

ISSA Proceedings 1998 - Duties Beyond Borders? Appeals To Moral Necessity In Statecraft



Speaking at the dedication of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum a few years ago, Nobel Laureate Elie Wiesel called for the Clinton Administration to take action to stop the carnage in Bosnia. "Something, anything, must be done," he implored (*Time*, May 3, 1993: 48). Shocked by atrocities, the horror of systematic rape, and waves of

panic-stricken refugees fleeing in the wake of "ethnic cleansing," many other people joined Wiesel in urging the nations of the world to intervene for humanitarian reasons. "All humanity should be outraged," asserted Thomas Buergenthal, former president of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights and a survivor of Auschwitz (cited in Lillich 1993: 574). "We cannot just let things go on like this," insisted former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. "It is evil" (*Time*, April 26, 1993: 35).

Whether prompted by genocide in the former Yugoslavia or political mass murder in such places as Cambodia or Rwanda, the issue of what should be done about human rights violations in other countries highlights an old debate over whether ethical considerations ought to influence foreign policy. Do political leaders have a moral obligation to alleviate human suffering no matter where it is located? Must they protect foreign nationals even at the expense of their countrymen? If so, should it be done through a quick rescue operation? Or should it include an effort to eradicate the underlying cause of the suffering? These questions have received renewed attention with the establishment of a United Nations' War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague, charged with conducting the first international war crimes trials since those undertaken in Nuremberg and Tokyo at the end of Second World War.

The purpose of this essay is to analyze appeals to moral necessity in persuasive dialogue on foreign policy issues. I begin by differentiating between two types of appeal: one based on duty; the other, on right. After comparing the deontological assumptions of duty-based appeals with the consequentialism of rights-based appeals, I discuss how metaphors are sometimes used in the latter to conflate

legal right with moral obligation. Next, using a series of speeches that attempted to justify the 1989 intervention by the United States into Panama, I illustrate the rhetorical strategy employed by statesmen who mask legal permissibility as moral obligation. Finally, I conclude with a discussion of the problems inherent in moral appeals that blur the distinction between the permissible and the obligatory.

1. Arguments From Moral Necessity

Throughout the ages, political leaders have justified the use of military force against neighboring states with a form of argument that stresses how foreign policy is driven by unavoidable necessities. In general, these necessities are portrayed in strategic terms; they are actions that supposedly must be carried out to advance national security interests regardless of whether they contravene prevailing ethical standards (Raymond 1995).

Recently a different conception of necessity has entered into debates about the use of military force. Rather than defending the resort to arms on the grounds of strategic necessity, it is often justified nowadays as a “categorical moral imperative” to stop a brutal government from violating the human rights of its citizens (Reisman 1973: 168; Schermers 1991: 592; Rodley 1992: 35). As one advocate of this view has put it, the military defeat of rulers who initiate massacres “is morally necessary” (Walzer 1977: 105). It is an absolute duty, one that holds at all times and in all places, and regardless of whether it advances the strategic interests of the intervening state.

Allowing the use of coercion by one state to modify the authority structure in another state would significantly transformation world affairs. Ever since the Peace of Westphalia ended the Thirty Years’ War in 1648, the twin principles of sovereignty and nonintervention have underpinned international relations. The only widely accepted exception to the prohibition against interfering in the domestic affairs of other nation-states is military intervention to liberate one’s own nationals when they are being held hostage, such as the 1976 Israeli mission to rescue its citizens from a hijacked airplane in Entebbe, Uganda. What is noteworthy about recent appeals to moral necessity is they do not focus on whether those who are suffering are the intervening state’s own citizens. Sovereignty, according to those who hold this view, is no longer sacrosanct (Scheffer 1996: 37). As self-proclaimed global citizens in an interdependent world, they do not recognize human rights issues as being a purely domestic matter. An example of this attitude can be seen in a letter written to the editor of

the *New York Times* (October 4, 1968, p. 46) by Arthur Leff, a professor at Yale Law School. Reacting to wrenching scenes of malnutrition during the Nigerian Civil War he demanded: "Forget all the blather about international law, sovereignty and self-determination, all that abstract garbage," he demanded. "Babies [in Biafra] are starving to death." As expressed in Article 7 of the Universal Declaration of Human Responsibilities, proposed by the InterAction Council of twenty-four former heads of state from five different continents, "Every person is infinitely precious and must be protected unconditionally."

2. Duty-Based Versus Rights-Based Appeals to Moral Necessity in Foreign Policy

In contrast to appeals to moral necessity that are grounded in deontological assumptions about categorical duty, a second type of appeal stresses the bad consequences that occur when legal rights are not observed (Eisner 1993: 224-225; Neff 1993: 185; Plant 1993: 110). The warrant licensing the claim that it is permissible to intervene with armed force in order to stop egregious violations of human rights rests on the backing of four propositions. The first proposition asserts that human rights are an international entitlement (D'Amato 1995: 148). Article 55(c) of the United Nations Charter requires member states to promote "universal respect for, and observance of, human rights" Over the past fifty years, the UN has developed a detailed list of inherent, inalienable rights of all human beings. The most significant legal formulation of these rights is in the so-called International Bill of Human Rights, the informal name given to The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (which was passed by a vote of the UN General Assembly in 1948), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (which were both opened for signature in 1966 and entered into force a decade later). The legal rules governing these rights are regarded as *jus cogens* - peremptory norms from which no derogation is permitted.

The second proposition maintains that governments committing grave violations of human rights forfeit their legitimacy. Although Article 2 (7) of the UN Charter prevents member states from interfering in the "domestic matters" of one another, the Charter's legal protection does not extend to genocide, torture, and other horrific acts shocking to the human conscience. Governments involved in egregious human rights abuses betray the most basic obligations they have to their citizens. By not providing citizens with security they fail recognized standards of civilization and lose their political legitimacy. The domestic jurisdiction of illegitimate governments is not protected by international law

(Tesón 1988: 15; Ellerman 1993: 348). Efforts by foreign states to defend the innocent against the actions of illegitimate governments is legally permissible (Luban 1980: 164).

The third proposition declares that the international community has a legal responsibility to stop serious human rights violations. According to the International Court of Justice, there are some obligations that a state has “towards the international community as a whole” and all members of that community “have a legal interest in their protection” (*Case Concerning the Barcelona Traction, Light and Power Company, Ltd.* [Belgium v. Spain], I.C.J. Reports, 1970, para. 33). Advocates of humanitarian intervention maintain that the entitlement for protection against genocide, slavery, and the like give rise to legal obligations *erga omnes*. Any member of the international community has legal standing to call for a state to observe these obligations and to impose sanctions if wrongful acts continue. As the publicist Emeriche de Vattel put it, “any foreign power may rightfully give assistance to an oppressed people who asked for aid” (cited in Schweigman 1993: 95).

Finally, the fourth proposition submits that punitive sanctions by members of the international community against illegitimate governments are legally permissible if they meet certain performance criteria. Among the criteria typically mentioned are:

1. a serious violation of human rights;
2. the lack of any other alternative to stopping the violation;
3. international endorsement of the military intervention;
4. multilateral conduct of the intervention;
5. use of the minimum level of force needed to stop the violation; and
6. a limited duration for the intervention (Benjamin 1992-1993).

3. The Use of Metaphors in Rights-Based Appeals

What is problematic about rights-based appeals is statecraft the shift from the assertion that certain actions are legally permissible to the contention that they are morally obligatory. To make this shift the rhetor relies upon metaphorical reasoning. Although metaphors often are thought of as poetic devices used to enliven dull prose, they also shape the way we conceive of complex phenomena. “The essence of a metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another” (Lakoff & Johnson 1980: 5). Unlike analogies which compare things from the same domain of experience (e.g., “A war with Iraq will result in

another Vietnam”), Vosniadou & Ortony (1989: 7) point out that metaphors involve “across-domain” rather than “within-domain” comparisons (e.g., “War is like a disease”). By crossing categorical boundaries when depicting the unfamiliar (Kittay 1987: 19), metaphors highlight certain aspects of a phenomenon under investigation while concealing or misrepresenting other aspects.

The shift from a legal right to an inescapable moral duty to intervene against abhorrent acts of violence is attempted by using various hydraulic and organic metaphors. Like a raging flood or a wild fire, international humanitarian norms are said to be spreading across the political landscape, overwhelming everything in their path. National leaders have no choice but to accommodate these powerful forces which make the triumph of human rights a “*genuine historical inevitability*” (Brzezinski 1996: 166, emphasis in original).

Metaphors provide cognitive shortcuts that allow one to go beyond the information that is given (Shimko 1994: 662). As a rhetorical strategy, rights-based appeals to moral necessity begin by establishing that the horrible consequences of not stopping human rights abuses makes military intervention legally permissible. By playing upon metaphors of inescapable physical forces, the argument then shifts from the permissible to the obligatory. Intervention is required, not because of a categorical duty derived from features of the act that make it right independent of its consequences, but due to the need for national leaders to get in step the inexorable march of moral history.

To illustrate the problematic nature of this type of appeal to moral necessity, let us turn to the case of the 1989 United States intervention into Panama.

4. The Rhetorical Strategy of Rights-Based Appeals

At 1:00 A.M. on December 20, 1989, 22,000 U.S. troops supported by F-117A stealth attack aircraft invaded Panama in what President George Bush called Operation Just Cause. The purpose of the operation was to capture General Manuel Antonio Noriega, a military dictator who had gained control over Panama six years earlier. During his time in power, Noriega repressed opposition movements, manipulated elections, and ordered the murder of dissident political leaders. His ruthless behavior was overlooked by political leaders in the United States because he had worked for the Central Intelligence Agency and assisted Washington in its fight against communism in Central America. Between 1986 and 1987, however, Noriega’s human rights abuses and his involvement in narcotics trafficking and money laundering with the Colombian Medellín drug cartel were brought to light by a series of Congressional inquiries, reports

published in the *New York Times*, and independent criminal investigations presented to grand juries in Miami and Tampa, Florida. On April 8, 1988, President Ronald Reagan issued Executive Order No. 12635, which imposed economic sanctions on Panama because Noriega's actions now were seen as an "extraordinary threat to the nation security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States."

Although the sanctions damaged the Panamanian economy, they did not weaken Noriega's grip on political power. As a result, Reagan's successor, George Bush, began providing covert support for Noriega's political opponents. But the support was equally ineffective. Neither the May 1989 elections in Panama nor an attempted coup five months later ended the dictatorship.

On Friday, December 15, Noriega announced that henceforth he would serve as Panama's "maximum leader" with enhanced power to crush domestic dissent. The next day, following the murder of an unarmed U.S. marine lieutenant by members of the Panama Defense Forces, the wounding of another American serviceman, and arrest and brutal interrogation of a U.S. naval officer and his wife, Bush decided to invade. When justifying his decision in an address to the nation on December 20, Bush asserted that "General Noriega's reckless threats and attacks on Americans in Panama created an imminent danger to the 35,000 American citizens in Panama." As president of the United States, he continued, "I have no higher obligation than to safeguard the lives of American citizens." While Bush's address to the American public was couched in the traditional language of protecting citizens abroad, speeches delivered by Ambassador Thomas R. Pickering to the United Nations Security Council on December 20, 1989 and by Luigi R. Einaudi to the Organization of American States (OAS) on December 22, 1989 extended the justification to include the moral necessity of protecting foreign nationals.^[i]

Following the line of reasoning voiced by the president, Pickering began his speech by citing the "inherent right of self-defense under international law . . . in response to armed attacks by forces under the direction of Manuel Noriega." But after underscoring the importance of safeguarding American lives, he introduced another rationale for the intervention: Noriega and his "ruthless cabal repeatedly obstructed the will of the Panamanian people." Panamanians, he insisted, "have a right to be free." Referring to Noriega and his minions as "thugs" and "monsters," Pickering noted that the "whole world" has "denounced the violation of human rights" in Panama. For the United States, the issue was not merely guarding

national security interests; the “sovereign will of the Panamanian people is what we are here defending.” Pointing to a series of conditions that made the intervention legally permissible, he concluded by stressing that the invasion occurred “only after exhausting the full range of available alternatives.” Moreover, it was undertaken “in a manner designed to minimize casualties and damage,” and designed with the goal of withdrawing “as quickly as possible.”

With the intervention framed by Pickering in terms of a legally permissible response by the United States to a moral outrage, Ambassador Einaudi proceeded to explain why Washington faced a moral necessity that obliged it to act. He began his explanation by suggesting that “There are times in the life of men and of nations when history seems to take charge of events as to sweep all obstacles from its chosen path.” At such times, he continued, “history appears to incarnate some great and irresistible principle.” The world community was “once again living in historic times, a time when a great principle . . . [was] spreading across the world like wild fire.” The principle articulated “the revolutionary idea that the people, not governments, are sovereign.” Drawing a parallel to the fall of Erich Honecker in the German Democratic Republic, Gustav Husak in Czechoslovakia, and Todor Zhivkov in Bulgaria, he claimed it is a principle that has “acquired the force of historical necessity.” If the OAS invoked the nonintervention rule in the case of Noriega, it would “find itself cast on the side of the dictators and the tyrants of this world,” oppressors “en route to extinction.”

Would this organization, he asked, be willing to forfeit the “moral authority which it enjoys throughout this hemisphere by challenging the just verdict that history had decreed upon Manuel Noriega?” Expressing the maxim that the only language that dictators understand is force, he asserted “You cannot reason with a dictator, and you cannot, alas, ask him to relinquish peacefully that which he has obtained through bloody and unspeakable means.”

The “United States was forced to a path not of our choosing, but a path dictated by our national rights and responsibilities.” Our action has been “welcomed overwhelmingly by the people of Panama,” who along with others in the Western Hemisphere were “sick of stolen elections, sick of military dictatorships, sick of narco-strongmen, and sick of the likes of Manuel Noriega.” By supporting the United States, Einaudi proclaimed the OAS would “put itself on the right side of history.”

5. Conclusion

Throughout the history of the modern state system, appeals to moral necessity have been used by many political leaders to justify military interventions. Great Britain, France, and Russia employed such appeals at various times during the nineteenth century. More recently, they were used by India when intervening in East Pakistan (1971), by Vietnam when moving against the Khmer Rouge (1978), and by Tanzania when removing Idi Amin from Uganda (1979). Moral appeals can be an effective tactic in foreign policy argumentation, swinging the weight of presumption in favor of military intervention. Of the various factors that influence the strength of an argument, many are concerned with emotions and highly-placed values. Not only do they evoke a visceral reaction in the hearer, they address the hearer's desire for certainty by being structurally simple and unambiguous (Sillince & Minors 1991).

As the U.S. intervention into Panama in 1989 suggests, appeals to moral necessity can also mask foreign policies driven by considerations of expediency rather than by a genuine sense of moral duty. Whereas Bush explained the intervention to his domestic constituency in the traditional vocabulary of power politics, Pickering and Einaudi defended it to external audiences in moral terms. Pickering presented the course of action as legally permissible given the human rights violations committed by Noriega. Einaudi then described it as necessitated given the relentless march of humanitarian law over the centuries. What began as a plea to the UN Security Council regarding the legality of the intervention evolved before the Organization of American States into a moral imperative.

In retrospect, the moral necessity conjured up by the Bush administration was an instrumental means for promoting realpolitik ends. The welfare of Panamanians under Noriega was not a motive for intervention independent of the effect that the intervention was thought to have in advancing U.S. security interests. The use of legal rights-based appeals to moral necessity in this case illuminates a larger issue in contemporary international relations. With the end of the Cold War, numerous calls have been issued for members of the international community to intercede where outrageous conduct shocks the conscience of humankind. But not everyone who heeds these calls will do so for noble motives. Some states will use the mask of moral necessity to hide egoistic security interests. While there may be a legal right to intervene in cases of egregious human rights violations, international law does not spell out a duty to intervene. Although the use of force may be permissible, it is also permissible to forego the use of force. Indeed, there may be times when it is morally right to forego military intervention even when it is legally permissible. As Molière reminds us, we are responsible not only for our

actions, but also our inactions.

NOTES

i. All quotations from President Bush are from the Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, December 25, 1989. All quotations from Ambassadors Pickering and Einaudi are from Panama: A Just Cause. United States Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, Current Policy No. 120.

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Problematizing Standards Of Argumentation To Students



1. The Problem

I teach undergraduate courses in Speech Communication in the United States in which I'm presumed to be able to grade students on their papers and on their classroom presentations based on how well they argue rather than what they argue. Yet I also live in a so-called postmodern age in which virtually all standards of rational argumentation have been called into question, particularly those emanating from white, heterosexual, Eurocentric males like myself.

