

# ISSA Proceedings 2010 - Argumentology About The Possibility Of Dialogue Between New Logic, Rhetoric, Dialectics



## 1. What is Argumentology?

Firstly, the term “*argumentology*” was sporadically used in 80-ies by Dutch scholars E. Barth, E. Krabbe, and J.L. Martens as a synonymous of *theory of argumentation* (Barth & Martens 1981). But the term did not receive a strong support in theorists’ of argumentation circles. [i]

In 80-90-ies of XX century there were a lot of theories of argumentation, and formal dialectics (Barth & Krabbe 1982), the Amsterdam pragma-dialectic theory of argumentation, as well as the linguistic theory argumentation of J. Ascombe and O. Ducrot were the examples (Van Eemeren, Grootendorst & Kruiger 1987, Ascombe, Ducrot, 1983). Some of these theories had a proper philosophical component. A philosophical component of formal dialectics was connected with analytical philosophy, and pragma-dialectic theory of argumentation had orientation to K. Popper’s critical rationalism. However, even in 90-ies there were a lot of old and new theories of argumentation with unclear and unexpressed philosophical foundations. In that context a necessity in a relatively independent domain of philosophy of theory of argumentation research was emerged. For a philosophical domain of argumentation study I have proposed to use such term as “*argumentology*”.

Argumentology is a *philosophy* of theory and practice of argumentation. The term “argumentology” does not refer to an empirical study or theory of argumentation, but to the ultimate *social-historical backgrounds* of the theory and to practice of argumentation. It is not a concrete scientific theory or empirical model, but a philosophy of argumentation. It means than argumentology studies any kind of backgrounds, or ultimate presuppositions of theory and practice of argumentation. Argumentology is a philosophy of a Homo arguer (in Henry Johnstone’s Jr. sense of the word).

As is widely shown, in contemporary theory of argumentation at least three conceptual models of argumentation were formed. These models are logic, dialectics, and rhetoric. They were carried out by ancient Greeks, Chinese and Indians (Tchouechov 2003, p. 34-39). For instance, Aristotle while using these models divided arguments into three classes – demonstrative, dialectical, and rhetorical. He taught that the aim of demonstrative (logical) arguments was to reach certainty; dialectical arguments – to reach acceptability; and rhetorical arguments – to reach cogency. The Dutch scholars F. H. van Eemeren, R. Grootendorst, and T. Kruiger paid special attention to this and showed that all these arguments assumed the use of premises of the following kinds: for the first ones – evidently true premises; for the second class – acceptable premises; and for the third – premises which could persuade a certain audience, or premises cogent for the audience. Aristotle determined the characteristics of deduction of arguments in the same way. According to him, for dialectical arguments *“it is possible to use either deductive or inductive syllogisms. The premises of a dialectical argument are generally accepted or are acceptable to “the wise – that is, to all of the wise or to majority or to the most famous and distinguished of them” (Aristotle, Topics)”* (Van Eemeren, Grootendorst & Kruiger 1987, p. 59).

In analysing the results of an elaboration of ancient argumentation theory – especially its way of evaluating aims, character, models, and other aspects of argumentation – it would be correct to conclude that not only theoretical or empirical, but also a philosophical – or in my terms, an argumentological – approach to argumentation analysis were found. This means that the ideas of the Dutch scholars that Aristotle was one of the first theorists of argumentation need to be formulated more widely. In my opinion, Aristotle was the first argumentologist, i.e. a philosopher of the theory and practice of argumentation who strictly distinguished at least three of its theories – *logic, rhetoric, and dialectics*. Taking into consideration the *preconditions* of Aristotle’s ideas about argumentation reflected in the views of his forerunners (Thales, Socrates, Protagoras etc.) together with similar ideas developed in the East, in the Nyāya and Mozi schools, it is correct to stress the existence of argumentology in *traditional society*.

But what was argumentology in traditional or pre-modern society? It was more than the logical-rhetorical-dialectical apology of historical tradition, or demands the truth submit to authority, or the substantiation of the insuperable force of

habits etc. In the argumentology we find coherent (to our views) ideas about the human and democratic nature of argumentation, peculiarities of its free verbal organization and communicative specificity in the philosophical heritage of Parmenides, Socrates, Aristotle, Mozi etc. The best illustration is Aristotle's "Organon", first philosophy, rhetoric and topics – and, of course, the specific character of his methodics, which has not survived.

