Argumentation Library

Paula Olmos *Editor*

Narration as Argument

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Argumentation Library

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Chapter 1
Introduction: Narratives, Narrating, Narrators

Paula Olmos

Issues regarding the relationship between *narration* and *argumentation*, as alternative or contiguous enunciative modes or discursive genres, are currently attracting the interest of many within the interdisciplinary community of argumentation scholars. The characteristics, structure and assessment possibilities of narrative arguments; the factors supporting the credibility of (either fictive or factual) narratives and their evidential role; or the relationship between narrative discourse and particular argumentative fields are topics which have been increasingly present in recent international meetings, including the last 2013 and 2016 OSSA and 2014 ISSA Conferences (with two complete panels on Narrative argument) and the 2015 Lisbon ECA.

In her 2003 article "On the Argumentative Quality of Explanatory Narratives", Tone Kvernbekk, a contributor to the present volume, said hers was "a first stab at a huge nexus of problems" that constituted "largely an unexplored area". As the variety of papers presented at the above mentioned meetings reveal, there has been some relevant exploration since then, but this has been conducted in a rather individual and isolated manner. The collective volume in French *Argumentation et narration*, edited by E. Danblon et al. in 2008 can be justly considered an exception.

The present collection of essays has achieved to gather an international group of scholars, mainly, but not exclusively, from the field of Argumentation Theory, and put together an anthology of eleven original chapters on *Narration as Argument* from different perspectives. It tries to be, in this sense, a panoramic state-of-the art book in which the variety of approaches share nevertheless certain common principles and goals.

The book is divided into two parts. In Part I, under the title "Narratives as Sources of Knowledge and Argument", we find five chapters addressing rather general, theo-

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retical and characteristically philosophical issues, related to the argumentative analysis and understanding of narratives. We may perceive here how scholars in Argumentation Theory have recently approached certain topics that have a close connection with mainstream discussions in epistemology and the cognitive sciences about the justificatory potential of narratives. Some of the papers in this part start from questions explicitly posed within the field of Argumentation Theory (Tindale, Bex & Bench-Capon, Plumer) about the possibilities of analyzing narratives as arguments. Others instead, while trying to address, in philosophical terms, issues like the epistemological role of narrative fiction (Green) or the cognitive processing of parabolic stories (De Bustos), need coming to terms with the justificatory function attributable to stories in communicative settings.

In Part II, entitled "Argumentative Narratives in Context", we find six more chapters that concentrate on either particular functions that unquestionably argumentatively-oriented narratives may play or particular practices that may benefit from the use of special kinds of narratives. Here the focus is on the detailed analysis of contextualized examples of narratives with argumentative qualities (Van den Hoven, Toker, Frenay & Carel, Phelan) or on the careful understanding of the particular demands of certain well-defined situated activities, as diverse as scientific theorizing (Olmos) or war policing (Kvernbekk & Bøe-Hansen), that may be satisfied by certain uses of narrative discourse.

The division has an inevitable ring of arbitrariness to it, as the papers in the first part make, of course, an evident use of significant examples which they carefully analyse (esp. De Bustos, or Bex & Bench-Capon), while the papers in the second part need to address some of the issues problematized in the first part. Moreover, coincidences and common and cross-references between papers in both parts (there are evident common issues, for example, in Olmos, Green and Plumer) have made decisions as to the location of some of the papers difficult to take. In any case, I think the division helps ordering the collection according to comprehensible criteria and enhancing the relevance of some of the papers that come from the transdisciplinary borders of the field of Argumentation Theory.

In what follows I will give an overview of the different contributions in the collection trying both to enhance their commonalities while also mentioning their divergent stances.

In "Narratives and the Concept of Argument", Christopher Tindale locates the volume's topic right at the core of argumentation studies, suggesting in his chapter a revision of the very concept of argument to accommodate different ways of giving reasons, and even good and cogent reasons. He claims that such a move has been made necessary by new insights on special modes of arguing, like visual argumentation[1] or, in our case, allegedly argumentative narratives. Tindale draws on a "dynamic sense of argument" that would pay attention to the way arguments evolve in conversation and in communicative practices in general, referring to Ralph Johnson's

[1] Visual argument, as a research topic that shows some parallel with narrative argument is also invoked by other contributors to the volume (Van den Hoven, Olmos) as a paradigm from which something might be learnt.

notion of a "dialectical tier" (Johnson 2000) as an, albeit still insufficient, seminal and momentous first step towards an integration of the context of arguing within the concept of argument.

Floris Bex and Trevor Bench-Capon's "Arguing with Stories" draws, instead, on previous work by Walton (2012) and Govier and Ayers (2012) in order to understand the way certain stories may function as arguments based on relations of similarity and analogical reasoning, that is, conforming to some well-studied argumentative schemes. Their approach suggest that perhaps, at least, for certain models, current argumentation theory may accommodate "narrative arguments" without undertaking the revision suggested by Tindale. Bex and Bench-Capon focus on models of argument based on parallel or *digressive* stories[2] among which relations of (structural or other) similarity may possibly hold. This is why they can resort to the notion of "story" as an "abstract sequence of events" and make use of certain formal and diagrammatic tools to expose temporal, causal and similarity relationships. Their selected samples include fables and parables (as is the case with De Bustos' paper in this same volume) and also some references to thought experiments (as in Olmos' contribution). Although Bex and Bench-Capon do not focus here on legal argumentation, their previous work in that field (Bex et al. 2010, 2011; Bench-Capon and Bex 2015) is present throughout their study as a constant and clarifying reference, bringing us some hints about a rather a significant practice for which an exploration of narrative argument has already been fruitful, something that is emphasised as well in Tindale's paper.

The next chapter, by Mitchell Green, "Narrative Fiction as a Source of Knowledge" offers an unequivocally epistemological analysis of literary fiction from the ranks of *literary cognitivism*: "the view that works of literary fiction may serve as sources of knowledge (and not merely belief) in a way that depends crucially on their being fictional". *Literary cognitivism*, which may seem, in principle, somewhat marginal to the main argumentative focus of the book, is nevertheless also present in Plumer's and Olmos's contributions, with which Green shares many common references. In return, Green's chapter invokes the well-known presence of unasserted or merely supposed imaginary contents in certain agumentative models and practices (precisely "for the sake of the argument", as in a *reductio*) as a basis for his defense of literary cognitivism that appears thus, to be at least partially based on the argumentative function of the literary narratives he is interested in. Green also uses other insights and suggestions characteristic of argumentative studies, as is the case of his Taxonomy of Conversation Types, for his problematization of the kinds of knowledge works of literature may provide (know-that, know-how, know-what-it-is-like, *cf.* Green 2010).

In his chapter, Green relevantly discusses with Gilbert Plumer about the latter's proposal of a model of "transcendental argument" as making sense of the way certain narratives (novels in particular) may yield epistemic results. Plumer has been developing this idea in different contributions since at least 2011 and the next chapter in this volume is, precisely, his latest and most sophisticated defense of such an

[2] *Digressive narrations*, in Cicero's terms, *De inv*. I.27 (Cicero 1976). See Olmos 2014b, p. 156.

approach. Gilbert Plumer's "Analogy, Presupposition and Transcendentality in Narrative Argument" addresses three possible theoretical frameworks and sets of notions that may help us analyse the argumentative character of fictional narratives such as novels. He claims, moreover, that his interest is centred on characterizing a "*distinctly narrative* type of argument" and not on analyzing narrative varieties of widely acknowledged argumentative schemes (as could be paradigmatically the case in Bex and Bench-Capon or Van den Hoven contributions), so his focus is on "credible" or "believable" narration as argument (Olmos 2014b, p. 157). Drawing extensively on but also improving and clarifying his previous works on "novels as arguments" (Plumer 2011, 2015a, b, 2016), Plumer concludes here that his transcendental approach, based on our "intuitive grasp of human nature and the principles that govern it" succeeds in overcoming the difficulties posed by epistemologists to arguments by analogy based on fictive stories as a source of knowledge.[3]

This part closes with Eduardo de Bustos chapter on "Parables: Crossroads Between the Cognitive Theory of Metaphor and Argumentation Theory". De Bustos' paper approaches the argumentative potential of such significant and intriguing narratives as are the parables, often extremely symbolic and difficult to interpret, starting from the consideration of their cognitive processing. Bustos's previous work on metaphors (2000, 2012, 2014, 2015) is here invoked as a suitable theoretical framework that allows us to discuss parables as "extended metaphors". Several combined basic metaphors are presented and exposed in the paper acting as underlying cognitive structures that help the audience understand the parables. These serve both as basis and as a limiting paradigm for their interpreted meaning. Bustos claims that such "underlying metaphors" rule the parables' *cognitive relevance*, within a certain communicative situation, as they are the key to their meaning and possible interpretation by the participants. Moreover, they must also be taken into account when dealing with their *argumentative relevance*, even though this more complex notion of relevance has less to do with the parable *meaning* than with the parable *function* in argumentative dialogue.

Introducing the second part of the volume, Paul van den Hoven explores, in "Narratives and Pragmatic Arguments: Iven's *The 400 million*" the similarities and dissimilarities between conventionally construed "arguments" and narratives as justifying basis for "judgments on actions", that is, as arguments (in a functional sense) for pragmatic claims. In particular, he focuses on one of the most basic and paradigmatic models of pragmatic argument, the one based on "expected consequences" (on which, for example, Utilitarian adjudications are grounded). The privileged relationship between the sphere of action and narrative persuasive discourse (also explored in Olmos 2016) finds in Van den Hoven's analysis of Joris Ivens's 1939 documentary *The 400 million* (that also involves visual means of arguing) a compelling example. The choice of a war propaganda production, moreover, coinciding with Frenay & Carel's text selection and anticipating the reflection on official and

[3] It is interesting to mention how this idea is also present in the essential book jointly signed by the Nobel-Prize winning novelist John M. Coetzee and psychologist Arabella Kurtz (2015) in which they discuss our capacity to grasp the correctness of "hypothesis regarding human experience".

unofficial "war narratives" proposed by Kvernbekk & Bøe-Hansen in the contribution that closes the present volume, offers us a unifying theme and the powerful suggestion of an extremely significant corpus for the study of the argumentative uses of narration. Fortunately enough, the volume contributors have independently selected samples that cover both the First (Frenay & Carel) and Second (Van den Hoven) World Wars and the contemporary Wars on Terrorism (Kvernbekk & Bøe-Hansen).

Coming from the field of Literary Studies and introducing somewhat different and highly suggestive kinds of methodological tools, Leona Toker's chapter addresses issues that are central to the volume, as the diversity of fictional stances and their varied relation to historical events. Toker's paper, "The Sample Convention, or, When Fictionalized Narratives Can Double as Historical Testimony", problematizes, thus, some of the assumptions made by both Green and Plumer as it shows that the supposedly obvious divide between fiction and fact in narrative and literature is not so neat as could be expected. Using her own terms "establishing the fictionality of a narrative" might be a rather complicated task. Toker claims that in the Gulag literature that she analyses, written by surviving ex-prisoners of the camps (that is, firsthand witnesses) [4] but at the same time fictionalized, the *as if convention* of counterfactual or imaginary literature is, in many cases, overshadowed by what she calls the *sample convention*. Characters and situations might be fictitious, but their resemblance with true characters and events is anything but a chance effect. They are, instead, presented as "samples" of different kinds, either as *typical* or ordinary within the camps's everyday life or *typifying*, in the sense of revealing possibly unfrequent but properly characteristic traits and events of such a realm. Thus, the boundaries between memoirist (factographic) and fully fictionalized accounts becomes somewhat blurred and the *attesting function* of fictionalized narratives might not be as diminished by their fictive character as could, in principle, be expected. The narratives in which the *sample convention* is predominant may thus double as some sort of *historical testimony*.

Adrien Frenay and Marion Carel's chapter, "From Narrative Arguments to Arguments that Narrate" starts quoting Jean Michel Adam's (2005) suggestive idea that prototypical sequential modes of discourse (narrative, descriptive, argumentative, explanatory or dialogical) do not characterize real textual or speech fragments in absolute terms but just *predominantly*. This implies, for our purposes, that we may well take a look at examples of both argumentation and narration "as they operate at the same time argumentatively and narratively". The paper offers then an exhaustive and innovative analysis of Maurice Barrès' 1914 column "L'Aigle survole le Rossignol" ("The Eagle Flies over the Nightingale"), based on the Semantic Blocks Theory, to show how an overtly partisan and intendedly persuasive text argues, among other things, by means of insinuating narratives for the audience to reconstruct. With this highly suggestive twist of the volume's topic, Frenay and Carel's paper shows that "narrative arguments" (arguments that are, at least partly,

[4] She uses examples by well-known literary authors like Solzhenitsyn, Shalamov or Demidov, among others.

expressed and communicated through narratives) are not the only narrative object of study for Argumentation Theory. Narratives implied by "*narrating* arguments" or "arguments *that narrate*" should also be taken into account.