Moreover, I've discovered that even those among my colleagues who've been trained as I have in principles of argumentation, informal logic, critical thinking and the like tend to apply those principles unevenly, inconsistently, particularly as regards the sorts of highly sensitive, highly controversial topics my students find most interesting. One potential source of inconsistency is bias. There is little reason to believe that we teachers of controversial subject matter are immune from the well documented influences of prejudices and wish-fulfillment beliefs on judgments of the validity of arguments (e.g., Hample, D., 1979; McGuire, 1960).

But another likely culprit is the principles themselves. What exactly is a false dichotomy or an inappropriate appeal to authority? When do circumstances mitigate what might otherwise be considered illogical? Does the press of time ever justify my decision to follow the crowd or be swayed by an *ad hominem*?

Designed as they are to apply to an array of context-sensitive situations, the various informal fallacies are inherently imprecise. These problems in judging the quality of students' arguments bear also on what we as teachers say and do in the classroom. At a recent conference on faculty advocacy in the classroom, a number of academics used the occasion to defend against charges that they had been using the classroom to promote one or another version of political correctness. To the contrary, said one Women's Studies professor, ... some, perhaps much, of what my students take to be advocacy in the classroom in fact consists of critical questions about the empirical foundations of their political and social beliefs, or critical evaluation of the logical structure of their beliefs.... As evidence for my 'advocacy', students point out that most of the corrections I make as to fact or

logic tend to be in a more liberal or 'politically correct' direction. [H]owever, it is not at all surprising that I might encounter more poorly founded opinions of the conservative sort. When the opportunity arises, I do try to point out similar errors made by the 'politically (not quite) correct', but they tend to be fewer in number...." (Holland, 1996).

But are what Holland calls "errors" in the logic of her conservative students really a reflection of her own biases, thus providing unwitting evidence of the limits of objectivity?

2. A Proposal

The problems herein identified should not be news to the sophisticated readership of these ISSR proceedings. Yet I suspect that many of us (most of us?) continue to assure our students that we will be judging their essays and class presentation on how well they support a position, not on what position they take. Similarly, we frequently assure students that, on matters of a controversial nature, we will teach them how to think, not what to think. These assurances may well be scandalous: a violation of "truth-in-advertising" principles which we who teach argumentation, informal logic, and the like, insist that others adhere to.

Of course, one could still maintain (as I do with my classes) that it is still possible for students and teacher to arrive together at reasoned and reasonable contextual judgments of better and worse arguments. (BH Smith, Ch. 1) But even this qualified claim implicitly problematizes the blanket assurance that we teachers will be judging students' work based on how they argue rather than what they argue. Why "contextual" judgments? In what sense "reasonable"? Why only judgments of "better" and "worse"? With these questions I am led to the central proposition of this paper.

I propose that we problematize our evaluations of the quality of students' argumentation with our students. I suggest this, not out of fear that we may be hauled into court for truth-in-advertising violations, but because it is an excellent way to provoke engaged thought by students about argumentation.

3. The Context

The foregoing is part of a larger project on what I call "Teaching the Pedagogies." (Simons) For some years now I've been encouraging my students to subject my use of a video in the classroom to rhetorical scrutiny. Then, in recent years, I've assigned them the task of systematically analyzing faculty rhetoric in one of their classes, raising with them a wide range of issues having to do with faculty

advocacy in the classroom. I've also engaged them in dialogue with respect to issues specific to my own teaching, attempting thereby to illustrate the sense in which one might be able to arrive communally at prudential judgments of better or worse in the absence of formulaic rules of argumentation.

The project I call "Teaching the Pedagogies" began for me at a conference on political communication for academics like myself back in 1984. Shown at the conference was *Life and Liberty for Those Who Obey*, a hard-hitting critique of the religious right at the time, complete with damning footage of leading ministers, indoctrination campaigns, censorship campaigns, a book-burning ceremony, and a behind-the-scenes look at the workings of political operatives trying to promote conservative candidates. I was much moved by the video, and I resolved immediately to get a copy and show it to my undergraduate classes in persuasion. But how should I teach the video? Should I let my students know that the video had reinforced my disdain for the religious right or should I conceal my own opinions? I decided to take up these matters with my fellow conferees.

The question of how to teach the video evoked a torrent of controversy. "A professor's job is to educate, not advocate," shouted one professor. "A professor's job is to profess," shouted another. Opinions in the group also differed as to what my profession of belief should be. "Use the video to expose the immoral rhetoric of the religious right," said a liberal professor. "Criticize the video, not the religious right," said a conservative. "While you're at it," he said, "do a hatchet job on the video's producer for putting out such a propagandistic film."

The conferees' response to my question left me in a state of initial confusion. It appeared that equally good (and bad) arguments could be made for such promotive strategies as outright advocacy and guided discussion and for such seemingly neutral but potentially deceptive strategies as conducting an evenhanded discussion and presenting in lecture form the arguments for viewing the religious right as immoral and the arguments for viewing the video's depiction of the religious right as immoral.

One thing seemed clear, however: that each of these pedagogical alternatives had ideological implications. Each, then, could be usefully understood as a rhetorical strategy. With this as a guiding insight, yet another pedagogical alternative suggested itself to me: ask the students how they, given my biases, would teach the film were they in my place. Then use the question as the springboard for a discussion of pedagogical alternatives as rhetorical strategies. This is what I

mean by teaching the pedagogies.

Over the course of many years I've engaged in this kind of pedagogical talk about pedagogical talk with a great many students. Typically they come up with a list of promotive and neutralizing strategies similar to those proposed at the conferences of faculty members, and for much the same set of reasons. Yet, the discussion is anything but routine. It moves among multiple levels of abstraction. In the process I both "profess" and lead a class discussion, occasionally playing devil's advocate to stimulate further controversy, and occasionally pausing to analyze the premises students have brought to bear upon the controversy. I generally conclude by answering my own question, proposing that the best answer to the question is the question itself. This inevitably prompts students to raise still other questions:

Isn't this solution also a compromise of sorts, a compromise between telling it like you think it is and discussing competing viewpoints?

Yes, I answer, but it also invites your reflection on these alternatives, and that changes them and you. That is, they are no longer simply natural ways of teaching and learning. And you have to think about what you want from this class.

But aren't you biasing the discussion by letting us know your viewpoint? Mightn't students who take a different position be intimidated by you, particularly since you also give the grades in the course?

Yes, I admit, that's a continuing problem, but can you think of a better alternative? If not, perhaps we have here an example of the possibility for reasoned and reasonable judgments of better and worse, in the absence of formulaic rules of argument. The discussion continues....

This concludes the formal part of my paper. In what follows, I append a number of handouts to my persuasion classes covering issues of advocacy in the classroom generally as well as issues specifically germane to my own classroom. These illustrate the approach I have been proposing in this paper.

Appendix A: *The Written Assignment in "Persuasion" Persuasion in the Classroom*

Do your instructors persuade or do they merely inform or educate? Can professors promote a viewpoint on a controversial issue even when they are presenting an informative lecture or conducting an even-handed discussion? Is such "propagandizing" always unethical or is it sometimes legitimate? How should professors deal with controversial subject matter in class?

Analyze the way one of your instructors handled controversial material in class

this semester. Perhaps identify patterns of persuasion (or non-persuasion) that recurred over the course of the semester. Or do a detailed case study of one particularly interesting episode in class. Feel free to focus on my own classroom.

Appendix B: *Issues of Persuasion in the University Classroom*

Should educators take and defend positions on controversial issues in their university classrooms? If so, when, how, under what conditions, etc.? Are professors obligated to be up front about their advocacy? Are they obligated to prepare the ground for their advocacy by contextualizing it historically and dialectically (Brand)? Must their advocacy be relevant to the announced subject matter of their classroom? Are they obligated to represent opposing positions fairly and to engage the strongest arguments of the opposition, not just the weakest arguments? Is there a difference between advocating in the classroom (okay) and proselytizing in the classroom (not okay)?

In advocating, are professors more justified in defending minority voices over majority voices (J.S. Mill)? Voices of the marginalized or the oppressed (e.g., women, African-Americans, Eastern cultures, socialism) over historically dominant voices (e.g., white males, Western culture, capitalism)? Is such advocacy justified as a kind of academic “affirmative action” (Brod): to compensate for the advantages accruing to the dominant voices outside the university classroom? If so, are all marginalized or oppressed voices equally worthy of being defended in the university classroom? If not, what should be the bases for inclusion and exclusion?

On the other hand, is advocacy in the university classroom potentially dangerous? Given that it is coupled with the professor’s right to dispense grades (and other rewards and punishments), is it potentially coercive? When used to “liberate” students from their biases, is it unduly patronizing? And does it really achieve its goals?

Thus, should university professors refrain from taking and defending positions in the classroom? Should they educate and not advocate? Should they inform and not persuade? Should they teach students how to think but not tell them what to think? Should it be enough for professors to contextualize controversies, present all sides in balanced fashion, and conduct evenhanded discussions of the issues with their class?

But is academic neutrality possible, let alone desirable? Aren’t most university classrooms either “political” or “already politicized” (Moglen)? Don’t the very

concepts of imparting information and teaching how to think presuppose a model of objectivity that is itself highly controversial? Isn't it possible to do a lot of persuading (and even proselytizing) in the guise of objectivity? In teaching "rules" of reasoning and "rules" of evidence, for example, can professors be ideology-free? Moreover, on controversial issues, isn't the stance of neutrality itself a position (a position of no position) and potentially an unethical position?

Don't students pay their professors (indirectly) to do more than ask questions and impart information? Shouldn't they provide models of reasoned advocacy and responsible activism?

Given the problems that even the most well-meaning instructors are likely to confront in handling controversial issues within their single-instructor classrooms, should universities do more to expose students to conflicts among faculty, perhaps in co-taught classes (Graff). In addition to "teaching the conflicts" (Graff), should instructors be "teaching the pedagogies": i.e., increasing student awareness of pedagogical issues in treatments of controversy (Simons)?

Appendix C: Problems of Faculty Advocacy in my Own Classroom

As you prepare for your assignment on advocacy in the college classroom, you might wish to ponder the ethics or appropriateness of some of the things I've said and done as a classroom instructor.

A. In my classes I generally tell students that I will grade them on how they support a position, not on what position they take. Yet this claim is in many ways problematic.

1. The sorts of "rules" of argument and evidence found in our text are highly imprecise. For example, the text instructs you to avoid inappropriate appeals to authority, but is unclear as to when such appeals are inappropriate.
2. What is inappropriate in one context may be appropriate in another. For example, scientists claim to reject all arguments from authority. What "counts" is what the research reveals about a phenomenon, not what some alleged expert says about it. But in the courtroom, expert opinion is often invoked by both sides in a case. And, although textbooks on argumentation generally treat appeals to "what most people think" as fallacious, in a message-dense society, we often have little choice but to rely on evidence of this kind.
3. Personal narratives are often quite persuasive; yet stories of this kind often overwhelm reason by appeals to emotion. Oftentimes, the story is about an extreme case, not a typical case. And the story gives us information about just one case, even though the generalization it purports to support is intended to apply to

a wide range of cases. Yet I confess that I am often moved in my grading of speeches or essays by well told narratives.

4. Such “rules” of argument and evidence as are found in argumentation textbooks were developed over the centuries by philosophers, rhetoricians, and legal scholars, nearly all of whom were white males. Now many feminists are challenging these principles, claiming for example that women think differently from men, and that their ways of thinking (e.g., based on personal experience more than abstract logic) deserve at least equal respect. Similarly Afrocentrists frequently claim that African cultures promulgated a kind of nonlinear reasoning that is preferable to Western linear reasoning. Multiculturalists often extend this line of argument to suggest that rules of argument and evidence are culture-specific, and that white, male Eurocentric thinking shouldn’t be imposed on other cultures. I continue to grade students based on the principles of argumentation found in argumentation textbooks, and I urge them on my students. Is this an unfair imposition of authority on my part?

5. It’s fashionable these days for scholars to claim that all so-called knowledge is mere belief; that there is no objective way to evaluate an argument; that all an argument does is reveal a particular angle of view, or perspective, of the arguer. I sometimes tell my students that such arguments are self-refuting and hence self-defeating, but they could as well use these same arguments on me. Still, I insist that we as a class can often agree on what constitutes a worse or a better argument. I try to demonstrate this in my classes.

6. A particularly vexing form of controversy involves problems of incommensurability. This occurs when each side argues from premises that the other rejects; neither side in the “feminist logic” controversy, for example, is able to engage the other on neutral ground. Am I as a teacher in a position to evaluate their arguments?

7. In my “Race and Racism” classes, I’ve sometimes admitted to difficulties in grading quality of argumentation. I hereby confess that I often have similar difficulties in our Persuasion class.

B. Classroom Practices

1. In our discussion of the video about the religious right in America, I pointed out some of the issues I faced in handling controversial issues of this kind in the classroom. E.g., Should I focus our discussion on the film as a form of propagandistic rhetoric or on the religious right’s propagandistic rhetoric? Or both? On whatever the class wishes to discuss? On the least popular position? Or

my own concerns? With a film such as this, can (and should) there be such a thing as an evenhanded discussion?

2. Questions of this kind present themselves to me in a variety of ways. I'm aware that I can influence your thinking (a) by the books I assign, (b) by the tasks I assign, (c) by what I say in lectures and what I talk about, etc.

a. In S.C. 082 I've spent much more time on material glorifying Martin Luther King than on material glorifying Malcolm X.

b. In S.C. 082, students read a book on race and racism issues by Dinesh D'Souza, a conservative scholar whom even other conservatives (e.g., G. Loury) have charged with promoting racist beliefs.

c. In S.C. 082, I assigned an essay on "The Power Tactics of Jesus Christ." The author, psychologist Jay Haley, presented Christ as a revolutionary who was not above using deception to gain his ends.

Two students strongly objected to the essay.

3. The course on Campaigns and Movements (SC 082) that I teach is officially designated as a Race and Racism course. One of its purposes is help overcome racism. Does Temple University's decision to require such courses of all undergraduates constitute an implicit endorsement of at least some advocacy (and even proselytizing) in the classroom?

Appendix D: Letter on "Appeals to God and Patriotism in Political Campaign Films; Followup Discussion

"The campaign films are designed for people who place their vote according to matters of heart over matters of mind."

Student:

"He [Reagan] showed so many things in his campaign ad that represented freedom. For example, he must have shown the flag 29+ times. This allowed me to just remember what America is all about."

Student:

The following is a response to criticisms of my advocacy in the persuasion classroom. What do you think?

In the "Classroom Advocacy" papers, a few of you took me to task for my remarks on the Reagan film's use of appeals to God and patriotism as reasons for voting for Reagan. One student commented that I'd unfairly put down religion on other occasions in class. Another said, "Educators do not have the right to chastise their students on their beliefs in God or their country."

My thanks to these students for their critical comments. God and country are

indeed sensitive topics. If I've crossed the line in comments on the Reagan film or in other treatments of religion in class, I'm sorry.

That having been said, I want to defend my remarks on the appeals to God and patriotism in the Reagan film.

Earlier this semester I referenced Petty and Cacioppo's distinction between central and peripheral processing of persuasive messages. The peripheral route is the knee-jerk route; in a message-dense society, we frequently respond unthinkingly to persuasive appeals like those of God and country. As some theorists put it, we use "cognitive shorthands." Thus, we don't ask many questions about what we've seen or heard (as in central processing).

There's a lot of evidence that politicians often get elected on the basis of voters' peripheral processing. I think that's a shame. Whom we elect to high office is too important for Americans to choose based on cognitive shorthands - on hearts rather than minds.

Re the Reagan film's repeated appeals to God and pride in country, I used an analogy to Pavlov's dogs, learning to salivate to a bell rather than to the food powder with which it had been previously been associated. My point was (and remains) that symbols like the American flag and references to God come to evoke conditioned responses. Then, when Reagan is linked to these positive stimuli, their positive associations rub off. Some of you will say that the foregoing comments are further evidence that I'm unrepentant in chastizing my students for their beliefs in God and country. On this issue, I want to respond carefully. I believe one of my jobs is to help you to think critically. But that doesn't mean that I have a right in a persuasion classroom to put down all beliefs in God and patriotism. That's not in my job specifications.

Nor would I want to put down beliefs in God and country. I've seen three ministers through to a Ph.D. degree and am supervising a fourth. These people have well thought ideas about God and religion. They have also interpreted their calling and their faith into missions of healing. When these (and many other) people speak of their belief in God as the inspiration for their service to others, I have nothing but admiration for them and respect for their beliefs.

