ISSA Proceedings 2010 – Presidential Arguments In Post-Soviet Russia: An Enthymematic Return To National Identity As Argumentation Of Citizenry?

1. Introduction

In the first decade of the 21st century, Russian Federation has re-emerged as a most important political and economical participant in current global times, but also rhetorically a most successful case of redefinition of national identity. During Vladimir Putin's presidency and continued through Dimitri**[i]** Medvedev's current lead, public Russian discourse actively re-affirms and re-constructs relationships with topoi of national identity, history in its large span of past, present and future, and with nationalist and authoritarian valences for its new Russian (former Soviet) citizens. In a world full of political dilemmas and debates over global or/over domestic issues, Putin and Medvedev's rhetorical and political actions highlight the importance of redefining Russian citizenship and democratic values on basis of national(ist) pride and culturally-specific definitions of 'sovereign democracy.'**[ii]**

As recent political analyses recognize (Aron, 2007; Hale & Colton, 2010; Linan, 2010), whether delivered by Putin till 2008 or by Medvedev since that time, Russian Presidential discourse presents its citizens effective cultural and political arguments that glorify the traditions and exceptional history of the pre- and Soviet past, reposition the geo-political role of the country, redefine state-nation with a vertically empowered political structure, and delineate political relationships with the West and with the world as a whole.**[iii]** Russian citizens are called to engage politically, emotionally, and of course, pragmatically by aligning with (*the*) proposed set of political and cultural narratives that explain and enhance the (re)building of the Russian Federation from past to future through current times. And as a result, recent polls (Hale & Colton, 2010) show

that most Russians consent the country has found its identity and voice again as a nation of power and redemption, proud of its pre-, Soviet and post-Soviet past, vigorously optimistic for its future and its role in the world!

From a rhetorical standpoint, such political articulations of new and old national arguments that motivate and invoke culturally-specific and politically-specific definitions of national identity bring into play a series of complex questions. What kind of discursive strategies create effective correctives of the Russian and/or Soviet past history in order to create a meta-cultural and coherent context for national identity and presidential/state support? After all, by revisiting the old discourse of power from Tsarist and Stalinist Russia, Putin in particular along with Medvedev have presented Russian Federation and its citizens with a political and a rhetorical success story. How can such political arguments function so effectively in the current Russian political sphere, engaging its citizens to support a Kremlin coined "sovereign democracy' reminiscent of authoritarian discursive patterns, dependent on well crafted rhetorical policies on history and its impact on public memory?

This article examines how enthymemes of national identity pre- and post-Soviet collapse in order to create effective political arguments from definition as well as cultural interpellations of historical redefinitions of national identity as two concurrent analytical frameworks in support of a coherent rhetoric of citizenry in post-Soviet times. The objective of the paper is to identify what rhetorical enthymematic projections of the role of citizenship/citizen validate ideological arguments of Russian-style "democracy" and national identity in Medvedev's "Go Russia" speech and article, as an emblematic Presidential address in current Russian political sphere.**[iv]**

2. Definitional Arguments of Identity

Examining how presidential addresses for over a decade continue to shape rhetorically its national understanding and mission of the strategically redefined democratic sphere, the article acknowledges two complementary discursive frameworks that support a coherent rhetoric of citizenry in current Russia. Previous research by Williams, Young, & Launer (2001) bring forth arguments *from* definition as part of one rhetorical analytical framework operational within the Russian redefinition of national identity.

The presidential election of Vladimir Putin in 2000 marks a cultural and rhetorical

revolution in the Russian Federation as the official public discourse makes a dramatic turn, offering novel arguments from definition, and with them, new propositions addressing how Russian people can and should(?) look at old Soviet times, while aiming to define its national identity, yet again. For over a decade, Vladimir Putin as President of Russian Federation (2000-2008) and Dimitri Medvedev (2008-on) as the current President of Russia have invoked history as a victorious ally in redefining new/old Russian political discourse infusing it with topoi like nationalism and authoritarianism, with historical narratives pertaining to new ways to look at old times, at culturally-specific definitions of the glorious past even during Soviet times. A rhetorical and a political accomplishment undoubtedly!

Williams, Young, & Launer (2001) analyze specific examples of Putin's restorative rhetorical strategies, like his proposal to the nation to adopt symbols of old history. Such a restorative argument from definition explains the re-conceptualization of the national anthem of Russian Federation as the melody of the old Soviet anthem with new lyrics (provided by the same author, Sergei Mikhalkov, a national poet in Soviet times). Other similar examples of arguments from definition involve strategies to revalidate the traditional Red Army banner, the tricolor flag and the double-headed eagle, symbols of former Soviet and pre-Soviet eras of glorious past.

But Putin's main campaign theme was that the time had come for the Russian people to pause and consider their situation. He encouraged them to situate themselves historically, as a Russian people, not as refugees from some other nation's political structure. Nevertheless, he suggested that they relinquish their new position as the agents of change, returning that power to the state. This, he argued, would bring true freedom. It would also reconstitute the people as a product of history, which is how he seems them. (2001, p. 471)

Of note that we have introduced arguments from definition and arguments of definition on basis of previous work done by Williams and Young (2006) on Russian presidential discourse of the 19900s. While both arguments from and of definition address citizenry as enactment of national identity, they are not synonymous in the ways they engage cultural discourse. Hence in our next section we attempt to demonstrate how cultural enthymemes interpellate both arguments from and of definition to create distinct yet complementary dimensions of national identity in Russian presidential appeals.

This analytical framework stemming from the play between arguments *from* and *of* definition (Wiliams & Young, 2006) as indispensable rhetorical processes that assist in understanding the restorative cultural arguments proposed to Russian citizens for over a decade. And yet, as the political and rhetorical powers of presidential appeals continue to develop into an effective discursive arena for Russian national identity, what other public arguments and/or cultural enthymemes take active role in redefining the new and stronger Russian Federation and its people? We argue that by invoking and interpellating enthymematic clusters of pre-and post-Soviet discursive structures, such Presidential addresses engage political and *cultural* (emphasis added) arguments of Russian identity as part of a coherent rhetoric of citizenry in post-Soviet times. **[v]**

3. Interpellation and Identity

How else but calling into action Russian and Soviet history as a strategic rhetorical meta-context of cultural enthymemes can Putin and/or Medvedev provide such extensive programs intended to redefine, restore, and re-invigorate the new and old Russian citizenry?

Looking for rhetorical ways in which culture creates relationships shared by rhetors and their audiences, enthymemes of "Soviet" and/or "Russian" identity demand evocative powers of cultural memory and cultural consensus**[vi]** to act as contextual and constitutive forces that drive the success of Russian presidential discourse. Thus, we argue that by continuing Putin's groundbreaking rhetoric of Russian identity, Medvedev's discourse makes skillful use of cultural evocation and rhetorical interpellation as strategic ways to engage history and its enthymematic points of reference pertinent to redefine citizenship and democratic values for the nation of former Soviet/current Russian state.

Charland's (1987) work on constitutive rhetoric brings about Althusser's notion of interpellation to assist in working with cultural public arguments that engage legitimacy, power and context within the texture of public arguments at stake. Interpellation becomes a rhetorical strategy that legitimizes constitutive arguments of national identity, which in the Russian case, assists with understanding the effective enthymematic usage of history as public argument of identity. Borrowing the term from Althusser, Charland (1987) defines 'interpellation" as an active term, as follows:

Interpellation occurs at the very moment one enters into a rhetorical situation,

that is, as soon as an individual recognizes and acknowledges being addressed. An interpellated subject participates in the discourse that addresses him. . . . Note, however, that interpellation does not occur through persuasion in the usual sense, for the very act of *addressing* is rhetorical. (p. 140)

For example, in order to explore (Putin and) Medvedev's appeals that legitimize Russian national identity and state authority, a significant rhetorical issue consists of cultural negotiations of identity and citizenry in relation to political power. Legitimacy of political voice implies a social, political, and cultural context within which voice exercises power. This requirement proposes a notion of rhetoric that *interpellates* the rhetor and his/her culture through discourse.**[vii]**

In the rhetorical action of interpellation, the context within which presidents like Putin and Medvedev articulate constitutive loci for identification and identity becomes a discursive site for cultural enthymemes. Aron (2007) presents in detail the new institutionalized version of democratic life in Russia as defined through a vertical power structure where the State Duma and the regional governances become unified both in vision and in action and where the United Russia model of political leadership brings up the Kremlin as the constitutive voice of power.**[viii]** For how else can one start to identify good reasons for adherence to the proposed nation-state of Russia, but via some carefully crafted, calling for enthymemes that sustain *the* (emphasis added) cultural and political view of a successful, exceptional Russian nation and citizenry?

Interpellation as a rhetorical active strategy can also bring forth words or fragments of arguments that invite audiences to create a consensual link to previous or well known cultural and political arguments, which is the case for most of post-Soviet Russian presidential discourse. When applied to Russian citizenry and/or Russian national identity, we consider that both Putin and Medvedev interpellate cultural arguments to locate their appeals either in the glorified version of Soviet identity as public arguments from definition (Williams and Young, 2006), as well as in defining new citizenry (arguments of definition) as enactments or interpellations of past- and post-Soviet identity. By utilizing the rhetorical strategy of interpellating cultural enthymematic arguments from and of Russian identity as new and old enactments of national voice, such play creates, we argue, an effective rhetorical body of appeals that sustain the uniqueness of Russian citizenry.**[ix]**

We consider that this salient strategic action relies on enthymematic public arguments that the Russian people can identify and also agree with, providing a consensual agreement to redefine national identity along the terms proposed by the Russian officials. Accordingly, Burke's (1968) notion of identification, along the dialectic relationship with identity, is fundamental to the framework proposed.

Identification constitutes for Burke a dialectical process in which the speaker draws on shared interests to establish "rapport between himself [herself] and his [her] audience."**[x]** Burke's emphasis on the relationship between identity and identification assists, in our view, in understanding the transformative rhetorical relationships between culture and [national] identity by focusing on the rhetorical process of *evocation*. Marin (2007) articulates that central to such rhetorical endeavor is the reinvention of identity rhetors invoke and evoke in their discourse, in that it transcends singular, limited definitions of their identity and creates plural ones (anew) for themselves and their audiences. When creating and recreating identity, in this case national Russian identity, rhetors (Putin and Medvedev) bring forward a specific interpellated historical experience that calls for audiences to instantiate those cultural arguments.

Consequently, this rhetorical approach emphasizes the reconstitutive powers of discourse by illuminating an analytical framework of interpellated consubstantiality in order to ensure persuasion in the complex and complicated rhetorical arena of current Russia. As such, this framework offers an invitational role for the (Russian) audience to partake in important rhetorical and political strategies to engage in new 'sovereign democracy' and in its national redefinition of Russian identity. In setting the terms for a national identity official discourse always reinvented for the new/old Russia, specific rhetorical interpellations and cultural evocation of arguments from history appear to facilitate a consubstantial participation on the part of the Russian people. And it is by invoking and evoking restorative reconstitution of public arguments that Putin and Medvedev continue to articulate Russian citizenry for over a decade, marking an important rhetorical shift in Russian national identity.

4. Application of the Analytical Framework to Medvedev's "Go Russia!" Address
On September 10, 2009, Medvedev surprised with "Go, Russia!" a speech held in the Kremlin's St. George's Hall while at the same time its identical written address was posted as an "article" on the official site of Russian Presidency. The

article invited for response and over 19,000 comments were received shortly after (Tkachenko, 2009). “Go Russia” presents the Russian President’s “vision for the country’s future” by placing ‘modernization’ as key to Russian political path. “Unlike all previous annual Russian presidential addresses, the contents of which were kept secret until the very moment of their delivery – including his own in 2008 – Medvedev published the concept of his 2009 address” in his September article (Tkachenko, 2009, p.2).

Abdullaev (2009) describes the speech as “the blueprint” for Medvedev’s 2009 state-of-the-nation address which “many political pundits have described as the president’s modernization manifesto” as it “stirred up a public reaction on an almost forgotten robustness and scale. More than 13,000 comments have been left on Medvedev’s blog, and scores of political analysts, spin doctors and even jailed Yukos tycoon, Mikhail Khodorkovsky have published articles, arguing the merits of Medvedev’s arguments”(p. 1).

Empowered by its very title, “Go Russia!” address unequivocally declares that Russia’s future is a democratic one:
Today is the first time in our history that we have a chance to prove to ourselves and the world that Russia can develop in a democratic way. That a transition to the next, higher stage of civilization is possible. And this will be accomplished through non-violent means. Not by coercion, but by persuasion. Not through suppression, but rather the development of the creative potential of every individual. Not through intimidation, but through interest. Not through confrontation, but by harmonizing the interests of the individual, society and government. (Medvedev, 2009, p.2)

But what exactly does this mean? What is the vision of “democracy” in Russia’s future, how does that relate to its present, its past, and the status and roles of its citizens? Does Medvedev’s use of “democracy” re-engage Putin’s “sovereign democracy,” an already interpellated term based on the identification of certain cultural and political arguments of Russian identity? The answer is in the affirmative.

For even as the future of Russia is declared to be a “democratic” one, the definitional construction of “democracy” in Medvedev’s “Go Russia!” address suggests that democracy is an outcome of economic forces (not the creation of human intellectual choices), that “freedom” results from prosperity, and that a

well-trained economy is the key to human fulfillment:

…scientific and technological progress is inextricably linked with the progress of political systems. Experts believe that democracy originated in ancient Greece, but in those days there was no extensive democracy. Freedom was the privilege of a select minority. Full-fledged democracy that established universal suffrage and legal guarantees for all citizens before the law, so called democracy for everyone, emerged relatively recently, some eighty to one hundred years ago. Democracy occurred on a mass scale, not earlier than the mass production of the most necessary goods and services began. When the level of technological development of Western civilization made it possible to gain universal access to basic amenities: to education, health care and information. Every new invention which improves our quality of life provides us with an additional degree of freedom. It makes our existential conditions more comfortable and social relations more equitable. The more intelligent, smarter and efficient our economy is, the higher the level of our citizens' welfare, and our political system, and society as a whole will also be freer, fairer and more humane. (Medvedev, 2009, p.3)

The basis on which the advent of "democracy for everyone" is dated to "eighty to one hundred years ago" is never stated, and the association between technology and democracy is implied to be causal, but there is no link actually provided. However, our focus is on a somewhat different point about this passage: Medvedev smoothly redefines "freedom" from that of the presumably political and social freedom of the Athenians (as these are frequently associated notions) to "freedom" provided by a technologically enhanced "quality of life." In this manner, it is through "information technologies" that Russia may realize "fundamental political freedoms, such as freedom of speech and assembly." The freedoms are reductively equated with the mediums or channels: the louder the microphone, the greater the freedom (although one has to wonder how this might work with respect to the freedom to assemble: The bigger the chat room, the greater the freedom of assembly?). Associations with these freedoms other than those technological (such as the content of the speech or the purpose of the assembly) are generally absent when such political rights and freedoms are being endorsed; they do not appear to be integral aspects of the emerging definition of Russian "freedom." Rather, continuing the consubstantial string of already agreed-upon public arguments for "freedom" provided via a vertical structure of power since Putin-era, the new added-on values of "freedom" evoke the past as a historical argument only to readjust it to engage the mere technological access to

information.

5. Interpellation of Citizen

Primary vehicles for the interpellation of citizen in the new Russia arise out of arguments from history, particularly from the victory narrative of the Great Patriotic War. But the Great Patriotic War public narrative carries with it a specific interpellation of Soviet and/or Russian consubstantial contribution to world history. Vladimir Putin, since the inception of his first presidential term, introduces a restrictive definition of the World War II as a powerful yet uniquely morphed Soviet/Russian argument for national identity. On the 60th Anniversary of the Beginning of the Great Patriotic War, Putin (2001) defines the war and its repercussions in the history and public memory of the people of Russia:

June 22 is one of the most tragic dates in our history. On that day, 60 years ago – today we are marking the 60th anniversary – the Great Patriotic War began. That was a terrible stab in the back for the *Soviet* people (emphasis added). It was the attack on the USSR that initiated the most bloody phase of the Second World War… the memory of those terrible war years will remain forever as an undying national sorrow etched into the hearts of all those who lived together in our united country… (p. 1).

Almost a year later, commemorating the 57th anniversary of victory in the Great Patriotic War, Putin mentions one time only the word "Soviet" infusing the speech with the "we" and "our" personal pronouns, locating 1945 victory within a Russian Federation locus of discourse, as he states that after "our victory in the war came victories in peacetime: victories in rebuilding our economy, achievements in education, culture in the exploration of outer space and the development of science" (Putin 2002, p.1). Medvedev continues the same enthymematic strategy of collapsing the Soviet and Russian victory in a single consubstantial evocation of the past, as he pays tribute to veterans (former Soviet, current Russian only?) as winners of peace "for our country and for the whole world" (Medvedev, 2010, p.1).**[xi]**

Important to note that while the original Russian phrase of "Great Patriotic War" identifies the well-known cultural notion of Soviet victory and its historical account of World War II, the "Go Russia" phrase plays the new, post-Soviet identification as part of the cultural appeals pertaining to the new (and old) Russian national identity. These distinct historical and rhetorical phrases that

create premises for Russian citizenry as cultural arguments from definition, strategically interpellate in the presidential appeals examined novel arguments of identity, novel arguments of defining national identity as a play between the past and the present of Russian history.

While Medvedev begins his “Go Russia!” address by expressing concerns about the Russian economy, in particular with economic problems of reliance on raw materials exports and “endemic corruption,” to turn to a national identity argument, asking whether Russia can “really find its own path for the future?” After posing this question, Medvedev (2009) shifts immediately to the topic of the Great Patriotic War:

Next year we will celebrate the sixty-fifth anniversary of Victory in the Great Patriotic War. This anniversary reminds us that our present day is the future of the heroes who won our freedom. And the people who vanquished a cruel and very strong enemy back in those days must today overcome corruption and backwardness. . . . As the contemporary generation of Russian people, we have received a huge inheritance. Gains that were well-deserved, hard-fought and well-earned by the persistent efforts of our predecessors. . . . How shall we manage that legacy? What will the future of Russia be for my son, for the children and grandchildren of my fellow citizens? (p.1)

Although there are legitimate questions about Medvedev’s framing of the victory in the Second World War as the winning of freedom for the Soviet Union, our immediate concern moves in a different direction: Within Medvedev’s generational construction, the “glorious history” of yesterday’s “heroes who won our freedom” models appropriate actions for today’s “people” to fight against today’s “strong enemy” of corruption and economic “backwardness.” Both to honor the inheritance received from yesterday’s heroes and to improve upon or “magnify” that legacy for future generations, today’s “citizens” of Russia are interpellated into a specific subject position relative to both the past and the future, and a key to that interpellation is the construction of what Ivo Mijnssen (2010) and others have called the “victory myth” of the Great Patriotic War.

The myth of victory appears to provide a basis for the identity of Russian society, yet the political community that attained victory was Soviet, not Russian. However, since ethnic Russians played a leading role in the victorious Soviet community, the historic outcome in this interpretation legitimates Russian demands for close cooperation in the post-Soviet space under its leadership.

(Mijnssen, 2010, p.8)

Medvedev eventually links this explicitly to concerns with self-definition: "We must understand and appreciate the complexity of our problems. . . . In the end, commodity exchanges [relying on oil and gas exports] must not determine Russia's fate; *our own ideas about ourselves, our history and future must do so*" (emphasis added) (2009, p. 2). We like to pinpoint here that the pronoun "we", which in this speech collapses only Soviet/Russian identity, carries long-lasting history of communist enthymemes, invoking for multiple audiences a set of consubstantial arguments of national identity and communist history in use for several decades in former Eastern and Central Europe (Marin, 2007).

Examining Medvedev's interpellation of Russians into this relatively new role as citizens of a democracy, we focus on his projection of "our own ideas about ourselves" (what we are viewing as key components of national identity) especially as these projections relate to relationships between the individual and mother Russia (and/or the political state) both historically (especially in the immediate post-Soviet period) and in the future.

As has been a consistent feature of contemporary Russian presidential discourse, Medvedev posits a historical continuity of Russia, the Russian people, and implicitly the Russian "nation" (in a sense similar to that invoked by Benedict Anderson (2006), that "nations" are states of mind, or common identification that creates, in Burke's (1968) terms, a consubstantiality among the "citizens" and the "nation"). This continuity rises above any particular historical political arrangements of the State: the "State" may be tribal, imperial, monarchal, Communist, or totalitarian, but Russia and the Russian "nation" have persevered intact through it all. "Russia," as Medvedev puts it (ironically in the context of corruption) has a history from "time immemorial." Here again, the interpellated "nation" as a multifold cultural enthymeme of historical arguments calls for audiences to co-create a consubstantial Russian oneness that rhetorically can move forward the political arguments for the modernization stage of its future.

Medvedev (2009) is explicit in his 'description' of the civic attitudes and engagement of the Russian as citizen, embedding his characterization in both broader descriptions of "national habits" and fabric of Russian history:
Paternalistic attitudes are widespread in our society, such as the conviction that all problems should be resolved by the government. Or by someone else, but

never by the person who is actually there. The desire to make a career from scratch, to achieve personal success step by step is not one of our national habits. This is reflected in a lack of initiative, lack of new ideas, outstanding unresolved issues, the poor quality of public debate, including criticism. Public acceptance and support is usually expressed in silence. Objections are very often emotional, scathing, but superficial and irresponsible. Well, this is not the first century that Russia has had to confront these phenomena. (p.2)

Medvedev proceeds to challenge the view that these "steadfast" traditions in a history that "tends to repeat itself" are "chronic social diseases" that cannot the conquered, maintaining that like serfdom and illiteracy they too can be overcome. Despite this overt claim, interpellations of the citizen of the new Russian sovereign democracy suggest enthymematical counterarguments that invite citizens to enact certain prescribed roles and attitudes with respect to civic involvement and political agency.

He shows the way relative to the *dangers* from the past – with an emphasis on the alleged "chaos" and threat of national disintegration that came during the Yeltsin years. This works to dampen the support for "radical democracy" and to invite the citizens to *trust the authorities* to make the proper decisions for the stability of the nation. Here again the authoritarian theme inaugurated by Putin's presidential addresses emerges as invoked political argument of implied citizenry previously identified and tested by Russian nation as effective. In contrast with the Yeltsin era, the Putin-Medvedev-to-be-continued political guidance stems from the vertical powers of political life:

Not everyone is satisfied with the pace at which we are moving in this direction. They talk about the need to accelerate changes in the political system. And sometimes about going back to the 'democratic' nineties. But it is inexcusable to return to a paralyzed country. So I want to disappoint the supporters to permanent evolution. We will not rush. Hasty and ill-considered political reforms have led to tragic consequences more than once in our history. They have pushed Russia to the brink of collapse. We cannot risk our social stability and endanger the safety of our citizens for the sake of abstract theories. We are not entitled to sacrifice stable life, even for the highest goals . . . . Changes will take place, but they will be gradual, thought-through, and step-by-step. But they will nevertheless be steady and consistent. (Medvedev, 2009, p.4)

In equating "'democratic' nineties" (already undercut in legitimacy by the quotation marks) with "paralyzed country" and "permanent revolution," Medvedev energies the association of democracy with chaos; by implicitly linking "democracy" as an "abstract theory" with the enthymematically present abstract theory of communism and in turn associating the chaos of democracy with the domestic horrors of the Soviet regime under the umbrella of "tragic consequences," Medvedev presents Russia's "path for the future," a path that will provide order and stability, a path that will tame the chaotic excesses of undisciplined democracy. It is a path of "managed democracy" in which the steps of change are "thought-through" and then directed from above.