James Phelan's selected object of study is the prose of Atul Gawande, an American surgeon, and a popular writer on issues of public health and medical ethics. His writings address the general public by presenting, describing and relating to his audience what he knows of the reality of medical practice in hospitals; a first-hand experience on which he bases his positions on certain polemical topics or his attitude towards certain proposed solutions to particular problems. "Narrative as Argument in Atul Gawande's 'On Washing Hands' and 'Letting Go'" shows how Gawande makes a skilful use of narratives, either telling his own experiences or those of his patients, in order to sustain and justify his sensible and allegedly knowledgeable claims. Phelan acknowledges thus several argumentative roles for the narratives present in the surgeon's discourse that either act as supplement to argument or as argument by another means.[5]

My own contribution to the volume, "On Thought Experiments and other Narratives in Scientific Argument", also focuses on scientific argumentative practices, but contrary to Phelan's illustrations from Gawande's discourse about therapeutic and caregiving protocols, this time the intended aim is to characterize some special kinds of *prima facie theoretical* arguments, namely those based on thought experiments in fields such as Physics. My strategy in the paper is to concentrate both on the characteristics and the standards of scientific argument as defined by their field-dependent features (according to Toulmin *et al.* 1978) and on the special traits of thought experiments as characteristically *narrative* means to give reasons. One of my contentions is that, contrary to the analysis made of thought experiments by some epistemologist, such narratives should *not* be reduced to a series of independent premises (a reconstructive practice against which Christopher Tindale does also complaint in his chapter). I also claim that if thought experiments have some evidential bearing on empirical science this has to do, in part, with their closeness to real experiments, which have also been historically understood as providing singular events's narratives but that, many times, are just successful (or could just be successful) under very particular and controlled conditions (sometimes materially impracticable). Narrative explanations in historical sciences such as geology or evolutionary biology also attest to the widespread presence of narrative means of giving reasons in scientific discourse. In the end, narrativity is much more present in the empirical sciences than has been traditionally acknowledged and it should not be seen as posing a more problematic threat to empiricism than *nomicity* (to which it seems to be opposed).

[5] It has to be noted, moreover, that the tradition of the *medical* or *clinical history* as evidentiary source (as already emphasized by Lain Entralgo 1950) has made medical doctors very sensitive to the narrative quality of their expertise, a consideration that has recently given rise to the movement of Narrative Based Medicine: "a wholesome medical approach that recognizes the value of people's narratives in clinical practice, research, and education as a way to promote healing", as Wikipedia defines it.

The last paper of the volume brings us back to the field of human action and, in fact, back to war. Although, as it has been already stressed, this is the third paper on *war narratives* of the volume, it is the one that most extensively focuses on the intentional strategies according to which these are systematically construed and disseminated. Tone Kvernbekk and Ola Bøe-Hansen's "How to Win Wars: the Role of the War Narrative" shows the widespread conscience among contemporary defense staffs about the need to win the wars in "the cognitive domain" more than in the battlefield. If Frenay & Carel or Van den Hoven took their historical narrative material from individual combatant propagandists, Kvernbekk and Bøe-Hansen have chosen to analyze and address the fate of *official war narratives* as they are systematically issued by the military authorities of the fighting parties. A war narrative serves military purposes, trying to persuade the public opinion of the character and expected outcome of field actions (which is more unpredictable than is usually assumed). They are prospective rather than retrospective narratives and their argumentative aim is to gather immediate support, in the rhetorical situation in which they are delivered. According to Kvernbekk and Bøe-Hansen, thus, *temporality*, the passing of the time and the fulfillment or unfulfillment of their estimates, affects them in different ways, usually by transforming them, in their final stage, into political liabilities.

The eleven papers of this collection show thus a variety approaches related to a coherent cluster of theoretical and analytical problems posed to Argumentation Theory by the evidently operative presence of narratives in argumentative discourse. The multiple cross-references between the volume contributors evidences their shared interests and common readings. This is even more significant if we take into account than some of them have not exactly been, so far, part of the Argumentation Studies academic community, working instead on epistemology (Green), cognitive sciences (De Bustos) or literary studies (Phelan, Toker). They have nevertheless taken the challenge of reflecting and writing about the volume's proposed topics and their contributions are especially precious as they open for us unsuspected insights and enriching perspectives.

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Part I
Narratives as Sources of Knowledge and Argument

Chapter 2
Narratives and the Concept of Argument

Christopher Tindale

Abstract One approach to the question of narrative argument is to explore the nature of narratives and their argumentative potential. This is to understand an established tradition of argument, with set understandings of the key concept, into which narratives must fit if they are to be deemed arguments or argumentative. Another approach is to revisit the nature of argument itself so that traditional conditions are not imposed on any new forms. Doing this is not to decide in advance how 'argument' should be understood such that narratives are precluded in advance (or required to meet standards that they have difficulty meeting). It is the second approach that I take in the paper, drawing on a dynamic sense of argument that allows a richer range of discourses to qualify. This approach proved fruitful for those working on visual arguments, the lessons of which promise to be of value here. I will illustrate my argument with several examples that show how narrative arguments engage an audience in a particularly vivid way, inviting them to experience aspects of an issue in a way that enhances the persuasive power of the argument.

2.1 Introduction

The power of narratives is lost on no one. They have accompanied us on the journey of life since early in our development. As children we are introduced to the social world in all its complexity through diverse narratives that represent and symbolize the values and beliefs of our community, while also entertaining and pleasing us. Aristotle explains this pleasure as being derived from our nature as imitative animals (*Poetics*, 1984b, Chapter 4). So it is no surprise that they would be called upon as tools of persuasion. Philosopher Daniel Dennett does this when he opts for the telling of a story in place of an argument because his readers "won't be swayed by a formal argument…won't even *listen* to a formal argument for [his] conclusion" (1995, p. 12). Of course, in opting for a story *instead* of an argument he already assumes something about both – that they are distinct and have different functions.

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The arguments involved are formal arguments, and that may explain their lack of persuasiveness. But still, Dennett's dichotomy is one we may challenge. Likewise, when Walter Fisher (who will be discussed below) distances himself from Perelman because the latter "sees people as arguers," while Fisher sees "them as storytellers" (Fisher 1987, p. 97), we might seriously question whether one precludes the other. In fact, it is part of the argument developed in this paper that they do not. "Narrative argument," as we might come to understand it, closes the gaps envisioned by Dennett and Fisher, adding to the tools of the rhetorician and arguer and further capturing part of our experience as argumentative beings.

Yet the idea of "narrative arguments" is itself still controversial, and a further goal of the paper is to defuse that controversy by demonstrating ways in which the narrative operates as an argument and the persuasive force involved. One approach to explore this question of narrative argument is to consider the nature of narratives and their argumentative potential. This would be to recognize an established tradition of argument, with set understandings of the key concept, into which narratives must fit if they are to be deemed arguments or argumentative. Another approach is to revisit the nature of argument itself so that traditional conditions are not imposed on any new forms. Doing this is not to decide in advance how "argument" should be understood such that narratives are precluded (or required to meet standards that they have difficulty meeting).

It is the second approach that I take in the paper, drawing on a dynamic sense of argument that allows a rich range of discourses to qualify. This approach proved fruitful for those working on visual arguments, the lessons of which promise to be of value here. I will illustrate my argument with several examples that show how narrative arguments engage an audience in a particularly vivid way, inviting them to experience aspects of an issue in a way that enhances the persuasive power of the argument.

2.2 Narrative Argument: The Debate

Such a reconsideration of the nature of argument is called for by some of the serious work that has been done on narratives and arguments by argumentation theorists, work that has effectively justified the dichotomies assumed by Dennett and Fisher because it concludes that on traditional readings of arguments, narrative cannot qualify. Tone Kvernbekk (2003), for example, decides that narratives cannot serve as arguments for several simple reasons.

For her, at the heart of the question is the nature of the relation between the premises and conclusions in narratives and in arguments. While they both can be seen to have conclusions, Kvernbekk challenges the idea that they will have a similar premise-conclusion relation: "it hardly seems likely that the premise-conclusion relation found in narratives is similar to that found in informal arguments, although this of course depends on what one takes an informal argument to be" (2003, p. 8). The reason for this unlikelihood is that narratives as products are

configured in hindsight: "In a narrative, the conclusion is known for a fact. It exists as something that happened before we can tell a story about it" (Ibid). By contrast, arguments use premises to take an audience to a conclusion that is not yet known or held, and provide justification for a claim. Narratives have conclusions that are already known to be true and do not require any justifying or warranting. Kvernbekk concludes: "*If* the point of arguments is to show that knowing the premises warrants knowing the conclusion, and *if* this justificatory relationship of premises to conclusion is at the heart of the very definition of an argument, *then* I conclude that narratives are not arguments, formal or informal" (Ibid.). Much here depends on her understanding of narratives, in particular, in linking them with hindsight. But it has to be conceded that this happens to be one of the few things that "virtually all narrativists" (p. 6) agree about: the establishing of plots takes place in hindsight. The narrator constructs the narrative with knowledge of the end result or closure of the plot. Indeed, early accounts of narrative or *narratio* are understood in terms of a setting out of the facts (Olmos 2013), and more generally, a recounting of a "concrete event" is deemed important for there to be a narrative at all (Olmos 2014, p. 202). It has to be allowed that such recounting will be retrospective. As Aristotle's simplistic formula insisted, there is no beginning or middle of the story until we have its end (*Poetics*, Chapter 7).

There are two things we might note about Kvernbekk's conclusion that offers such dismal prospects for those who would identify narrative arguments: (i) While she allows that there is no generally agreed view of narratives in the vast literature on narrative theory,[1] her account offers only a very narrow view of narrative, one that we should not acquiesce to if we are to fully appreciate the range of ways narratives might work as arguments. She seems to narrow the discourse of interest to the relation of facts, fictional or otherwise. The thought experiment, for example, would appear to be a use of narrative that falls outside of this range. (ii) Secondly, and most instructively, even if the narrator knows the outcome, the same would not necessarily hold for the audience. Even if that outcome is available to the audience, present in their cognitive environment, it may not have been activated for them. Something similar happens with the simple syllogism. The conclusion provides nothing that the audience does not "know", since the information is already contained in the premises. But the conclusion makes that information present to the audience in a way that they might not have recognized. Thus, with a story the justification is still required to bring the audience to see what the narrator has already seen. That's why so much testimonial evidence is narrative in nature. This point suggests that narratives may have specific value in practical arguments.[2]

[1] A good working understanding of narration, and one consistent with the view Kvernbekk expounds, is provided by van den Hoven (2015): "*a mental scheme in terms of which we 'understand' an act as caused by something that went before and leading to something that will follow*" (p. 120). I will also later draw on Fisher's suggestion: "Symbolic actions – words and/or deeds – that have sequence and meaning for those who live, create, or interpret them" (1987, p. 58).

[2] Kvernbekk does allow in her conclusion that narratives can be used to portray various reasoning processes, but remains sceptical as to whether narratives can provide reasons for their conclusions (because she sees them as explanatory rather than justificatory).

2.3 Good Reasons

Trudy Govier and Lowell Ayers' (2012) treatment of the parable operates within the same paradigm of argument as that of Kvernbekk.

They are not dismissive of the roles that narratives can play in argumentation. "Some narratives," for example, "play important rhetorical roles in contexts where arguments are offered, adding interest and vividness" (2012, p. 162), and stories about an individual case are often useful. But they question whether we can extract from a narrative an argument that expresses the point of the narrative, as supported by the events recounted (n.2). Their principal means of exploring this issue is to ask whether parables provide good reasons for what they advocate. The stress on good reasons is important for them, because the danger is that we might otherwise be persuaded on the basis of "vividness and appeal" (p. 163).

They view narratives in a way similar to Kvernbekk: narratives involve a series of events with a beginning, middle, and end, and which may relate the experiences of the narrator. Should that be the case, we would again be looking at a discourse constructed from a point of closure. They can be fictional or non-fictional. A parable is short and simple, and relates events that are familiar or accessible to the audience.

These definitions are useful; that of "argument" is crucial: "The point of an argument is not to tell a story that goes in some direction to a resolution but rather to *provide reasons* to support a claim that is in question" (p. 165). Claims are made to offer reasons for further claims, premises and conclusions. This is the logical core of an argument, some components of which could be implicit.[3]

From a logical point of view, certain concerns arise, and the first of these has to do with the scope of the conclusion. Many of the narratives involved in parables are personal, or involve individual examples. If the conclusion then generalizes from such an instance, there is the possibility of a fallacy of hasty conclusion (where a conclusion is drawn on the basis of insufficient evidence). And if the narrative is to represent further cases (as by analogy), we should ask how representative it is.