My criticism of Persuasion students for peripheral processing of God appeals in the Reagan film was by no means intended as a general put-down of beliefs in God or in religion more generally. Campaign films in general are not a message form in which one can easily determine the sincerity or authenticity of a political candidate's religious beliefs. Still less are viewers in a position to evaluate their

contents.

As for appeals to patriotism, I would again urge critical thinking. What kind of America do you want to be proud of? Earlier this semester I observed that Americans have historically been influenced by competing ideologies: one emphasizing individualism and the pursuit of economic self-interest; the other emphasizing equality and communal interests. Some critics of patriotism argue that it causes people to be unconcerned about problems elsewhere in the world. Others interpret American patriotism as a call for precisely this kind of worldly concern. Yet another way of expressing what America is all about is to point to the First Amendment, which makes possible, through its guarantees of free speech and free assembly, such substantive debates as I outlined above. Ironically, even the burning of the American flag has been interpreted by the U.S. Supreme Court as a kind of “speech” protected by the First Amendment. Of course many Americans believe flag-burning to be unpatriotic.

In my comments on the Reagan film, I believe I also drew a comparison with Nazi Germany’s appeals to God and country, including the Nazi’s use of the “Sig Heil” salute. Was this comparison invalid? Was it an instance of the very sort of knee-jerk rhetoric I was complaining about in class? Possibly. There are huge differences between the propaganda apparatus used in Nazi Germany to compel allegiance to Hitler and the techniques of persuasion used by American politicians to get elected. Still, there are some underlying similarities that deserve our attention.

One thing I regret is that I was a lot harder on the Reagan film than on the Clinton film. I did this because so many of you seemed to have been taken in by the Reagan film’s superbly crafted appeals to God and patriotism.

But the Clinton film deserved critical scrutiny as well. Some of you said in your papers that you especially liked Clinton’s kind remarks about Republican Bob Dole, as well as Clinton’s expressed wish that the campaign would focus on issues and not stoop to personal attack. A more critical reading of these remarks, given what we know about Clinton’s image problems, is that he was trying to frame the upcoming contest to his own advantage by taking the high road.

Others of you said that you were moved by what Hillary and her mother had to say about Bill. Interestingly, Clinton has expressed his admiration for Reagan’s campaign tactics. Clinton’s warm and fuzzy displays of family togetherness and family values were right out of Ronald Reagan’s campaign book. We should no more have voted for Clinton based on these emotional appeals than we might

have for Reagan on the basis of his appeals to God and patriotism.

Finally, there's the question of whether I've been overly critical of religion or of religious rhetoric at other times during the semester. One student cited my showing of the film, "Life and Liberty for Those Who Obey," put out by People for the American Way. Recall that I used the film to introduce the final paper assignment on advocacy by teachers in the classroom. How, I asked, should I have "taught" this film? Use it to criticize the rhetoric of the religious right? Use it to expose the rhetoric of the film? Conduct an evenhanded discussion? etc.

Here's my secret: I decided after pondering this question with my colleagues that the best answer to this question was the question itself. That is, I now think that the best solution to the dilemmas associated with how to teach the film is to ask my students how I should teach the film, and then encourage further thought about the rhetoric of the teacher in the classroom. I've tried to do that in this class. See my essay on this (on Reserve).

Well, there you have it: Herb Simons not only advocating in the classroom, but committing himself in writing.

I'd encourage you to respond to this essay, either in writing or in a visit to my office. The same holds true for other issues we discussed towards the end of the semester. For example, is my essay evidence of a white, male, or Eurocentric way of thinking? If so, should you think any the less of it for that? Is my advocacy in this essay to you appropriate or inappropriate? Can you "grade" my essay based on how I think, independent of what I think? Keep in touch; otherwise I'll miss you. You've been a wonderful class!

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ISSA Proceedings 1998 - Reasons To Buy: Teaching Reasoning Through Television



Ads purport to give us reasons to buy. What sorts of reasons are they? When Nike asked us to '*Just do it*', they were not - or not simply - with a sort of primitive practical syllogism, telling us to just buy. The phrase has layers of meaning. It could mean do what you were going to do, or what you were not going to. It has overtones of the coach,

or the irritated mother, of the inner voice urging you on. It is a cryptic and ambiguous phrase, accompanied by a stylish logo, and it is universally known. What is more, people buy Nikes. But their purchase is not simply falling in with the order to buy: it is a complex and highly social event.

To think of ads as practical syllogisms is to think of them as arguments from the content of the ad to an act of buying, or an intention to buy. But it is too simple to claim that an ad is properly taken only if the appropriate action issues. Ads are complex and highly sophisticated components of modern life, embedded deeply in a variety of cultural practices, but at the same time, communicating across the global village with almost unprecedented effectiveness. My project is to look more closely at the reasoning structure of advertisements.

George Steiner's claim that advertising is the poetry of the modern age is correct in the sense that the pure condensation of meaning which was once the province of purely poetic or religious discourse is now found in the ad industry. Highly intelligent (and well paid) executives spend hours searching for the one pithy phrase, a phrase that will capture the imaginations and heart, which will resonate and be sung, whispered or held - often for life. The jingles of my childhood seem inexpugnable. One, of very limited poetic worth, went

'Menz makes biscuits a treat

Because Menz makes biscuits that are good to eat'

It will, I am sure, remain with me when all else has gone. In the days of music

videos and startlingly high production values of visual television, the qualities of ads are legion. The sheer effectiveness of ads as memorable images, as semiotic signifiers, as music videos or film clips is itself a matter of academic study. We are familiar with the intertextuality of ads, both in the sense that the one theme will appear in print, television and billboards, but also in the sense that ads refer to the genres, particularly of television, with enormous subtlety. Puns proliferate, both visual and verbal and across the media. I do not attempt here to cover all aspects of advertising paper seeks out the structures of argumentation in ads. I concentrate on the verbal messages of ads as the central focus of argumentation. This is not to deny the importance of the visual and musical components of the force of advertisements, but rather to focus on one element of ads which has received relatively little attention.

I begin with an example of a print advertisement, to indicate the possibilities of argumentation, but also to sharpen issue of differences between print and other media. In this context, I explain my general project of analysing the reasoning on the media as a way of both teaching kids philosophy and of teaching them about the impact of the media. Kids are all too familiar with denunciations of the capitalist forces behind advertising -yet they adore ads. If we wish to have kids react critically to ads, the best method is to have them draw out their own understanding of advertisements as a starting point.

The second section draws on materials I have developed for talking about reasoning in television ads, and their billboard counterparts. The final section deals with the obvious problem with ads - are they true?

Section 1. A print advertisement

In the *New York Times* of November, 1996, my former compatriot, Rupert Murdoch, now a US citizen, placed a full page ad. He, as owner of the Fox network, was fighting a battle to gain access to the New York market, controlled , through its ownership of the cable company, by another media giant, the Time Warner company. Murdoch wanted Time Warner to offer Fox news on the cable. Time Warner refused, citing that most archetypal of all US institutions, the First Amendment, which protects freedom of speech. Already the situation is complex, in a fashion not unfamiliar to European media watchers. The ad, far from reducing the complexity of the situation, exploits it and presents what is by most counts a fairly elaborate argument.

"I'm about to dust some cops off.

Die pig, die pig, die."

Time Warner used the First Amendment's protection of free speech in its unwavering support for these lyrics, from "Cop Killer", by Time Warner Recording Artist Ice-T. After all, profits were at stake.

Now, Time Warner believe the FOX news Channel poses a threat to the Profits of its CNN.

And this time, Time Warner cites the First Amendment to deny New Yorkers the right to see the Fox News Channel.

The First Amendment protects free speech, *not* Time Warner profits.

Support, don't distort the First Amendment

Don't block the FOX News Channel

I was struck by this advertisement, not just because of the vagaries of capitalisation - and of capital - it exploited. The sheer effrontery of using Time Warner's support of tendentious lyrics to grab attention for a competing company has style. So does the irony of Fox accusing other companies of protecting profits by excluding competition. But what was striking about the ad for me was its use of a complex logical structure to make a rhetorical point.

The ad accuses Time Warner of inconsistency in its use of the First Amendment - the law which protects free speech in the United States. The first sub argument claims that

(1) Time Warner claimed the support of the first amendment to allow playing of the Ice-T lyrics

There is an implicature we can draw from 'After all profits were at stake':

(2) Time Warner's action were caused by the need to maximise profits,

This in turn leads,, by a weak inductive argument, to:

(3) Time Warner's actions are now caused by the need to maximise profits

The second subargument takes 3 and 4

(4) Time Warner claimed the support of the first amendment to prevent playing Fox news on New York cable.

to reach a conclusion that

(5) The First Amendment has been used to protect Time Warner profits.

So far , of course, there is no evident inconsistency: Even if Time Warner's actions were caused by the need to maximise profits, their behaviour appears to be consistent in both cases. The moral force of the argument depends on two enthymematic premises:

(6) The need to maximise profits is (in itself) not a good reason for acting.

This, ironically given Fox's behaviour, is taken for granted.

The second enthymeme, attributing inconsistency to Time Warner, could be
(7) It is improper, in some sense, to appeal to the First Amendment both to allow and to prevent material to reach the airwaves.

This is a crucial and debatable premise. Since the appeals to the First Amendment were successful, Time Warner was operating within the letter of the law, so their action was not legally improper, nor inconsistent with the law. Thus the ad must be suggesting that Time Warner is morally inconsistent and has effectively distorted the law. Clearly it is not inconsistent tout court to use a law which protects free speech under reasonable constraints, as the first amendment does to prevent playing of one type of material (eg incitement to treachery in time of war, or racist jibes) and allow playing of another type of material.

The two final claims of the advertisement make it clear that Time Warner is being accused of moral inconsistency and of ill faith in the use of the law

(8) The First Amendment protects free speech, *not* Time Warner profits.

This premise draws on the first of the elliptical premises, suggesting that the First Amendment has been misused in pursuit of profits. In the final call to action,

(9) Support, don't distort the First Amendment. is then read

(10) Don't block the FOX News Channel

Supporting Fox news, the ad says, is tantamount to supporting the real intention of the First Amendment.

The advertisement is clearly designed for the *New York Times*. The complexity of the argument structure, whatever its fallacies, leaves room for relatively sophisticated readers to fill in the gaps as they choose. Its political force survives the evident inconsistency of one media giant accusing another of greed, through the immensely powerful emotional appeal to the First Amendment.

Note moreover, that in terms of argumentation, this example uses a direct argument structure the conclusion of which is an appeal to action: supporting Fox. This is indeed a case of practical reasoning. It is rare to find the argument structure of an advertisement so explicit: I will suggest that the form is often implicit in advertisements. Just as it is often necessary to supplement explicit argument structures in ordinary language disputes, in order to reveal the implicit argument structure (van Eemeren, Jackson & Grootendorst, 1993), so it is often necessary to supplement the implicit argument structure of advertisements.

My first reaction to this advertisement when I saw it eighteen months ago, was to argue that this was a characteristically print media ad. I argued that the very

complexity of form identified here is unlikely to appear in television or radio advertising, since it required a level of logical and linguistic reflectiveness, let alone the time to reflect, which television viewers lack. This view is expressed, for instance, by Postman (1993), who suggests that the linear patterns of thinking may be undermined by the immediacy and impact of television, and that hot links on the internet also fail to encourage the development of logical thinking skills. Eisenstein's (1983) finely worked analyses of the impact of print have been developed by some to suggest that television, with its plethora of clues, limits the imagination, and the demands made on the viewer. Print, on the other hand is both 'linear' and demanding – the imagination is working double time to think through images given in language, while at the same time interpreting the logical links explicit in written language.

This is a conclusion I now reject, both at the level of the possibilities of argumentation, and at the level of the sophistication of audience reaction. What is at the heart of this ad is an accusation of inconsistency. Just such inconsistency is often attributed to opponents in political advertising on television. Inconsistency in itself is bad enough, but usually there is a further twist – your inconsistency is self serving. Quite generally, it is an error to identify print alone as suitable for reasoning skills. Being reasonable is fundamentally a feature of discourse and action, not of written linear texts. It is only a contingent feature of our culture that extended patterns of reasoning do normally appear in print. The fact that visual media evoke immediate and emotional reactions does not imply that television – and certainly television ads – are not as cognitively complex as print.

What is more, kids, especially, are highly sophisticated viewers of television. They are a highly televisually literate generation, whose skills include the ability to deconstruct the medium itself. As the media guru Rushkoff puts it: 'Most kids are doing media deconstruction while watching television' (Gabriel, 1996). He goes on 'Their favourite shows come "pre-deconstructed" that is with built in distancing devices ...such shows earn the ultimate youthful phrase "cool". By cool, I mean seeing things from a distance'. (Gabriel, 1996). Rushkoff goes on to talk of the sort of deconstruction that kids seek in watching television 'What screenagers seek from television, multi media and other entertainment is the "aha" experience of making connections across their storehouse of media images' (Gabriel, 1996).

The level and philosophical complexity of ads and the arguments they contain should never be underestimated. A good, cool ad is making a range of complex moves which are worth deconstructing, both for the argument structure and for the training in reasoning it provides.

Looking at the reasoning implicit in television ads is part of a broader project, which is designed to teach reasoning through television product, some of the materials of which have been trialled in the US and Australia. Advertising agencies, who specialise in persuasion, are adroit at exploiting underlying philosophical uncertainty, as well as pushing blatantly fallacious claims. This project aims instead to uncover and analyse those philosophical issues while teaching reasoning skills[i].

Traditionally reasoning skills have been taught through written examples, some of which are highly anachronistic or artificial. However critical reasoning skills are required in order to filter and interpret the rapidly changing circumstances of the world around us – and those skills need to be relevant. Many students use television as their major source of information about the world and as the source of basic understanding of the world. Yet we rarely provide students with the skills directly to criticise and analyse television's world view. It is an obvious step to use the medium of television itself as a means of analysing television product critically and thereby of teaching viewers to reason. Reasoning skills as conceived above do appear on television; and can be refined using debate about television. Ads are a particularly fertile field, both at the level of reasoning strategies, and at the meta level of philosophical debate about the issues in ads.

It will not do, however, to take a simplistic line of denying the force of ads, and labelling them as immoral, stupid, or ill intentioned. However true such claims may be, they fail to capture the cleverness and attraction of ads. Far wiser to begin with the questions: "What does this ad argue? Is it valid? Why does it work?" and get kids to learn the process of reasoning about and through ads, than to denigrate what is obviously a powerful product. In recent months, I have been working on a homepage (Slade, 1998) designed to help teachers – and students – work through the philosophical and argumentation strategies of television product. This paper provides a background for the section on advertisements.

Section 2. Fallacies and television ads

Television advertisements are a rich field of examples of all of the so called classical fallacies: from 'appeal to authority' to begging the question, from equivocation to affirming the consequent. The most obvious television fallacies offer real possibilities, both of argumentation structure and of philosophical debate, for teaching and examining reasoning skills. Each of the so called fallacies, however, must be seen in a context: a context which suggests that while formally fallacious, the ad might provide a moderately good reason to buy.

This is a consequence of what is a very general truth about television ads – they are enthymematic. Spelling out the suppressed premises is often a tedious and unrewarding affair, like spelling out the meaning of a metaphor. Nevertheless, I think it is worth remembering that much of the force of ads derives from the ambiguities and possibilities of elaboration they contain. The general model of elaboration I adopt draws on principles of charity of interpretation of behaviour to make sense of utterances (Davidson, 1967, 1984 *passim*) together with Gricean principles (eg Grice 1975). My assumption is that where an advertisement appears to be inexplicable or meaningless, we should search for the best fit of meanings, given our knowledge of the world and of linguistic practice. My procedure is thus similar to that outlined in van Eemeren *et al* (1993), in so far as it elaborates arguments according to contextual knowledge.

Consider a Mexican example, an ad for a beer called in Spanish ‘Dos X lager’ **[ii]**. It shows an image of a refrigerator, opening to show it filled with beer, again with less, then again with more beer.

The punch line:

‘Ahora entenderás la evolución de las especies’ (Now you understand the evolution of species) is open to a range of interpretations. It may mean that Dos X has proven, by its ability to survive, that it is the best – it has achieved natural selection. From the point of view of the ad agency intentional ambiguity such as this grabs the attention and ensures impact. In part such ads are driven by the washback validity of ad companies’ evaluative methods. It is normal to test ads for ‘cut-through’, or the extent to which they are remembered by focus groups of viewers. Ads which are difficult to understand and thus tantalising may be more memorable than others.

