. Thought shifts, reality shifts, gender shifts: one person metamorphoses into another in a world where people fly through the air, heal from mortal wounds. I am playing with my Self, I am playing with the world’s soul, I am the dialogue between my Self and *el espíritu del mundo*. I change myself, I change the world.

Sometimes I put the imagination to a more rare use. I choose words, images, and body sensations and animate them to impress them on my consciousness, thereby making changes in my belief system and reprogramming my consciousness. This involves looking my inner demons in the face, then deciding which I want in my psyche. Those I don’t want, I starve; I feed them no words, no images, no feelings. I spend no time with them, share not my home with them. Neglected, they leave. This is harder to do than to merely generate “stories.” I can only sustain this activity for a few minutes.

I write the myths in me, the myths I am, the myths I want to become. The word, the image and the feeling have a palatable energy, a kind of power. *Con imagenes domo mi miedo, cruzo los abismos que tengo por dentro. Con palabras me hago piedra, pájaro, puente de serpientes arrastrando a ras del suelo todo lo que soy, todo lo que algún día seré.*

*Los que están mirando (leyendo),
los que cuentan (o refieren lo que leen).
Los que vuelven ruidosamente las hojas de los
códices.
Los que tienen en su poder
la tinta negra y roja (la sabiduría)
y lo pintado,
ellos nos llevan, nos guían,
nos dicen el camino.¹⁹*

¹⁹Leon-Portilla, 125. [Au.]

Writing Is a Sensuous Act

Tallo mi cuerpo como si estuviera lavando un trapo. Toco las saltadas venas de mis manos, mis chichis adormecidas como pájaras a la anoche- cer. Estoy encorbada sobre la cama. Las ima- genes aleteán alrededor de mi cama como mur- ciélagos, la sábana como que tuviese alas. El ruido de los trenes subterráneos en mi sentido como conchas. Parece que las paredes del cuarto se me arriman cada vez más cerquita.

Picking out images from my soul's eye, fish- ing for the right words to recreate the images. Words are blades of grass pushing past the ob- stacles, sprouting on the page; the spirit of the words moving in the body is as concrete as flesh and as palpable; the hunger to create is as sub- stantial as fingers and hand.

I look at my fingers, see plumes growing there. From the fingers, my feathers, black and red ink drips across the page. *Escribo con la tinta de mi sangre.* I write in red. Ink. Intimately knowing the smooth touch of paper, its speech- lessness before I spill myself on the insides of trees. Daily, I battle the silence and the red. Daily, I take my throat in my hands and squeeze until the cries pour out, my larynx and soul sore from the constant struggle.

Something to Do with the Dark

*Quien canta, sus males espanta.
—un dicho*

The toad comes out of its hiding place inside the lobes of my brain. It's going to happen again. The ghost of the toad that betrayed me—I hold it in my hand. The toad is sipping the strength from my veins, it is sucking my pale heart. I am a dried serpent skin, wind scuttling me across the hard ground, pieces of me scattered over the countryside. And there in the dark I meet the crippled spider crawling in the gutter, the day-old newspaper fluttering in the dirty rain water.

Musa bruja, venga. Cu- brese con una sábana y espante mis demonios que a rempujones y a cachetadas me roban la pluma me rompen el sueño. Musa, ¡misericordia!

Óigame, musa bruja.

¿Porqué huye uste' en mi cara? Su grito me des- arrolla de mi caracola, me sacude el alma. Vieja, quítese de aquí con sus alas de navaja. Ya no me despedaze mi cara. Vaya con sus pinche uñas que me desgarran de los ojos hasta los talones. Váyese a la tiznada. Que no me coman, le digo. Que no me coman sus nueve dedos caníbales.

Hija negra de la noche, carnala, ¿Porqué me sacas las tripas, porqué cardas mis entrañas? Este hilvanando palabras con tripas me está matando. Jija de la noche ¡vete a la chingada!

Writing produces anxiety. Looking inside my- self and my experience, looking at my conflicts, engenders anxiety in me. Being a writer feels very much like being a Chicana, or being queer—a lot of squirming, coming up against all sorts of walls. Or its opposite: nothing defined or definite, a boundless, floating state of limbo where I kick my heels, brood, percolate, hiber- nate and wait for something to happen.

Living in a state of psychic unrest, in a Bor- derland, is what makes poets write and artists create. It is like a cactus needle embedded in the flesh. It worries itself deeper and deeper, and I keep aggravating it by poking at it. When it be- gins to fester I have to do something to put an end to the aggravation and to figure out why I have it. I get deep down into the place where it's rooted in my skin and pluck away at it, playing it like a musical instrument—the fingers pressing, making the pain worse before it can get better. Then out it comes. No more discomfort, no more ambivalence. Until another needle pierces the skin. That's what writing is for me, an endless cycle of making it worse, making it better, but al- ways making meaning out of the experience, whatever it may be.

*My flowers shall not cease to live;
my songs shall never end;
I, a singer, intone them;
they become scattered, they are spread about.
—Cantares mexicanos*

To write, to be a writer, I have to trust and be- lieve in myself as a speaker, as a voice for the images. I have to believe that I can communicate with images and words and that I can do it well.

A lack of belief in my creative self is a lack of belief in my total self and vice versa—I cannot separate my writing from any part of my life. It is all one.

When I write it feels like I'm carving bone. It feels like I'm creating my own face, my own heart—a Nahuatl concept. My soul makes itself through the creative act. It is constantly remaking and giving birth to itself through my body. It is this learning to live with *la Coatlicue* that transforms living in the Borderlands from a nightmare into a numinous experience. It is always a path/state to something else.

In *Xóchitl* in *Cuícatl*²⁰

She writes while other people sleep. Something is trying to come out. She fights the words, pushes them down, down, a woman with morning sickness in the middle of the night. How much easier it would be to carry a baby for nine months and then expel it permanently. These continuous multiple pregnancies are going to kill her. She is the battlefield for the pitched fight between the inner image and the words trying to recreate it. *La musa bruja* has no manners. Doesn't she know, nights are for sleeping?

She is getting too close to the mouth of the abyss. She is teetering on the edge, trying to balance while she makes up her mind whether to jump in or to find a safer way down. That's why she makes herself sick—to postpone having to jump blindfolded into the abyss of her own being and there in the depths confront her face, the face underneath the mask.

To be a mouth—the cost is too high—her whole life enslaved to that devouring mouth. *Todo pasaba por esa boca, el viento, el fuego, los mares y la Tierra*. Her body, a crossroads, a fragile bridge, cannot support the tons of cargo passing through it. She wants to install 'stop' and 'go' signal lights, instigate a curfew, police Poetry. But something wants to come out.

Blocks (*Coatlicue* states) are related to my cultural identity. The painful periods of confu-

²⁰In *Xóchitl* in *Cuícatl* is Nahuatl for flower and song, *flor y canto*. [Au.]

sion that I suffer from are symptomatic of a larger creative process: cultural shifts. The stress of living with cultural ambiguity both compels me to write and blocks me. It isn't until I'm almost at the end of the blocked state that I remember and recognize it for what it is. As soon as this happens, the piercing light of awareness melts the block and I accept the deep and the darkness and I hear one of my voices saying, "I am tired of fighting. I surrender. I give up, let go, let the walls fall. On this night of the hearing of faults, *Tlazolteotl, diosa de la cara negra*, let fall the cockroaches that live in my hair, the rats that nestle in my skull. Gouge out my lame eyes, rout my demon from its nocturnal cave. Set torch to the tiger that stalks me. Loosen the dead faces gnawing my cheekbones. I am tired of resisting. I surrender. I give up, let go, let the walls fall."

And in descending to the depths I realize that down is up, and I rise up from and into the deep. And once again I recognize that the internal tension of oppositions can propel (if it doesn't tear apart) the mestiza writer out of the *metate* where she is being ground with corn and water, eject her out as *nahual*, an agent of transformation, able to modify and shape primordial energy and therefore able to change herself and others into turkey, coyote, tree, or human.

I sit here before my computer, *Amiguita*, my altar on top of the monitor with the *Virgen de Coatlatlopeuh* candle and copal incense burning. My companion, a wooden serpent staff with feathers, is to my right while I ponder the ways metaphor and symbol concretize the spirit and etherealize the body. The Writing is my whole life, it is my obsession. This vampire which is my talent does not suffer other suitors.²¹ Daily I court it, offer my neck to its teeth. This is the sacrifice that the act of creation requires, a blood sacrifice. For only through the body, through the pulling of flesh, can the human soul be transformed. And for images, words, stories to have this transformative power, they must arise from the human body—flesh and bone—and from the Earth's body—stone, sky, liquid, soil. This work, these images, piercing tongue or ear lobes with

²¹Nietzsche, in *The Will to Power*, says that the artist lives under a curse of being vampirized by his talent. [Au.]

cactus needle, are my offerings, are my Aztec blood sacrifices.

LA CONCIENCIA DE LA MESTIZA TOWARDS A NEW CONSCIOUSNESS

*Por la mujer de mi raza
hablará el espíritu.*²²

Jose Vasconcelos, Mexican philosopher, envisaged *una raza mestiza, una mezcla de razas afines, una raza de color—la primera raza síntesis del globo*. He called it a cosmic race, *la raza cósmica*, a fifth race embracing the four major races of the world.²³ Opposite to the theory of the pure Aryan, and to the policy of racial purity that white America practices, his theory is one of inclusivity. At the confluence of two or more genetic streams, with chromosomes constantly “crossing over,” this mixture of races, rather than resulting in an inferior being, provides hybrid progeny, a mutable, more malleable species with a rich gene pool. From this racial, ideological, cultural and biological cross-pollination, an “alien” consciousness is presently in the making—a new *mestiza* consciousness, *una conciencia de mujer*. It is a consciousness of the Borderlands.

Una lucha de fronteras/ A Struggle of Borders

Because I, a *mestiza*,
continually walk out of one culture
and into another,
because I am in all cultures at the same time,
alma entre dos mundos, tres, cuatro,
me zumba la cabeza con lo contradictorio.
Estoy norteada por todas las voces que me hablan
simultáneamente.

The ambivalence from the clash of voices results in mental and emotional states of perplexity. Internal strife results in insecurity and indecisiveness. The *mestiza*'s dual or multiple personality is plagued by psychic restlessness.

In a constant state of mental nepantilism, an

²²This is my own “take off” on Jose Vasconcelos' idea. Jose Vasconcelos, *La Raza Cósmica: Misión de la Raza Ibero-Americana* (México: Aguilar S.A. de Ediciones, 1961). [Au.]

²³Vasconcelos. [Au.]

Aztec word meaning torn between ways, *la mestiza* is a product of the transfer of the cultural and spiritual values of one group to another. Being tricultural, monolingual, bilingual, or multilingual, speaking a patois, and in a state of perpetual transition, the *mestiza* faces the dilemma of the mixed breed: which collectivity does the daughter of a darkskinned mother listen to?

El choque de un alma atrapado entre el mundo del espíritu y el mundo de la técnica a veces la deja entullada. Cradled in one culture, sandwiched between two cultures, straddling all three cultures and their value systems, *la mestiza* undergoes a struggle of flesh, a struggle of borders, an inner war. Like all people, we perceive the version of reality that our culture communicates. Like others having or living in more than one culture, we get multiple, often opposing messages. The coming together of two self-consistent but habitually incompatible frames of reference²⁴ causes *un choque*, a cultural collision.

Within us and within *la cultura chicana*, commonly held beliefs of the white culture attack commonly held beliefs of the Mexican culture, and both attack commonly held beliefs of the indigenous culture. Subconsciously, we see an attack on ourselves and our beliefs as a threat and we attempt to block with a counterstance.

But it is not enough to stand on the opposite river bank, shouting questions, challenging patriarchal, white conventions. A counterstance locks one into a duel of oppressor and oppressed; locked in mortal combat, like the cop and the criminal, both are reduced to a common denominator of violence. The counterstance refutes the dominant culture's views and beliefs, and, for this, it is proudly defiant. All reaction is limited by, and dependent on, what it is reacting against. Because the counterstance stems from a problem with authority—outer as well as inner—it's a step towards liberation from cultural domination. But it is not a way of life. At some point, on our way to a new consciousness, we will have to leave the opposite bank, the split between the two mortal combatants somehow healed so that

²⁴Arthur Koestler termed this “bisociation.” Albert Rothenberg, *The Creative Process in Art, Science, and Other Fields* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 12. [Au.]

we are on both shores at once and, at once, see through serpent and eagle eyes. Or perhaps we will decide to disengage from the dominant culture, write it off altogether as a lost cause, and cross the border into a wholly new and separate territory. Or we might go another route. The possibilities are numerous once we decide to act and not react.

A Tolerance for Ambiguity

These numerous possibilities leave *la mestiza* floundering in uncharted seas. In perceiving conflicting information and points of view, she is subjected to a swamping of her psychological borders. She has discovered that she can't hold concepts or ideas in rigid boundaries. The borders and walls that are supposed to keep the undesirable ideas out are entrenched habits and patterns of behavior; these habits and patterns are the enemy within. Rigidity means death. Only by remaining flexible is she able to stretch the psyche horizontally and vertically. *La mestiza* constantly has to shift out of habitual formations; from convergent thinking, analytical reasoning that tends to use rationality to move toward a single goal (a Western mode), to divergent thinking,²⁵ characterized by movement away from set patterns and goals and toward a more whole perspective, one that includes rather than excludes.

The new *mestiza* copes by developing a tolerance for contradictions, a tolerance for ambiguity. She learns to be an Indian in Mexican culture, to be Mexican from an Anglo point of view. She learns to juggle cultures. She has a plural personality, she operates in a pluralistic mode—nothing is thrust out, the good the bad and the ugly, nothing rejected, nothing abandoned. Not only does she sustain contradictions, she turns the ambivalence into something else.

She can be jarred out of ambivalence by an intense, and often painful, emotional event which inverts or resolves the ambivalence. I'm not sure exactly how. The work takes place underground—subconsciously. It is work that the soul performs.

²⁵In part, I derive my definitions for "convergent" and "divergent" thinking from Rothenberg, 12–13. [Au.]

That focal point or fulcrum, that juncture where the *mestiza* stands, is where phenomena tend to collide. It is where the possibility of uniting all that is separate occurs. This assembly is not one where severed or separated pieces merely come together. Nor is it a balancing of opposing powers. In attempting to work out a synthesis, the self has added a third element which is greater than the sum of its severed parts. That third element is a new consciousness—a *mestiza* consciousness—and though it is a source of intense pain, its energy comes from continual creative motion that keeps breaking down the unitary aspect of each new paradigm.

En unas pocas centurias, the future will belong to the *mestiza*. Because the future depends on the breaking down of paradigms, it depends on the straddling of two or more cultures. By creating a new mythos—that is, a change in the way we perceive reality, the way we see ourselves, and the ways we behave—*la mestiza* creates a new consciousness.

The work of *mestiza* consciousness is to break down the subject-object duality that keeps her a prisoner and to show in the flesh and through the images in her work how duality is transcended. The answer to the problem between the white race and the colored, between males and females, lies in healing the split that originates in the very foundation of our lives, our culture, our languages, our thoughts. A massive uprooting of dualistic thinking in the individual and collective consciousness is the beginning of a long struggle, but one that could, in our best hopes, bring us to the end of rape, of violence, of war.

La encrucijada / The Crossroads

A chicken is being sacrificed
at a crossroads, a simple mound of earth
a mud shrine for *Eshu*,
Yoruba god of indeterminacy,
who blesses her choice of path.
She begins her journey.

Su cuerpo es una bocacalle. La mestiza has gone from being the sacrificial goat to becoming the officiating priestess at the crossroads.

As a *mestiza* I have no country, my homeland

cast me out; yet all countries are mine because I am every woman's sister or potential lover. (As a lesbian I have no race, my own people disclaim me; but I am all races because there is the queer of me in all races.) I am cultureless because, as a feminist, I challenge the collective cultural/religious male-derived beliefs of Indo-Hispanics and Anglos; yet I am cultured because I am participating in the creation of yet another culture, a new story to explain the world and our participation in it, a new value system with images and symbols that connect us to each other and to the planet. *Soy un amasamiento*, I am an act of kneading, of uniting and joining that not only has produced both a creature of darkness and a creature of light, but also a creature that questions the definitions of light and dark and gives them new meanings.

We are the people who leap in the dark, we are the people on the knees of the gods. In our very flesh, (r)evolution works out the clash of cultures. It makes us crazy constantly, but if the center holds, we've made some kind of evolutionary step forward. *Nuestra alma el trabajo*, the opus, the great alchemical work; spiritual *mestizaje*, a "morphogenesis,"²⁶ an inevitable unfolding. We have become the quickening serpent movement.

Indigenous like corn, like corn, the *mestiza* is a product of crossbreeding, designed for preservation under a variety of conditions. Like an ear of corn—a female seed-bearing organ—the *mestiza* is tenacious, tightly wrapped in the husks of her culture. Like kernels she clings to the cob; with thick stalks and strong brace roots, she holds tight to the earth—she will survive the crossroads.

