ISSA Proceedings 2014 – Rules Is Rules: Ethos And Situational Normativity

Abstract: One question in the debate between the rhetorical and dialectical approaches concerns the availability of rules and standards. Are there objective standards, or are they changeable and situational? In Part One I briefly identify three concepts, context, audience and ethos. In Part Two I focus on ethos and how it is endemic to argument with familiars. Part Three shows that ethos concerns many local factors is situational. Finally, in Part Four, it is shown how the pragma-dialectical Rule 1 is situational.

Keywords: context, ethos, pragma-dialectics rhetoric, Grice, familiars, argumentation.

"If rational means scientific, there can be little doubt that most people are irrational" (Burke 1984, 17)

1. *Introduction*
I am going to distinguish, for the purposes of this talk, between rhetoric and dialectics in a particular way. I do not mean this to be the only difference or the essential difference, but the one I am focusing on for this discussion. I want to say that dialectics is concerned with rules that are to one degree or another independent of a particular audience or context, while rhetoric takes rules as being relative to audience and context. This is not to say that audience is completely irrelevant to dialecticians, but rather that the rules and their applications do not vary much as audiences change.

In my paper, "Natural Normativity" (Gilbert 2007), I argued that rules emerge from the interaction of interlocutors in a natural way governed primarily by social mores, face goals, and relationships. There are three important components of this interaction: ethos, audience and context. It will be noticed first that each of these is a sub-species of the subsequent. Ethos refers to an individual, and an audience is composed of individuals. Audiences occur in contexts that delineate who and what they are. Contexts are overarching and range from extremely broad to relatively narrow and concrete.

While there is disagreement between the two primary camps in Argumentation Theory, some things are acceptable to both. Each side agrees that context, from geographic to socio-political, has a role in defining how an argument will proceed. No one thinks an argument taking place in a formal Japanese business setting will be the same as one occurring at a fender bender in Italy. On the other hand, while rhetoricians may believe that different rules will obtain in different context, the dialecticians are more inclined to imagine that the rules will only change *mutatis mutandis*. Similarly, the idea that different audiences hold different sets of beliefs and loci will receive a nod from most theorists. The difference here will be that dialecticians tend to be more concerned with truth than belief. This distinction is highlighted by Burke (1984).

Calling traditional wisdom and loyalty "fallacies," when they have guided the lives of most humans throughout history, surely cannot mean that we should not base our behaviour on them. It cannot mean that they never give us good reasons to believe (in) something, and to act on the basis of that belief. (18)

In short, we normally separate belief and truth, the former only coming under examination when questioned.

2. *Familiars*

The component on which this talk will focus is ethos. Ethos is the finest in the sense that it typically applies to the particular partner with whom one is immediately engaged. First, let me reiterate my usual parameters. My primary focus is on dialogical arguments between two people or, perhaps, three or four. Secondly, most of the time we argue it is with what I call *familiars*: people we know, have argued with before, and will argue with (or at least communicate with) again. This is of vital importance: Each of these people, people in our lives, has an ethotic standing that is a result of our past interactions. So, the sense of ethos I am talking about here is not the kind that adheres to well known public figures or famous orators. Rather, it is the kind that leads you to trust your auto mechanic, rely on your best friend, and be wary of the colleague who always feels too inquisitive about what you're working on.

Following Aristotle (1986) Brinton stresses the importance of ethos in assessing speeches. Fair-mindedness in the presentation of speech influences us as to the credibility of the speaker: "character is almost, so to speak, the controlling factor in persuasion" (Aristotle in Brinton 1986 247). Brinton uses the term "ethotic

argument" as follows: "So argument will be regarded as ethotic whenever the credibility of some person or persons is introduced or otherwise appears as a factor in persuasion or reasoning" (Brinton 1986 247).

Now I am happy to follow Brinton in taking an ethotic argument as one in which the ethos of the speaker becomes an issue. But I think it is important to distinguish between an ethotic *argument* and an ethotic *rating.* While the former has the ethos of the speaker as its subject, the latter is omnipresent in all arguments whether ethos is the subject or not. An individual's ethotic rating [ER] comes first and most assuredly from previous interactions. Even when encountering someone for the first time the associations they carry, the context they bear, and the situation in which that encounter ensues all form a basis for at least a preliminary ER. Who introduced you, the purpose of the meeting, it's importance to you, the initial power standings of those involved, all serve to create an initial tentative ER.

The preceding makes it sound as if an ER is a simple single factor such as might be applied to a public figure with respect to her "approval rating." With familiars this is not the case because our interactions with them range over a large number of occasions and activities. If we consider the sorts of factors that go into an ethotic rating, we quickly see that it can vary from factor to factor. Perceived traits such as honesty, trustworthiness, reliability, and loyalty are obvious, but as well there is enthusiasm, empathy, intelligence, humour, vision, and sensitivity among others. Here context also plays a role. In a business setting with a colleague reliability might be paramount, while in a casual setting with a friend, sympathy and humour might be at the top. The friend you go to a music concert with might be a different person from the one who goes with you to a ball game. It is also important that Music Guy may well be aware that his preference is in that direction, and not toward baseball. It's not that he's bad company, or a bad person, it's just that he spends all his time at the game chatting about music. My baseball friend can, in fact, talk about music, but when Ball Gal is at the game with me, her focus is on balls and strikes rather than music. This does not make her a better person, but a better baseball companion, and that is why I choose Ball Gal over Music Guy when I have an extra ticket for the Blue Jays game.

When talking about familiars we tend to know what are their strengths and weaknesses. Let's change the context to the office. I know that Office Guy is an excellent researcher, while Business Gal is a first rate planner. These, like those

above, are all personal aspects we might consider skills, talents, or preferences rather than moral characteristics or virtues. Yet, they can often play a role in an argument as when, for example, you are deciding who to invite to what or who to assign to what. Very often when we are talking about ethos we are referring primarily to trust, and how reliable a speaker is with respect to their authority and veracity. These characteristics are of the first importance and are certainly the sorts of things that Brinton has in mind. But notice that what they have in common with the previous characteristics is that they all concern *behaviour*, how people behave or are expected to behave in different situations depending on our historical awareness of their previous behaviour.

In some world ruled by Informal Logic we ought only pay attention to what is in the speech being presented, and not the character of the proponent. But that is, first, close to impossible, and, secondly, it does not seem desirable. I say it's not possible because we use past interactions to both form and facilitate current ones. I cannot and would not want to blank out my memory each time I encountered someone or listened to a speech or argument put forward by them. At this time we in Toronto have a mayor, Rob Ford, who has become internationally notorious for unseemly behaviour including drunkenness, smoking crack cocaine, lying and boorish statements and actions. If he makes a statement denying various allegations it would be foolish of me to accept them at face value and ignore the fact that he has frequently denied charges that he will subsequently accept. His ethotic rating is so low, that he is beyond belief in both the figurative and literal senses.**[i]**

When we read about ethos, whether in the context of the Aristotelian sense or in regard to appeals to authority (for example, Walton 1989, Willard 1990), there seems to be a sense that the ER is one complete thing that applies to a person, but I suggest this is not generally the case, and especially not when interacting with familiars. To see that it's not always the case in the Aristotelian sense consider once again Mayor Ford. While there are some people who believe everything he has said, most of those who still support him believe he has lied and mislead regarding aspects of his personal life and behaviour. But they still have faith in his ability to save Toronto taxpayers money and believe in his mantra, "stop the gravy train."**[ii]** So his ethotic rating with respect to his ability to control himself at a party may be very low, he is still trusted when it comes to municipal money management. Tindale is relevant here.

This is related to the expert's ethos. A speaker cannot give herself or himself trust; the audience extends that to them. But this can be a crucial factor in whether an audience will accept what an expert says, and, depending on its strength, can give that acceptance durability in the face of conflicting evidence. (Tindale 2011, 341)

The point I am making is that trust adheres to an expert, i.e., a person, with respect to a specific domain of information, and not necessarily to everything they utter. Indeed, this is one of the standard caveats of rules for agreement from authority: make sure the speaker is an expert in the right field. Thus Johnson & Blair (1983, 144 ff) are clear that there is a field S, and that expert A asserting Q, must be an expert in field S. Music Guy, might be unreliable in many areas, might even be personally un-respected by you, but nonetheless is widely regarded to know everything there is to know about fifties and sixties Rock and Roll. You might not trust him to repay the $50 he wants to borrow, but you'll always let him settle an argument about who wrote "The Book of Love." Certainly, ethos can be a general idea pertaining to an individual, but that is not the only way it can be applied. In fact, much of the time we're more particular and more discerning. We have expectations of the people we talk to, and standards we expect them to uphold. So, if we ask Music Guy who sang the lead in the premiere performance of Bizet's *Carmen*, and he does not know we expect him to say so.

3. *Beliefs*
As cited above, Burke points out that we invariably rely on uncertain information embedded in shared beliefs and loci. Without these all arguments would end up in an infinite regress. Mind you, saying that many beliefs are taken for granted does not mean they must be accepted. To the contrary, any belief can be questioned, and if questioned, must be defended. "Feed a cold, starve a fever," is a common belief dating back to 1574, and while widely believed by others worldwide, will turn out to be false if challenged (Fischetti 2014). "Chicken soup is good for colds," may or may not be true. But if our family accepts the maxim, then when little Emma has a cold the question is not, should we research the issue, but rather, who's going to make the chicken soup. Since, as Perelman has taught us, arguments begin with shared beliefs, they all depend on situational components deriving from context, audience and ethos. Thus, "dialectical reasoning begins from theses that are generally accepted" (Perelman 1982, 2).

It is important here that I reiterate my stipulation that my concern is with

familiars. When it comes to people with whom we do not interact, the situation is quite different as then their public reputation is all we have to go on. In consequence, I would be loathe to accept the word of Mayor Ford on *anything*, as he has shown he lies about some things. Most of my friends, tradespeople and professionals, on the other hand, follow Grice's Maxims (Grice 1975) or *I am aware of their exceptions.* I know, for example, that Simon is very honest, but always misjudges how long it will take him to complete an assignment, and that my friend Deanne invariably exaggerates somewhat to improve the drama of a story. One way of thinking of this is just how far, how seriously, and how crucially they stray away from the maxims. In fact, when considering rules we may need not go much further than Grice's maxims. We expect people to be truthful (or at least honest), relevant, clear and reasonably concise (Grice 1975, 26-27).**[iii]** Violation of these rules indicates a potential invoking of the Cooperative Principle [CP], whereby we force the utterance into accordance with said rules. But the CP cannot be invoked if we have no knowledge of the situation and/or audience. Returning to ethos, I offer the following definition.

An ethotic rating is a symmetrical relationship between a proponent and interlocutor based on value judgments regarding qualities relevant to the specific situation, where those judgments are based on previous interactions and/or information.

The relationship is symmetrical because both parties will be applying ERs to each other, and the awareness of that process is itself a component in the interaction. So our reaction to people is frequently relevant to Grice's maxims making alterations, mutatis mutandis, for cultural variation. These are based on previous interactions, except in the null case of an initial meeting. Even then, such factors as who made the introduction, the context, location and known goals can provide at least minimum pre-interaction grounds for a rating. In other words, context and situation *always* plays a major role. It colours our expectations, as well as our evaluative sensitivities insofar as context determines what sort of behaviours, beliefs and values are deemed appropriate and acceptable at a given time and place.

4. *Rules*

The pragma-dialectic approach, as propounded by van Eemeren & Grootendorst (1987) contains a set of ten rules designed to govern a critical discussion [CD]. A CD is an *ideal form of argumentation*, and following the rules maintains its

integrity. The underlying idea of the rules is to create a situation in which the interlocutors are being fair, open and focused on obtaining the truth. This is expressed in Rule 1: "Parties must not prevent each other from advancing or casting doubt on standpoints" (1987, 287). Of course, ideal CDs are as rare as hen's teeth, and this is acknowledged when the concept of strategic maneuvering was introduced in the late 1990s. Arguers want to and will make their points in persuasive ways so as to convince their partners to agree with them. This is fine and perfectly normal in most situations; some would argue it is inevitable. Thus, van Eemeren and Houtlosser write, in 2002:

Strategic manoeuvring may take place at several levels of an argumentative move. The basic aspects of strategic manoeuvring are, in our view, making an expedient selection from the topical potential available at a certain discussion stage, adapting one's contribution optimally to the specific expectations and demands of the audience, and using the most effective presentational devices. (392)

One is, nonetheless, limited by the dialectical rules mentioned above. The question is, how far can one push persuasive techniques without crossing the line so that an argument becomes derailed. An argument is said to be derailed when it violates one of the rules.

An argumentative move is considered sound if it is in agreement with the rules applying to a specific stage of a critical discussion and it is considered fallacious if it violates any of these rules and hinders the resolution of a dispute (393).