Through culturally-specific constructions of "democracy" and "citizen," the transformation of the governance system in Russia gains both *necessity* (it is "called for" by the needs of the citizens) and legitimacy. Here again, presidential appeals calling for new Russian citizenship become sustainable political enthymemes reminiscent of the old Soviet discourse on freedom and civic participation. As Medvedev asserted, the leaders are "not entitled to sacrifice stable life, even for the highest goals" (such as the abstract theory of democracy) (2009, p.1). The *vision* of "democracy" that emerges is a top-down democracy in which the authorities guide, regulate, and manage social and economic change. This re-defined democracy is currently being implemented in the Russian Federation, and the interpellated roles for patriotic and loyal citizens are concomitantly becoming institutionalized.

6. Crafting New Cultural Arguments from History: Interpellation and Tandem Rhetoric

While "Go, Russia!" speech and article surprised the world as Medvedev's manifesto, his official rhetoric remains to be read within yet another interpellated cultural and political context, namely as part or as a continuation of Putin-era official discourse. As such, Medvedev's speech is salient to a larger rhetorical context for political arguments on national identity, to the cultural realm of consubtantiality of politics between two Kremlin official voices, the current President of Russia (former Prime Minister) and the former President (current Prime Minister), both voices of a somewhat similar rhetorical tone. Thus, "sovereign democracy," authoritarianism and nationalism as two main pillar themes addressed from the Kremlin, and Putin's definition of citizenship for the Russian nation can all be identified as rhetorical and political arguments effective

in their own right (Williams, Young, & Launer, 2001; Williams & Marin, 2009).

Due to effective interpellation of historical enthymemes, the Russian people also enters the realm of consubstantial identification, providing electorate and political support in vast majority to the United Russia party (Putin being the current president) and to the current presidency. Dmitri Medvedev, former Prime Minister during last Putin electorate, Vladimir Putin as Prime Minister due to Constitution legislation (1993) participate in a "tandemocracy" difficult to understand without knowledge of historical background of pre-Soviet, Soviet and post-Soviet nation-state called Russian Federation. In an extensive survey study of the 2007-2008 election season, Hale and Colton (2010) depict a complex political arena for citizenry: the role of state is by a large margin is seen as necessary to remain dominating; United Russia (Putin's Party) is the Party of choice to continue and deepen market reforms, as well as the leading party to restore Russian identity; along with the "Putin factor," the overwhelming argument (98% of the voters) that lead to the current political scene of the Medvedev-Putin duumvirate. From the perspective of our overall argument, such "tandemocracy" notion translates well rhetorically into interpellated and co-shared enthymematic cultural arguments that prepare, assist, and continue to persuade the Russian people about national identity as past- or post-Soviet citizenry.**[xii]**

Hale and Colton (2010) state that that the presidential campaign of 2007-2008 was "managed by the authorities (read state) and was, by most disinterested accounts, the most meticulously engineered since the Soviet allots of the mid-1980s" (p. 18). We want to highlight that if we consider political context a macro level of discourse, cultural enthymemes contribute as discursive strategies to engage previously-agreed upon public arguments, thus offering a locus for consensual audience to redefine and strengthen the meta-argument of national identity, Russian national identity in the case examined.

Paying attention to strategic re-conceptualization of history (read 'national Russian history') as part of the cultural meta-context for effective public arguments, Linan (2010) argues that the well-designed political use of history with the aim of justifying current policies presents a vision "that makes Russian citizens be aware of their mission in the world and feel proud of their history, looking to the future with optimism" (p. 167). Linan (2010) adds that "*discursive control in a regime like the Russian one during the Putin era comes in very useful for influencing the social memory of Russian citizens, in order to build or impose*

consensus (emphasis added) (p. 168).

In conclusion, we argue that Medvedev's presidential discourse provides an effective use of the framework of rhetorical interpellation and cultural enthymemes, thus engaging culture-specific, Soviet/Russian definitions of citizenship and democratic values appealing to contemporary Russia. And Medvedev (2009) promises to continue to do so: "We will create a new Russia. Go Russia!" (p.6)

NOTES

[i] Dimitri, Dmitri or Dmitry are three spellings utilized for Medvedev's first name in most of the sources cited.

[ii] As indicated by Masha Limpan in the article "Putin's 'Sovereign Democracy'" in 2006, this term is a "Kremlin coinage that conveys two messages: first, that Russia's regime is democratic, and second, that this claim must be accepted, period. Any attempt of verification will be regarded as unfriendly and as meddling in Russia's domestic affairs" (p. A.21). See Lipman, M. (2006). "Putin's 'Sovereign Democracy.'" *The Washington Post*. Saturday, July *15*, 2006. A. 21. http://washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/07/14/AR200607141534.html

[iii] We acknowledge a large body of political science scholarship on Russian Federation since 1991. However, for the purpose of this article, the authors' intent was to focus as much as possible on the current state of affairs, discussing less the political strategies of previous Russian Federation presidents like Boris Yeltsin and Vladimir Putin. Rather, the political analyses consulted narrow the scope of the explorations on the contemporary Russian President, Dimitri Medvedev, and his continuation of Putin-style presidency.

[iv] "Enthymeme" is used in accordance with the Aristotelian concept presented in his Rhetoric, namely as a rhetorical argument (deductive in form) missing one of the premise yet inferring it on basis of a shared opinion in the public domain. Of note that "enthymeme" is considered the core of persuasion process in Aristotelian view. For a brief description of "enthymeme" as part of Aristotelian rhetorical theory, see *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotle-rhetoric/ #enthymeme/.

[v] We recognize that this article utilizes a small sample of presidential addresses, yet we consider these speeches are emblematic, hence, definitional and used as such in our rhetorical examination. In addition, we suggest readings

of both authors' previous research on the topic of both Russian and Eastern European cultural arguments, as listed in the reference section.

[vi] In this sense, culture becomes a dynamic rhetorical concept transforming speakers, audiences, and critics by bringing out fragmentation of identity, previous experiences, and contexts of interaction within rhetorical discourse. A basic definition of "culture" stemming from the intercultural research in communication can represent an operative assumption for this research. Accordingly, culture involves a holistic set of values, interrelationships, practices, and activities shared by a group of people, influencing their views on the world. One such definition, although not necessarily the most exhaustive, is provided by Dodd (1998) in his textbook on intercultural communication. Carley H. Dodd, *Dynamics of Intercultural Communication*, 5th ed. (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 1998, p. 36).

[vii] The authors consider Charland's usage of the term in its active function permits our usage of "to interpellate" accordingly. Maurice Charland, "Constitutive Rhetoric: The Case of the *Peuple Québécois*,"*Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 73 (1987): 133-50.

[viii] How is democracy enacted in recent, post-Yeltsin constrictions of the Russian Federation? Aron (2007) summarizes the new institutionalized version of democratic life in Russia, reminiscent of past histories and past discursive strategies in Soviet times: [1] Governors in turn appoint one of the regional representatives to the Federal Assembly and the Council of Federation ("the regional legislature selects the other members") (p.8). [2] Independent candidates are barred from running for Duma seats; "all candidates must belong to a party" (p. 7). [3] The Central Election Commission, "which is now completely subservient to the Kremlin," creates party registration obstacles and expenses that allow it to disqualify "any party" (p. 7). [4] The "post" which a party must past in order to qualify for proportional representation in the Duma has been raised from 5% to 7%, and "blocs of smaller parties are outlawed" (p. 7). [5] "United Russia" – "party of the Kremlin" (Putin/Medvedev) – is defined by leaders, not ideology, and it is far and away the most dominant political party." The new Party Chair for United Russia is Vladimir Putin. [6] The state now owns or has "firm control of all national television channels;" "a majority" of "independent newspapers and magazines have either been forced to fold of have been 'tamed' by change of ownership;" and an estimated 80-85% of Russians do not have internet access" (p. 8). In reality, no real public debate exists on major issues. "Government supervision of television programming," for instance, "reportedly includes weekly

lists of ‘recommended’ topics for coverage and lists of opposition leaders, independent commentators, and journalists who under no circumstances should be allowed to be interviewed or appear as guests on talk shows” (p. 8). [7] Finally, in Aron’s (2007) assessment, “the judiciary” – “(a)long with the legislative branch” – “now appears to be under almost total dominance by the Kremlin” (p.8).

[ix] One additional layer that is worth developing in a future scholarly article relates specifically to the play between arguments of and from definition in Putin and Medvedev enthymematic use of the term “democracy.” Both presidents utilize the term “democracy” defined as interpellating the “state” as a sine qua non condition, while “democracy” as “the Russian people” is only under the qualifier of “state as “people” (authors’ emphasis).

[x] Burke, K. (1969). *A Rhetoric of Motives*. (1950. Berkeley: University of California Press, p. 46).

[xi] For a closer linguistic analysis in line with the overall argument of this article, it might be of interest to further investigate the original Russian forms of pronouns, verbs, and possessives in order to check how are they played, again, enthymematically, in order to create deductive cultural arguments of national identity as Soviet/Russian.

[xii] By studying a larger number of presidential addresses by both Vladimir Putin or Dimitri Medvedev this *political tandem* can be viewed also from the persuasive and enthymematic angle of shared interpellated arguments of definition, naming Soviet identity similar to Russian identity, Soviet history as a selected Russian history, to name a few such arguments. An additional inference of the tandem bicycle as a political pedaling through Soviet and Russian history can easily bring further interesting views on the current political life in Russia. This tandem imagery works also well metaphorically presenting insight into the selection of cultural arguments and the rhetorical strategies necessary to create effective appeals that work for the Russian citizens in current global times.

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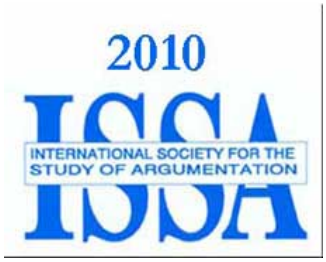

1. Introduction

Many people, when I suggest that the Natural Selection theory may be incomplete, look at me in surprise and reproach me for rejecting evolution, believing that I fail to accept that complex forms of life arose out of other simpler ones. I should say, to reassure you, that I am a convinced evolutionist. This reaction, however, shows that both terms, "*evolution*" and "*Natural Selection*", are seemingly mistaken, understandably, since both come from the same theory of evolution by Darwin. But *fact* and *explanation* are different things, and for those people's sake I should stress the difference: evolution is the *fact,* the speciation phenomenon of the variety of species that we find with a common origin, and yes, it is a fact, or at least that is how I see it, after the overwhelming fossil evidence (Foley, 2010; Hunt, 1997). But there are many ways of explaining that fact, and Natural Selection, despite its relevance, is just one of them.

Yes: Natural Selection is just the peculiar and personal explanation that Darwin gave to evolution, which can be condensed in the well-known "struggle for

survival" and "survival of the fittest" arguments. In this paper I present a critique to this philosophy of evolution, which does not mean that I question either the evolution or the correctness of Natural Selection.

2. The Clues to the Success of Natural Selection

Natural Selection is an amazingly successful model, still in force after more than a century and a half. This period is very long for any scientific theory, especially these days when knowledge advances so fast.

Several factors have contributed to this success. One is the strange phenomenon of identification that the terms "evolution", "Darwinism" and "Natural Selection" have suffered. They seem to come in one single package, synonymous, which makes it very difficult to separate what is right and what is wrong in them. The amazing discovery that evolution represents, and the appreciation for his author, Darwin, are worth the small price we have to pay in accepting his weak explanation by means of Natural Selection.

A second factor that has contributed to the strength of the Natural Selection model is what I call "scientific inertia": it is hard for a new idea to be accepted, but once it is, it becomes the "established" or "official truth", the "orthodoxy" , and it is difficult to change the scientific mind afterwards. Planck put this very well in one of his most famous quotes:

"A new scientific truth does not triumph by convincing its opponents and making them see the light, but rather because its opponents eventually die, and a new generation grows up that is familiar with it".

This is especially flagrant in Science: despite it being rationally-based, it does not seem to progress on rational grounds, but rather is moved by the same fears and influences that move sensitive human beings, well in tune, for their own good, with the mentality of the time.

This "inertia" affects all scientific theories, and Natural Selection is not an exception. It does, however, have one peculiar advantage over the rest, which makes it even stronger and more difficult to refute. It does not deal with the typical scientific topic, usually mysterious and uninteresting for most people. On the contrary, it deals with a very deep question at the very heart of every human being: the origin of their own existence. It is such a deep question that human beings have had an ancestral necessity to answer it, developing a whole system just to do it. The system was Religion, and the given answer was "life comes from

God". In this context, Natural Selection arises, as the first scientific theory that dares to answer the same question. And it does, by taking the prerogative from God, and handing it to Nature. At first, this was highly challenging for traditional thinking. But once religious prejudices are broken, the theory becomes reinforced, after all those unfair attacks it had to endure.

It is so strong that today any criticism of Natural Selection is suspected of being retrograde or primitive. The religious character of the critiques in the past now turns the defence of "Darwinism" into a kind of defence of "science" against "religion": if you attack Darwinism, you are a fanatic, old-fashioned, or even worse: anti-science.**[i]**

These are, in my view, the main factors that have contributed to the dominance of Natural Selection over the rest of evolutionary models. But what does Natural Selection actually mean, what is it about? Some inconsistencies in the meaning of this model are dealt with in the next section.

3. The Principle of Selection

The principle of Selection is the basis of Darwin's evolutionary model for explaining the mutability of species. This principle is the extrapolation to Nature (hence *Natural* Selection) of the artificial procedure performed by the human being, for achieving new and more efficient species. "*Can the principle of selection, which has been so potent in the hands of man, apply in nature?*" Darwin wonders in his book "The Origin of Species", (Darwin, 1968, p.130).

Darwin misses the fact, though, that the artificial selection performed by man, (whether for biological, or any other general purpose) requires necessarily a diverse set of elements, if a single one is to emerge from the set (see fig. 1.a). Therefore, when the human being makes his selection, he needs to choose from among various elements in order to obtain just one (it is then when the act of "selection" makes sense), finding the required variety that allows his choice already at hand.

The phenomenon of evolution, instead, starts from a single cell, which evolves by itself, despite being alone (Poole, 2002). In such a circumstance, no kind of "selection" is possible, while evolution still remains. If we accept that a single principle motivates the whole evolutionary process, that could not be a "selection principle", since we could not explain why the very first cell evolved alone, not to mention why it *arose*, which is the maximum evolutionary leap ever.

In fact, evolution seems to be the opposite process of a selection: the very first

cell evolves by itself, with no need for the presence of other elements (see fig. 1.b). A more detailed look into each new element reveals the same pattern of variability repeating itself over and over again, variations upon variations, producing an unimaginable spread of life: kingdoms, phyla, classes, orders, families, genera, species, types, races, individuals, etc. Such variety, all coming from one single cell, filling the gaps of almost any physical habitat, rather than a "selection", seems like an "explosion" of life **[ii]** (fig. 1.c).

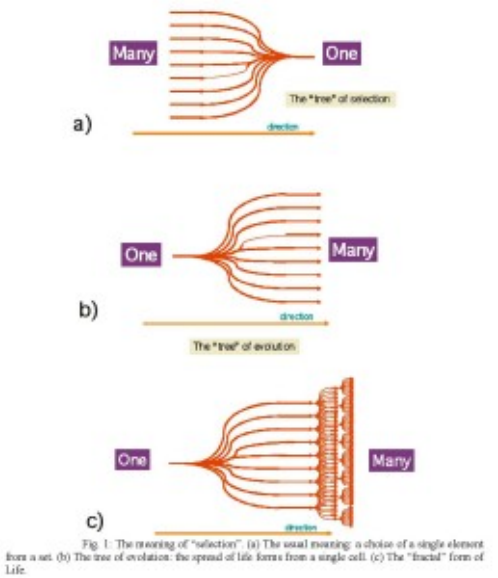

Fig. 1: The meaning of "selection". (a) The usual meaning: a choice of a single element from a set. (b) The tree of evolution: the spread of life forms from a single cell. (c) The "fractal" form of Life.

And the question is inevitable: this explosion of life obviously provokes a "struggle for survival", with species and individuals all struggling against each other, in order to achieve their space. However, Darwin does not say that; again he means exactly the opposite: it is not evolution which causes competition, but competition which causes evolution, meaning it is that fight for life which produces the modification and filtering of the most favourable genetic patterns which lead to improvement. Again, this conclusion collides with the lack of competition in the earliest stages of evolution: in the beginning there was room for them all, no need to "fight" or compete, and yet, they evolved. In fact, the first cell was by itself,

and it evolved. It is inevitable to think that the same principle which pushed the first cell to evolve, is the same one that pushed the subsequent forms forward. This should be clarified by any evolutionary model.

4. The philosophy of Natural Selection

The philosophy of Natural Selection is enclosed in the well-known phrases: the "struggle for survival" and the "survival of the fittest". These seem to say that evolution goes on thanks to the fittest, "the winners" of the fight, making this model a kind of "philosophy of success". But what about the "losers", what happens to them? According to Darwin, the answer is clear (Darwin, 1968, p.147): *"If any one species does not become modified and improved in a corresponding degree with its competitors, it will soon be exterminated".*

If we have a look at our evolution line (see fig. 2), this means that if individual B is fitter than A, B will survive, and A will be extinguished. In the same way, if C is fitter than B, C will survive, and B will be extinguished, and so on. According to this, one could think that we have left behind a trail of extermination. However, this is not the case: many species have escaped evolution, and survived till today, without evolving fortunately for us, otherwise we would be alone at the top of "Mount Evolution", and we could not survive on our own: we need plants, insects to fertilize the plants, birds, mammals, even the bacteria that live in our stomachs.

In fact, in order for a few species to evolve substantially, it is necessary that many others do not. Evolution requires a substrate of more primitive and basic life, to support the progression of subsequent improvements. Thus, there is a limitation to the term "struggle for surviving", and a compromise is required between "survival" and "extinction", "struggle" and "balance", "quality" and "quantity of life" (see fig. 3).

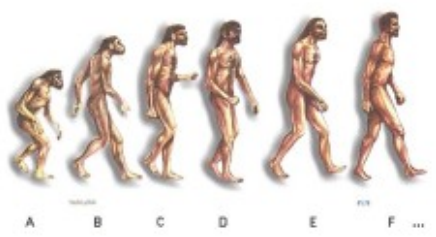

Fig. 2: Our evolution line, illustrating the argument behind the "survival of the fittest".

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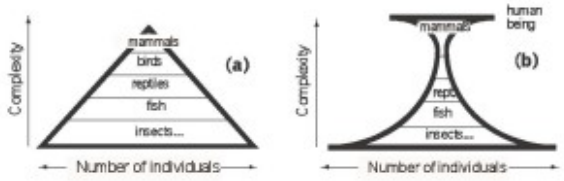

Fig. 3: The pyramid of evolution: The progression of complexity requires a base of primitive life which does not evolve, a necessary compensation between complexity and number of individuals (higher complexity requires a lower number of individuals, and vice versa, in order to keep the quantity & quality life-balance). a) Before the appearance of consciousness. b) After the appearance of consciousness, the pyramid starts to collapse at the apex. Figurative sketch, based on data in (UCM, n.d.).

5. Is Natural Selection a tautology?

This “survival of the fittest” argument has been described by some authors as almost tautological.**[iii]** Who survives? The fittest. But who are the fittest? Those who survive. And it is very difficult to escape that circle (Haldane, 1935; Popper, 1978; Brady, 1979; Peters, 1976; Hoyle, 1983).

If we organized a contest to cover some work posts, and after some interviews, we published a list of the selected candidates, in which we added as the reason for their selection that “they were the best for the post”, probably the rest of the non-selected candidates would be wondering what they did wrong, because there

is no clear and specific criteria of why those were the best. In a contest or a game, those who win are always the winners, but that is not the explanation of their victory, it is just a definition, an identification of the victory. In the life race too, those who survive are the best for surviving, but that is not any explanation of their survival. That is why Natural Selection is not an explanation, or an argument or hypothesis: it is just the identification of a factual result.**[iv]**
Note that there is no problem that Natural Selection cannot explain: for instance, the great enigma of dinosaurs. So it can easily explain both their total domination and their sudden extinction, although they are two contradictory phenomena: the dinosaurs dominated the other species because they were more adapted to the environment, but when the environmental circumstances changed, they died out because they were no longer adapted.

If individuals "A" have survived individuals "B", that will mean that the "As" are better adapted than the "Bs". So we can always say, without fear of contradiction, that those who survive are the fittest, (the criteria to recognize adaptation is survival), so since they have survived, we will find in that some justification of their adaptation. And that will be a handicap, which will prevent us from knowing, lost in rhetoric, the true causes of their survival.
Darwin himself falls into this trap when using Natural Selection to explain two contradictory phenomena (Darwin, 1872, p.208):
"*In certain whole groups of plants the ovules stand erect, and in others they are suspended; and within the same ovarium of some few plants, one ovule holds the former and a second ovule the latter position. These positions seem at first purely morphological, or of no physiological signification; but Dr. Hooker informs me that within the same ovarium, the upper ovules alone in some cases, and in other cases the lower ones alone are fertilised; and he suggests that this probably depends on the direction in which the pollen-tubes enter the ovarium. If so, the position of the ovules, even when one is erect and the other suspended within the same ovarium, would follow from the selection of any slight deviations in position which favoured their fertilisation, and the production of seed*.".

In order to explain why one species exhibits one trait rather than another, we need to know what the advantage is (otherwise our explanation would fit both the case and its opposite equally well). The traits generally depend on the epoch or the environment, and we do not see much collapse in the explanation given by Natural Selection, since the advantage can always be vaguely attributable to "the

change of circumstances". The problem arises when, like in the above case, we face the explanation of one trait and its opposite – ovules erect and ovules suspended – which share the same individual (a kind of plant), the same time, and the same circumstances. If supposedly the trait is the advantageous one, then its opposite is not. If the opposite trait is the advantageous one, the same reasoning stands for the former. In default of an explanation of why both appear in the same conditions, Darwin needs to admit that his selective explanation surprisingly fits in *any possible case*.
Such a loose explanation seems to blur the regular aim of Science, no longer like hitting the target with a well-aimed shot, but rather like moving the target to catch the bullet in flight, wherever it goes. Thus, nobody knows with certainty why the dinosaurs came into being, or why they were dominant, or why they died out, despite the fact that, by Natural Selection, we can be sure that they were perfectly adapted for a time, and perfectly unadapted, some time later.
The answer is always the same: "Evolution goes on thanks to the fittest species", but actually it does not mean anything by it, since there is no identification of any real reference or cause that made those species more efficient.