Lavando y remojando el maíz en agua de cal, despojando el pellejo. Moliendo, mixteando,

²⁶To borrow chemist Ilya Prigogine's theory of "dissipative structures." Prigogine discovered that substances interact not in predictable ways as it was taught in science, but in different and fluctuating ways to produce new and more complex structures, a kind of birth he called "morphogenesis," which created unpredictable innovations. Harold Gilliam, "Searching for a New World View," *This World* (January 1981), 23. [Au.]

*amasando, haciendo tortillas de masa.*²⁷ She steepes the corn in lime, it swells, softens. With stone roller on *metate*, she grinds the corn, then grinds again. She kneads and moulds the dough, pats the round balls into *tortillas*.

We are the porous rock in the stone *metate* squatting on the ground.

We are the rolling pin, *el maíz y agua, la masa harina. Somos el amasijo.*

Somos lo molido en el metate.

We are the *comal* sizzling hot, the hot *tortilla*, the hungry mouth.

We are the coarse rock.

We are the grinding motion, the mixed potion, *somos el molcajete.*

We are the pestle, the *comino, ajo, pimienta,*

We are the *chile colorado*, the green shoot that cracks the rock.

We will abide.

El camino de la mestiza / The Mestiza Way

Caught between the sudden contraction, the breath sucked in and the endless space, the brown woman stands still, looks at the sky. She decides to go down, digging her way along the roots of trees. Sifting through the bones, she shakes them to see if there is any marrow in them. Then, touching the dirt to her forehead, to her tongue, she takes a few bones, leaves the rest in their burial place.

She goes through her backpack, keeps her journal and address book, throws away the muni-bart metromaps. The coins are heavy and they go next, then the greenbacks flutter through the air. She keeps her knife, can opener and eyebrow pencil. She puts bones, pieces of bark, *hierbas*, eagle feather, snakeskin, tape recorder, the rattle and drum in her pack and she sets out to become the complete *tolteca*.²⁸

Her first step is to take inventory. *Despojando, desgranando, quitando paja*. Just what did she inherit from her ancestors? This weight on her back—which is the baggage from the Indian

²⁷*Tortillas de masa harina*: corn tortillas are of two types, the smooth uniform ones made in a tortilla press and usually bought at a tortilla factory or supermarket, and *gorditas*, made by mixing *masa* with lard or shortening or butter (my mother sometimes puts in bits of bacon or *chicharrones*). [Au.]

²⁸Anzaldúa's reference for this quote is missing in the original. [Ed.]

mother, which the baggage from the Spanish father, which the baggage from the Anglo?

Pero es difícil differentiating between *lo heredado, lo adquirido, lo impuesto*. She puts history through a sieve, winnows out the lies, looks at the forces that we as a race, as women, have been a part of. *Luego bota lo que no vale, los desmientos, los desencuentos, el embrutecimiento. Aguarda el juicio, hondo y enraizado, de la gente antigua*. This step is a conscious rupture with all oppressive traditions of all cultures and religions. She communicates that rupture, documents the struggle. She reinterprets history and, using new symbols, she shapes new myths. She adopts new perspectives toward the darkskinned, women and queers. She strengthens her tolerance (and intolerance) for ambiguity. She is willing to share, to make herself vulnerable to foreign ways of seeing and thinking. She surrenders all notions of safety, of the familiar. Deconstruct, construct. She becomes a *nahual*, able to transform herself into a tree, a coyote, into another person. She learns to transform the small “I” into the total Self. *Se hace moldeadora de su alma. Según la concepción que tiene de sí misma, así será.*

Que no se nos olvide los hombres

*Tú no sirves pa' nada—
you're good for nothing.
Eres pura vieja.*

“You’re nothing but a woman” means you are defective. Its opposite is to be *un macho*. The modern meaning of the word “machismo,” as well as the concept, is actually an Anglo invention. For men like my father, being “macho” meant being strong enough to protect and support my mother and us, yet being able to show love. Today’s macho has doubts about his ability to feed and protect his family. His “machismo” is an adaptation to oppression and poverty and low self-esteem. It is the result of hierarchical male dominance. The Anglo, feeling inadequate and inferior and powerless, displaces or transfers these feelings to the Chicano by shaming him. In the Gringo world, the Chicano suffers from excessive humility and self-effacement, shame of self and self-deprecation. Around Latinos he suffers from a sense of language inadequacy and its accompanying discomfort; with Native Ameri-

cans he suffers from a racial amnesia which ignores our common blood, and from guilt because the Spanish part of him took their land and oppressed them. He has an excessive compensatory hubris when around Mexicans from the other side. It overlays a deep sense of racial shame.

The loss of a sense of dignity and respect in the macho breeds a false machismo which leads him to put down women and even to brutalize them. Coexisting with his sexist behavior is a love for the mother which takes precedence over that of all others. Devoted son, macho pig. To wash down the shame of his acts, of his very being, and to handle the brute in the mirror, he takes to the bottle, the snort, the needle, and the fist.

Though we “understand” the root causes of male hatred and fear, and the subsequent wounding of women, we do not excuse, we do not condone, and we will no longer put up with it. From the men of our race, we demand the admission/acknowledgment/disclosure/testimony that they wound us, violate us, are afraid of us and of our power. We need them to say they will begin to eliminate their hurtful put-down ways. But more than the words, we demand acts. We say to them: We will develop equal power with you and those who have shamed us.

It is imperative that mestizas support each other in changing the sexist elements in the Mexican-Indian culture. As long as woman is put down, the Indian and the Black in all of us is put down. The struggle of the mestiza is above all a feminist one. As long as *los hombres* think they have to *chingar mujeres* and each other to be men, as long as men are taught that they are superior and therefore culturally favored over *la mujer*, as long as to be a *vieja* is a thing of derision, there can be no real healing of our psyches. We’re halfway there—we have such love of the Mother, the good mother. The first step is to unlearn the *puta/virgen* dichotomy and to see *Coatlapoeh-Coatlicue* in the Mother, *Guadalupe*.

Tenderness, a sign of vulnerability, is so feared that it is showered on women with verbal abuse and blows. Men, even more than women, are fettered to gender roles. Women at least have had the guts to break out of bondage. Only gay men have had the courage to expose themselves to the woman inside them and to challenge the current

masculinity. I've encountered a few scattered and isolated gentle straight men, the beginnings of a new breed, but they are confused, and entangled with sexist behaviors that they have not been able to eradicate. We need a new masculinity and the new man needs a movement.

Lumping the males who deviate from the general norm with man, the oppressor, is a gross injustice. *Asombra pensar que nos hemos quedado en ese pozo oscuro donde el mundo encierra a las lesbianas. Asombra pensar que hemos, como feministas y lesbianas, cerrado nuestros corazones a los hombres, a nuestros hermanos los jotos, desheredados y marginales como nosotros.* Being the supreme crossers of cultures, homosexuals have strong bonds with the queer white, Black, Asian, Native American, Latino, and with the queer in Italy, Australia and the rest of the planet. We come from all colors, all classes, all races, all time periods. Our role is to link people with each other—the Blacks with Jews with Indians with Asians with whites with extraterrestrials. It is to transfer ideas and information from one culture to another. Colored homosexuals have more knowledge of other cultures; have always been at the forefront (although sometimes in the closet) of all liberation struggles in this country; have suffered more injustices and have survived them despite all odds. Chicanos need to acknowledge the political and artistic contributions of their queer. People, listen to what your *jotería* is saying.

The mestizo and the queer exist at this time and point on the evolutionary continuum for a purpose. We are a blending that proves that all blood is intricately woven together, and that we are spawned out of similar souls.

Somos una gente

*Hay tantísimas fronteras
que dividen a la gente,
pero por cada frontera
existe también un puente.*

—GINA VALDÉS²⁹

Divided Loyalties. Many women and men of color do not want to have any dealings with

²⁹Gina Valdés, *Puentes y Fronteras: Coplas Chicanas* (Los Angeles, CA: Castle Lithograph, 1982), 2. [Au.]

white people. It takes too much time and energy to explain to the downwardly mobile, white middle-class women that it's okay for us to want to own "possessions," never having had any nice furniture on our dirt floors or "luxuries" like washing machines. Many feel that whites should help their own people rid themselves of race hatred and fear first. I, for one, choose to use some of my energy to serve as mediator. I think we need to allow whites to be our allies. Through our literature, art, *corridos*, and folktales we must share our history with them so when they set up committees to help Big Mountain Navajos or the Chicano farmworkers or *los Nicaragienses* they won't turn people away because of their racial fears and ignorances. They will come to see that they are not helping us but following our lead.

Individually, but also as a racial entity, we need to voice our needs. We need to say to white society: We need you to accept the fact that Chicanos are different, to acknowledge your rejection and negation of us. We need you to own the fact that you looked upon us as less than human, that you stole our lands, our personhood, our self-respect. We need you to make public restitution: to say that, to compensate for your own sense of defectiveness, you strive for power over us, you erase our history and our experience because it makes you feel guilty—you'd rather forget your brutish acts. To say you've split yourself from minority groups, that you disown us, that your dual consciousness splits off parts of yourself, transferring the "negative" parts onto us. (Where there is persecution of minorities, there is shadow projection. Where there is violence and war, there is repression of shadow.) To say that you are afraid of us, that to put distance between us, you wear the mask of contempt. Admit that Mexico is your double, that she exists in the shadow of this country, that we are irrevocably tied to her. Gringo, accept the doppelganger in your psyche. By taking back your collective shadow the intracultural split will heal. And finally, tell us what you need from us.

By Your True Faces We Will Know You

I am visible—see this Indian face—yet I am invisible. I both blind them with my beak nose and am their blind spot. But I exist, we exist. They'd

like to think I have melted in the pot. But I haven't, we haven't.

The dominant white culture is killing us slowly with its ignorance. By taking away our self-determination, it has made us weak and empty. As a people we have resisted and we have taken expedient positions, but we have never been allowed to develop unencumbered—we have never been allowed to be fully ourselves. The whites in power want us people of color to barricade ourselves behind our separate tribal walls so they can pick us off one at a time with their hidden weapons; so they can whitewash and distort history. Ignorance splits people, creates prejudices. A misinformed people is a subjugated people.

Before the Chicano and the undocumented worker and the Mexican from the other side can come together, before the Chicano can have unity with Native Americans and other groups, we need to know the history of their struggle and they need to know ours. Our mothers, our sisters and brothers, the guys who hang out on street corners, the children in the playgrounds, each of us must know our Indian lineage, our *afro-mestisaje*, our history of resistance.

To the immigrant *mexicano* and the recent arrivals we must teach our history. The 80 million *mexicanos* and the Latinos from Central and South America must know of our struggles. Each one of us must know basic facts about Nicaragua, Chile and the rest of Latin America. The Latinoist movement (Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, Cubans and other Spanish-speaking people working together to combat racial discrimination in the market place) is good but it is not enough. Other than a common culture we will have nothing to hold us together. We need to meet on a broader communal ground.

The struggle is inner: Chicano, *indio*, American Indian, *mojado*, *mexicano*, immigrant Latino, Anglo in power, working class Anglo, Black, Asian—our psyches resemble the bordertowns and are populated by the same people. The struggle has always been inner, and is played out in the outer terrains. Awareness of our situation must come before inner changes, which in turn

come before changes in society. Nothing happens in the “real” world unless it first happens in the images in our heads.

El día de la Chicana

I will not be shamed again
Nor will I shame myself.

I am possessed by a vision: that we Chicanas and Chicanos have taken back or uncovered our true faces, our dignity and self-respect. It's a validation vision.

Seeing the Chicana anew in light of her history. I seek an exoneration, a seeing through the fictions of white supremacy, a seeing of ourselves in our true guises and not as the false racial personality that has been given to us and that we have given to ourselves. I seek our woman's face, our true features, the positive and the negative seen clearly, free of the tainted biases of male dominance. I seek new images of identity, new beliefs about ourselves, our humanity and worth no longer in question.

Estamos viviendo en la noche de la Raza, un tiempo cuando el trabajo se hace a lo quieto, en el oscuro. El día cuando aceptamos tal y como somos y para en donde vamos y porque—ese día será el día de la Raza. Yo tengo el compromiso de expresar mi visión, mi sensibilidad, mi percepción de la revalidación de la gente mexicana, su mérito, estimación, honra, aprecio, y validez.

On December 2nd when my sun goes into my first house, I celebrate *el día de la Chicana y el Chicano*. On that day I clean my altars, light my *Coatlalopeuh* candle, burn sage and copal, take *el baño para espantar basura*, sweep my house. On that day I bare my soul, make myself vulnerable to friends and family by expressing my feelings. On that day I affirm who we are.

On that day I look inside our conflicts and our basic introverted racial temperament. I identify our needs, voice them. I acknowledge that the self and the race have been wounded. I recognize the need to take care of our personhood, of our racial self. On that day I gather the splintered and disowned parts of *la gente mexicana* and

hold them in my arms. *Todas las partes de nosotros valen.*

On that day I say, “Yes, all you people wound us when you reject us. Rejection strips us of self-worth; our vulnerability exposes us to shame. It is our innate identity you find wanting. We are ashamed that we need your good opinion, that we need your acceptance. We can no longer camouflage our needs, can no longer let defenses and fences sprout around us. We can no longer withdraw. To rage and look upon you with contempt is to rage and be contemptuous of ourselves. We can no longer blame you, nor disown the white parts, the male parts, the pathological parts, the queer parts, the vulnerable parts. Here we are weaponless with open arms, with only our magic. Let’s try it our way, the mestiza way, the Chicana way, the woman way.

On that day, I search for our essential dignity as a people, a people with a sense of purpose—to belong and contribute to something greater than our *pueblo*. On that day I seek to recover and reshape my spiritual identity. *¡Anímate! Raza, a celebrar el día de la Chicana.*

El retorno

All movements are accomplished in six stages, and the seventh brings return.

—I Ching³⁰

*Tanto tiempo sin verte casa mía,
mi cuna, mi hondo nido de la huerta.*

—“Soledad”³¹

I stand at the river, watch the curving, twisting serpent, a serpent nailed to the fence where the mouth of the Rio Grande empties into the Gulf.

I have come back. *Tanto dolor me costó el alejamiento.* I shade my eyes and look up. The bone beak of a hawk slowly circling over me, checking me out as potential carrion. In its wake a little bird flickering its wings, swimming sporadically like a fish. In the distance the expressway and the slough of traffic like an irritated sow.

³⁰Richard Wilhelm, *The I Ching or Book of Changes*, trans. Cary F. Baynes (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1950), 98. [Au.]

³¹“Soledad” is sung by the group, *Haciendo Punto en Otro Son*. [Au.]

The sudden pull in my gut, *la tierra, los aguaceros*. My land, *el viento soplando la arena, el lagartijo debajo de un nopalito. Me acuerdo como era antes. Una región desértica de vasta llanuras, costeras de baja altura, de escasa lluvia, de chaparrales formados por mesquites y huizaches*. If I look real hard I can almost see the Spanish fathers who were called “the cavalry of Christ” enter this valley riding their burros, see the clash of cultures commence.

Tierra natal. This is home, the small towns in the Valley, *los pueblitos* with chicken pens and goats picketed to mesquite shrubs. *En las colonias* on the other side of the tracks, junk cars line the front yards of hot pink and lavender-trimmed houses—Chicano architecture we call it, self-consciously. I have missed the TV shows where hosts speak in half and half, and where awards are given in the category of Tex-Mex music. I have missed the Mexican cemeteries blooming with artificial flowers, the fields of aloe vera and red pepper, rows of sugar cane, of corn hanging on the stalks, the cloud of *polvareda* in the dirt roads behind a speeding pickup truck, *el sabor de tamales de rez y venado*. I have missed *la yegua colorada* gnawing the wooden gate of her stall, the smell of horse flesh from Carito’s corrals. *He hecho menos las noches calientes sin aire, noches de linternas y lechuzas* making holes in the night.

I still feel the old despair when I look at the unpainted, dilapidated, scrap lumber houses consisting mostly of corrugated aluminum. Some of the poorest people in the U.S. live in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, an arid and semi-arid land of irrigated farming, intense sunlight and heat, citrus groves next to chaparral and cactus. I walk through the elementary school I attended so long ago, that remained segregated until recently. I remember how the white teachers used to punish us for being Mexican.

How I love this tragic valley of South Texas, as Ricardo Sánchez calls it; this borderland between the Nueces and the Rio Grande. This land has survived possession and ill-use by five countries: Spain, Mexico, the Republic of Texas, the U.S., the Confederacy, and the U.S. again. It has

survived Anglo-Mexican blood feuds, lynchings, burnings, rapes, pillage.