Now as I said in Part One, and very loosely speaking, the dialectical approach takes argumentation as being first governed by rules, and subsequently controlled by audience. For me, this raised a question (and I am not sure it applies only to the dialectical approach,) and that is this. There are very many contexts, especially when that is broadly taken, where rules are violated. In particular, there are situations in which the ethos of a proponent is such that one is culturally enjoined from responding in an argumentative manner. Much as we learn in the west that boys don't hit girls, so the ER of an individual may preclude responding in a full and open way. So what happens when we have a conflict between a cultural norm and an argumentative rule? There are many cultures, for example, where arguing with a person who is older is unseemly and rude. Their ethotic rating comes not from personal experience, but from their contextually

defined status, or, perhaps more likely, the ER I have of this individual is overridden by the context. This cultural ER means that I cannot contest their opinions or beliefs, and this is opposed to the PD rule 1 where preventing argument is outlawed.

When I ask my Asian students about such arguments they are clear that they never argue with their elders; it is simply not done. In a similar vein, my Italian students explain that arguments never really end because no matter what, no one ever backs off or accepts "defeat," a violation of Rule 9. Rule 10 states: "Formulations must be neither puzzlingly vague nor confusingly ambiguous and must be interpreted as accurately as possible." But many cultures, aboriginal, Talmudic, and so on present arguments that by design or tradition are both ambiguous and confusing. When arguments are narratives, they may consistently violate this rule.

I could go on but I prefer to get to the question all this seems to raise, viz., are these situations of fallacy and rule violation, or would they be considered not arguments at all. What I mean to ask is this, if the ER of a proponent is such that one is not permitted to disagree, or if permitted to disagree then only to a limited extent, are we in an inherently fallacious situation, or is there simply no argument taking place. Obviously, one answer may be that there is an argument going on, but it's not a critical discussion, but even then the question of fallaciousness still arises. One might need to ask, as bizarre as it sounds, can a culture commit a fallacy? If a culture, religion or tradition marks an individual or class of people with an ethotic rating that precludes disagreement, then how can we assess the quality of their arguments?

On the dialectical model of argumentation rules, and following them, is the very heart of the project. As a result, unimpeachable ERs are inherently a violation of dialectic rules insofar as argumentation is severely limited. It strikes me, in consequence, that it is best for the dialectical view to claim that no arguments are taking place. The alternative is to charge that a culture is inherently fallacious. This is akin to what Malcolm Gladwell did in his analysis of the 1997 crash of Korean Airlines flight 801 (Gladwell 2008). He maintained the crash occurred because of the culture of deference that precluded a co-pilot from arguing forcefully with a pilot.**[iv]** In this sense it is the ethotic relations imbued by the culture that is at fault.

Ethotic ratings are ubiquitous for the simple reason that we almost always know those with whom we are interacting, and when we don't, we use the context to fill in as much as possible. Our partners always have markers of gender, race, class, age, and often status, wealth and cultural background. All of these influence our view of our protagonists, limit the actions and reactions we will have, and generally undermine a level playing field. So the question of violating various rules applies not only to severe cases such as the Korean deference issues, but in our own "egalitarian" society as well. It strikes me that on the dialectical model, because of the pervasive nature of ethotic evaluation, that virtually all argumentative interactions will become fallacious, which, of course, makes it an empty concept.

On the rhetorical view, this is not really a problem. It's not a problem because the audience centred nature of the view means that relations need to be explored in order for the interaction to be understood. As Willard, an extreme rhetorician, explains, arguments must be examined in situ, and the Argumentation Theorist must get her hands dirty by examining the human relationships that exist amongst the audience members (Willard 1989, 93). In this way ethotic relations are recognized as existing and as permeating the interaction, but now they can be examined for mis-use and abuse, rather than having their simple existence be evidence of a fallacy.

I dearly hope that I have not created a straw man in the description of the dialectical position. If I have, I apologise and beg for clarification. But it strikes me that a rule-based system cannot account for the personal dynamics that are inherent to human interactions. That said, I believe the rules, be they the pragma-dialectic ten commandments or the Informal Logic evaluative triumvirate, are important and useful. My issue is not with them as rules, but rather with them as the first basis for evaluation.

NOTES
i. This is not to say that Mayor Ford does not have his supporters. See Tindale (2011) for a discussion of this phenomenon.
ii. It is notable that even though almost every claim he has made regarding the money he has saved has been challenged, he is still believed by some.
iii. Grice's maxims require cultural variation and can be quite different in a variety of situations. Written with British gentlemen of a certain class in mind some alterations may be quite startling, e.g., in some cultures saying the

minimum is rude, and in some being honest is not always expected. That, however, is a different talk.

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v. There is not universal agreement with Gladwell's claim. Cf. http://www.nytimes.com/2008/12/29/opinion/29iht-edbeam.1.18978412.html?_r=0 for example.

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ISSA Proceedings 2014 – Towards A Foundation For Argumentation Theory

Abstract: I shall present and analyze numerous principles that argumentation theorists do agree upon (and some closely related one which they do not) and argue that the set presented here offers at best limited grounds for cross-theoretical evaluation.

1. *Introduction*
Argumentation theorists disagree about many things. For example, is conductive reasoning distinct from deductive or inductive reasoning? Could a painting or a judo flip be an argument? How many types of fallacies are there? Are there any enthymemes? Is relevance an independent condition of a good argument? Can a non-virtuous arguer give a good argument? Are arguments better construed as acts or as propositions or as sentences? Are all arguments dialectical? Answering these sorts of questions are among the current challenges of argumentation theory.

One impediment to answering these questions is that differing answers are often grounded in different theoretical frameworks. Hence, the issue is not merely one of trying to marshal 'the best' reasons for a particular answer to one of these questions, but rather to produce 'the best' overall theory. But now a new problem emerges – how do we assess, across theories, whether theory X is right for saying

an argument can have an infinite number of premises say, while theory Y is wrong for saying an argument cannot? We could of course try to adjudicate theories in the standard way in terms of simplicity, explanatory depth and breadth, etc., but such comparisons rarely generate a neat linear ordering. One theory may have advantages in one area of explanation, but do worse in another. Even worse, the theories may not agree on even the basic ontology and not agree on what sort of thing an argument is (or could be). Hence, one might doubt that it is possible to construct a fully adequate theory of argumentation.

My concern here is to at least begin to explore the possibility of adjudicating basic ontology issues in argumentation theory. What, if anything, are the constraints on an adequate theory of argumentation at the basic ontological level (at least from the perspective of argumentation theory)? Are there any substantive principles that are accepted by all theories that might serve as grounds for adjudicating amongst competing theories? In this paper I shall present and analyze numerous principles that argumentation theorists do agree upon (and some closely related ones which they do not) and argue that the set presented here offers at best limited grounds for cross-theoretical evaluation, though I shall also point to some possible paths forward.

2. *Background agreement*

Argumentation theory does not take place in a vacuum. Indeed, for there to be a recognizable argumentation theory (as distinct from say particle physics or pre-Imperial Roman history or basket weaving or World Cup football) there must be much that is at least tacitly agreed upon, such as at least: there are thinking beings, there are material objects such as chairs, buildings, stars, etc. The thinking beings perform various kinds of actions and have various kinds of goals, beliefs, and desires. There are languages which thinking beings use to communicate information with each other. There are various academic disciplines that categorize this information, etc.

I am not claiming that these tacitly agreed upon items are definitely known or true or unchallenged. Paul Churchland (1981) doubts there are beliefs. Trenton Merricks (2003) argues that there are no macro-sized non-conscious material objects while Jason Turner (2011) argues there are no composite objects at all. All I am suggesting is that, as argumentation theorists, we presuppose that argumentation is a human activity that occurs within the context of human beliefs and desires and goals within a world of tables, chairs, buildings, etc.

So there is a vast swathe of propositions that I suspect we agree upon and take for granted when we are doing argumentation theory. But much of this that we presuppose does not itself impact or help us adjudicate disputes in argumentation theory since it is against this presupposed backdrop, when trying to understand the human activity of argumentation, that the disputes themselves arise. Hence, even if it turns out that Merricks is right that there are no baseballs (or any other non-conscious composite objects), but merely atoms arranged baseball-wise, then, while a part of our presupposed background is not quite accurate, the inaccuracy is not something that affects our argumentation theory. We can argue about whether baseballs were in the strike zone just as easily as whether atoms arranged baseball-wise were in the strike zone. So despite the existence of large-scale agreement, we have not necessarily made much progress in terms of helping adjudicate theory disputes in argumentation theory, since it is against the large-scale agreement that the disagreements arise.

3. *Substantive agreement*

Is there anything substantively relevant to argumentation theory that all argumentation theorists agree upon? (or at least should agree upon?) At the very least it seems hard to be counted as doing argumentation theory if one does not accept:

(1) *There are acts of arguing*
Hard, though perhaps not impossible. Could there be a world in which people give/express arguments (and so there is a need for argumentation theory, and yet there is no arguing)? Perhaps they give arguments as a form of poetry or entertainment. The question of course is whether what the people give should in fact be called 'arguments' (or whether even if called 'arguments', the study of them should be called 'argumentation theory'). If we say 'yes' because historically they once used them to argue, but now do not, then the world is not a world in which there are no acts of arguing. If we say 'yes' because what they give/express correspond with what we give/express when we argue, then the matter is inconclusive since it may be that it is the usage of the giving/expression to argue that allows the giving/expression to be called an argument. So without the arguing, the giving/expressing in our hypothetical world would not be the giving/expressing of an argument. Regardless, even if it really were a possibility that one could do argumentation theory without there being acts of arguing, that possibility is quite remote from the situation in which we actually find ourselves –

one in which there are acts of arguing.

Given the plausible background assumption that action theory and argumentation theory are not the same thing, we should also accept:

(2) *Not all acts are acts of arguing*
(2), unlike (1), is not a precondition for doing argumentation theory, but rather a fact about the background world that is presupposed and yet is relevant to argumentation theory. Given the world of agents with beliefs and desires, and goals and wants and needs who act on those beliefs and desires to achieve their goals in a world of tables and chairs and money, etc., there are in fact acts that agents perform that are not acts of arguing. My sitting down before turning on the computer was not an act of arguing. Your eating of breakfast this morning (assuming you ate breakfast this morning) was not an act of arguing. In general acts of poety reading, prophesying, walking, etc are, most of the time anyway, not acts of arguing. This of course leaves open where the line is between acts of arguing and acts that are not acts of arguing. For example, are acts of persuading (or attempted persuasion) all acts of arguing or not. Are at least some acts of explaining also acts of arguing? Is proving a type of arguing or not?

While we may disagree on where the line is, we agree that there is a line to be drawn. For the notion of arguing to be a relevant sub-class of action, then there need to be examples of action that do not fall into the sub-class – otherwise arguing and acting start to look like two different names for the same thing. Hence, any theory that ultimately claimed that all acts (or none) are acts of arguing is to be rejected.**[i]** So what to make of the critical thinking textbook – *Everything's an Argument?* Despite the title, the actual claim of the book is that every instance of language or symbol use is a form of argument, which, even if stronger than most argumentation theorists are willing to accept, is still much weaker than the claim that all acts are acts of arguing.

(2) is not to be confused with the related:

(Z) Not all acts could be acts of arguing.

Put another way (Z) is: there is some act that could not be an act of arguing, or there is some act for which it is impossible that it be an act of arguing. While I suspect that many argumentation theorists agree with (Z) – there just are some acts that could never be acts of arguing, I am not sure that such agreement is

justified. Indeed, if exemplifying, providing an example to show a certain kind of object, act, or state of affairs is possible, is a kind of arguing and any action could, in the right circumstances, be an act of exemplifying, then every act could be an act of arguing.**[ii]** (This does not mean that there is a possible world in which every single act in that world is an act of arguing – it merely means that for every act x, there is some possible world in which x is an act of arguing.)

Some argumentation theorists hold that there must be a linguistic component for an act to count as an act of arguing. Others disagree – consider for example, Michael Gilbert's (2003) judo flip example. Regardless, if it is true that an act of arguing must involve a linguistic component, then any act with no linguistic component is not and (assuming it could not be the same act if it had a linguistic component) could not be an argument. But since argumentation theorists do not universally agree on whether an act of arguing must involve a linguistic, or even symbolic, component, we cannot use such an appeal to ground accepting (Z).

While argumentation theorists disagree about what is and is not an act of arguing and disagree about whether there are boundaries to what acts could be arguings, theorists at least agree that:

(3) *At least some acts of arguing involve the expression of reasons*

Stipulate that to express reasons it to give a symbolic representation of the reason. For many those expressions are limited to linguistic expressions – for others, pictorial expressions with no linguistic component will also count as expressions of reasons. But given the stipulation, Gilbert's judo flip may be the giving of a reason, but not the expressing of one. Hence, I cannot say that argumentation theorists agree that all acts of arguing involve the expression of reasons. But what of:

(A) All acts of arguing involve the giving of reasons.