From the point of view of the consumer however, the sheer fact of being familiar with the Dos X ad cannot even remotely guarantee that we buy that beer rather than another. Thus we need to draw again on our principle of charity to make sense of the Dos X ad. Why would the ad give us reason to buy? One version might be

If people drink a lot of Dos X, it must be a good beer to drink

But the ad shows lots of beer passing through the fridge

So I too will buy Dos X (if I want beer)

This is not compelling, but it alerts us to a possible structure of argumentation. Ads can indirectly suggest how to behave by making indirect claims about others’

behaviour.

Some ads have fairly simple arguments: the classical appeal to authority, for instance, with breakfast cereal being advertised using a sporting star, suggests that if you eat the same breakfast cereal you too might improve your sporting ability. This is not always merely a fallacy – appeals to authority are quite reasonable in their place. Indeed, a cereal recommended by one who is an expert in sporting health might provide a better recommendation than the sheer suggestion that it is great. The reasons are not as baldly bad as they might at first seem.

Another example of an apparent fallacy is again Australian:

‘Sugar, a natural part of life’

The enthymematic step relies on a premise

Natural parts of life are good for you

to reach the conclusion

Sugar is good for you (or eat sugar!)

We might point out that

Cancer, a natural part of life

is also true. The argument looks absurdly fallacious. In fact, a careful examination of the subtext of the argument might uncover a slightly better argument: say

You have a choice of natural and artificial sweeteners

All else being equal, natural is better

So buy sugar.

Appeal to a principle of charity makes better sense of the ad than sheer harping on invalidity.

Consider another example, of what are often known as life style ads. The new Apple ad, ‘Think Different’ is designed to remind consumers that although PCs dominate the market, a different product might have advantages. The ad is both elliptical and ungrammatical. Its impact derives in part from its open endedness. What does it mean to ‘think different’? Is it the same as thinking differently, or not? With Apple positioning itself to be the minor player in the personal computing domain, how is it locating its market? In a sense this is a paradigm lifestyle ad – with blatantly fallacious arguments, even if we accept the untrue premise

People who think different, the Dalai Lama, Einstein and so on are associated with Apple computers

So, if you are associated with Apple, you will be different
So you will be like the Dalai Lama, Einstein and others.
Even if it were true that you would be different if you were to be associated with Apple, it certainly does not follow that you will be relevantly like the extraordinary people shown.

The fallacy is shared by all life style ads, of which Coke has been the leading exponent. Coke ads associate a particular life style with those drinking Coke, with the implicit suggestion that if you drink Coke you will also be young elegant and lively. But even if it were the case that:

All the young and lively and beautiful people drink Coke,
which is the best that could be claimed on the basis of the lifestyle ad it would be affirming the consequent to claim that

If you drink Coke, you are young and lively and beautiful.

Even worse is the claim that drinking Coke will make you young and lively and beautiful. But kids certainly recognise this fallacy.

The Sprite ads in Australia drew on kids' scepticism, saying:

Drinking Sprite will not make you a good basketball player. But it will refresh you.

The very existence of the debunking form of ads, of which there are many, shows how aware we are of the logical weakness of ads.

How then are we to make sense of such ads providing us a reason to buy? If we as viewers are well aware of the fallacies, why do we like the Coke ads, the Nike and the Sprite ads, and why do we keep on buying? Partly, the answer is elliptical phrase to draw attention, to avoid the obvious. The Nike campaign, 'Just Do it' exploits ambiguity to draw attention. It does not simply tell us to buy the shoes. There is a perfectly justifiable argument which might go:

When we buy training shoes, we want to buy the same sort as everyone else - we will try to buy what others buy..

In the absence of other good reasons to pick one brand over the other, what reasons are there to pick a brand? I pick the brand I think others will pick, and assume that they do the same.

We all know we all watch television and the Nike ad

So we all know we all know the Nike brand

So the best strategy is to buy Nike.

Such chains of reasoning are rarely made explicit; but they do provide a rational

reason for acting as the ad suggest, and buying Nike. Any criticism of the impact of ads in the lives of kids must allow for this level of complexity, rather than debunking ads. This does not mean we have to accept a pattern of consumption dictated by ads. The next step is to develop the ability to question, philosophically, the patterns of justification themselves. In effect, once we have found the best possible argument, we examine the truth of the premises. In the case of this version of the argumentation, we would want to ask why kids *should* use the same trainers as others, why they want to be like others. We might ask what the costs to those who produce the goods are. Indeed, the recent difficulties of Nike about their use of cheap labour suggest that just such questions have been asked by consumers.

The issues are often complex ethical problems. Such problems are worth discussing outside the context of the ad and raise fundamental philosophical issues. That I wish to finish with is the notion of truth in ads itself.

3. Truth and Ads

Are ads ever true? In so far as an advertisement is a call to action, it is either complied with or not, rather than either true or false. But the premises of ads are certainly either true or false, and the notion of truth plays a major role in talk about advertising, as well as in ads themselves.

But first a word of caution. The truth of premises is neither sufficient for a good ad, nor necessary. Consider first those familiar soap powder ads in which mothers of a family of five kids vouch for Omo. True they may be, but the ads lacked cool. Even more striking is the case where truth in an ad was seen as negative, so that truth of the premises was definitely not necessary for a good ad. I quote the following story about Coke ads in Mexico:

Mexicans had such an inbuilt scepticism that they regarded the very concept of "truth" with great suspicions the Coca Cola company... found in their marketing studies..

Coke had conducted extensive marketing studies in Mexico as it was introducing the company's world wide slogan "It's the real thing", which had worked wonders throughout the world, advertising industry sources recall. In line with Coca-Cola's international advertising campaign , it had translated the slogan in Mexico almost literally to "Esta es la verdad" or " This is the truth". But it didn't work. Several focus groups assembled in Mexico City reacted coldly to it.

"We found that the word *truth* had a negative connotation in Mexico," I was told

by Jorge Matte Langlois, the Chilean born psychologist, sociologist and theologian who had conducted the confidential polls for the Zedillo campaign, and who had conducted the focus groups for Coca-Cola years earlier. "People's reaction was, if it's the truth, it must be bad".

Coca-Cola's Mexico division soon changed its slogan to "La chispa de la vida"- "the spark of life". (Oppenheimer, A, 1996: 269-270)

Coke has gone through a myriad of ads in Mexico since then: now we have 'Disfrute Coke' and a much debated campaign, which thankfully never reached the air, trying to link Coke with the Easter spirit. One cringes at the thought of Coke reviving Jesus or Jesus turning water to Coke, but the proposed campaign was not far off. Last year, an ad for local spring water featured a priest standing over a bottled of imported purified water and saying 'Well if it had to be purified, how many sins had it committed?'

Thus far the point may be merely that truth or - at the very least, the desirability of truth - is culturally influenced. For many, the function of ads is precisely to transform truth, to alter meanings. Barthes' (1972) work on soap powders showed how ads about what are really harsh chemical substances could transform them into gentle products: products which manifested the mother's loving care for her family. Mark Morris transformed the thesis into a ballet, transforming the product again into a signifier of the US commercial culture. Such transformations, we are reminded by those who create and those who criticise advertisements, are essential to the advertising culture.

The study of such transformations have long been a staple of the media criticism industry. What I mean by philosophical debate about ads, however, is something different. Ads are a potent site for philosophical questioning, in part because of the enormous energy that is involved in locating where an ad will have an impact. The ad is often a clue to a real philosophical dilemma. Television commercials characteristically aim to be unsettling, to cut at the margins of issues which are exercising a community. The best ads play on the issues which are exercising a community, drawing out the concerns and materialising them. The very content of ads contain issues about truth which need discussing.

Toby Miller[iii] notes the following statistic: while in 1993, six hundred ads in the US mentioned truth, by 1994 two thousand did (Fitzgerald, 1994). The mention of 'truth' here calls out for investigation. Understanding what is going on in appeals to 'truth' requires hard philosophical leg work. It is truth, as it is used in the ads, that we need to begin to address when we talk of television. Kids and adults have

been told that television is a capitalist plot. They don't want to talk about that. What they want to do is talk about what interests them – what 'true' means in an ad. Kids are not interested in the meta-level debate about whose interests are served by television; but they are interested in issues like fairness, truth, reality. Consider the Cannon ad, for a laser printer – 'Its only competition is reality'. What is real and what unreal about a photocopy, colour or not? Surely photocopies are real photocopies?

Truth as a concept used in ads has burgeoned as the disquiet about the role of truth on television, in the news, and in the advertising industry itself has risen. My project is to allow this debate to go back to its philosophical beginnings, to the theories of truth which sustain lay talk about truth. I will not rehearse my account here, since I aim merely to encourage debate about truth and television, although I do think we can do better than a wholesale post modern rejection of truth.

I finish with another New York gleaning, this time from a department store called Barney's. I was wandering in the store when I saw a huge sign 'Philosophy'. It was a trade mark for a range of cosmetic products. I quote the booklet the naked truth:

... the naked truth is a revolutionary new product that takes the notion of tinted moisturisers to the next generation... so we're stretching the truth a little. after all perception is reality.

(philosophy sales booklet, Barneys, 1996, p30.)

Truth has become an issue which advertisers have latched on to: After all, the ad says that 'perception is reality'. Surely that claim needs debating?

NOTES

i. 'Reasoning' as it is used here has a broad application, to skills which range from analysis through inference to evaluation. Reasoning thus conceived is far broader than the set of logical skills often caricatured by non logicians: it is rather, logical skills as conceived by many logicians and most informal logicians, as skills of interpreting and evaluating arguments, with all due contextual sensitivity. They are skills used by all from the youngest toddler when guessing at causal connections to the most theoretical of physicists or post modernists, drawing out implications of statements.

ii. This is a Mexican beer. Four X is the Australian beer noted for the ad 'I can feel a Four X coming on', which I will not attempt to analyse.

iii. in conversation, and in Miller (1998)

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ISSA Proceedings 1998 - Reasonableness Rather Than Rationality



The idea that logic alone can determine the distinction between good and bad arguments is rapidly being replaced by a broader dialectical theory of argumentation. Yet, to preserve a suitable notion of normativity, dialecticians appeal to a notion of rationality that shows much the same features as the disreputed logic is sought

to replace. In this contribution, I will diagnose the problem and present an alternative: dialogical rhetoric.

The idea that bad arguments are logically interesting is rather young. For ages, logic was primarily interested in good arguments. Bad ones were negatively defined as not-good, and, as distinguishing instrument, logic could be limited to answering the question what accounts for the goodness of arguments. Modern formal logic, in this fashion, sought after *sound* arguments that yield conclusions by necessity. Starting with true premises, a truth-preserving method of valid inference warrants conclusions that cannot be wrong. The truth of the premises, although essential for soundness, is left to the relevant fields of investigation. Logic proper concerns the method of inference and deals only with validity. Logically speaking, a good argument is a valid one, and a bad argument is invalid. This type of logic observes what we may call the deductive demand. A good argument is one of which the conclusion follows necessarily, under the condition that its premises are true.

Hamblin's *Fallacies* (1970) cracked the ice. He showed that the notion of invalidity was not adequate in accounting for bad arguments, and that consequently the deductive demand did not serve the distinction between good and bad arguments. In a nutshell: invalidity was neither a sufficient nor a necessary condition for fallaciousness. Some fallacies are not invalid at all (e.g. the notorious begging the question), and many arguments are invalid but not

fallacious (all inductive arguments are deductively invalid). Many thinkers have followed Hamblin, and added doubts on the suitability of the deductive demand. I will mention three problems in particular.

1. The deductive demand is an all-or-nothing matter: only necessary conclusions are allowed and anything less is rejected. To every problem there is only one solution: the best one. Curiously enough, however, no account can be given for a notion of 'better'. This makes argumentation, in any substantial sense, impossible. Argumentation, after all, consists of arguments pro and arguments contra, and the balance of those two factors constitute the strength of an argument. The deductive account cannot acknowledge positive and negative forces in this way because a deductive argument 'knocks down' either way.

2. The deductive demand cannot acknowledge alternatives, and is in that sense *monological*. The point is that as a truth-preserving method it should yield necessary conclusions and it cannot allow a different logic arriving somewhere else. But if so, any deviation of the monologic is impossible, including unlogicality. Indeed, as the early Wittgenstein said: 'we can think nothing unlogical, since if we could, we would have to think unlogically' (*Tractatus*: 3.03). The idea is that thinking as such presupposes logic. This feature gives monologic a transcendental flavor: it provides for the very condition of the possibility for thinking and cannot be questioned, nor sustained by argumentation. Monologic must be 'seen', and can only be 'shown'. The problem, obviously, is that bad arguments do exist and that we must presume that the persons who advance them in fact thought badly.

3. Perhaps the most serious problem for the deductive demand is that it is not hard at all to meet it. Many arguments are sloppy in the sense that not all premises are explicitly mentioned. This is not a problem, because most people will tacitly add the missing premise. To determine the deductive validity, however, we must add the hidden premise. This can do no harm because it cannot make a valid argument invalid, but it can do much good by explicitizing an implicit premise. The problem, however, is that *any* argument can be made valid by adding the right premise. The associated conditional, or even the conclusion itself, and perhaps even the negation of one of the other premises[i], will do. This simply means that either an argument is valid, or can be made valid. Deductively, no bad arguments exist. Deductive logic, far from providing a suitable instrument, has no powers to perform its distinguishing task.

Dialectical Shift

Increasing numbers of logicians have dropped the deductive demand over the last three decades, in favour of a *dialectical* approach. Dialectics differs from deductive logic by applying *acceptable* instead of *true* premises, and by acknowledging different systems of logic between which a *choice* must be made. Dialectics does not yield necessity but is satisfied with probable conclusions[**ii**]. Dialectical logic is much more modest than deductive logic, and 'may or may not be a good one in the full alethic sense', as Hamblin says, 'but it is certainly a good one in some other sense which is much more germane to the practical application of logical principles'(Hamblin 1970: 241).

If logic is to perform its normative task in the practice of argumentation, it should comply to the nature of argumentation better than formal deductive logic does. A first observation is that argumentation is always a *dialogical* matter involving, basically, two participants: a proponent, defending a thesis, and an opponent, resisting the thesis. Monologic concentrated on the support of the conclusion only, but dialectical logic emphasizes the generic role of the opponent: only when disputed it makes sense to defend a thesis. Supporting an undisputed thesis is a waste of time at best; irrelevant babbling at worst; or an *ignoratio elenchi* in between. Dialectical logic, thus, takes disagreement as a condition for the possibility of discussions, but this calls for a suitable form of regimentation. Or else, the participants may 'simply bash each other until bashing served no further purpose'(Freeman 1991: 18).

There are many different ways to deal with disagreements. We may try to solve the conflict, or stick to investigating where exactly the difference lies. We may want to settle the issue by means of force, or try to tackle the opponent by ridiculizing her position. Different ways of dealing with conflicts yield different types of discussion. And different types allow for different moves. What is suitable in a quarrel is not always acceptable in a critical discussion, and vice versa[**iii**]. Whether or not a move is acceptable depends upon the type of discussion that is going on. Dialectical logic presumes that it is up to the participants to decide upon how they want to deal with their disagreement. But when they have agreed upon a specific type of discussion, they should observe its particular regulative rules. The goodness of an argumentative move is determined by the rules that are in force: compliance with the rules makes an argument good whereas violation of the rules disqualifies it.

Clearly, the participants must voluntarily submit to the rules and their compliance to some type of discussion must be of their own accord. Only when someone has

accepted the authority of a set of rules, she can be held committed to them. Dialectical rules are only in force if they are *conventionally* accepted by all participants involved. The rules can change only when the conventional demands are being observed: suspend the discussion in progress, discuss the necessity of accepting new or modified rules, authorize them conventionally, and recommence the discussion proper again. The conventional authorisation of the rules implies that dialectical system is always local in scope; only when conventionally authorized, influences from other discussions *can* be acknowledged. Very often, the conventional aspect remains implicit: many rules of discussion go without explicitly mentioning them and it would be even very tedious to issue a 'dated and signed written declaration' every time an argument were about to begin[iv]. Nevertheless, as Douglas Walton says, 'the rules can be explicitly stated, and agreed to by the participants, where it is useful and necessary, at the opening stage'(Walton, 1989, 10, *italics whs*). In other words, the participants *would* accept the rules if they were explicitly asked to. Conventional normativity may be called '*would*-normativity'.