Today I see the Valley still struggling to survive. Whether it does or not, it will never be as I remember it. The borderlands depression that was set off by the 1982 peso devaluation in Mexico resulted in the closure of hundreds of Valley businesses. Many people lost their homes, cars, land. Prior to 1982, U.S. store owners thrived on retail sales to Mexicans who came across the border for groceries and clothes and appliances. While goods on the U.S. side have become 10, 100, 1000 times more expensive for Mexican buyers, goods on the Mexican side have become 10, 100, 1000 times cheaper for Americans. Because the Valley is heavily dependent on agriculture and Mexican retail trade, it has the highest unemployment rates along the entire border region; it is the Valley that has been hardest hit.³²

"It's been a bad year for corn," my brother, Nune, says. As he talks, I remember my father scanning the sky for a rain that would end the drought, looking up into the sky, day after day, while the corn withered on its stalk. My father has been dead for 29 years, having worked himself to death. The life span of a Mexican farm laborer is 56—he lived to be 38. It shocks me that I am older than he. I, too, search the sky for rain. Like the ancients, I worship the rain god and the maize goddess, but unlike my father I have recovered their names. Now for rain (irrigation) one offers not a sacrifice of blood, but of money.

³²Out of the twenty-two border counties in the four border states, Hidalgo County (named for Father Hidalgo who was shot in 1810 after instigating Mexico's revolt against Spanish rule under the banner of *la Virgen de Guadalupe*) is the most poverty-stricken county in the nation as well as the largest home base (along with Imperial in California) for migrant farmworkers. It was here that I was born and raised. I am amazed that both it and I have survived. [Au.]

"Farming is in a bad way," my brother says. "Two to three thousand small and big farmers went bankrupt in this country last year. Six years ago the price of corn was \$8.00 per hundred pounds," he goes on. "This year it is \$3.90 per hundred pounds." And, I think to myself, after taking inflation into account, not planting anything puts you ahead.

I walk out to the back yard, stare at *los rosales de mamá*. She wants me to help her prune the rose bushes, dig out the carpet grass that is choking them. *Mamagrande Ramona también tenía rosales*. Here every Mexican grows flowers. If they don't have a piece of dirt, they use car tires, jars, cans, shoe boxes. Roses are the Mexican's favorite flower. I think, how symbolic—thorns and all.

Yes, the Chicano and Chicana have always taken care of growing things and the land. Again I see the four of us kids getting off the school bus, changing into our work clothes, walking into the field with Papí and Mamí, all six of us bending to the ground. Below our feet, under the earth lie the watermelon seeds. We cover them with paper plates, putting *terremotes* on top of the plates to keep them from being blown away by the wind. The paper plates keep the freeze away. Next day or the next, we remove the plates, bare the tiny green shoots to the elements. They survive and grow, give fruit hundreds of times the size of the seed. We water them and hoe them. We harvest them. The vines dry, rot, are plowed under. Growth, death, decay, birth. The soil prepared again and again, impregnated, worked on. A constant changing of forms, *renacimientos de la tierra madre*.

This land was Mexican once
was Indian always
and is.
And will be again.

Stanley Fish

b. 1938

Stanley Eugene Fish was born in Providence, Rhode Island, and grew up in Philadelphia. He was educated at the University of Pennsylvania and earned his Ph.D. in 1962 at Yale. He taught at the University of California at Berkeley and subsequently at Johns Hopkins University and at Duke University, where he was professor of both English and law, chair of the English Department, and director of the university press. He left Duke in 1998 to become dean of arts and sciences at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Fish's earliest scholarly work focused on the Renaissance (with a book based on his dissertation on John Skelton's poetry in 1965) and on the work of Milton and George Herbert. His first major work, *Surprised by Sin: The Reader in "Paradise Lost"* (1967), applies an early version of reader-response theory, arguing that Milton uses literary strategies to lead his readers to a sense of the sinfulness of pride, only to then "surprise" them by showing how they themselves have been prideful in their very reading of the poem. This approach shifts the critical focus from the idea that meaning is in the text itself to the idea that meaning occurs as a result of the operation of the text upon the reader. Fish's scholarly writing from this time forward is distinguished by his careful attention to literary theories, particularly those based on language theories, such as reader-response, speech acts, and, later, deconstruction.

In *Surprised by Sin*, Fish maintains that the "surprise" works in *Paradise Lost* because of Milton's goal of bringing the reader to self-consciousness about sin. But soon, in several articles later collected in *Is there a Text in this Class?*, *The Authority of Interpretive Communities* (1980) and in a book, *Self-Consuming Artifacts: The Experience of Seventeenth-Century Literature* (1972), Fish generalizes his theory and shows that it applies to other works, indeed to all works of literature. The "artifact" of the literary work does not, he argues, contain its own meaning. The meaning emerges as a result of the act of reading, which therefore ought to be the focus of the critic's attention.

Fish is himself one of the severest critics of the theory he put forward at this time. In the introduction to *Is there a Text in this Class?*, he points out the flaw of his method and of much reader-response criticism, namely, that of presuming to know how reading works in some universal sense (at least for all educated readers) and to be able to describe it. Moreover, he notes, in a book like *Surprised by Sin*, the critic assumes that the effects achieved are the effects intended by the author, which simply returns the meaning or the responsibility for the meaning to the text itself. In the essays collected in *Is there a Text in this Class?*, Fish argues that the reader "creates" the text by deciding which of its features are relevant or significant. But how does the reader decide? Fish was not content (as were other reader-response critics) to allow mere individual preference to rule. Instead, he puts forward the enormously influential idea of the *interpretive community* (later to appear as "discourse community" in rhetoric scholarship) that maintains the values and conventions that "always

already” constrain its members as they come to the text. In answering the question of whether there is a text in the class, Fish answers “no,” if by “text” one means an object with a fixed and determinate meaning. Rather, the text is a creation of the community, for what is there is what a particular community agrees or is constrained to see there. This means that any interpretation that makes sense or is persuasive is so only because it arises within and is directed to a community that sees or is willing to see the text through the same lens of assumptions about what counts as literature, or even about what words and phrases may mean. This analysis implies, in its turn, that the proper business of criticism is to address and argue about the way the lens is or ought to be shaped—that is, the interpretive assumptions that one does or ought to apply. It also implies that the very definition of “literature” is communally bound, and therefore that there is no such thing as a quintessentially literary text. All texts, indeed, are “always already” under interpretation.

Fish’s work during the succeeding decade elaborates these insights, examining the sources and criticizing the implications of “foundationalist” theory—namely, “theory that promises to put our calculations and determinations on a firmer footing than can be provided by mere belief or unjustified practice.”¹ He sees the foundationalist assumption operating widely, almost universally, as a belief that interpretation must seek some underlying truth that is “really” there or at least some objective basis for assessing our beliefs. Fish also takes up the question of what an antifoundational view of language and interpretation might be. The essays in *Doing What Comes Naturally: Change, Rhetoric, and the Practice of Theory in Literary and Legal Studies* (1989) address these issues. Here is what Fish says this title means:

I intend it to refer to the unreflective actions that follow from being embedded in a context of practice. This kind of action—and in my argument there is no other—is anything but natural in the sense of proceeding independently of historical and social formations; but once those formations are in place (and they always are), what you think to do will not be calculated in relation to a higher law or an overarching theory but will issue from you as naturally as breathing.²

Meaning, then, follows from the set of presuppositions that constitute or characterize the social formation (or the particular moment and its context) rather than from anything inherent in the words or sentences or other symbols that are used for communication. Most importantly for Fish, there is no place to stand that is outside some context and set of presuppositions. It is not possible, that is, to assess a given interpretation in an absolute way. Nor is it possible to articulate a theory that accounts for all of the features of context and thereby become completely self-conscious about the way one’s interpretive acts are bound. This last point leads Fish to assert that theory (as in literary theory or philosophical method) has no consequences.

A further consequence of the antifoundationalist position is to recognize that although the set of interpretive principles in force at any time (Fish is thinking of

¹Stanley Fish, *Doing What Comes Naturally: Change, Rhetoric, and the Practice of Theory in Literary and Legal Studies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1989), p. 321.

²Fish, p. ix.

principles of law especially) may be arbitrary in some sense—that is, they cannot be based on ultimate reality or transcendent truth—they are nonetheless *in force* and not *absent*. Fish insists that he is *not* arguing that there aren't constraints, that we should adopt rampant relativism, or that all interpretations are personal. That position is just as untenable, he argues, as the foundationalist position.

Interpretive systems obviously change, and Fish wants to know how that change occurs. They do not change because of theory, he argues, if by theory we mean “a set of rules or principles or procedures that is attached to . . . no particular activity, but is of sufficient generality to be thought of as a constraint on (and an explanation of) all fields of activity.”³ They change, rather, because of an argument that, although it may not be “right” in an absolute sense, is able to change the prevailing way of thinking about the world to another way—another way that is just as bound by circumstances and contexts but that comes to seem superior. Fish is following Thomas Kuhn to a considerable extent in this analysis. Both recognize that a new idea or way of seeing—a new “paradigm”—does not come into being without being argued for. This is the operation, Fish says, of rhetoric.

In his subsequent work, the essays collected in *Professional Correctness: Literary Studies and Political Change* (1994) and *There's No Such Thing as Free Speech, and It's a Good Thing, Too* (1995), and in a remarkable range of essays in print and electronic journals, speeches, and interviews, Fish explores the consequences of his basic argument in literature, cultural studies, education, law, and various areas of public policy. In *Professional Correctness*, he argues that because literary criticism is a highly specialized interpretive community, it lacks the power to effect political change. Therefore, critics are mistaken when they claim that change will occur because of the kind of texts they study or the forms of interpretation they use. This, Fish says, is the underlying error in the great multiculturalism debates.

Fish has won a wide audience in the law and philosophy of law communities, judging by the responses to both *Doing What Comes Naturally* and *There's No Such Thing as Free Speech*. “Virtually all students of law, the social sciences, and social philosophy should read” the latter book, says one review.⁴ The chapters in it (many of them transcripts of Fish's debates with conservative ideologue Dinesh D'Souza) concern public policy issues, basic precepts of liberalism, and, once again, multiculturalism. The title essay repeats Fish's now basic thesis in the form of the argument that all speech is situated and purposeful. Except in the artificial environment of a college seminar, all speech is rhetorical or instrumental, intended to accomplish something. Fish shows that all free speech advocates will say that there are “of course” some limits to what speech can be allowed in public. That “of course” is determined by the social situation, and since all speech is socially situated, there will always be some “of course” limits. The only condition in which speech could really be “free” would be one in which speech meant nothing and was offered for no reason.

³Fish, p. 14.

⁴Lief Carter, “*There's No Such Thing as Free Speech*,” *The Law and Politics Book Review* 4.3 (March 1994): p. 33.
<www.unt.edu/lpbr/subpages/reviews/fish.htm>

The essay “Rhetoric” that is reprinted here comes from *Doing What Comes Naturally*. Fish reviews the history of rhetoric as a contest between foundational and antifoundational views. He holds rhetoric in high regard for its underlying Sophistic belief in an antifoundational worldview. Protagoras was correct, says Fish, in recognizing that only the situated and contingent reality is meaningful. Therefore, rhetoric is necessary for civilized life. Moreover, the revival of rhetoric in the twentieth century is a good thing: It both reflects and enhances the “interpretive turn” (what others have called the linguistic turn) in many disciplines. Fish’s roll call of the heroes of the interpretive turn is a helpful summary of the central theme of twentieth-century rhetorical theory.

Selected Bibliography

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Fish’s major works are *Surprised by Sin: The Reader in “Paradise Lost”* (Cambridge, Mass., 1967; 2nd ed. 1998); *Self-Consuming Artifacts: The Experience of Seventeenth-Century Literature* (Cambridge, Mass., 1972); *Is there a Text in this Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities* (Cambridge, Mass., 1980); *Professional Correctness: Literary Studies and Political Change* (Oxford and New York, 1994); and *There’s No Such Thing as Free Speech, and It’s a Good Thing, Too* (Oxford and New York, 1995). Another collection of essays on law, religion, and politics is *The Trouble with Principle* (Cambridge, Mass., 1999).

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. . . up rose
 Belial, in act more graceful and humane;
 A fairer person lost not Heav'n; he seem'd
 For dignity compos'd and high exploit:
 But all was false and hollow; though his Tongue
 Dropt Manna, and could make the worse appear
 The better reason, to perplex and dash
 Maturest counsels: for his thoughts were low; . . .
 . . . yet he pleas'd the ear
 And with persuasive accent thus began.
 Paradise Lost, II, 108–15, 117–18

I

For Milton's seventeenth-century readers this passage, introducing one of the more prominent of the fallen angels, would have been immediately recognizable as a brief but trenchant essay on the art and character of the rhetorician. Indeed, in these few lines Milton has managed to gather and restate with great rhetorical force (a paradox of which more later) all of the traditional arguments against rhetoric. Even Belial's gesture of rising is to the (negative) point: he catches the eye even before he begins to speak, just as Satan will in book IX when he too raises himself and moves so that "each part, / Motion, each act won audience ere the tongue" (673–74). That is, he draws attention to his appearance, to his surface, and the suggestion of superficiality (a word to be understood in its literal meaning) extends to the word "act"; that is, that which can be seen. That act is said to be "graceful," the first in a succession of double meanings (one of the stigmatized attributes of rhetorical speech) we find in the passage. Belial is precisely *not* full of grace; that is simply his outward aspect, and the same is true for "humane" and "fairer." The verse's judgment on all of his apparent virtues is delivered in the last two words of line 110—"he seem'd"—and the shadow of "seeming" falls across the next line which in isolation might "seem" to be high praise. But under the pressure of what precedes it, the assertion of praise undoes itself with every Janus-faced word (the verse now begins to imitate the object of its criticism by displaying a per-

vative disjunction between its outer and inner meanings; indicting seeming, it itself repeatedly seems): "compos'd" now carries its pejorative meaning of affected or made-up; "high" at once refers to the favored style of bombastic orators and awaits its ironic and demeaning contrast with the lowness of his thoughts; "dignity" is an etymological joke, for Belial is anything but worthy; in fact, he is just what the next line says he is, "false and hollow," an accusation that repeats one of the perennial antirhetorical topoi, that rhetoric, the art of fine speaking, is all show, grounded in nothing but its own empty pretensions, unsupported by any relation to truth. "There is no need," declares Socrates in Plato's *Gorgias*, "for rhetoric to know the facts at all, for it has hit upon a means of persuasion that enables it to appear in the eyes of the ignorant to know more than those who really know" (459),¹ and in the *Phaedrus* the title figure admits that the "man who plans to be an orator" need not "learn what is really just and true, but only what seems so to the crowd" (260).²

This reference to the vulgar popular ear indicates that rhetoric's deficiencies are not only epistemological (sundered from truth and fact) and moral (sundered from true knowledge and sincerity) but social: it panders to the worst in people and moves them to base actions, exactly as Belial is said to do in the next famous run-on statement, "and could make the worse appear / The better reason." This is an explicit reference to a nest of classical sources: the most familiar is Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, II, 1402, 23, condemning the skill of being able to make arguments on either side of a question: "This . . . illustrates what is meant by making the worse argument appear the better. Hence people were right in objecting to the training Protagoras undertook to give them."³

¹*Gorgias*, ed. and trans. W. C. Helmbold (Indianapolis, 1952), p. 18. [Au.]

²Plato, *Phaedrus*, ed. and trans. W. C. Helmbold and W. G. Rabinowitz (Indianapolis, 1956), p. 46. [Au.]

³*The Works of Aristotle*, vol. 11, ed. and trans. W. Rhys Roberts (Oxford, 1946). [Au.]

Socrates makes the same point in the *Phaedrus*: “an orator who knows nothing about good or evil undertakes to persuade a city in the same state of ignorance . . . by recommending evil as though it were good” (260). Behind Belial (or descending from him; the direction of genealogy in *Paradise Lost* is always problematic) is the line of sophists—Protagoras, Hippias, Gorgias, shadowy figures known to us mostly through the writings of Plato where they appear always as relativist foils for the idealistic Socrates. The judgment made on them by a philosophic tradition dominated by Plato is the judgment here made on Belial; their thoughts were low, centered on the suspect skills they taught for hire; the danger they represented is the danger Belial represents: despite the lowness of their thoughts, perhaps *because* of the lowness of their thoughts, they pleased the ear, at least the ear of the promiscuous crowd (there is always just beneath the surface of the antirhetorical stance a powerful and corrosive elitism), and the explanation of their unfortunate success is the power Belial now begins to exercise, the power of “persuasive accent.” Encoded in this phrase is a continuing debate about the essence of rhetoric, a debate whose two poles are represented by Gorgias’s praise in the *Encomium of Helen* of rhetoric as an irresistible force and the stoic Cato’s characterization of the rhetorician as a good man skilled at speaking (“*vir bonus, dicendi peritus*”). The difference is that for Gorgias the skill is detached from any necessary moral center and represents a self-sustaining power (“persuasion allied to words can mould men’s minds”), while for Cato the skill is a by-product of a focus on goodness and truth (thus the other of his famous aphorisms, “seize the thing, the words will follow”—“*rem tene, verba sequentur*”—which later flowers in the Renaissance distinction between *res et verba*).⁴ In one position eloquence is the hard-won creation of a special and technical facility, a facility one acquires by mastering a set of complicated—and morally neutral—rules; in the other eloquence is what naturally issues when a

man is in close touch with the Truth and allows it to inspire him. Born, it would seem, in a posture of defensiveness, rhetoric has often gravitated toward this latter view in an effort to defuse the charge that it is amoral. Quintilian’s formulation (itself gathered from the writings of Cicero) is one that will later be echoed in countless treatises: “no man can speak well who is not good himself” (“*bene dicere non possit nisi bonus,*” *Institutes*, II, xv, 34). As a defense, however, this declaration has the disadvantage of implying the superfluousness of rhetoric, an implication fully realized in Augustine’s *On Christian Doctrine* where eloquence is so much subordinated to wisdom that it disappears as a distinct and separable property. Belial, in contrast, is wholly defined by that property, by his ability to produce “persuasive accents.” “Accent” here is a powerfully resonant word, one of whose relevant meanings is “mode of utterance peculiar to an individual, locality or nation” (OED). He who speaks “in accent” speaks from a particular *angled* perspective into which he tries to draw his auditors; he also speaks in the rhythms of song (etymologically, accent means “song added to speech”) which as Milton will soon observe “*charms the sense*” (II, 556). “Persuasive accent,” then, is almost a redundancy: the two words mean the same thing and what they tell the reader is that he is about to be exposed to a force whose exercise is unconstrained by any sense of responsibility either to the Truth or to the Good. Indeed, so dangerous does Milton consider this force that he feels it necessary to provide a corrective gloss as soon as Belial stops speaking: “Thus *Belial* with words cloth’d in reason’s garb / Counsell’d ignoble ease and peaceful sloth” (II, 226–27). Just in case you hadn’t noticed.