The strange thing about Natural Selection is not that it does not fail, but it *cannot* fail. Any scientific theory can be falsified, (with mental experiments, for instance). Natural Selection cannot: it is *only* and *always* correct, by definition. Any experiment we can imagine, will always be attributable to Natural Selection. If we asked: why did they survive? The answer is: "because they were fitter". But how do we know they were fitter? And the answer is "because they survived".
From this vague and circular argument, the only thing we can conclude is that the fittest do survive *at each moment*, without specifying why, nor the strange directionality of evolution, that does not go back to retake species once they have died out, even if the environmental conditions are the same ones that propitiated their appearance.

Another strange feature of Natural Selection is that it cannot predict. A scientific theory, in order to be recognized as such, requires *falsification* and *prediction*, both based on the model's ability to predict phenomena, in order to be validated (if the prediction is correct) or refuted (if it is incorrect). Natural Selection is not able to predict, *a priori*, which individuals or species will survive others; the only thing it does is to note their survival *a posteriori*, and look for the justification of their adaptation in it. That is why, actually, it is not a scientific theory: its

hypothesis is the pure observation of facts. Its pseudo-prediction on "the survival of the fittest", is equivalent, in our football example, to predicting that "the team that scores the most goals will win", or in the medicine example, that "the one who stops breathing will die" (see Endnote iv).

Darwin himself concedes this lack of ability for prediction:
"Who can explain why one species ranges widely (…), and why another allied species has a narrow range and is rare?" (Darwin, 1968, p.68)
And elsewhere:
"(…) Probably in no one case could we precisely say why one species has been victorious over another in the great battle of life". (Darwin, 1968, p.127)
Note that the past tense of his last phrase *"has been victorious"*, is indicative of the impossibility of explaining survival, not even *a posteriori*, when we already have the result in front of us.

Since both features, *falsification* and *prediction*, are required for any scientific theory in order to be considered as such, we are forced to wonder: *"Should we then acknowledge the enviable status of the Natural Selection hypothesis, and abandon the requirement of refutability as a symptom of good Science, and the theoretically controlled prediction as its main objective?"* (Marone, 2002).**[v]**

6. Beyond the Tautology
The first sentence of a letter to the Editor, signed by Ledyard Stebbins, in response to a paper by R.H. Peters, reads as follows (Stebbins, 1977, p.386):
"The article by R.H. Peters (1976) which leads off 110 volume of the American Naturalist could be dismissed by evolutionists as so far removed from evolutionary theory and experimentation as not to be worthy of attention were it not the lead article in a journal which in the past has been an outstanding organ of communication between biologists interested in major theories (…)"

As we can see, Darwinists' reactions against those, like Peters (Peters, 1976), who maintain the tautological character of Natural Selection, are anything but moderate –Stebbins, for instance, does not even cite Peters's paper in the section "Literature cited". It seems that, for them, critics of this kind are just "wealthy amateurs" (*Objections*, n.d.), (an implicit accusation of intrusiveness), and accuse them of simplification, misunderstanding, misquoting or quoting out of context, or even misunderstanding the notion of "circularity" (an implicit accusation of not understanding anything at all) (Caplan, 1977). So much sensitivity is

understandable, since it would be terrible for top scientists – supposedly reasonable – to recognize that they have fallen into the syndrome of "the emperor's new clothes", fooled by false bafflements, moved by the fear of not being considered smart enough, if they don't agree with the orthodoxy.
In the introduction I pointed out the difference between *fact* and *explanation*; now I would like to point out the difference between *explanation* and *understanding*. Many times in Science we have thought we understood, when we just had an explanation. If the explanation is good enough, knowledge increases on a solid basis, but in some cases the explanation is poor or out of date, and still, in the lack of something better, reaches a position of "orthodoxy", growing artificially upon more or less redundant justifications. This produces an *inflation of knowledge,* a knowledge bubble, which bursts when a new discovery shows its incorrectness, or its obsolescence.
This has happened in the past (the paradigmatic example is the hypothesis of the "ether"), and in my view, it is what is happening with Natural Selection now. For its time, when it was believed as an unquestionable matter that species were created by God such as they were, the explanation that species change over time through natural processes was undoubtedly revolutionary. For one hundred and fifty years afterwards, though, this explanation is taken for granted, not anymore a challenge for our minds.

I think those of us that dare to think Natural Selection is a tautology, do not have any intention to fool Science with artificial matters or empty rhetoric. Deep down within this controversy, there is a fundamental question: whether competition, the survival instinct, can be the explanation for the lives and progress of species, given that, at heart, this is an inherent instinct to life, and cannot be removed in any experiment for comparison purposes.
Even if that causal link "survival-evolution" were real, is it testable? Stebbins's paper, for instance, talks about "*experiments*" that "*have, of course, enabled evolutionists to falsify definitely and for all time the Lamarckian hypothesis (…)*", as if the falsification of the Lamarckian hypothesis was the confirmation of Natural Selection (Stebbins, 1977, p. 388).

Apparently, in these experiments, the "population pressure" (competition) is what forces the change of species, with the individual being more or less irrelevant. "*The individual",* he says,*" is never identified as such any more than is the individual molecule in experiments dealing with the dynamics of gases (…)*"

(Stebbins, 1977, p.388).
However, we also know that, according to Natural Selection, the essential change from one species to another comes precisely from the individual, more concretely, from a microscopic change within a gene of the individual. And that is why this hypothesis of competition causing the species' change is so strange: it is as if a tank of Oxygen could turn into Hydrogen just because a single molecule reacted to a change of pressure, taking his gas example.**[vi]**

This question has been taken very seriously by Marone *et al*., who have tried to clarify once and for all the supposed causal connection competition-adaptation in their own field, (Ecology), not in purely epistemological terms, but in practice, by measuring its impact on a practical work in the field on desert communities (Marone, 2002). "*We want to avoid the temptation of criticizing Natural Selection from a purely epistemological point of view*". They, however, "*beyond any reasonable doubt*", could not find any connection between the identified selection pressures and the expected adaptation results. This negative output prompts the authors to ask: "*"if we are right, it seems fair to wonder why we demand certain scientific canons in Ecology, which we suspend – without criticism?- when we are dealing with Natural Selection".***[vii]**
It seems as if Natural Selection was, rather than a scientific theory, a frame of work, into which the observable needs to fit (Popper, 1974). That is why it is so surprising that, when dealing with Natural Selection, our work is restricted to finding "the explanation of why it explains", limiting our research to justifying why the observed fits within it.

In my view, its lack of predictive power resides in that it involves the typical uncertainty of randomness (environmental historical accidents, random mutations), on which it still tries to build the causal evolutionary connection.
As a scientist, of course I am ready to accept that random events show a statistical distribution, which becomes apparent, not in the single event, but in the long-term series of events: For instance, if we roll a pair of dice, we will observe that the combination "7" is much more frequent than the combination "2" in the long term, since it is much more probable.

Thus, according to some authors, evolution is not a problem of "survivability", but a problem of "probability of survival", which weighs the long term result on the side of "the fittest". For them, "*(…) fitness is more accurately defined as the state of possessing traits that make survival more likely; this definition, unlike simple*

"survivability", avoids (Natural Selection) *being trivially true"* (*Objections*, n.d.). Or, in a more developed explanation by H. Pagels (Pagels, 1990, p.118):**[viii]**
"The probability distribution is like invisible hands. A good example is the slow and invisible process of biological evolution. This process is only real when we go beyond the apparent random events, and we examine a distribution of probabilities which gives an objective meaning to the environmental pressure on those species over others, better prepared for surviving in that environment"

Yet, if it was so, it will be reasonable to expect that those who are fitter – i.e. those who have a higher probability of survival, in fact will survive more easily, i.e. they will occur more frequently, in the same way that our combination of "7", because it is the most probable, is also the most frequent in a pair of dice. Therefore, according to that, the more evolved the species is, the more frequent it will be, or in other words: elephants would be much more common than flies. However, we do not observe that in nature: the pyramid of evolution is as shown in Fig. 3.a, not inverted, only changing its tendency with the appearance of human beings, when it starts to collapse at the apex (see Fig. 3.b).
Probably this little paradox – brought about by the redefinition of "the fittest" – is which has obliged some to relax the definition of "evolution" as well: "*Biologists do not consider any one species, such as humans, to be more highly evolved or advanced than another*". *"Evolution does not require that organisms become more complex. (…) there is a question if this appearance of increased complexity is real, (…) Complexity is not a consequence of evolution. (…) Depending on the situation, organisms' complexity can either increase, decrease or stay the same, and all these trends have been observed in evolution"* (We find this in *Wikipedia,* under the entry "Objections to evolution").
Immersed in that relativism, we need to stop in our attempt to understand a process that we cannot even define.

7. Shortfalls of Natural Selection
Besides this, the argument of Natural Selection based on "struggle" suggests the question: struggle, against what? The answer could be against other individuals, other species, or against adverse environmental circumstances, in general. In any case, it implies that evolution is driven by "something", however imprecise it may be, which is *external* to the species.
This idea avoids the possibility that the life of species is something inherent, essentially evolutionary (*per se*), in the same way as many other natural

processes. For instance, the life of an individual follows a defined evolutionary pattern of birth-growth-&-death imprinted in its genes, no matter whether there is another individual developing next. The life of a species could just be the temporal extrapolation of the life of individuals, and therefore, with the same birth-growth-&-death pattern.

There are many other processes of this kind (essentially evolutionary), which follow a cyclic pattern of birth-growth-&-death imprinted in the system, with no connotations of any kind of competition or struggle against external factors: The life of a star, the life of a galaxy, the life of the Universe, (space-time), or even the life of scientific ideas, ruled by a rather different dynamic from fight or struggle, according to Planck (see quote in section 2).
Finally, in the evolution of species we can clearly identify two changes of paradigm that so far cannot be explained by Natural Selection: one is the origin of life itself, the other one is the origin of consciousness (intelligence). These are represented schematically by the two leaps in fig. 4. The first one represents the origin of life, emerging from an inert substrate, the second represents the origin of consciousness, emerging from unconscious life.

The first of these phenomena (the appearance of life from an inert substrate) cannot be explained by Natural Selection, since a statement based on surviving obviously only makes sense for organisms that are already alive. Therefore, the lower limit of validity of Natural Selection is clear: just beyond the border between the alive and the inert, not managing to explain such a leap: how or why that first living cell arises. The second of these leaps, the appearance of consciousness, marks a turning point in evolution, and still remains an enigma for anthropologists (Flinn, 2005, p.10). Both changes of paradigm fully enter in what we call the evolution phenomenon, and should not be ignored by any theory that aspires to explain it.
It is far from my intention to propose an alternative, pseudo-scientific model for evolution. Still, let me say that we might need to seek the explanation of life at the heart of the physical laws that explain the evolution of the Universe, not in an isolated way within Biology, as if the evolution of life were an independent phenomenon from everything else, and could evolve as if it were alien to it. In other words, life could be an evolutionary phenomenon, in the context of an evolutionary Universe. If that were right, the arrow of life’s complexity would inexorably point towards the future, regardless of competition or eventualities,

parallel to the arrow of time.

Of course, we are far from understanding the laws of nature, as to reach an understanding of its connection with the enigma of life and consciousness. But for the XXI century, this line of research, in my view, is much more challenging.

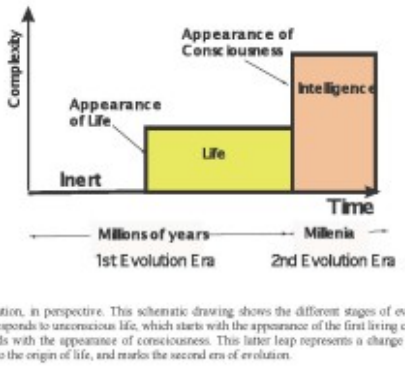

Fig. 4. Evolution, in perspective. This schematic drawing shows the different stages of evolution. The first era corresponds to unconscious life, which starts with the appearance of the first living cell (origin of life), and ends with the appearance of consciousness. This latter leap represents a change of paradigm comparable to the origin of life, and marks the second era of evolution.

Fig. 4. Evolution, in perspective. This schematic drawing shows the different stages of evolution. The first era corresponds to unconscious life, which starts with the appearance of the first living cell (origin of life), and ends with the appearance of consciousness. This latter leap represents a change of paradigm comparable to the origin of life, and marks the second era of evolution

8. Conclusion

In his last chapter, "Recapitulation and Conclusion", Darwin writes:

"*Although I am fully convinced of the truth of the views given under the form of an abstract, I by no means expect to convince experienced naturalists, whose minds are stocked with a multitude of facts all viewed, during a long course of years, from a point of view directly opposite to mine. It is so easy to hide our ignorance under such expressions as the "plan of creation", "unity of design", etc. and to think that we give an explanation when we only restate a fact*". (Darwin, 1968, p. 453)

I cannot think of a more accurate conclusion for my paper; let me borrow it, just

changing the words “plan of creation” and “unity of design” for others like “natural selection”, “survival of the fittest” or “struggle for life”.

NOTES

[i] To be honest, this suspicion is sometimes justified. Some very conservative religious parties are still reluctant to accept evolution today, others do accept evolution but promote strange (not scientific) initiatives with scientists in support of their thesis, see for instance the manifest “against Darwinism”, signed by one hundred scientists (ASDD, 2001). Since when do so many scientists need to co-sign a statement against, or in support of a scientific theory? But even stranger is the over-reaction of Darwinians, by collecting seven thousand scientists’ signatures in just four days (ASSD, n.d). The battle still continues, giving an idea of how contaminated the debate is on both sides, on not so purely scientific or argumentative grounds.

[ii] A “Big Bang” of Life, comparable to the Big Bang of the Universe.

[iii] Popper, in his article “Natural Selection and the Emergence of Mind”, regrets in the past having described the theory as almost tautological (Popper, 1978, p. 345). To understand this change of mind, it is useful to know that this paper is actually the speech he delivered at Darwin College (Cambridge) on November 8th, 1977. He may have fallen under the spell of the high reputation of both Darwin and Cambridge, when he was invited to give the first Darwin lecture. Such a “*great honour*”, as he says, not being “*a scientist nor (…) a historian*” (Popper, 1978, p.339), may have conditioned his change of mind.

[iv] Identifying *result* and *process* is the main mistake of Natural Selection. It is as if, in a football match, for instance, we tried to explain the reasons for the victory in terms of the score, we would not have the chance to understand the *tactics* that propitiated that victory. A characteristic of the result (the survival, the victory) cannot be identified with, and used to explain, the *process* that led to that result, or the causes that conditioned it. If we explained, for instance, the death of somebody by saying that “he stopped breathing”, it is obviously true, everybody dies for that reason, but the “stop-breathing” argument would not explain much about *why* that death came about. In the same way, “the survival of the fittest” is a *result,* and not the only one, of the process of evolution. Natural Selection fails in using it to explain the deep reasons that drove that process (evolution) throughout time. Despite the redundancy of this model, its wide success is surprising. A similar argument such as the one above to explain someone’s death would not have had any credit in Medicine.

[v] Original in Spanish. Translation by the author.
[vi] The irrelevance of the individual on one hand and his relevance on the other seems to be a contradiction of the theory, and the step from the outside macroscopic pressure to the inner microscopic mutation is not clear – especially now that the Lamarckian hypothesis, according to Stebbins, has been dismissed.
[vii] Original in Spanish. Translation by the author.
[viii] Source in Spanish. Translation by the author.

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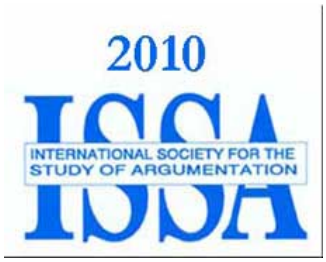
ISSA Proceedings 2010 – Persuasive Definitions In Ethical Argumentation On Abortion



1. Introduction

Disputants in the abortion debate employ persuasive definitions of the notions *abortion* and *fetus* to plead a pro-life or a pro-choice cause. Pro-lifers define *abortion* as an "unspeakable crime" or as a "deadly sin" and the *fetus* as "an innocent human being" or "a person from the moment of conception" while pro-choicers define *abortion* as "an operation performed to end an unwanted pregnancy" and the *fetus* as a "newly implanted clump of cells" or a "potential human being".

This paper **[i]** is concerned with the dialectical and rhetorical effects of the use of persuasive definitions in ethical argumentation on abortion. Using the pragma-dialectical framework (van Eemeren and Grootendorst 1984, 1992, 2004) within which persuasive definitions may be viewed as a form of strategic maneuvering (Zarefsky 2006), I will show that in ethical argumentation on abortion persuasive definitions mainly function as rhetorical means by which the parties convey an attitude of approval or disapproval of abortion and attempt to gain the audience's adherence to one position or another. The paper is structured as follows: in section 2 I briefly review some of the most known approaches to persuasive definitions that have been instrumental in the analysis of persuasive definitions in the abortion debate; in section 3 I examine the persuasive definitions used in some excerpts of pro-life and pro-choice argumentative texts focusing on the effects intended by the arguers.

2. Approaches to persuasive definitions

Generally, the main function of a definition is to clarify a notion or a term. Ilie (2007) holds that the act of defining "involves processes of identification, categorization and particularization of the entity or phenomenon to be defined. [It] implies the communicative act of making something clear and tangible. [It] entails determining the outline and boundaries of the entity or phenomenon to be defined" (2007, p. 669). Similarly, according to Viskil (1994), the acceptability of a standpoint depends on the clarity with which "*unknown or obscure terms*" (emphasis in the original) are defined (1994, p. 79).

However, when a definition contains emotionally loaded language, it is no longer a neutral definition but a persuasive one which conveys and stirs attitudes towards the thing that needs clarification. In other words, what a persuasion definition does is to"clarify" things by presenting them in a certain light

conveying the attitude of the speaker / writer and seeking to stir similar attitudes in the intended interlocutor or audience.

Persuasive definitions in which terms are defined using emotional language are an essential characteristic of ethical argumentation. Stevenson (1944) has done extensive work on persuasive definitions as employed in ethical disagreements. The author argues that ”in any ’persuasive definition’ the term defined is a familiar one, whose meaning is both descriptive and strongly emotive. The purport of the definition is to alter the descriptive meaning of the term; […] but the definition does not make any substantial change in the term’s emotive meaning” (1944, p. 210). Persuasive definitions are usually accompanied by the words ”true” or ”real” used in a metaphorical way which have the force of ”to be accepted”. Stevenson considers that persuasive definitions are deceptive in the sense that they can serve as argumentation tactics to manipulate an audience, hence he recommends prudence when facing such definitions.

Walton (2005) objects to this view of persuasive definitions and persuasive language as always misleading or fallacious. He argues that ”if the purpose of a persuasive definition is to persuade, and if rational persuasion can be a legitimate goal, putting forward a persuasive definition can have a legitimate basis in some cases” (2005, p. 159). Persuasive definitions are placed into a new dialectical framework in which they are evaluated in light of their purpose as speech acts. The author proposes a persuasion dialogue model, ”a formal structure with moves and rules in which the aim of each participant is rational persuasion based on the values and other accepted premises of the other party” (2005, p. 177). Within this dialogue, a persuasive definition has the function of an argument and can be considered a legitimate move as long as it contributes to rational argumentation in a given case and helps the dialogue fulfill its collective goal (2005, p. 178).

According to Zarefsky (2006), a persuasive definition is “a non-neutral characterization that conveys a positive or negative attitude about something in the course of naming it. The name is, in effect, an implicit argument that one should view the thing in a particular way. [T]he definition is put forward as if it was uncontroversial and could be easily stipulated” (2006, p. 404). For this reason, the author considers persuasive definitions “a form of strategic maneuvering” (2006, p. 399). In other words, by means of this type of definition, the speaker can put forward certain values and beliefs without arguing in support of them. This has been called by Zarefsky (1997) an argument by definition.

Macagno and Walton (2008) claim that persuasive definitions often "involve a conflict of values, in which the interlocutor founds his implicit argumentation upon a value that the interlocutor does not share. However, sometimes this conflict of values depends on the interlocutors' arguing about two different realities, two different concepts named in the same fashion" (2008, p. 205).

Dissociation and persuasive definitions are effectively combined in argumentative discourse. As argued by Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969), "[definition] is an instrument of the dissociation of concepts, more especially, whenever it claims to furnish the real, true meaning of the concept as opposed to its customary or apparent usage" (1969, p. 444). Sometimes by means of a dissociative definition a new characteristic is introduced as the criterion for the right use of a concept. The authors consider that "a definition is always a matter of choice. Anyone making such a choice, particularly if a dissociative definition is involved, will generally claim to have isolated the single, true meaning of the concept, or at least the only reasonable meaning or the only meaning corresponding to current usage" (1969, p. 448).

According to van Rees (2005), distinction and definition are two speech acts performed in a dissociation. Both speech acts belong to the class of usage declaratives (van Eemeren and Grootendorst 1984) whose role is to clarify linguistic usage. For a dissociation to be dialectically sound, the two speech acts inherent in it should be performed recognizably that is explicitly, implicitly or indirectly. When the distinction or the definition is just presupposed, the procedural requirements for a dialectically sound dissociation are not met[ii]. Thus the distinction or the definition introduced by means of dissociation is meant to be taken for granted with no further discussion (van Rees 2005, p. 388).

In line with Zarefsky (2006), I consider persuasive definitions to be a form of strategic maneuvering which should both clarify or precizate things and convey a certain attitude towards the issue at stake thus achieving dialectical reasonableness and rhetorical effectiveness at the same time (van Eemeren and Houtlosser 2002). In argumentative practice, however, persuasive definitions arise from a clash of values as Macagno and Walton (2008) also suggest and serve the interests of the arguers that use them. These arguers may be so strongly attached to their positions which they want to impose that they are more interested in winning the dispute in their favor than in resolving the disagreement. Therefore the strategic maneuvering with persuasive definitions

derails when a party's rhetorical aim of naming things in such a way as to convey and stir a certain attitude overrides the dialectical aim of clarifying matters on the merits. In Walton's (2005) terms, the use of persuasive definitions becomes fallacious when it hinders the fulfillment of the general goal of the dialogue where it occurs.

As Stevenson (1944), van Rees (2005) and Zarefsky (2006) point out, the fact that persuasive definitions can be advanced as indisputable arguments which need no further critical testing to be accepted makes them a powerful instrument of persuasion. In my view, persuasive definitions are used in argumentative discourse less for their dialectical potential of clarifying or precizating things and more for their rhetorical potential to convey the speaker's attitude towards an issue and redirect or influence the interlocutor's or the audience's attitude towards the respective issue.