These conclusions from the logical point of view may be due to the strict requirements that they impose on their arguments. In each case, they convert them into propositional form, identifying premises and conclusions. And these propositional forms invariably reflect known argument structures. What this illustrates is the problem familiar to proponents of visual arguments: the tendency, insistence even, to require that if something is to count as an argument it must be possible to frame it in, or "reduce" it to, propositions. And those propositions can then be tested for logical cogency in terms of their internal relations. If we are to resist this tendency, we need to widen our understanding of argument, claiming for narratives what has been claimed for visuals.[4]

[3] But not *all* of them. They do not allow that all of an argument could be expressed visually or through other non-verbal means.

[4] I am not suggesting that narratives and visuals work in the same ways, only that they share non-traditional features that recommend a certain similarity of treatment.

One of the important points raised involves the notion of representation. Just how would a parable represent something else? Govier and Ayers consider analogy (in which case any argument involved is an argument by analogy), symbolism (the assessment of which from a logical point of view remains unclear), and instantiation, where items and events are instances of something else. They then explore these ideas through the investigation of a number of cases, noting the argumentative significance of parables in each case.

Throughout their analysis the tension is maintained between the effects a narrative may have (like charm) and logical cogency. This tension is a concern for them: that audiences may be inappropriately moved by something other than the logic of good reasons. For example, they consider a parable in which a man wakes up his neighbor in search of some charcoal so that he can smoke. The neighbor then observes that the man is carrying a lantern. Thus, he already possesses what he needs. A general conclusion can be drawn from this, with the man instantiating any man. But that conclusion, based on this one case, would be a hasty generalization; it would fail in logic. Because of this concern, Govier and Ayers conclude: "The charm and wit of the story seem to disappear if we cast it in argumentative form, and the logical argument we would derive from it is weak at best. Thus it may seem interpretively preferable, and more charitable, to leave the parable as a story" (p. 178). Subsequent examples tend to involve arguments from analogy that violate some crucial criterion of the cogency of that argument form. So the concern throughout is that narratives invariably fail to provide good reasons for any conclusions that might be drawn from them. In many cases the problem lies with the scope of the conclusion, which must be restricted in order to represent cogent arguments (and this limits the story). They conclude two things of importance: (i) that the arguments drawn from the narratives (parables) are rarely cogent, and (ii) that such arguments lack any distinctive narrative form, but instead involve analogies or generalizations.

Again, I would propose two observations here: (1) Recall that their definition of argument stresses its *core*. In identifying a core, they also suggest that there are non-core elements, and these they provide in a footnote: emotional indicators, counter-considerations, and also jokes or illustrative anecdotes (2012, p. 166, n.9). In fact, the footnote includes among the non-core items "attempts to rebut actual and potential objections to the premises, conclusion, or line of reasoning." Such a remark evokes Ralph Johnson's (2000) dialectical tier where such objections are considered and rebutted. But it might be noted that while his dialectical tier could be set against the illative core of an argument (and thus be considered non-core), he still considers it an essential part of the argument and extends his considerations of cogency to it. Albeit the suggestion there might be that he is adding dialectical criteria to the logical core. But the distinction between such "parts" of an argument can be hard to maintain (Tindale 2002), and the suggestion that there can be criteria beyond the logical involved in the evaluation of arguments is enough to encourage the consideration of other non-logical criteria. My point here is that once such a consideration is allowed, the decision of what is core and what is non-core is open to debate, as indeed is the notion of argument itself.

Still, as long as traditional core criteria dominate accounts of argument such as those provided by Kvernbekk and Govier & Ayers, then the analyst can demand of the text, "what are the premises?", and in the absence of a suitable response, reject the candidate. The problem is similar to the treatment of images as arguments. The difference, of course, lies in the discourse-basis of the narrative and the different genres involved. But this similarity just serves to identify the frustration experienced when trying to account for narratives in terms of the genre of argumentation. Because if we do reduce an example to premises and the claim they support, then we have indeed an argument. But what is left of the narrative? It has been absorbed in the argument. Or, more to the point, what is left that is of importance for the narrative to contribute in evaluating the strength of the discourse? What much of this discussion suggests is that whether narratives can work as arguments will depend very much on how we construe "argument."

(2) My second observation about Govier and Ayers' treatment involves a shift to a competing account of "good reasons," one based in a narrative perspective. A pioneering work on the topic of narrative and communication is Walter F. Fisher's *Human Communication as Narration* (1987). As Paula Olmos (2014) observes "a narrative paradigm of reason, such as the one advanced by Fisher, might help us start looking at the way our narratives establish plausible theoretical and practical frameworks for the human understanding of the human world" (p. 206). Indeed, it might do this and more, since he introduces an expansive understanding of logic.

He identifies a tradition of what he calls "technical logic," that begins with Aristotle's deductive logic, includes the inductive logics of Bacon and Mill, and continues through to the positivistic logics of philosophers like Descartes, Russell and Whitehead. These technical logics are contrasted with the "informal logics" of Toulmin and Perelman (although this is not a term Perelman would have embraced), which "have come to dominate contemporary theories and textbooks on rhetoric and argumentation" (p. 27). These informal logics are then related to what he calls "*rhetorical logic*", and he proceeds to juxtapose rhetorical logics to technical logics. Later, we get a summary of the rhetorical variety: "rhetorical logic specifies (as formal logic does not) (1) concepts of what is rhetorically reasonable, (2) ways of constructing and deconstructing arguments, (3) means of discovering what is sayable, (4) alternative ways of presenting arguments, and (5) ways of deciding when and why an argument is relevant. Rhetorical logic isolates and addresses the questions on which a given matter does or will logically turn, and it identifies what arguments are relevant to the issues in dispute" (p. 41).

Fisher presents his narrative paradigm as a synthesis of two complementary strands in the history of rhetoric, one that is argumentative and the other literary (1987, p. 58). This move allows him to talk not just about a rhetorical logic but also a narrative rationality, which captures the sense of logic intrinsic to the idea of narrativity. This sense requires that human communication be tested against the principles of probability (coherence) and fidelity (truthfulness and reliability) (p. 47).

Probability itself (understood in terms of whether a story hangs together) is assessed according to a set of coherences involving the argumentation, the material (coherence with other stories) and character. He judges this last kind of coherence

to be "one of the key difficulties between the concept of narrative rationality and traditional logics" (p. 47). Indeed, this would seem to be an important ethotic element missing from other logics, but one appreciated in a parallel tradition reaching back to Aristotle. Coherence in literature, as in life, requires character consistency. Aristotle recognized the causal influence character has on action, such that we are surprised when people we know (in life and in fiction) act in unexpected ways.

Drawing these elements together, the principal point we might take from Fisher is that the "good reasons" of Govier and Ayers may not be the only variety and the kinds they insist on may not be sufficient for an argument to be persuasive. Undoubtedly, the coherence of the core is important: things must follow, relevance counts, cogency matters. But it is not enough. As Fisher phrases things, the individual form of an argument is important, "but *values* are more persuasive, and they may be expressed in a variety of modes, of which argument is only one. Hence, narrative rationality focuses on "good reasons" (pp. 48, 107-110). By this concept he means (and the italics are his): "*elements that provide warrants for accepting or adhering to the advice fostered by any form of communication that can be considered rhetorical*" (p. 48). Such "elements," we might consider, will include features of argument that other theorists have relegated to the non-core. As with the lesson learned from Johnson earlier, when we move outside of the narrow conception of argument inherited from the tradition, a range of possibilities opens up. The principal criterion of evaluation is that of coherence. And this is something that applies with equal force to arguments and narratives.

By the close of his account, Fisher has proposed that Perelman's preferred term "argument" be replaced by his concept of "good reasons" (p. 137). This proposal stems in part, I think, from his distinguishing arguers from storytellers. But we might as profitably turn back from these ideas to interrogate the concept of argument itself, expanding it to fit some of the communicative features that have been identified.

Another source of important observations arises from a scholarly dispute between Kvernbekk and Matthew Keefer (1996). Keefer's own disagreement in that 1996 paper is with Deanna Kuhn and the assumptions that drive her study of arguments and the skills involved. Kuhn finds that many of her experimental subjects do not give good (or adequate) reasons for the beliefs they hold. But, claims Keefer, in concluding this she is using a model of scientific argument (and evidence) that is theoretical rather than practical. Keefer argues, for example, that "many of the values and beliefs that form and inform what we decide to do (and how we defend what we do) are not chosen from among alternatives in the way that Kuhn imagines, i.e., on the basis of the 'evidence' for them" (1996, p. 36). Thus, Kuhn tends to illegitimately subsume forms of practical argument under a scientific model of informal reasoning. In light of this conflation, it should not be surprising that some of her subjects do not respond in the ways expected. Keefer insists that the criteria used for judging a practical argument differ markedly from those appropriate for scientific validity.[5]

[5] A similar observation is made by Georges Roque (2015) in his defense of visual arguments.

We do speak of knowledge in both instances: of practical knowledge, for example. And it is important to ask what we mean by knowledge in such cases, and, moreover, whether we can refer to knowledge without referring to truth. Here, we are not looking at truth in terms of the truth values favoured in traditional accounts. Rather than a correspondence with reality, we expect actions to derive from a coherent set of beliefs, and we judge them correct or incorrect to the degree that they meet such a standard of coherence. This is the sense of truth I judge to be operating in Fisher's account. Writing in a legal context, Finnis et al. (1987) offer the helpful insight that "a practical proposition is true by anticipating the realization of that which is possible through acting in accord with that proposition, and by directing one's action toward that realization" (pp. 116–17). This is done not in a vacuum, but in the context of a belief set that has been well established on a personal level and meets the challenges of the cognitive environment in which an individual operates. The locus of the knowledge involved resides not in the world understood as a separate reality (Keefer 1996, p. 40), but in the correspondence between an agent's commitments and the beliefs and understandings against which those commitments acquire their social expression. A practical decision is not about what *is* the case, but what *should be* the case, and the evidence appropriate to it is quite different. On these terms, not all arguments can be reduced to the propositional and evaluated in terms of their truth value. A claim like "you should do X" has no truth in this sense, yet such conclusions are common in advocacy argumentation.[6] This gestures beyond the traditional notion of argument that Kvernbekk championed, one that she shared with Kuhn.

2.4 The Concept of Argument

This brings me to the heart of the matter. If there is one thing that the previous sections of the paper make clear it is that there is still disagreement about how a central concept like "argument" is to be understood. The development of argumentation theory in recent decades, and some of its subsidiary movements like informal logic, has led to a focus on the nature of argument and attempts to settle on a central conception. But so far, those efforts have not been fully successful. While there have been tremendous advances in our conception of "argument" and what this entails, there is still a retention of many of the traditional aspects, not all of which are healthy.[7]

[6] This is a point that Roque (2015) makes well, comparing two responses to the possibility of visual arguments by J. Anthony Blair (1996, 2004). In the first paper, Blair insists that an argument is always a propositional entity; but in the second, this view is revised. This is because we do not just use arguments to assert truths; we also use them to change an audience's attitudes or behaviour. But attitudes do not have a truth value.

[7] See, also, David Hitchcock (2006) for a detailed discussion of various definitions of "argument" offered by some leading informal logicians, like Douglas Walton, Ralph Johnson, and J. Anthony Blair, and also other theorists associated with informal logic, like Charles Hamblin. Hitchcock's own definition of argument is "a set of one or more interlinked premiss-illative-conclusion sequences" (p. 19).

If we turn to the textbooks (always a popular move in this kind of inquiry) and look at how "argument" is used and illustrated, then we may be surprised by the results. We may still find examples like "New York is in New York, therefore New York is in New York." Such "entailments" are popular in certain kinds of texts. They purport to show what must be the case if something else is the case. But how useful is this information? As we saw in the accounts of Kvernbekk and Govier & Ayers, in evaluating arguments there is the expectation that premises will act as *reasons* that increase our acceptance of some further statement (or persuade us to accept it for the first time). But that New York is in New York could hardly be judged as a reason on these terms. Even as an inference, the repetition of one statement is alarmingly uninformative, and the "therefore" accomplishes nothing.

Then there is the case of Irving Copi, whose textbooks are among the most widely used in North America (or were), having introduced generations of students (and professors) to the subject of logic. In the 4th edition of his *Introduction to Logic* (1972) we find:

> All that is predetermined is necessary.
> Every event is predetermined.
> Therefore every event is necessary (p. 7).

This has been preceded by the following explanations: "*Inference* is a process by which one proposition is reached and affirmed on the basis of one or more other propositions accepted as the starting point of the process" (p. 5); and "corresponding to every possible inference is an *argument*, and it is with these arguments that logic is chiefly concerned" (pp. 6–7). Here, argument and inference are synonymous, which explains why some of the uninteresting entailments are deemed to work as arguments. But what interests me most is that over twenty years later, in the third edition of a similar text now called *Informal Logic* (1996) Copi, with his co-author Keith Burgess-Jackson, while giving a different initial example, gives the same explanation: "*Inference* is commonly defined as a process in which one proposition is arrived at and affirmed on the basis of one or more other propositions accepted as the starting point of the process (p. 2); and "Corresponding to every possible inference is an *argument* and it is with these arguments that logic is chiefly concerned" (p. 3).