The normative force of rules provides for a possibility to determine win or loss of a discussion in an *objective* way. If the rules are clear, anybody can see whether they are being followed or not. In particular, it allows the *logician* to put a decisive verdict on discussions. She is supposed to be able to determine exactly what type of discussion is going on, and she is supposed to be able to apply the suitable standard to the discussion and determine who has the best arguments. Because the participants have committed themselves to the rules, and she is only applying these standards, her verdict is normative for the participants involved. Obviously, the external observer must be neutral regarding the positions of the participants. His verdict should be unbiased and only the arguments as advanced should count. An external observer can control the agreed-upon regimentation of the discussion, and by application of that standard determine win and loss in an unbiased way. Barth and Krabbe define rationality in these terms: 'it is not irrational to lose a discussion'. But it is - we suggest - irrational not to admit that one has lost'(Barth and Krabbe 1982: 71).

Would-normativity is not satisfactory, because, shortly, it allows for *would-not*. In face of losing a discussion, a participants may simply withdraw his commitment, or demand modification, or simply deny that he made the commitment at all[v]. The external observer can note this, but has nothing to go on to condemn it. The

evil-doer can simply claim not to accept the move in question. The local character of dialectical normativity, demanding specific agreement, allows for very limited, even opportunistic exceptions. Would-normativity is not what we expect from normativity; it lacks normative force precisely where it is needed most: when somebody would not accept something she *should* accept. To account for should-normativity, we must rule out arbitrary or strategical one-sided withdrawals. Dialectically, this is only possible if the agreements are controlled in some way. Not only the observance of agreed-upon rules, but also the agreement as such must be secured to safeguard normativity. If this were not regimented conventional normativity were a farce, because participants could change their commitments at will.

Control of agreements as such is needed for another reason as well. How are the conventional agreements arrived at? Presumably by discussion. But in what way is such a meta-discussion regulated? If a conventional set of rules were normative here as well, an infinite progress would have started. Dialectical logicians, if they address the problem at all, appeal to a notion of 'logical intuition' or 'natural rules' of normal argumentative behavior[**vi**]. The idea is that participants want to cooperate because they agree on the purpose of the discussion. If so, it is rational to follow rules that promote cooperation, for example: do not abuse the adversary; acknowledge loss if forced to; do not mislead the other; etc. Although the rules that make up for dialectical rationality are innocent enough, they are *substantial*. They do not only demand that one must be reasonable, they also say what *counts* as reasonable. Rationality, thus, provides for a substantial higher-order standard, which stops higher-order discussions in a notion of rational *acceptability*. We may see, incidentally, that a *reason* is given to be rational: it promotes the purpose of the discussion.

Still, if conventional acceptance is to be taken serious we must acknowledge that someone may reject rationality in terms of normal argumentative behavior. For example, what if compliance to the 'normal' rules would result in loss of the discussion, and the stakes are just too high for that? We need not necessarily think of people seeking advantage to find examples. Gandhi should be called irrational if 'normal' argumentative behavior defined the substance of rationality. But if there can be reasons for being irrational, can those reasons be good? And what standards are conceivable to determine this? Ever higher-order systems of rules lead to the infinite progress. Only an indisputable rationality can call such progress to a halt.

The Rational Observer

It may seem, and it is often claimed, that the dialectical shift in logic followed Hamblin's proposal to leave 'the control of each discussion' in the hands of the participants themselves' (Hamblin 1970, 283). But the foregoing suggests a third crucial role: the external observer who controls the rationality of the discussion. Dialectical logic is not dialogical, but in fact trialogical, and the logician typically is in the position to play the third role. The dialectical understanding of normativity as being dependent upon agreement is responsible for this proliferation of logical roles. To account for agreement we must account for commensurability: the standards of assessment must be the same for everyone involved. If normativity is a matter of agreement, it should transcend the particular preferences and provide for a standard that commensurates the idiosyncratic "standards" of the respective participants[vii]. The rational observer is the embodiment of this standard[viii]. This means, however, that the control of the discussion is in the hands of the participants themselves only in so far as they represent the verdict of the rational observer.

It may not surprise us, considering the role of the rationality, that dialecticians generally make a qualitative distinction between two different ways of dealing with conflicts; they distinguish between *settling* and *resolving* a dispute. Settling simply indicates that the problem at issue is set aside by whatever means: tossing; refereeing; fighting or intimidation. 'To really resolve a dispute', however, 'the points that are being disputed have to be made the issue of a *critical discussion* that is aimed at reaching agreement

' (Van Eemeren and Grootendorst 1992: 34). Although people are granted the freedom to deal with conflicts of opinion in several different ways, one specific type of discussion is singled out: the prototype of rational argumentation, critical discussion.

The rational observer is unbiased and evaluates any discussion by the strength of the arguments alone; not by the particular interests of the participants. The criteria applied by the rational observer depend upon the type of discussion that is going on. Still, contrary to what dialecticians tend to say, the participants are not free to choose any type of discussion they want. The choice of a type of discussion depends upon the best way to deal with a problem, and the rational observer surveys all possible ways and can pick the best one. The notion of rationality, indeed, is only useful if it provides for a 'best' solution. If it yielded just another opinion, it could not be normative regarding the other options. It

would just be another perspective like those of the other participants. The opinion of the rational observer must be qualitatively better to have normative force. In fact: it must be the best solution, because rationality should be normative for all possible positions. But this merely means that rationality has taken over the role monologic played before the dialectical turn. To account for its normativity, dialectics turns out to be a monologic in disguise. If so, we may ask to what extent the objections to monologic apply to dialectical rationality as well? To a large extent, I think.

1. Dialectical rationality is supposed to settle issues and cannot itself acknowledge alternatives. If the ideal standard were applied in any pure form, everybody would agree to its conclusions. This regards the outcome of any discussion that is regimented by a specific set of rules, but it also applies to the higher-order choice of a logical system as such. The ideal observer makes the ideal choice of a logical system. For every problem, an ideal rationality would find (or invent if necessary) a perfect normative tool to solve it. In this way, rationality does not acknowledge 'better' anymore than monologic and quests for the 'best' solution as well.

2. The acknowledgement that people in fact argue and that arguments pro and contra both cut ice is a matter of discomfiture and is a result of the fact that real-life arguers are not perfectly rational. The problem is how this imperfection as such can be accounted for. As highest standard, rationality has a similar transcendental status as monologic: 'we "play" upon modes of thought we expect the readers already to follow'(Barth and Krabbe 1982: 75). In what way can people be irrational, under these circumstances. Indeed, how can they have a perspective that deviates from the rational one?

3. The main problem for a dialectical notion of rationality is that it is an *ideal* standard and, as human beings, we have only our limited perspectives at our disposal. The normative standard of an ideal observer is fundamentally inaccessible for us. In argumentation both parties may claim that their own arguments accord to the rational standard, but that is often precisely what is at issue. When it comes to distinguishing good from bad arguments, we need an instrument that is available, and dialectical rationality by definition is not.

The failure of a dialectical notion of rationality to perform its normative function can be illustrated by making a short detour to fallacy-theory. Van Eemeren and

Grootendorst link fallacies directly to the violation of specific rules for critical discussions: 'the dialectical rules which are violated in case of fallacies are applicable *only in so far as the purpose of the discussion is to resolve a dispute*' (Van Eemeren and Grootendorst 1987: 296, italics whs). The pragma-dialectical understanding of rational normativity, thus, is conditional: if people engage in a critical discussion, they must obey its specific rules. But the occurrence of a fallacy simply yields a *modus tollens* of the normative conditional: violating the rules simply negates the consequent which means that the antecedent is false as well. The occurrence of a fallacy, unless as slip of the tongue or corrigible mistake, simply indicates that no critical discussion is going on. If so, as Van Eemeren and Grootendorst argue, it is not possible to apply the standard for a critical discussion and consequently 'there is no point, from a dialectical perspective, in referring to a fallacy' (Van Eemeren and Grootendorst 1987: 298). Dialectical normativity based on rationality fails to perform its normative task.

In brief: dialectical normativity is either a monologic in disguise, meeting much the same problems as deductive monologic, or the rational solution cannot be distinguished qualitatively from other opinions and represents just another point of view without specific normative force. Slightly differently put: the verdict of the neutral external observer either remains external and thus irrelevant for the participants, or becomes an element within the discussion, cancelling its neutrality. The external rational observer will not do for a suitable notion of normativity. Yet, we need not be sad about this. It may, as Hamblin argued, 'not be the logician's particular job to declare the truth of any statement, *or the validity of any argument*' (Hamblin 1970: 244).

Dialogical Rhetoric

Rhetoric is often blamed for lacking normativity. It is conceived of containing argumentative tricks that induce people to accept things they would not have accepted were they put in less woolly terms. Rhetoric aims at bringing people to accept conclusions they would not accept by themselves and should not accept by general standards.

Rhetoric is considered an instrument to deceive people. Such an understanding of rhetoric is very far off the mark, at least when we look at rhetorical theories. Classical rhetoricians maintained that only the virtuous could speak well and that deception was the least advisable strategy for any orator. We need not appeal to a now outdated Aristotelean epistemology, -which linked virtue and truth-, to see

that deception is a very bad advice for a speaker. Trustworthiness pays double; deception only makes people suspicious on the long run. Only a very shortsighted rhetoric resorts to deception. Rhetoric does not focus on the advantages of the speaker, but much more on the position of the hearer. Rhetoric, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca say, 'aims at gaining the adherence of minds'(Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969: 14), and this can only be achieved if, indeed, the audience to which the speaker directs her arguments becomes convinced. The speaker seeks the cooperation of her audience and in order to attain it, she must take seriously the standards of the hearers. This rhetorical demand for a fundamental audience-orientation implies the pedestrian hint to speak English to anglophones and not to bore lay-people with technicalities. But it also takes into regard the asymmetrical startingpoint of discussions. Rhetoric accepts the idea of dialectics that some thesis must be disputed for an argument to begin. That is, only when a thesis is being questioned by *someone*, it makes sense to support it. As it is the actual resistance of a specific opponent that blocks the establishment of the thesis, it is his doubt that should be removed. The very *raison d'être* of argumentation indicates that a specific audience is addressed.

But if rhetoric directs its arguments at a particular audience what about the rest of the world? Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca discuss mixed audiences in this respect, and they propose a notion of the Universal Audience to conceive of arguments that are convincing for all audiences, and thus normative for *any* audience. This construction is superfluous, however. The speaker can only orient herself to the audience as she perceives of it. She has no direct access to the minds of her hearers and can only estimate its standards. Particular, mixed and universal audiences are all projections of the speaker, and the orientation to the audience thus has always a tentative character that needs to be adjusted while the discussion is in progress. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca define the notion of audience as 'the ensemble of those whom the speaker wishes to influence by his argumentation'(Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969: 19), and this can be substantiated in a particular, mixed, or perhaps even universal way. There is no need to make a fundamental or even qualitative distinction between types of audiences [ix].

Still, there *is* an important normative problem. The demand to orient oneself to the standards of the audience, erodes the position of the speaker herself! If the standard of the audiences were all that counted, the speaker seems to be extradited to the whims of her audience. This surely, would be a very disturbing consequence of audience-orientation. There would be a moral objection: it is

absurd to demand the orientation to abject standards. There is a rhetorical objection on the longer run: one would disqualify as serious partner in discussion when shifting standards according to specific audiences.

Most serious, however, is the logical objection that only by observing one's own standards a thesis is worth defending. Much like the dialectical idea that an argument only begins when some thesis is being questioned, we should say that an argument only starts when the speaker is willing to support it. If only the standards of the audience were decisive, its very resistance would be the end of the discussion. Precisely because the speaker is committed to the thesis, she defends it, but this is only possible if she acknowledges the normative force of her own position, at least for herself.

If rationality fails to transcend the subjectivity of the respective participants, it seems that the disagreement that initiated the discussion in the first place pervades the entire discussion and that, indeed, we have nothing to go on but the idiosyncracies of the respective participants. In contrast to dialectics, however, I do not think this is much of a problem. In fact, I think that acknowledging the fundamental differences between participants may even yield a much stronger notion than the dialectic appeal to rationality. Note that agreement is not denied. *People may*, and in fact do, agree on many things; just as they are disagreeing on many other things as well. My point, however, is that agreement is *insubstantial* for normativity, and that commensurability is of no consequence when it comes to distinguishing good from bad arguments.

Whereas dialectics stopped the infinite progress jeopardizing conventionalism in the rational *acceptability* of arguments, I propose to locate the stop of the progress in the actual *acceptance* by the adversary. Instead of tacitly assuming a third logical role in the dialogue, I suggest we take the responsibility of the participants themselves seriously. The idiosyncrasy of the standards is not resolved in the commensurability of a transcendent standard of rationality, but is restrained by each other. When rhetoric is seen from a dialogical perspective, we will observe that the orientation to the audience goes both ways. In any dialogue, of course, both participants are speaking, and both must orient themselves to the standards of their respective audiences, that is: their adversary. A *dialogical rhetoric*, I suggest, understands a discussion as the mutual orientation of the participants to each other's standards. Not only actively, as proponent, but also passively, as opponent, a participant must orient herself to the other. Dialectical logic burdens only the proponent to proof her thesis. The opponent can ask any

question he likes. Dialogical rhetoric concedes this in principle, but adds the condition that the questions must be *reasonable*. The point simply is that not every question is good enough to demand a serious answer. As Aristotle remarked: 'a man should not enter into discussion with everybody or practice dialectics with the first comer' (*Topica*, VIII, 14, 164b). The proponent may ask the oponent to defend his opposition. In effect this means that both participants face burden of proof for their respective positions both in defending and in resisting a thesis.

Both participants are both advancing a position of their own, and opposing the position of the other. Whether they succeed in doing so is up to the respective adversary. It is the adversary that has to be convinced of the reasonableness of the advanced move, and it is the adversary's standard that determines the goodness of the argument. But only so, we should add, if the adversary is reasonable himself. He may for various reasons resist the thesis, even against his better judgment; he may use fallacies to distract attention; he may simply be too ignorant to see the real point... He may simply be the wrong person to discuss the issue with. He may not be among those whose minds we seek adherence of. The reasonableness of the hearer opposing some thesis, depends on the standards of the proponent.

The basic idea of dialogical rhetoric is that the two personal or even idiosyncratic standards of proponent and opponent 'span' a normative field that determines the argumentative moving space of a particular discussion. Like dialectical discussions, such a dialogico-rhetorical normative field always has only a local character, because it is always the result of the contributions of the particular participants involved. Yet, we may see that discussion has consequences for other discussions. The audience is, as said, a construction of the speaker, and she can only make her projections on the basis of past experiences or reputation of the adversary. A reputation may seriously damage, or strengthen, one's point of departure in other discussions. Bad behavior may have as a consequence that the adversary terminates the discussion at issue, but may also deter other potential partners in discussion. Still, sometimes it may be worth the risk.

The adversary determines whether or not an argumentative move is accepted or not. If it is, the move is established. If it is not, the proponent may try to support the claim in an other way, or she may question the reasonableness of the resistance. If so, it is up to the opponent to defend the opposition. In general, this will not be a fruitful strategy when a discussion has just started. A discussion

begins with resistance of the opponent and the proponent's wish to convince him. It is strategically unwise to begin a defense by asking why on earth he is resisting her claim. But at the end of a discussion, after many moves have been made, such a question may not be strange at all. If an elaborate defence has been given it may very well be the question why somebody is still resisting the claim that has been supported extensively. Still, resistance may be the right thing to do; the opponent may convince the proponent of the reasonability of the opposition. This may result in the withdrawal of the claim, in which case the opposition of the claim is established[x].

The normative force of dialogical rhetoric lies in the fact that for the establishing of any move both participants are responsible. Obviously, the proponent is responsible for the moves she advances. But the opponent also becomes committed when he does not, or no longer, resist the claim[xi]. In this way, both participants become responsible for both supporting and rebutting moves. Both positive and negative aspect form, as it were, a vector that together constitute the strength of the argument. The resulting conclusion is binding for both participants because they either advanced or accepted the constitutive elements. Dialogical rhetoric plays on the disagreement that got the argument started in the first place. It works in cases of incommensurability, but can obviously also be maintained when the situation is much less *différent* as some contemporary philosophers want us to believe. The matter is insubstantial for a suitable notion of normativity. Just as unimportant is the taxonomy of types of discussion. Discussions are not neatly defined from the outset and may slide from one type to another[xii]. The problem is that if the rules are normative, it is impossible to see how such a sliding could ever occur. In fact, a rule-based normativity should prevent normative sliding. If incidental exceptions to the rules are allowed this merely means that the normativity is not located before the argumentation proper starts, but within the discussion itself. Even if rules were laid down at the beginning, the very decision that no exception is to be made puts the normative authority within the discussion proper. But this is simply to say that it all depends upon whether or not some argumentative move is accepted or not. There is no use in doubling this issue by postulating incidental rules in between. There is no use for any notion of discussion-rules other than as suggestions of strategic hints, indicating argumentative regularities that may be helpful, and even to the benefit of everybody involved. The point is that an argument does not become good or bad because of these rules. They do so because they are, or are not, accepted by

the only one whose opinion is of any substantial interest: the adversary's. Instead of the term 'rules' I prefer the rhetorical term 'topos'. The question is not how to authorize a rule, but how to implement a topos effectively.