The ultimate conditions of all existence, or the ultimate backgrounds of being, cognition and, strictly speaking, human activity for Aristotle were in some senses common *verbal models* as well as schemes and arguments. In correspondence with the study of the four causes (material, formal, efficient, and final), Aristotle determined the nature and objects of argumentation. According to Aristotle, "All instruction given or received by way of argument proceeds from pre-existent knowledge. This becomes evident upon a survey of all the species of such instruction. The mathematical sciences and all other speculative disciplines are acquired in this way, and so are the two forms of dialectical reasoning, syllogistic and inductive; for each of these latter make use of old knowledge to impart new, the syllogism assuming an audience that accepts its premises, induction exhibiting the universal as implicit in the clearly known particular. Again, the persuasion exerted by rhetorical arguments is in principle the same, since they use either example, a kind of induction, or enthymeme, a form of syllogism. The pre-existent knowledge required is of two kinds. In some cases admission of the fact must be assumed, in others comprehension of the meaning of the term used, and sometimes both assumptions are essential " (Aristotle, 2007, p.2).

In his opinion, to provide argumentation to any point of view meant the following: providing *valid arguments* in order to demonstrate any true premise (according to the laws of contradiction and the excluded middle and etc.); *explaining* the sense of any problem interesting to a human being by asking *appropriate questions*; *grounding acceptability for experts* to solve any difficulty; *persuading an audience* of the expediency of a given opinion etc.

As it was shown by Stephen E. Toulmin, *Aristotle's Prior Analytics* was connected with thinking, acting, and talking in accordance with laws of *formal logic*. Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics* reflected thinking and talking based on laws of *natural science*. Aristotle's *Special Topics* was a model of *informal logic*, and Aristotle's *Art of Rhetoric* was a *theory of arguing* with the standpoints of the auditors or readers (for details see: Toulmin 1992, p.6).

There are at least four pluses and one minus of Aristotle's argumentology. Plus 1. There are strong reasons to consider that Aristotle actually implemented the idea of possibility of special practical-methodological orientation of metaphysics which we define as "argumentology". Plus 2. We should take into consideration the close connection of Aristotle's argumentology with antique polis conditions, which turned out to be not local and regional but global, i.e. related to the life of the whole of humanity. Plus 3: Aristotle's first philosophy as well as argumentology was not knowledge based *above* or *apart from* real problems of science and practice, but on its inner component. This fact became a reason for the apportionment of adequate communicative and cognitive levels of analytics (logic), dialectics (topic), rhetoric, poetics, and hermeneutics etc. Plus 4: Aristotle's philosophy of argument also included analysing human rationality, and the connection between true, valid, convincing and persuasive arguments and their initial premises (Van Eemeren, Grootendorst, Kruiger 1987, p.59). Minus 1. However, we should remember that Aristotle developed a concept of *eternal* and *constant* ultimate conditions of all existence and cognition, which was urgent in respect of pre-modern society's values. Consequently, there are strong reasons to consider that Aristotle actually implemented the idea of possibility of special practical-methodological orientation of metaphysics which we define as "argumentology".

When evaluating Aristotle's argumentology we should not treat it as modern. Moreover, we should remember that Aristotle developed a concept of eternal and constant ultimate conditions of all existence and cognition. Nevertheless Aristotle's first philosophy was not knowledge based *above* or *apart from* real problems of science and practice, but its inner component. This fact became a reason for the apportionment of adequate communicative and cognitive levels of analytics (logic), dialectics (topic), rhetoric, poetics, and hermeneutics etc.

The ancient understanding of the nature and objects of argumentation is still a necessary precondition of contemporary argumentology; and the gradation (scale) of methods of argumentation developed therein still has great cultural and civilizational significance.