There is certainly a relationship to be noted between arguments and inferences. Robert Pinto (2001), for example, has called arguments "invitations to inference" (p. 37). But, to draw from another of Blair's discussions (2012), while it is often possible to shift without any harm from talking of inferences to talking of arguments, "the two should not be conflated." As he notes, inferring is one type of reasoning ("making a judgment that one proposition is implied by another or other", p. 141), and this is clearly basic to the use of arguments in argumentation. But argumentation is not required for inferring, and its use of arguments involves much more. A person who reasons infers or draws inferences. When they then turn to communicate their reasoning to others, to present an argument to them, the activity involved is different. The reasons offered in the argument may be different from the reasons that person inferred, because the audience is different and requires different

strategies. Inference is at the root here, but the communicative act of arguing has become more complex and involves many more considerations. The two cannot be conflated in the simple way that Copi proposes.

What is problematic about these traditional examples is that the conception of "argument" is a static one. By this I mean that it exemplifies the idea of a product alone, without any relation to the argumentative situation that gave rise to it. It appears "finished"; nothing more needs to be said; it is not part of any ongoing exchange of views (it is not dialectical). It can be evaluated without any concern about the intent behind it, the goals that prompted it, or the audience for which it is intended (it is not rhetorical).

On these terms, the view of "argument" is one that it is solely logical. But even here it reflects what might be called an "impoverished" logic, because we learn so little from it. It teaches us about validity, and that is important (it is less obvious that it teaches us much about soundness). So there is a place for such traditional examples. But they are not sufficient to explain, reflect and teach how arguments operate in the social world, in everyday life, and so the conception of "argument" that underlies them is similarly lacking in value.

Ralph Johnson (2009) offers a similar challenge to the tradition from which I have drawn this impoverished conception of static argument. His motivation has to do with the ability of that tradition (he calls this the tradition of formal deductive logic, of FDL) to deal adequately with everyday arguments. As he puts it: "We became convinced that traditional (formal deductive) logic did not provide a proper account of the goodness of arguments, and that it did not prepare students for assessing and constructing and criticizing the arguments that mattered in their life-world" (2009, p. 22). FDL was never intended to serve as a theory of argument; its initial domain was mathematics, and its proper focus is deductive implication (2009, p. 25).

Johnson blames the textbook tradition for this state of affairs and not individual logicians, like Frege or Russell. On Johnson's terms, as we saw earlier, it is not sufficient that there be reasons leading to a conclusion in order for there to be an argument. "That which is argued about must be controversial, contentious, really in doubt; and for this to occur, there must be contrary views" (p. 75).[8] This insistence points to a strong dialectical vein in Johnson's informal logic that comes to the fore in his (2000) book. It leads him to call for the "naturalization of logic" as "the next important task confronting us. Central to this development will be the reconceptualization of argument so that its dialectical nature is fully appreciated. In this process, logicians have something to learn from other disciplines, among them rhetoric" (2014, p. 81).

This reconceptualization of argument is taken up in Johnson's central work, *Manifest Rationality*. There, he provides the definition of "argument" that I referred to in the previous section:

[8] Another of Johnson's concerns with FDL is that "argument" is often taken as synonymous with "inference."

> An argument is a type of discourse or text – the distillate of the practice of argumentation – in which the arguer seeks to persuade the Other(s) of the truth of a thesis by producing the reasons that support it. In addition to this illative core, an argument possesses a dialectical tier in which the arguer discharges his dialectical obligations (2000, p. 168).

This is an innovative conception of our central concept and there is much that could be said about it.[9] But the key thing of interest to me here is that dual nature of the definition that I mentioned earlier, offering both the "traditional" core (called the illative core) of statements and a "new" dialectical tier. It is this tier that deserves attention because it begins to push in the direction of the rhetorical (without quite reaching it), and to open up possibilities beyond what scholars like Govier and Ayers envisaged.

It is in turning to the dialectical tier that Johnson clarifies what he looks for in naturalized arguments that take account of alternatives. While "many arguments consist of the first tier only" (in which case it is a misnomer to call them arguments or, at least, complete arguments), the best practitioners "always take account of the standard objections" (2000, p. 166). It is this taking account that constitutes the dialectical tier. More precisely, it is the addressing of alternative positions and standard objections. There seem two things to address here: (i) the relationship between the illative and dialectical tiers with respect to the product itself, and (ii) the relationship between the arguer and Other(s) implied by the dialectical tier.

Taking account of and anticipating objections is non-controversial, even if it has not been a feature of the tradition. But insisting that this should be an essential component of what an argument *is*, such that its absence excludes a discourse or text from being an argument, is controversial. It must be asked whether this dialectical tier is a part of the product or, rather, is something that arises afterwards, as participants reflect on the initial argument.

Importantly, since what separates rhetoric from argumentation for Johnson is the requirement of manifest rationality, then the proposal would seem to project slim prospects for the development of rhetorical argumentation. Johnson's view of rhetoric is not as modern as some of his other ideas. At several points he discusses the distinctions between rhetoric and informal logic. Chief among these is the difference in purpose. Rhetoric aims at effectiveness rather than truth and completeness. That is, it does not observe the necessity of a dialectical tier. If there is an objection to the argument of which the arguer is aware, from the point of view of rhetoric he or she has no obligation to deal with it; the argument is effective without it. For informal logic, rationality is a goal in itself. The character of manifest rationality, which is not explicit in the definition of argument, turns out to completely underlie it.

Not surprisingly, one critic of the dialectical tier is Trudy Govier (1998). Among her concerns is the apparent insistence on completeness and the vagueness of knowing when all the objections have been met. In a sense, both of these can be addressed by noting how *implicitly* Johnson's definition of "argument" assumes the underlying importance of context. In moving beyond the traditional core, he starts to consider

[9] I analyze the definition in detail in (2002).

aspects of the argumentative situation, or context, and this context should tell us what the objections are that need to be addressed (rather than allowing an infinite number of potential objections). This the rhetorician can see.

The dialectical tier in Johnson's concept of argument creates an internal tension between the product an argument is and the process it captures, and while his project itself suggests a way to resolve this tension, such a resolution has yet to appear. The direction we need to go in is a rhetorical one. The anticipation of the Other's objections that a dialectical tier requires informs and *forms* the arguer's own utterances and *in this sense* the dialectical "tier" cannot be divorced from the structure. In fact, understood this way, the line between the two tiers really begins to dissolve.

Johnson acknowledges that the arguer is only half the story and that the process is incomplete without the Other, and he gives us a dynamic relationship of back-and-forth responses. He writes:

> Genuine dialogue requires not merely the presence of the Other, or speech between the two, but the real possibility that the logos of the Other will influence one's own logos. An exchange is dialectical when, as a result of the intervention of the Other, one's own logos (discourse, reasoning, or thinking) has the potential of being affected in some way. Specifically, the arguer agrees to let the feedback from the Other affect the product (p. 161).

This interaction really is quite dynamic. It has echoes of the kind of dialogism that we find in Mikhail Bakhtin's work (Tindale 2004). Bakhtin (1981) invokes the dynamic *internal* nature of discourse, including argumentation. A very similar, idea was captured by Paul Grice (1989) in his additions to the maxim of manner. In noting that some assertions involve a denial of what has been said, Grice proposed "Frame whatever you say in the form most suitable for any reply that would be regarded as appropriate"; and "Facilitate in your form of expression the appropriate reply" (1989, p. 273). Such positions challenge the notion of the separated, self-reliant thinker/speaker who composes a discourse in isolation and then brings it into a dialogue (or argument) with another. This idea suggests that the dialectical is not something that takes place after the illative is fixed; it precedes the development of that "core." In fact, the term "core" is no longer warranted if the dialectical infuses it rather than surrounds it.

Johnson, in the passage cited above, moves toward this position in the remarks made about the logos of the Other influencing the arguer. But he draws back from it at the end when the reference to feedback suggests a more traditional separation of opposing discourses. What works well, though, and is entirely consistent with Johnson's position, is a Bakhtinian or Gricean collecting of that opposition within the argumentative discourse itself. All of this requires a deeper, more natural rhetoric of argument.

There are certainly advances in the way "argument" has been understood by informal logicians. Born from a need to make the logic classroom more relevant for its students, informal logic strives to treat "real" arguments in their natural environments. Rather than the made-up and contrived examples of the older textbooks, the examples are taken from common everyday sources and illustrate how people

actually employ arguments in their argumentation. There is also an appreciation of arguing as an activity (Hitchcock 2006, sees it as a speech act), witnessed in the dialectical thrust of Walton's (2006) dialogues and Johnson's dialectical tier. Arguments are not just things produced in the world, people produce them, and those people are important to understanding them. Stripping arguments from their natural environments and analyzing them in the classroom lost that dimension of understanding. So, there are suggestions of a more dynamic sense of argument here.

2.5 A Dynamic Sense of "Argument"

By contrast with the static model of argument, a more dynamic view can be identified with its roots in Aristotle's thought. Adopting a rhetorical perspective on argumentation has always involved the recognition that an argument's purpose in addressing an audience and not just its structure must be part of its description. Bringing the audience into the conceptual field marks the engagement with rhetoric and the rich collection of ideas available from that tradition. But as we have seen, there is still a tendency to separate out the "structural" part of the definition and treat arguments in the static way, as mere products. This approach effectively tears the product from the process in which it was produced. When the argument is then analyzed it is so on the basis of the statements involved and without sufficient regard for the situation that produced it, along with those participating in that situation. Treating arguments in this detached, static way amounts to a failure to recognize the dynamic nature of what is involved.

Stephen Toulmin hinted at what was at stake when he wrote: "An argument is like an organism" (1958, p. 87). In saying this he meant that it has parts, an integrated structure. Toulmin's statement further recalls the Aristotle of the *Poetics* describing the work of art like an organism, with head, body and tail. But, importantly, Aristotle also judged it to be like an animal because it was alive, another animated thing among animated things. While Fisher insists that there is no history of the relationship between logic and the poetic, there are certainly the makings of such a history in the discussions of the *Poetics*. Aristotle's unifying of the poetic and the logical is expressed through his principle of "necessity and likelihood."[10] In demanding such sequences in plots, Aristotle evinces reasonableness here at the heart of the poetic – a moving train of logic. Of course, while we readily apply necessity to the movement of the syllogism, it is less evident how this is appropriate for plots (while likelihood offers no such problem). But in this discussion, as Stephen Halliwell (1986) has observed, "Aristotle's notions of causal and logical necessity are not altogether separable, and there is no good reason why we should have to make a choice between the two in attempting to relate the necessity of the

[10] Many translations will render *eikos* as "probable," but there are distracting modern-day associations with this term not conveyed if we prefer "likelihood" as its translation. In particular, we avoid any discussion of statistical probability.

Poetics to parts of the larger philosophical system" (Halliwell 1986, p. 100). From an audience's point of view, the dramatic sequence and structure of a plot are comparable to a logical argument. Indeed, a plot recalls the nature of the syllogism when we learn that "the displacement or removal of any one of [the parts] will disturb and disjoint the work's wholeness" (*Poetics*, Chapter 8).[11]

But if the poetic has a movement, so too must logic itself, although this is not recognized in the "technical logics" identified by Fisher. Logic has a life, and its structures have internal movement. This sense needs to be transported to the study of argumentation. An argument is alive; it is a message (which would include images) of activated potential. To recall some particularly important Aristotelian terms that capture the way he conceived natural and social objects, an argument is a potentiality (*dunamis*) and two actualities (*energeia*).

The relationship between these terms is complicated. Aristotle used it famously in *De Anima*, or 'On the Soul', (1984a) as a way to capture the interactions of the parts of a human being (body and soul): a soul is the first actuality (activation) of a body that has life potentially. Then, the second actuality is any expression of that initial activation. For example, an eye (a "body") has the potential for sight (the first actuality) but may be asleep. When the eye is actively seeing it expresses the second actuality. The sense we want to understand from this is simply the activating of something that is there potentially.

Aristotle's *Rhetoric* (2007), especially in its third book, encouraged us to think of the ways in which rhetoric and arguments "activate" what is potential in the audience. What he called "bringing-before-the-eyes" (*pro ommaton poiein*) is a way in which ideas are made present by being activated in an audience so that they attend to them and act upon them: "for things should be seen as being done rather than as going to be done" (*Rhet*. III.10.6). This actualization is an important contributor to our understanding of "presence" as a rhetorical idea, and captures a range of activations that good argumentation can achieve. Moreover, while this encourages attentiveness it also provokes – as we later discover in the discussion of arrangement or *taxis* – receptivity [*eumatheia*]. If they are not attentive, hearers will not be receptive, "because the subject is unimportant, means nothing to them *personally*" (III.14.7, emphasis mine).

