

# **ISSA Proceedings 2014 - The September 11, 1973 Military Coup In Chile And The Military Regime 1973-1990: A Case Of Social And Political Deep Disagreement**

*Abstract:* This paper intends to describe and analyze the argumentation that has taken place in El Mercurio, Chile's main daily newspaper, both in articles in the printed edition as well as in blogs in the online edition, during the months of September and October 2013. This argumentation constitutes a case of social and political deep disagreement. The nature of the disagreement lies in the ways of explaining the coup and the military regime.

*Keywords:* blogs, deep disagreement, multi-modal argumentation, pragma-dialectics, strategies for overcoming deep disagreement.

## *1. Introduction*

In several conferences of ISSA and OSSA, I have presented a number of papers on arguments in political propaganda taking the Chilean daily El Mercurio as the source of the argumentation. The main thrust of these papers is the view that the study of argumentation in general should include the analysis of emotional, physical and intuitive arguments as well as logical ones. The paper presented in the 2010 ISSA conference (Duran, 2010) intended to show that, on the basis of work done in the previous papers, the psychoanalytic theory of Bi-Logic is in a position to explain some fundamental aspects of argumentation in agitation propaganda as developed by the press. That paper concluded with a reflection on the dramatic disagreement in Chilean society about the causes and circumstances of the military coup, the military dictatorship, and the return to democracy.

I attended during the 2010 ISSA conference the paper by David Zarefsky on deep disagreement in argumentation. His views helped me to develop a preliminary understanding of argumentation possibilities to break the deadlock in Chile through argumentation techniques as discussed in his paper. Since then I had

tried to find material in El Mercurio that would help me to develop some mechanism to deal with the disagreement. The social and political idea behind this initial project was that a society cannot truly function without an understanding of the reasons for a major crisis that divided it into two irreconcilable camps. I found an article in El Mercurio published in early 2010 by Arturo Fontaine, then Director of CEP (Centro de Estudios Públicos), a powerful think-tank representing the views of the highest levels of the entrepreneurial class in Chile. According to Fontaine, any attempt to discuss the drama of Chile would necessarily involve that the supporters of the coup would need to recognize the repressive nature of the military dictatorship; conversely, those who suffered the repression would have to accept that the government of President of Salvador Allende ended up terrorizing the middle classes.

I decided to look into blogs in El Mercurio internet (emol.com) that could deal with the topic. During the many activities to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the coup, the amount of coverage of the coup and military regime has been impresssive, still within the general frame of deep disagreement. I have focused mainly on articles on the editorial page of the daily edition and on several internet blogs that deal with the topic. The purpose of this paper is to analyze the argumentation that has taken place in the blogs.

## *2. Framework for the study of blogs*

In order to proceed with the analysis of the argumentation as it appears in the blogs, it seems necessary to develop a systematic framework. Usually blogs consist of expression of opinions, or points of view, with no attempt to participate in dialogues. In the case of the topic of this study, those opinions tend to be very black and white, with the people in favor of the military regime attacking the other side quite strongly, and viceversa. Ad hominem fallacies are found frequently, including insults and accusations of evil motivations. Therefore, what is the reason to develop a systematic framework? It has been my idea for a long time, that people need a social forum where they could exchange their views and opinions about economic, political, social issues in a way that could become interactive. The mass media, especially the press, seem to be an appropriate vehicle for that purpose..

In his recent book *Arguing with People*, Michael Gilbert (Gilbert, 2014), introduces a complex model for argumentation among people that includes some core aspects of the Pragma-Dialectical model of Van Eemeren and Grootendorst,

combined with his own theory of Multi-Modal Argumentation, and his understanding of argumentation as leading hopefully to coalescence. In this context, my thought moved from the idea of analyzing argumentation in blogs to hopefully, at some point, be able to propose formally to conduct dialogues along the lines of the new model.