The goodness of arguments is determined by the acceptance of the adversary; the badness of arguments by the refusal of the adversary to accept an argumentative move. This idea has consequences for the notion of fallacy. Without an operative notion of discussion-rules, fallacies cannot be seen as violations of rules. The traditional fallacies can, however, be understood as unadvisable argumentative strategies. Arguments that are usually considered fallacious are bad because they are weak; they are easy to expose, and not very convincing for the most part. A taxonomy of fallacies is useful to show risky argumentative strategies, but not as a list of arguments that are as such always bad. If only, I may shortly point out, because fallacies are not merely slips of tongues, but are often committed for good reasons. A fallacy can shift the burden of proof to the adversary because his charge of 'fallacy!' may be called for support. In this way, committing a fallacy can be strategically advantageous. Fallacies should not only be studied for logical self-defense, but also as a means to win a discussion. If an adversary accepts a 'fallacy' there is not much reason to call it a fallacy at all, although the logician may want to point out to the naive adversary that he could have maintained his position better. A fallacy is only fallacious if it is exposed as such, and not all traditional fallacies are fallacious all the time. In any way, it is up to the adversary to point out the fallacy, not to any external observer. But a charge of 'fallacy!' can always be called for defence.

Postlude

Obviously, despite overpowering evidence and even while acknowledging the reasonableness of the arguments, someone may persist in resisting a conclusion. No account of normativity can prevent this, but at least dialogical rhetoric can *blame* someone for doing this. Dialectical logic, depending on the voluntary submission to rules of discussion can only determine the fact that someone does not accept the rules that were supposed to be normative. It can never blame someone for not voluntarily submitting to any rule. Not even to rules of transcendental rationality: there is no dialectical answer to someone who wants to be irrational. But there is a rhetorical answer to someone who wants to be unreasonable: go and waste someone else's time. It moreover allows one to take up responsibility for one's own position, even facing non-cooperation because of unreasonable demands of the adversary.

NOTES

- i.** Obviously, this will make the premises inconsistent. But the problem of inconsistency is its triviality, not its invalidity. After all: *ex falsum sequitur quodlibet*.
- ii.** Cf. Van Eemeren, Grootendorst, and Snoeck Henkemans 1996, chapter 2.
- iii.** Walton distinguishes between eight different types of discussion, including eristic discussions. Most dialecticians, however, do not recognize the latter as genuine discussion. Cf. Walton 1989: 3-11.
- iv.** Cf. Barth and Krabbe 1982: 21f, defining a logical convention for a well-defined company.
- v.** Walton and Krabbe see retraction as 'one of the most fundamental (almost intractable) problems concerning commitment'. They are certainly right, but the problem may be less intractable if there were no need for an external observer to decide upon the acceptability. Cf. Walton and Krabbe 1995: 9ff.
- vi.** Cf. e.g. Barth and Krabbe 1982: 39; 75.
- vii.** Johnson and Blair argue that: 'many people evaluate arguments by one 'standard' only: does it support my view or not? That', they insist, 'is not a logical standard of evaluation but rather a purely idiosyncratic one'(Johnson and Blair 1983: 30).
- viii.** Obviously, the rational observer is a logical role; it is not demanded that it is actually present at the spot. The participants may themselves take up the role of the rational judge. What is important, however, is that only an unbiased evaluation of the advanced arguments is normative.
- ix.** Cf. also Ray 1978.
- x.** It is also possible that the participants accept the reasonableness of each other's position and yet retain to their own point of view. The conclusion is that the disagreement is not resolved.
- xi.** At what stage he does so is not important at this point. In some cases, hem must be quick to react, because the discussion may pass an irreversible moment after which no return to an earlier stage is possible. In other cases, steps may be retraced to an earlier stage. What is allowed is simply ot the adversary to decide.
- xii.** Cf. Walton and Krabbe 1995: 100-116.

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ISSA Proceedings 1998 - Falsification And Fieldwork In Recent American Anthropology: Argument Before And After The Mead/Freeman Controversy



Ethnographic fieldwork – going into the bush, into the unknown – to study some ‘tribe’ has arguably been the central feature of cultural or social anthropology in this century.^[i] “Ethnography has been, and is, the sine qua non of cultural anthropology. It accounts for our initial status and networks within our profession, legitimizes us as “real” anthropologists. . . and provides us with the means to survive the publishing dictates of the academy.” (Farrer 1996: 170). It has been taken as primarily the product of the individual researcher and as relatively unproblematic. It then provides the evidential foundation for anthropological theory, which is where controversy enters. Debates are about the implications of the ‘research findings’, not typically the findings themselves. In the last decade and a half, there has been increased attention paid to just how ethnographies are rhetorically constructed by an anthropologist.

This is a valuable emphasis, but I am adding another – looking at how fieldwork is criticized and accepted as reliable after publication. I explore this process as a social activity by the discipline in light of its various audiences. To do this I focus on what led up to and followed Derek Freeman’s attack on Margaret Mead’s *Coming of Age in Samoa*. My concern is not with argument by Mead or Freeman per se – that has been done (Weimer 1990, Marshall 1993).

A bit of quick history. In 1925 Margaret Mead went to American Samoa to test G. Stanley Hall’s then current account of adolescence as inevitably stressful.. Her subsequent book refuting Hall and giving a compelling portrait of South Sea life, *Coming of Age in Samoa*, became a bestseller, and its view of adolescent development, particularly in sexual relations, had a great influence on American culture. Mead became the best-known anthropologist in America, a veritable

cultural icon (Lutkehaus 1996).

In 1983, five years after Mead's death, the first notice of the Australian anthropologist Derek Freeman's critique of Mead was published on the front-page of the *New York Times*; a media event ensued, complete with television appearances. Freeman, who dedicated his book to Karl Popper, the philosopher who championed the importance of falsification in science, claimed to have definitely falsified Mead, as well as offered a more adequate account of the interaction of biology and culture. A multitude of reviews and rejoinders followed; Freeman replied vigorously to many of these.

The American Anthropological Association even took a vote deploring the recommendation of the book by the magazine *Science* 83. In 1989 a documentary film, *Margaret Mead and Samoa* (Heimans 1989), apparently supported Freeman with an interview with one of Mead's informants who stated that she and other Samoan girls had "pulled Mead's leg in response to probing questions about their personal lives, and that Mead, then 24 years old, believed their tall tales" (Monaghan 1989: A6).

Why was the Mead-Freeman controversy such an event? For some anthropologists, there has been a certain befuddlement - why won't it go away? One reason is the sheer number of issues involved - ranging from particular questions such as the degree of Mead's facility with the Samoan language, to the personalities involved, to larger issues such as the nature-nurture debate and social responsibility of scientists. It is a mistake to say, as some have, that "it was really about" one thing and not another. Nonetheless I focus in this paper primarily on the relation of an epistemic matter to a standard rhetorical one, on how anthropological fieldwork claims are taken to constitute reliable evidence or knowledge for the audiences of anthropology. Following Lyne, I distinguish anthropology's intra-field audience - other anthropologists, its inter-field audience - other scholars and scientists outside the discipline, and its extra-field audience - the general or educated public (Lyne 1983). My issue involves how, as Lyne puts it, epistemic expertise is projected to these various audiences.

1. A Criterion of Science

Although many discussions of whether or not social sciences are really sciences are at best unfruitful, let me begin with one criterion for being a science set out by a philosopher writing for anthropologists (see also Kuper 1989: 455). In "*Objectivity, Truth, and Method: A Philosopher's Perspective on the Social Sciences*" Little writes, that while there is no "cookbook" version that can be

given for scientific method:

The epistemic features of science include at least these criteria: an empirical testability criterion, a logical coherence criterion and an institutional commitment to intersubjective processes of belief evaluation and criticism. . . . And all [sciences] proceed through a community of inquirers in which the individual's scientific results are subjected to community-wide standards of adequacy. And these standards are designed to move the system of beliefs in the field to greater veridicality and explanatory power. (1995: 42)

It is the last criterion that is my focus – the requirement of an effective critical assessment community of inquirers. The connection of this criterion of scientific standing to the audiences of American anthropology is highlighted by two influential anthropologists, who see the controversy as a “scientific scandal” for “the reading public” who had come to look to Mead and others to deliver the discipline's “long-established promise: its capacity on the basis of reliable knowledge of cultural alternatives to critique and suggest reform in the way we live.” (Marcus & Fischer 1986: 3).

Little cites several examples of anthropological ethnography, to “show that it is possible for interpretive anthropology to be supported by appropriate empirical methods; and that is all that we need in order to show that anthropology is a scientific discipline in which there are appropriate standards of empirical reasoning as a control on scientific assertion.” (1995: 43). However he does not examine how any of these were critiqued by the anthropological community. Are there in fact standards of ethnographic accuracy? And most importantly for this paper have anthropologists applied them? I will argue the record is mixed.

There has been a tendency to see the ethnographic process as unproblematic, and thus not especially needing critical assessment. In considering the Mead/Freeman controversy, Rappaport comments “Even poor ethnography usually gets the facts right.” (1986: 347). Heider asserts that “ethnographers rarely disagree with each other's interpretations of a culture” (1988: 73). It should be added in defense of anthropology that in the beginning years of this century a high priority was placed on studying societies before they disappeared or radically changed. It was rare that two researchers would work on the same society, or even two adjacent ones. Thus the likelihood of conflicts such as between Mead and Freeman was low, though they certainly occurred. Given the relatively small number of anthropologists it “seemed a waste of scarce resources to let two or more researchers go to the same place.” (Kloos 1997: 430).

A second tendency is to neglect the role of the community of scientists in

critiquing the evidence in the constitution of the evidence as such. "Real science" is what goes on before publication. Just one example. Headland slips into this tendency even though it does not even reflect his own practice. At the close of a survey of controversies in ecological anthropology – in effect showing how anthropology meets Little's third criterion, he writes: "Basically, we need to do good anthropology – which means longer periods of fieldwork, more archaeology, especially in the wet tropics, and interdisciplinary team research." (1997:609). Given what he is trying to show, that "a refreshing new approach in ecological anthropology called historical ecology" has been part of effective critique of a number of "doctrines long accepted", it is surprising he does not stress that more good anthropological criticism is needed.

2. Views of the Controversy At the Time and Later

In the initial round of reviews of Freeman's book, many anthropologists basically rejected Freeman's claim to have refuted Mead (Weiner 1983, Schneider 1983). A number attacked Freeman for the manner of his critique, waiting until after Mead was dead, using questionable rhetoric, and the like. For some within anthropology the controversy was really peripheral to anthropology itself. It was simply a result of the vagaries of publishing and media misunderstandings. Others found Freeman basically correct on many of the elements of his critique, even though they may have questioned his approach (Appell 1984, Brady 1991). Freeman saw himself as vindicating anthropology, that is, by using anthropological means to refute Mead's work on Samoa, and thus redeem his discipline (as well as presenting a more accurate picture of Samoans).

For many outside of anthropology, Freeman set the agenda. There was a clear and decidable issue: "Who was correct about Samoan sexuality and adolescence?" and Freeman was seen as right. For example, Martin Gardner in an article entitled "The Great Samoan Hoax" writes: [Freeman's] "explosive book roundly trounced Mead for flagrant errors in her most famous work, *Coming of Age in Samoa*. ... new and irrefutable evidence has come to light supporting the claim that young Mead was indeed the gullible victim of a playful hoax. Her book, until recently considered a classic, is now known to be of minimal value – an amusing skeleton in anthropology's closet." (1993: 135) As I discuss below this view is *not* commonplace within the field of anthropology, but this pro-Freeman view of the matter is prevalent in two camps, in the inter-field area called "evolutionary psychology", where Freeman has been described as a "hero" of the movement (*Economist* 1998: 84, Pinker 1997) and, extra-field, in politically conservative or

right-wing American writing (Jones 1988, Davidson 1988). For many in the extra-field audience the Mead-Freeman controversy is not simply a matter of historical curiosity, but also part of clearing away misconception, propaedeutic to new intellectual advances. Wrangham and Peterson in *Demonic Males: Apes and the Origins of Human Violence* use Mead as a prime example of what their book is to offset, the “misleading separation of nurture from nature”. They assert that Mead’s “findings from this expedition [to Samoa] would capture the imagination of the Western world and galvanize a movement toward cultural relativism. Yet she was later proven extraordinarily wrong in many of her claims about Samoan life.” (1996: 106, 97).**[ii]**

For some the most salient issue has been whether Mead was duped by some of her informants. The fear that, in turn, the American public was duped has colored anthropological responses. For one, “Perhaps the most painful part of this controversy has been the erosion of the ‘public trust’ in the social sciences to which many educated Americans have traditionally looked for guidance with respect to how to raise their families.” (Scheper-Hughes 1984: 90).

An editorial the *Denver Post* asserted: This is more than just another academic teapot tempest; anthropology is a science often accused of being a haven for social theorists manipulating facts to prove their preconceived points . . . Mead . . . made major contributions to U. S. social attitudes. Her reputation is secure. The real loser may be anthropology’s reputation as a science. If its methods haven’t made quantum leaps forward since Mead’s day, the whole discipline might find a better home in creative literature (in Rappaport 1986: 316).

3. Whose Responsibility?

Are such public perceptions American anthropology’s fault? Some anthropologists have tried to distance their discipline. Rappaport argues that “Anthropology is no more capable of establishing the mythic status of narratives than is chemistry. All anthropology can do is to offer to a public accounts from which that public can select some (as it can from other sources) to establish as myth, leaving the rest to anthropologists’ arcane in-house conversations.” True enough, but as Rappaport mentions on the very next pages, “The book enjoyed substantial classroom adoptions for decades.” (1986: 322, 324, also Kuper 1989: 453). Such distancing attempts, such as Marcus’s comment, apparently intended to downplay Freeman’s critique, that “outside of introductory courses, [Mead’s] work has not generally been read in recent years.” are revealing (quoted Fields 1983: 232-233). But it is precisely in such courses that anthropology has its greatest opportunity to

educate its extra-field audience about itself. As the philosopher Philip Kitcher has suggested in his analysis of the conflicts between evolutionists and scientific creationists, the use of slogans, raw dichotomies ('proven fact' vs. 'only a theory'), and simplistic philosophies of science by biologists provide readily exploitable starting points for creationists (Kitcher 1983). The extra disciplinary audience for anthropologists, like evolutionary biologists, is in part a reflection of how scientists have educated it, including their critics. At least one would expect them to cite their efforts to rectify the misperception, even if the efforts are unsuccessful.

There is another tactic. If, as the Denver Post suggested above, anthropology was more like literature, then it would not be responsible for attempting to resolve the controversy. As one literature professor suggested: "[T]here is *a priori* no reason why we should attribute a greater degree of truth to her account of Samoan life than we might to a travel journal or a realist novel on the same subject.

And the same is true of Derek Freeman's . ." (Porter 1984: 31). But then anthropology's standing as science and source of cultural critique would have to be reassessed, something many in the field would resist.

4. Critique in Anthropology Prior to 1983

In responding to Freeman's critique some anthropologists rather dismissively said that the problems with *Coming of Age in Samoa* were well-known. In a review, Ivan Brady says by 1983 though Mead's Samoan research was still respected for "its pioneering impact . . . It was also recognized as inadequate on several counts . . . And had been relegated largely to discussions of disciplinary history" (1991: 497). And there certainly were several critiques. Indeed Freeman published a list of errata in Mead's *Social Organization of Manu'a* after they were not included in its republication (1972). Examples of published critiques are an article by Worsley in *Science and Society*, a socialist oriented British publication (1957) and an analysis of education in an African tribe, *Chaga Childhood*, by a South African anthropologist (Raum 1940).**[iii]** These do not seem to be obvious places to look for responses to Mead's work on Samoa. Someone from outside the discipline would easily miss these.