According to Tony Blair (2003), "[e]ven the broadest definitions of argument, such as those of Willard (1989) and Gilbert (1997), presupposes some element of reason-using." Is there then no arguing if one is just giving the conclusion without reasons for it? While plausible, I am not sure that all argumentation theorists agree. For example, Maurice Finocchiaro (2003), argues that in at least some instances an argument is merely a defense of its conclusion from objections even if no reasons are given for that conclusion. Others allow the possibility of zero-

premise arguments and if one thinks that for every argument there is a corresponding potential arguing, then again it seems one is committed to the possibility of an act of arguing that does not involve the giving of reasons.(See Goddu 2014) So as plausible as (A), I hold off from adding it to list of agreed upon principles. [It may turn out that resolving the Finocchiaro case or the zero-premise argument case will ultimately vindicate (A). In the former, one might hold that the rejection of objections to a given conclusion themselves constitute reasons for that conclusion, whereas in the latter, perhaps one might reject that for every argument is a corresponding potential arguing. Regardless, I leave (A) off the list for now.]

Could you have an expression of reasons that was not part of an act of arguing? I suspect so. When I give an example of a reason, I express it, even if I do not argue. If I merely repeat someone else's reasons, I express them without arguing with them. A computer that generates complexes of sentences in the form: "A, B so C" may express reasons without any act of arguing happening. So I suspect we have evidence for:

(B) Not every expression of reasons is part of an act of arguing.

But I put (B) aside on the grounds that there may be some dispute about what counts as the expressing of a reason.

Finally, it is part of our background presuppositions about language and symbols and representations in general that they have meaning or content. Hence, all argumentation theorists should agree that:

(4) *Expressions of reasons have informational content*

Of course we may disagree about how to capture the notion of informational content – say in terms of propositions, or some primitive 'same content as' property, or something else. Regardless, we still agree that there is informational content that is distinct from the expression – "x is a bachelor" and "x is an unmarried male of marriageable age", or "x = 25" and "x = 5 squared" may have the same informational content, but are definitely not the same expressions.

Argumentation theorists, as far as I can tell, agree on (1)-(4). At the very least they act and write as if they do even if they have never explicitly uttered or written them. I suspect most would assent to (A) and (B) as well, but for the

moment I am putting those aside. (Though what follows does not change if (A) and (B) are put in the mix.) If I am wrong and argumentation theorists do not even agree on (1)- (4), then the prospects for moving forward are quite limited. If we cannot even agree on the basic constituents out of which the data we are trying to explain are constructed, then we will certainly never agree on any attempt to explain and organize that data. But is agreement on (1) – (4) enough for any progress? I turn to that question in the next section.

4. *Any payoff?*
Does (1)-(4) provide us enough agreement to make progress on our disputes? I suspect not, since the background presuppositions and (1)- (4) are currently consistent with:

(Y) There are no arguments.

Proof: Suppose the word 'argument' were stricken from our language as a myth, say on the par of 'subluminous ether' or 'phlogiston'. Could one still do argumentation theory with the ontology presupposed in (1)-(4)? Yes. There would be acts of arguing which we would try to distinguish from acts that were not acts of arguing. At least some of those acts of arguing would involve the use of expressions that had informational content. One could still debate whether the act or the expression or the informational content was the most important aspect of what was going on. One could still distinguish combinations of actions and expressions that in a certain context for a certain audience would be more likely to achieve assent than other combinations of actions and expressions in that context. One could talk of the logical properties holding between different pieces of informational content. One could ask whether the actions or the expressions or the informational content could be partitioned into various categories such as good, bad, rational, irrational, deductive, inductive, conductive, abductive, enthymeme, fallacy, convergent, divergent, virtuous, etc. One could, in short, I suspect recapitulate much of argumentation theory without the word 'argument' referring to anything at all.

One might claim that all this shows is that the word 'argument' is ambiguous – sometimes it is used to refer to the acts of arguing, sometimes to reason/claim expressions, sometimes to the informational content of those expressions. Granted. But I was not trying to show that (1) – (4) entail that there are no arguments – I was merely trying to show that (1) – (4) are consistent with there

being no arguments. The fact that (1) – (4) would also be consistent with 'argument' being a disjunctive ontological category, i.e. x is an argument iff x is an act of arguing or a reason/claim expression or the informational content of a reason/claim expression is beside the point. Put another way, (1) – (4) is consistent with none of the three contenders being arguments and with all of them being types of arguments. Nothing in (1) – (4) privileges one possibility over another. But note that even if one accepts that the word 'argument' is ambiguous, the word could still be excised for clarity's sake with no ontological loss – in other words, at the very least one could be a reductionist about arguments – they are nothing over and above acts of arguing or reason/claim expressions or the informational content of reason/claim expressions (and if the ambiguity was causing theoretical problems, then for the sake of accurate theory we might decide to excise the word anyway.)

But if (1) – (4) are consistent with there being no arguments, or with just acts being arguments or with all three ontological categories including types of arguments, then agreement on (1) – (4) alone will not help us adjudicate disputes concerning the nature and types of arguments. We cannot resolve disputes concerning enthymemes or fallacies or whether there are deductive, inductive, conductive, and abductive types of arguments if we cannot agree whether there are arguments at all, or if there, are what ontological category they fall into. Suppose, however, that, in addition to ~(Y), i.e. there are arguments, we add:

(C) Arguments are repeatable

to our list of agreed upon principles. Roughly speaking, repeatable entities can happen, exist, or be instantiated more than once. On most views, material objects are repeatable, but the temporal slices of material objects are not. Your desk chair is probably the same chair as yesterday. Even if the person in the next office is sitting in the same type of chair as you – they are not sitting in the very same chair. Similarly, on most views properties are taken to be repeatable even if the particular instantiations of them are not.

Argumentation theorists write and act as if arguments are repeatable. We worry about how to correctly extract the arguments from given texts, we expect our students to give us Anselm's argument and not their own muddled version of it, we speculate about how an argument would fare when given in different situations or to different audiences, and so on. This is not to say that we agree on

the identity conditions of arguments – by no means. But argumentation theorists do not take the identity conditions to be so stringent that arguments are not repeatable.

But holding to (1) – (4), ~(Y), and (C) has significant consequences for argumentation theory. Assume that the only three plausible candidates for arguments are some sort of act, expression, or abstract object. I know of no attempt to define argument that does not fall into one of these three categories (though I can find you various works where a given definition in one place puts arguments in one ontological category, but in another place puts arguments in a different ontological category – oops!). But given (C) we should also accept, what I take is a controversial claim in argumentation theory, viz.:

(*) Arguments are abstract objects.

The reason is simple. Neither acts nor expressions are repeatable. I raise my hand. I raise my hand again. While I performed two acts of the same type, I did not perform just one act – one act happened before the other and temporal location is one of the identity conditions of acts. Similarly for expressions: the first 'the' on this page may be the same type of symbol as the second 'the', but the two 'the's are not one and the same expression – they are located in different places and composed of different molecules of ink. Abstract objects of various stripes, on the other hand, are repeatable – informational content construed as propositions say, or act types or expression types which are properties. Hence, adding (C) to our list of agreed upon principles brings with it a commitment to arguments being a kind of abstract object.

Note that it does not commit us to a particular type of abstract object. Hence, those who favour act talk might opt for act types over propositions. I suspect that such solace will be short lived, for though I will not argue it here, I strongly suspect that any appeal to act types, to get the typing correct, will ultimately appeal to the informational content. For example, my giving Anselm's argument in a high falsetto in English while someone else presented Anselm's argument in booming Danish will count as instances of the same act type, for the purposes of identifying arguments, in virtue of the informational content presented since most of the other act types these two particular acts fall under do not overlap.

Regardless, I am not here trying to argue for the truth of (*), but merely to show

that given (1) – (4), commitment to ~(Y) and (C), short of finding another ontological option for arguments beyond the three standard ones used in argumentation theory, commits one to (*). If arguments as abstract objects cannot be tolerated, one is free to reject that arguments are repeatable (and live with the consequences) or even to reject ~(Y) and just give up on arguments altogether and focus, in one prefers, on, say, arguings and types of arguings instead.

5. *Conclusion*

On the one hand I have made no progress on the list of issues I used as examples at the beginning of this paper. The principles we, as argumentation theorists, agree upon so far, are too minimal to help us resolve these issues. But I do hope that I have at least provided four possible avenues for moving forward. Firstly, we could try to find more principles that argumentation theorists agree upon. (Perhaps one might try to appeal to the principles offered in George Boger's "Some Axioms Underlying Argumentation Theory"? I suspect however that the tenets he gives are not generally agreed upon or non-contentious, even if widely accepted within one strain of argumentation theory.) For example, I strongly suspect that argumentation theorists also agree on some principles roughly like the following:

(D) All arguings involve the expressing/giving of a claim.
(E) All arguers have some goal to be achieved by arguing.
(F) Some arguings happen for the purpose of changing belief, promoting action, convincing, persuading, demonstrating.

One can hope that finding more agreed upon principles will generate a better basis for adjudicating disputes. Note however, that even adding (D) – (F) to our list of agreed upon principles does not change the results of section 4.

Secondly, we could deny that there are arguments and focus instead on arguings, reason/claim expressions, and the informational content of such expressions (and the relationships and uses and types) of each and see if dissolving talk of arguments also dissolves the original problems. Thirdly, we could deny that arguments are repeatable and trace out the consequences for argumentation theory. Fourthly we could accept that arguments are repeatable and focus on arguments as abstract objects and trace out the consequences of that. For example, it is not at all clear that arguments as abstract objects can have missing premises – perhaps the expressions of the arguments in texts can have missing

components (given the arguments we take those expressions to express), but the arguments themselves cannot. Hence, commitment to (*) might also commit one to 'enthymeme' not being a property of arguments at all. I leave it up to you which path you shall follow.

NOTES

i. John Woods (1992) appeals to similar principle with regards to relevance – any theory of relevance that makes everything relevant to everything or nothing relevant to anything is to be rejected.

ii. The issue is made more complicated by the problem of trying to type acts or identify the identity conditions of an act – could act x have happened two minutes later and still be the same act? On some theories of the nature of acts the answer is 'no', but on others it is 'yes'.

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ISSA Proceedings 2014 – Climate Scientist Stephen Schneider Versus The Sceptics: A Case Study Of Argumentation In Deep Disagreement

Abstract: Can deep disagreement be managed by argument? This case study examines the 2010 exchange between prominent climate scientist/climate communicator Stephen Schneider and an Australian television audience of self-described climate "sceptics." An analysis of the moves made by audience members, the moderator, and Schneider himself shows that Schneider consistently reframed the interaction emphasize trust, refusing to respond in kind to attacks on his credibility. He exerted firm control on the issues. And at several points, he exercised his authority as a scientist in refusing to engage points that were outside the scientific consensus. Although some of Schneider's moves might traditionally have been classified as fallacies, in this context they served as strategies for managing interactional challenges, and making an exchange of arguments possible.

Keywords: argument, argumentation, disagreement, normative pragmatics, authority, climate communication

1. *Introduction*

Arguments get made when people disagree (Goodwin, 2001; Govier, 1987; Jackson & Jacobs, 1980). But disagreeable interactions aren't necessarily ideal

environments for good reasons to flourish. Some argumentation theories try to side-step this difficulty by supposing that arguers' surface disagreements rest on a deeper basis of cooperation. But even if we adopt this idealizing starting point for theory – and certainly if we do not (Goodwin, 2007) – we still have to inquire "how arguers make do under imperfect circumstances" (Jacobs & Jackson, 2006, pp. 123-124), that is, under the circumstances they are actually in. Thus lack of cooperation, fallacious moves and other symptoms of deep disagreement are not just problems for theorists to deal with; arguers in practice have to confront and manage them. "Argumentation is a self-regulating activity" (Jacobs, 2000, p. 274); it is primarily up to the arguers themselves to construct an interaction where they can use good reasons to get something done.

This case study carries forward the normative pragmatic approach to argumentation by untangling the management strategies adopted by a most skilled arguer in a most disagreeable situation. In 2010 eminent climate scientist Stephen Schneider appeared on Australian television to talk with an audience of climate "sceptics." Schneider's long career as a science communicator had started in 1971, when as the juniormost member of a modelling team whose results had attracted the attention of the press, he was volunteered to be their spokesperson. Schneider found he enjoyed the work, and was good at it, so for the next forty years he placed himself on the leading edge of both climate science – founder and editor of the journal *Climatic Change*, lead author in the IPCC process – and climate science communication. A highly reflective communication practitioner, his working paper on "Mediarology" documents his commitment to thinking through the "oxymorons" or "double ethical binds" confronting scientists who lived up to their obligation of public outreach (Schneider, n.d.). And the very title of his memoir, *Science as a Contact Sport* (2009) documents his willingness to engage broadly with diverse public audiences on the issues he devoted his life to.

It was likely Schneider's general willingness to talk with his fiercest opponents that lead him in to respond positively to an invitation to go on the Australian news/talk show *Insight* to engage with 52 self-described doubters. Australia, one of the early leaders in policy action against climate change was at that time entering a period of backlash, which eventually resulted in the repeal of many important measures. Although outright doubts about the reality of anthropogenic global warming were low (Leviston, Price, Malkin, & McCrea, 2014), the tone of

the debate had grown increasingly harsh.