I have lingered so long over this passage because we can extrapolate from it almost all of the binary oppositions in relation to which rhetoric has received its (largely negative) definition: inner/outer, deep/surface, essential/peripheral, unmediated/mediated, clear/colored, necessary/contingent, straightforward/angled, abiding/fleeting, reason/passion, things/words, realities/illusions, fact/opinion, neutral/partisan. Underlying this list, which is by no means exhaustive, are three basic oppositions: first, between a truth

⁴See A. C. Howell, “*Res et Verba: Words and Things.*” in *Seventeenth Century Prose: Modern Essays and Criticism*, ed. S. Fish (Oxford, 1971). [Au.]

that exists independently of all perspectives and points of view and the many truths that emerge and seem perspicuous when a particular perspective or point of view has been established and is in force; second, an opposition between true knowledge, which is knowledge as it exists apart from any and all systems of belief, and the knowledge, which because it flows from some or other system of belief, is incomplete and partial (in the sense of biased); and third, an opposition between a self or consciousness that is turned outward in an effort to apprehend and attach itself to truth and true knowledge and a self or consciousness that is turned inward in the direction of its own prejudices, which, far from being transcended, continue to inform its every word and action. Each of these oppositions is attached in turn to an opposition between two kinds of language: on the one hand, language that faithfully reflects or reports on matters of fact uncolored by any personal or partisan agenda or desire; and on the other hand, language that is infected by partisan agendas and desires, and therefore colors and distorts the facts which it purports to reflect. It is use of the second kind of language that makes one a rhetorician, while adherence to the first kind makes one a seeker after truth and an objective observer of the way things are. It is this distinction that, as Thomas Kuhn notes, underwrites the claims of science to be a privileged form of discourse because it has recourse to a “neutral observation language,”⁵ a language uninflected by any mediating presuppositions or preconceptions; and it is the same distinction that informs Aristotle’s observation (*Rhetoric*, III, 1404, 13) that “Nobody uses fine language when teaching geometry.” The language of geometry—of formal rules with no substantive content—is contrasted by Aristotle to all those languages that are intended only to “charm the hearer,” the languages of manipulation, deception, and self-consciously deployed strategy.

It is this understanding of linguistic possibilities and dangers that generates a succession of efforts to construct a language from which all per-

⁵Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago, 1962), p. 125. [Au.]

spectival bias (a redundant phrase) has been eliminated, efforts that have sometimes taken as a model the notations of mathematics, at other times the operations of logic, and more recently the purely formal calculations of a digital computer. Whether it issues in the elaborate linguistic machines of seventeenth-century “projectors” like Bishop Wilkins (*An Essay Towards a Real Character and a Philosophical Language*, 1668), or in the building (à la Chomsky) of a “competence” model of language abstracted from any particular performance, or in the project of Esperanto or some other artificial language claiming universality,⁶ or in the fashioning of a Habermasian “ideal speech situation” in which all assertions express “a ‘rational will’ in relation to a common interest ascertained without deception,”⁷ the impulse behind the effort is always the same: to establish a form of communication that escapes partiality and aids us in first determining and then affirming what is absolutely and objectively true, a form of communication that in its structure and operations is the very antithesis of rhetoric, of passionate partisan discourse.

That desideratum and the fears behind it have received countless articulations, but never have they been articulated with more precision than in these sentences from Bishop Sprat’s *History of the Royal Society of London*, 1667:

When I consider the means of *happy living*, and the causes of their *corruption*, I can hardly forbear . . . concluding that *eloquence* ought to be banish’d out of all *civil societies*, as a thing fatal to Peace and good Manners. . . . They [the ornaments of speaking] are in open defiance against *Reason*; professing not to hold much correspondence with that; but with its slaves, the *Passions*: they give the mind a motion too changeable, and bewitching, to consist with *right practice*. Who can behold, without indignation, how many mists and uncertainties, these specious *Tropes* and *Figures* have brought on our Knowledge? How many rewards, which are due to more profitable, and difficult arts, have been snatch’d away by the easie vanity of *fine speaking*? (pp. 111–13)

⁶See Andrew Lange, *The Artificial Language Movement* (Oxford, New York, and London, 1985). [Au.]

⁷Jürgen Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis* (Boston, 1975), p. 108. [Au.]

The terms of banishment are exactly those invoked by Plato against the poets in book X of his *Republic*: Homer, Socrates says, may be “the most poetic of poets and the first of tragedians, but we must know the truth [and] we can admit no poetry into our city save only hymns to the gods and the praises of good men; for if you grant admission to the honeyed Muse . . . pleasure and pain will be lords of your city instead of law and that which shall . . . have approved itself to the general reason as the best” (607a). The “honeyed muse” is precisely what Belial becomes when his tongue drops Manna (113), a quintessentially idolatrous act in which he substitutes his own word for the word sent down to us by God and therefore deprives us of the direction that God’s word might have given us. Although the transition from classical to Christian thought is marked by many changes, one thing that does not change is the status of rhetoric in relation to a foundational vision of truth and meaning. Whether the center of that vision is a personalized deity or an abstract geometric reason, rhetoric is the force that pulls us away from that center and into its own world of ever-shifting shapes and shimmering surfaces.

Of course, the allure of surfaces and shapes, of “specious *Tropes* and *Figures*,” would not be felt if there were not something already in us that inclined to it. Rhetoric may be a danger that assaults us from without, but its possible success is a function of an *inner* weakness. The entire art, as Aristotle explains regretfully, is predicated on “the defects of our hearers” (*Rhetoric*, III, 1404, 8), on the assumption that members of the audience will be naturally susceptible to the rhetorician’s appeal. The anti-rhetorical stance can only be coherent if it posits an *incoherence* at the heart (literally) of the self that is both rhetoric’s victim and its source. That self is always presented as divided, as the site of contesting forces; in Christian terms the forces are named the carnal and the spiritual; in secular psychologies the names are passion and reason or the willful and the rational; but whatever the names, the result is a relationship of homology between the inner and outer landscapes, both of which contain a core element of truth and knowledge that is continually threatened by a

penumbra of irrationality.⁸ If tropes and figures “give the mind a motion too changeable,” it is because the principle of change, in the form of the passions, already lives in the mind, and it follows then that banishing eloquence and the poets from your republic will only do half the job. As Milton puts it in the *Areopagitica*, “they are not skillful considerers of human things who imagine to remove sin by removing the matter of sin”;⁹ policing the outer landscape will be of little effect if the inner landscape remains host to the enemy, to sin, to error, to show.

It is the view of the anti-rhetoricians that this double task of inner and outer regulation can be accomplished by linguistic reform, by the institution of conditions of communication that at once protect discourse from the irrelevancies and contingencies that would compromise its universality and insulate the discoursing mind from those contingencies and irrelevancies it itself harbors. Wilkins proposes to fashion a language that will admit neither *Superfluities*—plural signifiers of a single signified, more than one word for a particular thing—nor *Equivocals*—signifiers doing multiple duty, single words that refer to several things—nor *Metaphor*—a form of speech that interposes itself between the observer and the referent and therefore contributes “to the disguising of it with false appearances” (pp. 17–18). The idea is that such a language, purged of ambiguity, redundancy, and indirection, will be an appropriate instrument for the registering of an independent reality, and that if men will only submit themselves to that language and remain within the structure of its stipulated definitions and exclusions, they will be incapable of formulating and expressing wayward, subjective thoughts and will cease to be a danger either to themselves or to those who hearken to them. In this way, says Wilkins, they will be returned to that original state in which the language spoken was the language God gave Adam, a language in which every word perfectly expressed its referent (on the model of Adam’s simultaneously understand-

⁸This is the language of H. L. A. Hart’s *The Concept of Law* (Oxford, 1961). [Au.]

⁹John Milton, “*Areopagitica*,” in *Milton’s Prose*, ed. J. Max Patrick et al. (New York, 1968), p. 297. [Au.]

ing the nature of the animals and conferring upon them their names), a language that in the course of time and “emergencies” has unfortunately “admitted various and *casual alterations*” (p. 19).

In the twentieth century Wilkins’s program is echoed point for point (absent the theological scaffolding) by Rudolf Carnap: Carnap would admit into the lexicon only words that can be tied firmly to “protocol” or “observation” sentences, sentences that satisfy certain truth conditions and are therefore verifiable by reference to the facts of the world. The stipulation of this criterion, Carnap asserts, “takes away one’s freedom to decide what one wishes to ‘mean’ by [a] word.”¹⁰ The freedom of individual speakers and hearers would be further taken away if the words of a verifiable lexicon were embedded in a grammar that “corresponded exactly to logical syntax,” for if that were the case “pseudo-statements could not arise” (p. 68). That is, no one could be misled either by the words of another or by that part of his consciousness inclined to wander from the path of truth; the tendency of language to perform in excess of its proper duty—to report or reflect matters of fact—would be curbed in advance, and the mind’s susceptibility to the power of a language unconstrained by its empirical moorings would be neutralized. In short, the danger posed by rhetoric, both to the field of discourse and the discoursing consciousness, would have been eliminated. Of course, there are important differences to be noted between the idealism of Plato, the antienthusiasm of a Restoration bishop, and the logical positivism of a member of the Vienna Circle, but together (and in the company of countless others) they stand on the same side of a quarrel that Plato was already calling “old” in the fifth century before Christ. That quarrel, the quarrel between philosophy and rhetoric, survives every sea change in the history of Western thought, continually presenting us with the (skewed) choice between the plain unvarnished truth straightforwardly presented and the powerful but insidious appeal of “fine lan-

¹⁰Rudolf Carnap, “The Elimination of Metaphysics,” in *Logical Positivism*, ed. A. J. Ayer (Glencoe, Ill., 1959), p. 63. [Au.]

guage,” language that has transgressed the limits of representation and substituted its own forms for the forms of reality.¹¹

II

To this point my presentation has been as skewed as this choice, because it has suggested that rhetoric has received only negative characterizations. In fact, there have always been friends of rhetoric, from the sophists to the anti-fundamentalists of the present day, and in response to the realist critique they have devised (and repeated) a number of standard defenses. Two of these defenses are offered by Aristotle in the *Rhetoric*. First, he defines rhetoric as a faculty or art whose practice will help us to observe “in any given base the available means of persuasion” (I, 1355, 27) and points out that as a faculty it is not in and of itself inclined away from truth. Of course, bad men may abuse it, but that after all “is a charge which may be made in common against all good things.” “What makes a man a ‘sophist,’” he declares, “is not his faculty, but his moral purpose” (I, 1355, 17). To the anticipated objection that rhetoric’s potential for misuse is a reason for eschewing it, Aristotle replies that it is sometimes a necessary adjunct to the cause of truth, first, because if we leave the art to be cultivated by deceivers, they will lead truth-seekers astray, and, second, because, regrettable though it may be, “before some audiences not even the possession of the exactest knowledge will make it easy for what we say to produce conviction” and on those occasions “we must use, as our modes of persuasion and argument, notions possessed by everybody” (I, 1355, 27). That is, because of the defects of our hearers the truth itself must often be rhetorically dressed so that it will gain acceptance.¹²

Aristotle’s second defense is more aggressively positive and responds directly to one of the most damaging characterizations of rhetoric:

¹¹See on this point George Kennedy, *The Art of Persuasion in Greece* (Princeton, NJ, 1963), p. 23. [Au.]

¹²See John Milton, “Reason of Church Government,” in *The Complete Prose Works of John Milton*, ed. D. M. Wolfe et al., vol. 1 (New Haven, Conn., 1953), pp. 817–18. [Au.]

“We must be able to employ persuasion, just as strict reasoning can be employed, on opposite sides of a question, not in order that we may in practice employ it in both ways (for we must not make people believe what is wrong), but in order that we may see clearly what the facts are” (I, 1355, 28–33). In short, properly used, rhetoric is a heuristic, helping us not to distort the facts, but to discover them; moreover, adds Aristotle, the setting forth of contrary views of a matter will have the beneficial effect of showing us which of those views most accords with the truth because “the underlying facts do not lend themselves equally well to the contrary views.” By this argument, as Peter Dixon has pointed out, Aristotle “removes rhetoric from the realm of the haphazard and the fanciful”¹³ and rejoins it to that very realm of which it was said to be the great subverter.

But if this is the strength of Aristotle’s defense, it is also its weakness, for in making it he reinforces the very assumptions in relation to which rhetoric will always be suspect, assumptions of an independent reality whose outlines can be perceived by a sufficiently clear-eyed observer who can then represent them in a transparent verbal medium. The stronger defense, because it hits at the heart of the opposing tradition, is one that embraces the accusations of that tradition and makes of them a claim. The chief accusation, as we have seen, is that rhetoricians hold “the probable (or likely-seeming, plausible) in more honour than the true” (*Phaedrus*, 267a). The sophist response is to assert that the realm of the probable—of what is likely to be so given particular conditions within some local perspective—is the only relevant realm of consideration for human beings. The argument is contained in two statements attributed famously to Protagoras. The first declares the unavailability (not the unreality) of the gods: “About gods I cannot say either that they are or that they are not.”¹⁴ And the second follows necessarily from the absence of godly guidance: “Man is the measure of all things, of the things that are that they are, and of

the things that are not that they are not” (quoted in Plato, *Theaetetus*, 152a). What this means, as W. K. C. Guthrie has pointed out, is “that the Sophists recognized only accidental as opposed to essential being, . . . the conditional and relative as opposed to the self-existent.”¹⁵ This is not to say that the categories of the true and good are abandoned, but that in different contexts they will be filled differently and that there exists no master context (for that could only be occupied by the unavailable gods) from the vantage point of which the differences could be assessed and judged.

The result is to move rhetoric from the disreputable periphery to the necessary center: for if the highest truth for any man is what he believes it to be (*Theaetetus*, 152a), the skill which produces belief and therefore establishes what, in a particular time and particular place, is true, is the skill essential to the building and maintaining of a civilized society. In the absence of a revealed truth, rhetoric is that skill, and in teaching it the sophists were teaching “the one thing that mattered, how to take care of one’s own affairs and the business of the state.”¹⁶ The rhetorician is like a physician; it is his job “to diagnose the particular institution and prescribe the best course of action for a man or a state under given conditions”¹⁷ (see Plato, *Theaetetus*, 167b–d, *Protagoras*, 318e–19a); and when Socrates asks Protagoras if he is “promising to make men good citizens,” the reply is firm: “That . . . is exactly what I profess to do” (*Protagoras*, 319a). Of course, in this context words like “good” and “best” do not have the meanings a Plato or Socrates would want them to have—good and best in any and all circumstances; rather, they refer to what would appear to be the better of the courses that seem available in what are generally understood to be the circumstantial constraints of a particular situation; but since, according to the sophist view, particular situations are the only kind there are, circumstantial determinations of what is good are as good as you’re going to get.

¹³*Rhetoric* (London, 1971), p. 14. [Au.]

¹⁴*Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker*, ed. H. Diels and W. Kranz (Berlin, 1960), 371: 80, B4. [Au.]

¹⁵William K. Guthrie, *The Sophists* (Cambridge, 1971), p. 193. [Au.]

¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 186. [Au.]

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 187. [Au.]