### *2.1 M. Gilbert's model for the study of argumentation*

In what follows I introduce the model that has helped to get going in the analysis of argumentation in blogs in the case of social and political deep disagreement in Chilean society. At the same time, I discuss David Zarefsky's ideas on transcendence of deep disagreement as they appear in his paper presented at ISSA 2010 (Zarefsky, 2010). A combination of the ideas of Gilbert and Zarefsky could hopefully produce the model that I have been discussing above. However, in this paper, the model is to an important extent used in order to show the limitations of interactions in the blogs. Needless to say, I do not want to be deterred by such limitations in future work.

In dealing with his purpose of helping people to argue, Michael Gilbert introduces the idea of stages of argumentation that was developed, as mentioned above, by van Eemeren and Grootendorst: as is well known, the stages are confrontation, opening, argumentation, and conclusion. The novelty in Gilbert's approach in this new book, is that he proposes that these stages should be analyzed in a way that, in each one of them, one must be clear as to which mode(s) of argumentation is (are) at stake. Thus, the interaction at the confrontation stage could be in the logical mode combined with, for example, the emotional mode; or it could be happening at the visceral mode; or visceral mode together with the logical mode; or it could be in any one of the modes alone. And the same thing can happen in the other stages. This way of conceiving arguing adds to the process of understanding it a much needed complexity.

I believe that both the Pragma-Dialectical and Gilbert's approaches to argumentation are intended, if possible, to lead into coalescence. This idea is very important in my present study as discussed below. Now, I need to incorporate to this model some of the key ideas of Zarefsky in the paper mentioned above.

David Zarefsky is concerned with the fact that argumentation assumes a certain degree of agreement such that, even when there is disagreement, there should be the possibility of arguing the case. Thus, productive disagreement must have an

underlying stratum of agreement. However, there are situations in which each arguer's claims are based on assumptions that the other arguer rejects. In this case he says "[d]eep disagreement is the limiting condition at which argumentation becomes impossible." He says that this state of affairs was first characterized by Robert Fogelin (Fogelin, 1985).

I examine Zarefsky's views on possible ways of transcending deep disagreement in what follows, but first I entertain a few thoughts on this problematic issue. Given the Pragma-Dialectical/Gilbert model articulated above, it seems rather evident that most, or a great number, of cases of deep disagreement happen at the confrontation stage. Indeed why to argue if there is no basis of agreement whatsoever. However, let's assume that in a certain argumentation process, disagreement is found in the opening stage, such that no agreement is possible as to the rules of the process of arguing: for example, one arguer believes that only logical rules of arguing are acceptable while the other claims that emotional rules are paramount. The same could be said about the stage of argumentation. In either situation, it seems clear that the arguers have to come back to the confrontation stage. If so, it seems that deep disagreement cases happen basically at the confrontation stage. Another key issue is the consideration of magnitude or levels or depth of deep disagreement. Not all cases are necessarily the same. It may happen that one of the arguers claims, to start with, that s/he disagrees completely with the other arguer; or the situation could be less radical, and the deep disagreement appears after a few exchanges in which they find areas of productive exchange.

## *2.2 D. Zarefsky's strategies for dealing with deep disagreement*

David Zarefsky discusses four possible strategies for overcoming deep disagreement. He groups these strategies in pairs under the following headings: inconsistency, packaging, time, and changing the ground. In its turn, each one of them is divided into two options. My own take on this insightful proposal is to explore them as potential ways of seeking productive agreement: therefore, I present them here as I intend to use them in my own study of deep disagreement in Chilean society. The overall picture is the following:

1. Inconsistency may happen as "hypocrisy" or "circumstantial ad hominem". In both moves, the attempt is to get inside the opponent's frame of reference and discredit it on grounds of inconsistency. The charge of hypocrisy happens when the arguer maintains a position which is inconsistent with another one maintained

during the argument. The circumstantial ad hominem option takes place when a position of the arguer is contradictory to her or his own behavior. Now, in both cases, the arguer that is seeking an end to the deadlock expects that the inconsistency can be enough to make the other arguer realize where s/he really stands.