Aristotle's insights in the *Rhetoric* encourage us to adopt the language of potentiality and actuality for the processes in argumentation that are captured in the nature of "argument," viewed now as something dynamic. In argumentation, the first actuality is achieved in the movement within an argument from the premises to the conclusion – while there is not yet any uptake, any adoption (literally) of the claim involved. This internal movement already indicates the way in which an argument is alive with action, dynamic on its own terms. There is a movement from premises to conclusion that the mind follows, or, in Pinto's terms, is invited to follow.[12] This is the level of inferencing, of the illative core. Secondly, there is a move-

[11] Halliwell (1987) translation.

[12] Consider further how the tools of informal logic include diagramming methods in which arrows point from premises to conclusion. This assumes the metaphor of movement; it captures the directional nature of reasoning.

ment toward the audience that has already been anticipated in the internal movements of the "core", insofar as the components have been chosen with the audience in mind. A further actuality corresponds to what arises in the audience, the one that adopts ideas in the process of "uptake." This uptake is a complicated matter that depends on many variables, including the arguer's skill at recognizing the audience and the means of persuasion available for that audience. But among the strategies that encourages this second actuality or uptake is the use of narrative. How this might work will be considered in the last section of the paper.

On the terms explained here, we might view an argument as both an organization *and* a dissemination, since it collects ideas and then moves them internally from premises to conclusion, and then externally to an audience. And it has features that facilitate both of these movements. Or at least the arguer has access to such features, many of which are to be found in the wealth of ideas available in the rhetorical tradition.

The static sense of argument sees arguments as products with no essential connection to the argumentative situation from which they arose. They are inert pieces of discourse, connected statements that can be judged "good" or "bad" merely in terms of their structures. (This is clearly the case with the traditional model and still the case generally with informal logic models). By contrast, a dynamic sense of argument sees arguments as social events, personalized by those engaged in them. They are alive with meaning and movement, and should only be judged "good" or "bad" in light of consideration of the entire argumentative situation (including the participants).[13]

2.6 Narrative Arguments

I close the paper by illustrating my discussion with two examples of narrative arguments, one old, the other (relatively) new.

Consider, as an example, the following discourse from the Chinese scholar and sage Mencius (1999):

> Probably in the ancient times there were people who did not bury their dead parents. When a parent died, he or she was thrown into a gully. Then one day when the son passed there, the dead body was being eaten by foxes and sucked by flies and gnats. A cold sweat exuded from the brows of the son, who looked away, unable to bear the sight. The sweat was not exuded for others to see, but was an expression of his inmost heart. Probably he went home to fetch basket and spade for the burial. It was really right for him to do so. So it is reasonable that all filial sons and benevolent men should bury the remains of their parents. [Mencius (125).]

[13] How do we judge such arguments? I leave that for another discussion. Suffice it to say, criteria that support an audience-perspective would be those that require a good argument to withstand critical assessment via an appropriate set of questions, since these questions do not arise from nowhere, they have their origin in the communities that employ them.

Mencius clearly puts forward a claim: it is reasonable that all filial sons and benevolent men *should* bury the remains of their parents. I emphasize the "should" to stress the advocacy nature of the argument, where a truth value would be difficult to assign. It even has a conclusion indicator ("so") that informal logicians are fond of identifying. And there is premise material here in the account of the son's experience and actions. The entire argument is a story – a story with a moral that commands action.[14] Mencius argues that it is reasonable that "all filial sons and benevolent men should bury the remains of their parents," and his "evidence" for this conclusion is a speculative story about how such a practice would probably have come about. There is no attempt to suggest a "truth" to this account. It depends for its force on what is likely to be the case (or probable, as the translation has it). To test such "evidence," an audience has to measure what is suggested against their experience of likelihoods and determine whether the likelihood is strong in this case. In fact, we can see how such stories would then proliferate in legal reasoning, where a jury is asked to imagine the likely order of events that have led to the occurrence that is under scrutiny by the court. Aristotle's invocation that stories should express what follows necessarily or according to likelihood suggests that experience has a certain logical coherence. This coherence must be reflected in the narrative as it is here, and in turn gives narratives plausibility. It is such plausibility that counts as a central criterion for "good" narrative arguments (Olmos 2013). In Gilbert Plumer's (2011) terms this plausibility is a "realistic believability," where the fictive gains real world credence.

Mencius' story, moreover, is more than a simple description of likely events: it engages the audience through *pathos*. The cold sweat that the son experiences, which was an expression of his emotional reaction, conveys a sense of horror and thereby captures something of the shared values of arguer and audience. The audience has been anticipated in the design of the narrative and now is invited not just to match the coherence of the account with their experience but also to feel what the fictitious son felt. How could this be conveyed in the "core" of the argument?

Govier and Ayers will worry perhaps that the audience is being addressed by "vividness and appeal" (2012, p. 163). But no rhetorician will share this concern. The test lies in the way it coheres (or not) with experience, a consideration that takes us beyond the core.

I take my second example from one of Barack Obama's speeches. Obama has a propensity for closing his argumentative speeches with a story, one that captures in illustration the central message of his argumentation.

Obama's 2008 campaign for the US presidency was almost derailed by comments made by Jeremiah Wright, his former pastor. These comments were controversial in a range of ways, but the most damaging were those about white people that were deemed racist comments. Obama had successfully avoided issues of race throughout his campaign. But Wright's comments forced him to address them, and he did so in a speech in Philadelphia on March 18, 2008. This speech was largely an

[14] I leave aside whether it constitutes a parable, as per Govier and Ayers (2012), rather than a fable, as per Olmos (2014).

exercise in how to counter Guilt by Association argumentation. He then used an extended argument by analogy to show that the concerns of disaffected blacks were also shared by disaffected whites, that at root the things Wright complained about were felt across a broad swath of American society. He ended the speech with the following story:

> There is a young, twenty-three year old white woman named Ashley Baia who organized for our campaign in Florence, South Carolina. She had been working to organize a mostly African-American community since the beginning of this campaign, and one day she was at a roundtable discussion where everyone went around telling their story and why they were there.
>
> And Ashley said that when she was nine years old, her mother got cancer. And because she had to miss days of work, she was let go and lost her health care. They had to file for bankruptcy, and that's when Ashley decided that she had to do something to help her mom.
>
> She knew that food was one of their most expensive costs, and so Ashley convinced her mother that what she really liked and really wanted to eat more than anything else was mustard and relish sandwiches. Because that was the cheapest way to eat.
>
> She did this for a year until her mom got better, and she told everyone at the roundtable that the reason she joined our campaign was so that she could help the millions of other children in the country who want and need to help their parents too.
>
> Now Ashley might have made a different choice. Perhaps somebody told her along the way that the source of her mother's problems were blacks who were on welfare and too lazy to work, or Hispanics who were coming into the country illegally. But she didn't. She sought out allies in her fight against injustice.
>
> Anyway, Ashley finishes her story and then goes around the room and asks everyone else why they're supporting the campaign. They all have different stories and reasons. Many bring up a specific issue. And finally they come to this elderly black man who's been sitting there quietly the entire time. And Ashley asks him why he's there. And he does not bring up a specific issue. He does not say health care or the economy. He does not say education or the war. He does not say that he was there because of Barack Obama. He simply says to everyone in the room, "I am here because of Ashley."
>
> "I'm here because of Ashley." By itself, that single moment of recognition between that young white girl and that old black man is not enough. It is not enough to give health care to the sick, or jobs to the jobless, or education to our children.
>
> But it is where we start (Obama 2008).

Here we have a story within a story. Obama tells Ashley's story in which Ashley tells her story. But Obama's story is more than her story; it includes its impact on those present and culminates in the recognition between the elderly black man and the young white woman. They have a common interest in fighting injustice, and insofar as Obama has presented his campaign as a fight against injustice, their common interest supports his campaign. To the counter-argument to guilt by association and the argument from analogy, Obama adds a narrative argument. It does not stand alone but supplements the argument by analogy (the argument that shows an analogous set of concerns for poor blacks and poor whites) and so might be seen as an extension of it. It does this by personalizing the argument, by situating it in real, identifiable lives. The claims about poor blacks and whites is not left on the abstract level, they are given presence and immediacy in Ashley's story. As theorists as diverse in their opinions of narratives as Paula Olmos and Trudy Govier observe, representation is an important aspect or achievement of narratives (whether by

analogy, symbolism, or, in this case, instantiation), and Ashley's story has power because it is representative. We could attempt a reduction to premise/conclusion form, but I think we must agree that something is lost in doing so. Does the narrative argument betray a generalization fallacy as Govier and Ayers fear? That is a question for an audience to answer, because insofar as they see Ashley Baia in themselves, what is generalized is their experience.[15]

2.7 Conclusion

On Kvernbekk's (2003) terms, Obama's example is not an argument per se: "it hardly seems likely that the premise-conclusion relation found in narratives is similar to that found in informal arguments" (8). Indeed, such an argument is largely implicit: Premise: Ashley Baia and the older black man recognize a common project. Premise: Their experience parallels/represents the experience of America's poor whites and blacks. Conclusion: America's poor whites and blacks should recognize a common project. It is not clear whether Kvernbekk could argue that Obama's television audience *knew* the conclusion, even though it was an event that had taken place. So this example would be explanation more than argument. But if indeed his audiences knew the ideas involved, then that knowledge was only implicit in their cognitive environment. And what the Ashley Baia story does is make it present; activate it so that it can be attended to and its implications pondered. And of course, as Kvernbekk also allows, her assertion about the dissimilarity between premise/conclusion relations in narratives and arguments "depends on what one takes an informal argument to be" (2003, p. 8). The more dynamic nature of argument is apparent in Obama's narrative.

As I suggested above, we need to view arguments as social events, personalized by those engaged in them. Both the Mencius and Obama "narratives" vividly illustrate my point. These examples illustrate the dynamic sense of argument insofar as they are alive with meaning and movement, and should only be judged "good" or "bad" in light of consideration of the entire argumentative situation, which is complex in each of the cases involved. They both retain the internal movement characteristic of all arguments, exhibiting relevant relations between the ideas, whether we see these narratives as examples of analogy or representation. But their value lies in the dissemination of those ideas to the appropriate audiences.

In each case, the stories are not recalling what is already there, as in an allusion; but they are adding to what is currently available. The argumentative force of such a strategy is to bring an abstract idea into a lived experience where it might resonate in the lives of the audience. The arguments may have the force of reinforcement, or of persuasion itself. They are insightful, and they add to the cognitive resources that

[15] The audience for this narrative argument is American whites because while Ashley Baia is named, the older black man is left anonymous. His story is not the one that matters. It is white experience that is being personalized.

members of an audience have to think through an issue and come to their own decisions regarding it. Narratives of the kind considered here provide flesh and blood for the bones of an argument, transforming both into a powerful tool of argumentation.

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Chapter 3
Arguing with Stories

Floris Bex and Trevor Bench-Capon

Abstract Stories can be powerful argumentative vehicles, and they are often used to present arguments from analogy, most notably as parables, fables or allegories where the story invites the hearer to infer an important claim of the argument. Case Based Reasoning in Law has many similar features: the current case is compared to previously decided cases, and in case the similarity between the previous and current cases is deemed sufficient, a similar conclusion can be drawn for the current case. In this article, we want to take a further step towards computationally modelling the connection between stories and argumentation in analogical reasoning. We show how story schemes can be used to investigate and determine story similarity, and how the point of a story – that is, the conclusion that the storyteller intends the hearer to draw – can be likened to the *ratio decidendi* in a legal case. Finally, we present some formal tools for modelling stories based on computational models of practical reasoning.

3.1 Introduction

Stories[1] can be a powerful vehicle of persuasion. They can be used, for example, to present evidence about "what happened" in a particular case in a coherent and believable way (Wagenaar et al. 1993), or to convince others to follow a particular course of action (Bex et al. 2014). A story does not persuade by imparting explicit rules, but instead by exposing a coherent narrative aimed at changing or reinforcing attitudes, whereby the stories illustrate various group cultural norms. Many

[1] We make a distinction common in literature theory, namely between the *story* and the *discourse* of a narrative (Toolan 2001). A story as discussed in this article is the (abstract) sequence of events. The discourse, issues related to which we do not discuss here, is the way in which a story is presented and the medium used (i.e. images, text, figures, film).

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folktales are of this type, as are many children's stories. In some genres, such as fables and parables, the main purpose of the story is to support the conclusion. In fables, especially, the lesson is often made explicit by a "moral".