3. Persuasive definitions in ethical argumentation on abortion

In ethical disputes, defining key terms by means of persuasive definitions has significant implications for the resolution of the differences of opinion. Usually, the core of ethical dilemmas is represented by the conflict between persuasive definitions of the issue at stake. Such a case is the abortion dispute in which the clashing definitions of the key notions of *abortion* and *fetus* make the resolution of the difference of opinion impossible.

In ethical argumentation on abortion, arguers make strategic use of persuasive definitions in order to convey their pro-life or pro-choice attitude towards abortion as well as to redirect or influence the audience's perception of this controversial issue. The present analysis of the use of persuasive definitions in the abortion discourse starts from three major assumptions that I have previously made about the abortion debate.

First of all, the abortion controversy is a case of *deep disagreement* (Fogelin 1985) in which the arguers hold incommensurable positions on the status of the *fetus* and hence on the significance of *abortion* (Mazilu 2009a). The two notions *abortion* and *fetus* may be conceived of in contradictory ways so as to serve a pro-life or a pro-choice interest.

Second, given the fact that the abortion controversy is a case of deep disagreement in which the parties share no common ground of values and preferences and lack a resolution-minded attitude, it appears that both pro-life

and pro-choice argumentation is directed at the audience that plays the role of a "third party" in the dispute. The arguers make use of *strategic maneuvering* with dissociation and persuasive definitions aimed more at winning the dispute in their favor by gaining the third party audience's adherence to one position or another and less at resolving the difference of opinion on the merits (Mazilu 2008b).
Third, the emotional appeal is the main tactic employed by the parties to influence the third party audience's perception of the reality of abortion (Mazilu 2008a, 2009b).

On the basis of these premises my first hypothesis is that the conflicting persuasive definitions of the notions *abortion* and *fetus* manipulated by the arguers in the abortion debate represent one of the causes of the deep disagreement the parties find themselves in. The persuasive definitions advanced by the two opposing parties convey two "incommensurable" attitudes towards abortion and the fetus. Thus, pro-life activists define abortion as an "unspeakable crime" or as a "deadly sin" and the fetus as "a human being" or "a person from the moment of conception". Pro-choice supporters, on the other hand, define abortion as an operation performed to end an unwanted pregnancy and the fetus as a "newly implanted clump of cells" or "not a person at least up to a certain moment". Following Macagno and Walton (2008), I hold that these contradictory definitions "involve a conflict of values" which relies on different perceptions of what human life is. These ways of defining the key notions of *abortion* and *fetus* in the abortion debate have profound dialectical and rhetorical consequences for the resolution of the dispute in case.

My second hypothesis is that persuasive definitions are part of the arguers' emotional appeal directed at the audience and therefore their main function is a rhetorical one meant to help the arguers win the discussion over in their favor.

Before examining the persuasive definitions of the notions *abortion* and *fetus* in pro-life and pro-choice argumentation, it is necessary to know what lexical definitions of these notions can be found in various dictionaries. It is interesting to see how the lexical definitions of the two notions have been adjusted to serve a pro-life or a pro-choice interest.

The notion *abortion* is defined as:
[T]he act of giving premature birth with loss of the fetus in the period before a live birth is possible; the procuring of induced termination of pregnancy to

destroy a fetus (Shorter Oxford English Dictionary); *[T]he intentional ending of a pregnancy, usually by a medical operation"* (http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/british/abortion_1); *[T]he termination of a pregnancy after, accompanied by, resulting in, or closely followed by the death of the embryo or fetus; spontaneous expulsion of a human fetus* (http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/abortion); *[A] medical operation to end a pregnancy so that the baby is not born alive [=termination]"* (http://www.ldoceonline.com/dictionary/abortion).

As far as the notion *fetus* is concerned, it is defined as:
[A]n unborn human more than eight weeks after conception (Shorter Oxford English Dictionary); *[A] young human being or animal before birth, after the organs have started to develop* (http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/british/foetus); *[A] developing human from usually two months after conception to birth* (http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/fetus); *[A] baby or young animal before it is born* (http://www.ldoceonline.com/dictionary/foetus).

3.1 Persuasive definitions in pro-life argumentation
Pro-life argumentation frames abortion as a criminal act by which an innocent human being is deliberately killed. This way of framing abortion is meant to convey the pro-life activists' attitude of disapproval and to influence the audience's perception of this issue. The following pro-life excerpts are illustrative of explicit, implicit and indirect persuasive definitions of the notions *abortion* and *fetus*.

According to van Rees (2005), a definition is made explicit by means of a performative formula of the type "I define" (p. 384). A definition is performed implicitly when there is no performative formula but "the expressions that are used have syntactic and semantic characteristics that make them preeminently fit for performing the speech act that is intended" (p. 385). An indirect definition is performed by means of expressions which have "syntactic and semantic characteristics that make them preeminently fit for performing *another* (emphasis in the original) speech act than the one intended" (p. 385). A definition is presupposed when no explicit, implicit or indirect speech act is performed. In this case the meaning introduced by the definition is intended to be taken for granted (p.386).

An explicit persuasive definition of abortion can be found in John Paul II's argumentation against abortion as a representative of the Catholic Church.
(1) *The Second Vatican Council defines abortion, together with infanticide, as an "unspeakable crime". (…) Especially in the case of abortion there is a widespread use of ambiguous terminology, such as "interruption of pregnancy", which tends to hide abortion's true nature and to attenuate its seriousness in public opinion. But no word has the power to change the reality of things: procured abortion is the deliberate and direct killing, by whatever means it is carried out, of a human being in the initial phase of his or her existence, extending from conception to birth. The one eliminated is a human being at the very beginning of life. From the time that the ovum is fertilized, a life is begun which is neither that of the father nor the mother; it is rather the life of a new human being with his own growth. It would never be made human if it were not human already. This has always been clear, and modern genetic science offers clear confirmation.*
(Excerpt from John Paul II *Encyclical Letter on the Value and Inviolability of Human Life / Evangelium Vitae*, http: //www.newadvent.org/)

The arguer as a pro-life advocate makes strategic use of dissociation when he pretends to reveal the "true nature" of abortion: "But no word has the power to change the reality of things". Pro-choice supporters are therefore accused of manipulating the public opinion by promoting the "false nature" of abortion when they call it "interruption of pregnancy". This dissociation between the "true nature" and the "false nature" of abortion is followed by a persuasive definition of *abortion* meant to reinforce the "real" significance of this act: "The Second Vatican Council defines abortion, together with infanticide, as an "unspeakable crime". (…) [P]rocured abortion is the deliberate and direct killing, by whatever means it is carried out, of a human being in the initial phase of his or her existence, extending from conception to birth".

Moreover, the uncontroversial human nature of the fetus is emphasized by a persuasive definition: "The one eliminated is a human being at the very beginning of life. From the time that the ovum is fertilized, a life is begun which is neither that of the father nor the mother; it is rather the life of a new human being with his own growth". Putting abortion whose legal status is uncertain on a par with infanticide which is generally considered a crime is a persuasive argumentative tactic meant to evoke negative attitudes in the audience.

Furthermore, defining *abortion* as an "unspeakable crime" or as "the deliberate

and direct killing of a human being" where the adjectives "unspeakable", "deliberate" and "direct" have been carefully selected leaves no room for further debate on the definition. Such a persuasive definition qualifies as an indisputable argument aimed at stirring in the audience an attitude of disapproval of abortion.

The two definitions of the notions *abortion* and *fetus* instantiate what Zarefsky (1997) calls "argument by definition". By means of this type of argument the speaker advocates values and beliefs that he does not have to defend explicitly. This is the case of our pro-life protagonist who simply stipulates that abortion is a crime and that the fetus is a human being from the moment of conception without supporting his claims with arguments or leaving room for critical doubts from the part of the virtual interlocutor or of the audience. The two definitions are put forward as if they were indisputable facts.
An implicit persuasive definition of *abortion* is present in the following fragment illustrating the Orthodox perspective.

(2) *Interruption of pregnancy, no matter how it is performed, has been always considered a fearful crime. (…) So, we can consider abortion to be premeditated murder; although according to human laws it is not punished, according to God's judgement it will be punished even more harshly than the killing of a man. Abortion is double murder: first, against God who created that being, and then against that soul (…). Abortion is one of the greatest sins which bring about God's wrath on us all. (…) Abortion is a revolting sin.* (my translation)
(Excerpt from *On Abortion, with Father Serafim Man*, http://www.orthodoxphotos.com/readings/avortul/serafim.shtml)

The protagonist strategically uses the term "interruption of pregnancy" favored by pro-choice advocates instead of the term "abortion". By this move, the term adopted from the opposing party, "interruption of pregnancy" is made equal to abortion and is persuasively named a "fearful crime". Indirectly, the well-known pro-choice definition of interruption of pregnancy as an operation is cast doubt on. As a result, an interruption of pregnancy should count *in reality* as a "fearful crime" before the audience.

In addition, a distinction is made between the human laws and the divine laws in what punishment of abortion is concerned. According to the speaker, the divine laws are the "real" laws by which the gravity of abortion has to be judged. The next move made by the protagonist is to replace the term "interruption of

pregnancy" with the term "abortion" and name it "premeditated murder", "double murder", "one of the greatest sins" or "a revolting sin". All the terms chosen to qualify abortion have the potential to evoke negative feelings in the audience. At the same time, by these persuasive acts of naming the protagonist conveys his attitude of profound disapproval of abortion. These definitions are proclaimed as indisputable facts that need no further arguments in support.

As far as the notion *fetus* is concerned, no explicit definition is provided but we can infer from the context of the murder scenario reproduced in the text that the fetus is considered a human being from the moment of conception. The fetus is referred to by means of a metonymic expression "that soul" which is meant to appeal to the audience's feelings of compassion. All in all this strategic manner of framing abortion conveys the speaker's attitude of disapprobation, on the one hand, and attempts at making the audience feel the same way by stirring their fear or compassion, on the other hand.

A persuasive definition of *abortion* is indirectly performed in the following excerpt which illustrates a similar Orthodox position on abortion.

(3) *By abortion we understand the killing of babies in the womb by all kinds of means. Because the fetus has a live soul created by God at the very moment of conception, that is why abortion is so strongly disapproved of by the Church and the Holy Fathers, because life is killed, the soul is lost, both of the killed one and of the one who kills.* (my translation)
(Excerpt from *On Abortion, with Father Cleopa Ilie*, http://www.orthodoxphotos.com/readings/avortul/cleopa.shtml)

The protagonist chooses to use an expression that has the syntactic and semantic characteristics of another speech act than the one intended. An assertive speech act ("we understand") is used instead of the more direct usage declarative primary performative "we define" or indirect usage declarative "abortion is" with the same purpose of defining abortion.

There are some obvious similarities between this text and the previous one as expressions of the same Orthodox vision. First, the murder scenario in which a murderer, a victim and different methods of killing are involved. Thus, *abortion* is persuasively called "the killing of babies in the womb by all kinds of means". Second, the notion *fetus* is not given an explicit definition but the context helps us

understand that it is considered a human being from the moment of conception: "Because the fetus has a live soul created by God at the very moment of conception". Moreover, the consequences of abortion for the victim and the murderer are strategically emphasized: "life is killed, the soul is lost, both of the killed one and of the one who kills".

By this manner of framing abortion as a threat to life, the representatives of the Orthodox Church convey their strong disapproval of abortion and evoke negative feelings in the audience. Therefore the use of structures such as "the killing of babies in the womb", "life is killed", "the soul is lost" is a characteristic of religious argumentation which is targeted mainly at the audience's emotions. The terms employed by the protagonist in depicting this murder scenario belong to the category of terms that according to Zarefsky (2006) "facilitate visualization". The term "killing" for instance suggests images that can frighten the audience, a fact which might lead to disapproval of abortion on the basis of the emotions evoked by these images. This way of entitling abortion is a very persuasive argumentative tool that may work where rational persuasion is not successful.

The following excerpt puts forward a definition of *abortion* from a double perspective, medical and religious coming from a doctor who fights against abortion.

(4) *Abortion is, from a medical point of view, an operation about which one cannot say that is beneficial. It's the first time in medicine when the doctor-patient relation doesn't have a healing purpose. It's the first time when the doctor-patient relation turns upside down and loses its value, because two healthy patients go to the doctor: one of them leaves in a state of illness, the other one dies. (…) Abortion is, from a religious point of view, an instance of infanticide. How can we prove it? It's very easy to prove it and I'm glad that medicine has reached so far that it can prove today all the stages of abortion but especially why abortion is murder. Lots of films have been made in which one can see what is a human being, how this human being is born, but above all why we believe it is a human being from conception to birth.* (my translation)

(Excerpt from Mrs Christa Todea-Gross, *Conference on Abortion*, Oradea 2004, http://www.avort.ro/avortul.php)

Defining *abortion* from this double perspective is not accidental taking into consideration that the author of the text is both a doctor and a pro-life activist. The protagonist takes full advantage of her two roles in order to make her

argumentation against abortion more persuasive.

From a medical perspective, *abortion* is defined as "an operation about which one cannot say that is beneficial" because, as the protagonist states, the doctor-patient relation is distorted ("the doctor-patient relation doesn't have a healing purpose, the doctor-patient relation turns upside down and loses its value"). In support of this statement, the protagonist brings as a major argument the negative consequences that this operation has upon the two patients involved in it, the mother and the fetus ("two healthy patients go to the doctor: one of them leaves in a state of illness, the other one dies").

As *illness* and *death* are what people fear most, the protagonist strategically selects these two effects of abortion in order to evoke negative feelings in the audience. In this scenario the doctor is considered responsible for what happens to the two "healthy patients" that come to him. Thus, the protagonist makes an indirect plea that doctors should stop performing abortions so that the doctor-patient relation preserve its value.

From a religious perspective, *abortion* is defined as "an instance of infanticide". Interestingly, no religious argument is advanced in favor of this position as we might have expected. Instead, the protagonist turns to her first role, that of a doctor and tries to support this religious point of view by medical evidence ("I'm glad that medicine has reached so far that it can prove today all the stages of abortion, lots of films have been made in which one can see what is a human being"). This is a strategic move from the part of the protagonist, to make a religious statement and to back it up using scientific support. According to the protagonist, the films that have been made can indisputably prove that the patient killed by abortion is a human being from the moment of conception. Moreover, appealing to films as visual evidence is meant to "facilitate visualization" and thus to persuade the audience more easily.

Framing abortion as an operation which kills a healthy patient or as an instance of infanticide or murder can be considered an argument by definition that conveys the protagonist's attitude of disapprobation and is aimed at arousing the same attitude in the audience.

3.2 Persuasive definitions in pro-choice argumentation

Pro-choice advocates frame abortion as an operation by means of which an

unwanted pregnancy is ended at the mother's request. This way of framing abortion is meant to convey the pro-choice supporters' approval of abortion as a fundamental right of a woman and at the same time to influence the audience's view of the issue. The following fragments illustrate instances of implicit persuasive definitions in pro-choice argumentation.

The first excerpt is part of a series of arguments advanced to reject the pro-life position that abortion is a crime on the basis of the premise that the fetus is a human being.

(5) *The fetus is a part of the woman's body, like the bile or the appendix. One cannot take seriously the fact that a human embryo is a real person. Pregnancy is an embryo or a fetus – that is a mass of tissues, a product of conception – not a baby. Abortion is the termination of a pregnancy not the killing of a baby. The fetus may be live, but the same are the ovum and the sperm. The fetus is a potential human being, not a real one; it's the design not the house itself; it's the acorn, not the oak tree. A fetus is not a person before implantation or before the first kick or the first breath. That's the moment when it proves its viability.* (my translation)

(Excerpt from *39 Pro-choice Arguments and Their Refutation*, http://www.provitabucuresti.ro/argument/39.arguments.pdf**.)**

As one can see, the text abounds in persuasive definitions through which pro-choice advocates support their own theory of abortion and of the status of the fetus. These definitions are put forward in such a manner as to be taken as indisputable facts, the virtual interlocutor or audience having to accept them without argument. Regarding the notion of *fetus*, it is implicitly defined as "a part of the woman's body, like the bile or the appendix". Framing the fetus as a kind of an annex organ that a woman can get rid of without doing herself an injury appears as a strong argument advanced in support of the standpoint that abortion is not a crime but a common operation.

As stated before, persuasive definitions may strategically combine with dissociation for a more effective impact on the audience. Thus, the statement that "One cannot take seriously the fact that a human embryo is a real person" contains a presupposed definition of the *embryo* and a dissociation between an "apparent" and a "real" person. The presupposed definition of the *embryo* is that it is not a person in the "real" sense of the word and consequently, it has only characteristics of an "apparent" person.

Additionally, the term “pregnancy” is made synonymous with the terms “embryo” or “fetus” and is defined as “a mass of tissues, a product of conception – not a baby”. The scientific terms “mass of tissues” and “product of conception” as opposed to the term “baby” are strategically selected for their “disposition to affect” the audience’s cognition not emotions. This is an indirect way of rejecting the pro-life argument that the fetus is a human being / a baby from the moment of conception. From the pro-choice perspective, the equivalence product of conception – human being / baby is inconceivable.

Pro-choice supporters take one step further in arguing in favor of abortion by dismissing the criterion of “liveliness” introduced by their opponents in assigning the fetus the status of a human being : “The fetus may be live, but the same are the ovum and the sperm”. They place the fetus on a par with the elements it is made up of, the ovum and the sperm. As one can notice, the product is not at all viewed as superior to the two elements that have contributed to its appearance. All three are seen as “live” elements but none of them is attributed the status of a live human being.

Another dissociation is introduced between a “potential” and a “real” human being in order to establish the status of the fetus: “The fetus is a potential human being, not a real one”. This dissociation is followed by two analogies between the fetus as a potential human being and the design of a house which is not a house and between the fetus as a potential human being and an acorn which is not an oak tree. All these moves are aimed at deconstructing the pro-life theory of the fetus’ humanity and at changing the audience’s attitude towards abortion as well.

“Viability” is a criterion often employed by pro-choice advocates to clarify the moment when the fetus becomes a human being: “A fetus is not a person before implantation or before the first kick or the first breath. That’s the moment when it proves its viability”. Therefore there is a difference between a fetus before implantation / the first kick / the first breath and the fetus after these moments. As one can see, this moment of viability is quite relative, it may coincide with implantation, the first kick or the first breath. Choosing one moment or another is not accidental, it depends on the interest which is at stake: granting personhood to the fetus earlier or later during the pregnancy period.

On the basis of these arguments related to the fetus, pro-choice advocates define *abortion* as “the termination of a pregnancy not the killing of a baby”. The term

"termination of pregnancy" conveys a positive attitude towards the practice of abortion and seeks to elicit an attitude of approval in the audience as well. By emphatically opposing the two possible interpretations of the abortion act – the termination of a pregnancy vs the killing of a baby – of which the first one is viewed as the correct one, the pro-choice protagonist argues in favor of the moral permissibility of abortion. His persuasive definition of abortion as interruption of pregnancy is intended to be taken as an uncontroversial fact. Since the fetus / the embryo is only "a product of conception", "a mass of tissues" or "a potential human being" at the most, no criminal act is performed by abortion.

Unlike the pro-life texts in which the emotive meaning of terms is exploited, in the pro-choice argumentation above medical terms such as "fetus", "embryo", "bile", "appendix", "pregnancy", "mass of tissues", "product of conception", "ovum", "sperm" or "termination of pregnancy" are strategically selected to convey a scientific view of abortion and of the fetus and to appeal to the audience's reason. Nevertheless, although not emotional, these terms can evoke positive attitudes towards abortion which is intended to be seen as a simple operation and not as a crime.

The second excerpt is part of "a defense of abortion" in which the protagonist, a philosopher, attempts to prove that the pro-life premise that the fetus is a human being from the moment of conception is false.

(6) *Most opposition to abortion relies on the premise that the fetus is a human being, a person, from the moment of conception. (…) I think that the premise is false, that the fetus is not a person from the moment of conception. A newly fertilized ovum, a newly implanted clump of cells, is no more a person than an acorn is an oak tree.* (Excerpt from Judith J. Thomson, *A Defense of Abortion*, in Philosophy and Public Affairs, vol.1, no.1, Fall, pp. 47-48)

The protagonist provides an implicit definition of the notion *fetus* as "not a person from the moment of conception". She further argues that "a newly fertilized ovum, a newly implanted clump of cells, is no more a person than an acorn is an oak tree". By this manner of defining the fetus, the author conveys her attitude of approval of abortion and at the same time she tries to influence the audience's perception of the issue. She operates a strategic selection of medical terms in order to define the fetus so as not to make abortion a condemnable act. "A newly

fertilized ovum" or "a newly implanted clump of cells" cannot possibly be conceived of as a human being.

The analogy between such an ovum or clump of cells which is not a person and an acorn which is not an oak tree is meant to reinforce the effect of the definition. It is to be taken as an indisputable argument in favor of the moral permissibility of abortion at a very early stage of the fetus' life. The terms chosen by the protagonist to define the fetus have the potential to evoke positive attitudes in the audience in the sense of viewing abortion as a morally permissible option for an unwanted pregnancy. Moreover, this way of framing the fetus may be considered a form of comfort offered to the women who might have doubts about their decision to have an abortion. As the fetus is not a person from the moment of conception but merely "a newly fertilized ovum" or "a newly implanted clump of cells", performing an abortion is not a crime.

4. Conclusion

The analysis of some pro-life and pro-choice texts has shed light on how pro-lifers and pro-choicers make use of persuasive definitions to convey their attitude towards abortion and to influence the audience's perspective on the issue. Two patterns of use have been identified with respect to how the key notions abortion and fetus are defined by the parties and how these are intended to be perceived by a third party, the audience.

Pro-lifers dissociate between the "real" and the "false" meaning of *abortion* focusing on the criminal aspect of this deed. As for the notion *fetus*, pro-lifers do not make any distinction between the fetus as a "potential" human being and the fetus as a "real" human being, in this way human development being seen as a continuous process. In their attempt to persuade the audience that abortion is immoral, pro-lifers may define it as an "unspeakable crime" or "the direct killing of an innocent human being". The fetus whose personhood represents the key issue in the abortion debate from the pro-life perspective is defined as "a human being from the moment of conception". The terms used to depict the abortion scenario in which an innocent human being is deliberately killed are highly emotional and are strategically selected to evoke negative attitudes in the audience.

Pro-choicers do not separate any particular aspect from the unitary notion *abortion* but when discussing about the key issues in the abortion controversy, they distinguish between the "real" key question (term II – women's rights, valued

positively) and the "false" key question (term I – the status of the fetus, negatively qualified). As far as the notion *fetus* is concerned, pro-choicers make a distinction between the fetus as a "potential" human being and the fetus as a "real" human being when the personhood of the fetus is debated on. Pro-choicers define *abortion* as "interruption of pregnancy" or "termination of pregnancy" and the *fetus* as "a mass of tissues", "a product of conception", "a cluster of newly fertilized cells" or "a potential human being". The terms chosen to frame abortion as an operation by means of which a woman ends an unwanted pregnancy belong to the medical field and they have the role to convey a scientific perspective on abortion.