2. Packaging is divided into “incorporation” and “subsumption”. Incorporation consists in including the deep disagreed upon issue into a larger package which also includes things that the other arguer agrees with. Subsumption is a strategy which seeks to subsume the items of deep disagreement within a larger frame which can be acceptable to both arguers. In both cases of packaging, the expectation is to generate agreement around the disagreed topics such that the arguers may develop some sense of working together.

3. Time can happen as “exhaustion” or “urgency”. Exhaustion refers to cases that have been very long, tense, and emotionally draining. Urgency refers to a bad situation generated by a crisis that has undermined the arguers. Of course, a crisis may lead to exhaustion. The expectation in these two cases is that the arguers cannot continue in a deadlock that affects their lives so seriously.

4. Finally, changing the ground could take place as “interfield borrowing” or “frame-shifting”. In interfield borrowing one arguer assumes the field of the other arguer attempting to find an area of possible productive argumentation. In frame-shifting one of the arguers will try to move the argument from one context or frame to another where both could agree upon. In these two cases the expectation is to situate the argumentation on a common plane where agreement becomes possible.

### *3. Analysis of blogs*

In this part of the paper, I examine specific cases of deep disagreement as they have been found in two blogs in El Mercurio, one in early September and the other one in early October, both in 2013. At that time, Chile was witnessing a remarkable and painful explosion of public debate as a consequence of the commemoration of the 40th anniversary of the September 11, 1973 coup d’etat that deposed the democratically elected government of Salvador Allende. A number of high level politicians from all sides of the political spectrum got involved in different ways of commenting or arguing about the coup and the military dictatorship that followed. President Sebastián Piñera, a right wing

politician but with a centrist tradition, made a public criticism of some of the civilians involved in the government of General Augusto Pinochet. Members of traditional institutions, including the powerful Catholic Church, were also involved in this public debate. In this social and political atmosphere, blogs in El Mercurio became a source of intense and voluminous participation of people representing the two sides of the deep disagreement. The task is now to examine the two blogs mentioned above.

Now, this examination of the blogs is undertaken in two main and different, but related, ways. On the one hand, the blogs are described as they appear face value, with no intervention of the framework developed above. Then, they are related to the framework “sideways”, so to speak: the job is to show possible ways of relating aspects of the framework to issues presented in the blogs. As mentioned at the beginning, the blogs consist of viewpoints with no recognition of the need to exchange views in any formal sense. At the most, they can be evaluated as remaining at the stage of confrontation and this happens in a crude way, really. At this moment, it is pertinent to introduce a significant concept that Michael Gilbert discusses in his recent book (2014): his views on arguing with people have in mind what he calls “familiar”, that is, people with whom the arguers are familiar, they know each other well enough. Of course, this concept is at the other end of what happens in the blogs, to the extent that the participants could be called “unfamiliar”. This issue is considered when describing and analyzing the two blogs.

### *3.1 A personal deep disagreement exchange*

Before undertaking the study of the blogs, I believe it is pertinent to discuss one personal exchange that I had in the late 1980's, when Pinochet was still in power. It involved a dialogue that I had with a former student whom I met by chance in a coffee shop in Santiago. He was a member of the upper class in Chile, and a supporter of the coup and the military regime. When he was my student in the 1960's, we had developed a friendly relation. Upon greeting each other, he told me how pleased he was to see me back in Chile, and then, almost immediately asked me how I felt about the military regime. My response was that it was a repressive dictatorship with horrible violations of human rights to which he agreed upon saying that he was sorry about that. He continued saying that he was truly sorry, but the fact is that Chile had developed economically in a way that, at some point, democracy would return, and then Chile, as was the case with Spain,

would move politically from the centre right to the centre left, back and forth. He added that in that situation there would never again be another Allende. I was completely shocked such that I could hardly articulate anything else. If that dialogue with my former student indicates something is that perhaps it happened at an earlier “stage” than confrontation. Or maybe, that I could not even recognize confrontation. In hindsight, I think that I may have agreed subconsciously with him that that was going to happen, as indeed it has happened in Chile over the past 24 years! It was an experience that I keep going back to. I am not sure that I could have entertained an argument with him.