Much of our previous work on stories and argumentation (e.g. Bex et al. 2010) focuses mainly on arguments about stories: arguments based on evidence are used to reason about the plausibility of a story. However, it is also possible to use a story as an argument, that is, propose the story itself as a reason for some conclusion (Bex 2013; Bex et al. 2014). Stories can be told with a variety of purposes and whether a story should be considered as an explanation, as a source of entertainment or as an argument depends not just on its structure but also on the intention of the author or speaker. This idea stems from speech act theory (Searle 1969): it is the intention of uttering some locution – the *illocutionary force* of the speech act – that determines how the contents of the speech act should be treated. So if a story is told with the intention of persuading or arguing, we can consider it to be an argument, a reason for a conclusion, whereas if it is told with the intention of explaining we can consider it to be an explanation (Bex and Walton 2016).[2] There are often strong clues as to the speaker's intention from the context. The conversation preceding the story is often important, while the way the conversation continues following the story can show how the hearer has understood the story: this may be endorsed or challenged by the speaker. This is particularly true of parables in the Gospels, which are usually told in a context that helps to indicate the intended point. In fables the explicit "moral" fulfils this function.

Stories are often used to present arguments from analogy,[3] most notably as parables, fables or allegories where the story invites the hearer to infer an important claim of the argument. For example, the *New Testament* parables, Aesop's fables or Plato's allegories are stories which are meant to persuade us of certain ideas by appealing to, or challenging, our core beliefs and values. Similarly, thought experiments like Searle's Chinese Room (Searle 1980), intended to direct the intuitions of their audience, are often also presented as a small anecdote or story.

Analogical reasoning, where two stories or cases are compared, has been investigated formally in the field of Case-based Reasoning (CBR) (Gentner and Forbus 2011), and ideas from this early work were also used in approaches to legal CBR (e.g. CATO, Aleven 1997), which adds argument moves to explore the similarities and differences between legal cases. Any legal case can be presented as a narrative,

[2] The intention can be inferred from the context in which the story is told. If it is delivered as part of a persuasion or deliberation dialogue (Walton and Krabbe 1995), it will normally be an argument. While the story in itself may not indicate the intention of the narrator, stories are typically told in a context. The parables, for example, are always placed in a context, which is important to their understanding. Of course, the hearer may misjudge the context and so fail to understand the story properly, but this is a danger with any speech act.

[3] Like analogies, a single story can suffice to establish the conclusion. In contrast argument from example requires the cumulative impact of many examples. A similar distinction can be made between reasoning with legal cases, where a single precedent is, if sufficiently authorative, enough, and knowledge discovery, where the degree of support depends on the number of examples found in the dataset.

and the presentation will allow different facts to be selected and emphasised and different glosses given to explain behaviour or complete gaps in a way which will support the interpretation desired by the narrator. In recent work, we have shown how the legal and the factual level in a case can be mapped onto each other (Bench-Capon and Bex 2015), and how argument moves about similarity developed in the legal context can also be applied to factual stories (Bex et al. 2011). However, what remains to be investigated is how stories can be used in a broader argument: that is, how similarities between stories can be persuasive.

In this article, we want to take a further step towards modelling the connection between stories and argumentation in analogical reasoning. Section 3.2 shows how arguments from analogy can be based on stories, and Sects. 3.2.1, 3.2.2, and 3.2.3 then discuss some of the objections to and difficulties of integrating stories and arguments. Section 3.3 sketches the kind of computational structures that will be required to implement this approach. Section 3.4 discusses some leading related work before Sect. 3.5 offers a short conclusion.

3.2 Arguments from Analogy

Much of our everyday reasoning is based on analogy, and hence there is a lot of literature (in philosophy, logic, law, AI) dealing with argument from analogy.[4] Basically, the argument from analogy works as follows. First, a source case is presented that appears to suggest a statement A as its conclusion; here, the source case is the reason for conclusion A, an argument in itself. Then a target case is presented, one that appears similar to the source case in some relevant ways, and the aim of the argument is to get the respondent to accept the same conclusion, or a parallel one, *mutatis mutandis*, in the target case. Fig. 3.1 illustrates these various steps.

The argument scheme on which we base our investigations in this paper is a slightly amended version of the one presented by Walton (2012).

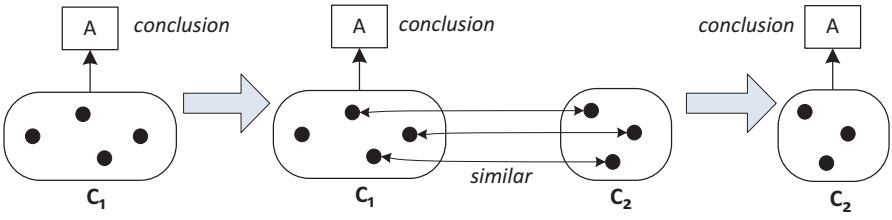

Fig. 3.1 Drawing the same conclusion from a similar case

[4] For example, The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy states: "Analogical reasoning is fundamental to human thought and, arguably, to some nonhuman animals as well. Historically, analogical reasoning has played an important, but sometimes mysterious, role in a wide range of problem-solving contexts. The explicit use of analogical arguments, since antiquity, has been a distinctive feature of scientific, philosophical and legal reasoning".

Similarity Premise: In some important respects, case C_1 is similar to case C_2.
Base Premise: From C_1 it can be concluded that A is true (false).
Conclusion: From C_2 it can be concluded that A is true (false).

The difference with the original scheme is that whereas Walton's scheme has the base premise/conclusion "A is true in C_1/C_2", the current scheme correctly positions A as being a conclusion that is drawn from a case: the case does not strictly entail the conclusion, and it does not pose its conclusion as a norm. Rather it invites the hearer to draw the conclusion, so that its force is always persuasive, never coercive.[5] This makes the form of the presentation significant: an attractive story makes drawing the desired conclusion all the more enticing. In arguments from analogy, there is usually a point one wants to make, as simply comparing cases is not very interesting, unless there is some purpose to it. That A can be regarded as a conclusion is also evident in the critical questions for the scheme (left unchanged from Walton's work).

CQ1: Are there respects in which C_1 and C_2 are different that would tend to undermine the force of the similarity cited?
CQ2: Is A the right conclusion to be drawn in C_1?
CQ3: Is there some other case C_3 that is also similar to C_1, but in which some conclusion incompatible with A should be drawn?

The use of the scheme is as follows. The story acts as C_1, and the hearers map elements of their own situation to form C_2.This means that the conclusion to be drawn from the story becomes applicable to them. For example in the fable of the *Ant and the Grasshopper*, the hearer should see their own behaviour as matching that of the grasshopper, and learn from the story that they should become industrious like the ant.

3.2.1 Story Similarity

Stories are finite sequences of facts, events or states of affairs. Different stories can be seen as being similar for various reasons. For example, they may have the same subject, or a similar structure and themes.

The comparison of cases has been investigated formally in AI in the field of Case-based Reasoning (see Gentner and Forbus 2011 for an overview). The computational process of analogising in CBR usually consists of the following steps. First, given base case C_1 a target case C_2 is retrieved and a mapping is constructed. This mapping consists of a set of correspondences, each linking a particular item in the base with a particular item in the target. This is like the story case described above,

[5] Note that, in theory, we can "coerce" our audience into drawing a particular conclusion if we succeed in preemptively defeating all other possible conclusions that might be drawn from the story. However, it is like a defeasible rule: if it were possible to exclude *all* exceptions, we would have a strict (coercive) rule, but it isn't so we don't. Similarly stories can try to preempt alternatives, but can never preempt them all.

where the story, like the precedent, is mapped into the current situation, so that it can be applied to it. This mapping can also contain candidate inferences, surmising what is true in C_2 based on projecting the structure of C_1, and an evaluation score which indicates the extent to which the two cases are similar. The results of the comparison of C_1 and C_2 may then be generalised and stored as an abstract schema, and in the final step one or both of the cases may be amended to provide a better match.

In Bex et al. (2011), we presented a model of story similarity which is based on this earlier work combined with insights from the well-known work by Schank and Abelson (1977) as well as work on legal CBR (Aleven 1997). In our work, we distinguish *stories*, specific sequences of events, and *story schemes*, general scenarios consisting of general roles (Propp 1968) that elements of a story can fulfil. Stories can be matched to schemes by assigning the facts to their respective roles, and two cases are thus said to be similar if they can be matched to the same story scheme. Thus, analogising in (Bex et al. 2011) is similar to mapping two cases directly without an intermediate story scheme as in Gentner and Forbus (2011), but a scheme allows us to match two similar cases C_1 and C_2 even if not every element of C_1 maps to an element of C_2 (as long as the elements of C_1 and C_2 match a story role in the scheme).

As an example of story similarity, consider the story in Searle's Chinese Room Argument (Searle 1980).[6] The story supposes that a man, who knows no Chinese, is locked in a room, and that he has sets of rules for correlating sets of Chinese symbols with other sets of Chinese symbols in a meaningful way. People outside the room cannot see what is in the room but they can pass pieces of paper with questions in Chinese through a slit. The man will look up the characters on the piece of paper and write the appropriate answer (as given by his rules) on another piece of paper and pass this back to the person outside. Thus, from the point of view of somebody outside the room in which the man is locked, his answers to any questions are absolutely indistinguishable from those of native Chinese speakers.

Searle's point is that, even though the "room as a whole" might (and, it can be assumed, does) pass the Turing test, the man in the room clearly does not understand Chinese. Searle makes this point to then draw the analogy from the Chinese Room to a computer: if you give a Chinese character, or any knowledge unit for that matter, to a computer all it does is perform a lookup operation without understanding the knowledge.

The argument associated with the Chinese room thought-experiment is now as follows. First, the story about the man in the room is posed and compared to a similar story about a computer performing lookups. This comparison can be modelled by way of an intermediate story scheme as in Bex et al. (2011), which is illustrated in Fig. 3.2. Once the two stories are matched, we can take the conclusion of story 1 (i.e. "the man is not using any intelligence even though the room exhibits apparently

[6] Interestingly, in his 1980 article Searle uses the Chinese Room experiment to argue against Schank and Abelson's (1977) work on story understanding, which he regards as the paradigmatic example of strong AI.

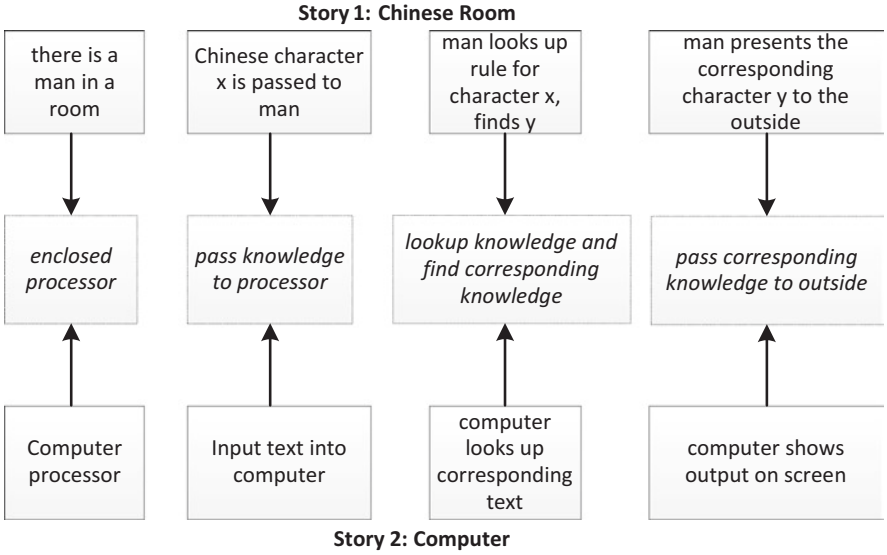

Fig. 3.2 Chinese Room Argument: matching two stories to a scheme

intelligent behaviour") and draw a similar conclusion from story 2 (i.e. "the computer processor is not intelligent even though the computer exhibits apparently intelligent behaviour").