According to Aristotle's *Prior Analytics* there was a *deductive (mathematic) proof* on one edge of the scale of rationality where true conclusions could be received with the assistance of valid forms of reasoning and true premises. On the right-hand edge of that gradation of communicative rationality or *logos* (in the words of

ancient Greeks) there was the procedure of *scientific explanation* (useful to explain the laws of nature and phenomena of natural sciences). On the right-hand side of scientific explanation were procedures of *ethical and political warranties* (argumentation schemes of transition from moral norms and political imperatives to tactics and strategies of human activity). To the right of this were *dialectical arguments* as an instrument of understanding based on *topoi* of science, art and common sense discourse about the true or the verisimilar for given experts or wise representatives of the community. To the right of dialectical arguments there was *rhetorical argumentation* – a means of persuading a concrete audience about any opinion offered – and also rules regulating the holding of any dialectic critical discussion (these are the main aspects for rationally overcoming differences in opinions).

It is necessary to stress that the argumentological gradation of rationality of pre-modern society was not a characteristic peculiar to the West or Europe. For example, more attention was devoted to ethical and political warranties and dialectical grounds, but not a classic deductive proof, in ancient India and China (this concerns especially the studies of Confucius, Vedanta etc).

The objects of many contemporary theories of argumentation first formulated by Aristotle were in some sense re-discovered not only in traditional medieval society, but in modernity as well. It seems that even nowadays this process is dynamic. It could be explained by the open and incomplete character of human history, its communicative precondition and social-historic standards of human rationality.

Consequently, the term ‘argumentology’ does not refer to an empirical study or theory of argumentation, but to the ultimate social-historical backgrounds (concepts of man, rationality etc.) of the theory and practice of argumentation. In pre-modern society those backgrounds warranted the possibility of producing valid arguments in order to warrant any true premise. Among them were the concept of an appropriate question, explanation of the sense of a problem, substantiation of the acceptability of solving any problem for experts, and the study of audience persuasion. Consequently, such levels of argumentology as analytics (logic), dialectics (topics), methodics, rhetoric, poetics, hermeneutics, and others existed in pre-modern society.

## *2. Argumentology: Modernity and Postmodernity*

If we readdress our attention from pre-modern argumentology to the

argumentology of a society in the process of modernization (XVI-XIX century modernization) we will not find that ethical and political warranties, dialectical arguments, and rhetorical argumentation are of main interest in such a society. In historical-philosophic processes this lack of interest manifests itself as a kind of oblivion to the canons of antique ethical-politic warranties. This is reflected first of all in attempts to create a new or modern hierarchy of ethical and politic values with the assistance of deduction (mathematical demonstration).

Argumentology of modernity was connected with attempts to create a new (modern) hierarchy of ethical and politic values with the assistance of *deduction (mathematical demonstration)*. Detailed research work on the nature of *scientific explanation*, especially its inductive method, has become the opposite side of that process. Argumentology of modernity has been transformed into the *logic and methodology of science (maths as well)*.

Consequently, starting in the XVIIth century attempts to introduce problems of dialectical arguments and rhetorical argumentation to the cultural environment by using the word "logic" were usually treated by contemporaries as a historical misunderstanding (for example, Hegel's and Marx dialectical logic).

Only in the twentieth century did a gradual transformation to the global or postmodern world refresh interest in the continuous gradation of human rationality, discovered in times of pre-modern society. A new interest in argumentology problems was the consequence.

That interest is most fully formed in the works of Belgian and British scholars by the end of the 1950s. Nevertheless it also was treated initially as a historical misunderstanding. A real unity of contemporary humanity into one global system, which demanded a combination of different parts of humanity which cultivate non-similar values of pre-modernity, modernity and postmodernity, was only formed in the late 1990s (Tchouechov 2006, p. 91-136). That fact demonstrated to everyone not only the urgency of antique argumentology, but also the need to develop it according to contemporary objective and subjective ultimate conditions of human existence.

Argumentology of post-modernity were presented by Ch. Perelman's new rhetoric; J. Habermas's concept of communicative activity; St. Toulmin's historical-epistemological logic; formal dialectics theory of E. Barth and E. Krabbe (the term argumentology was first used but only in technical sense by E. Barth

and E. Krabbe).