Some reflection about this case is needed before I move to the study of the blogs. At that time, I did not know much about argumentation theory, my only training had been since the mid 1970’s in informal logic, not enough to know what to do in an argumentation case like this one. However, the point is a larger one and it involves at least two issues. One refers to the fact that most people in the world are not familiar with argumentation theory, so it is practically impossible for them to proceed along the lines of the framework that I developed above or any other systematic one. Thus, it would be important to get to know what exactly happens when people argue in general. Is there some sense of stages? Do they try to come up with rules for the argumentation? Is there an intuitive sense of all this? Do argumentation theorists, in one way or another, manage to articulate formal structures for conducting arguments based on ways that are natural so to speak?

The second issue involved here relates to the need for educating people formally since the early stages of the education system. What are argumentation theorists going to do about this immense challenge? Leaving this sophisticated knowledge only for meetings in conferences, or writings that go around experts, or for high level teaching in academic institutions, would miss the very nature of what argumentation theorists have been doing.

### *3.2 Analysis of the first blog*

Perhaps I should move to the study of the blogs by stating that it is my expectation that this study could help promote the need to educate people. It may be a long shot, but it is worth trying.

In the climate of intense public debate in Chile as a consequence of the 40th commemoration of the military coup, political leaders of all parties, religious leaders, educational professionals, and the general public at large got involved in

all sorts of public statements and debates. This was the case of the Bishops of the Catholic Church who produced a public document on September 9, 2013.

The Bishops state that the society continues to be divided into two irreconcilable camps, and time has come to search for a true reconciliation. However, they say, in the present context, unfortunately strong accusations and reproaches tend to predominate. They continue by stating that the wounds left by the painful events in September of 1973 have not really healed. They claim that truth, justice and reconciliation is the road to a true understanding. They are also very critical of the abuses of human rights by the military regime during and after the coup. Finally, they remind people of the role the Church undertook in the defense of human rights during that regime.

It is possible to characterize this statement of the Church in terms of David Zarefsky's strategy for overcoming deep disagreement called "time in the sense of urgency". The Church makes it clear that the status quo of confrontation is not possible to maintain any longer.

I have selected two blogs found in El Mercurio for a detailed study. One of them was originated by an article published by Senator Hernán Larraín from the most right wing party called UDI, Democratic Independent Union. UDI was created during the military regime in order to provide political support to it. His most important founder and leader was Jaime Guzmán, a young, prominent intellectual who played a most important role in the creation of legal, political, and economic structures during the government of General Pinochet. Larraín represents a rather centrist side in this party. The article was published on September 2, 2013.

The other blog stems from an article published on October 8 by Eugenio Tironi, a centre-left intellectual from the PPD, Party for Democracy. I selected these two blogs for several reasons. One reason is the fact that Larraín, being in the most right wing party in Chile, has taken a conciliatory position and in his article he is asking for forgiveness so as to provide a basis for reconciliation. A second reason for the selection of blogs is that Tironi, on the other side, represents a clear centre-left position and sometimes is accused by the more traditional left in Chile as being too bland. His article represents a strong criticism of Jaime Guzmán's endorsement of the military regime. The point here is that both politicians tend to the centre of the political spectrum, thus they are more prone to get engaged in overcoming deep disagreement. A third reason is related to the fact that one of



the bloggers in the Larraín article produces a more balanced account of the Chilean crisis, but paradoxically he loses that balance in the Tironi blog.

The Hernan Larrín blog developed out of his article entitled “Las razones de un perdón” (“The reasons for asking for forgiveness”). In this article Larraín states that Chile still suffers from the profound wounds developed out of the political violence of the 1960’s and the three years of the Allende government. He says that there were groups in the left that were promoting violence. The coup ended with democracy and civil liberties. However, the military regime, at the same time that developed repression and violation of human rights, contributed to the creation of a successful economic model. In any event, after 40 years since the military coup, Chile is still a divided country. He urges people to come out of this confrontation and try to find a common ground in order to live in peace and united. He proposes to ask for forgiveness as the way for social healing. He himself takes this option in the expectation that forgiveness may take people on the road to reconciliation.