Legal Case-based Reasoning such as Aleven (1997) takes a similar approach to Gentner and Forbus (2011), but makes the identification of relevant similarities and differences between legal cases the subject of argumentation. For example, one can argue that a story does not match the scheme established by the precedent (CQ1, known as *distinguishing* in the legal context), or one can present another story as a counterargument to the original argument (CQ3). CQ2 is not relevant to legal CBR since the conclusion is the decision given in the precedent, which is a matter of record beyond dispute

Whilst in Bex et al. (2011) the focus is on factual stories instead of legal cases, it is still possible to use the argumentative moves of Aleven (1997) to explore similarities between stories. Take, as an example, a third story as a counterargument to the original argument. In case of the Chinese Room, one is reminded of the original Mechanical Turk, a chess playing automaton in the 18th century. Everyone thought the machine was intelligent until it was revealed to have a human operator hidden within it. Figure 3.3 shows that this story can also be matched to the same story scheme as the Chinese Room and the computer story in Searle's thought experiment. With this story we can argue that intelligence *is* possible for a machine: no-one disputes the intelligence of the operator of the Turk. The argumentative process can continue further after this: it can be argued that the Mechanical Turk story is different because the operator thinking of the appropriate counter-move is not a lookup operation like a computer or the man in the Chinese Room performs

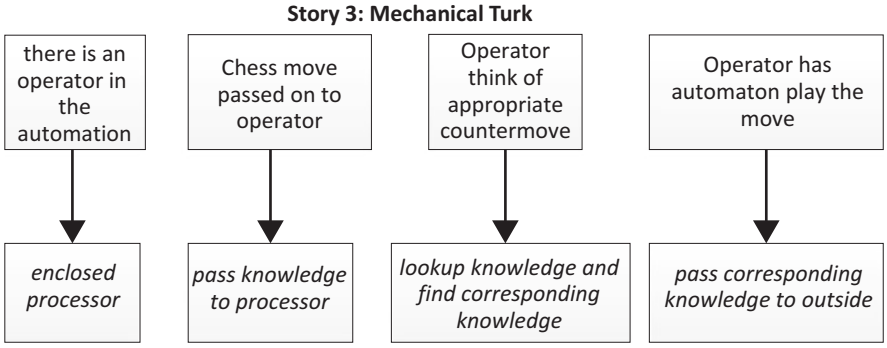

Fig. 3.3 Matching the Mechanical Turk story to the same scheme as the Chinese Room

(*distinguishing the precedent*). This distinction can perhaps be countered (*downplaying a distinction*) by arguing that chess players (like the operator) actually systematically consider multiple options they know from experience of previous games and thus perform what one might call a "lookup operation". Few people, however, believe that you can (currently at least) play chess (after the opening) by simply looking up responses: there are too many positions to be considered. In this case the plausibility of the look up table existing is less than the possibility of an intelligent machine.

Note that the original story can be told in such a way that possible future counterarguments based on critical questions are pre-empted. This can be seen in a Parable like the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:29-37), which Jesus tells to provide an answer to the question *who is my neighbour?* Jesus tells of a man who is robbed and beaten and left at the side of the road. In the course of the story, some expected answers to the question (my co-religionists, my countrymen) are mooted and dismissed as the priest and Levite pass by on the other side, before the correct answer *any human being who shows compassion* – even my religious and national enemy – is provided in the person of the Samaritan. In this way two of the possible responses which might have led to CQ3 are proposed and dismissed, so there is no opportunity to counter with, for example, the story of the Good Priest.

Contrast this with Aesop's fable the *Ant and the Grasshopper*. In that fable the grasshopper sings through the summer while the ant toils to build up a surplus. When winter comes, the grasshopper is starving and begs the ant for some food. The ant refuses. In La Fontaine's version he tells the grasshopper that having sung throughout the summer, he can now dance. The lesson is obvious: work hard and look to the future (Bex et al. 2014).

However, the simple narrative does offer scope for continuations to provide CQ3 objections. Suppose the ant laughs so hard at La Fontaine's little joke that he chokes to death.[7] Now the moral is different: perhaps *gather ye rosebuds while ye may*. To subvert the original message even further suppose the grasshopper is next of kin to

[7] Cf. the parable of the Rich Fool in Luke 12:13–21.

the ant and inherits his stock of food. Now perhaps *he who laughs last laughs longest* is the moral to be drawn.

Or we could change the story itself so that the ant behaves like the father in the parable of the prodigal son[8] rather than the elder brother, and opens his stores to the grasshopper. There is no obvious moral, but the encouragement to be generous rather than judgemental is clear in this variation.

3.2.2 Drawing Conclusions from Stories

An important question is: how can we draw a conclusion from a particular story? In legal CBR, there are legal rules and principles that allow us to infer the conclusion from the factors in a case (Prakken and Sartor 1998). For stories, we need to look at their *point* (Bex 2013). Stories are often told to make a point, and it is this point that can be regarded as the conclusion of a story told as an argument.[9] But what kinds of points are often made using stories? And, perhaps more importantly, how do we establish the point of a particular story?

Often the point has to do with a "twist in the tale", which adds persuasiveness to the story.[10] Wilensky (1982) calls these *internal points*, parts of the story text that generate interest. This dramatic content or twist in a story can be found by looking at deviations from "normal behaviour" by characters in the story. For example, the original audience may have expected the Samaritan to leave the man or even steal his remaining clothes (because of the enmity between Samaritans and Judeans), but instead the Samaritan shows compassion and goes beyond what is normally expected in such situations.

Story schemes play an important part in establishing the dramatic content: it is a deviation from the standard script that counts as a twist in the tale. In the case of Searle's Chinese room story, for example, the Chinese Room satisfies the Turing test. Our standard script is that if something satisfies the Turing test, it can be said to be intelligent. Searle's dramatic twist is then that there is actually no intelligence being engaged even with a human inside.

So the dramatic story content plays an important part in establishing the point of a story; "neutral" stories, in which there is no dramatic resolution to some central event, are often regarded as pointless.[11] With respect to such content it is also

[8] Luke 15:11–32.

[9] In fables the point is usually made explicit in the form of the moral. In parables the point is often not made explicit, but can be inferred from the context: for example the parable of the Good Samaritan is told in repose to the question "Who is my neighbour?"

[10] Such twists are much more common in stories intended to persuade – to lead to a *change* of attitude, such as parables, than stories intended to reinforce existing attitudes, such as fables.

[11] Fables seem to rely on their charm, and the fact that the leading roles are typically taken by anthropomorphic animals. This, their suitability for illustration, and their unchallenging messages all mean they are nowadays usually presented to children rather than adults.

important to take the intention of the narrator and the knowledge and beliefs of the audience into account. Story schemes are part of our knowledge and influence when we think something is "normal" and when we think a story "has a twist". Thus, deeply entrenched beliefs influence the point that people read in a story. Furthermore, an audience will identify more with a character who is in a similar situation or who has a similar worldview. If we tell the parable of the Good Samaritan to someone with no knowledge of the context (of the enmity between Judeans and Samaritans), it will have less impact because the point of the story will be less clear.

It is also important to take the intention of the narrator into account when determining what the point of a story is. As was briefly indicated above, the intention of the narrator (as represented by the illocutionary force of the speech act(s) of telling the story) influences how a story should be interpreted: a story may be told with the intention of explaining, arguing and so forth. This intention may depend on the dialogical context in which a story is told (Reed 2011; Bex and Bench-Capon 2014)). For example, Jesus tells the story of the Good Samaritan to answer the question "Who is my neighbour?" Now, if like Schank et al. (1982) and Bex and Walton (2016) we interpret the point of the story to be the intention of the narrator, the point of Jesus telling the story is to answer the question, and to provide a reason for the answer.

In sum, the point of a story is the interaction between the structure and contents of the story and the knowledge and beliefs of the reader. The story teller intends the story to have such an interaction and thus change the beliefs of the reader in a particular way.

3.2.3 Story Points and Legal ratio decidendi

The point of a story can be compared with the *ratio decidendi* of a legal case. The *ratio decidendi*, literally the reason for the decision, is the basis on which the case was decided, and hence the rule which will be binding on other decisions in future. This contrasts with the *obiter dicta* (other statements) which are observations which may have persuasive but not binding force on subsequent cases. Rarely, however, is the *ratio* made explicit in the decision itself, giving rise to two positions. One is that the case does have a *ratio* associated with it, which can be discovered by a correct interpretation of the decision. This view is encouraged by the use of headnotes, which offer such an interpretation, and which usually include a *ratio*.

The other view is that the *ratio* is not fixed, but is capable of reinterpretation in the light of subsequent cases: the task of the legal interpreter being to make sense of a whole body of case law, considered hermeneutically. On this view the *ratio* of a case may turn out to be other that was originally thought, if this is necessary to make it cohere with later decisions.

We find interesting parallels with the kinds of stories we have been considering. Fables tend to look like the first kind of view: their point is usually clear and often explicitly stated as the moral of the fable. Other stories, such a parables, may be less

clear, and require interpretation. And these interpretations may change, either in response to different social contexts, or in order to achieve coherence with other parables. Also it is often said that a parable should have a single point. This does not prevent preachers from drawing additional lessons from the *obiter dicta* of the parable[12].

3.3 Formal Tools for Modelling Stories

In Bex et al. (2014), we have presented a formal, computational framework for modelling stories. We argue that because a story can be seen as a sequence of events, in particular where that sequence is a selection from a number of possible events, a natural computational structure for exploring stories is a state transition diagram. State transition diagrams come in a variety of forms, but at their simplest comprise a series of states linked by actions possible in the state, indicating the state that will be reached if the action is performed. Consider the *Ant and the Grasshopper* fable. The scenario can be represented as the State Transition Diagram shown in Fig. 3.4.

Now the *Ant and the Grasshopper* fable becomes two different paths through this diagram: the ant takes A1 followed by A3, while the grasshopper takes A2, A4. Someone might object that the ant would be generous and so the sequence would be A2, A5, A3, but this would receive the reply "ants don't behave that way", or "it would not be wise to trust to the generosity of others." At the very least the grasshopper risks ending in Q3. Note that the diagram serves to circumscribe what is possible: if we want to allow for the ant dropping dead we would need a transition A6*: has apoplexy* leading to a new state Q4 (dead, food plentiful, food stock). The point of the story is that Q3 is a clearly undesirable state which one should avoid, and so one should choose A1 rather than A2 in Q0, and so avoid even the possibility of reaching Q3.

This simple state transition diagram serves for a simple story such as the *Ant and the Grasshoppe*r. For more complicated stories, such as the Good Samaritan, we would need a richer diagram. For example the Action Based Alternating System with Values proposed in Atkinson and Bench-Capon (2007) enables us to explore the effect of interactions between several agents, and explains the desirability or otherwise of various states by labelling the transitions with the social values promoted and demoted. This can be used to reason about the motives of the agents concerned in terms of the ordering agents put on these values (Bex et al. 2014; Bex and Bench-Capon 2014). For the Good Samaritan the value labelling would suffice to enable us to represent the different preferences of the people involved, and so recognise that our current preferences (assuming we share the preferences of the brother) are less than ideal. For the remainder of this paper, however, we will focus

[12] For example the parable of the Prodigal Son is often used to make points based on the response of the elder brother.

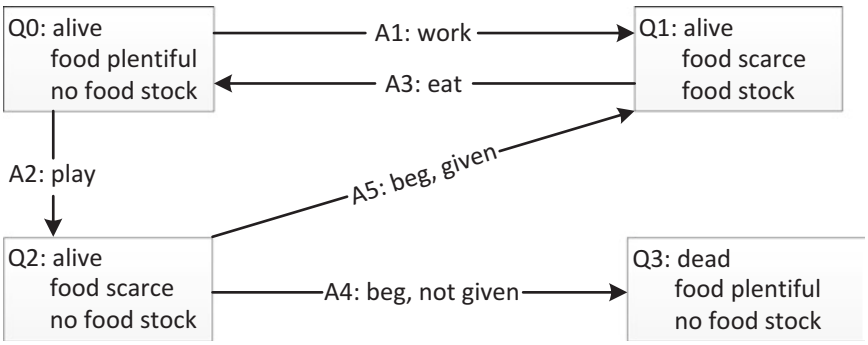

Fig. 3.4 State transition diagram for The Ant and The Grasshopper

on the simpler case of the different paths through the simple transition diagram shown in Figure 3.4.

To return to the *Ant and the Grasshopper* we need five components:

- A set of propositions: in this case the three propositions: agent is alive, food is plentiful, agent has food.
- A set of states, one for each possible assignment of truth values to these propositions (Q0-Q3 in Figure 3.1). By convention Q0 is the current or initial state.
- A set of actions: A1 to A5 in Figure 3.1.
- A set of preconditions defining which actions are available in each state
- A transition function stating which state is reached when an action is executed in a given state.

The preconditions and transitions can conveniently be represented as a transition matrix or read from the diagram.

The AATS with values additionally requires a set of agents, a set of joint actions constructed from the actions of the individual agents, a set of values, and a function to related promotion and demotion of values to transitions.

A story scheme is now a particular path through a transition diagram. In order to be able to argue from analogy we need to augment the story schemes with an ontology. Clearly any animal at all can play the role of agent in the transition diagram of Figure 3.4. Therefore we could have told the fable about any pair of animals. The ontology required to support fables will focus on animals, and will associate them with stereotypical properties (owls are wise, foxes are cunning, ants are industrious and grasshoppers are frivolous etc). Another suitable pair could have been selected from the ontology: for example if we prefer to use mammals rather than insects, we may say squirrels are industrious and hares are frivolous, so that we could tell the fable of the *Squirrel and the Hare*. As far as the story scheme is concerned, this will mean that in addition to the transition diagram and the path through it, we will add the associated qualities of the agents following a given path.

To deploy the fable in argument we need to find a context in which we are trying to persuade someone who is frivolous to be industrious. Thus the match which

triggers the use of the diagram will be on the contrasting qualities of the animals in the story. The point will then be grasped by the audience if they:

1. identify themselves with the grasshopper, either on the basis of the attribute, or simply because they prefer to play rather than work:
2. recognise that the situation reached by the grasshopper is undesirable and needs to be avoided
3. realise that it can be avoided by adopting the qualities (or at least the behaviour) of the ant.