And other anthropologists praised Mead's work. McDowell wrote that "Most significant is [Mead's] concern for the precision and accuracy of the data she gathered In presenting her material accurately and precisely, Mead is a careful and exceptionally honest ethnographer." (1980: 127). At least until very recently it has been quite rare for anthropologists to do restudy of a group

previously studied by another anthropologist. But Ta'u, where Mead worked, has been restudied, in 1954, by Lowell Holmes, perhaps the first time a "methodological restudy was ever conducted with the specific purpose of evaluating the validity and reliability of an earlier observer's work." (Holmes 1987: 14) Holmes writes that his advisor Melville Herskovits suggested he restudy Mead's work, in part because "for some time scholars (including himself) had been skeptical about Mead's findings in American Samoa"(1987: 18). This gives some credence to the claim that Mead's work was thought to be suspect. However Holmes sums up his results as indicating that, though in some cases Mead "over-generalized and was given to exaggeration", overall Mead "was essentially correct in her characterization and conclusions about coming of age in Samoa. And I still am impressed with the quality of her investigation." (1987: 172-73). Unfortunately for anyone looking for a clear-cut resolution of the controversy, Freeman claims that Holmes's assessment is suspect, and that Holmes changed his evaluation of Mead's work over time, and under pressure. Nardi cites Holmes and an article by Naroll, which in turn cites Holmes, as examples of preexisting critiques (1984: 323) . However, the criticisms of Holmes are hardly comparable to Freeman's. Further Naroll also included an article by Mead in the collection in which the criticisms Nardi cites are included (Naroll 1970, Mead 1970). Of course, whatever one's view of Mead on Samoa, she was an indisputable pioneer in other areas, for example, in visual anthropology.

An examination of surveys published before Freeman's book in 1983 does not show any signs of this supposed widespread knowledge of Mead's weaknesses. For example, Agar lists a number of disputes over fieldwork, but does not mention Mead's work as one of these (1980). Edgerton and Langness discuss a number of cases where ethnography has been questioned - Ruth Benedict's Pueblo work, the Redfield-Lewis divergence - in a chapter where they also mention Mead, but make no indication of any reservations about her work (1974). Indeed the strength of the defenses of Mead after Freeman suggests that he was far from simply rehearsing or amplifying commonly held suspicions, albeit in an objectionably antagonistic fashion.

Either the supposedly well-known problems with Mead's work were not in fact known or recognized to be serious problems by very many, or not made public, even within the wider field. In any case the discipline never confronted them. Indeed there are mentions of a general custom of not being a public critic of a colleague's work. Jackson quotes an anthropologist informant as "commenting on one of the discipline's unwritten rules 'We've built up a sort of gentlemanly code

dealing with one another's ethnography. You criticize it, but there are limits, social conventions . . . You never overstep them or you become the heavy.'"(1990: 22).**[iv]** So when Freeman did bring them up, one speculates that there were some guilty consciences. Whether from simple oversight or Mead's iconic status, her Samoan work went without adequate critical assessment. In terms of the criterion of a critical assessment community prior to 1983 in this respect there is little evidence of it existing.

5. Critique in Anthropology After 1983

What has happened since 1983? One major change is the importance anthropologists now place on listening to those they study, to their subjects, as Freeman emphasized. Taking into account their views has become more common, indeed expected. As responses of Samoans to the controversy indicate there is at least much to learn from that audience.**[v]**

Another common response to the whole debate is to 'perspectivize' it, that is, to attribute the dispute to the effects of different perspectives or approaches of those involved, and not due to any inaccuracy per se. Thus falsification is impossible. For example, a review of a new book on the controversy begins: "I was amazed to find that yet another contribution to the so-called 'Mead-Freeman controversy' had been published, . . . It is even more unfortunate that authors cannot resist making judgements on this issue and trying to resolve the issues involved, insisting that there is and was a definitive , 'real' Samoa to be discovered. . ." (Morton 1996: 166). Scheper-Hughes, whose own ethnography in Ireland seemed to conflict with previous work of Arensberg, argues that

.. when we are talking about Samoan culture or Irish culture we are talking about an interpretation that is the result of a complex series of interactions between the anthropologist and his or her informants. . . . Ethnography is a very special kind of intellectual autobiography, a deeply personal record through which a whole view of the human condition, an entire personality, is elaborated. .. And the knowledge that it yields must always be interpreted by us, by the particular kind of complex social, cultural and psychological self that we bring into the field.Hence there can be no "falsification" of a 1925 ethnography by a 1940 or a 1965 "restudy" because the particular ethnographic moment in the stream of time that Mead captured is long since gone. (1984: 90)

This pattern of attributing differences to perspectives is not limited to this controversy. There is a growing movement in anthropology toward seeing

ethnography as a much more complicated and multifarious endeavor than previously held. A greater sense of the personal nature of ethnography, and of the rhetorical construction of ethnography developed in the years after 1983. As Brady points out, these developments “which we lump under the heading of ‘post-modernism’, [influenced] . . . a common perception (but very little said in print) that even if Mead was wrong, Freeman didn’t have . . . the answer to what was right . . . The ‘meta-issues,’ in other words, seem to have carried the day against Freeman, against closure on multiple interpretations of Samoan ethnography.” (1988: 44). However, while anthropology’s internal, or intra-field, audience was not especially interested, its inter- and extra-field audiences were drawing their own conclusions, as discussed above. Though really a matter for another day, I do not believe that post-modernism in any stricter sense than Brady’s is really involved. The issues pre-date its rise; it serves more to provide a strawman to criticize (Pool 1991).

This ‘perspectivist’ response would seem to make a thorough going criticism otiose. Other anthropologists, of course, do not see it this way. It is striking that other ethnographic work by Mead has come under significant criticism. Gewertz and Errington have re-evaluated Mead’s analysis of one tribe the Chambri (or Tchambuli) in *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies* arguing that Mead’s interpretation was led astray by reliance on a Western conception of self (Gewertz 1984, Errington & Gewert 1987). Others have made substantial criticism of Mead and Bateson’s work on Bali (Jensen & Suryani 1992). If Mead and her work were ever sacrosanct that does not appear to be the case recently (Foerstel & Gilliam 1992, Roscoe 1995).

With respect to Samoa, and in particular the controversy itself, there has recently been a number of critical work. There are two book length assessments. Cote, a sociologist, in *Adolescent Storm and Stress: An Evaluation of the Mead-Freeman Controversy*, comes to the conclusion “that Mead’s coming-of-age thesis is quite plausible . . . There are some problems with some of what she wrote in *Coming of Age*. But there is little reason to believe that she was wrong in most of what she reported – contrary to what Freeman claimed and despite the mythology surrounding her book.” (1994: xiv). Orans in *Not Even Wrong: Margaret Mead, Derek Freeman, and the Samoans* (1996) concludes that Mead’s fieldwork and the claims she makes on its basis are seriously inadequate, that on a number of points Freeman is correct, but that Freeman is wrong to think that he could refute Mead in that her claims are really insufficiently formulated to be either verified or falsified. Hence the book’s title *Not Even Wrong*. Given the prominence given to

the 1989 filmed interview with an informant which led to the perception that Mead was duped, after examining Mead's fieldnotes and letters, Orans holds that there is no indication that the 'tall tales' had any particular impact on Mead's thinking.

Even more striking are attempts to not just adjudicate the controversy, but to learn from it. Taking up suggestions first raised by Shore, Mageo develops an account of that integrates what she calls "the incongruent impressions that surround Samoan character." She argues that Mead and Holmes "documented the communal personality, which is the ideal product of Samoan socialization. Freeman observes the psychological costs of this ideal." (1991: 405). She does not simply say that there are different approaches, the Rashomon 'perspectivist' tactic, but tries to account for this divergence, and thus advance beyond the controversy. There are other articles of a critical nature (Shankman 1996, Grant 1995). Perhaps book reviews of the three books on the controversy (Caton, Cote and Orans) will be revelatory. Textbooks now at least have perfunctory mention that Mead's work is contested.

What is striking is the contrast between the simplistic "Freeman falsified Mead" views prevalent inter- and extra-field and the recent critical work on the controversy within it. If prior to 1983, the American public listened to an incompletely scrutinized account from anthropology, allowing Mead's erroneous findings to go unchallenged, today they do not seem to be listening to anthropology at all. And if they are not listening, then the discipline cannot fulfill what Marcus and Fischer call its "long established promise: its capacity on the basis of reliable knowledge of cultural alternatives to critique and suggest reform in the way we live." (1986: 3).

6. Conclusion

Is anthropology "the gang who couldn't shoot straight"? That is certainly not my contention. As Kloos points out in an examination of disagreements in anthropology, there also are many examples of sites studied by anthropologists from a number of countries, including the one studied, where no radical disagreements have emerged. And he rightly stresses that these outnumber the thirty some cases on the list of serious discrepancies that he has compiled (Kloos 1996). Nor do discrepant results necessarily indicate the absence of a critical assessment community. Tracing the history of research on the !Kung people, Kuper argues for the existence in that area of anthropology of a disputatious, but

at the same time cooperatively interacting, group of researchers from different countries and theoretical backgrounds, working, as he says, "in many ways like conventional scientists." - or at least like the standard conception of scientists (1993: 68). The practice of the journal *Current Anthropology* of publishing articles followed by comments from other scholars, often quite critical, is also signal. The American Anthropological Association has a precedent here. It published a collection of articles on another, somewhat similar dispute within the discipline: *The Tasaday Controversy: Assessing the Evidence*. (Headland 1992).

My conclusion is that, if one examines the discipline of American anthropology with respect to Mead's *Coming of Age in Samoa* prior to 1983 in light of the criterion of functioning as a critical assessment community the judgment has to be anthropology's achievement is at best mixed. A book that many in retrospect claim was inadequate was allowed to be seen as adequate, or even better. Since 1983 the evidence is considerably stronger, but not univocal. Here the *practice* seems better than the theory. That is, there is a considerable amount of criticism. What is problematic the strand of what I call 'perspectivism'. Here I have suggested the problem is not so much the practice of critical assessment, but confusion over the nature of, or even need for what Little terms "community-wide standards of assessment". This history in turn is, I have suggested, is partially reflected in the relation of American social anthropology to its various audiences. Meeting Little's criterion is of course at most a necessary condition. I have not tried to *explain* what occurred. Perhaps it is a matter of disciplinary structure and practice, of how a scientific discipline functions. Or perhaps it is the nature of social reality - the stuff ethnographies are about - as just too complicated or transitory to be studied in the ways anthropologists study it. One could argue that the culture and personality school, of Benedict and Mead, was particular prone to problems (see Stocking 1989). Establishing claims about temperament of a culture or dominant personality traits in a group may simply not be an endeavor for which anthropological methods are appropriate. The particular factors of Mead's iconic status, and Freeman's approach, must be considered. I am inclined to favor the first explanation, or perhaps some combination of factors.

Nonetheless there is only so much a discipline can do to educate its audiences. I was taken aback to read in a recent book by a psychologist - from Harvard University Press, the publisher of Freeman's book no less - that *Coming of Age in Samoa* is "considered by some to be one of the great anthropological studies of all time." (Plotkin 1998: 241). After all the controversy, I cannot believe that even Mead's strongest supporters would evaluate it that highly.

NOTES

i. I use 'anthropology' as short for American cultural or social anthropology. I draw on Strikwerda 1991. I want to thank Penny Weiss and Clarke Rountree for their comments, the Indiana University Kokomo Division of Arts and Sciences and Interlibrary loan staff and the Indiana University Institute for Advanced Study for their support.

ii. I have not done a comprehensive search, but the prevalence of these interpretations of the upshot of the controversy is striking. I did find more favorable treatments of Mead in books and tapes for children (for example Ziesk 1990).

iii. Note that these are not American authors. Gupta and Ferguson (1997: 45, n. 38) cite Radin's 1933 critique of Mead. Their omission of any mention of Freeman strikes me as rather disingenuous.

iv. Worsley writes that after publication of his 1957 article Mead wrote him attacking the piece. "Taken aback by the virulence of this language, I soon discovered that it evidently was not unusual, for I received several communications from anthropologists in the United States who told me that they had been treated to similar withering counterattacks when they had dared, especially in public situations, to say anything critical of her work". (1992: xi).

v. In her preface to the 1973 edition of *Coming of Age in Samoa*, Mead acknowledged Samoan concerns but stated that "It must remain, as all anthropological works must remain, exactly as it was written, true to what I saw in Samoa and what I was able to convey of what I saw; true to the state of our knowledge...." (1973: xii). Why she did not discuss these concerns in some depth elsewhere is not clear.

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ISSA Proceedings 1998 - Rhetoric As Ideological Pronouncement: An Analysis Of The Cardinal Principles Of The National Entity Of Japan



The concept of *kokutai* or 'national structure' derived from the fundamental insularity and isolation of the Japanese. The concept served as a powerful linguistic weapon both for attack and defense in the political arena of the period 1931-1945.... [A]fter the Meiji Restoration, 'national structure' was used to signify the uniqueness of the existing government of Japan. The word became a glorification of that order, a claim that the present had existed since time immemorial. Since the oldest book extant was the *Kojiki*, which recounted the descent from heaven of the ancestor of the Royal Family, the national structure was generally understood to centre on an unbroken line of emperors of heavenly origin. - *Tsurumi Shunsuke*

Over the past centuries, scholars of rhetorical communication have been

grappling with a fundamental nature of argumentation that continues to shape and reshape social, political and religious structures of human society. Literature suggests that whereas most scholars acknowledge its critical or sometimes subversive effects, some have paid a considerable attention to enemies of argumentation such as ideology, myth, and propaganda. For instance, Marxists are concerned with ideology as the ruling ideas of the epoch in an attempt to investigate what might be termed the internal life of the ideological realm and to provide detailed and sophisticated accounts of how a society's "ruling ideas" are produced. Religious scholars have argued that myth, as sacred tales concerned with the origins of natural or supernatural, or cultural phenomena, serve various roles available within the articulated social cosmos for community members to achieve a position of influence within the social hierarchies or to find ways of operating meaningfully as contributing members. Finally, the scholars of media studies have explored the tension between the principles of democracy and the process of propaganda since the notion of a rational person, capable of thinking and living according to scientific patterns, of choosing freely between good and evil seems opposed to secret influences or appeals to the irrational.

Given that, it is surprising to know that there has been very little discussion about "ideological pronouncement," which means a sort of rhetoric which undermines and limits the possibility of critical discussion among target audiences. In what follows, I will explore "ideological pronouncement" as an enemy of argumentation. First, I will contend that the nature of argumentation is primarily characterized as an engagement in critical/rational discourse. Second, I will define the nature of ideological pronouncement as an engagement in fascist/anti-realist discourse. Specifically, the essential constituents for such an enactment can be identified as anti-realism, a lack of critical space, and especially, one-sided communication.

Finally, I will investigate Japan's wartime textbook, the *Kokutai no hongi*, or *Cardinal Principles of the National Entity of Japan* (hereafter it will be referred to as *Cardinal Principles*) as a rhetoric of ideological pronouncement. In 1937, the *Cardinal Principles* was published by the Japanese government and became the most widely employed moral education textbook, an official attempt at indoctrination of its nationalist principles: "first printing of approximately 300,000 copies was distributed to the teaching staffs of both public and private schools from the university level to the lower cycle of elementary schools" (*Cardinal Principles* 10). As of 1943, the book is said to have sold approximately 1,900,000 copies. Given such enormous popularity, it seems appropriate to use

the *Cardinal Principles* as a prime example of fascist discourse.

1. Argumentation as engagement in critical/rational discourse

Let me start the discussion by posing a question: Why is ideological pronouncement problematic or undesirable? To answer the question, I will define and examine the following three concepts: *argumentation*, *argument*, *argumentativeness*. First, argumentation is generally recognized as “the process of advancing, supporting, modifying, and criticizing claims so that appropriate decision makers may grant or deny adherence” (Rieke & Sillars 5). This audience-centered definition holds the assumptions that the participants must willingly engage in public debate and discussion, and that their arguments must function to open a critical space and keep it open. From this perspective, as Chaim Perelman has rightly pointed out, the aim of argumentation is to gain the adherence of others. Hence, argumentation should be viewed as an interactive process between arguer and audience to determine the appropriateness of an advocated claim based upon data presented with reasoning given. Only the arguments that exceed a threshold for audience acceptance will survive or prevail, and others will disappear or fade away. This way, argumentation plays a chief role in the critical decision-making process.