That is, as I have already said, the strongest of the defenses rhetoric has received because it challenges the basic premise of the anti-rhetorical stance, the premise that any discourse must be measured against a stable and independent reality. To the accusation that rhetoric deals only with the realms of the probable and contingent and forsakes truth, the sophists and their successors respond that truth itself is a contingent affair and assumes a different shape in the light of differing local urgencies and the convictions associated with them. "Truth was individual and temporary, not universal and lasting, for the truth for any man was . . . what he could be persuaded of."¹⁸ Not only does this make rhetoric—the art of analyzing and presenting local exigencies—a form of discourse no one can afford to ignore, it renders the opposing discourse—formal philosophy—beside the point. This is precisely Isocrates' thesis in his *Antidosis*. Abstract studies like geometry and astronomy, he says, do not have any "useful application either to private or public affairs; . . . after they are learned . . . they do not attend us through life nor do they lend aid in what we do, but are wholly divorced from our necessities."¹⁹ Indeed, he goes so far as to deny to such disciplines the label "philosophy," for "I hold that man to be wise who is able by his powers of conjecture to arrive generally at the best course, and I hold that man to be a philosopher who occupies himself with the studies from which he will most quickly gain that kind of insight" (p. 271). Men who want to do some good in the world, he concludes, "must banish utterly from their interests all vain speculations and all activities which have no bearing on our lives."

What Isocrates does (at least rhetorically) is shift the balance of power between philosophy and rhetoric by putting philosophy on the defensive. This same strategy is pursued after him by Cicero and Quintilian, the most influential of the Roman rhetoricians. In the opening pages of his *De Inventione* Cicero elaborates the myth that will subsequently be invoked in every defense of

humanism and belles lettres. There was a time, he says, when "men wandered at large in the field like animals," and there was "as yet no ordered system of religious worship nor of social duties."²⁰ It was then that a "great and wise" man "assembled and gathered" his uncivilized brothers and "introduced them to every useful and honorable occupation, though they cried out against it at first because of its novelty." Nevertheless, he gained their attention through "reason and eloquence" ("*propter rationem atque orationem*") and by these means he "transformed them from wild savages into a kind and gentle folk." Nor would it have been possible, Cicero adds, to have "turned men . . . from their habits" if wisdom had been "mute and voiceless"; only "a speech at the same time powerful and entrancing could have induced one who had great physical strength to submit to justice without violence." From that time on, "many cities have been founded, . . . the flames of a multitude of wars have been extinguished, and . . . the strongest alliances and most sacred friendships have been formed not only by the use of reason, but also more easily by the use of eloquence" (I, 1). Whereas in the foundationalist story an original purity (of vision, purpose, procedure) is corrupted when rhetoric's siren song proves too sweet, in Cicero's story (later to be echoed by countless others)²¹ all the human virtues, and indeed humanity itself, are wrested by the arts of eloquence from a primitive and violent state of nature. Significantly (and this is a point to which we shall return), both stories are stories of power, rhetoric's power; it is just that in one story that power must be resisted lest civilization fall, while in the other that power brings order and a genuine political process where before there was only the rule of "physical strength."

The contrast between the two stories can hardly be exaggerated because what is at stake is not simply a matter of emphasis or priority (as it

¹⁸Ibid., p. 51. [Au.]

¹⁹Isocrates, "Antidosis," in *Isocrates*, vol. 2, ed. and trans. George Norlin (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962), pp. 275, 277. [Au.]

²⁰Cicero, "De Inventione," in *Cicero*, vol. 2, ed. and trans. H. M. Hubbell (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), I, 2. [Au.]

²¹See, for example, John Lawson, *Lectures Concerning Oratory*, ed. E. N. Claussen and K. R. Wallace (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1972), p. 27. [Au.]

seems to be in Aristotle's effort to demonstrate an *alliance* between rhetoric and truth) but a difference in worldviews. The quarrel between rhetorical and foundational thought is itself foundational; its content is a disagreement about the basic constituents of human activity and about the nature of human nature itself. In Richard Lanham's helpful terms, it is a disagreement as to whether we are members of the species *homo seriusus* or *homo rhetoricus*. *Homo seriusus* or Serious Man

possesses a central self, an irreducible identity. These selves combine into a single, homogeneously real society which constitutes a referent reality for the men living in it. This referent society is in turn contained in a physical nature itself referential, standing "out there" independent of man. Man has invented language to communicate with his fellow man. He communicates facts and concepts about both nature and society. He can also communicate a third category of response, emotions. When he is communicating facts or concepts, success is measured by something we call *clarity*. When he is communicating feelings, success is measured by something we call *sincerity, faithfulness to the self* who is doing the feeling.²²

Homo rhetoricus or rhetorical man, on the other hand,

is an actor; his reality public, dramatic. His sense of identity, depends on the reassurance of daily histrionic reenactment. He is thus centered in time and concrete local event. The lowest common denominator of his life is a social situation. . . . He assumes a natural agility in changing orientations. . . . From birth, almost, he has dwelt not in a single value-structure but in several. He is thus committed to no single construction of the world; much rather, to prevailing in the game at hand. . . . He accepts the present paradigm and explores its resources. Rhetorical man is trained not to discover reality but to manipulate it. Reality is what is accepted as reality, what is useful. (p. 4)

As rhetorical man manipulates reality, establishing through his words the imperatives and urgencies to which he and his fellows must respond, he

²²*The Motives of Eloquence* (New Haven, Conn., 1976), p. 1. [Au.]

manipulates or fabricates himself, simultaneously conceiving of and occupying the roles that become first possible and then mandatory given the social structure his rhetoric has put in place. By exploring the available means of persuasion in a particular situation, he tries them on, and as they begin to suit him, he becomes them.²³ "I hold," says Isocrates, "that people can become better and worthier if they conceive an ambition to speak well," for in the setting forth of his position the orator "will select from all the actions of men . . . those examples which are the most illustrious and the most edifying; and habituating himself to contemplate and appraise such examples, he will feel their influence not only in the preparation of a given discourse but in all the actions of his life" (pp. 275, 277). What serious man fears—the invasion of the fortress of essence by the contingent, the protean, and the unpredictable—is what rhetorical man celebrates and incarnates. In the philosopher's vision of the world rhetoric (and representation in general) is merely the (disposable) form by which a prior and substantial content is conveyed; but in the world of *homo rhetoricus* rhetoric is *both* form and content, the manner of presentation and what is presented; the "improvising power of the rhetor" is at once all-creating and the guarantee of the impermanence of its creations: "to make a thing beautiful or unbeautiful, just or unjust, good or bad is both a human power and a sign of the insubstantiality of these attributes."²⁴ Having been made they can be made again.

Which of these views of human nature is the correct one? The question can only be answered from within one or the other, and the evidence of one party will be regarded by the other either as illusory or as grist for its own mill. When presented with the ever-changing panorama of history, serious man will see variation on a few basic themes; and when confronted with the per-

²³See Thomas Sloane, *Donne, Milton, and the End of Humanist Rhetoric* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London, 1985), p. 87: "Rhetoric succeeded in humanism's great desideratum, the artistic creation of adept personhood." See also Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* (Chicago, 1980). [Au.]

²⁴Nancy Streuver, *The Language of History in the Renaissance* (Princeton, NJ, 1970), pp. 15, 12. [Au.]

sistence of essentialist questions and answers, rhetorical man will reply as Lanham does by asserting that serious man is himself a supremely fictional achievement; seriousness is just another style, not the state of having escaped style:

In a fallen cosmetic world, [plain Jane] is asking *not* to be considered, wants to be overlooked—or perhaps to claim attention by contrast. She is as rhetorical as her made up sister, proclaims as loudly an attitude. Thus the whole range of ornament from zero to 100 is equally rhetorical, equally deep or equally superficial. (p. 30)

That is to say, for rhetorical man the distinctions (between form and content, periphery and core, ephemeral and abiding) invoked by serious man are nothing more than the scaffolding of the theater of seriousness, are themselves instances of what they oppose. And on the other side, if serious man were to hear *that* argument, he would regard it as one more example of rhetorical manipulation and sleight of hand, an outrageous assertion that flies in the face of common sense, the equivalent in debate of “so’s your old man.” And so it would go, with no prospect of ever reaching accord, an endless round of accusation and counteraccusation in which truth, honesty, and linguistic responsibility are claimed by everyone: “from serious premises, all rhetorical language is suspect; from a rhetorical point of view, transparent language seems dishonest; false to the world.”²⁵

And so it *has* gone; the history of Western thought could be written as the history of this quarrel. And, indeed, such histories have been written and with predictably different emphases. In one version written many times, the mists of religion, magic, and verbal incantation (all equivalently suspect forms of fantasy) are dispelled by the Enlightenment rediscovery of reason and science; enthusiasm and metaphor alike are curbed by the refinement of method, and the effects of difference (point of view) are bracketed and held in check by a procedural rigor. In another version (told by a line stretching from Vico to Foucault) a carnivalesque world of exuberance and possibility is drastically impoverished by the ascen-

dency of a soulless reason, a brutally narrow perspective that claims to be objective and proceeds in a repressive manner to enforce its claim. It is not my intention here to endorse either history or to offer a third or to argue as some have for a nonhistory of discontinuous *episteme* innocent of either a progressive or lapsarian curve; rather, I only wish to point out that the debate continues to this very day and that its terms are exactly those one finds in the dialogues of Plato and the orations of the sophists.

III

As I write, the fortunes of rhetorical man are on the upswing, as in discipline after discipline there is evidence of what has been called the interpretive turn, the realization (at least for those it seizes) that the givens of any field of activity—including the facts it commands, the procedures it trusts in, and the values it expresses and extends—are socially and politically constructed, are fashioned by man rather than delivered by God or Nature. The most recent (and unlikely) field to experience this revolution, or at least to hear of its possibility, is economics. The key text is Donald McCloskey’s *The Rhetoric of Economics* (Wisconsin, 1985), a title that is itself polemical since, as McCloskey points out, mainstream economists don’t like to think of themselves as employing a rhetoric; rather, they regard themselves as scientists whose methodology insulates them from the appeal of special interests or points of view. They think, in other words, that the procedures of their discipline will produce “knowledge free from doubt, free from metaphysics, morals and personal conviction” (p. 16). To this, McCloskey responds by declaring (in good sophistic terms) that no such knowledge is available, and that while economic method promises to deliver it, “what it is able to deliver [and] renames as scientific methodology [are] the scientist’s and especially the economic scientist’s metaphysics, moral, and personal convictions” (p. 16). Impersonal method, then, is both an illusion and a danger (as a kind of rhetoric it masks its rhetorical nature), and as an antidote to it McCloskey offers rhetoric, which he says, deals not with abstract truth, but with the truth

²⁵Lanham, *Motives*, p. 28. [Au.]

that emerges in the context of distinctly human conversations (pp. 28–29). Within those conversations there are always

particular arguments good or bad. After making them there is no point in asking a last, summarizing question: “Well, is it True?” It’s whatever it is—persuasive, interesting, useful, and so forth. . . . There is no reason to search for a general quality called Truth, which answers only the unanswerable question, “What is it in the mind of God?” (p. 47)

The answerable questions are always asked within the assumptions of particular situations, and both question and answer “will always depend on one’s audience and the human purposes involved” (p. 150). The real truth, concludes McCloskey, is that “assertions are made for purposes of persuading some audience” and that, given the unavailability of a God’s-eye view, “this is not a shameful fact,” but the bottom line fact in a rhetorical world.

At the first conference called to consider McCloskey’s arguments, the familiar anti-rhetorical objections were heard again in the land, and the land might have been fifth-century Athens as well as Wellesley, Massachusetts, in 1986. One participant spoke of “the primrose path to extreme relativism” which proceeds from “Kuhn’s conception of the incommensurability of paradigms” to the “contention that there are no objective and unambiguous procedures for applying . . . rules since the meanings of particular actions and terms are entirely . . . context-dependent.” Other voices proclaimed that nothing in McCloskey’s position was new (an observation certainly true), that everyone already knew it, and that at any rate it didn’t touch the core of the economists’s practice. Still others invoked a set of related (and familiar) distinctions between empirical and interpretive activities, between demonstration and persuasion, between verifiable procedures and anarchic irrationalism. Of course, each of these objections had already been formulated (or reformulated) in those disciplines that had heard rhetoric’s siren song long before it reached the belated ears of economists. The name that everyone always refers to (in praise or blame) is Thomas Kuhn. His *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* is arguably the most fre-

quently cited work in the humanities and social sciences in the past twenty-five years, and it is rhetorical through and through. Kuhn begins by rehearsing and challenging the orthodox model of scientific inquiry in which independent facts are first collected by objective methods and then built up into a picture of nature, a picture that he himself either confirms or rejects in the context of controlled experiments. In this model, science is a “cumulative process” (p. 3) in which each new discovery adds “one more item to the population of the scientist’s world” (p. 7). The shape of that world—of the scientist’s professional activities—is determined by the shapes (of fact and structure) already existing in the larger world of nature, shapes that constrain and guide the scientist’s work.

Kuhn challenges this story by introducing the notion of a paradigm, a set of tacit assumptions and beliefs within which research goes on, assumptions which rather than deriving from the observation of facts are determinative of the facts that could possibly be observed. It follows, then, that when observations made within different paradigms conflict, there is no principled (i.e., nonrhetorical) way to adjudicate the dispute. One cannot put the competing accounts to the test of fact, because the specification of fact is precisely what is at issue between them; a fact cited by one party would be seen as a mistake by the other. What this means is that science does not proceed by offering its descriptions to the independent judgment of nature; rather, it proceeds when the proponents of one paradigm are able to present their case in a way that the adherents of other paradigms find compelling. In short, the “motor” by which science moves is not verification or falsification, but persuasion. Indeed, says Kuhn, in the end the force of scientific argument “is *only* that of persuasion” (p. 94). In the case of disagreement, “each party must try, by persuasion, to convert the other” (p. 198), and when one party succeeds there is no higher court to which the outcome might be referred: “there is no standard higher than the assent of the relevant community” (p. 94). “What better criterion,” asks Kuhn, “could there be?” (p. 170).

The answer given by those who were horrified by Kuhn’s rhetoricization of scientific procedure

was predictable: a better criterion would be one that was not captive to a particular paradigm but provided a neutral space in which competing paradigms could be disinterestedly assessed. By denying such a criterion, Kuhn leaves us in a world of epistemological and moral anarchy. The words are Israel Scheffler's:

Independent and public controls are no more, communication has failed, the common universe of things is a delusion, reality itself is made . . . rather than discovered. . . . In place of a community of rational men following objective procedures in the pursuit of truth, we have a set of isolated monads, within each of which belief forms without systematic constraints.²⁶

Kuhn and those he has persuaded have, of course, responded to these accusations, but, needless to say, the debate continues in terms readers of this essay could easily imagine; and the debate has been particularly acrimonious because the area of contest—science and its procedures—is so heavily invested in as the one place where the apostles of rhetorical interpretivism would presumably fear to tread.

At one point in his argument Kuhn remarks that in the tradition he is critiquing scientific research is “reputed to proceed” from “raw data” or “brute experience”; but, he points out, if that were truly the mode of proceeding, it would require a “neutral observation language” (p. 125), a language that registers facts without any mediation by paradigm-specific assumptions. The problem is that “philosophical investigation has not yet provided even a hint of what a language able to do that would be like” (p. 127). Even a specially devised language “embodies a host of expectations about nature,” expectations that limit in advance what can be described. Just as one cannot (in Kuhn's view) have recourse to neutral facts in order to settle a dispute, so one cannot have recourse to a neutral language in which to report those facts or even to report on the configuration of the dispute. The difference that divides men “is prior to the application of the languages in which it is nevertheless reflected”

(p. 201). Whatever reports a particular language (natural or artificial) offers us will be the report on the world as it is seen from within some particular situation; there is no other aperspectival way to see and no language other than a situation-dependent language—an interested, rhetorical language—in which to report.

This same point was being made with all the force of philosophical authority by J. L. Austin in a book published, significantly, in the same year (1962) that saw the publication of *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Austin begins *How to Do Things with Words* by observing that traditionally the center of the philosophy of language has been just the kind of utterance Kuhn declares unavailable, the context-independent statement that offers objective reports on an equally independent world in sentences of the form “He is running” and “Lord Raglan won the battle of Alma” (pp. 47, 142). Such utterances, which Austin calls “constative,” are answerable to a requirement of truth and verisimilitude (“the truth of the constative . . . ‘he is running’ depends on his being running”); the words must match the world, and if they do not they can be criticized as false and inaccurate. There are, however, innumerable utterances that are not assessable in this way. If, for example, I say to you, “I promise to pay you five dollars” or “Leave the room,” it would be odd were you to respond by saying “true” or “false”; rather, you would say to the first “good” or “that's not enough” or “I won't hold my breath” and to the second “yes, sir” or “but I'm expecting a phone call” or “who do you think you are?” These and many other imaginable responses would not be judgments on the truth or accuracy of my utterance but on its appropriateness given our respective positions in some social structure of understanding (domestic, military, economic, etc.). It is only if the circumstances are of a certain kind—that is, if five dollars is a reasonable rather than an insulting amount, if the room I order you to leave is mine not yours—that the utterances will “take” and achieve the meaning of being a promise or a command. Thus the very identity, and therefore the meaning, of this type of utterance—Austin names it “performative”—depends on the context in which it is produced and received. There

²⁶*Science and Subjectivity* (Indianapolis, 1967), p. 19. [Au.]

is no regular—in the sense of reliable and predictable—relationship between the form of the linguistic marks (the words and their order) and their significance. Nothing guarantees that “I promise to pay you five dollars” will be either intended or heard as a promise; in different circumstances it could be received as a threat or a joke (as when I utter it from debtors’ prison), and in many circumstances it will be intended as one act and understood as another (as when your opinion of my trustworthiness is much lower than my own). When the criterion of verisimilitude has been replaced by the criterion of appropriateness, meaning becomes radically contextual, potentially as variable as the situated (and shifting) understandings of countless speakers and hearers.