What Larraín says here is similar to what Arturo Fontaine expressed in his article from early 2010. He says that there were groups in the Chilean left that promoted political violence and, at the same time, he recognizes that the military regime was repressive. He makes a point though that the regime also helped to promote economic development in Chile. Certainly, he seems to be putting on the table, some of the most significant factors of the deep confrontation in Chilean society. From the perspective of Zarefsky, it is possible to evaluate his position as a case of time with the option urgency, as well as it happens in the Bishops’ document.

The analysis of the blog is interesting in several ways. First, very few people referred in their participations to the most significant point of Larraín, that of asking for forgiveness. More so, even fewer bloggers acknowledged his article in a direct and explicit way. One of the few who did so was very critical accusing Larraín of naivete. Second, the blog consists of a large number of extremely critical points against the other side of the social and political divide: in essence, they are expressions of the confrontation. Third, there are few participants that get involved in exchanges, and when that happens they are confrontational. Finally, I found, as mentioned above, one set that is initiated by a blogger who appears balanced in his evaluation of the events in Chile, in a way somewhat similar to Fontaine and Larraín. I proceed then to analyze this particular exchange attempting as much as possible to refer to the Gilbert/Zarefsky model

presented above.

The blogger, whom I refer to by the initials of his name as JAFM, describes the situation in the 1970's in Chile as one characterized by the presence in the country of guerrilla operatives exported by the Cuban revolution, but also by Armed Forces trained by the United States in the School of the Americas. Also there were Chilean guerrilla groups. He says that Chile was in fact the reflection of the cold war. He blames the "political class" as a whole for the coup. He mentions that it is important to understand, but not justify the violations of human rights by the military regime. In a second blog, JAFM expresses his view that Chileans must teach their children to resolve conflicts through dialogue and respect for institutions. At the present stage, he values politicians as opposed to the political class of the 1970's.

One blogger, MEG, agrees entirely with him but does not explain. She does not mention Hernán Larraín, nor forgiveness. Another blogger, AFV, also without reference to Larraín, appears to be in significant agreement with JAFM, to whom he addresses his participation, but does not acknowledge that he agrees with him. A third participant, MQ, does not refer to Larraín and attempts to defend Allende from the accusation of favoring armed struggle and inviting Cuban extremists in the country. He blames extreme left wing parties and groups but not relating them to Allende. He blames the United States and President Nixon in particular for the coup and makes the point that the USSR did not have any interest in Latin America beyond Cuba. A fourth blogger, JPRM, negates the presence of Cuban guerrilla operatives in Chile, and blames the United States as well. This blogger does not mention Larraín or forgiveness. A fifth participant, EJLC, agrees with JAFM with respect to his historical analysis, but disagrees with him in blaming the political class of the 1970's. He himself blames Allende, whom he describes as the Chávez of that time, and his followers who introduced weapons in Chile. Therefore, in his view, the Armed Forces could not accept that and neither the disastrous economic situation. This blogger does not mention either Larraín or forgiveness. Blogger MQ accuses the previous blogger EJLC of spreading falsehoods with regards to introduction of weapons in Chile. A sixth participant, MSOE, mentions Larraín indirectly and metaforically, with no reference to forgiveness. What she says may be of great interest in the study of blogs, although it is unclear to whom exactly she is referring to. She mentions that there are three kinds of witnesses: those who saw well but have doubts; those who did

not see well but believe they have seen well; and finally those who saw nothing but believe that they have seen everything. She also says that “something like this is happening.... if Mr Larraín lost a good and important part of this story.” Finally, JAFM, the initiator of these exchanges, comes back with a third participation, but not acknowledging any of the participants in the blog that after all he initiated. He presents now an indirect critical point to Larraín’s views, by way of saying that no economic advance can justify the violations of human rights. He insists in criticizing the political class of Allende’s time, but also mentions that his government was not doing anything to overcome poverty.