The *Sceptics*, as the episode was called, is thus a promising context in which to study good practices for managing deep disagreement. In the following pages, I first outline specific challenges Schneider faced, before turning to what we can observe of his toolkit for managing these challenges. Quotations are from the show's own transcript (*Insight*, 2010), corrected from the video.

2. *The challenges*

In undertaking to engage with "the sceptics," Schneider was facing several challenges. The first, overarching challenge was whether interaction was possible at all – or at least, whether a reason-giving, argumentative interaction was possible. Schneider himself characterized the wider public discussion of climate issues with a fight metaphor, as a "constant set of *combat*." The press moderator similarly framed the present interaction in warlike terms, introducing segments by inviting the television audience to watch Schneider "*take on* a room full of climate change sceptics" and "to *win* them over." This framing hardly provided optimism on the ability of good reasons to find traction in the situation.

In addition to the general problem of deep disagreement, Schneider faced two related, specific challenges when interacting with "sceptics." First was the challenge of distrust. Australians have been characterized as having a "not exceptionally high" level of trust in scientists generally (Leviston et al., 2014). Not surprisingly, there is evidence (from surveys in the US, at least) that people who are doubtful or dismissive of the existence of climate change are particularly distrustful, especially of climate scientists (Leiserowitz, Maibach, Roser-Renouf, & Hmielowski, 2012). In meeting with The Sceptics, Schneider repeatedly encountered indications that his interlocutors not only doubted his climate science, but also doubted him, personally. One criticized him for allegedly spinning his science, characterizing him as "exaggerating;" another said he was giving "prevaricative" answers; and Janet—one of his leading opponents on the program – accused him of "alarmism" and "scaremongering." During the interaction, Schneider's perceived bias was twice traced back to its roots in self-interest, either financial:

The only reason you're getting grant money is because climate change, the planet is warming, it's the only reason you're getting grant money. If we didn't have this hysteria there would be no grants, there would be no money – no people making

money at all.

or political:

What I find suspicious is that I have not heard, and I watch a lot of media, one of these moderately minded scientists come out and hose down the Doomsday scenarios being pedalled by environmentalists and our politicians. I'm not speaking of you yourself, sir, but your industry, your lobbying, the lobby of which you are a part... I think a scientist in your position could speak up against bias language even in areas where it actually contributes to your industry.... I would like to hear people in your business admit some doubt.

This second passage occurred relatively late in the event, after Schneider (as we will see below) had built up some trust with his audience, and the interlocutor here tries to exempt Schneider from the criticism he is levelling. But his utterance reveals that he takes climate scientists to be a "business," "industry" or "lobby" group, roughly on par with the fossil fuel industry or environmental advocacy organizations: a typical political actor, using "bias language" to advance self-interest. Obviously, it will be difficult for Schneider to get his interlocutors to take his arguments seriously if they believe he is just a political shill; Schneider must therefore do something to mitigate the distrust in order for the interaction to proceed.

A second specific challenge Schneider faces arises from the fact that climate science is complex, but the time for making arguments is always limited. Those who would cast doubt on mainstream science can take advantage of this fact by adopting a strategy known as the "Gish Gallop," or what American debaters term "spread." Using this strategy, interlocutors raise such a large number of arguments – generally weak or baseless arguments – that their opponents are unable to respond to them all within the time constraints, thus creating an appearance that they cannot respond. Intentionally or not, several of Schneider's interlocutors bombarded him with diverse considerations in a small space of time. For example, early in the interchange one interlocutor – Janet – raised three distinct points over a short set of three turns:

[Janet] The hypothesis that we are currently faced with is that carbon dioxide is the driver of climate change and throughout history we have proven evidence that temperature has been much colder with higher degrees of CO_2 in the atmosphere

than what we have today and vice versa...

The evidence says that we did have warming, yes, we have [not] been in a long-term warming trend the last 15 years, we haven't had no statistical warming and so I think that's a problem with this hypothesis. I believe that the hypothesis has been shown to be false....

I think we've got a fundamental problem in that we are wanting to change our entire economic structure based on the hypothesis that CO2 is the driver of climate.

The first concerns how scientists have attributed the current warming to the rise in CO2 ("attribution"); the second concerns the existence of current warming at all ("detection"); the third concerns the correct policy response to climate change. Although the program is long given the television medium (with 45 minutes devoted to talk), and the moderator allows Schneider extended turns, Schneider could legitimately find it difficult to respond fully to even one of these points, much less all three. After all, it took the IPCC 5th Assessment Report 1552 pages to summarize the physical science relevant to points 1 and 2.

3. *Schneider's strategic toolkit*
Having reviewed the challenges Schneider faces, I now turn to examine his responses. What strategies does he have for opening a space for argumentative interaction, managing deep disagreement, distrust, and issue spread? I start with Schneider's responses the two more specific challenges, before taking up the general problem of transacting disagreement between scientists and citizens.

3.1 *Aggressive presumption of good faith*
Throughout the event, Schneider refuses to accept his interlocutors' negative characterizations of his motives. But he equally refuses to reply to them in kind. In this way, Schneider verbally enacts an attitude of trust in his interlocutors, treating them as worthy conversation partners.

Consider first Schneider's management of the open expressions of distrust towards him. When accused of exaggeration, Schneider responds by simply denying the charge and re-explaining the evidence for his figures. When accused of contradicting what he had said in another context, he blames the problem on his "American English" and admits that "if" he said what the interlocutor said he said, "he misspoke" – although it was almost certainly the case that it was the

interlocutor who misunderstood. When accused of bias due to membership in the climate science "industry," he either ignores the accusation (helped by the moderator, who shifted immediately to another member of the audience), or explains that the group of climate scientists are quite diverse, including some members who admittedly do "overstate," but many (including himself) who do not.

Schneider is furthermore careful to avoid saying that his interlocutors are speaking with the kind of "bias" or "exaggeration" they charge him with. Schneider of course is aware of the generally accepted fact that special interests have put substantial amounts of money behind messaging that manufactures doubt of climate science (e.g., Ceccarelli, 2011; Oreskes & Conway, 2010). And it is also clear that Schneider thinks some of his interlocutors have been misled by these messages. But in discussing the misinformation, he distances his present conversation partners from the advocacy. For example,

There are groups which have spent a lot of time – people have made assertions...

Here Schneider starts by a reference to the "groups" doing the distorting, but immediately corrects this already impersonal designation to remove the suggestion of active misleading (it's just making "assertions") and of organization (it's just "people"). Even when pressed, he maintains a distinction between the intentional misleading performed by advocacy groups in the public sphere and the specific utterances of his present interlocutors. Schneider starts his second interchange with Janet, one of his most hostile opponents, by saying:

I'm concerned that you're kind of repeating a mantra from what you've heard from discredited information.... When people try to say that [the "discredited information"] they either do not understand climate science or they polemicizing, because it is an absolutely every single model.

Here we see Schneider reporting not his interlocutor's assertion of faulty reasoning (hedged as "kind of"), but his own "concerns" about it; and he gives his interlocutor an out, allowing that she may just "not understand," not that she is necessarily "polemicizing."

Finally, Schneider responds to distrust by actively expressing trust, specifically denying that people like his interlocutors are moved by anything less than the public good. "I don't know [any] coal miner or any auto worker making a big car

who does it to screw up the climate," he explains at one point, "but they may be screwing up the climate."

In sum, Schneider appears to be systematically avoiding any hint that his interlocutors may be guilty of bad argumentative conduct – and specifically, of precisely the bad argumentative conduct some of them accuse him of. There is no "crying foul" against his interlocutor's questionable moves (Innocenti, 2011). Instead, Schneider is implicitly following Sally Jackson's (2008) advice to scientists in particular: to refrain from questioning others' motives, to avoid opening a meta-debate over possible "politicization" of scientific findings, and instead to stick to critiquing the reasoning itself. Although (as we will see below) Schneider does set limits around what is worth debating, in his utterances he consistently frames his interlocutors as worthy conversation partners.

3.2 *Issue management*

As pointed out above, Schneider's interlocutors (intentionally or not) several times present him with multiple potential issues, threatening to make his replies appear inadequate. Issues are not simply given by the occasion, however; they are the outcome of the discursive work done by all participants in an exchange (Goodwin, 2002). What does Schneider do to manage the complexity he faces?

Throughout the event, Schneider displays some skill at being explicit about the set of issues he is addressing. At a minimum, he often begins his turns with "first of all," priming his auditors to expect additional arguments after the first is finished. He even occasionally manages to mark his later points, with "with regard to" or "the question is" – something that is difficult to do on the fly. Schneider also frequently begins by identifying the specific issue he will address. In an elaboration of his first strategy of aggressive trust, he tends to accomplish this by praising his interlocutor's framing of the "question" as "good," "very good," or even "excellent." At one point he even goes out of his way to explain why the question is a good one – because it aligns with the questions climate scientists themselves have raised:

Yeah, a good question [raising doubts about the integrity of some measurements] and so does the scientific community.... So that very good question that you asked is exactly the same question that climate scientists have been asking themselves for 30 to 40 years.

When faced with a definite "Gish Gallop," Schneider is especially careful to be explicit about the issues in play. Here is Schneider in his first interchange with Janet, the interlocutor whose three issues were quoted above, at the end of taking up her second point:

That's [her first point, attribution] a tougher question which I will be happy, in fact must address which many of you brought that up in your opening comments.
[Moderator] We'll get on to that in a moment. Does that answer your question, Janet?
[Janet raises her first point again.]
[Schneider] Yeah, that's a different question.
[Janet, overlapping] That isn't…
[Schneider] That's what we call detection—[correcting that to] attribution. I promise you I'll talk about that. Right now we're only talking about, is the climate changing? [i.e., detection]

Here we see Schneider doing extensive metadiscursive work to differentiate the potential issues, to identify which he has already replied to, and to promise to reply to the remaining. The moderator never gave him a chance to return to the missing point, but his explicitness here makes clear to the listening audience that it is the constraints of the medium, not his own inability, that prevents a full response to the issues.

Finally, in one extreme case Schneider twice breaks in to secure his opportunity to register a reply. At the end of the second interchange with Janet, Schneider first interrupts the moderator, asking, "can I just quickly answer that?" and then interrupts Janet with "can I please finish?" Despite the politeness devices (asking for permission, minimizing the interruption as "quick," using "please"), Schneider here shows he is willing to disrupt the interchange in order to get his points heard.

Schneider's marking of points is helpful for ensuring that his audience follows his reasoning. But clarity is not the only strategic purpose of his heavy use of metadiscourse. While responding as fully as the medium permits to the points he thinks most important, Schneider's argumentative roadmaps prevent his audience from inferring that he has no answers to the others.

3.3 *Exercise of authority*

As we have seen above, Schneider does a lot to establish his interlocutors as worthy conversation partners – even when they are giving them grief – and also gives strong endorsements to the "questions" they are raising. At the same time, however, he is clear about one thing: there are points that are simply not debatable.

In his first interchange with Janet, Schneider leads off with:

Yeah, okay, that's wrong, sorry – that's not what the evidence says. First of all…

Notice that Schneider mitigates the rejection of Janet's reasoning by shifting from the possible "you're wrong" to the impersonal "that's wrong," and by adding hedges in advance and an apology afterwards. Also, although he does not argue against Janet's point, he does go on to provide an explanation of the science on the topic. Stronger is his response to another interlocutor:

I'm sorry to say that's not true. Please read the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report…

Here we see the same impersonality and apologizing, but coupled with a possibly condescending instruction to the interlocutor to go and read up on the topic – a method for resolving the difference of opinion that doesn't take up precious time in the interaction. Finally, in an exchange with a recalcitrant interlocutor Schneider first offers an out – "perhaps you haven't understood the answer" – before finally concluding:

[Schneider] Oh, then you're totally wrong.
[Interlocutor] I'm saying [repeats point]
[Schneider] I think you need to study this problem.
[Interlocutor] I've studied it—
[Schneider] Obviously not well. Let me give you an example.
[Moderator] Okay, one at a time. Let Stephen respond.
[Schneider] [Gives example.] … That is completely well established, it's been established for a long time and if you don't accept that you really need to study science. You're just wrong.

Here Schneider's reply is personal – "you're totally wrong" – and the dismissal he gives his interlocutor – to go and "study science" – direct.

It is interesting to note that in all three instances, Schneider is refusing to engage

when his interlocutor attempts to play a "scientist" role (e.g., when he is identified as a "Dr.") or to use the language of science (e.g., "hypothesis"). While Schneider finds it praiseworthy for lay interlocutors to raise "questions" – especially when their questions coincide with scientists' own – lay interlocutors aren't worth talking with when they cross over into the terrain of science and maintain positions that he, the scientist, finds unsupportable. In these cases Schneider exercises his authority as a scientist, declares that his interlocutors are "wrong," and directs them to engage in further study (i.e., to become scientists) before he will engage with them. Shutting down debate is of course commonly accounted as a fallacious move in argumentative interactions. In Schneider's interaction with "the sceptics," it appears to play a vital role in keeping the controversy contained.