There are some examples of post-modern argumentology: pragma-dialectic theory of argumentation (F. H. van Eemeren, R. Grootendorst), problematology (M. Meyer), informal logic (R. H. Johnson), new dialectics (D. Walton), critical thinking (R. Paul). They are directly and (or) indirectly connected with contemporary theory of argumentation (TA). There is a difference between these types of argumentation concepts. The former distinguishes between various levels of argumentation analysis. Pragma-dialectical concept distinguishes a *philosophical level* of argumentation study (K. Popper's concept of critical rationalism), as well as theoretical, dialectical (according to K. Popper's interpretation of dialectics as well), empirical (i.e. reflecting practice of verbal communication within contemporary Western society) and others.

It is important to pay special attention to the fact that majority of the concepts are not even pure argumentological, but only contain some elements of argumentology (in my opinion, critics of argumentation theory and informal logic should show why these concepts cannot be considered as strict theories at all). Perelman's new rhetoric, D. Walton's new dialectics, and the pragma-dialectics of the Dutch argumentation theorists, together with M. Meyer's problematology and A. Fisher's critical thinking schemes of argumentation analysis do indeed differ from logic, rhetoric, and dialectics of pre- and modern society.

This difference is reflected not only in the changing scope of the terms "formal logic", "rhetoric", and "dialectics" with the assistance of prefixes such as "non-", "in"-, and "new-".

It also illustrates indirectly that the formation of contemporary argumentology is far from completion even when including problems of attempts to offer new democratic schemes of communication which could be useful in overcoming political, economic and other discords, controversies and conflicts.

Nowadays, unfortunately, we are witnessing an increase in the use of the most inhuman methods of overcoming cultural civilization discords. Consequently the degree of interest in analysing the potential of various paradigms of argumentology in the contemporary world will increase.

For example, rhetoric of modernity was realized as the theory of oratory and literary style in the middle of the XIX century. At the XXth century beginning under the influence of positivist philosophy most scholars thought the nature of

convincing (persuasive) affect (argumentation) could be explained by instruments of formal logic. According to Ch. Perelman, new rhetoric should oppose to formal (deductive) logic, as well as to the dialectics of Hegel and Marx developed in modernity. However, Perelman was the first to propose that the discipline could be defined in terms of “dialectics” and “topics” (the terms were not to our regret used and as a result in the 1960s argumentologists were unable to answer the questions of what the new dialectics and new topics were), but later he preferred the term “new rhetoric”). According to Perelman, it better reflected the role of persuasive phenomena and the audience in argumentation. The final reason for preferring the term “new rhetoric” was that it enabled him to ignore discussions about the essence of the “new dialectics” (Perelman 1986, p.8). Unlike the forerunners, Perelman combined an implicit philosophical model of rhetoric with the possibilities and needs of particular (local and regional), and even universal audience. According to Perelman, the existence of inactive, irresponsible and incompetent subjects of communication and cognition discredit the idea of a universal audience. Perelman included supporters of opposing views and opinions (in respect to the rhetor) in the structure of an audience. The measure of their responsibility was determined by their treatment of universal values. The rhetor (argumentator) as a part of a universal audience is intent on increasing the level of its adherence to those values. Obviously, using weapons, advertising techniques and propaganda and manipulating peoples’ consciousness are not considered methods suitable to new rhetorical argumentology. Argumentology perspectives nowadays are connected by the vast majority of scientists with the development of the dialogical approach or its *dialectical paradigm*, that is *new dialectics*. Linguists, artificial intelligence specialists, rhetoricians and psychologists insist on the attractiveness and reliability of this paradigm (see: Van Eemeren, Blair, Willard & Snoeck Henkemans, 2003). But it is strange that today almost nothing is said about the future of dialectics by Marxist philosophers.

### *3. Contemporary Argumentology: Four Paradigms are a Final List?*

The contemporary understanding of the nature of different paradigms of argumentology assumes that we consider their close connection with ontological and epistemological types of subject-object relations.

Different paradigms of studying argumentation correlate with unequal functional types of ontological and epistemological relations.

That is what is difficult to understand for many authors of contemporary textbooks on logic, who mix problems of mathematical or deductive



demonstration and argumentation. Their main fault is the lack of attention paid to the subject, the object and the communicative aspects of proved knowledge. It is obvious that such a model is a basis for explaining communication processes by intercourse of some *passive objects* without influence on the process of demonstration.