There are several conclusions at this stage. The first one is the almost complete lack of reference to the author of the article to which the blog owes its existence. Of course, there could not be any dialogue or actual argumentation with him, but at least one would expect some reference to his ideas, especially given the fact that Larraín is writing about the need to overcome the deep disagreement in Chile. Second, there is deep disagreement found in this particular exchange in the blog, and no clear sense of further interactions. Third, even when there is agreement, paradoxically there is no recognition of it. Thus, fourth, the participants in this exchange seem intended in presenting their points of view only. Fifth, the fallacy of *ad hominem* appears here, for example, in accusations such as that of stating falsehoods. Sixth, the issues raised by MSOE, assuming that I am correct in their interpretation, may be seen as a sharp description of the way blogs go around: some bloggers see well but are prepared to doubt; some other do not see well but believe they do; and then there are those who see nothing and believe that they have seen everything. MSOE may be stating that there are many bloggers who truly do not know what they are saying, but still feel the need to present their views. In any event, the idea here is that if there could be further interaction, for example taking into account the Gilbert model, then possibly people could be able to understand each other in more positive ways.

Finally, from the perspective of the Gilbert model, at the most, the exchanges remain at the level of confrontation. Looking at them from the point of view of Zarefsky’s ideas on breaking the deadlock of deep disagreement argumentation, perhaps only one of the points by JAFM could be seen as relevant: this seems to be the case, when he advocates the need to teach children the value of dialogue and respect of institutions as the way to avoid political violence. I am tempted here to say that this represents a case of packaging in the subsumption option. I

say this because, after all, JAFM has recognized the same as Fontaine and Larraín, the need to look at the negative aspects of the two sides of the social and political divide. He stops there, but Larraín claims that there ought to be forgiveness. Now, I evaluated his position above in terms of the case of time in the urgency option, and now I see that looking at JAFM's view combined with Larraín's claim, the packaging possibility seems applicable as well. To be clear about this: in my own sense here I draw from Fontaine, Larraín and JAFM's need to examine the negative aspects of the left and right side of the deep social and political confrontation as the basis for overcoming it, therefore, borrowing JASM's idea, subsuming them under the value of dialogue and respect of institutions.

### *3.3 Analysis of the second blog*

The second blog stems from Eugenio Tironi's article entitled "¿Quién perdió?" ("Who Lost?") The article refers to the October 5, 1988 plebiscite that the opposition to Pinochet won, and therefore signalled the beginning of the end of the military regime. According to Tironi, the real loser in the plebiscite was Jaime Guzmán whose significance as an ideologist of the regime has been discussed above. Tironi says that the real losers were "Jaime Guzmán and the ideology according to which, in due course, people accommodate themselves to their economic interests." The article represents a very critical view not only on Guzmán, but on the whole of the military regime based on its commitment to neo-liberal economic policies. In his article, Larraín mentions that the military regime was successful in this sense in Chile. I intend to examine this point below, but at this stage I should point out that it does constitute a very difficult issue in terms of deep disagreement.

What is clear is that this article develops a strong criticism of the right side of the political deep disagreement only, in contrast to the Larraín article, as well as Fontaine's view in early 2010, and also the blogger JAFM.

I selected one specific set of exchanges in the blog because in it JAFM participates with a very strong criticism of Tironi. This set is initiated by blogger EJLC, also involved in the Larraín blog, who criticizes Tironi accusing him of a double moral standard. He relates Tironi to the communist party in Chile saying that communism has been involved in serious violations of human rights as was the case in the URSS, North Korea, Cuba, China, etc. A second blogger, FJGP, responding to EJLC, says that socialists and communists are the worst violators of human rights in history. A third participant, CCBC, also responding to EJLC,