It is, of course, precisely this property of performatives—their force is contingent and cannot be formally constrained—that is responsible for their being consigned by philosophers of language to the category of the “derived” or “parasitic,” where, safely tucked away, they are prevented from contaminating the core category of the constative. But it is this act of segregation and quarantining that Austin undoes in the second half of his book when he extends the analysis of performatives to constatives and finds that they too mean differently in the light of differing contextual circumstances. Consider the exemplary constative, “Lord Raglan won the battle of Alma.” Is it true, accurate, a faithful report? It depends, says Austin, on the context in which it is uttered and received (pp. 142–43). In a high school textbook it might be accepted as true because of the in-place assumptions as to what, exactly, a battle is, what constitutes winning, what the function of a general is, etc., while in a work of “serious” historical research all of these assumptions may have been replaced by others, with the result that the very notions “battle” and “won” would have a different shape. The properties that supposedly distinguish constatives from performatives—fidelity to preexisting facts, accountability to a criterion of truth—turn out to be as dependent on particular conditions of production and reception as performatives. “True” and “false,” Austin concludes, are not names for the possible relationships between freestanding (constative) utterances and an equally freestand-

ing state of affairs; rather, they are situation-specific judgments on the relationship between contextually produced utterances and states of affairs that are themselves no less contextually produced. At the end of the book constatives are “discovered” to be a subset of performatives, and with this discovery the formal core of language disappears entirely and is replaced by a world of utterances vulnerable to the sea change of every circumstance, the world, in short, of rhetorical (situated) man.

This is a conclusion Austin himself resists when he attempts to isolate (and thereby contain) the rhetorical by invoking another distinction between serious and nonserious utterance. Serious utterances are utterances for which the speaker takes responsibility; he means what he says, and therefore you can infer his meaning by considering his words in context. A nonserious utterance is an utterance produced in circumstances that “abrogate” (p. 21) the speaker’s responsibility, and therefore one cannot with any confidence—that is, without the hazard of ungrounded conjecture—determine what he means:

a performative utterance will, for example, be . . . hollow or void if said by an actor on the stage, or if introduced in a poem, or spoken in a soliloquy. . . . Language in such circumstances is in special ways . . . used not seriously, but in ways *parasitic* upon its normal use. . . . All this we are *excluding* from consideration. Our performative utterances . . . are to be understood as issued in ordinary circumstances. (p. 22)

The distinction, then, is between utterances that are, as Austin puts it later, “tethered to their origin” (p. 61), anchored by a palpable intention, and utterances whose origin is hidden by the screen of a theatrical or literary stage setting. This distinction and the passage in which it appears were taken up in 1967 by Jacques Derrida in a famous (and admiring) critique of Austin. Derrida finds Austin working against his own best insights and forgetting what he has just acknowledged, that “infelicity [communication going astray, in an unintended direction] is an ill to which *all* [speech] acts are heir.”²⁷ Despite

²⁷Jacques Derrida, “Signature Event Context,” *Glyph* 1 (1977): 190. [Au.]

this acknowledgment, Austin continues to think of infelicity—of those cases in which the tethering origin of utterances is obscure and must be constructed by interpretive conjecture—as special, whereas, in Derrida’s view, infelicity is itself the originary state in that any determination of meaning must always proceed within an interpretive construction of a speaker’s intention. The origin that supposedly tethers the interpretation of an utterance will always be the product of that interpretation; the special circumstances in which meaning must be inferred through a screen rather than directly are the circumstances of every linguistic transaction. In short, there are no ordinary circumstances, merely those myriad and varied circumstances in which actors embedded in stage settings hazard interpretations of utterances produced by actors embedded in other stage situations. All the world, as Shakespeare says, is a stage, and on that stage “the quality of risk admitted by Austin” is not something one can avoid by sticking close to ordinary language in ordinary circumstances, but is rather “the internal and positive condition” of any act of communication.”²⁸

In the same publication in which the English translation of Derrida’s essay appeared, John Searle, a student of Austin’s, replied in terms that make clear the affiliation of this particular debate to the ancient debate whose configurations we have been tracing. Searle’s strategy is basically to repeat Austin’s points and declare that Derrida has missed them: “Austin’s idea is simply this: if we want to know what it is to make a promise we had better not *start* our investigations with promises made by actors on stage . . . because in some fairly obvious way such utterances are not standard cases of promises” (p. 204). But in Derrida’s argument, the category of the “obvious” is precisely what is being challenged or “deconstructed.” Although it is true that we consider promises uttered in everyday contexts more direct—less etiolated—than promises made on a stage, this (Derrida would say) is only because the stage settings within which everyday life proceeds are so powerfully—that is, rhetorically—in place that they are in effect invisible, and

therefore the meanings they make possible are experienced as if they were direct and unmediated by any screens. The “obvious” cannot be opposed to the “staged,” as Searle assumes, because it is simply the achievement of a staging that has been particularly successful. One does not escape the rhetorical by fleeing to the protected area of basic communication and common sense because common sense in whatever form it happens to take is always a rhetorical—partial, partisan, interested—construction. This does not mean, Derrida hastens to add, that all rhetorical constructions are equal, just that they are equally rhetorical, equally the effects and extensions of some limited and challengeable point of view. The “citationality”—the condition of being in quotes, of being *indirect*—of an utterance in a play is not the same as the citationality of a philosophical reference or a deposition before a court; it is just that no one of these performatives is more serious—more direct, less mediated, less rhetorical—than any other. Whatever opposition there is takes place within a “general” citationality which “constitutes a violation of the allegedly rigorous purity of every event of discourse or every *speech act*” (p. 192).

Searle points out (p. 205) that in order to achieve a “general theory of speech acts,” one must perform acts of exclusion or idealization like Austin’s; but it is the possibility of a general theory—of an account that is itself more than an extension of some *particular* context or perspective—that Derrida denies. His is the familiar world of Rhetorical Man, teeming with roles, situations, strategies, interventions, but containing no master role, no situation of situations, no strategy for outflanking all strategies, no intervention in the arena of dispute that does not expand the arena of dispute, no neutral point of rationality from the vantage point of which the “merely rhetorical” can be identified and held in check. That is why deconstructive or post-structuralist thought is supremely rhetorical: it systematically asserts and demonstrates the mediated, constructed, partial, socially constituted nature of all realities, whether they be phenomenal, linguistic, or psychological. To deconstruct a text, says Derrida, is to “work through the structured genealogy of its concepts in the most scrupulous

²⁸Ibid. [Au.]

and immanent fashion, but at the same time to determine from a certain external perspective that it cannot name or describe what this history may have concealed or excluded, constituting itself as history through this repression in which it has a stake."²⁹ The "external perspective" is the perspective from which the analyst knows in advance (by virtue of his commitment to the rhetorical or anti-foundational worldview) that the coherences presented by a text (and an institution or an economy can in this sense be a text) rests on a contradiction it cannot acknowledge, rests on the suppression of the challengeable rhetoricity of its own standpoint, a standpoint that offers itself as if it came from nowhere in particular and simply delivered things as they really (i.e., nonperspectivally) are. A deconstructive reading will surface those contradictions and expose those suppressions and thus "trouble" a unity that is achieved only by covering over all the excluded emphases and interests that might threaten it. These exclusions are part of the text in that the success of its totalizing effort depends on them. Once they are made manifest, the hitherto manifest meaning of the text is undermined—indeed, is shown to have always and already been undermined—as "the rhetorical operations that produce the supposed ground of argument, the key concept or premise," are deprived of the claim to be *unrhetorical*, serious, disinterested.³⁰

Nor is this act performed in the service of something beyond rhetoric. Derridean deconstruction does not uncover the operations of rhetoric in order to reach the Truth; rather, it continually uncovers the truth of rhetorical operations, the truth that all operations, including the operation of deconstruction itself, are rhetorical. If, as Paul de Man asserts, "a deconstruction always has for its target to reveal the existence of hidden articulations and fragmentations within assumedly monadic totalities," care must be taken that a new monadic totality is not left as the

legacy of the deconstructive gesture. Since the course of a deconstruction is to uncover a "fragmented stage that can be called natural with regard to the system that is being undone," there is always the danger that the "natural" pattern will "substitute *its* relational system for the one it helped to dissolve."³¹ The only way to escape this danger is to perform the deconstructive act again and again, submitting each new emerging constellation to the same suspicious scrutiny that brought it to light, and resisting the temptation to put in place of the truths it rhetoricizes the truth that everything is rhetorical. One cannot rest even in the insight that there is no place to rest. "Rhetoric," says de Man, "suspends logic and opens up vertiginous possibilities of referential aberration" (p. 10). But the rhetorical vision is foreclosed on and made into a new absolute if those "vertiginous possibilities" are celebrated as the basis of a new wisdom. The rhetorical beat must by definition go on, endlessly repeating the sequence by which "the lure of solid ground" is succeeded by "the ensuing demystification."³² When de Man approvingly quotes Nietzsche's identification of truth with "a moving army of metaphors, metonymies and anthropomorphisms," a rhetorical construction whose origin has been (and must be) forgotten, he does not exempt Nietzsche's text from its own corrosive effects. If Nietzsche declares (well in advance of Kuhn and Austin, but well after Gorgias and Protagoras) that "there is no such thing as an unrhetorical, 'natural' language," for "tropes are not something that can be added or subtracted from language at will," the insight must be extended to that very declaration: "A text like *On Truth and Lie*, although it presents itself legitimately as a demystification of literary rhetoric, remains entirely literary, and deceptive itself" (p. 113). The "rhetorical mode," the mode of deconstruction, is a mode of "endless reflection," since it is "unable ever to escape from the rhetorical deceit it announces" (p. 115).

²⁹Jacques Derrida, *Positions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), p. 6. [Au.]

³⁰Jonathan Culler, *On Deconstruction* (Ithaca, NY, 1982), p. 86. [Au.]

³¹*Allegories of Reading* (New Haven, Conn., 1979), p. 249. [Au.]

³²William Ray, *Literary Meaning* (Oxford, 1984), p. 195. [Au.]

IV

That, however, is just what is wrong with deconstructive practice from the viewpoint of the intellectual left, many of whose members subscribe to Nietzsche's account of truth and reality as rhetorical but find that much of post-structuralist discourse uses that account as a way of escaping into new versions of idealism and formalism. Frank Lentricchia, for example, sees in some of de Man's texts an intention to place "discourse in a realm where it can have no responsibility to historical life" and fears that we are being invited into "the realm of the thoroughly predictable linguistic transcendental," the "rarified region of the undecidable," where every text "speaks synchronically and endlessly the same tale . . . of its own duplicitous self-consciousness."³³ Terry Eagleton's judgment is even harsher. Noting that in the wake of Nietzschean thought, rhetoric, "mocked and berated for centuries by an abrasive rationalism," takes its "terrible belated revenge" by finding itself in every rationalist project, Eagleton complains that many rhetoricians seem content to stop there, satisfied with the "Fool's function of unmasking all power as self-rationalization, all knowledge as a mere fumbling with metaphor."³⁴ Operating as a "vigorous demystifier of all ideology," rhetoric functions only as a form of thought and ends up by providing "the final ideological rationale for political inertia." In retreat "from market place to study, politics to philology, social practice to semiotics," deconstructive rhetoric turns the emancipatory promise of Nietzschean thought into "a gross failure of ideological nerve," allowing the liberal academic the elitist pleasure of repeatedly exposing "vulgar commercial and political hectorings" (pp. 108–9). In both his study of Benjamin and his influential *Literary Theory: An Introduction*, Eagleton urges a return to the Ciceronian-Isocratic tradition in which the rhetorical arts are inseparable from the practice of a politics, "techniques of persuasion indissociable from the substantive issues and

audiences involved," techniques whose employment is "closely determined by the pragmatic situation at hand."³⁵ In short, he calls for a rhetoric that will do real work and cites as an example the slogan "black is beautiful," which he says is "paradigmatically rhetorical since it employs a figure of equivalence to produce particular discursive and extra-discursive effects without direct regard for truth."³⁶ That is, someone who says "black is beautiful" is not so much interested in the accuracy of the assertion (it is not constatively intended) as he is in the responses it may provoke—surprise, outrage, urgency, solidarity—responses that may in turn set in motion "practices that are deemed, in the light of a particular set of falsifiable hypotheses, to be desirable."³⁷

For Eagleton, the desirable practices are Marxist-socialist and the rhetoric that will help establish them has three tasks:

First, to participate in the production of works and events which . . . so fictionalize the "real" as to intend those effects conducive to the victory of socialism. Second, as "critic" to expose the rhetorical structures by which non-socialist works produce politically undesirable effects. . . . Third, to interpret such words where possible "against the grain," so as to appropriate from them whatever may be valuable for socialism.³⁸

It is, of course, the second of these tasks that presents conceptual and cognitive problems. If all cultural work is, as Eagleton says in the sentence just before this passage, rhetorical, then how does one's own rhetoric escape the inauthenticity it discovers in the rhetoric of others? Eagleton's answer is contained in his assumption of the superiority of the socialist program; any rhetorical work in the service of that program will be justified in advance, while conversely any rhetorical work done in opposition to socialist urgencies will flow from "false consciousness" and will deserve to be exposed. This confidence in his objectives makes Eagleton impatient with those for

³³After the New Criticism (Chicago, 1980), pp. 310, 317. [Au.]

³⁴Walter Benjamin or Towards a Revolutionary Criticism (London, 1981), p. 108. [Au.]

³⁵Ibid., p. 104. [Au.]

³⁶Ibid., p. 112. [Au.]

³⁷Ibid., p. 113. [Au.]

³⁸Ibid. [Au.]

whom the rhetoricity of all discourse is something to be savored for itself, something to be lovingly and obsessively demonstrated again and again. It is not, he says, “a matter of starting from certain theoretical or methodological problems; it is a matter of starting from what we want to *do*, and then seeing which methods and theories will best help us to achieve these ends.”³⁹ Theories, in short, are themselves rhetorics whose usefulness is a function of contingent circumstances. It is ends—specific goals in local contexts—that rule the invocation of theories, not theories that determine goals and the means by which they can be reached.

There are those on the left, however, for whom the direction is the other way around, from the theoretical realization of rhetoric’s pervasiveness to a vision and a program for implementing it. In their view the discovery (or rediscovery) that all discourse and therefore all knowledge is rhetorical leads or should lead to the adoption of a *method* by which the dangers of rhetoric can be at least mitigated and perhaps extirpated. This method has two stages: the first is a stage of de-bunking, and it issues from the general suspicion in which all orthodoxies and arrangements of power are held once it is realized that their basis is not reason or nature but the success of some rhetorical / political agenda. Armed with this realization, one proceeds to expose the contingent and therefore challengeable basis of whatever presents itself as natural and inevitable. So far this is precisely the procedure of deconstruction; but whereas deconstructive practice (at least of the Yale variety) seems to produce nothing but the occasion for its endless repetition, some cultural revolutionaries discern in it a more positive residue, the loosening or weakening of the structures of domination and oppression that now hold us captive. The reasoning is that by repeatedly uncovering the historical and ideological basis of established structures (both political and cognitive), one becomes sensitized to the effects of ideology and begins to clear a space in which those effects can be combated; and as that sensitivity grows more acute, the area of combat will become larger until it encompasses the under-

³⁹*Literary Theory* (Minneapolis, 1983), p. 211. [Au.]

lying structure of assumptions that confers a spurious legitimacy on the powers that currently be. The claim, in short, is that the radically rhetorical insight of Nietzschean/Derridean thought can do radical political work; becoming aware that everything is rhetorical is the first step in countering the power of rhetoric and liberating us from its force. Only if deeply entrenched ways of thinking and acting are made the objects of suspicion will we be able “even to *imagine* that life could be different and better.”

This last sentence is taken from an essay by Robert Gordon entitled “New Developments in Legal Theory.”⁴⁰ Gordon is writing as a member of the Critical Legal Studies Movement, a group of legal academics who have discovered the rhetorical nature of legal reasoning and are busily exposing as interested the supposedly disinterested operations of legal procedures. Gordon’s pages are replete with the vocabulary of enclosure or prison; we are “locked into” a system of belief we did not make; we are “demobilized” (that is, rendered less mobile); we must “break out” (p. 291), we must “unfreeze the world as it appears to common sense” (p. 289). What will help us to break out, to unfreeze, is the discovery “that the belief-structures that rule our lives are not found in nature but are historically contingent,” for that discovery, says Gordon, “is extraordinarily liberating” (p. 289). What it will liberate are the mental energies that were before prevented by the “paralysis-inducing” effects of received systems of thought from even imagining that “life could be different and better.” In the words of Roberto Unger (another prominent member of the movement), if you start with an awareness of the insight “that no one scheme of human association has conclusive authority” and come to an understanding of the “flawed” nature of the schemes now in place, you can then “imagine the actualizations [i.e., present-day arrangements of things] transformed” and in time “transform them in fact.”⁴¹ The result will be a “cultural-revolutionary practice” that will bring about the “progressive emancipation from a

⁴⁰*The Politics of Law* (New York, 1983), p. 287. [Au.]