Another important definition is concerned with the term “argument.” In his landmark article, “Rhetorical Criticism as Argument,” Wayne Brockriede maintains that “argument” means the process whereby a person reasons his/her way from one idea to the choice of another idea, and further argues that this concept of argument implies five generic characteristics:

1. an inferential leap from existing beliefs to the adoption of a new belief or the reinforcement of an old one;
2. a perceived rationale to justify that leap;
3. a choice among two or more competing claims;
4. a regulation of uncertainty in relation to the selected claim – since someone has made an inferential leap, certainty can be neither zero nor total; and
5. a willingness to risk a confrontation of that claim with one’s peers.

Thus, the second definition also assumes the arguers’ willingness to risk engaging in critical evaluation of claim selected, data presented, and reasoning provided. As Brockriede himself notes, the “last characteristic is especially important. By inviting confrontation, the critic-arguer tries to establish some degree of intersubjective reliability in his[/her] judgment and in his[/her] reasons for the

judgment" (167). Thus, the establishment of intersubjectivity is one of the primary aims of engaging in argumentative discourse.

As a consequence, the arguer is necessarily required to cultivate his/her "argumentativeness," or willingness to argue for what he/she believes, by treating disagreements as objectively as possible, reaffirming the other, stressing equality, expressing interest in the other's position, and allowing the other person to save face (Devito). Thus, the arguer is forced to engage in critical/rational discourse, running a risk of being defeated by his/her opponents. When he is quoted by Jürgen Habermas, H. Neuendorff states: Anyone participating in argument shows his[/her] rationality or lack of it by the manner in which he[/she] handles and responds to the offering of reasons for or against claims. If he[/she] is "open to argument," he[/she] will either acknowledge the force of those reasons or seek to reply to them, and either way he[/she] will deal with them in a "rational" manner. If he[/she] is "deaf to argument," by contrast, he[/she] may either ignore contrary reasons or reply to them with dogmatic assertions, and either way he[/she] fails to deal with the issues "rationally." (Habermas 18)

Therefore, Habermas concludes that "[c]orresponding to the openness of rational expressions to being explained, there is, on the side of persons who behave rationally, a willingness to expose themselves to criticism and, if necessary, to participate properly in argumentation" (18). Thus, assurance of rationality is one of the chief purposes of argumentation.

In short, argumentation must help carry out critical decision-making, establish intersubjectivity, and save rationality in the act of speech. I believe that ideological pronouncement fails to meet all three of the fundamental characteristics of argumentation. Ideological pronouncement should be considered problematic and even undesirable in that it is designed to oppress free and critical discussion and promote controlled and uncritical thinking. In the following section, I will illustrate how ideological pronouncement is constructed by using Japan's wartime rhetoric as a major paradigm case.

2. Ideological pronouncement as engagement in fascist/anti-realist discourse

Rhetorical reality is produced and maintained through symbolic interaction between and among people and rhetoric. Clearly, communication practice typically serves to reinforce the ongoing construction of rhetorical reality (Berger & Luckmann; Farrell & Goodnight). In this sense, reality is far from something we are given by others, but something we experience within the framework of rhetorical formation. As Berger and Luckmann argue, "Knowledge about society

is thus a realization in the double sense of the word, in the sense of apprehending the objectivated social reality, and in the sense of ongoingly producing this reality” (66).

I argue that a rhetorical reality becomes ideological pronouncement when it possesses the three characteristics mentioned previously, and that such an anti-argumentative rhetoric is likely to proliferate in the period of fascist ideology, such as wartime. To begin with, the nature of ideological pronouncement can be defined as “anti-realism,” or symbolically constructed reality. For instance, the character of wartime Japanese rhetoric can be represented by the following: *respect for order, hierarchy, filial piety, and harmony*. As Kenneth Burke has argued, “a cycle or terms implicit in the idea of ‘order,’ in keeping with the fact that ‘order,’ being a polar term, implies a corresponding ideas of ‘disorder,’ while these terms in turn involve ideas of ‘obedience’ or ‘disobedience’ to the ‘authority’ implicit in ‘order’” (450).

Specifically, the *Cardinal Principles* was exerted in order to construct Japan as the great family nation which has no parallel in history. The imperial Household is regarded as the head family, and the Japanese people as the Emperor’s subjects and nucleus of national life. The book begins:

The unbroken line of Emperors, receiving the Oracle of the Founder of the Nation, reign eternally over the Japanese Empire. This is our eternal and immutable national entity. Thus, founded on this great principle, all the people, united as one great family nation in heart and obeying the Imperial Will, enhance indeed the beautiful virtues of loyalty and filial piety. This is the glory of our national entity. (emphasis added, 59)

Thus, filial piety is featured as “a Way of the highest importance” that “originates with one’s family as its basis” (*Cardinal Principles* 87). The term “Way” is used in the technical and ethical sense to indicate a particular significance in placing the Imperial Ancestor and the Emperor in the relationship of parent and child. Thus, the Emperor-subject relationship is emphasized as not only that of sovereign and subject, but of father and child. In this way, the content of the *Cardinal Principles* is far from historical facts: rather, it is an ideological construction. Japanese historian Nagahara Keiji comments: The imperial view of history sought to reinforce itself as an ideology to rationalize the powers that be, rather than to cope with contemporary rationalism. The Imperial view of history was inherently non-scientific, since it started the Japanese history from the divine message, descent of the Sun Goddess’s grandson to earth, and Emperor Jinmu. Further, it fundamentally blocked the academic recognition of Japanese history by ascribing

everything to “manifestation of Kokutai” and describing Japanese aggression as dissemination of the “Imperial Will.” (my translation, 27-28)

After all, it is impossible for State Shinto evolved from an indigenous religion of nature-worship to offer a solution to social problems caused by the rapid modernization of Japan. It was rather natural for militarists and imperialists to seek a means of escape into territorial aggrandizement in order to divert the attention of the public from real issues. This attempt to resolve the internal contradictions only created new contradictions, all doomed to end badly. The second essential constituent for ideological pronouncement is “a lack of critical space.” Rather than promoting a space for critical thinking and reflection, it functions to undermine and limit the possibility of critical discussion among target audiences. For instance, the *Cardinal Principles* is said to serve the role of indoctrination, or “the teaching of what is known to be false as true, or more widely the teaching of what is believed true in such a way as to preclude critical inquiry on the part of learners” (*Oxford Companion to Philosophy* 867). It was published for the purpose of easing the social tension caused by the impact of Westernization after the Meiji Restoration and Great Depression later, and of unifying the Japanese people for nationalistic ideas. Robert King Hall explains: Its avowed purpose was to combat the social unrest and intellectual conflicts which sprang from the “individualism” of the people and to substitute a devotion to the “national unity” which it identified with unswerving loyalty to the Imperial Family. (“Prefactory Note” in the *Cardinal Principles*)

Thus, the *Cardinal Principles* serves twin functions: the first is to divert the Japanese people’s attention from internal disorder and dissatisfaction with political realities; and the second, to provide justification for Japan’s wartime nationalism.

The final important characteristic of ideological pronouncement is “one-sided communication,” or a sort of imperfect communication designed to ask the audience to stop thinking and accept the imposed cultural norm or social more blindly. In this frame of reference, no criticism or even questioning is called for, but all obedience and loyalty are required by the ruling class. A prime instance of this is the wartime Japan’s “ideology of death.” Tsurumi Kazuko argues that, in the army and the navy, the indoctrination was extended so as to serve as socialization for death:

Army indoctrination was a strictly one-way communication, in which only the socializer spoke and the socializee was expected to accept silently whatever was told him. It was an imperfect communication, since the socializee was not

expected to understand precisely what these words meant but only to grasp vaguely what they were about. Their ambiguity created a halo of sanctity around the words of the Imperial dicta.... Thus imperfect communication, instead of complete discommunication or perfect communication, was function for military elites as a method of indoctrinating soldiers in the ideology of death. The use of imperfect communication as a vehicle of army socialization was related to the functional diffuseness of its ideological content. (121)

Thus, the Japan's army education provides what Tsurumi calls "imperfect communication" for indoctrinating young soldiers in the "ideology of death."

With the above defining characteristics in mind, let me now turn to an analysis of the *Cardinal Principles* in order to show how ideological pronouncement as a rhetoric serves a role of fascist/anti-realist discourse, in lieu of that of critical/rationalist discourse.

3. The cardinal principles of the national entity of Japan as an example of ideological pronouncement

The *Cardinal Principles* employs a variety of rhetorical strategy to distinguish Japanese from Western traditions. Assuming a nation to be an "imagined community" (Anderson), I will analyze its rhetorical strategies as an instrument of official nationalist education within the context of the three constituents of ideological pronouncement.

First of all, to prove the ground from which the claim that the Japanese people are a special race destined to rule the world is drawn, the *Cardinal Principles* argues that the "Emperor is a deity incarnate who rules our country in unison with the august Will of the Imperial Ancestors" (71). As the fascist regime came into power, the "sacred and inviolable" nature of the Emperor was transfigured to claim that he was the living representative of the imperial line unbroken for the age eternal. This is the existential dimension regarding Japan's special status. The *Cardinal Principles* contends:

The Emperor is not merely a so-called sovereign, monarch, ruler, or administrator, such as is seen among foreign nations, but reigns over this century as a deity incarnate in keeping with the great principle that has come down to us since the founding of the Emperor; and the wording of Article III [of the Imperial Constitution] which reads, "The Emperor is sacred and inviolable," clearly sets forth this truth. Similar provisions which one sees among foreign nations are certainly not founded on such deep truths, and are merely things that serve to ensure the position of a sovereign by means of legislation. (165)

Here Japanese mythology is used to generate a national ethos. Its citizens are told that Japan is a unique sacred nation which is ruled by a divine character. The *Cardinal Principles* goes on to argue the time dimension of Japan's special status. Namely, it is argued that Imperial Japan possesses everlasting life and so flourishes endlessly in an eternal "now." The *Cardinal Principles* states:

That our Imperial Throne is coeval with heaven and earth means indeed that the past and the future are united in the "now," that our nation possesses everlasting life, and that it flourished endlessly. Our history is an evolution of the eternal "now," and at the root of our history there always runs a stream of eternal "now."
(65)

The concept of an eternal "now," of course, assumes that the Imperial rule is unchanging and resistant to historical pressures within and without the country. Clearly, the aim of the *Cardinal Principles* is to unify and elevate the nationalistic spirit of the Japanese. The authors themselves state:

We have compiled the [*Cardinal Principles*] to trace clearly the genesis of the nation's foundation, to set forth clearly at the same time the features the national entity has manifested in history, and to provide the present generation with an elucidation of the matter, and thus to awaken the people's consciousness and their efforts. (emphasis added, 55)

Like the Hegelian phenomenology, consciousness becomes a task in the sense that Spirit is a progressive and synthetic movement through various figures or stages in which the truth of one moment resides in that of the following moment. In this way the *Cardinal Principles* constructs a convenient ideology for the ruling class (see, for instance, Ajisawa). Again Nagahara argues:

From the imperial view of history, the social and political actions of the masses, especially issues of class struggles and movements, were not only of no significance but also intolerable and something excluded. These problems could destabilize "harmony" of the great family nation whose head was the imperial family. This emotional and irrational concept of "harmony" was employed as a device to conceal the oppressing condition of the imperial state under the name of family nation. (my translation, 24)

Thus, the *Cardinal Principles* cannot but emphasize the spirit of harmony in order to inhibit liberal academism or politics.

The second defining characteristic of ideological pronouncement is one-sided communication, accepting no empirical evidence to prove the point, only to

extend comparisons with and denials of “outsiders.” At this point, the *Cardinal Principles* deploys the strategy hinged upon binary oppositions to, first, discredit the Western tradition, and, then, praise the Japanese tradition. They are based upon the assumption that the growing prosperity of the Imperial Line has “no parallel in foreign countries” (*Cardinal Principles* 67).

The book takes virtually any and every opportunity to argue the superiority of Japan over the West. The first example draws upon a purported relationship between “God” and men. Whereas the West posits a hierarchical relationship between God and people, in the East God is in eternal concord with the mutual harmony between them. Thus, the spirit of harmony is demonstrated even within the relationship of “God” and the Japanese people. Elsewhere, the same idea is also extended to the relationship between nature and human beings in which humankind and nature enjoy coalescent intimacy (*Cardinal Principles* 97). Political or moral philosophy is presented as another area of comparison (113). Whereas harmony provides moral character for the Japanese people, Westerners are not thought to be capable of drawing on collective inner strength because individualism characterizes them. Finally, Japan is represented as superior to the West in the terms of its social institutions. The Imperial Constitution is featured as a major example (161). The Constitution is distinguished from that of foreign countries by the nature of the ruler, and it is considered an august message of the Emperor.

In short, Japan is both differentiated from the West, and the superiority of Japan is held to be demonstrated over the West throughout the *Cardinal Principles*. The keys to the comparison are the oppositions between Japanese “harmony” and Western “individualism,” and between Japanese “filial piety” and Western “liberalism.”

The final constituent for the enactment of ideological pronouncement can be viewed as a lack of critical space, thus, undermining and limiting the possibility of public argument or discussion. Specifically, the *Cardinal Principles* presents a “sub-universe” within which Japan is infused uniquely with the “spirit of harmony.” Not only is harmony the “foundation of our country” but there exists no true harmony in Western individualism. The *Cardinal Principles* maintains: Harmony is a product of the great achievements of the founding of the nation, and is the power behind our historical growth; while it is also a humanitarian Way inseparable from our daily lives. The spirit of harmony is built on the concord of all things. When people determinedly count themselves as masters and assert

their egos, there is nothing but contradictions and the setting of one against the other; and harmony is not begotten. In individualism it is possible to have cooperation, compromise, sacrifice, etc., so as to regulate and mitigate this contradiction and the setting of one against the other; but after all there exists no true harmony. (93)

The spirit of harmony is characterized as the key concept to national unity and contrasted with individualism, or self-autonomy, which is asserted to be the basis of Western socio-political theories. If harmony is a cultural ideal of the Japanese race, then everything that aims at harmony should be desirable. Even “war” can be regarded as a valid activity, as long as its ends are to achieve harmony and to bring about peace: “War, in this sense, is not by any means intended for the destruction, overpowering, or subjugation of others; and it should be a thing for the bringing about the great harmony, that is, peace, doing the work of creation by following the Way” (*Cardinal Principles* 95).

In the *Cardinal Principles*, there is a careful and predetermined plan of prefabricated symbol manipulation to communicate to an audience. The symbol manipulated is, of course, the Emperor and the imperial myth. The modern concept of equal partnership among autonomous people is replaced by the emotional concept of harmony that envelopes the sovereign and subjects within a hierarchical relationship. Potentially threatening praxis is inhibited or ruled out by the bond of intimate interaction between the Emperor and his “Good and Loyal” subjects. Real politics is, for instance, not valued since it might hurt the spirit of harmony.

Harmony is asserted to have practical benefits for other cultures, too. The *Cardinal Principles* maintains that saving the deadlock of Western individualism is Japan’s “cosmopolitan mission” (55). The *Cardinal Principles* even indicts Westernization for the cause of the social evils in Japan’s modernity:

The various ideological and social evils of present-day Japan are the fruits of ignoring the fundamentals and of running into the trivial, or lack in sound judgment, and of failure to digest things thoroughly; and this is due to the fact that since the days of Meiji so many aspects of European and American culture, systems, and learning have been imported, and that, too rapidly. (52)

The Imperial Forces, hence, are given the mission to spread the Japanese moral superiority over the world. Of course, territorial aggrandizement is the only way to fulfill the cosmopolitan mission. So the spirit of harmony is elaborately transformed into the justification for Japan’s war efforts and imperial acts.

4. Conclusion

I have so far argued that ideological pronouncement is fascist/anti-realist discourse, and should be discounted and criticized as such. The problem lies in the fact that when such a discourse proliferates and is accepted by the general public, it is often difficult to counter it by critical/rationalist discourse as Japan's wartime experience indicates. The situation is, I believe, a cultural or even mythical domination of ideology over argumentation. In other words, the whole book can be regarded as a "mystification of social reality" insofar as the text represents the fascist regime's attempt to indoctrinate the people by combining its own aims with Japan's indigenous religion, Shinto. Japanese mythology is made into mythos of the state for the sake of rationalization.

The "mystification of social reality" is a process through which a grand narrative is logically rationalized by social agents depending upon, rather than opposing a mythos. By "mythos" I mean people's appreciation of their cultural heritage or membership in society. Here the rhetorical construction of mythic authority is used for the purpose of ordering the Japanese youth to serve the country. It is necessary to realize that the outcome of such a fascist/anti-realist discourse would be a disaster. Further efforts should be devoted by rhetorical communication scholars in order to attain freer and more reflective societies, and against the emergence of controlled and uncritical societies in the future.

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