Pro-lifers make use of "real" definitions based on facts of "essence", the terms *fetus*, *human being* and *person* being considered equivalent. Pro-choicers combine definitions based on facts of usage according to which the term *person* does not apply to fetuses with "real" definitions.

The "incommensurable positions" of the disputants are reflected by the definitions of *abortion* and *fetus* they advance as indisputable facts that cannot be critically scrutinized. The way these controversial notions are defined widens the disagreement space between the two parties and makes the resolution of the dispute impossible. Although dissociation is capable to clarify or precizate things, its use in the abortion debate cannot resolve the contradictions in the starting points of the two parties. Additionally, despite their clarifying potential as dialectical tools, the definitions employed in ethical argumentation on abortion do not clarify the controversial notions *abortion* and *fetus* so as to facilitate the resolution of the dispute, but convey an attitude of approval or disapproval of abortion and function as rhetorical tactics intended to move the audience.

NOTES

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[ii] A dialectically sound dissociation has to concomitantly meet two types of requirements: procedural and material. Procedural requirements are met if the protagonist puts the change in starting points up for discussion in a side-discussion to get the antagonist's acceptance. Material requirements are met if the antagonist accepts the change in starting points brought about by the dissociation the protagonist has introduced (van Rees 2005, p. 387).

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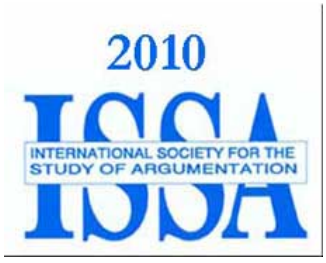
ISSA Proceedings 2010 – "Palmerston Bustles Around With The Foreign Policy Of This Powerful Nation, Like A Furious And Old Drunkard…": On The Discursive Formulation Of Argument By Analogy In History



1. Introduction

Over the last few decades, there has been a remarkable spate of interest for the discipline of history. On the one hand, scholars have focussed on some crucial epistemological and methodological underpinnings of this

academic field. Thus, Koselleck (1986) describes historians' task by means of Comenius's image of a backward-oriented vision through a spyglass on a shoulder: however accurate their search for truth, their views are bound to be constrained by the multiple perspectives the spyglass may offer. For this reason, history is often interpreted as a research territory in which the empirical ratio of documentary evidence is intertwined with the analyst's own effort to construct a convincing representation of past events (Tosh 1989; Lozano 1991).

On the other hand, history has been tackled for the captivating co-presence and cross-fertilisation of narrative (White 1978, 1987 and 1999) and argumentative components (Perelman 1979; Ricoeur 2000) in professional historians' scientific prose: in this respect, the reconstruction of a spatio-temporal background constituted by key-events and issues selected and foregrounded by the historian as meaningful is tightly knit to the formulation of the scholars' possibly authoritative argument.

As far as the study of historical argumentation is concerned, a fruitful line of research has been the parallel drawn in a fairly large number of works between the figure of historians and that of judges (Ginzburg 1991 and 2000; Bloch 1998; Thomas 1998; Prost 2002). The main tenet of these contributions is that the historian's endeavour resembles the judge's task when it comes to the retrieval of hints and clues aimed at grounding a rigorous reconstruction of facts; still, historians detach themselves from judges because they are also expected to pay attention to contextual factors bringing about cause-effect relations in time, and they are ultimately requested to analyse rather than acquit or condemn. Additionally, a few attempts have been made to classify the most widely spread forms of argument in history: for instance, Carrard (1992, p. 201-202) delves into the use of figurative language on the part of the so-called New Historians such as Le Goff and Braudel, and he describes the rhetorical strength attained through geological metaphors – cf. the terms 'successive layers', 'residue' and 'amalgam' by Braudel – employed to define the central question of France's identity. Moreover, Prost (1996) concentrates on the increasing tendency of using systematic exemplification and statistical evidence as cornerstones in the unfolding of convincing historical arguments.

However, in spite of the inspiring nature of these rich accounts of the disciplinary practices of history, only tangentially have scholars become interested in the

inherently textual dimension of historical argumentation. In the light of this, the primary aim of this paper is to bring insights into the linguistic construction of argumentation in historical text (cf. Bondi and Mazzi 2007 and 2009), by choosing one specific form of argument as a case in point, notably argument by analogy. The latter has been the object of centuries of intellectual debate: it is discussed by Aristotle in Book II of the *Rhetoric*, further dealt with in Book IV of Locke's *Essay*, and more recently investigated by Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1966). Apart from the exhaustive body of research produced by such classics, argument by analogy is addressed by Juthe (2005, p. 5), who sees analogy as a "one-to-one correspondence" between the elements determining the "Assigned Predicate" shared by two objects, namely the "Analogue" and the "Target-Subject". Interestingly, Juthe (2005) expatiates on Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's (1966) definition of the association of 'themes' with 'fora', by distinguishing between same- and different-domain analogies, depending on the different degree of proximity between the two entities involved in the one-to-one relationship determined by analogy.

This paper draws on applied linguistics studies on academic discourse (cf. Hyland and Bondi 2006), and it therefore combines the tools of corpus linguistics (Hunston 2002) and discourse analysis (Brown and Yule 1983; Bhatia 2004; Swales 2004) in an investigation of the broader discursive mechanisms activated by the occurrence of argumentation by analogy in a large sample of authentic history prose. As such, the study is less concerned with a conceptualisation, let alone a redefinition, of analogy in history than with a closer empirical examination of the discursive operations performed by professional historians whenever they decide to avail themselves of analogy as a powerful rhetorical tool.

Findings will show that the reiterated expression of analogy serves as a clue to understand some crucial features of the organisation of historical text, i.e. broader argumentative sequences whereby argumentation is followed by explanation based on examples, the formulation of the writer's own evaluation (Hunston and Thompson 2000) and the overall fleshing out of the metadiscursive substance characterising the interactive plane of historical text (Hyland 2005). As regards the latter, results reveal that analogy plays a central role in the organisation of discourse in line with the reader's needs as well as in shaping authorial intervention in text by means of a variety of devices going back to Hyland's theorization on interactional metadiscourse.

The thesis argued here is that analogy is a chiefly interactive device, which combines with a set of discursive tools securing a fruitful relationship between writers and readers in the development of historical narrative and argument. Section 2 will now illustrate the methodological premises to the study, whereas Section 3 will explore the main findings, which are eventually discussed in Section 4.

2. Materials and methods

This study is based on the so-called *HEM-History* corpus, an English monolingual corpus comprised of 306 history research articles. These were taken from the 1999 and 2000 editions of the following specialised journals: *Labour History Review* (LHR), *Historical Research* (HR), *Gender & History* (GH), *Journal of European Ideas* (JEI), *Journal of Medieval History* (JMH), *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* (JIH), *Journal of Social History* (JSH), *Studies in History* (SH), *American Quarterly* (AQ), *American Historical Review* (AHR). Even though journals were partly identified through exogenous criteria such as availability in electronic form, recourse was made to disciplinary experts who suggested a set of reliable publications to choose from. The corpus contains 2,416,834 words, and it consists of full texts, whereby only footnotes, tables and bibliography have been removed. bv

From a methodological point of view, the study developed through a quantitative and a qualitative stage. For a preliminary quantitative investigation, the linguistic software package *WordSmith Tools 5.0* (Scott 2007) was used, which allows the analyst to access and process corpus data in a reliable and systematic way. In particular, we focussed on the linguistic items that may be most straightforwardly associated with the expression of analogy in text as a starting point for the study of this argument form: selected items were therefore *like*, *as* and the lemmas *similar** and *analog** containing all forms like *similar*, *similarity*, *similarly* and *analogy*, *analogous* respectively. These items will be referred to as 'analogy markers' in the rest of the paper.

For each analogy marker, a concordance list (Sinclair 2003) was generated. Concordance is *WordSmith*'s on-screen function enabling one to have all corpus entries of a certain word/phrase displayed in context at once. Concordances were used as a basis to sort the corpus entries manually for the purpose of distinguishing and discarding all non-analogical occurrences of selected items – e.g. the verbal use of *like* – the latter being immaterial for the analysis proposed

here.

The quantitative exploration of data was finally integrated with the attempt to classify arguments by analogy first by following Juthe's (2005) framework, and then by statistically verifying to what extent recourse to analogy is more closely linked with argumentative rather than narrative passages of historical research articles (cf. Section 3).

From a qualitative point of view, the analysis centred on the study of the broader textual functions of analogy in the argumentative discourse of professional historians, by focussing on the collocational surroundings of analogy markers. Collocation denotes the regular co-occurrence of words (Sinclair 1991 and 1996), and it is frequently used in applied linguistics studies as a clue to phraseology as well as, at a deeper level, the broader textual sequences of the genre under examination. The main findings of the study are presented in the upcoming section.

3. Results

The corpus-based study of selected analogy markers points, first of all, to the fuzziness of a distinction such as that proposed by Juthe (2005) between same- and different-domain analogy. This is not to say that such a classification of arguments by analogy is unjustified; quite the opposite, it is a sensible categorisation that improves Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's (1966) somewhat rigid view that analogy by definition implies a certain distance between themes and fora. However, it suffices to take a look at the following examples to realise that the applicability of Juthe's categories does not necessarily occur smoothly:

(1) Just as physicians and surgeons in their medical works warned patients of the dire consequences they might suffer should they have recourse to other practitioners less qualified than themselves, so the saints too issued warnings in mysterious ways by striking here at the very badge of the medical profession. (JMH)

(2) Sometimes, where we have only one manuscript and little evidence of the reception of a text, the modern historian, like the medieval historiographer, must depend on imagination and experience to fill the gap. It is after all not just the medieval historian who must be creative. The studies of Blacker and Spiegel paved the way for Peter Damian-Grint's major study of vernacular historiography in the Anglo-Norman realm. (JMH)

(3) In other words, we resort to the ancient dating mechanism of relative

chronology, centred on persons and offices, with synchronisms. And this is just how we go about assigning dates to any undated material. Like geologists with strata, or archaeologists with chronological levels, or dendrochronologists with tree-rings, we identify synchronistic layers, one after another. Medievalists treat the witness-clauses of undated charters in this way: all the named persons were together on one occasion. (HR)

In (1), there is little doubt that physicians and surgeons on the one hand, and saints on the other, are two fairly distant entities involved in a different-domain analogy, whereas in (2) and (3) the status of analogy is more controversial. Hence in (2), modern historians may be distinct from medieval historiographers in terms of the specificity of the respective object of study, and yet they may share research methodology, at least partially; in (3), furthermore, there is much common sense in the belief that geologists as well as archaeologists and dendrochronologists are hardly the same as historians, but it could easily be counter-argued that regardless of their distinctive disciplinary issues they all belong to the domain of researchers.

By reason of these pitfalls, a preliminary overview on data can be better obtained by observing less the nature of each target-subject and analogous than the broader co-text in which selected analogy markers are embedded. In this respect, it is interesting to note that analogy is employed to varying extents in narrative or argumentative passages of historical research articles. Table 1 below shows the percentage distribution of *like*, *as*, *similar** and *analog** across the two main configurations historical academic prose is known to take:

Item	Narrative	Argumentative
Like	25	75
As	28.6	71.4
*Similar**	18.9	81.1
*Analog**	0	100

Table 1. Narrative or argumentative contexts of items (%)

The table shows that in spite of a predictably more restricted frequency, analogy can also be retrieved within more distinctively narrative contexts, in which the writers' concern is to provide accurate spatio-temporal representations of

significant events on which they centre their reconstruction. This is well illustrated in (4), where the analogy between Virgil and Metastasio is set in an essentially narrative context signalled by the reiterated occurrence of temporal expressions:

(4) Like Virgil in the Aeneid, Metastasio moves beyond the immediate situation to open up a grand historical vista, setting this particular episode in the larger and rather more positive political context of international tranquillity and ultimate peace on earth, the famous pax Romana to be achieved by Aeneas' descendants. It has been noted that this was designed to flatter the peace-loving policies of Ferdinand IV of Spain after the Treaty of Aix La Chapelle (1748) which ended the War of the Austrian Succession [40]. The works of Metastasio, poet in residence at the imperial court of Vienna, were available in English translation from 1800, and even before that his Dido abandonnata had been performed in London. In 1792 an adaptation by Prince Hoare was staged at the Haymarket, with some new music by Mr Storace. (HEI)

With regard to the preponderance of argumentative contexts in which writers resort to analogy in order to argue for or against a particular thesis or interpretation of historical facts, there is good evidence that analogy occurs within the writer's discourse or counterdiscourse. By 'analogy in counterdiscourse', we refer here to those sequences of the research article, whereby authors aim either to dismantle analogical reasoning that was set up or may be set up by other disciplinary experts, or otherwise to construct their argument on the basis of the explicit refutation of an analogical relationship. By contrast, we take 'analogy in discourse' to mean that writers make use of argument by analogy as a backbone of his own argumentation, in order to provide their discourse with a definite orientation towards an intended conclusion. To be brief, analogy in counterdiscourse is refutative, whereas analogy in discourse is constitutive of the author's standpoint. Table 2 below provides a precise statistical quantification of the positioning of argument by analogy within discourse and counterdiscourse for each selected marker:

Item	Discourse	Counterdiscourse
Like	77.3	22.7
As	83.6	16.4
*Similar**	85.8	14.2

*Analog**	100	0

Table 2. Argumentation by analogy in discourse and counterdiscourse (%)

The figures reported in the table demonstrate that history writers tend to conceive of analogy more as an active tool in shaping their argument than as a weapon to defuse any competing discourse on the part of qualified disciplinary peers. The forays into the general configuration of argument by analogy as revealed by the close examination of analogy markers leads to the more specific question of what linguistic resources are more likely to be correlated with this form of argument.

Starting from counterdiscursive contexts, analogy markers often correlate with what Thompson (2001) calls 'low-value subjective modalisation'. This is a chiefly dialogic context in which the writer's voice engages in a dialogue with the expert reader's voice, and it is primarily signalled by the occurrence of such modal operators as *may* or *might*. In historical research articles, the dialogic use of these modal verbs frequently acts as a preamble for the writer's counterdiscourse introduced by adversative connectives like *but*, *however* or *on the other hand*:
(5) One might argue that the legal system, like medicine, should use a fairly conservative and rigid definition of science, since mistakes in this realm can lead to dire consequences, such as wrongful convictions or civil liability (Angell and Huber). Justice is achieved when guilty people are convicted and innocent people are set free, and when civil liability decisions reflect causal responsibility. […] The conservative approach to the Daubert ruling reflects this viewpoint. On the other hand, relying on this definition of science may have an adverse impact on the legal system's other goals, such as the protection of legal rights or due process. (SH)

In (5), the analogy between legal system and medicine is part of the modalised statement prefaced by *one might argue that*, which is later on refuted by the writer – *On the other hand,…* – who points to the adverse effects of retaining the definition of science spelt out earlier on. Alternatively, the formulation of the writer's counterdiscourse is secured by the collocation of analogy-markers and meta-argumentative expressions (Stati 2002), i.e. the open-ended set of words, phrases or even whole clauses that do not only belong to the lexical field of argumentation but at once reveal the argumentative properties and development

of the text – e.g. *argument*, *demonstrate*, *proof* and related expressions:
(6) As pointed out by Carmichael, in 1913, these do not correspond to the clothes worn by Humility and the other nuns in the altarpiece. This is not, per se, a definitive argument. The habit of Saint Clare's successor, the abbess Benedetta, is not the same as that of the foundress in the Benedetta Crucifix in Santa Chiara, Assisi (Fig. 21 and Fig. 22). The most conclusive argument against the commissioner being a nun is the veil of the tiny kneeling commissioner. A fully professed nun would almost certainly have worn a black top veil. It seems likely therefore that the commissioner was a wealthy lay woman. This in itself makes the commissioner a highly unusual one. According to one survey, only three percent of votive portraits during this period were of sole laywomen. (JMH)

In extract (6), the author starts by re-directing an argument s/he intends to rectify, notably Carmichael's statement reported in the opening sentence. The author's intention is corroborated by the meta-argumentative sentence *This is not, per se, a definitive argument*, which in turn grounds on the refutation of the analogy between abbess Benedetta's habit and that of the foundress in the Crucifix in Santa Chiara. What is more, the writer's refutation of the one-to-one analogical relationship between the two habits precedes the last and decisive step in his/her rectification of the opening argument, as can be seen by the other meta-argumentative statement in bold, i.e. *The most conclusive argument…is*, which makes it plain that the propositional content of the sentence lies in disclosing the argument perceived to have the upper hand in settling the issue.

As far as the articulation of the writer's argumentative discourse is concerned, the collocational surroundings of markers indicate that argument by analogy is closely connected with three inter-related discourse operations: the crafting of textual sequences of argumentation and explanation, the formulation of the writer's evaluation and, most importantly, the elaboration of the metadiscoursal substance on the interactive plane of historical text.

To begin with argumentation-explanation sequences, corpus data suggest that the use of analogy in argumentation can give rise to explanatory passages where writers clarify the content of analogies, by narrowing their perspective down to specific cases taken as examples. In these cases, the textual transition from argument by analogy to explanations based on examples is generally realised through operators such as *for instance*, *for example* and *in this case*:
(7) The thrust of Sorrell's book is that Francis must have been – and was – aware

of the beauty and usefulness of creation; and while Sorrell believes this was a thorough-goingly religious attitude on the part of Francis, yet he also believes that it was similar to the modern environmental or ecological sentiment. These ascriptions to St Francis of a "love of Nature" and of being a proto-ecologist have been taken up by scientists. For instance, a famous modern "ecological" bacteriologist, René Dubos, has claimed that "It is not unlikely that the Franciscan worship of nature, in its various philosophical, scientific, and religious forms, has played some part in the emergence of the doctrine of conservation in the countries of Western civilization and its rapid spread during the last century" (Dubos, 1974, p. 124).

In (7), the writer is dealing with the somewhat ambitious analogy between Saint Francis' preaching and modern environmental or ecological concerns hypothesised in Sorrell's book. In order to make sure that readers can fully appreciate the merits of the striking parallel, the historian restricts his argument from the general claim contained in the analogy to a specific point which s/he introduces through *for instance* and s/he substantiates by means of a quote from a purportedly authoritative source, bacteriologist René Dubos. In this way, an adequate explanatory background is provided in support of authorial argumentation elicited before.

As regards the formulation of authorial evaluation, intended here as a broad term to designate the writer's stance towards or feelings about the entities he or she is writing about (Hunston and Thompson 2000, p. 5), it can be noted that professional historians are prone to evaluate either in terms of value or in terms of status. The former kind of evaluation presupposes that writers express their viewpoint about the propositional content of the text along the good/bad axis, as it were, whereas status implies that writers are evaluating as to the degree of certainty they ascribe to the topic they are dealing with. An effective instantiation of the collocation of analogy markers with value-oriented evaluation, as it were, is (8) below: the author sets up an analogy between Iran's political leaders and medical doctors, and he then provides a back-up to that argument by quoting the writings of Mudabbir al-Mamalik, an influential editor s/he aligns him/herself with – *He had a point*. By contrast, (9) exemplifies the combination of analogy with evaluation in terms of status: the core of the argument lies in the matching of false prophets and tyrannical rulers, supported as it is by the writer's careful evaluation – *perhaps the closest…* – bearing on the probability that David Austin

deserves to be estimated as a case of charismatic prophet of the 1790s:
(8) Like medical doctors, Iran's political healers, then, had to diagnose this metaphorical national body. If decades earlier, some thinkers such as Malkum Khan had isolated lawlessness as a debilitating contagion weakening Iran, during the Constitutional Revolution others would identify other viruses invading the country. One writer in April 1907, for example, was Mudabbir al-Mamalik – the editor of the newspaper Tamaddun.[106] In an earlier article, Mamalik had used anatomical metaphors to make this diagnosis: "If we examine closely the nerves and muscles of this country, we will see that many types of pains have been inflicted upon this weak body . . . and despite the affliction of many disasters at the same time, it has not collapsed and still has half a life."[107] He had a point. (AHR)
(9) False prophets, like tyrannical rulers, use "unintelligible jargon" to lead the common people astray. Another ardent republican prophet, William Scales, styled himself an American Jesus, of lowly origins and simple understanding. […] The best example of this fusion of republican and millennial language can be found in the writings of David Austin, perhaps the closest thing America had to a charismatic prophet in the topsy-turvy decade of the 1790s. Recovering from a near fatal bout with scarlet fever in 1796, Austin – then a well-respected Presbyterian preacher in Elizabethtown, New Jersey – heard the voice of God calling him to the prophetic… (AHR)

Finally, evidence points to the collocation of analogy markers with the metadiscursive component of historical text. 'Metadiscourse' is defined by Hyland (2005) as a cover term denoting all self-reflective expressions through which writers negotiate meanings with readers. As such, it is a peculiarly interactive device that assists readers both in expressing their point of view and in engaging a readership of expert disciplinary members. Metadiscourse accounts for a crucial aspect in the unfolding of the interactive plane of discourse, because it integrates the chiefly propositional topic-related dimension of text with a wide range of writer-generated signposting responding to readers' need for clarification and guidance. It is significant that the use of argument by analogy in historical text is recurrently associated with the deployment of metadiscursive devices.

More precisely, it can be observed that analogy markers tend to co-occur with both interactive and interactional metadiscourse. With regard to interactive metadiscourse, which fulfils the key-function of organising discourse in line with

the reader's needs, there appear to be four main kinds of metadiscursive devices tied to analogy: transition signals, code glosses, frame markers and endophoric markers (Hyland 2005, p. 50-52). First of all, transition signals indicate the pragmatic connections between the various stages of argument. Corpus data emphasise that *but*, *therefore* and *so* are the most widely attested members of this class in association with analogy:

(10) David Nirenberg has recently reinterpreted the 1320 pastoureaux movement in France, which also took the form of a crusade, as a 'rebellion against royal fiscality, camouflaged with the very language of sacred monarchy and Crusade that had helped to legitimize the fiscality under attack'. But the case is much less clear-cut than the Dózsa rebellion. There is no evidence, for example, of crusading ideas being mediated to participants by a group like the Observants. More convincing precedents are the peasant unions of 1469 and 1478 in Styria, where a similar pattern can be traced: failure on the part of the landed nobility to provide defence against Turkish incursions, and consequential measures of self-defence by the peasants which included the rejection of noble privileges forfeited through this inactivity.[5] There was therefore a specific regional context in the form of the pressing Ottoman menace and resistance to any centralised form of defence mounted by a particularist aristocracy. […] (JMH)

In (10), the writer is crafting his/her argumentation around the analogy between the so-called Dósza rebellion and the peasant unions in Styria – *where a similar pattern can be traced…* In doing so, s/he articulates his/her reasoning first as a response to Nirenberg's allegedly misconceived interpretation of the *pastoreaux movement* in France (*But the case is…*); then, s/he fleshes out the analogy constituting the bearing wall of his/her argument, before drawing the conclusion that the parallel between Dósza and peasant unions holds owing to a shared regional context exposed to the Ottoman threat (*There was therefore a specific…*).