⁴¹“The Critical Legal Studies Movement,” *Harvard Law Review* 96 (1983): 580. [Au.]

background plan of social division and hierarchy" (p. 587). To the question, what is the *content* of that emancipation, given a world that is rhetorical through and through, those who work Gordon's and Unger's side of the street usually reply that emancipation will take the form of a strengthening and enlarging of a capacity of mind that stands to the side of, and is therefore able to resist, the appeal of the agenda that would enslave us. That capacity of mind has received many names, but the one most often proposed is "critical self-consciousness." Critical self-consciousness is the ability (stifled in some, developed in others) to discern in any "scheme of association," including those one finds attractive and compelling, the partisan aims it hides from view; and the claim is that as it performs this negative task, critical self-consciousness participates in the positive task of formulating schemes of associations (structures of thought and government) that are in the service not of a particular party but of all mankind.

It need hardly be said that this claim veers back in the direction of the rationalism and universalism that the critical/deconstructive project sets out to demystify. That project begins by rejecting the rationalities of present life as rationalizations and revealing the structure of reality to be rhetorical, that is, partial; but then it turns around and attempts to use the insight of partiality to build something that is less partial, less hostage to the urgencies of a particular vision and more responsive to the needs of men and women in general. Insofar as this "turn" is taken to its logical conclusion, it ends up reinventing at the conclusion of a rhetorically informed critique the entire array of anti-rhetorical gestures and exclusions. One sees this clearly in the work of Jürgen Habermas, a thinker whose widespread influence is testimony to the durability of the tradition that began (at least) with Plato. Habermas's goal is to bring about something he calls the "ideal speech situation," a situation in which all assertions proceed not from the perspective of individual desires and strategies, but from the perspective of a general rationality upon which all parties are agreed. In such a situation nothing would count except the claims to universal validity of all assertions. "No force except that of the better argu-

ment is exercised; and, . . . as a result, all motives except that of the cooperative search for truth are excluded."⁴² Of course, in the world we now inhabit there is no such purity of motive; nevertheless, says Habermas, even in the most distorted of communicative situations there remains something of the basic impulse behind all utterance, "the intention of communicating a true [*wahr*] proposition . . . so that the hearer can share the knowledge of the speaker."⁴³ If we could only eliminate from our discourse performances those intentions that reflect baser goals—the intentions to deceive, to manipulate, to persuade—the ideal speech situation could be approximated.

What stands in our way is the fact that many of our speech acts issue from the perspective of local and historically contingent contexts, and these by definition cannot contribute to the building up of a general rationality. Therefore, it is incumbent upon us to choose and proffer utterances that satisfy (or at least claim and desire to satisfy) *universal* conditions of validity. This is the project Habermas names "Universal Pragmatics" and the name tells its own story. Habermas recognizes, as all modern and postmodern contextualists do, that language is a social and not a purely formal phenomenon, but he thinks that the social/pragmatic aspect of language use is itself "accessible to formal analysis" (p. 6) and that therefore it is possible to construct a universal "communicative competence" (p. 29) parallel to Chomsky's linguistic competence. Sentences produced according to the rules and norms of this communicative competence would be tied not to "particular epistemic presuppositions and changing contexts" (p. 29), but to the unchanging context (the context of contexts) in which one finds the presuppositions underlying the general possibility of successful speech. "A *general* theory of speech acts would . . . describe . . . that fundamental system of rules that adult subjects master to the extent that they can fulfill *the conditions of happy employment of sentences in utterances* no matter to which particular language the sentences may belong and in which accidental contexts the

⁴²*Legitimation Crisis* (Boston, 1975), pp. 107–8. [Au.]

⁴³*Communication and the Evolution of Society* (Boston, 1979), p. 2. [Au.]

utterances may be embedded" (p. 26). If we can operate on the level of that fundamental system, the distorting potential of "accidental contexts" will be neutralized because we will always have one eye on what is essential, the establishing by rational cooperation of an interpersonal (non-accidental) truth. Once speakers are oriented to this goal and away from others, oriented toward *general* understanding, they will be incapable of deception and manipulation: "Truthfulness guarantees the transparency of a subjectivity representing itself in language" (p. 57). A company of transparent subjectivities will join together in the fashioning of a transparent truth and of a world in which the will to power has been eliminated.

In his book *Textual Power* (New Haven, 1985), Robert Scholes examines the rationalist epistemology in which a "complete self confronts a solid world, perceiving it directly and accurately, . . . capturing it perfectly in a transparent language" and declares it to be so thoroughly discredited that it now "is lying in ruins around us" (pp. 132–33). Perhaps so, in some circles, but the fact of Habermas's work and of the audience he commands suggests that even now those ruins are collecting themselves and rising again into the familiar anti-rhetorical structure. It would seem that any announcement of the death of either position will always be premature, slightly behind the institutional news that in some corner of the world supposedly abandoned questions are receiving what at least appear to be new answers. Only recently the *public* fortunes of rationalist-foundationalist thought have taken a favorable turn with the publication of books like Allan Bloom's *The Closing of the American Mind* and E. D. Hirsch's *Cultural Literacy*, both of which (Bloom's more directly) challenge the "new Orthodoxy" of "extreme cultural relativism" and reassert, albeit in different ways, the existence of normative standards. In many quarters these books have been welcomed as a return to the common sense that is necessary if civilization is to avoid the dark night of anarchy. One can expect administrators and legislators to propose reforms (and perhaps even purges) based on Bloom's arguments (the rhetorical force of anti-rhetoricalism is always being revived), and one

can expect too a host of voices raised in opposition to what will surely be called the "new positivism." Those voices will include some that have been mentioned here and some others that certainly merit recording but can only be noted in a list that is itself incomplete. The full story of rhetoric's twentieth-century resurgence would boast among its cast of characters: Kenneth Burke, whose "dramatism" anticipates so much of what is considered avant-garde today; Wayne Booth, whose *The Rhetoric of Fiction* was so important in legitimizing the rhetorical analysis of the novel; Mikhail Bakhtin, whose contrast of monologic to dialogic and heteroglossic discourse sums up so many strands in the rhetorical tradition; Roland Barthes, who in the concept of "jouissance" makes a (non) constitutive principle of the tendency of rhetoric to resist closure and extend play; the ethnomethodologists (Harold Garfinkel and company) who discover in every supposedly rule-bound context the operation of a principle (exactly the wrong word) of "ad-hoc-ing"; Chaim Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca whose *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation* provides a sophisticated modern source book for would-be rhetoricians weary of always citing Aristotle; Barbara Herrnstein Smith who, in the course of espousing an unashamed relativism, directly confronts and argues down the objections of those who fear for their souls (and more) in a world without objective standards; Fredric Jameson and Hayden White who teach us (among other things) that "history . . . is unaccessible to us except in textual form, and that our approach to it and to the Real itself necessarily passes through its prior textualization";⁴⁴ reader-oriented critics like Norman Holland, David Bleich, Wolfgang Iser, and H. R. Jauss who, by shifting the emphasis from the text to its reception, open up the act of interpretation to the infinite variability of contextual circumstance; innumerable feminists who relentlessly unmark male hegemonic structures and expose as rhetorical the rational posturings of the legal and political systems; equally innumerable theorists of composition who, under the slogan "process, not product," insist on the rhetorical nature of com-

⁴⁴*The Political Unconscious* (Ithaca, 1981), p. 35. [Au.]

munication and argue for far-reaching changes in the way writing is taught. The list is already formidable, but it could go on and on, providing support for Scholes's contention that the rival epistemology has been vanquished and for Clifford Geertz's announcement (and he too is a contributor to the shift he reports) that "Something is happening to the way we think about the way we think."⁴⁵

But it would seem, from the evidence marshaled in this essay, that something is always happening to the way we think, and that it is always the same something, a tug-of-war between two views of human life and its possibilities, no one of which can ever gain complete and lasting ascendancy because in the very moment of its triumphant articulation each turns back in the direction of the other. Thus Wayne Booth feels obliged in both *The Rhetoric of Fiction* and *A Rhetoric of Irony* to confine the force of rhetoric by sharply distinguishing its legitimate uses from two extreme-limit cases (the "unreliable narrator" and "unstable irony"); some reader-response critics deconstruct the autonomy and self-sufficiency of the text, but in the process end up privileging the autonomous and self-sufficient subject; some feminists challenge the essentialist claims of "male reason" in the name of a female rationality or nonrationality apparently no less essential; Jameson opens up the narrativity of history in order to proclaim one narrative the true and unifying one. Here one might speak of the return of the repressed (and thereby invoke Freud whose writings and influence would be still an-

⁴⁵"Blurred Genres: The Refiguration of Social Thought," *The American Scholar* 49 (spring 1980). [Au.]

other chapter in the story I have not even begun to tell) were it not that the repressed—whether it be the fact of difference or the desire for its elimination—is always so close to the surface that it hardly need be unearthed. What we seem to have is a tale full of sound and fury, and signifying itself, signifying a durability rooted in inconclusiveness, in the impossibility of there being a last word.

In an essay, however, someone must have the last word and I give it to Richard Rorty. Rorty is himself a champion of the antiessentialism that underlies rhetorical thinking; his neo-pragmatism makes common cause with Kuhn and others who would turn us away from the search for transcendental absolutes and commend to us (although it would seem superfluous to do so) the imperatives and goals already informing our practices. It is, however, not the polemicist Rorty whom I call upon to sum up, but the Rorty who is the brisk chronicler of our epistemological condition:

There . . . are two ways of thinking about various things. . . . The first . . . thinks of truth as a vertical relationship between representations and what is represented. The second . . . thinks of truth horizontally—as the culminating reinterpretation of our predecessor's reinterpretation of their predecessors' reinterpretation. . . . It is the difference between regarding truth, goodness, and beauty as eternal objects which we try to locate and reveal, and regarding them as artifacts whose fundamental design we often have to alter.⁴⁶

It is the difference between serious and rhetorical man. It is the difference that remains.

⁴⁶*Consequences of Pragmatism* (Minneapolis, 1982), p. 92. [Au.]

Glossary

abolitionism Advocacy on behalf of ending slavery. American abolitionist societies first formed in the 1780s. After northern states abolished slavery in the decades after the Revolution, the movement languished until the 1830s when a new, radical, and interracial antislavery movement sprang up. Even after the enactment of the Thirteenth Amendment outlawing slavery, some abolitionists continued work on behalf of African American education and civil rights.

a fortiori Literally, “from the stronger.” An argument in which the rhetor draws a conclusion by first setting up two possibilities, one of which is more probable than the other. Whatever can be affirmed about the less probable can be affirmed with even greater force about the more probable.

allegory A narrative or story in which the agents, actions, and sometimes the settings offer both literal and figurative meanings. In historical and political allegory, characters and actions in the story represent historical persons and events. In allegories of ideas, characters stand for abstract concepts such as virtues, vices, or states of mind, and the plot communicates a doctrine or moral.

appeals, rhetorical and persuasive Aristotle defined three ways a rhetor could persuade an audience: through *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos*. *Ethos* is the appeal to the audience’s trust in the speaker’s character and authority. *Pathos* is the appeal to the audience’s emotions. *Logos* is the appeal to the audience’s reason or logic.

arrangement See *canons of rhetoric*.

ars arengandi (are en GAN dee) Medieval instruction in forensic speaking.

ars dictaminis (dik tuh MIN us) The medieval art of letter composition, which originated as part of rhetorical study and flourished in the eleventh and twelfth centuries during a revival of classical studies. It is sometimes called *ars dictandi*.

ars poetria (poe et TREE ah) Literally, “the art of poetry.” The stylistic analysis of poetry engaged in by medieval grammarians in order to teach correct grammar and style, with an emphasis on **tropes** and **figures**.

ars praedicandi (pry dik CON dee) The rhetorically organized art of preaching. The systematic study of preaching began in the twelfth century and gained momentum in the thirteenth as preaching became a more important part of the clergy’s work. A flood of manuals on preaching then appeared, describing how to structure a “thematic” sermon based on detailed discussion of a biblical text and suggesting rhetorical features to employ in sermons.

Asianist style A style featuring ornamentation and a swift, even wild manner of speech. The term arose in the mid-first century B.C.E. to describe the rhetoric of Greek colonists from Asia Minor who had preserved Sophism. Its counterpart is the **Atticist** style. Cicero, one of the first users of the term, also distinguished a second Asianist style, epigrammatic and charming.

Atticist style A classical Roman style based on allegedly Attic (Greek) standards of purity, simplicity, and grace. Atticists advocated studying and imitating classical Greek orators and returning to classical Greek rules of diction and composition. In the seventeenth century, the conflict between **Senecans** and **Neo-Ciceronians** replayed the battle between Atticists and **Asianists**.

belles lettres (bell LET tre) Writing valued for its style and aesthetic qualities rather than its persuasive force or informational content.

black jeremiad *Jeremiad*, from the biblical prophet Jeremiah, means “a bitter lamentation.” Seventeenth-century New England Puritans developed the jeremiad as an oratorical form in which ministers first cited God’s promise to the audience as a chosen people, went on to criticize the audience’s sins and failings, and finally prophesied that the group would redeem itself as the chosen people in God’s eyes. African American rhetors such as Frederick Douglass, Mary McLeod Bethune, and Martin Luther King Jr. adapted this jeremiad form. Their speeches posited African Americans as a chosen people within a chosen nation—America—and argued that America had a covenantal duty to deal justly with African Americans.

canon A body of texts that a culture’s literary establishment considers the best and most influential.

canons of rhetoric *Canon* is an ancient term for a division or part. The five canons or parts of classical oral rhetoric are **invention**, arrangement, style, **memory**, and delivery. Invention is the art of making persuasive arguments in any given rhetorical situation; arrangement means ordering the parts of a discourse according to the rhetor’s audience and purpose; style is the use of appropriate and effective language; memory is memorization; and delivery is the art of performing a speech using gestures, tones, and vocal modulations.

commonplaces or common topics Called *topoi* in Greek, *loci* in Latin. The commonplaces or topics are the “locations” of standard categories of arguments. Aristotle distinguishes four common topics: whether a thing has occurred, whether it will occur, whether things are bigger or smaller than they seem, and whether a thing is or is not possible. Other commonplaces are definition, comparison, relationship, and testimony, each with its own subtopics.

current-traditional composition A phrase coined by Daniel Fogarty, S.J., in 1959 to describe the most common method of American writing instruction during the greater part of the twentieth century. It focused on Alexander Bain’s modes of discourse—description, narration, exposition, and persuasion—and embraced a prescriptive view of grammar, usage, and structure.

declamation A highly embellished type of ceremonial speech originating in Imperial Rome, when censorship made overtly political rhetoric impossible. Declamations were taught in the schools and often practiced as a form of private entertainment. In deliberative declamations, the speech dealt with a dilemma confronting a historical or mythological person. In *controversia*, laws were stated and an unusual situation involving them sketched out. The orator could invent any situation and portray any party in the case. In modern usage, declamation is any speech or recitation delivered with strong feeling.

deconstruction A method of textual analysis and philosophical argument pioneered by Jacques Derrida that involves the close reading of texts, most often in the fields of literature, philosophy, linguistics, or anthropology, to reveal incompatibilities between the explicit and implicit planes of discourse in a text and to show how the text disguises these incompatibilities. Typically, a deconstructive reading focuses on binary oppositions within a text. It shows how those oppositions are structured hierarchically (that is, that one of the terms is “favored”), and then overturns those hierarchies to make the text say the opposite of what it initially said. The final move in deconstructive reading is to displace the opposition and reassert both terms within a nonhierarchical relationship. In this way, deconstruction subverts a text’s implicit claim to possess adequate grounds to establish its own structure, unity, and meaning.

deduction/deductive method Reasoning from the general to the specific; deriving a conclusion from comparison of general to particular premises. Aristotle called deduction “a discussion in which certain things having been laid down, something other than those things necessarily results through them.” Deductive reasoning is expressed in the form of a **sylogism** or **enthymeme**. The most famous example is:

1. All people are mortal.
2. Socrates is a person.
3. Therefore, Socrates is mortal.

dialectic The practice of inquiry and argumentation through conversation. To Aristotle, dialectic meant the art of discussion by question and answer in order to approach probable truth in questions about human affairs. To Ramus, it was an art that sought to perfect the **syllogism** as a way of examining statements about the world. In current usage, it is the art of arriving at the truth through the exchange of logical arguments.

dialogism (die a LOW jiz em) Term used by twentieth-century philosopher and literary critic Mikhail Bakhtin to characterize verbal interactions between individuals. According to Bakhtin, language is born not within isolated humans but in interactions between two or more humans. Dialogism also encompasses the dialogue the reader must engage in with the text; prose literature in which several contesting voices, representing different ideological positions, participate equally in dialogue; and the implicit dialogue any word user carries on with previous users of the word.

dramatism A method of linguistic and conceptual analysis developed by twentieth-century rhetorician Kenneth Burke that treats language and thought primarily as modes of symbolic action rather than means of conveying information. Any act involves an agent performing the action, a scene, some means or agency, and a purpose; *act*, *agent*, *scene*, *agency*, and *purpose* thus comprise the dramatistic pentad. Some aspect of these elements, Burke asserts, motivates every narrative act.

