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.

REFERENCES

Aristotele (1996). *Retorica*. Milano: Mondadori.

Bhatia, V. (2004). *Worlds of Written Discourse. A Genre-based View*. London: Continuum.

Bloch, M. (1998). *Apologia della storia*. Torino: Einaudi.

Bondi, M. & Mazzi, D. (2007). The Future in History: Projecting Expectations in Historical Discourse. In G. Garzone & R. Salvi (Eds.), *Linguistica, linguaggi specialistici, didattica delle lingue. Studi in onore di Leo Schena* (pp. 85-94). Roma: CISU.

Bondi, M. & Mazzi, D. (2009). Writing History: Argument, Narrative and Point of View. In M. Shiro, P. Bentivoglio & F. Erlich (Eds.), *Haciendo Discurso. Homenaje a Adriana Bolivar* (pp. 611-626). Caracas: Universidad Central de Venezuela.

Brown, G. & Yule, G. (1983). *Discourse Analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Carrard, P. (1992). *Poetics of the New History. French Historical Discourse from Braudel to Chartier*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Ginzburg, C. (1991). *Il giudice e lo storico*. Torino: Einaudi.

Ginzburg, C. (2000). *Rapporti di forza. Storia, retorica, prova*. Milano: Feltrinelli

Hunston, S. & Thompson, G. (2000). Evaluation: an Introduction. In S. Hunston & G. Thompson (Eds.), *Evaluation in Text. Authorial Stance and the Construction of Discourse* (pp. 1-27). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hunston, S. (2002). *Corpora in Applied Linguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hyland, K. (2005). *Metadiscourse. Exploring Interaction in Writing*. London: Continuum.

Hyland, K. & Bondi, M. (Eds.) (2006). *Academic Discourse across Disciplines*. Bern: Peter Lang.

Juthe, A. (2005). Argument by Analogy. *Argumentation*, 19, 1-27.

Koselleck, R. (1986). *Futuro Passato*. Genova: Palestro.

Locke, J. (1971). *Saggio sull'intelletto umano*. Torino: UTET.

Lozano, J. (1991). *Il Discorso Storico*. Palermo: Sellerio.
Perelman, C. & L. Olbrechts-Tyteca (1966). *Trattato dell'argomentazione. La nuova retorica*. Torino: Einaudi.
Perelman, C. (1979). *Il campo dell'argomentazione. Nuova retorica e scienze umane*. Parma: Pratiche.
Prost, A. (1996). Histoire, vérités, méthodes. Des structures argumentatives de l'histoire. *Le débat*, 92, 127-140.
Prost, A. (2002). Argumentation historique et argumentation judiciaire. In M. de Fornel & J.-C. Passeron (Eds.), *L'Argumentation. Preuve et persuasion* (pp. 29-47). Paris: Editions de l'Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales.
Ricoeur, P. (2000). *La mémoire, l'histoire, l'oubli*. Paris: Seuil.
Scott, M. (2007). *WordSmith Tools 5.0*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Sinclair, J. (1991). *Corpus, Concordance, Collocation.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Sinclair, J. (1996). The Search for Units of Meaning. *Textus*, 9, 75-106.
Sinclair, J. (2003). *Reading concordances*. London: Longman.
Stati, S. (2002). *Principi di analisi argomentativa*. Bologna: Pàtron.
Swales, J. (2004). *Research Genres. Explorations and Applications.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Thomas, Y. (1998). La vérité, le temps, le juge et l'historien. *Le débat*, 102, 17-36.
Thompson, G. (2001). Interaction in Academic Writing: Learning to Argue with the Reader. *Applied Linguistics*, 22, 58-78.
Tosh, J. (1989). *Introduzione alla ricerca storica*. Scandicci: La Nuova Italia.
White, H. (1978). *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
White, H. (1987). *Retorica e storia*. Napoli: Guida.
White, H. (1999). *Storia e narrazione*. Ravenna: Longo Editore.