In second place, code glosses serve to supply additional information, conventionally by rephrasing or elaborating what the writer has asserted before. In the HEM-corpus, a privileged code gloss seems to be the reformulation signal 'Negation + *rather/instead*', employed for the purpose of expatiating on the prior analogy:

(11) From Russia, Maxim Gorky observed in late November 1917 that "the working class is for [V. I.] Lenin what ore is for a metalworker…He [Lenin] works

like a chemist in a laboratory, with the difference that the chemist uses dead matter…[whereas] Lenin works with living material."[7] But Bolshevik Marxism was not alone in its refusal to accept human nature and society as they were. Rather, the tension between nature and nurture was encoded within the larger pan-European view of modernity whereby political authorities increasingly sought to define and manage virtually all critical public and private spheres. (AHR)

In (11), the writer borrows from Gorky the analogy approaching Lenin to a chemist, the only difference being that the former works with living rather than dead material. S/he builds on this image, by pointing out that Bolshevik Marxism in general is characterised by a refusal to passively accept human nature, which in turn rests in a whole network of correspondences with a broader pan-European view of modernity – *Marxism was not alone…Rather, the tension…*

Thirdly, frame markers accompany analogy as they increase its rhetorical strength by setting it into a well-devised text where boundaries are explicitly marked, discourse goals are clearly announced and the development of authorial argument is neatly ordered. The most frequent frame markers attracted, as it were, by the presence of analogy are items that indicate additive relations – namely *first* and *second* – or prospective statements predicting discourse goals – cf. *my purpose is…*:
(12) At one point, Bauer describes the relation between Judaism and Christianity as analogous to that between mother and daughter. The point of this analogy is not only to make vivid the conflict between the two religions – thus, as the daughter is "ungrateful" to her mother, so, in turn, the mother refuses to "acknowledge" her daughter – but also to suggest the notion of an historical progression between generations. There are two striking features in Bauer's account of this historical progression. First, the daughter (Christianity) has "the higher right", has "progress" on her side [8]. Second, it appears that the mother (Judaism) and daughter (Christianity) cannot both survive; "the new", Bauer insists, "cannot be if the old endures" [8]. Both of these claims require some elaboration. (HEI)

As we can see from excerpt (12), the analogy between Judaism and Christianity as target-subjects, and mothers and daughters as analogous finds its place in a passage where the discourse is tersely organised in its following steps. The writer prospectively announces that s/he will deal with as many as *two striking* features

in Bauer's theorisation, which he accomplishes through *First* and *Second* as introductory signals. Finally, s/he moves on by predicting that he will devote part of the upcoming text to an additional reflection upon Bauer's notions, as signalled by the forward-oriented statement *these claims require further elaboration* labelling the propositional content of the next paragraph or two.

Fourthly, analogy can be noted to collocate with endophoric markers directing readers to other parts of the research article, and hence guiding them to the retrieval of relevant information somewhere else in the text (14) or maybe throughout the rest of the text as in (13):
(13) …one might argue that M. C. Escher's paintings are scientific without implying that they are science, just as a coating of paint may have a metallic sheen without being a metal. For the purposes of this essay, I will use the word 'scientific' to refer to properties (or characteristics) that we ascribe to those disciplines or human activities that we call 'science'. (SH)
(14) Herder writes: These patched up fragile contraptions known as State-machines are wholly devoid of inner life. There is no sentiment, no sympathy of any kind linking their component parts. Just like Trojan horses they move together or against each other. Without national character, they are just lifeless monsters. […] In the following section, however, I shall point to some aspects of Herder's anthropological and historiographical work that imply that his concept of community is not as totalizing as his idea of organistic politics and his theory of language may at first suggest. By pointing to some key passages, I will show that his concept embraces the idea of contingency, … (HEI)

The writer in (13) plays on the term 'scientific' to establish an analogical relationship between Escher's paintings and coatings of paint; with the aim of specifying how the analogy must be interpreted by the reader, s/he argues that in the rest of the paper, the word 'scientific' will be taken to fall within the definitional statement comprised in the rest of the sentence – *properties…that we ascribe to those disciplines or human activities that we call 'science'*. Furthermore, (14) is a remarkably illustrative extract: the writer goes back to Herder's thesis that State-machines are close to Trojan horses, by giving the reader adequate feedback on how s/he will pick up on the analogy *in the following section*.

If we move from interactive to interactional metadiscourse associated with the spread of analogy markers, we note that boosters are by far the most pervasive

interactional device attested by corpus data. Interactional metadiscourse concerns authorial interventions in text through comments, acknowledgments, suggested interpretations or critical positions with respect to divergent opinions. Of the various sub-categories included by Hyland (2005, p. 52-53) in interactional metadiscourse, boosters appear to be the most widely represented alongside analogy markers. Boosters denote the writers' assertive voice closing down the room for competing views, with the effect of narrowing down the space for alternative, let alone conflicting opinions set aside through a particularly confident voice. Common boosters retrieved in the collocational surroundings of analogy markers encompass the correlative *not only…but also*, emphatic formulae such as *what…is that* and *it is precisely because…*, *this is why…*, *this is precisely the…*, and the intensifier *indeed*.

The presence of boosters co-occurring with argument by analogy might not come as a surprise, because the writer's expression of certainty is highly likely to confer more authority to the argument itself, as can be seen from the examples reported below:
(15) Like historians, autobiographers implicitly or explicitly suggest causal connections, underline discrepancies between intentions and results, and point out ironies that are only recognizable with the benefit of hindsight. […] They must face questions of style and structure, just as they do in writing history. It is precisely because history and autobiography are so closely related that historians who decide to cross the line from one to the other find themselves uneasy about what they are doing. (AHR)
(16) This is precisely the sort of universal/imperial/millenarian mission that seems to have inspired Russia's Communist leaders. Just as Marxism can be considered a secularized form of Judeo-Christian eschatology, the Communist revolution can be seen as a revolutionized form of Russian imperial ideology. […] Like the American notion of Manifest Destiny, Bolshevik millenarianism was secular. […] Indeed, the leaders of the new Soviet state merely recast the Russian Empire's old universalist and religious style of expression into the equally universalist but secular language of international socialism. (AHR)

By briefly browsing through (15)-(16), one realises how close the link is between argument by analogy and boosting. In (15), the booster *It is precisely because…that* marks the straightforward connection relating the argument – i.e. the analogy between historians and autobiographers – to the conclusion that

historians…find themselves uneasy crossing the border with autobiography. In (16), similarly, the analogical relationship between Marxism/Judeo-Christian eschatology and Communist revolution/imperial ideology supports the prior thesis highlighted by *this is precisely…*; conversely, *indeed* acts as the trait-d'union, as it were, between the argument by analogy involving Manifest Destiny and Bolshevik millenarianism, and the conclusion pointing to the perceived correct reading of Soviet leadership.

4. Conclusions

The findings presented in Section 3 suggest that the discursive construction of argument by analogy acts as a clue to some crucial argumentative sequences and organising principles of historical discourse. First of all, data show that the formulation of analogy tends to disclose the dialogic interplay of voices in the historical research article – as is the case with counterdiscursive responses provided by writers to the voice of competing interpretations of events and trends; secondly, analogy markers are often observed to lie at the basis of the two related steps of argumentation and explanation. Finally, there is a considerably interesting relation between the use of argument by analogy and the complex network of writer-reader interaction both in terms of authorial evaluation and with regard to the full deployment of metadiscourse.

In this respect, there is convincing evidence that historical discourse is a site where analogy markers display a significant tendency to attract interactive and interactional metadiscourse, and/or vice-versa. Consequently, results indicate that historians may resort to argument by analogy as a rhetorical strategy consolidating the interactive plane of text that frames the propositional contents of authorial argumentation (Hyland 2005). Indeed, by operating as a strategy through which language is best adapted to the expert audience of historical narrative and argument (cf. Perelman 1979), the collocation of analogy markers with metadiscourse highlights the fundamentally interactive status of analogy: in order to reinforce their points, historians establish a link between a fact or a notion and an analogous object they assume to be close to the readers' existing knowledge and cultural imagery**[1]**. In a word, just like metadiscourse, analogy is a tool in the historian's hands to engage the reader by making sure that authorial argument is constructed with the intended audience's needs in mind.

Obviously enough, the analytical parameters adopted in the paper may usefully be extended for further investigations. To begin with, it would be worth looking for

other linguistic indicators of argument by analogy: the somewhat restricted range of elements considered here proved a good starting point in order to devise a more systematic analysis; yet we are far from claiming that the whole range of potential signals of this form of argument are exhausted here. In addition, an opportunity worth exploring might be to set up a cross-linguistic comparative framework within history: is argument by analogy used to the same extent and in the same way by historians writing in other languages such as Italian? Do we find a similar correlation between analogy markers and metadiscourse? Finally, a promising line of research could lie in the cross-disciplinary study of analogy, in order to verify whether other more or less close disciplinary cultures (e.g. economics) also display a preference for argument by analogy or whether they generally privilege other argument forms as a way of entering a dialogue with disciplinary peers.

NOTES

[i]In this respect, an issue worth further investigation is the heuristic function analogy may have in history. For instance, a sample of professional historians could be interviewed in order to enquire whether and to what extent they are aware that analogy might well contribute to the construction of historical truth, as it were, by fostering the understanding of admittedly controversial historical facts by virtue of their established proximity with more well-known events.

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ISSA Proceedings 2010 – The Argumentative And Legalistic Analysis Of Versification

1. Introduction

There have been many argumentative studies of poetry, especially Renaissance poetry, for which Latin and Greek rhetoric and dialectics have been considered particularly relevant. However, one can put forward at least two arguments against the claim, here argued, that argumentative analysis can and should be extended to versification and by implication to verbal rhythm in general, which versification norms regulate.

In rhetorical Latin or Greek terms, research on argumentation concentrates on inventio, and in particular logos, the discovery and evaluation of true or apparently true verbal statements. Words have rhythm and one can describe rhythms verbally, but one cannot translate their meaning, if meaning they have, into verbal statements and so assess them as true or apparently true. Secondly, ancient rhetoric did study rhythm under actio, but actio explored means of heightening the persuasive effect of logos, not of adding arguments. In that, it is arguably similar to pathos and ethos, the other two subdivisions of inventio, although actio concerned, not the composition, but the delivery of a speech. For those two reasons, it appears paradoxical to claim that an argumentative study of versification is possible.

The purpose of research is to question opinion. It is to argue a "thesis", in Aristotle's definition of the term (*Topics*, 104b18-28). Through argumentation, research makes paradoxical claims endoxical or the reverse. Paradoxical claims, however, are often not paradoxical absolutely. They are paradoxical relatively to communities, for instance the communities of argumentation theorists and literary theorists. They are also more or less paradoxical, because communities or their members may be more or less for or against the claim or indifferent. In respect of versification, there is such a division of opinion within the literary community. Many consider versification more or less extraneous to poetry, explicitly like the poet Philip Sidney, in his statement that verse is "but an ornament and no cause to poetry" (Gavin Alexander, p. 12), or implicitly, perhaps like Aristotle, in the brevity of his metric observations in *Poetics*. Yet, for others, versification matters and, during several centuries, almost all poets writing in English observed the same collective norms of versification, accepting thereby to limit their individual writing freedom. One may inquire why.

Combining formalistic and argumentative, legalistic analysis, the answer argued here is that versification, at least during that period, was not a mere "ornament": the normative form and the practice of versification with its departures from the norm were argumentatively meaningful. To the extent that its normative format allows (6000 words) and taking account of the three reviewers' and an editor's comments, this paper, relating literature, law and argumentation, elucidates the meaning of what it calls the "ideal model" of English versification (section 2), outlines its norms (section 3) and describes departures from those norms in terms of defences (section 4).

There have been other models to account for verse (see T.V. F. Brogan and, for a recent example, Derek Attridge). Unlike the ideal model, too powerful a model dissolves the contrast between norms and departures, by providing for the latter within the normative model. Here, the main sources for the ideal model are essays written under the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I. In the chronological order of publication, not composition, those essays are:
Roger Ascham (1570), *The Scholemaster*
George Gascoigne (1575), Certain Notes of Instruction
George Puttenham (1589), *The Arte of Poesy*
Philip Sidney (1595), The Defence of Poetry
Thomas Campion (1602), Observations in the Art of English Poesie

Samuel Daniel (1603), *A Defence of Rhyme*

Alexander includes them all, except the first, in Sidney's 'The Defence of Poetry' and selected Renaissance Literary Criticism. This paper also mentions Francis Meres' Palladia Tamia, Ben Jonson's Conversations with William Drummond and Alexander Pope's Essay on Criticism. They do not appear in the "References" neither do the relevant works of Plato or Aristotle, retrieved from the Perseus Digital Library website in canonically lineated form, nor the lines of verse from William Shakespeare, John Donne, and John Beaumont. Editorial differences are not material here.

2. The Ideal Model: Meaning

The prevailing opinion, which Sidney did not share, was that versification was meaningful. Firstly, it was a necessary condition for poetry. The argument was this: if writing is poetry, then it is in verse; if it is not in verse, it is not poetry. The observance of the ideal model, however, did not only participate in characterizing writing as poetry, and so target the public. For its early upholders, the formal norms of the ideal model had extra-poetical meaning. It was not only a form. It was a code, which converted formal properties into beliefs and values: if verse did not observe the ideal model, then it did not adhere to those beliefs and values.

One could say much the same of other social practices, for instance the formation of contracts. If an agreement is a contract (that is, legally enforceable), then it must satisfy conditions A, B, C, D etc. By complying with the conditions, one removes the agreement from the private to the social sphere and targets a public, the courts of law, and their acknowledgment that this is indeed a contract. Furthermore, compliance implies beliefs and values, for instance the belief that English courts' objective analysis of intention is preferable to the parties' subjective accounts.

The ideal model, as section 3 will show, was uncertain, which legal norms often are also. Nevertheless, according to its early advocates, it imitated or re-presented (the distinction cannot be discussed here) and participated in both the divine cosmological order and the ideal domestic political and ethical order, by which England, combining its several traditions, would attain unity and superiority over its neighbours and rivals. The ultimate authority for the model remains unknown, and some relativistic writers submitted to the model, with scepticism, in deference to authority.

2.1. Cosmological meaning

Puttenham begins book II, entitled 'Of Proportion Poetical', with a statement relating the Universe, music and poetry. Under the express authority of mathematicians (probably the Pythagoreans), he declares "all things [in the Universe] stand by proportion". Campion opens his essay with a similar statement. Section 3 will show that the ideal model indeed stood by proportion.

The argument was this: if and only if the norms of the ideal model were implemented, then verse, observing proportion, would become part of the universal harmony, from which man, in the religious context of the times, could depart, with a resultant reiteration of the Fall. The argument had political and ethical implications.

2.2. The argument of authority

Coincidentally, a discussion on the educational merits of corporal punishment was the occasional cause of *The Scholemaster*, which includes the earliest extent guidelines as to the ideal model of English versification. The discussion, as reported by the author, Ascham, the Queen's classics tutor, who attended it, took place in 1563 at Windsor Castle and concerned Eton College nearby. It involved members of the government, among whom Sir William Cecil, the Queen's Principal Secretary.

There are several other arguments to associate the ideal model with political authority. However, there is no evidence as to who actually declared, if anyone, that henceforth the ideal model would rule. Ascham and Puttenham claim that in some respects it is natural. Gascoigne does not. He regrets the former freedom of poets, saying "I can lament that we are fallen into such a plain and simple manner of writing" (Alexander, p. 240). (The model was indeed simple, as section 3 will show.)

2.3. Political meaning

Implications about the political order before Elizabeth I can be read into *The Scholemaster*'s statements on the state of poetry before and still at the very beginning of the reign. There was the England before, the political chaos of the War of the Roses, still manifest in the poetry handed down from that period, and the England as from her accession to the throne, in which she would establish order and prosperity.

Half a century after Ascham wrote *The Scholemaster*, Beaumont stated the political significance of the ideal model expressly. In "To the Glorious Memory of our late Sovereign Lord, King James", lines 121-124, he says, with reference to the latter monarch's own essay on poetry:
He leads the lawless poets of our times
To smoother cadence, to exacter rhymes:
He knew it was the proper work of kings
To keep proportion, eu'n in smallest things.

(The very versification of those lines illustrates the political function of the ideal model, as the analysis proposed at the end of section 3 will show.)

2.4. Ethos (the ethical meaning)
One can relate the ideal model of versification to Plato's major political work, *Republic*, and its discussion on the kinds of poetry to be censured and permitted in the ideal city, in respect of the ethical training of its guardians.
In *Republic*, book III, Plato has Socrates set down the virtues that the guardians of the ideal city should have and the education they should receive to that end (388a-389d). Foremost among the virtues is self-control (389c-d). Poets, Socrates goes on to say, should write accordingly (391a-392b).

Having set up criteria for the censorship of poetical content, Socrates proposes criteria for the censorship of genres and meters (393c ff), with several arguments against imitation as achieved in drama (tragedy and comedy). Poetry, if it is to be allowed in the ideal city at all, must avoid imitation, except the imitation of men who are "brave, sober, pious, free and all things of that kind" (395c).

Therefore, the ideal city must allow only narrative and on condition that the narrator manifests those virtues, *including through his meter*. "The right speaker, Socrates then says, speaks (…) [all through his text] in a rhythm of nearly the same kind" (397b), which follows from the requirement that he should not imitate anything except the virtues required from the guardians of the ideal city.

The next issue is which rhythm(s). Here, Socrates refers to Damon, a musician friend of his who had studied the ethos of rhythms. Socrates declares that poets should observe "the rhythms of a life that is orderly and brave".
The discussion in *Republic* on the appropriate rhythm(s) is difficult to follow, perhaps purposefully, since modern psychologists are still debating the question

(Paul Shorey's note to 400a, in the Perseus website edition).

However, Socrates at this point mentions the basic foot of the ideal English model, the iamb and an alternative foot of that model, the trochee. The ethical value Socrates actually attaches to those feet appears unclear, but the words etymologically mean respectively to "assail" and "run", which are surely activities that a soldier must engage in (except in the retreating sense of the second word).

2.5. The cultural policy meaning

Although he called Plato "divine", Ascham, in book II, adumbrates the ideal model within a humanist essay on textual imitation as a pedagogical technique, that is to say on what the modern French critic Gérard Genette has called "hypertextual" practices.

In respect of versification, he calls for an importation of Greek and Latin versification, with the typically Renaissance policy of drawing English culture out of alleged prior barbarity or bestiality (see the question below).

Meres' *Palladia Tamia: Wit's Treasury,* published a few decades later, in 1598, can be read as a statement that Ascham's cultural project had been successfully implemented, as the subtitle makes clear: *A Comparative Discourse of our English Poets with the Greek, Latin, and Italian Poets*.

Ascham does not use the terms "Middle Ages" and "Renaissance". However, he presents the Middle Ages as a barbarous era bracketed off from Antiquity, on one side, and, on the other, from the Renaissance.

One of distinctive features of "true versifying", Ascham says, as practised by the Latin and Greek poets, in contrast with the allegedly barbarous Goths and Huns, is the absence of rhyme.

Accordingly, he proposes (as Campion does also, but contrary to his actual practice) that English versification should free itself of rhyme. "Surely, he says, to follow rather the Goths in rhyming, than the Greeks in true versifying, were even to eat acorns with *swine* [italics here added], when we may freely eat wheat bread among men" [modernized spelling].

The majority of dramatic poetry was to be written in blank verse (unrhymed pentameters, as defined in section 3), thereby emulating Latin and Greek poetry. However, lyrical poetry and some dramatic poetry continued to rhyme.

The two facts suggest a point that section 3 will develop: that, as the Elizabethan

Settlement purposed to do, but also as the English language was doing, the ideal model of versification reconciled different traditions.

2.6. Relativism and skeptical submission

Puttenham, while acknowledging the tripartite division of cultural history, does not, contrary to Ascham, disparage rhyming. In book I, arguing that rhyming is not specific to the barbarians, he does not deny, unlike Ascham, the worth of poets other than Greek or Latin.

Moreover, Puttenham (book II, chapter 11) proposes a noteworthy typology of stanzas, which he calls 'staffs', with different rhyme patterns and line lengths, as later found in John Donne's *Songs and Sonets*, first published posthumously in 1633.

Daniel goes further than Puttenham, in declaring, contrary to the tripartite historical schema, that all periods manifest nature's possibilities. Consequently, contrary to Ascham, one should not categorize some as worthy and others as gross.

Puttenham and Daniel, then, do not condemn all poetry except Latin and Greek, especially, as Ascham does, for the use of rhyme nor do they present the ideal model as not allowing rhyme. Rhyme, for them, is a device that poets, have resorted to, both before and after the great Latin and Greek poets and not only in Europe.

In fact, Puttenham (book II, chapter 3, Alexander, p. 113), reversing Ascham's judgement on Latin and Greek unrhymed verse as opposed to barbaric rhymed verse, says that should one take away its meter, Latin and Greek verse would be of no more interest than English verse.

Furthermore, Gascoigne describes and prescribes the ideal model, but as noted previously, with regret for the loss of English poets' former metrical freedom. He does so submissively, saying "since it is so, let us take the ford as we find it" (Alexander, pp. 240-241). Most poets were to observe the model during more or less three centuries.

3. The Ideal Model: Norms

Puttenham and Campion explicitly intended the ideal model of versification to extend the harmony of the Universe to actual versification, which the former like Ascham deemed had become chaotic. Under Plato's utopic political doctrine, verse, written according to ideal model, should also have the ethical effect of

portraying the poet as a disciplined individual whom emotions cannot affect, especially fear and pity, which a soldier-citizen in Plato's ideal city should never allow himself to experience.

The poet's self-mastery is manifest in his ability to abide by the ideal model in all contexts. Possibly echoing Plato, Puttenham says poetry requires "law", "restraint", "rules" (book II, chapter 6, Alexander, p. 118-119). Setting aside rhyme and syllabic limitation, the English model required the observance of two norms: the regular distribution of pauses and the regular alternation of two types of syllables.

Gasgoigne characterized the English model as "plain and simple" (Alexander, p. 240) and indeed it was. However, interestingly for the extension of argumentative analysis from law to versification, the norms were uncertain and debated (opposing for instance Campion and Daniel), but the uncertainty did not lessen the force of the obligation to observe them.

In respect of Puttenham's and Campion's references to universal proportion, the following is worth noting. There was the same proportion in the pentameter, the most usual line in English poetry under the ideal model, between a line's number of feet and its number of syllables (5/10) as between the two categories of syllables (1/2), since one category of syllable had twice the value of the other. Puttenham's rule for the pause in an even numbered line also results in producing the same proportion.