mentions that there were one hundred million people assassinated until 1998 by communists, pending the statistics until now. At this stage, JAFM intervenes in the exchange, with a strong criticism of Tironi, albeit not mentioning him explicitly, by stating that it is terribly difficult to argue with people in the left, because they take unmovable positions no matter what arguments are provided to them: they keep rejecting and refuting them. He continues by criticizing marxist-socialism on the counts of economic failure, political repression, and lack of respect of human rights, and he says that that was the doctrine of President Salvador Allende. Had he succeeded, Chile would be an underdeveloped country, with political repression, and violation of human rights. Then he shows great appreciation for Jaime Guzmán because he worked for the establishment of a political system that provided sufficient political stability that made it possible for international investment in Chile. As a consequence Chile is today a respected country in the world due to its economic achievements. A fifth participant, MQ, also involved in the Larraín blog, responds to JAFM by questioning if any country achieved development through neo-liberalism. A sixth blogger, HF, attacks MQ saying that what he says is absolutely false and provides the names of a number of countries, including some traditional European developed countries, that succeeded due to neo-liberalism. Finally, MQ himself responds by saying that HF understands very little about the topic since he is confusing capitalism with neo-liberalism. He invites HF to study a bit more the issue so that he realizes that in the countries that HF mentions the state has played a very important role in economic terms, which is the very opposite of a neo-liberal approach.

Comparing the analyses of the two blogs, first, in the Tironi one, there is explicit and clear implicit reference to the author of the article, essentially by way of strong criticism of Tironi. However, no blogger mentions the main point of “who lost” in the plebiscite that Tironi makes. Blogger JAFM comes a bit close to it when he defends strongly Jaime Guzmán who is the ideologist that Tironi criticizes in his article. Second, the bloggers who respond to the Tironi critics, do not refer to him directly or indirectly, but criticize those critics. No further interaction between them proceeds, but there is deep disagreement present here in the sense of attacks against communism and neo-liberalism.

Third, there is some interaction between the participant who questions JAFM and the one who responds to him, but very limited in terms of follow up. In any event, this is also a case of deep disagreement. Fourth, as in the Larraín blog, the

participants seem just interested in presenting their points of view. Fifth, I think that what blogger MSOE expresses in the previous blog with regards to the three kinds of participants, may apply here: for, given the nature of their participations, it is not clear whether they do really know the topic they are writing about. However, this may not be fair on my part, for I have not been an external critic of the objectivity of the participations of the bloggers, neither of the authors of the articles that originated the blogs. However, a feeling that has appeared at this stage has become too strong for me to avoid and I come back to consider it at the end of the paper. Sixth, the fallacy of ad hominem is present in this blog as well, as it happens in the case of accusations of ignorance.

Finally, from the Gilbert model perspective, exchanges remain at the level of confrontation as well as in the Larraín blog. With regards to the point of view of Zarefsky, there is no immediate case that could be made for overcoming deep disagreement in this blog as different from what happened in the previous blog. It is possible, however, to imagine a situation stemming from the exchange between MQ and HF: in this particular exchange, somebody may suggest that a main point would be to decide factually whether the state has been involved in the countries that HF presents as successful cases of neo-liberalism. If this were the case, then I would be inclined to evaluate the possibility of inconsistency as hypocrisy as the strategy to follow to resolve deep disagreement. The reason is simple to state: HF defends the success of neo-liberalism in several countries that he mentions explicitly, and MQ claims that in them the state has played an important role in economic development, which is the opposite of neo-liberal doctrine. But, obviously I seem to be imagining well beyond the actual texts of both bloggers.

However, there is a productive point that could be assessed as positive in the imaginary case. It concerns the relation between inconsistency in the hypocrisy mode and changing the ground in the option of interfield borrowing. In the case under examination here, it seems that there is a clear similarity between both strategies because they do involve getting 'inside' the other arguer. This is a very promising issue for further research in the study of strategies for resolving deep disagreement.

#### *4. Conclusions*

The ongoing research that is developed in this paper has required the generation of a systematic framework for the study of cases of deep disagreement as they are manifested in blogs in the press. This framework could also be potentially used in

dialogues with familiars. As presented above, the framework involves a combination of the argumentation model suggested in Michael Gilbert's book *Arguing with People*, with the ideas on strategies in order to overcome deep disagreement discussed by David Zarefsky in his paper read in the 2010 ISSA Conference. Now, from this perspective, the research has been able to show that the Gilbert model, as expected beforehand, helps to conclude that there is no process of real argumentation involved in the blogs that have been analyzed: at the most, the argumentation happens at the stage of confrontation. Whereas, somewhat more productive have been Zarefsky's ideas in that they have been useful in suggesting several worthwhile strategies for dealing with deep disagreement. Clearly, the door has been opened for more research.