In postmodernity a *formal-logical* paradigm of argumentology is not the only possible variant. The restriction of this paradigm is gradually being overcome within a *rhetorical paradigm* of analysis and implementation argumentation. Rhetoric is a direct broadening of and addition to formal logic. If we consider rhetoric on the basis of its etymology we will see that its philosophical foundations point to *subject-object* ontological and epistemological relations between an orator and audience.

The rhetorical paradigm of argumentology allows us not only to overcome different impasses of formal-logical paradigm but also to create a relatively new research programme of the philosophical study of the essence and objectives of argumentation.

The earlier one considered that the rhetorical paradigm of argumentology was only reflected in *argumentative-centric* rhetoric. Nowadays its role in explaining the nature of *expressive-centric* rhetoric, which concerns the study of figures and tropes of thought and words are explained. It is possible to detect similarities between the two types of rhetoric if we take into account the fact that the technological side of argumentative-centric rhetoric is not a mechanical addition to verisimilar opinions or political and moral values. This is the main and irreplaceable form of conceptualization and *imitation* of the latter (Tchouechov 2005, p.100-150). Argumentative rhetoric and expressive rhetoric usually disclose *subject-object* relations, and the rational and emotional connections of the arguer and the audience. They are closely connected with hermeneutics.

As H.-G. Gadamer said, a text to be understood becomes concrete only during interpretation but nevertheless the latter deeply concerns the sense of that text. This means that our freedom to interpret a text is strictly constrained. This is the main source of *pararhetorical phenomenon* i.e. pararhetorical character of argumentology, based on poetics and lead by hermeneutics.

Hermeneutics cultivated the study of object-subject relations, i.e. connections between the text and its interpreter. Hermeneutics connects with pararhetorical paradigm of argumentology. The connection of the philosophical foundations of

hermeneutics and rhetoric can be described with the assistance of the “complementarity” principle until hermeneutics is realized as a particular science which studies understanding, but not as a methodology of humanitarian sciences or even a type of metaphysics of human existence (H.-G.Gadamer, M.Heidegger).

The pararhetorical character of argumentation evaluation is overcome in the process of reconstructing, broadening, adding to and critically revising argumentation from the *dialectical* point of view. So even the practice of publishing books and interior reading stipulate not the transformation of rhetoric to hermeneutics as Gadamer supposed, but the necessity of including new dialogic relations in the subject of rhetoric. We do not pretend to have solved the problem, but we should testify that it is necessary to distinguish formal-logical, linguistic, psychological and other *scientific approaches* to dialogical argumentation research, and also to distinguish formally and informally oriented trends therein and to remember that the distinctions between the latter are not always equal to distinctions between the corresponding sciences.

The main problems of contemporary dialogical argumentology (new dialectics) could be overcome by using the argumentation potential of M.M. Bakhtin’s philosophical dialogical concept. In that the philosophy argumentation may be regarded as an intercultural language or, an argumentology begins when “strict scientific character”, in Bakhtin’s words, is of no use and the “Otherness of science” is used. Consequently, it is possible to unite, for example, the results of various dialogical studies of argumentation only by using common philosophical language (according to our hypothesis this should be a new language of dialogical argumentology – the terms argumentator, audience etc. are examples). This indicates that a dialogical approach to argumentation is always connected with some philosophical (dialectical) ideas. There are some contemporary dialectical theories of argumentation, and pragma-dialectic theory of argumentation (initially formulated at Amsterdam school by Professors Franz van Eemeren and Rob Grootendorst) first of all.

There are a lot of empirical (scientific) dialectical models of argumentation – linguistic, cognitive, logical, rhetorical etc. But they should be founded by contemporary argumentology, or a philosophy of theory and practice of argumentation to provide dialogue between new rhetoric, new dialectics, and new argumentative logic as well as.

Argumentology is not an empirical study or theory of argumentation, but is a

philosophy of ultimate social-historical backgrounds of argumentation.

In pre-modern society those backgrounds warranted the possibility of producing valid arguments in order to warrant any true premise. Among them were the concept of an appropriate question, explanation of the sense of a problem, substantiation of the acceptability of solving any problem for experts, and the study of audience persuasion. Such levels of argumentology as analytics (logic), dialectics (topics), methodics, rhetoric, poetics, hermeneutics, and others existed in pre-modern society. Its best examples are based on the idea of the absence of ontological gaps in human rationality.