3.1. Pauses

Lineation was and is still considered a distinctive feature of verse: unlike prose, verse divides into lines, irrespectively of the right-hand margin. Furthermore, unlike prose lines, verse lines, it is thought, begin with a capital letter.

Shakespeare's only extent (but hypothetical) holograph shows that, although composing under the ideal model, the poet, according to Brooke (p. 216) and Parker (p. 140), did not always write in that way graphically, not because he did not acknowledge the ideal model, but because he did not need those visual markers.

Lineation, if correct, merely exhibits the model's requirement for the distribution of pauses. Before the ideal model was established, poets, says Puttenham, failed to restrain their discourse with pauses, which should be observed "if it were but

to serve as a law to correct the licentiousness of rhymers" (book II, chapter 5, Alexander, p. 118).

According to the ideal model, there are two pauses in each line: the first, at the end of the line, which justifies lineation; the second, sometimes called a 'caesura', within each line, which divides it into two sub-units.

The requirement may appear rather easy to observe. In fact, Puttenham says that the pauses should correspond to more or less dissociable syntactical units, allowing graphic punctuation. The effect of that rule is that, if the editors had required this text to be in decasyllabic lines, the most common form under the ideal model, this sentence would need rewriting, as the following lineation shows:
The effect of that rule is that, if the
Editors had required this text to be
In decasyllabic lines, the most com-

3.2. Feet

The ideal model required, not only that the poet should be self-disciplined enough to divide his discourse into end-stopped lines with an additional internal pause in each line, but that the words of each line should fit naturally, not only into the format of a set number of syllables, but into binary syllabic units.

Indeed, just as the Elizabethan settlement purposed to go beyond the clash between Catholics and Puritans or the English language was fusing its French and English sources, so the ideal model of versification, made explicit in the early part of her reign, brought together several models.

The ideal model was to combine the syllabic model of French versification (at least, as interpreted at the time), the ancient Latin and Greek quantitative model, and the accentual system of the English language, if not directly the Old English accentual model of versification.

All the writers agree that ideal model of versification should be syllabic. Verse should be written in homo-syllabic lines (with the same number of syllables per line all through) or in (homo-strophic) stanzas repeating an identifiable pattern of syllabic variations per line (although hetero-strophic verse does exist).

Furthermore, establishing the ideal model of versification, the authors all require that, as in Ancient Latin and Greek verse, lines should divide into feet. However, they also agree that, unlike the Latin and Greek feet, the English foot should be

binary.

3.3. Uncertainty

The authors agreed that there should be a medial pause or caesura in each line, but disagreed as to its position. There was also agreement that lines should divide into feet and, more specifically, binary feet, but disagreement about the units of those binary feet. (Syllabic division is uncertain also, but the focus here will be on the binary syllabic contrast.)

Both Puttenham (book II, chapter 5, Alexander, p. 118) and Gasgoigne (Alexander, p. 244) agree that there must be an internal pause. The two authors, however, disagree on its standard position: if the number of syllables is even, Puttenham says the caesura must fall in the middle, so in a decasyllabic line after the 5th syllable, but Gascoigne says that, in such a line, it should do so either after the 4th or 6th.

Ascham praises Henry Howard as the first, in his translation of Virgil, to have written in blank verse (that is, without rhymes). However, he reproaches him for not adopting the quantitative meter of his source. What Ascham wishes to impose, like Campion later, is the foot in quantitative terms, following the Latin and Greek model: in other words, each line should divide into an alternation of relatively short or light and long or heavy syllables.

In fact, Howard had indeed not *adopted* the Latin and Greek model, but he had *adapted* it to what was being identified at the time as a characteristic feature of the English language, stress or accent, which had governed Old English verse.

He had, by his practice, redefined the foot in accentual terms. Under that redefinition, an iamb, one of the classical feet, does not combine a short syllable and a long syllable, but an unstressed syllable and a stressed syllable.

The accentual-syllabic model was to prevail, but uncertainty as to the definition of the foot, quantitative or accentual, remained for some time. Thus, Alexander (pp. 371-372) notes that Puttenham's treatment of verse is confusing.

Puttenham acknowledges that two syllables can form a foot and that two feet can be made up of four syllables (book II, chapter 4, Alexander, p. 114); he also considers accent (II, 7-9); but he presents the different measures used by English poets in syllabic terms (II, 4).

Puttenham's confusion, one can add, may account for his statement (II, 5) about the medial position of the internal pause, which has the inevitable effect in even-numbered lines of splitting the two syllables of a foot from one another, often with

a graphic punctuation mark.
Gascoigne follows the accentual practice, yet he describes the two syllables both in accentual and quantitative terms: “the first, he says, is depressed or made short and the second is elevate or made long” (Alexander, p. 240).

Today, the general rule concerning stress is said to be that lexical words, like “be” or “exist”, have one stress and sometimes more as opposed to grammatical words, like “be” as an auxiliary, which have none.
However, accents other than linguistic stress can interfere, as in “To be or not to be: that is…”, where the fourth stress, a rhetorical stress, falls on “that”, a grammatical word, not on “is”, a lexical word, with a resultant trochaic variation.
Gasgoigne also notes that there are syllables which, contextually, can be either stressed or unstressed (Alexander, p. 240). Puttenham (Alexander, p. 120) says that this polyvalence is characteristic of the Anglo-Saxon monosyllables.
Some modern commentators consider that the Old English model (four stresses per line with a strong medial pause) continued to effect versification. The Elizabethan and Jacobean authors do not refer to that model, but it is a persuasive explanation for cases where grammatical words like “of”, usually unstressed, occur in the slot for a stressed syllable.

Finally, both Puttenham (Alexander pp. 119 and 122), in respect of rhyme, and Gasgoigne (Alexander, pp. 239 and 241), for meter and rhythm, insist that stress must be natural. Stresses must not be “wrenched” or “wrested” in pronunciation to force them into the slots of the metric pattern.
In setting down this requirement, Puttenham and Gascoigne may echo Plato’s statement that *rhythm must follow the words* and not the opposite (399e-400a). Plato’s reason is probably that words or concepts are to rhythm what the mind is to the body, but the injunction clashes with his restriction on permissible meters or rhythms.

3.4. Example
As with legal norms, the uncertainty of the norms, for instance regarding the internal pause, the foot and stress, did not make them any the less obligatory. However differently they were defined, the norms of the ideal model have in common a promotion of self-control and so constancy.

Now, if one examines Beaumont’s above quoted quatrain, it may seem to comply with the ideal model of versification, as it should, given the poet’s statement in

those lines about lawless poets on the one hand and bringing them to order on the other.
Indeed, as indicated below there is nothing wrong with the stanza. Each line is composed of 10 syllables. In each, there is an alternation of unstressed and stressed (here italicized) syllables (taking into account the usual accentual ambivalence of 'of' and 'to'). In other words, each line is composed of 5 iambic feet (here separated by a vertical bar), and each line is unquestionably end-stopped:
He *leads*|the *law*|less *po*|ets of| our *times* (10)
To *smoo*|ther *ca*|dence, to| *exact*|er *rhymes*: (10)
He *knew*| it *was*| the *pro*|per *work*| of *kings* (10)
To keep| pro*por*|tion, e*u'n*| in s*mall*|est *things*. (10)

Setting aside the elision in line 4, which section 4.1 will comment, the lines do indeed appear perfect, in subsuming under the ideal accentual-syllabic model the words as naturally pronounced.
However, the analysis has omitted one rule of the ideal model: a pause must divide the line into two and, according to Puttenham (but not Gascoigne), a pentameter into two five-syllable units.
It is the case at lines 2 and lines 4, which divide exactly in the middle and with a comma. It is not the case at lines 1 and 3: the first has either a caesura after the 2nd syllable or none; the third, after the 2nd, the 4th or none.

Now, whereas lines 2 and 4 state the order brought about by the king, those two other lines concern the chaotic situation prior to his actual intervention. The departure from the ideal model therefore appears justified.

4. Defences: Denials and Justifications
George Orwell argued that humankind's need for contrasts made utopias impossible to establish. The same perhaps is true of all ideal models. As early as the late eighteenth century, a few poets may well have invented individual models, as Gerald Manley Hopkins did at the end of the nineteenth.

However, until the institution of free verse, most observed the ideal model. If they failed to do so, they were criticized or "censured" (the two words were synonymous), as Donne was by Ben Jonson, according to Drummond. Even today, editors can re-edit apparent verse as prose: thus Brooke (p. 216) as opposed to Parker (pp. 141-142).

Few poets, however, observed the norms consistently. Literary critics, teachers, students who comment verse (unlike others who ignore it) focus, not on observant lines, but on departures, and they most frequently do one of two things.
In the manner of counsels for the defence, they argue on behalf of the poets, that the departures are in fact not departures or that the departures, limited in number, are meaningful and therefore justified.

4.1. Graphic and non-graphic denials
A pentameter, the most current line in traditional English verse, can have more or less than ten syllables, but the departure be denied. Exploiting dieresis, certain syllables can count as two. A line may also include a silent pause, counting as one syllable. Poets have also allowed themselves one syllable or two more per line, under what appears to have been or become an additional rule or licence that, before the internal pause or before the end of the line, an unstressed or so-called "feminine" ending did not count, as in "To be or not to be: that is the quest*ion*". Other additional rules enable a pentameter to have more than ten syllables. Syneresis fuses two syllables into one. Likewise, synaloepha merges the end and the beginning of two words, with or without an elision mark.

Writers of verse have often resorted to a graphic denial of departures through elision marks, as seen above in Beaumont's quatrain, where "even" is reduced to a monosyllabic "e'en". The word, arguably, may have been pronounced in that manner, but the standard spelling would have disrupted the meter. In eliding to conform, the poet adhered to the ideal model. In her editions of Donne, Helen Gardner, claimed that Donne did observe the model and, accordingly, added elision marks.

Elision marks, which are frequent, amount to a denial that the line does not observe the ideal model. (Under a more subtle analysis, they both acknowledge the metric model and make another rhythm perceptible.) However, critics (for instance, Brooke and Parker) have justified them. The Jacobean poets, they claim, attempted thereby to narrow the gap between poetry and ordinary speech, allowing truth to oral speech to prevail over graphic spelling norms.
According to Brooke (p. 216), the departures of the Jacobeans, of which this oral preference is only an instance, broke down the categorical barrier between prose and verse, making each a matter of degree, enabling the gradual transition from one to the other. The breaking down of the two categories appears significant and justified, at a time when the cosmological and political orders were also breaking

down.

4.2. Aristotelian justifications

However, even before the Jacobeans, undeniable departures from the norms perhaps also became a condition for poetry, but on two conditions: firstly, within limits, beyond which one could not recognize the normative form; secondly, if justifiable as also meaningful.

Certainly, most commentaries by critics, teachers and students for whom verse matters consist in more or less subtle justifications of departures. It is even current to say that, if justified, departures from the ideal model are characteristic of good verse.

Law can justify defamation or obscenity in consideration of a general interest, for instance respectively truth or literature. Likewise, comments that make departures from the ideal model meaningful justify those departures for their significance or semantic value.

Plato, in *Republic*, book III, considers allowing poetry in the city only if it fulfils several conditions. One of those conditions is that the poet, in his rhythms, constantly imitates virtues that the soldier-guardians of the city must possess, among which self-control. The ideal model of English versification provides the norms for poets to comply with Plato's requirement, at least in respect of self-control.

In book X, Plato develops his metaphysical argument against imitation, broached on in book III. With the implicit exception for the imitation of the accepted virtues, imitation is contrary to philosophy, in its attempt, absurd, because impossible, at copying a mere instance or copy of an Idea whereas the mind should aspire to contemplate the Idea itself, of which its instances are only imperfect copies.

The ideal model conforms to Plato's ethical requirements, but comments on departures from the model, although compatible with his injunction that *meter should follow the words* and not the reverse, are usually more immediately compatible with Aristotle's revaluation of imitation or re-presentation as being akin to philosophy

Imitation or re-presentation, says Aristotle (*Poetics* 48b4-19), is similar to philosophy and the learning process in general, because the mind, conceiving the likeness of, for instance, a two-dimensional oil painting of a person on canvas and that three-dimensional flesh-and-blood person himself, conceives their abstract,

more general common denominators.

The analysis of Beaumont's quatrain in section 3.4 has done just that: it has shown how, alternately contrary to and in accordance with the model for internal pauses, the pause system of the lines re-presented their verbal meaning, the practice of "lawless poets" and then the submission to the ideal model.
One could quote a great many other examples of how one can comment departures from the ideal model and how literary critics, teachers and students actually do comment them, as being justified for re-presentational reasons. Here, for want of space, one can consider only two: one relates to the pause, the other to the foot.

Illicit pauses

The first example is the opening of Donne's "The Flea", quoted here with a double vertical bar to show the internal pauses:
Mark but this flea,|| and mark in this
How little || that which thou deniest me is…

Part of a heterometric stanza, the first, octosyllabic line is divided in accordance with the model, but not the second, decasyllabic line (with a disyllabic pronunciation of "deniest"). In that line, the pause falls arguably just after the 3rd syllable, not after the 5th nor after the 4th (as respectively Puttenham and Gascoigne would have it do).

Why? Surely, the contrast between the alleged littleness of what is denied (defloration) and the allegedly disproportionate immensity of the woman's refusal justifies the departure, which breaks the line up into 3 syllables, on the one hand, and 7 syllables, on the other.

The words justify the rhythmic departure. They say: "Look, I am not observing the model, but the words provide the reason why." Indeed, notwithstanding Plato's statement that words should not follow the rhythm, but the latter, the former, one might say that *the words are merely an argument to justify the formal departure*.

Illicit feet

Literary critics, teachers and students comment departures from the ideal model's syllabic and accentual norms, like departures from the ideal model's

norms on pauses, as being justified semantically.

In the ideal city, poetry, Plato argued, must imitate nothing, except allowed virtues. It should imitate neither characters or passions nor perceptions of the physical world, for instance “neighing horses and lowing bulls, and the noise of rivers and the roar of the sea and the thunder and everything of that kind” (396b, repeated more or less at 397a).

Published long after the essays referred to here, Pope, in *An Essay on Criticism*, prescribed exactly the contrary: “The sound, he declared, must seem an echo to the sense” (line 365). Here also, notwithstanding Plato’s prescription about words and rhythm, one might claim the opposite: *the sense must seem an echo to the sound.*

Apparently alluding to Plato’s examples, Pope exemplified his own prescription in the following lines (368-369), where spondaic feet (two stressed syllables) represent the sense together with different categories of phonemes (the analysis of which cannot be undertaken here):

But when *loud Sur*ges lash the sounding Shore,
The hoarse, *rough Verse* shou’d like the Torrent roar.

5. Conclusion

Contrary to the usual focus of argumentative studies on *logos*, this paper has argued within its limited format for the extension of argumentative analysis to versification, which regulates verbal rhythm. In the case of English versification, it has shown that, originally, the ideal model was not the empty form it may well have become, but was cosmologically, politically, ethically and culturally meaningful. It has also shown that the model functioned like a law, departures from which have resulted in censorship or criticism, denials and justifications.

During several centuries, the majority of poets observed the model and their departures were not such as to jeopardise the recognition of the model. Most poets, by fitting words into the slots of the model, gave the abstract model existence. They implicitly argued, in each of their poems, that observance of that collective model should limit individualistic formal inventions, even when and if the other implications were lost, contrary to those who, as early as the late eighteenth century, developed their own model, putting originality first.

The extent of the adherence to the model and its meaning and of the departures from it is the most significant aspect of a versified poem as such. Whatever else versified poetry has to say, one can find elsewhere: the social sciences, the humanities, prose literature, pop songs, or tabloids. Charged with meaning, the model and the possible departures came first. Poets then found words. Yet, many, perhaps most, literary specialists reverse the order, some ignoring versification completely and leaving one amazed at why poets bothered. Argumentation theorists, also, should perhaps be more attentive to rhythm, were it only to elucidate ethos.

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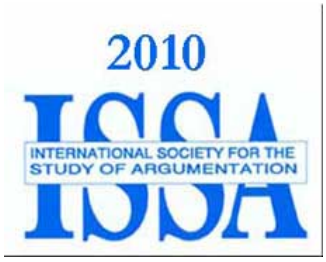
ISSA Proceedings 2010 – From Polemical Exchanges To Dialogue:

Appreciations About An Ethics Of Communication



1. Introduction

Although agreement and consensus are widely considered respectful and play a fundamental role to solve conflicting situations, how can we deal with circumstances which agreement and consensus seem too far? Is consensus a necessary factor for a fair dialogue? To polemize is a way to manage disagreements and it is commonly presupposed that in order to attain better communication, good relationship and mutual understanding we must require agreement, consensus and common ground conceptions. Are disagreements necessarily unfair? Are agreement, consensus and common ground conceptions to be pursued in all situations? Can people not live in harmony even though they have different opinions or discrepant world-views? Would not it be more beneficial to a more harmonious coexistence to emphasize as Nicholas Rescher a concept of rationality which includes a legitimate diversity, a constrained dissonance, an acquiescence in the difference and a respect for the autonomy of others than taking the consensus as an imperative of reason or as a requirement for its limitations? (Rescher 1995, p. 3, 7, 14)

Disagreement and dissent are attitudes that oppose dogmatism and are important elements of being rationally critic. Karl Popper stated that "the growth of knowledge depends entirely on the existence of disagreement" and even though it may lead to "strife" or "violence" it "may also lead to discussion, to argument and to mutual criticism"(Popper 1996, p. 34). However, why do disagreements instead of rational debates turns so frequently into quarrels or offensive disputes? How do we handle with these extremes situations? Habermas in his theory of communicative rationality has pointed out that "reaching understanding is considered to be a process of reaching agreement among speaking and acting subjects" (Habermas 1984, p. 287). But even critical rationality seems to be insufficient to preclude insulting remarks and irrationals discussions grounded on harsh feelings, desires and beliefs.

To manage controversies is not sufficient to appeal only to rationality. Ethical values should be reflected on, in order to deal with attitudes that are not attained

exclusively at a cognitive level or that can not be settled on an informational base solely. When a reasonable debate turns into a quarrel, it is necessary for the disputants, even for a moment, to suspend the opinions or the judgments and keep simultaneously a dialogical attitude so as to renew the controversy later in a less exalted mood.

Ethical values deal with sentiments, desires, beliefs, accountability, reliance, truthfulness, and respect. Their concern is at the core of a dialogical attitude that may keep the disputants in touch while the judgments are suspended. Suspension of judgment is a state of our intellect that we do not assert nor negate any proposal or assertion whatsoever. It is called *épokhé* in the Pyrrhonean skeptical tradition (Popkin & Stroll 2002, p. 55). Suspension of judgment or *épokhé* follows soon after a situation in which disagreement – opposed views or attitudes – seems to prevent any decision in a dispute. It is in the state of *épokhé* the promising terrain that dialogue may grow. It is in the state of *épokhé* that the confrontational animosity is kept aside and follows on a state of moderate feelings and tranquility (called *ataraxia* by the Pyrrhoneans).

In this paper, Marcelo Dascal's theory of controversies is taken as a general framework, and in order to avoid any attraction towards angry and offensive disputes, a maneuver is proposed to help move from a contentious to a dialogical attitude by exploring an interplay between Pyrrhonean skepticism and Martin Buber's philosophy of dialogue. A dialogical attitude is fundamental in order to regain a state of reasonableness and fairness and this state is a necessary condition for argumentation. As David Bohm says:
"The object of a dialogue is not to analyze things, or to win an argument, or to exchange opinions. Rather, it is to suspend your opinions and to look at the opinions – to listen to everybody's opinions, to suspend them and to see what all that means. If we can see what all of our opinions mean, then we are *sharing a common content*, even if we don't agree entirely." (Bohm 2007, p. 30)

2. The Irresistible Attraction towards Dispute: The Evil of Certainty
Our daily life, be it public or private, professional or not is entangled in debating, discussing or arguing. The content of strife may vary from trivial domestic quarrels, to disputes over labor demands, to conflicts in organizations, to political dissensions, or to scientific controversy and so on.

In order to understand the phenomena of polemical exchanges, Marcelo Dascal

(Dascal 1998) proposed, as a general hypothesis, a typology that consists of two sets of abstract "ideal types". The two sets represent two "macro" levels of organization which Dascal calls, respectively, "strategical" and "tactical". The first level comprises the polemical types; they refer to the structure of the polemical exchange; the second level comprises the *types of polemical move*; they refer to the process of the polemical exchange.

There are three polemical types: 1) discussion, 2) dispute and 3) controversy.
1) A discussion is a polemical exchange whose object is a well-circumscribed topic or problem that allows for solutions which result from the application of procedures that the contenders accept in a well-defined field. The root of a problem is a mistake relating to some important concept or procedure within this field. Discussion is basically concerned with the establishment of truth. It follows a "problem-solving" model. The Popperian schema of conjectures and refutation fits very well into this type of polemic.
2) A dispute is a polemical exchange whose object is also a well-defined problem. But instead of allowing for solutions, at best it can only dissolve or be dissolved, because the contenders at no point accept its definition as grounded in some mistake, and neither do they accept any procedure for deciding the dispute. The root of the problem is not a mistake, but differences of attitudes, feelings, or preferences that seems unsolvable. Disputes are basically concerned with winning, and winning involves a "contest" model.
3) A controversy is a polemical exchange that occupies an intermediate position between discussion and dispute. It has no steady specific problem and can spread quickly to other problems. The contenders reveal profound divergences about the extant methods of problem solving. The problems are not perceived as a matter of mistakes to be corrected, nor are there accepted procedures for deciding them. Controversies are an ongoing process that are neither solved as discussions, nor dissolved as disputes; they are, at best, resolved. Their resolution may consist at the "weighting" of the conflicting positions to see at which side reason favors, or at the modifying of the accepted positions of the contenders, or at the clarifying the nature of the differences at stake. Controversies are basically concerned with persuading. It follows a "deliberative" model.

The types of polemical moves are also three: a) proof, b) stratagem, and c) argument.
a) Proof is a move that aims to establish the truth of a proposition by employing

some inferences that lead from various propositions to the one that needs to be proved. It is related to discussion.
b) A stratagem is a move that aims to cause a relevant audience to (re)act in a certain way, by inducing it to believe that a proposition is true. It may involve deception and dissimulation. The force of this move lies in rendering the contender "speechless", i.e., unable to react with a satisfactory counter-move. It is related to dispute.
c) An argument is a move that aims to persuade the addressee to believe that a proposition is true. Like stratagems, arguments are also concerned with beliefs also. But unlike stratagems, arguments seek to achieve their effect by providing recognizable reasons for inducing in the contender the desired belief. Unlike proofs, these reasons need not be based on a logically conclusive inference pattern or on truthful evidence, but on sufficiently sound reasoning and some factual agreements. It is related to controversy.