4. *Conclusion*

Few raised their hands towards the end of the program, when the moderator inquired whether Schneider had changed any minds. But perhaps changing minds – resolution of the disagreement – was not the point of the interaction (Goodwin, 1999)

Instead, towards the end of the event Schneider and many of his interlocutors find themselves converging with regard to what one in the audience calls "the rhetoric of this" – that is, the way the controversy is discursively transacted outside the present interaction. Schneider echoes an interlocutor's criticism of some of his fellow scientists, who "overstate" the facts about climate change. Another interlocutor picks up with approval Schneider's critique of the media's "sound byte journalism," which she agrees adds to "the problem." When one interlocutor criticizes the "argy-bargy sort of thing" which makes it impossible for laypersons to find credible answers, Schneider approves and goes on to warn against any speaker who claims to be a "truth teller" – on either side of the debate. And most notably, Schneider and two of "the sceptics" exchange stories of receiving threats and ostracism because of their statements on climate issues. Schneider sums up that discussion:

I decry the destruction in civility that's been happening around this issue...because if people can't maintain a civil dialogue how are you going to run a civil democracy?... There's no place for that in civil society because scientists also need to be engaged by helping people understand risk. And when you're in this constant set of combat then how do we have any chance of talking to each

other in a civil way? Which is why I agreed to do this program.

To which his interlocutor replies:

I was just about to say the thank you for actually engaging in dialogue sensibly and not— basically not demonising anyone who dares to raise a doubt.

It's become typical advice to offer climate scientists: do not debate with "the sceptics" who doubt your science; stop arguing, and use more effective communication techniques instead (e.g., Lamberts, 2014). The fact that Stephen Schneider was able to argue with an audience of "the sceptics" for an hour flies in the face of this advice. It took effort to make the interaction happen; as I have shown, Schneider had to use great care in projecting an active trust in his interlocutors, in managing the issues, and, at some points, in closing down debate. But the investment was worth it. As a small enactment of "civil dialogue," this event provided a demonstration to the participants and the wider audience that something like a worthwhile argumentative interaction is possible, even among those who deeply disagree.

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ISSA Proceedings 2014 – The Matrix For The 21st Century Russian Education

Abstract: The paper deals with the problem of argumentation literacy in the field of modern Russian education. We carry out the analysis of argumentation that university students put forward while writing argumentative essays as a part of their final English test. The analysis concerns papers written by students at different exam levels: B2, C1. The command of English at these levels differs a lot and the analysis is aimed at revealing connection between students' language ability and their argumentative ability.

1. *Introduction*

This paper addresses the study of relations between students' argumentative ability and their foreign language ability and in particular, that part of relations that has to do with the skill to produce arguments in a foreign language (English in our research) and the level of the English language competence. The study makes use of the pragma-dialectical approach to argumentative discourse that unites normative and descriptive approaches to the argumentation. We start with some background information concerning the changes in educational approach to foreign language teaching that are being carried out in the field of Russian language education. Then we present the results of students' essays analysis and finally make some conclusions.

2. *Educational shift towards competences*

The Common European Framework provides a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc. across Europe. It describes in a comprehensive way what skills language learners have to acquire in order to use a language for communication and what knowledge and skills they have to develop to be able to act effectively. The Framework also defines levels of proficiency that allow learners' progress to be measured at each stage of learning and on a life-long basis.

The Council of Europe is concerned to improve the quality of communication

among Europeans of different language and cultural backgrounds. This is because better communication leads to freer mobility and more direct contact, which in turn leads to better understanding and closer co-operation.

The main document produced by the Council of Europe is the CEFR, the chief goal of which can be formulated as the following: "The Common European Framework is intended to overcome the barriers to communication among professionals working in the field of modern languages arising from the different educational systems in Europe" (CEFR, 2001, p. 1). Recently created Language Testing Centre of Saint Petersburg State University has developed its own tests that are currently going through the process of being linked to the CEFR. That means that a group of international experts are analyzing the above-mentioned tests developed by the university experts in terms of their compliance with the CEFR requirements.

According to the CEFR language use embracing language learning comprises the actions performed by persons who as individuals and as social agents develop a range of competences, both general and particular language competences with the special emphasis on communicative competence. They draw on the competences at their disposal in various contexts under various conditions and under various constraints to engage in language activities. The production and receiving verbal messages in various situations imply both the diversity of themes covering specific topical domains and communicative relations between interlocutors. Activating strategies relevant to functional approach seems most appropriate for carrying out the tasks to be accomplished in general education (CEFR, 2001, p. 9)

Thus, we can say that modern educationalists regard forming competences as one of the main goals of foreign language teaching. Competences are regarded as a sum of knowledge, skills, abilities behavioral rituals that allow a person to perform actions. In our study we are interested mainly in communicative language competence that comprises several components: linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic. If we look at the definitions of the above competences given in the CEFR, we will get the following:

Linguistic competences include lexical, phonological, syntactical knowledge and skills and other dimensions of language as system.

Sociolinguistic competences refer to the sociocultural conditions of language use.

Pragmatic competences are concerned with the functional use of linguistic resources (production of language functions, speech acts), drawing on scenarios or scripts of interactional exchanges.

All these competences are necessary for encouraging learners to organize argumentative speech in a foreign language in both learning situations and natural communicative situations. Argumentative foreign language competences are concerned with argumentative ability of the person and comprise the ability to present a viewpoint in a foreign language drawing on linguistic devices, to put forward arguments for or against a particular standpoint, to sequence arguments in a logical way and to present arguments organizing them in argumentative structures.

We think that these competences should be included in pragmatic competences as an important component in the course of foreign language teaching.

3. *Argumentation literacy*
The problem of argumentation literacy in the field of Russian education has become urgent with the introduction of the United State Exam in Russian comprehensive secondary school. School students are encouraged to use some of argumentation schemes in foreign language writing and speaking. However, the level of present Russian school foreign language interaction concerns more explanation of the speaker's standpoint rather than argumentation. The level of higher education requires a more sophisticated approach to argumentation education incorporating different levels of language proficiency and knowledge in special professional fields. With State Saint Petersburg University's joining the Bologna process aimed at the creation of European Higher Education Area (EHEA) the urgency of argumentation literacy has become even higher.

As far as Russia is concerned we can say that practical argumentation education was mostly developed in business schools and foreign languages in most cases came as a subsidiary instrument used for verbal socializing. Moreover, the model of the adult world reflected in the language is connected with certain stereotypes, which should be taken into account and are presently covered by the culture-studies as speech habits and rituals in quickly changing present-day communication. The concept of the stereotype can be seen as a phenomenon that

covers social aspect of communication practice and a rhetorical one. In the first case the recurrence of social situations is important which can be used in educational case settings, whereas the rhetorical aspect provides the genre of argumentative dialogue. Both aspects are relevant for argumentation literacy.

Second and foreign language teaching is often based on the assumption that learners have already acquired a knowledge of the world sufficient for the purpose participating in argumentative dialogue. This is, however, not always the case and we think that is definitely not the case when we are talking about argumentative ability of the learner of a foreign language. It is really difficult to put your message across to other people in a foreign language and far more difficult to convince them.

The learner may well argue in his/her mother tongue and we tend to extrapolate his/her ability into a foreign language. Understanding the stereotypes and the fact that people communicate and listen differently is a part of argumentation and language teaching.

As J. Harmer noted 'language teaching…reflects the times it takes in. Language is about communication…Teaching and learning are very human activities; they are social just as much as they are linguistic' (Harmer, 2011, p. 9).

3.1 *CEFR criteria*
The aim of the present study is to carry out the analysis of argumentation that university students put forward while writing argumentative essays that are an obligatory part of their final test in English. First we discuss basic criteria for two levels (B2 and C1) and then cover the comparative argumentation analysis connected with their language skills.

New requirements for English as a foreign language have recently been adopted for university students. According to these requirements all university graduates should possess B2 in English. Those students who entered university with B2 should sit English exam at C1 level. Thus, university graduates may be either B2 or C1 students. We conducted a comparative analysis of essays written by students at different exam levels: B2 and C1 according to CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference). The required performance of English at these levels differs a lot and we believe that the argumentation competence may also differ. CEFR criteria at the target levels B2 and C1 are the following:

B2 students can write an essay or report, which develops an argument systematically with appropriate highlighting of significant points and relevant supporting detail. Examples: Can write an essay or report which develops an argument, giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view and explaining the advantages and disadvantages of various options. Can synthesize information and arguments from a number of sources. Has a sufficient range of language to be able to give clear descriptions, express viewpoints and develop arguments without much conspicuous searching for words, using some complex sentence forms to do so.

C1 students can select an appropriate formulation from a broad range of language to express him/herself clearly, without having to restrict what he/she wants to say. Examples: Can write clear, well-structured expositions of complex subjects, underlining the relevant salient issues. Can expand and support points of view at some length with subsidiary points, reasons and relevant examples.

3.2 *B2 students' argumentative ability*

Argumentation scheme for the analysis is taken from the pragma-dialectical approach. In pragma-dialectical approach (van Eemeren, Grootendorst, Jackson & Jacobs, 1993) natural argumentative discourse models were described through normative models, which allow incorporating normative models of dialogue and different types of communicative activity in some particular situational settings.

The analysis shows that students presenting their essays at B2 level demonstrate the following argumentative abilities and competences. They can indicate standpoints and produce mainly utilitarian arguments. They employ the limited range of language to express standpoints. The examples of the expressions are the following:

1. In my opinion, I personally think, I agree, I consider, I'm inclined to believe, I believe, I think, I feel, as far as I am concerned, my personal opinion is, from my point of view.

The most common way to indicate standpoint at this level is to indicate it explicitly by using personal pronouns and explicit linguistic markers as can be seen from given examples.

The analysis also reveals that at this level of language competence students use two main types of arguments: 1. personal, utilitarian, beneficial; students appeal

to positive concepts of "goodness"; 2. arguments to popular opinion. Let us look at the example of utilitarian argumentation. The standpoint that is defended is expressed explicitly with the clear linguistic marker. The argumentation can be reconstructed as subordinately compound:

2. Standpoint: In my opinion, it is very useful for young people to move to another city to study
Argument 1: Studying far away from home gives students not only an academic knowledge but also a great life experience.
Sub-argument 1: These skills make young people more successful, self-confident and clever. Sub-argument 2: It makes students to become independent from their parents.

There is one argument that is backed up by two sub-arguments. All the arguments that are put forward to defend the standpoint are mainly utilitarian and beneficial and closely connected with the personal life experience of the arguer. A special type concerns causal relations.

Given examples show that the arguer cannot alienate himself/herself from his/her owns self. It is revealed in the concepts to which he/she appeals: life experience, independence, success, self-confidence. We can consider some more examples of personal utilitarian arguments:

3. Standpoint: Some people think that participating in a reality show can be a valiable life experience (we retain original grammar and spelling)
Argument: I agree with this statement, as this kind of experience may be very useful.

4. Standpoint: The Internet is very useful thing.
Arguments: 1. it can help us to find information, 2. it connects people around the world, we can chat how much we want.

5. Standpoint: In my opinion, people should communicate face to face.
Arguments: 1. a human will feel himself better if he communicates really not with Internet. 2. Live communication will help us to understand other people, their problems, interests. 2.1. By this way you can find friends easier and faster. 3. Walking with friends is also good for mind.

All these examples of utilitarian argumentation reveal that at B2 level students (in

the majority of cases) cannot alienate themselves from their personal experience and put forward arguments that are closely linked with their knowledge of the world. Thus, they act as naïve arguers and draw heavily from their knowledge of the world that was formed mainly by their environment (school, family, friends etc.).

3.3 *C1 students' argumentative ability*

The argumentation scheme used by C1 level students is a little bit different. The analysis shows a definite ability of students to alienate themselves from their personal experience and produce more abstract and impersonal arguments. These types of arguments are presented in a more orderly way and they are more explicit. The created argumentative scheme reflects standpoints are becoming more varied and the point of view is expressed more eloquently. Although the functional register of verbal stereotypes is still egocentric as in utilitarian argumentation, the indicators reflecting introductory level of argumentation show the confidence of the speaker : I cannot deny, I would like to say, that's why I am sure etc.

C1 level students more often introduce their standpoints without explicit verbal indicators, which is not the case with B2 students. The latter prefer to express their standpoints explicitly or present a certain proposition as a generally accepted idea such as 'some people think'. According to F. Eemeren, P.Houtlosser and F.Henkemans "When a proposition is presented as generally accepted or irrefutable... this implicates that the other party cannot escape from accepting that proposition as a shared starting point" (Eemeren, Houtlosser & Henkemans, 2007, p. 105). B2 students act as 'naïve' arguers and make use of the tools they would have used arguing in their mother tongue, for it seems safer to stick to generally accepted ideas.