écriture féminine (ec reh TURE fem e NEEN) A set of concepts and a writing style associated with French writers Julia Kristeva, Luce Irigaray, Hélène Cixous, and Monique Wittig. These writers contend that Western cultures' religions, philosophies, literature, and languages support the notion that the male—possessor of the phallus—is the center of meaning; men define the rest of the world, particularly women, as the “Other.” Practitioners of *écriture féminine* try to represent the marginalized “Other” in their works by defying narrative conventions, blending theoretical and literary writing, mixing criticism and polemic with fantasy and wordplay, and emphasizing the **semiotic** aspect of language. Some scholars criticize writers involved with *écriture féminine* for assuming that wo-

men's biology invariably affects their psychology and language use.

elocution The art of oral delivery, especially of speeches or memorized literary texts. Eighteenth-century works on elocution emphasized proper pronunciation and effective gestures and physical expressions.

enthymeme [EN th' meem] A means of proof in an argument wherein the rhetor places together probable premises about human action in order to arrive at a probable conclusion. The form of an enthymeme is the same as that of a **syllogism**. Rhetors usually choose a widely held belief as the first or major premise, then apply the premise to the particular case about which they are arguing.

epistemology The branch of philosophy concerned with the nature of knowledge. More generally, the term describes the ways in which people come to acquire knowledge. “Ways of knowing” is sometimes used as a synonym.

ethos See **appeals, rhetorical and persuasive**.

faculty psychology An eighteenth-century philosophy, associated with the work of John Locke, that divided the human mind into four different functions or “faculties”: reason or understanding, imagination, the passions, and the will. George Campbell, Hugh Blair, Richard Whately, and Alexander Bain, among others, applied faculty psychology to rhetoric by stating that a successful rhetor must appeal to each faculty by using a specific form of communication and a corresponding style. For example, the rhetor must first appeal to reason by informing, using a style characterized by perspicuity (clearness). Persuasion finally results when the rhetor has informed and convinced the *reason*, pleased the *imagination*, and moved the *will*.

figure An artful use of language to achieve a special meaning or effect. In figures, as compared to **tropes**, the departure from standard usage is not primarily in the meaning but in the order of the words. Figures involve unusual patterns of language, such as repetition or juxtaposition of similar words. **Tropes**, in contrast, radically change the meaning of the words themselves.

grammar In Aristotle, a set of verbal terms or categories by means of which a discourse can be analyzed. In the medieval era, grammar was the first of the seven liberal arts, encompassing literary analysis along with the study of language. In contemporary usage,

“prescriptive” grammar sets forth the current standards of language use, whereas “descriptive” grammar catalogs current usage.

hermeneutics (**her men NEW tiks**) The theory of interpretation of texts, especially biblical or literary texts, as opposed to the practice of interpretation (exegesis).

heuristics (**hyoo RIS tiks**) The study or use of aids to discovery.

humanism/humanitas (**hue MON ee tas**) The study of literature, moral philosophy, and civics. Humanism flourished during the Renaissance: Humanists studied, translated, and idolized classical Latin and Greek authors. Humanism in the schools emphasized grammar, rhetoric, poetry, history, and moral philosophy. The humanism movement began in northern Italy, where Petrarch advocated Cicero’s concept of *humanitas* as an ideal of cultivated learning.

identification Kenneth Burke’s term for the ways in which the members of a group promote social cohesion by identifying with something larger and more comprehensive. Identification is neither completely deliberate nor completely unconscious. Burke offers the concept of rhetorical identification in order to go beyond the traditional view that rhetoric solely encompasses deliberate efforts to persuade.

ideology The body of beliefs, doctrines, or values held by a single individual, group, or culture. To Marx, Engels, and later Marxists, the term refers to any body of beliefs or statements that assert the naturalness and desirability of a particular set of social structures and social practices and, at the same time, conceal the real nature of social relations, thus helping to justify and perpetuate the oppressive social dominance of one class over others.

induction/inductive method The act or process of deriving general principles from particular facts and instances. In rhetorical induction, an argument moves from observations about particular group members to a conclusion about all members of the group.

intertextuality A contemporary literary theory first espoused by scholars such as Roland Barthes and Julia Kristeva, which posits that no text can be read apart from other, preexisting works. Both the text and its reader exist in a web of relationships that create expecta-

tations in readers, and every text continuously refers to other texts.

invention The first of the five **canons** of rhetoric: the art of discovering available, persuasive arguments. Classical rhetoricians thought of invention as the stage where they generated appeals to reason, or *logos*. **Commonplaces**, the **stasis**, and other **heuristics** helped rhetors discover arguments. Contemporary writers use techniques such as brainstorming, outlining, and clustering as aids to invention.

kairos (**KY ross**) Classical Greek term meaning the right time or circumstances; the immediate social situation within which a solution to a problem must be proposed.

langue/parole (**langh/pa ROLE**) *Langue* (language) refers to a system of language as a whole, shaped by the entire community of language users. *Parole* (speech) refers to an individual speech act, or utterance, within the confines of *langue*. Ferdinand de Saussure first introduced the distinction.

licentia docendi (**lie KEN tee ah doh KEN dee**) Licenses to teach granted in the Middle Ages by *studia*, a collection of schools where lectures took place. Eventually the Church regulated *licentia docendi*, and graduates of Church-approved schools could teach anywhere in Christendom.

linguistics The study of the nature, form, and structure of language. It encompasses the study of utterances (*parole*) within the larger system of language (*langue*). Most twentieth-century linguists, such as Ferdinand de Saussure, believe that the study of transcendental form or structure is more valuable than the study of individual speech acts. Opponents of this view include Mikhail Bakhtin and Kenneth Burke.

literacy The ability to read and write. In contemporary usage, the word sometimes refers to a range of more specialized reading and writing skills. Some scholars have claimed that literacy, in the sense of reading and writing ability, leads to cognitive differences and cultural change, but others vehemently disagree. See **orality**.

logographer In classical Greece, a writer of forensic speeches for litigants to deliver.

logos In classical rhetoric, the appeal to reason. The word means “speech” or “statement” in Greek; thus, to

Aristotle arguments from *logos* are those that derive from the issue itself, not from emotion (*pathos*) or the speaker's authority (*ethos*).

memory The fourth of the five **canons** of rhetoric. In classical rhetoric, memory pertained to the memorization of a completed discourse or set of prompts. Classical and medieval rhetoricians enhanced their memory through training and practice. For example, a speaker would memorize the sequence of rooms in a building, assign a vivid image to each section of the speech, and then associate the image with a location in the memorized building. Because people could retrieve ideas from the ordered places within memory and reorganize and expand on them, memory became a means of invention as well.

Methodism A religious movement within the Anglican Church begun by John Wesley in the eighteenth century. It formed a separate sect in 1791 and now constitutes one of the largest Protestant denominations worldwide. Methodists believe in salvation by grace through faith, confirmed by good works; the witness of the Holy Spirit to a person's salvation; and the theoretical possibility of personal triumph over temptation. During the nineteenth century, Methodists assigned major responsibilities to laypersons and enrolled women as leaders and even as preachers.

neo-Ciceronianism A seventeenth-century stylistic approach that acknowledged the five-part domain of rhetoric and thus attempted to preserve rhetoric from **Ramism** and scientific reductionism. Neo-Ciceronians focused on style, especially amplification and ornament. Their opposition to the **Senecan** school echoed the earlier conflict between **Asianist** and **Atticist** rhetoricians.

Neoplatonism A philosophical school developed by Plotinus during Imperial Rome that became the dominant philosophy in the Greco-Roman world from the end of the third century B.C.E. to the sixth century C.E. Neoplatonists posited that all existence emanated from a single source, with which an individual soul could mystically unite, and they read the works of Plato and Aristotle as mythical allegories. Saint Augustine was the most influential Neoplatonic Christian theorist.

New Criticism A tendency in literary criticism beginning after World War I and preeminent in Ameri-

can high schools and colleges in the 1940s and 1950s. New Critics saw literary texts as independent and self-sufficient objects; they de-emphasized the biography of the author, the social conditions when the text was produced, and the text's effects on readers. Instead, they emphasized close reading, or explication: the detailed analysis of interrelations and ambiguities of the work's elements. Opponents of New Criticism charge that it ignores historical and social factors that shape literary experience.

orality A condition of society in which speaking and listening form the only or principal channel through which communication in language occurs. Some anthropologists have argued that in oral cultures, both verbal style and thought processes feature simple juxtaposition of ideas, concrete imagery that appeals to the sense and emotions, ritualized references to authority, and competitive, emotion-laden disputation. *See* **literacy**.

pathos *See* **appeals, rhetorical and persuasive**.

persuasion The process through which language or symbolic actions influence the choices of others. Aristotle called rhetoric "the art of discovering all the available means of persuasion in any given situation." He said we persuade others by three means: *logos*, *ethos*, and *pathos*.

phronesis Aristotle's word for the mental ability to select the best course of action in situations fraught with uncertain knowledge and competing claims of morality and practicality. Individuals use *phronesis* to make life decisions, and rhetors should cultivate and employ it in rhetorical deliberations.

positivism A philosophical system contending that every rationally justifiable assertion can be scientifically verified or logically or mathematically proven. Though Auguste Comte coined the term in 1820, elements of positivism reach back to the Platonic tradition.

pragmatism A philosophical movement during the early twentieth century encompassing the thought of John Dewey, William James, and C. S. Peirce, among others. Although pragmatists believed in empiricism, they thought that problems, whether academic or social, were not resolvable by a single formula or system. They claimed that knowledge was an evolving process; saw traditionally eternal ideas of space, time,

axiomatic truth, causation, and values as relative to varying social, historical, psychological, or logical contexts; held a probabilistic view of physical and social hypotheses and laws in opposition to dogmatic certainty; and espoused a secular, democratic individualism, asserting the right of individuals to live in a free society.

Ramism The intellectual trends associated with the work of Renaissance professor Peter Ramus. He challenged Aristotle's authority, disparaged Cicero and Quintilian, and advocated his own reformulation of the arts and sciences. Ramus assigned **invention to dialectic** instead of rhetoric and dropped **memory** from his scheme altogether, leaving only style—which to Ramus meant the use of tropes and figures—and delivery to rhetoric. He also criticized ornateness and encouraged a plain style, very cerebral and analytic, as near “mathematical” expression as possible.

salon A regular social gathering of intellectuals and other eminent people at the home of a woman prominent in high society. Salons flourished in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century France.

Scholasticism (sko LAS ti siz em) The system of thought that dominated the schools of Western Europe from the eleventh to the fifteenth century. Its objective was the clarification of Christian faith through the use of reason. Scholasticists emphasized dialectical examination of apparent contradictions in Church doctrine. They believed in a version of Aristotelian empiricism that required an individual to seek to know external reality rather than emphasizing the mind's power to reimagine and shape reality.

scientific method An inductive method of discovery and analysis that has characterized natural science since the seventeenth century. It consists of systematic observation, measurement, experiment, and the formation, testing, and modification of hypotheses. Both the scientific method and the intellectual method **Ramus** developed, which assigned the process of invention to dialectic and confined rhetoric to stylistic ornamentation, stemmed from the Renaissance desire for universal, teachable methods.

Second Sophistic Period of Roman rhetoric from Quintilian's time to the sack of Rome in 410. Rhetors of the Second Sophistic shared with the earliest Greek Sophists an interest in etymologies, grammar, and the

power of stylistic variety and abundance. However, the Second Sophists did not claim to use their rhetorical skill for important social or political ends, as their predecessors had. Instead, since rhetoric had been deprived of political importance by Imperial censorship, these rhetors practiced declamations and closet oratory and sometimes performed carefully composed speeches for special ceremonies.

semantics (se MAN tiks) The branch of philosophy that focuses on language itself and examines such issues as meaning, synonymy, ambiguity, and the relationship between the structure of language and the structure of reality. In the twentieth century, **semiotics** is the most significant kind of semantic theory.

semiotics (sem ee AH tiks) The domain of investigation that explores the nature and function of signs within diverse kinds of signifying systems; semiotics includes the study of language, the use of specifically verbal signs. Semioticians believe that signs consist of two inseparable parts, the signifier (in language, the speech-sounds or marks on a page), and the signified (the concept or idea that is the meaning of the sign). No inherent, natural connection exists between a verbal signifier and what it signifies. Instead, both signifier and signified develop within a network of relationships within a particular symbolic system.

Senecan style A seventeenth-century rhetorical style characterized by loose structure, relatively brief sentences, succinct and pithy phrasing, and jerky rhythm. Practitioners of Senecan style saw it as akin to the **Atticist** style of classical Greek rhetoric and opposed to the ornamental **Neo-Ciceronian** style.

sign Within the field of **semiotics**, that which represents or stands as a substitute for something else. Ferdinand de Saussure defines the linguistic sign as combining the signifier, or acoustic image, and the signified, or concept.

signifying The process within **semiotics** by which signs transmit meaning. Meaning is not intrinsic to these signs but attaches to them arbitrarily. In black rhetoric, signifying refers to several forms of persuasion, insult, boasting or lying, verbal and nonverbal, all accomplished through innuendo or indirection. Henry Louis Gates Jr. calls signifying the master **trope** of black rhetoric.

skepticism The contention that human reason is incapable of gaining access to true knowledge, a position championed by sixteenth-century scholar Michel de Montaigne. Some scholars think Montaigne discredited reason in order to discredit rational arguments against religion. Others think he meant to deny the authority of all received wisdom, since such wisdom changes with changing historical circumstances — thus clearing a space for modern science.

Sophistic rhetoric/Sophists (sof IS tic/SOF ists) The Sophists were a school of rhetoric teachers working in and around Athens in the fourth and fifth centuries B.C.E. They practiced rhetoric as an intellectual method, a way of generating knowledge. They believed that social circumstances limit knowledge; whatever people can know must be context-bound. Since no absolute sources of knowledge exist, the power of language becomes almost total. Plato disparaged the Sophists, depicting their rhetoric as a manipulative attempt to persuade people that they had learned the truth, whether or not the truth was in fact conveyed.

sprezzatura (spretz ah TOUR uh) A term in Castiglione's *The Courtier* sometimes translated as "nonchalance." *Sprezzatura* encompasses formidable accomplishment without undignified display. Using easy grace and superiority, the perfect courtier must make whatever he says and does appear to be effortless.

stasis/stasis theory (STASE iss) *Staseis*, in Greek, means "questions" or "issues." Stasis theory, formulated by classical Greek rhetors, is a **heuristic** or theory of invention that gives rhetors a set of questions to help them determine their key points of disagreement and agreement with their audiences in a given case. Ancient rhetoricians subdivided *staseis* into *specific* or *definite* issues, those involving actual persons, places, and events; and *general* or *indefinite* issues, or matters suited to political, ethical, or philosophic discussion. Hermagoras designated four major stasis questions: conjecture ("Is there an act to be considered?"), definition ("How can the act be defined?"), quality ("How serious was the act?"), and procedure ("What should we do?").

stylistics The systematic study of style. Since the 1950s, the term has referred to a method of analyzing literary and rhetorical texts that tries to replace the

"subjectivity" of standard criticism with a more "objective" or "scientific" analysis. For example, some stylisticians perform computer analysis to catalog how an author uses particular grammatical features, **figures**, or **tropes** in many texts. Stylistics contrasts with the more general advice on style that classical rhetoricians offered.

syllogism (SILL o jiz im) A form of **deductive reasoning** consisting of a major premise, a minor premise, and a conclusion that follows from the two.

tautology (taw TOL oh gee) In logic, a statement composed of simpler statements in a fashion that makes the full statement logically true whether the simpler statements are factually true or not; for example, "If she has a baby, it will be either a boy or a girl." A tautological argument is thus empty or circular because it assumes to be true what it has to prove as true: for example, "Abortionists are murderers because abortion is murder."

topoi/loci (TOE poy/LOW key) From the Greek *topos*, place. Stock formulas such as comparison and contrast, cause and effect, and puns, which rhetors can use to generate rational appeals and arguments. These basic categories of relationships among ideas belong to the **invention** process since they help the rhetor discover things to say about a subject. *See commonplaces.*

trope "Turn" in Greek. According to Quintilian, a trope is an artful substitution of one term for another for rhetorical effect. This substitution affects the standard meaning of a word. Unlike a **figure**, a trope usually involves a single word and changes the word's proper meaning. In contemporary rhetorical and literary criticism, *trope* refers to the use of words in other than their literal sense, as in metaphor, irony, or synecdoche.

utterance An individual speech act or natural unit of linguistic communication, spoken or written. Utterances are also called *parole*. According to Mikhail Bakhtin, utterances are the basis of linguistics. Although Bakhtin contends that an individual utterance is an isolated event, Ferdinand de Saussure argues in his discussion of **semiotics** that an utterance is actually a social event.

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