However, my overall goal is to apply this framework to the development of exchanges in blogs. I mean, that perhaps it could be possible to introduce the framework so that blogs could proceed according to it. Therefore, participants in the blogs could become able to know about the four stages of argumentation, try to follow them systematically, and in cases of deep disagreement, perhaps be able to try the strategies described by Zarefsky. This goal may seem ambitious, even unrealistic, but perhaps worth trying. Moreover, I see it in line with the need to educate people in general about the outstanding achievements of Argumentation Theory. One important issue in this context is the fact that participants in blogs are "unfamiliars" as opposed to what Gilbert says concerning the dialogical relation between familiars.

With regards to Gilbert's model, I have not dealt in this paper with his theory of Multi-Modal Argumentation when analyzing the blogs. It seems to me that the exchanges in the two blogs examined, may be assessed as a combination of the logical and emotional modes, perhaps the intuitive mode as well. But at this stage, I need to work more on the ways in which evaluations of the non-logical modes should proceed in the case of blogs: indeed there is no clear way of assessing emotions in a systematic way here. One could, of course, say that given some interactions, it is easy to assume emotional expressions by analogy to what happens in face-to-face dialogues.

And yet another topic of great significance would be the study of levels or magnitude of deep disagreement. This issue has only been indicated in a preliminary way in this paper. There seems to be no question, at least intuitively, that cases of deep disagreement are not all of the same "depth". For example, the

question as to the atrocities committed by the military regime does introduce very deep disagreement when people who suffered them confront those who supported the regime. Emotions tend to be extremely high in this case. Comparing that situation with a debate about the state's participation in the economy, it is possible to see that, while in this instance there is deep disagreement, the case does not reach the emotional level of the previous one.

A related issue needs to be considered now. When presenting my interaction in the late 1980's with my former student, I said that I was shocked by what he said about the fact that, since Chile had developed economically, then when democracy would return, the political scenario would be moving from the centre-right to the centre-left and vice-versa. Senator Larraín mentions in his article that the military regime violated human rights and at the same time developed a successful economic policy. The blogger JAFM mentions that economic development cannot be used to justify political repression. Also, several exchanges between the two sides, as can be perceived in the blogs analyzed, refer to the relation between economic success and repression. Here lies, in my view, one of the deepest sources of disagreement still present in Chilean society. For can the left side of the disagreement be prepared to accept that the military coup and repression was needed in order to achieve economic well-being?

A further point complicates matter even more. It seems clear that getting rid of the government of Pinochet was possible by an "agreement", whose whole nature is not known, between the regime and the centre-left coalition that had formed since the early 1980's in Chile. That agreement brought about the plebiscite that made possible to end the regime. So, there is already some level, not insignificant, of breaking the deadlock between the two sides: at least, at the level of the political leaderships. One area of agreement here is the fact that the centre-left coalition would maintain the neo-liberal-economic policies of the regime. Therefore, the Zarefsky strategy at play here may be evaluated as time in a combination of exhaustion and urgency, although it could very well have happened that during the negotiations a number of the other strategies may have been present.

A final issue relates to the fact that my overall research, since I began the study of the right wing press in Chile with several colleagues in the 1970's, intended to contribute to the development of a more democratic society. At the same time, we were committed to an objective and systematic study that should not be



interfered by our commitment to a specific ideological position. This involves to walk a fine line all the time. Thus, since I am myself a member of the left side of the political confrontation, how would I behave, at the present stage, if I were to have actual argumentations with people on the other side of the disagreement? For instance, if I were to meet my student and decide to argue seriously with him: would I be willing to accept that, given repression, violation of human rights and everything else, one thing that was positive of the military dictatorship was their successful economic policies? Only actual argumentation processes would be able to help in answering that troublesome question.

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