Students presenting their essays at C1 level also often use compound sentences to introduce standpoints. Here are some examples of different ways to present a standpoint:

6. Nowadays globalization not only affects world economy and culture but also changes people's everyday experiences.

7. To my mind globalization would not change the world for the better.

C1 level students when using utilitarian argumentation connect arguments with

usefulness for the community and society in general rather than with their personal experience... Thus at this level utilitarian argumentation becomes more impersonal. This can be illustrated with the following examples:

8. One more argument for globalization is that it benefits everyone, not only big corporations but also people in developing countries, as it provides them with job places.

9. It (globalization) offers new opportunities for travel, work and education and of course for communication.

In terms of argumentation schemes students at C1 level demonstrate the ability to use regressive presentation (which is not the case at B2 level students who prefer the progressive presentation). The arguer puts forward arguments and then expresses his/her opinion.

10. Companies tend to become more productive and competitive thereby raising the quality of goods, services and the standards of living, that's why I am sure that term globalization is definitely about progress.

One more argument type of C1 level students' argumentation is connected with the binary oppositions. Unlike the schemes reflecting specific relations between a premise and standpoint opposites are patterns that can be abstracted from any particular content. A binary opposition deals with the aspect of categorization.

Modern global world is full of opposites that could be defined through diverse categories – good opposes bad, big opposes small, right opposes left, night opposes day, old opposes young, and globalists oppose anti-globalists. These oppositions create society's beliefs and misconceptions of what is good and what is bad, or what is ethical and non-ethical, and from a young age we subconsciously conform to these without even knowing it , and even as adults we continue creating these oppositions in our minds when processing fact evaluation of facts. A binary opposition is a pair of opposites that powerfully form and organize human thought and culture. Binary opposition is so deeply rooted in thinking patterns that we cannot even escape it. The concept of binary opposition is in use almost always whether we realize it or not (Goudkova & Tretyakova, 2010, p. 657).

C1 level students use binary oppositions to present their arguments thus directing

the vector of argumentation to the positive concepts when defending a standpoint and to the negative concepts when putting arguments against a standpoint. Here are arguments that students put forward arguing for and against globalization. Arguments for:

11. When the nations have "one world, one vision", the same political and economic interests, it helps them to live in peace – appellation to the concept of "peace".

12. Globalisation encourages better standards for the environment – appellation to the concept of "environment protection".

13. Globalisation gives us many communication advances such as e-mail, mobile phones, social networks, skype – appellation to the concept of "easy and better communication".

Arguments against:

14. Globalisation results in destruction of cultural diversity – appellation to the concept of "destruction".

Counter-argumentation refers to negative concepts, e.g.:

15. The great number of employees from developing countries creates such a competition that multinational companies could easily exploit the workers setting unfairly low wages.

The negative concepts to which the arguer appeals are the concept of exploitation and the concept of injustice.

Thus, we can specify the following features of C1 level in argumentation: a regressive presentation of argumentation, alienation from personal experience in utilitarian argumentation scheme, a greater number of verbal expressions reflecting introductory level of argumentation and the use of opposites as a specific pattern.

4. *Conclusion*
In conclusion it may be stated the matrix for the argumentative analysis of foreign-language essay writing can be effectively carried out with the help of pragma-dialectics. Critical argumentation is a practical skill that needs to be

taught, from the very beginning, through the use of real or realistic examples of arguments of the kind that the user encounters in everyday life (Walton, 2006, p. xi)

The analysis of B2 and C1 students' essays shows that Russian students writing in English may know the basics of argumentation but they cannot use it properly, as they are not proficient enough in the L2 language. They start using arguments when they become more skilled in the language and the results show that that is achieved at C1 level. At all these levels of language competence the type of argumentation in a foreign language is connected with the concept of stereotyping as a multi-dimensional activity that creates a communication frame of critical discussion and a range of indicators for presenting arguments.

Results obtained show that students act as naïve arguers in Russian environment because of the lack of basics of argumentation theoretical technique. They produce their arguments on intuition, which tells more about the speaker/ writer than about effective arguments.

Argumentation competences should be incorporated into the university curriculum to provide students with basic concepts and practices. Argumentation appears to correlate with innate properties of the student's mind. The more advanced in the language (English) students become the more independently from their personal experience and more impersonal their arguments are. Thus, the higher language competence the more abstract arguments become. We can conclude that there is strong correlation between language competence and argumentative competence.

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ISSA Proceedings 2014 – Missiles As Messages: Appeals To Force In President Obama's Strategic Maneuverability On The Use Of Chemical Weapons In Syria

Abstract: In the aftermath of the Bashar al-Assad's use of chemical weapons, President Obama proposed a military response that would send "a message" via missiles. This paper explores the way that such a message blurs the line between force and persuasion in diplomatic argument, complicating the normative assumptions of argumentation theory and underwriting the conditions of possibility for Obama's strategic maneuverability in the context of diplomatic argument.

Keywords: Diplomatic Context, Ad Baculum, Violence, Power, Presidential rhetoric.

Between August 21 and September 10, 2013 President Obama provided a rationale for military strikes in response to Bashar al-Assad's use of chemical weapons in the suburbs of Damascus. This period was punctuated by a White House assessment that the Syrian Government was responsible for the use of chemical weapons in Ghota, and two speeches by President Obama on the use of military force. The first speech came on August 31, and requested Congressional authorization to use military force against the Assad regime. The second came on

September 10 amidst indications that Congress might not authorize the use of force against Syria. The second speech, however, called for Congress to postpone the vote in order for a joint U.S.-Russian diplomatic effort to "push" Assad to give up his chemical weapons. Our concern is primarily with the communicative dimensions of this "shift" between military action and diplomatic negotiations. To that end, it is useful to recall a series of events which led up to these moments.

The Syrian uprising against Bashar al-Assad began in March of 2011 was among a series of protests against authoritarian regimes in North Africa and Southwest Asia. By April of that year Assad had committed himself to a military response to the uprising. In August, President Obama claimed that Assad had lost his legitimacy to rule and called for him to step down. The U.S. imposed deep sanctions on the Assad regime going so far as to close its embassy in Syria (Harding, Mahmood, & Weaver, 2012). By early 2012, Assad's forces had shelled opposition forces in the city of Homs, and the protests of March 2011had transfigured into an armed rebellion. As the situation escalated, President Obama rejected directly arming the rebellion but also warned the Assad regime that the use of chemical weapons would be a tragic mistake. By August of 2012 President Obama had drawn a "red line" on the Assad regime's use of chemical weapons, noting that any violation of the so called "red line" would change U.S. policy regarding military intervention in Syria.

When Obama was asked by Chuck Todd whether or not he envisioned "using [the] US military, if simply for nothing else, the safe keeping of the chemical weapons, and if you're confident that the chemical weapons are safe?" Obama responded by saying that the use of chemical weapons would change his calculations about military engagement.

I have, at this point, not ordered military engagement in the situation. But the point that you made about chemical and biological weapons is critical. That's an issue that doesn't just concern Syria; it concerns our close allies in the region, including Israel. It concerns us. We cannot have a situation where chemical or biological weapons are falling into the hands of the wrong people. We have been very clear to the Assad regime, but also to other players on the ground, that a red line for us is when we start seeing a whole bunch of chemical weapons moving around or being utilized. That would change my calculus. That would change my equation (The White House, 2012).

A year later the United Nation's (2013) special report on the use of chemical weapons in Syria found "clear and convincing evidence" that chemical weapons had been used in the Ghota suburb of Damascus. The final UN report did not claim who was responsible for the use of these weapons, instead concluding that "chemical weapons have been used in the ongoing conflict between the parties." The Obama administration, however, was clear in its assessment that Bashar al-Assad's government had authorized the use of chemical weapons. On August 30, 2013 the White house (2013, 1) claimed "with high confidence that the Syrian government carried out a chemical weapons attack in the Damascus suburbs on August 21, 2013." One might have expected, then, at least given the "red line," that a U.S. military response was imminent.

Obama delivered a statement setting out the case for military action – during which he asked Congress for the authorization to use force against the Assad Regime – just one day after the White House released its accusation that Assad had used chemical weapons. He quickly reiterated the findings of the government assessment from the day before (The White House, 2013, 2): "the Syrian government was responsible for the attack on its own people." He described Assad's use of chemical weapons as "an assault on human dignity … a danger to our national security. It risks making a mockery of the global prohibition on the use of chemical weapons. It endangers our friends and our partners along Syria's borders … It could lead to escalating use of chemical weapons, or their proliferation to terrorist groups who would do our people harm." Thus, he continued, "this menace must be confronted." The President then informed his audience that he had "decided that the Unites States should take military action against Syrian regime targets." Importantly, he noted that the "capacity to execute the mission is not time-sensitive," but that he was prepared to give the order.

Indeed, this was not too far from the case. Obama had initiated plans for a military strike over a 48 hour period during Labor Day weekend (August 31-September 1, 2013). Reports indicated that this strike may have had as many as 43 targets (Klein & Sotas, 2013; Luce, 2013). It would seem, at least on these grounds, that a strike *was* immanent (potentially displaying the "credibility" of U.S. deterrent power to the "international community"). We also know, thanks to the work of Karlyn Kohrs Campbell and Kathleen Hall Jamieson (2008), that this course of action is relatively commonplace in the history of American presidential

rhetoric. Indeed, "presidential rhetoric has always sought to justify military action and to evoke congressional and public approval, such justification now appears less frequently in speeches seeking congressional authorization for future actions and more frequently in speeches seeking congressional ratification of actions already undertaken" (p. 219).

Obama, however, followed the call for military action with the claim that since U.S. power is rooted "in our example as a government of the people, by the people, and for the people," and that he intended to seek authorization for the use of force from "the American people's representatives in Congress." Obama then turned to providing a rationale for why Congress should authorize the use of military action. The impetus to "send the right message" took the form of a rhetorical question. "Here's my question for every member of Congress and every member of the global community: what message will we send if a dictator can gas hundreds of children to death in plain sight and pay no price? What's the purpose of the international system that we've built if a prohibition on the use of chemical weapons ... is not enforced?" He concluded the speech by "asking Congress to send a message to the world that we are ready to move forward together as one nation." The message must therefore be that the United States will enforce the international prohibition against the use of chemical weapons, and that it will do so using its military prowess. We must, as Obama put it "follow through on the things we say, the accords we sign, the values that define us."

This strike was, of course, never executed, and thus Obama's appeal to Congress was not retroactive *per se.* On the one hand, the lack of actual military action makes it difficult to claim that Congress could retroactively authorize it. On the other hand, the Obama administration had planned and prepared the strike, while Obama claimed that he had the authority as Commander-in-Chief to execute a strike without Congressional approval. The reason to appeal to Congress was simply to imbue the strike with "our example as a government of the people, by the people, and for the people." The argument in favor of a jurisdictional shift was thus a tropological deployment of the locus of the irreparable: the implicit claim was that the strikes *were all but inevitable,* while the strikes only carried the weight of American democracy if they were approved by Congress. Military action effectively became a *figure of speech* in which Obama maneuvered strategically. In one fell swoop this message, ostensibly delivered not just to Assad, but to the entirety of the international community, changed the subject of the argument

from the desirability of military action to the desirability of an extant set of international norms, while simultaneously reframing the former in terms of the latter by way of a simple metaphor: let the strikes deliver a message; if they deliver *only* death, then Americans are no different than Assad; if they deliver *only* death, the international community is no different than Assad.

At the same time, the move was tactically relevant. The jurisdictional shift from Obama to Congress had real implications for the timeframe in which the strike could be executed. This tactical effect was made much more important during Obama's speech on September 10, 2013, during which he called for Congress to postpone action in order for the U.S. and Russia to pursue "diplomatic" arrangements with the Syrian government (The White House, 2013, 3). First, however, Obama reiterated his claim that Assad's use of chemical weapons violated U.S. national security interests and that "the United States should respond to the Assad regime's use of chemical weapons through a targeted military strike." Again, he noted that such a course of action was within his authority as Commander-in-Chief, but defended his decision to "take this debate to Congress." He even noted the way such a course of action departs from the previous decade that had "put more and more war-making power in the hands of the President, and more and more burdens on the shoulders of our troops, while sidelining the people's representatives from the critical decisions about when we use force." Obama's next move, however, was yet another jurisdictional shift, this time back in favor of action undertaken by the executive. Specifically, he referred to the opening of a new diplomatic path that resulted from the efforts of Russia "to join the international community in pushing Assad to give up his chemical weapons." In so doing, the Assad regime had verified that it had chemical weapons and would be willing to join the Chemical Weapons Convention. Obama then asked "the leaders of Congress to postpone a vote to authorize the use of force while we pursue this diplomatic path." This second jurisdictional shift (this time from Congress back to Obama) removed the impetus for Congress to act in order to create more room for executive branch diplomacy to work.