It ought to be emphasized that real cases of polemical exchanges do not appear as exactly circumscribed by these three ideal types. Instead, polemical exchanges turn out to be a mixture of all three types.

It is desirable that conflicting situations in all contexts should be handled by using proof and argument, and by maintaining polemical exchanges at the realm of either discussions or controversies. A stratagem may be effective, but it is clearly undesirable from an ethical standpoint. It may even seem obvious from a rational point of view to reject stratagem as a move. Although argumentation is not necessarily conflictive, there is an irresistible attraction to contention, especially if the issues at stake involve not just relevant interests and beliefs but also commitment.

However, why does fair and reasonable argumentation lead to tricky stratagems? Why do disputes seem to be so inevitable?
A hypothesis that can be worked out is that dispute, at a strategical level, contain a strong element of certainty that awakens in the contender an overwhelming desire to win; and, at a tactical level, there is at the disposal of the contender a broader repertory of argumentative maneuvers ranging from arguments not committed with validity or fairness to arguments with strong elements of rationality especially of juridical character.

Dispute deals with differences of attitudes, feelings, or preferences which are

invariably based on beliefs. Belief refers to something we take to be the case or regard it as true. Therefore, beliefs nurtures and supports our certainties.

José Ortega y Gasset, widely known for his 1930 work *The Revolt of the Masses*, made a fundamental distinction between ideas and beliefs in an essay entitled "Ideas and Beliefs" (Ideas y Creencias), published in 1940. "Ideas" we have and "beliefs" we are. "Ideas" may be disposed of or changed at convenience, or by empirical testing or by rational proof. According to Ortega, "ideas" are "the thoughts that we have about things, were it original or received, they do not possess in our life the value of reality" (Ortega y Gasset 1959, p. 10). "Beliefs", as Ortega says, "constitute the base of our life, the terrain that it happens in". Following on, he says, "Because it poses us in front of what is for us the proper reality" (Ortega y Gasset 1959, p.10).

In this study, "ideas" and "beliefs" will be taken as guiding poles through which a possible way toward dialogue departing from a dispute will be discussed.
It is a natural and very frequent phenomenon that a good debate turns into a quarrel, and that a fair dialogue sadly ends up in a conspicuous contention. Proofs and arguments may also turn into tricky stratagems, and discussions and controversies may turn out to be fierce disputes. This attraction to contention leads to a lessening of the possibilities for the solution to the issues at stake. Dascal (Dascal 2008, p. 34) gave the name "dichotomization" to the process of radicalization of the debate through emphasis on the incompatibility of the poles and the disavowal of intermediate alternatives. Dispute implies certainty of decision procedures in a negative way, so the issue cannot be decided. On the other hand, discussion implies certainty of decision procedures, but in a positive way, so the issue can be decided. Once the dichotomy is accepted by the contenders, it will alternate the debate between discussion and dispute. Discussion treats the issues as "ideas" which scientifically confront each other for the sake of truth. Dispute treats the issues as "beliefs" which are opposed to each other like armies in a trench battle. It is more frequent a truth-searching discussion to incline toward a belief-laden bitter dispute instead the contrary, i. e., a belief-laden bitter dispute to incline toward a truth-searching discussion. Belief-laden arguments, even when fallacious, are many times "heavier" than informative-laden arguments even when they are clear and sound reasoning.

In a controversy, the space for possibilities of the issue at stake is widened through a process which Dascal (Dascal 2008, p. 35) named "de-dichotomization".

This approach leads to a breaking of the poles so as to search for a cooperative dialectical solution for the debaters. Controversy implies a questioning attitude of deliberative procedures that view the issue as not susceptible to being reduced or simplified but instead to being made more complex. Although controversy appears to be a flexible and open-ended way to persuade rationally by favoring the growth of knowledge and interpersonal cooperation, most of the real polemical exchanges are irresistibly attracted toward dispute. Disputes are conveyed in a dogmatic manner owing to the certainty that belief-laden arguments yield. They have a restrictive scope and as it pushes the debate to an imperative and imposed solution it is quite often that the debate get stanched at a dead-end. It is at this moment that polemical exchanges gets harsh and become a bitter quarrel. What can be done to make things flow again without mutual aggression? How can we turn a quarrel into a good debate? How can an angry contention be turned into a fair dialogue? How can a tricky stratagem be turned out into a reasonable argument? How can a dispute be changed into a wider scope controversy?

Belief is in the background of most disputes and it is the main force that nurtures them; it controls our lives and plays a vital role in our actions and produces certainty in our speech. To believe something implies certainty without the necessity of reflection. The term "certainty" means the psychological state of being without doubt. Belief and certainty are not evil in themselves, but all fanaticism and dogmatism are full of beliefs and certainties. As William Butler Yeats said in his poem "Second Coming":
"The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity."

It is a well-known fact that differences in belief can give rise to perilous states of affairs and can provoke much bloodshed and disgrace such as those of the religious wars that devastated Europe in the16th and 17th centuries, the totalitarianism of the 20th century and currently Islamic fundamentalism. These events involve disputes over religious and political ideology which the protagonists are full of a certainty that their beliefs are unquestionably true. How do we deal with the ruinous and pernicious consequences of the confrontation of beliefs? How do we face the clash of personal certainties avoiding humiliation and nullification of one of the contenders? How can ethical values play a fundamental role in polemical exchanges?

A common maneuver of controversy is to doubt the alleged certainty of the decision procedures. To question fundamental beliefs directly is philosophically legitimate, but this questioning is a very dangerous and inadvisable move in certain contexts. It can give rise to our most terrifying sentiments, in a manner similar to the opening of Pandora's Box. Prudence and respect are essential when dealing with beliefs. Hence, it can be distinguished in a debate certain dogmatic assumptions that are held as "beliefs", and as "beliefs" these assumptions, when they are questioned or cast into doubt, they invariably provoke a defensive reaction full of passionate feeling. On the other hand, if these dogmatic assumptions are held as "ideas" they can more easily be questioned or cast into doubt without provoking such defensive reactions full of excitement. Therefore, it is reasonable to enlarge the domain of assumptions that can be taken as "ideas" and restrict the core of the assumptions that can be treated as proper "beliefs". Henceforth, we should direct all questioning and all doubts over the assumptions taken as "ideas" in order to proceed the debate and take for granted all assumptions held as "beliefs". Even so, the debate may undermine itself and give rise to exchanges of insults and aggressions.

At this point we can turn the attention to the anti-dogmatic tradition of philosophical skepticism.

3. Suspension of Judgment: The Benefits of Doubt

The history of philosophy presents us with endless debates between great systems, each trying to represent the true answer to the problems of being and knowing and each trying to convince the others of its own truth. In the history of science the controversies are so common that we may trace the succession of theories and concepts as if they were a succession of oppositions of scientists trying to convince each other of the truth of their results and conclusions. Also the ordinary life is interlaced with confrontations and disagreements. This experience of conflicting opinions brought about the Skeptical Tradition starting at the time of the ancient Greeks and continuing to the Renaissance and Reformation with thinkers like Montaigne, to the development of modern philosophy with Descartes, Hume and Kant until the present day (Popkin 1979; Popkin & Stroll 2002). As Richard Popkin pointed out in his preface (Popkin 1979), the argumentations of the early Greek thinkers tried to establish either that no knowledge was possible or that there was insufficient and inadequate evidence to determine if any knowledge was possible, and hence that one ought to

suspend the judgment on all questions concerning knowledge. The first type of skepticism is the so called Academic skepticism of Arcesilas (315-241 b.c.) and Carneades (213-129 b.c.) and was formulated in the Platonic Academy. The second type is the so called Pyrrhonean Skepticism of Pyrrho of Elis (360-225 b.c.), Aenesidemus (100-40 b.c.), Agrippa (around the end of 100 a.d.) and Sextus Empiricus (160-210 a. d.). Pyrrhonean skepticism and its relationship to the theory of controversies will now be focused on.

Pyrrhonean skepticism had flourished mainly in the medical community around Alexandria and had Sextus Empiricus, a physician and philosopher, as responsible for the most complete account of ancient Greek skepticism. His two remaining works are the *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* (*Hypotypōseis Pyrrhōneioi*, thus commonly abbreviated *HP*) and *Against the Mathematicians* (*Adversus Mathematicos* in Latin or *Pros Mathematikois* in Greek).

The skeptical tradition of Sextus Empiricus called *diaphonía* this perpetual divergence of opinions. Sextus asserts that face the interminable conflict with regard to the object presented and unable either to choose a thing or reject it, is left over for us to suspend all judgment (Empiricus 1990, p. 63). Sextus defined skepticism as follow:
“an ability, or mental attitude, which opposes appearances to judgments in any way whatsoever, with the result that, owing to the equipollence of the objects and reasons thus opposed, we are brought firstly to a state of mental suspense and next to a state of “unperturbedness” or quietude” (Empiricus 1990, p. 17).

In this passage, the main features of Pyrrhonean skepticism is exposed by Sextus as a three-step sequel that firstly considers the equipollence or the equal force between dogmatic arguments contrary to non evidence, which may be called the principle of *isosthéneia* (equipollence); secondly, the attitude of *epokhé*, the suspension of judgment in the face of different propositions equally plausible or equally “weighted”; thirdly, the attainment of *ataraxia*, a state of quietude, derived from the interruption of dogmatic discrepancies. The disturbing situation of dogmatic quarreling about disparate points of view is seen by Pyrrhoneans skeptics as a disease to be cured.

The third step shows a very important characteristic of Pyrrhonism: that stillness and tranquility of mind is more important than the attainment of knowledge by all means, in spite of considering themselves as the type of philosophers that keep on

searching the truth. The word "*Skepsis*" comes from the Greek and means investigation. Pyrrhonean skepticism is perhaps best described as a deep and persistent commitment to the searching of truth. Sextus classified philosophers with regard to the truth of an object as of three types: 1) the dogmatists, who believe that have discovered the truth, as for example the Aristotelians, the Epicureans, and the Stoics; 2) the academics, who considered it inapprehensible as Arcesilas and Carneades; 3) the skeptics, which persist in their search (Empiricus 1990, p. 15-16).

The state of suspension of the judgment, *épokhé*, is an intellectual state that does not assert or negate any proposal or assertion; all are equally plausible and unverifiable. It is not a permanent state, but a provisional one that the investigator or debater arrives at, moments after verifying that the arguments of each system are of equal force (*isosthéneia*), and that is an obstruction to a final decision. Hence, incapable of deciding between equal weight arguments the skeptic suspends the judgment.

The Pyrrhonean skeptics are as truth searcher as dogmatists, but the last ones are much more compelled to certainty than for truth properly. This makes a sharp difference of attitudes because the dogmatists are more susceptible to be certain to have reached the truth than the skeptics. Having certainty about a truth is a strong guidance for action in life, so how can the skeptics live without such guidance?
The dogmatists frequently argue the Pyrrhoneans about how they can live and act without beliefs, and keep doubting uninterruptedly all apophantic judgments. The Pyrrhonean philosophy has been answering these objections since the time of the ancient Greeks (Porchat Pereira 1993, p. 174).

Is there any proposal that the Pyrrhoneans can not incontestably reject? Sextus had answered this question by concluding that appearances or phenomena (*tò phainómenon*, that which appears) imposes unquestionably to us: "when we question whether the underlying object is such as it appears, we grant the fact that it appears, and our doubt does not concern the appearance itself but the account given of that appearance …" (Empiricus 1990, pp. 21-22). Skeptics do not try to dogmatize or to assent to a non evident object. They do not transcend the phenomenon; they make all of their assertions in the realm of that which appears. Adhering to appearances, the Pyrrhonean skeptics can live undogmatically in accordance with the normal rules of life. By rules of life, Sextus means a fourfold

orientation (Empiricus 1990, p. 23): (1) guidance of nature, which means "we are naturally capable of sensation and thought"; (2) constraint of passions, which means we are commanded to satisfy hunger and thirst; (3) accordance with tradition of customs and laws; (4) instruction of the arts (*techné*), which means that the skeptics accepts whatever technical results may benefit them.

For the Pyrrhoneans a phenomenon is a criterion for action in the world. It does not direct the argumentative battery towards that which appears but towards all pretension to explain what underlies the phenomenon. Sextus says that "even if we do actually argue against the appearances, we do not propound such arguments with the intention of abolishing appearances, but by way of pointing out the rashness of the dogmatists …" (Empiricus 1990, p. 22).

Dogmatic argumentation, be it through the Socratic practice of the antinomies of the Platonists or through the Aristotelian dialectic, proposes to persuade opponents to construct a truthful epistemic knowledge which yields certainty. The Pyrrhonean skepticism argumentation makes every effort to break the pretensions of dogmatic discourse by driving the polemical exchanges to an undecidable situation where things continue to be in opposition. That situation favors the suspension of judgment in order to interrupt the conflicts or the quarrels that arise when the disputants seem to be moving in circles and repetitions.

Pyrrhoneans skeptics, as great debaters, organized patterns of reasoning or argumentation, called *Tropos*, which in the face of undecidable disagreements, it followed the suspension of judgment. The patterns of argumentation (*Tropos*) of the Pyrrhoneans consists of a certain set of arguments each focusing on a specific issue on which the suspension of judgment followed as an inevitable result of endless disputes. According to Popkin the *Tropos* are "ways of proceeding to bring about suspension of judgment on various questions" (Popkin 1979, p. XI).

For our purposes in this study we take from the Pyrrhonean skepticism three procedures that will act in order to avoid the aggressive contention: firstly, the argumentative ability of the Pyrrhoneans to question and to test the certainties of their opponents; secondly, the attitude of suspension of judgment (*épokhé*); and thirdly, the attitude of *ataraxia* or tranquility of mind which follows *épokhé*. Therefore, when a debate is deeply mired in a dispute and the debaters do not seem to understand each other anymore and the mood are exalted enough for to

end the polemical exchange in a respectful and friendly manner, the first maneuver is to introduce the seeds of doubt in order to cool down some certainties, especially those based on “ideas”, not those based on “beliefs”. The Pyrrhonean action of pure rational questioning without the purpose of establishing a point of view can move the polemical exchange from the condition of dispute to a controversy. At this stage of the debate when some controversy begins to set and emotions are properly dammed is the right time to trigger the second maneuver which is to suspend judgment. Suspension of judgment (*épokhé*) and the state of “unperturbedness” or quietude (*ataraxia*) are maneuvers deeply connected to the dialogical attitude developed by the philosophy of Martin Buber. Both Buber and the Pyrrhoneans follow a common path of wisdom that seeks to avoid the fierce willingness of debaters trying to massacre each other by all means imposing their point of view.

Robert Nozick pointed out, at the beginning of his introduction to *The Nature of Rationality*, that what philosophers really love is reasoning instead of wisdom as could be supposed by the very meaning of the word “philosophy” (Nozick 1993, p. xi). It can be said that not only philosophers but also politicians, lawyers, theologians and ordinary men, especially when they are full of certainty, seems also to accede to an endless and bitter reasoning, not rarely producing offenses, humiliations and lack of respect. The Pyrrhoneans, in this regard, seem closer to wisdom since they aim at quietude and moderate feelings in order to avoid sterile disputes. Buber´s approach takes dialogue as way to bind the disputants, one toward the other, without any previous requirement to each one give up their point of view (Buber 2006, p.7).

However, before getting to the state of *ataraxia* (stillness, quietude), the skeptic suspends all judgment and adopts the attitude of *epokhé*. It is in the *épokhé* the terrain that dialogue can grow and expand. Dialogue for Buber is not just talking to each other or exchanging words with cultural significance. It is fundamentally the reciprocity of the self towards the other, the mutual contact that makes the one’s presence to the other an open experience of genuine communication that includes silence as well (Buber 2006, p. 1-45). Principles of sound reasoning alone cannot bring groups or individuals together; these principles, however, are a necessary condition for doing so. For managing controversies, it is not sufficient to appeal to rationality alone in order to avoid fallacies or to keep deliberating correctly. We ought to reflect on ethical values in order to deal with attitudes that

are not attained exclusively at a cognitive level, and that can be disposed of by an inductive experienced process based on information exchange. Sentiments, desires and beliefs are the ground in which differences of opinions are most explosive, and irrational elements develop, getting stronger. Ethical values deals with sentiments, desires and beliefs and are at the core of a dialogical attitude that can keep the disputants in touch while the judgments are suspended.

4. The Interhuman as the Sole Ground for a Genuine Dialogue: Preparation for an Ethics of Encounter

When discussing social phenomena there are several approaches that try to understand the interplay between the individual and society by using concepts like, for example, Durkheim's social facts, Marx's social class or Weber's social action. All these approaches roughly consider values, cultural norms, and social structures that are external to the individuals and coerce them, as is established in the sociology of Marx and Durkheim; or the interaction of individuals determining the changes on the external structures, as is established in the sociology of Weber. At the sociological level, the individuals are tied to groups, classes, institutions etc., but do not have necessarily any kind of personal relation with each other. Martin Buber's approach looks at the personal level, which is an existential relation between one individual and another or an interhuman relation (Buber 1965, Ch. III).

The wide range of conflicts in society that are basically determined by human differences (class, value, culture, ideology, interest) can be seen as an intercourse between disputant groups or individuals trying to impose their own points of view on each other. In order to establish the contextualization of these polemical exchanges not only social but also behavioral sciences should be considered. However, all these fields omit the personal or existential sphere treated by Buber.

This sphere leads to the perspective of searching for a real encounter between the self and the other; this real encounter is the deepest ground for dialogue. It is an inter-human sphere that is not the purely social one usually defined as what is shared in common by individuals and that previously coerces them. Instead, the inter-human sphere is a face-to-face relationship, a one to the other connection that sustains the dialogical dimension. Genuine dialogue is not just talking to each other or exchanging opinions as an intellectual activity. It is fundamentally the reciprocity between the self and the other, the mutual contact that makes one person present to another in an open experience of genuine communication that

includes the mutual acceptance of partnership (Buber 1965, p. 85-88; Buber 2006, 1-45).

According to Martin Buber, dialogue happens when the relationship between one human being and another is not perceived as consisting merely of specific, isolated qualities, but as having a unity of being, a subject-to-subject relationship that Buber himself expresses as the primary word "*I-Thou*". This primary word guarantees that human beings' integral and dialogical relationships must be founded on reciprocity and mutuality and not on detachment and separateness as in a subject-to-object relationship. Dialogue is thus on an ontological ground. Hence for Buber "all real living is meeting", and any postures or attitudes that would lead to a disruption or separation at either side of an encounter would obstruct such a meeting. What could obstruct this meeting? What postures or attitudes would lead to a disruption at either side?

At the very beginning of *I and Thou* Buber (Buber 1958, p. 3) asseverates that "to man the world is twofold, in accordance with his twofold attitude." Going further he says that "the attitude of man is twofold, in accordance with the twofold nature of the primary words which he speaks."

The first attitude is a subject-subject attitude which is characterized by the primary word *I-Thou*. This attitude presupposes a connection between one human being and another. The second attitude is a subject-object attitude which is characterized by the primary word *I-It*. This attitude presupposes the separateness of human beings from the world around them. *I-Thou* and *I-It* signify relations rather than things.

When a debate between individuals points irrevocably to an undecidable and harsh dispute between one disputant and another, it means that they do not recognize each other as partners or do not foresee a horizon of cooperation. Then the skeptical argumentative machine may work to disrupt certainties about the ideas at issue, and go into a state of *epokhé*, i.e., to suspend judgment.

At the moment that all judgment is suspended, the words that are spoken may not be those of the ideas at issue but may be those that go in search of a common human and existential ground. The relevant words that move us towards an ethical claim of communication are those who say that the other person must always count in our deliberations; that the other person is not a thing to

manipulate or to experience, as in an *I-It* relation, but it is a whole being presence of the one to the other that we ought to pursue. The relevant words ought to reflect our intentional consciousness which has a fundamentally relational character. Buber says:
"Let it be said again that all this can only take place in a living partnership, that is, when I stand in a common situation with the other and expose myself vitally to his share in the situation as really his share. It is true that my basic attitude can remain unanswered, and the dialogue can die in seed. But if mutuality stirs, then the interhuman blossoms into genuine dialogue". (Buber 1965, p. 81)

The demand for being rationally critical seems to be insufficient not only for preventing angry contends and recurring discussions that are solidly grounded on beliefs and certainties, but also for entering into a genuine dialogue. Genuine dialogue is rooted in the terrain of inter-subjectivity whose first move is to recognize the other as a partner. This recognition demands the capacity to realize a subject-subject, or an *I-Thou* relationship. Buber says:
"If I face a human being as my Thou, and say the primary word I-Thou to him, he is not a thing among things, and does not consist of things. (…) I become through my relation to the Thou; as I become I, I say Thou. All real living is meeting." (Buber 1958, pp. 8-11)

The ethical commitments that we can take from Buber's philosophy of dialogue are then solidly grounded on an ontological level. This ontological level reflects itself as speech and counter-speech, as words that are spoken between people in the mutuality of *I* and *Thou*, in "the between". "Trust" is a purely relational term that is free of all content and just expresses the turning of oneself toward the other. It is a confident affirmation of the acceptance of the other as a subject. Another relevant term which Buber frequently uses is "spirit". Buber says:
"Spirit in its human manifestation is a response of man to his *Thou*". (…)
"Spirit is not in the *I*, but between *I* and *Thou*." (Buber 1958, p. 39)

"Spirit" for Buber is the capacity and the propensity to encounter another person as other and as a singular person; it is the capacity and the propensity to realize the meeting of the one to the other. Buber also uses the term "faith" to mean the confidence that this meeting is realizable.
The terms "spirit" and "faith" are connected ontologically and do not necessarily refer to God or have necessarily a religious character. One may be an atheist and have faith and spirit.

If I trust you as a singular person, I will respect you in my deliberations, and I will be fair in my argumentation. This attitude brings about tolerance, but tolerance does not mean putting up with disrespect, unfairness and manipulation.

5. Concluding Remarks

The main purpose of our study was to find a way to overcome the deadlock in a situation in which a debate became bitter, harsh and offensive with no prospect of solution. In order to avoid this situation we proposed a maneuver to move from a contentious and confrontational attitude to a dialogical attitude by exploring an interplay between Pyrrhonean skepticism and Martin Buber's philosophy of dialogue.

To join two matrices of thought as diverse as Pyrrhonean skepticism and Buber's philosophy of dialogue we made intuitively some reflections on the problem of the change of rational and polished discussions to offensive and harsh disputes. Our purpose was not to prove any advantage of being a skeptical philosopher or to induce any adherence to the ontological commitments of Buber's philosophy. What we tried to show is how the different aspects of these two philosophies can find a common ground and work together. The common ground is the context of a contentious debate whose arguments have degenerated into mutual aggression. One need not be a Pyrrhonean or a Buberean, or even be sympathetic to them, to use in polemical exchanges rational strategies to challenge certainties of the first and the ethics of meeting of the second. We do not attempt to offer a solution to the argumentative quarrels. They are part of our nature. However, we can and must seek a way to deal better with them.

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