In modernity argumentology has been constituted mostly by the concept of logic and the methodology of science, based on the strict contraposition of scientific and ordinary-practical rationality.

Postmodern argumentology is, on the one hand, a kind of rethinking of the most developed examples of pre-modern and modern argumentology; but on the other hand it is constituted by a philosophical dialogic concept of new rhetoric, and new dialectics coordinated with contemporary standards of scientific and human rationality.

Argumentology is a practical philosophy. Practical philosophy, like philosophy in general, aims to reveal the ultimate backgrounds of human activity and behaviour by concretizing them in recommendations as to their organization and optimization.

According to Plato and Hegel, theoretical philosophy was also practical. Aristotle supposed practical philosophy to be an application of theoretical philosophy's ideas. According to J. Dewey, practical philosophy was at the core of theoretical philosophy. Other scholars were convinced that no philosophies other than practical ones were possible.

Logic, rhetoric, poetics (hermeneutics), and dialectics historically corresponded to the values of pre-modern society. Logic and methodology of science, poetics and hermeneutics were closely connected with modernity. Post-modernity has become a basis of globalization as many contemporary authors are sure. This fact presupposes a precise analysis of the following question: does it mean that a new rhetorical, pararhetorical, formal-logical and dialogical paradigms of argumentology are being formed together with a philosophy of post-modernism or

simply that postmodernist philosophy continues and strengthens the pararhetorical paradigm of argumentology which is connected with hermeneutics and the poetics of modernity.

Was a new rhetorical, pararhetorical, formal-logical or dialogical paradigms of argumentology indeed formed together with a philosophy of post-modernism? Even a cursory glance at the postmodernist philosophy convinces us that pararhetorical phenomenon is very close to it.

Post-modernists (for instance Lyotard) really appeal to the new values and introduce a new type of logic and rhetoric (firstly concerning the technique of counting and saying that context theory is unsatisfactory) (Lyotard 1979).

Postmodernists reject the old rhetorical idea about the compulsory addressing of a text and proclaiming deconstruction to be a postmodernist game. This game with argumentation is never dull for its fans, of course, as long as it is not a job or a profession. The sense of the post-modernist relation to rhetoric and game is vividly reflected in the following story by J. Derrida. It tells us that at 10 a.m. on the 22nd of August, 1979, someone phoned him. The US telephone operator asked the scholar if he would accept a reverse charges call from Martin ("Martini" as Derrida heard) Heidegger. As the author specified, the same thing had happened earlier when he had heard familiar voices on the telephone and had been looking forward to his reaction to a call from Heidegger's spirit. "It is a joke and I refuse to pay", replied Derrida (Derrida 1980). It meant that it was too dull even for the fan to play a very familiar game. No fan who takes a game seriously refuses to play. Derrida showed his post-modernist position: how to treat a game as *paragame*.

Consequently, the main philosophical method of post-modernism - deconstruction - is not a game (in the exact sense of the word), but is a paragame. Critics of post-modernism usually do not pay more attention to it. Consequently, the argumentological spirit of post-modernist philosophy could be evaluated in the conceptual frameworks of pararhetoric - not even the *hermeneutical*, but the poetic type of the *pararhetorical* paradigm of argumentology. It is confirmed by the wide prevalence of post-modernism in the spheres of art, politics, morality etc. We may suppose, however that there are more distinctions between rhetorical and hermeneutical, or pararhetoric paradigms of argumentology than it seems. This is why verbal communication is real and situational while written

communication is (in the words of J. Derrida) “dead” or independent concerning the context of communication, but complete and reversible. In this respect the argumentological hermeneutics is only one aspect (but a very important one) of the rhetorical paradigm of argumentology, firstly because society, according to the representatives of hermeneutics, is a community of interacting individuals, and a concordance of their interests and views is impossible without argumentation. It is not surprising that argumentology perspectives nowadays are connected by the vast majority of scientists with the development of the dialogical approach or its *dialectical paradigm*. However, under the mask of the dialogical approach to argumentation, different, often incompatible reports are presented and works are published. It means that M.M. Bakhtin’s philosophical dialogical concept is still up to date.

#### NOTE

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