Of particular importance is that Obama declared that this new diplomatic path was possible, in part, thanks to what might be termed a "credible threat of US military action." Moreover, he "ordered our military to maintain their current posture to keep pressure on Assad, and to be in a position to respond if diplomacy fails." It is worth noticing the communicative dimensions of the US military

action: it returns in this institutional configuration as a threat to enforce the success of the diplomatic path. This response is once again presented as a message: in responding to Hawkish claims that the US should militarily remove Assad from power Obama argued that "even a limited strike will send a message to Assad that no other nation can deliver. I don't think we should remove another dictator with force – we learned from Iraq that doing so make us responsible for all that comes next. But a targeted strike can make Assad, or any other dictator, think twice before using chemical weapons." A targeted strike is an appropriate message to deter future uses of chemical weapons whether by Assad or another actor. Absent this message the U.S. would abdicate its role in enforcing international agreements, which in turn would obstruct the efficacy of a diplomatic resolution.

It is the repetition of this prospect of "sending a message" which strikes us as peculiar. Obama's isolation of chemical weapons as a "red line" in his calculation to use military force, all wiggle room aside, was an argument ad baculum: it was an appeal to force or violence; it was a threat. If it's true that Obama's reference to the "red line" can be included in this category of argument, then the assumption that he ostensibly intends for Assad to have is that crossing the "red line" will result in military strikes. By extension, both Assad and any number of other national or military leaders should have been deterred from using chemical weapons. At first glance, it appears that the problem (at least the problem for Obama, given his claim that Assad has, in fact, crossed the "red line") is one of efficacy. Surely Assad would have been deterred had the threat been more credible, or so the argument goes. Moreover, since we have claimed that this "threat appeal" was as much for the "international community" as it was for Assad, one would have expected a prompt military strike against Syria. The "success" of diplomatic negotiations, however, muddles any discussion about efficacy insofar as threats appear to have been central to the diplomatic discourse. Certainly it might be the case that Obama's "red line" was ineffective at stopping the violation of international norms regarding the use of chemical weapons, but it also seems to be the case that threats were integral to the diplomatic efforts undertaken in the name of those very norms.

It is not as if ad baculum arguments are a novel concept in the study of diplomatic argumentation, nor is it the case that they have gone untreated by scholars of argumentation. Douglas Walton provides a useful summary of this literature

(2000). In the "logic textbooks" (as Walton calls them), argument ad baculum is frequently classified as a type of fallacy on one of two grounds: argument ad baculum is irrelevant to the discussion; or argument ad baculum is not technically an argument, since it cannot establish the truth or falsity of a given proposition. One makes a threat in order to *forego* argument, rather than to advance it. In the diplomatic context, however, ad baculum arguments are more or less routine. Diplomatic argument is often described as a pragmatic exercise rather than a purely logical one. Diplomatic arguments have little to do with truth or falsity, and as a result little to do with argumentation logic. Carney and Scheer (1964), for example, make exactly this point: appeals to force are not fallacious because they do not intend for two parties to agree on the truth of a proposition. Assad may not have had to believe that the use of chemical weapons was *unjust* in order to believe that a shooting war with the United States was *unacceptable.*

Scholarship about ad baculum argument, however, has not been limited to thinking it as either fallacious or fundamentally non-argumentative. Woods and Walton (1976), for example, find a certain kind of prudential argumentation in threat appeals. This thinking relies on understanding the physical violence that is implied by a threat appeal as itself external to the argumentation at hand. For Woods and Walton, the violence to which a threat refers has nothing to do with the discussion in which that reference is meaningful. The violence to which a threat refers is thus a potential consequence of the discussion much like any other consequence will require a listener to make a prudential inference. The fallacious element of ad baculum, at least in this account, is not in the inference, but rather in the broader dialogic context in which it is invoked. This is why Walton eventually concludes that argumentation scholars require a "dual" analysis that is capable of understanding prudential inferences alongside contextual-dialectical analysis. The analysis of ad baculum argument as fallacious or non-fallacious is thus premised on a shift in dialogue; from a discussion where threat appeals are "out of place" to one where they are "acceptable."

The difference between a fallacious threat appeal and a non-fallacious threat appeal, then, is a matter of context: threats are a part of the normal evolution of international negotiations, therefore arguments ad baculum are (contextually) not fallacious. In any case, the evaluation of the threat appeal seems dependent on a reading of Obama's *intent.* This process, however, is not without pitfalls. Since political discourse is neither pure negotiation nor pure persuasion, "the best we

can do," as Walton puts it, "is to ask what type of dialogue the participants were originally supposed to be engaged in." This problem, as David Zarefsky (2014, pp. 88-90) has rightly pointed out, stems primarily from fact that there are no clear time limits and no clear terminus to political argument. How then are we to understand the distinction upon which the application of these analytic tools (logic and dialectic) are based? How are we to understand the nature of the "contextual shift" from one type of argumentative discourse to another?

It seems to us that a useful point of departure might be that these disparate bodies of literature, at least as Walton treats them, essentially reach a similar conclusion: an appeal to force effectively *suspends* argument (or at the very least argument of a specific kind) insofar as it does not allow argument to test the validity of a given proposition so that a consensus may be reached. At first glance, Obama's discourse is well explained by Walton's analytical tools. He seeks to introduce violence as *integral* to argumentative reasoning. In particular, Obama's argument seems to be that "the international community" (which is here led or even constituted by the United States) will react with violence against Assad if a particular set of actions are taken. The prudential inference is that it's unwise for the Assad government (or any other government) to use chemical weapons. There is also a contextual shift at work here. Certainly the original reference to a "red line" was not an offhand remark. It responded to a hypothetical action undertaken by the Assad government. This, in turn, means that Obama's initial threat was situated in the context of a pre-existing set of propositions which required a prudential inference on the part of the Assad government. There was a decision to be made about the use of chemical weapons, and Obama's initial threat added to the circumstances under which a prudential inference could inform that decision.

We were not, of course, privy to the contents of that decision-making process. One would be hard pressed, however, to claim that such a process was a part of a diplomatic dialogue. Obama was not bargaining with Assad when he claimed that the use of chemical weapons would cross this "red line." Rather, he seems to be doing many of the things that we call strategic maneuvering, while at the same time he makes a claim which may very well be accurate: he is able to make many useful arguments *as a result of* the continued threat of U.S. military power. The threat appeal *did,* if we are to take Obama at his word, have the effect of *creating* a diplomatic dialogue. In other words, the threat appeal would constitute a fallacy (at least using Walton's model) since it constituted a contextual shift in the nature

of the discussion. It is at this point that several epistemological barriers, namely the lack of clear time limits and a terminus of discussion, rear their ugly heads. Specifically, the difficulty becomes separating these "transitions" in dialogue from each other sufficiently to recognize clear "contexts." The *tendency* of the discussion indicates that the diplomatic dimensions of Obama's negotiation are *instantiated* by their fallacious origins, since they continue a line of thought which is only possible qua fallacy. Obama's diplomacy becomes a "trans-fallacious" moment constituting a diplomatic context.

We can gather from this "trans-fallaciousness" why the "suspension" of argumentation must be our point of departure: argument is not (or arguments of a specific kind are not) suspended by threats in the sense that they are ended as such. This is because the discourses in which threats are "fallacious" are themselves normative performances. Argumentative discourses where threat appeals seem "out of place" still produce norms by way of persuasion. Further, and regardless of the effect of a threat on "actual persuasion," the expectation of an argumentative discourse is that one *performs* as if the conclusion that is reached is true. But this is true of argumentation sans threat appeal as well. The exposition of the truth or falsity of a given proposition qua argument is a practical exercise that has real implications for one's being-in-the-world. The performance of persuasion, particularly over time, can thus be understood as the material organization of the cultural practice of argument. What we mean, then, when we say that argument ad baculum functions by suspending argument (or certain types of arguments) is that threats can be considered as a part of the material history of power relations in a given society. They submerge or subordinate potential or evolving lines of argumentation such that those lines of argumentation become external to the norms of discussion. In a diplomatic context what the threat appeal materializes is the third order conditions of strategic maneuverability which "pertain … to the power or authority relations between the participants" (van Eemeren, Houstlosser &Snoeck Henkemans 2008, p.478). The trans-fallacious character of a "missile message" is built into the very diplomatic context that defines the power relationship between state actors.

It may well be insufficient, then, to analyze the role of threat appeal in argumentation at the level of fallacy. If it is an international norm (or rather a set of norms) which allow diplomatic argument to even take place as we know it, then the move is not to use violence to silence a debate about whether or not Syria

should adhere to the international norm against the use of chemical weapons, but instead to claim that military power is both the condition of and is justified by that norm. It is critical, at this juncture, to recall Obama's rhetorical question to Congress: what is the point of the international prohibition on the use of chemical weapons if it cannot (or will not) be enforced? This claim ties together violence and the norm itself. The symbolic value of a congressionally approved military action, however, is that it binds a set of disparate actors together as the international community in a way that allows for a "democratic" discourse. There is no debate about the prohibition on the use of chemical weapons unless violence and the threat of violence are the metaphors through which the international norm against the use of chemical weapons grants a certain coherency to the international community. Such a phenomenon should not be taken lightly, since it bears upon an established notion of the relationship between violence and reasoned argumentation: it is not as if the violence/persuasion relationship only works in one direction, nor is it the case that the line between persuasion and coercion is clear. As a result, we must be able to think the ways that communication is able to mobilize violence (or at the very least the potential for violence) as a precondition for argumentative discourse. Put differently, there is nothing reasonable about diplomatic argument unless we presuppose violence as a precondition of reasonability.

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ISSA Proceedings 2014 – Disruptive Definition As A Method Of Deterritorialization In Modern Argumentative Contexts

Abstract: This paper proposes the concept of disruptive definitions as a tool to territorialize, deterritorialize, and reterritorialize argumentative space. Upon exploring definitional scholarship, I investigate the argumentative strategies of herders along the Mongolian/Chinese border. Then, I ask how cross-border protest movements have used disruptive definitions to deterritorialize and reterritorialize government definitions of citizenship. Finally, I juxtapose these protests to Deleuze and Guattari's nomadology to investigate the complex terrain of political struggle in our hyper-globalized, internetworked society.

1. *Introduction*

In this paper, I propose the concept of disrupting definitions as a tool to *territorialize, deterritorialize*, and *reterritorialize* argumentative space. Specifically, I examine arguments made by herders along the Mongolian/Chinese border where argumentative space is territorialized by governments that define identity by residency. Communities have resisted this territorialization through cross-border protest movements using what I call disruptive definitions, those that define identity by culture, religion, history, or access to open space to *deterritorialize* and *reterritorialize* argumentative space. To better understand the effect of these new argumentative spaces, I juxtapose this analysis to Deleuze and Guattari's metaphor of *nomadology* to explore the process of culture and identity meaning making among modern herding communities. From this study, I argue that deterritorialization-by-definition may produce radically expanded argumentative definitions that can be used as tools to investigate the complex terrain of political struggle in our hyper-globalized, internetworked society.

2. *Disruptive definitions*

Questions of definitional certainty in argumentative contexts have been widely discussed within a variety of contexts. Scholars such as Edward Schiappa (1993) and David Zarefsky (2009) have examined the use of persuasive definitions and the dramatic implications of those definitions in regard to strategic maneuvering. These works have illuminated the use of definitions to plead a cause and to differentiate between the "is" and "ought" of deliberation. Such studies have been applied theoretically by contest round debaters, using topicality challenges to investigate the argumentative relevance of claims (Spring, 2010). Pragmatically, these studies have been used by Kenneth Broda-Bahm (1999) to understand environmental security and land development. In each instance, definitional scholarship has been used to mark argumentative and tangible spaces – territories – that create authoritative terminologies that bind deliberations by inclusion and exclusion.

The resulting *territorialization*-by-definition allows argumentation scholars to produce coherent analysis, yet makes it difficult to understand those communities, spaces, and arguments that transcend demarcated territory. In this paper, I utilize the figure of the "nomad" as one such metaphor that moves between demarcated spaces, between both the "is" and "is not" of *territorialized* definitions. Yet, to approach the figure of the "nomad" requires a disturbance in the process of definition, resulting in the creation of "disruptive definitions," those definitions that open space for multiple possible understandings, embodiments and entailments. This approach is required as nation-states have sought to define mobile citizens using terms such as "nomad" in an attempt to settle and control communities.

This trend towards nationalist definition is seen in western literature that typically refers to Mongolian herding communities as nomads, pastoral nomads, or pastoralists. Relying on the metaphor of "nomad" tends to suggest that community members wander through the fixed gridlines of nation-state geography as "random atoms," acting in a backward, uncivilized manner (Lafitte, 2011). This misunderstanding of Mongolian herders misses the complex, often hierarchical structures of their communities and networks of exchange. The label "nomad" also tends to reinforce a dualism that ossifies divisions between the nomadic and settled communities, between the civilized and the barbarian, between the knowable and unknown, and between right and wrong. Disturbing this state expectation and definition of "nomad" expands the possibilities of

identity meaning making by communities such as Mongolians on the Chinese/Mongolian border.

Disruptive definitions, particularly those seen in Mongolian communities, have much in common with the process of *deterritorialization* proposed by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guarttari (1983) in *Anti-Oedipus.* Here, *deterritorialization* is used to describe processes of de-contextualizing sets of relationships, creating origami-like folds in the paper of meaning, finding new points of meeting and departure – distant actualizations – that previously eluded perception.

Many deliberations are premised on territorialization, the process of definition that uses a key word to mark territory and understand contexts that inform argumentative possibilities and deliberative analysis. These demarcations function to limit deliberation, but also limit the connections that deliberators can draw between multiple views and theories. The process of argumentative territorialization-by-definition excludes many perspectives, including the nomadic that rejects such boundaries. A process of deterritorialization recontextualizes and resists these argumentative territories and boundaries. In this moment, connections and positions that had previously been considered beyond the scope of a deliberation, labeled as "is not" and "ought not," again become possible. The new connections uncovered by deterritorialization may lead to reterritorialization, the marking of territory in new ways where the argumentative definition is radically expanded or rearticulated. Or, the definition may remain permanently deterritorialized, resulting in an expectation of multiple competing understandings in deliberation.

3. *Nomadology*

My own work, through an understanding of disrupting definitions of the figure of the "nomad," aims to integrate our understanding of modern struggles within the broader dialogue about *nomadology* as a mode of critical inquiry. The figure of "nomad" requires special attention to the competing definitions used by self-identified communities, ethnographic studies, development projects, nationalistic movements, and philosophical theories. In this essay, I examine Mongolian communities along the Mongolian/Chinese border where revolutions, cartography, and climatic change have drawn divisions between traditional Mongolian herding communities. The Chinese and Mongolian governments anticipate that citizens, even those choosing to live as herders will choose to identify as citizens of modern nation-states. As a result, conflict frequently occurs

when herder communities choose to identify via extra-state networks such as traditional grazing patterns or family structures. A plethora of publications, protests, and productions point to a more nuanced understanding of cross-border connections. Applying the term of disruptive definitions to this milieu reveals previously misunderstood connections between definition and disruptive definition, between territorialization and deterritorialization.

Juxtaposition of disruptive definitions to Deleuze and Guattari's theory of nomadology further enhances our understanding of cultural and identity meaning making among modern herding communities. In this essay, through an examination of cross-border protests, I ask if the pressures created by the need to contest definitions and present counter-definitions have created quilting points that have deterritorialized or reterritorialized the figure of "nomad," in ways that awaken new understandings of both specific definitions of "nomad" and the argumentative study of definitional deliberation.

For example, the Mongolian government is currently territorializing herding lands. Articulated as a linear progression, this process is prefaced by the concept of empty land, terra nullis, which government officials use to justify new development projects. This is a strategy that could be articulated as territorialization (government parcels land and defines it as *terra nullis*), deterritorialization (herders articulate land use in response to terra nullis by using a frame of movement-as-*otor*), and reterritorialization (herders produce new assemblages to participate in public forums while maintaining herding traditions). Argumentative clash emerges in this process as mining companies are attracted to the "open spaces" of the Eurasian Steppe where strip-mining is used to quickly extract vast reserves of coal, copper, uranium, and rare-earth minerals. Many interventions into mining protests within China and Mongolia seeking to reach peaceful resolution have failed because they have assumed that herders are only vying for monetary reparations for lost land. I argue that these studies are incomplete because they have not accounted for the process of territorialization, deterritorialization, and reterritorialization from which modern clashes emerge. Were these efforts to engage in the study of disruptive definitions proposed by this paper, they would be able to access the richer history and entanglements between herder communities and herding lands. While such an understanding might assist mining corporations in better averting protests, it is more likely to encourage analysts and negotiators to produce protections and policies inline

with herder communities' needs.

4. *Land disputes*

Exploring Mongolian land disputes through Deleuze and Guattari's conceptual triptych of *territorialization, deterritorialization*, and *reterritorialization*, can encourage better understand both how this land came to be known as empty and why protests are occurring. The concepts of deterritorialization and reterritorialization help us to understand the ways in which this land can be understood as neither empty nor full, but instead a "rhizomatic mechanic assemblage." In doing so, we begin thinking about the Mongolian steppe as a mechanic assemblage incorporates the complex body of interpretations, connections, and dimensions that can be joined together in multiplicitious ways to create new understandings of the Mongolian steppe. These new connections create a realm of multiplicities that herders can use to resist the attempts of states and governments to "over code" herder identity or privilege a singular, government authored, definition of what it is to be a herder.

Mongolian communities' have long dealt with competing definitions of what is means to be a herder or a nomad. These definitions have been used by invaders, colonizers, nationalists, and development programs to justify boundaries, education, and readings of history. As such, these definitions are ideal locations for an analysis of disrupting definitions. Scholars have produced a number of nuanced terms and hierarchies with which to describe herders. For example, anthropologists classify, Mongolians as pastoral-nomads because they move in biannual migrations with herds of domesticated animals. In Marxist terms, Mongolians are landless peasants, and for Social Darwinists they exist at the lowest level of human development. A territorialized definition of the Mongolian nomad would require that one of these definitions were chosen as the primary mode of analysis, and all other definitions understood as competing definitions. However, a deterritorialized definition might take a broader scope of possibility; Mongolian communities could simultaneously and selectively embody the definitions of anthropologists, Marxists, Social Darwinists, and governments, while also maintaining their own definitions of community and movement.

The need for such deterritorialization of definition was seen in 2005 when President N. Enkhbayar stated; "It is not my desire to destroy the original Mongolian identity but in order to survive, we have to stop being nomads" (as cited in Diener, 2011). Similarly, across the border in Inner Mongolia, the Chinese

Government released a whitepaper indicating that by 2015 there will be no more nomads in China (Southern Mongolian Human Rights Information Center, 2012). At the same time, Mongolians were producing disrupting definitions, deterritorializations, of the terms "herder" and "nomad" to explain their complex interactions with modernity. Here, state territorialization, and community deterritorialization produce definitional clash that I argue illuminates the need for disruptive definitions.

Pastoral-nomadic communities, along with other types of nomads, hunter-gathers, and travelers from whom Deleuze and Guattari pull to create their metaphor of nomadology, present a special problem to definitional scholarship. These communities resist and therefore do not have figureheads such as presidents and community leaders. They may on occasion appoint a speaker, or a speaker may appoint herself to speak for her community, but the power of that appointment is short term and intangible. As such, the artifacts, speeches, protests, and discussions that I analyze are but single entry points to understand the assemblage of multiplicities in Mongolia and Inner Mongolia. What these deliberations do for my analysis is provide quilting points that bind together herders, the nation-state, and international organizations. Analysis of these quilting points indicates the emergence of new forms of protest and identity. For example, Mongolian mining protests articulate neither traditional herding culture nor the government definitions of land and citizenship. Instead, these mining protests articulate the emerging shifts and developments amongst herding communities in late modern capitalism.

5. *Protest rhetoric*
In China, the Cultural Revolution resulted in the arrest and persecution of at least 100,000 Mongolians who resisted collectivization and the cultural politics of the Chinese Communist Party. This history has been used as a reference point for divisions between Mongolian herders, farmers, and urbanites, and between Han and Mongolian citizens of the People's Republic of China. The Chinese government attempted to smooth over these poor relations by establishing university and government position quotas for Mongolians, allowing exemption from the national birth control policies, and sponsoring specific ethnic events. These exemptions did not work as intended, and conflicts such as the 1981-1982 protests by Mongolian students over "filling up Inner Mongolia" with Han Chinese continued (Jankowiak, 1988). More recently, conflict erupted as 650,000 herders

were evicted from traditional pasturelands (Southern Mongolian Human Rights Information Center, 2011a). These evictions, which the government calls "environmentally-driven resettlement," are coupled with plans for state-sponsored education, public health, and housing services. However, such policies still restrict movement of herding communities under the auspices of saving land and limiting the effects of climate change (Tan, 2011).

For example, in Inner Mongolia, China, in May 2011 a herder named Mergen set up a roadblock protest to prohibit the transportation of coal across his grazing lands. In assessing this protest, it is important to remember that transportation infrastructure in this part of Inner Mongolia is minimal. Mergen was blocking the pathway frequently taken by mining companies, taken so frequently that tire tracks had cut through the low grasses that feed herds of cattle. This is not a paved road, and the space alongside the road is identical to the road except it is not cut by tire tracks. Mergen was run over by a Han Chinese truck driver who drove through the roadblock of herders and horses. Mergen's head was crushed beneath the truck's tires and his body dragged across the steppe. Mergen's death was only one of many deaths-by-traffic accidents that occurred during the spring and summer of 2011. What made his death different, however, was the immediate recording and distribution of images of Mergen's death and crushed skull accompanied by the Han-Chinese truck driver's statement "my truck is fully insured, and the life of a smelly Mongolian herder costs me no more than 40,000 Yuan (approx. 8,000 USD)" (Southern Mongolian Human Rights Information Center, 2011c). Although the driver was eventually tried and executed for his part in Mergen's death, it was only after weeks of protest that he was tried for his crime. In press statements prior to his execution, the truck driver continually emphasized that his victim was both a Mongolian and a herder. To the driver, this ethnic and lifestyle classification legitimized his dehumanizing rhetoric.

A wide variety of protests emerged from Mergen's death, including the Song *Dedicated to Mergen, Hero of the Grasslands,* which was both published and banned on May 29, 2011. This song calls forth a broad audience of Mongolians, from those living in the steppe with herds to those in apartment buildings who only speak Mandarin. In this song, the author identifies as Mongolian, focusing on bloodlines rather than the government's use of bounded land and special ethnic characteristics such as language. The implications of this identify is to explode the definition of "Mongolian" and link with communities living as, and identifying

as, herders.

I am a Mongol even if I sing my rap in Chinese
No matter what you say I am a Mongol
Mongol blood flows in my veins
The vast Mongolian steppe is my homeland.
(Southern Mongolian Human Rights Information Center, 2011b)

The Song *Dedicated to Mergen, Hero of the Grasslands* exemplifies reterritorialization in a realm of multiplicities where the song's author has provided a connection between two completely different multiplicities. This connection forms a parallel evolution – or deterritorialization and reterritorialization – so that the protesters deterritorialize the Chinese definition of Mongolian identity by making keeping applicable portions of the government definition and mixing in their own interpretations. This process demonstrates the way that Deleuze and Guattari think of connections that produce multiplicities, which then connect together to create rhizomatic assemblages.

In the time since Mergen's death, herders along the Chinese/Mongolian border have continued to protest state infrastructure projects that they see as threats to their identity. The Southern Mongolian Human Rights Information Center outlines five deaths that have occurred since 2010, along with large-scale protest, and imprisonment of protest leaders and Internet activists. (Southern Mongolian Human Rights Information Center, 2013a, 2013b, 2014). Yet, these clashes are not endemic to only Inner Mongolia, similar clashes are occurring in Tibet ("Hundreds of Tibetans," 2014) and Xingjian ("Mongolian Herders," 2014). Additionally, outside of China, Maasai (Kanduli, 2013), Bedouin ("Arrests At," 2013), Native American (Strasser, 2013), and Aboriginal communities ("Traditional Landowners," 2014) are engaging and disrupting state definitions of identity in land-rights conflicts.

6. *Conclusion*

Deleuze and Guattari identify rhizomatic assemblages as "lines of flight," pathways that we can follow to escape the hierarchical modes of control and the emphasis on a center and periphery that characterize modern governments. While Deleuze and Guattari suggest that nomadology is a useful line of flight for settled communities, my work asks if nomadology is also useful to understand the lines of flight utilized by herders to escape repressive government regimes.

The possibility found in modern Mongolian protests, articulated by disruptive definitions, is the emergence of arguments that embody new possibilities, frames, and connections. The results of such disturbed definitions, and the deterritorialization that they produce, are difficult to predict before they have come to fruition. However, those definitions that have emerged, such as the definition articulated earlier in the *Song for Mergen*, point to the ability to better analyze complex arguments, for deliberations to incorporate multiple competing and at time contradictory positions in a manner that engenders new connections and understandings.

Skeptics might argue that this study has merely proposed a correction, evolution, or better understanding of what it means to be a Mongolian, herder, or nomad. My argument is that the use of static definitions misses the very being of herder communities, and as such will always fail to inform discussions and policies pertaining to these communities. Yet my argument, that a definition should be in flux, risks producing both messy deliberation and analysis – how can we study a song writer who identifies as both Mongolian and Chinese, speaks in a language that he opposes, heralds a herding lifestyle while writing from an apartment block? We might call him hypocritical or accuse him of speaking for others – but in doing so we miss, or worse silence, critical aspects of his identity. What is required is a definition that can embody both of these opposing polarities – that resists the desire for definitional certainty that is dependent on polarities. By using disrupting definitions as a tool to territorialize, deterritorialize, and reterritorialize argumentative space we might be able to move towards better policy making, better argument analysis, and better deliberative practices.

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