3.4 Related Research

The connection between stories and arguments has been explored in more informal models of argumentation and reasoning. Walton (2012), for example, has explored the required similarities between stories and arguments from analogy. Govier and Ayers (2012) argue that stories can be presented as arguments in themselves. They use the Good Samaritan as an example, setting out the argument that they reconstruct from the story Their reconstruction requires them to include some additional, "implicit" premises. These are shown in italics.

1. *If supposedly holy people (the priest and the Levite) were to ignore an unknown and needy person on a road, they would not treat that person as a neighbour*.
2. If a person who was of no special status and did not know an unknown and needy person on a road were to treat him with mercy and kindness, that person would treat the needy person as a neighbour. So
3. What matters about being a neighbour is not one's status or one's prior knowledge of a person.
4. What matters about being a neighbour is treating another with mercy and kindness when that person is needy and one encounters him.
5. *It is good to treat a needy stranger as a neighbour if one encounters him.* Therefore,
6. *One should treat other people, when they are in need and one encounters them, as one's neighbours with mercy and kindness*.

In this reconstruction of the Good Samaritan, two crucial premises and the conclusion are said to be implicit: that is they are not present in the parable, but supplied by Govier and Ayers. The addition of premise 1 is perhaps not important: it simply explains the role of the priest and the Levite, which are not really central to the argument anyway. The addition of premise 5 is more contentious because it transforms the nature of the argument. Without premise 5 it is a classification argument with a factual conclusion - the Samaritan is neighbour to the traveller – which was the conclusion drawn by the lawyer to whom Jesus told the parable in Luke 10:36. Premise 5 turns it into an argument with a normative conclusion, advocating particular behaviour. This is perhaps justified by the comment 'Go and do thou

likewise' made by Jesus in Luke 10:37, since this shows that the intention in telling the parable is to affect future actions.

Whilst Govier and Ayers' reconstruction is interesting, we contend that the point of the parable is not to impose a norm, but rather an invitation to adopt different attitudes, to recognise that duties between people arise from their common humanity rather than any social or religious ties. This will lead people to act in accordance with the norm, but motivated by a "change of heart" which makes them want to act properly, rather than recognition of, and compliance with, a norm (as was already argued in Sect. 3.2). Certainly the Samaritan is acting because he is the sort of person he is, not because he wishes to comply with a norm not acknowledged by the priest and the Levite.

The correct argument, in our view, is as follows:

1. Conventional attitudes would lead to the traveller being left for dead.
2. The traveller shouldn't be left for dead.
3. Someone with the Samaritan's attitudes would help the traveller
4. Therefore you should adopt the Samaritan's values

In contrast with Govier and Ayers' reconstruction, this argument has a clear analogical component (Samaritan has attitude *a* leading to positive results, so you should also adopt attitude *a*). However, in order to make this argument more concrete we need a detailed account of the internal reasoning, the deliberations of the Samaritan, the Levite and the Priest. We believe that the computational model sketched in Sect. 3.3 is the first step towards such an account: once we have the AATS with values of a story, we can generate arguments for the various choices of the characters according to their values and their preferences between these values.

3.5 Conclusion

In this paper we have tried to demonstrate some next steps towards a fully integrated account of argument and narrative. We have shown how stories can be used to present arguments from analogy, and how such arguments (and their critical questions) can be formally modelled using familiar techniques from CBR, especially legal CBR. Additionally we have explained how the common computational structures of state transition diagrams and ontologies can be used to underpin our account.

Argument from analogy preys on the temptation to generalise from limited experience which seems ever present in people, often leading people to state fallacious generalisations. ("Whenever I take an umbrella it does not rain."). In its standard form the argument from analogy is very plain. But stories can give the analogy more substance and hence more persuasiveness. Also note that often it is not the truth of a story that is at issue, the power of an argument based on a story comes from the aptness and plausibility of the story not from whether it is taken to be fictional or not. For example Wittgenstein (1980) argued that "Christianity is not based on truth; rather, it offers us a narrative and says: now, believe!" A compelling

argument does not necessarily have to be true, especially when it appeals to values (as parables often do).[13]

There remain a large number of open questions regarding the interactions between narrative and argument. For example, how exactly can we derive the point of a story from the story and the context in which it is told? How do different types of stories change or reinforce attitudes? Are stories just a rhetorical "trick" or can they be used to express information that otherwise remains implicit? Providing formal answers to these and other questions is pertinent if we want to fully integrate stories and arguments.

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[13] For Apollonius of Tyana, a 1st-century CE philosopher, the lack of any pretence to truth was a major strength of Aesop's fables: "Then, too, he was really more attached to truth than the poets are; for the latter do violence to their own stories in order to make them probable; but he by announcing a story which everyone knows not to be true, told the truth by the very fact that he did not claim to be relating real events."

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Chapter 4
Narrative Fiction as a Source of Knowledge

Mitchell Green

Abstract In this essay I refine and extend a defense of literary cognitivism (the view that works of literary narrative fiction may serve as sources of knowledge –and not merely belief– in a way that depends crucially on their being fictional) that I and others have provided in earlier publications. Central to that defense is a refinement of Aristotle's idea of successful dramas as unfolding with "internal necessity", in light of which I distinguish those forms of narration that show, rather than merely state, that something is so. Literary narrative fiction also often takes the form of a thought experiment, and I distinguish among three aims of such experiment: to make claims (didactic), to exhort to action (directive) and to stimulate inquiry (interrogative). In developing this approach I defend a view of the author of a literary narrative fiction as being in conversation with her readers, and to that end draw upon a view of conversation as driven by an evolving common ground shared among interlocutors. I close with a discussion of some important pitfalls to which narration in literary fiction is prone, and of how in such cases narration's epistemic value depends primarily upon on our taking the author's word for how things are.

4.1 Literary Cognitivism

Many readers taken by the charms of literature are likely to agree that it can serve as a source of knowledge. This idea is often bound up with the further thought that the knowledge we can glean from literature is different in kind from that which we can get from journalism, history, social psychology, and other forms of non-fiction. However, in what follows I shall leave aside this uniqueness claim, and pursue the more modest task of determining whether literature can be a source of knowledge even if it is not a source of a special type of knowledge.

Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, Thoreau's *Walden*, and Boswell's *Life of Johnson* are all widely considered literature, but they are not fiction. I take works such as these to present no special problems concerning their ability to be sources of knowledge. For different reasons, much fictional work will be beyond the purview of our

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discussion. This is because a work of fiction must surpass a threshold of quality in order to be literature. Although I shall not try either to justify or carefully delineate that threshold, I here assume that rising above it requires complexity of plot, compelling characters, creative use of language, innovative deployment of formal features, and a capacity to compel readers to examine their own assumptions about literature, themselves, or the world.

Also, literary fiction might be a source of knowledge in a way that does not crucially depend on its being fictional. For instance, an historical novel set in, say, Renaissance Naples, might include the information that Giovanna I's (first) coronation was in 1344. A reader who did not know this before reading the novel might ascertain this fact by reading it, provided the author and her publication process (publishers' fact-checking, reviews in reputable publications, etc.) are reliable. However, I do not see any special issues arising here for our ability to acquire knowledge from what we read: similar issues arise for the capacity of historical scholarship to inform and enlighten its readers.

Instead, my concern is with the ability of works of literary fiction to possess epistemic value in ways that depend crucially on their being fictional. I will construe a work of verbal fiction as any artifact comprising a series of sentences whose contents are presented as to be imagined. For sentences in the indicative mood, these contents are to be imagined to be true; for sentences in the imperative mood, these contents are to be imagined as being enjoined, and so on.[1] Once we fix on the idea of a work of verbal fiction being used properly by a reader, we are ready to ask whether any such appropriate usage may also be epistemically edifying. I will thus consider the defensibility of the following thesis:

> Literary cognitivism (LC): literary fiction can be a source of knowledge in a way that depends crucially on its being fictional.

A work's being a source of knowledge does not guarantee that every reader will gain knowledge from it: the reader may not be paying attention, misconstrue the genre, fail to grasp an allusion, or in some other way not cotton on. None of these failings will detract from a work's epistemic value. Again, LC does not claim that all works of literary fiction are sources of knowledge; some such works may instead count as literary due to non-epistemic virtues.[2]

One might object that while it would be reassuring if LC were true, it is doubtful that it is. A reason for such skepticism is that leaving aside cases of historical setting,

[1] Stock (2016) takes a fictive utterance to be a tokening of a sentence that is intended to be imagined true, with the further intention that the audience recognize and act in light of the speaker (author's) intention that she so imagine it. Just as I've argued elsewhere (Green 2007) that the broader concept of speaker meaning does not require reflexive communicative intentions, I am doubtful that a fictive utterance requires a reflective intention. Instead, I construe a fictive utterance as one whose content is overtly intended to be imagined. (One's intention is overt when one intends that that very intention be epistemically available to others.)

[2] We may also contemplate an analogue of LC stating that literary fiction can be a source of knowledge in a way that depends crucially on its being *literary*. Some such thesis as this seems to be the focus of Egan (2015), but it will not be our concern in what follows.

authors of fiction are not beholden to fact, but may instead create characters and many of their properties at will. We may even assume that in order to qualify as literature, a fictional work must respect the bounds of logical and metaphysical possibility: no violations of the Law of Excluded Middle, and no stories in which something is made of water without at the same time being made of H_2O! Yet even such restrictions as these leave considerable leeway for the author to spin a tale consisting of sentences that are under no compulsion to achieve word-to-world direction of fit. As Garcia-Carpintero (2016) observes, we find eloquent expression of this viewpoint in Ian McEwan's *Atonement*. In it, the character Briony is writing a novel that she hopes will provide atonement for a misdeed she committed in her adolescence. McEwan has Briony say,

> The problem these fifty-nine years has been this: how can a novelist achieve atonement when, with her absolute power of deciding outcomes, she is also God? There is no one, no entity or higher form that she can appeal to, or be reconciled with, or that can forgive her. There is nothing outside her. In her imagination she has set the limits and the terms. No atonement for God, or novelists, even if they are atheists. (McEwan 2003, pp. 350–1)

In spite of its eloquent expression, this skepticism misidentifies the source of the difficulty about gaining knowledge from fiction. An utterance of an indicative sentence made without word-to-world direction of fit does not prevent it from also being in the service of knowledge. For instance, we regularly suppose propositions for the sake of argument. A *reductio ad absurdum* argument, for instance, involves supposing a premise (that N is the largest integer, for example) that one does not put forth as having word-to-world fit. This by itself constitutes no objection to our ability to prove something on this basis. So long as reasoning under the scope of that supposition is cogent, there need no bar to our proving that the assumption yields a contradiction, and thus that there can be no largest integer.[3] So too, a literary fiction might contain a thought experiment that, on reflection, leads us to answer a question, such as whether civil disobedience might ever be morally required, or whether our evidence could make it rational to believe in the supernatural. If a thought experiment in mathematics or physics can be a source of knowledge, it is far from clear why a work of literary fiction cannot employ a thought experiment for epistemic purposes.[4] In particular, it is difficult to see why the further requirement that a work of fiction also be an instance of literature should vitiate its capacity for epistemic value.

Even granting these points, one might reply that our main concern here is not the broad area of literary fiction, but the more specific one of literary narrative fiction in

[3] Green (2000) explores in further detail the use of suppositions in everyday reasoning. It should be borne in mind that in colloquial English, 'suppose' sometimes is used to refer to propositions that we put forth either as epistemic possibilities or as educated guesses. Both uses involve the speaker in a stronger commitment than the one I am focusing on here, which may alternatively be described as an acceptance state in the sense delineated in Stalnaker (2014).

[4] Egan (2015) argues that works of literary fiction might contain thought experiments, and so be sources of knowledge, but that they contain sources of aesthetic pleasure that go well beyond these features. We have no reason to disagree with this claim, and it is no challenge to the thesis being argued for here.

which at a bare minimum the reader is intended to imagine a series of events rather than a single event. After all, the great majority of literary fiction is narrative. However, adding this further requirement does not, per se, undermine the epistemic value of our subject matter. We also find thought experiments in the sciences incorporating narrative: an example is Galileo's in which we are asked to imagine that, first, two objects of different mass are released simultaneously from a tower; and that a few moments later the two objects hook up mid-descent. Here we have a bit of narrative fiction. Yet intuitively one can see that the new composite object will not fall faster than its components had been falling before linkage; we may readily conclude that it is not the case that more massive objects fall faster toward the surface of the earth than do less massive. As before, there is no reason to suppose that adding literary qualities to this bit of narrative fiction would undermine its epistemic value.

One might accept these replies on behalf of literary narrative fiction, but respond that while there is no bar in principle to its being a source of knowledge, as a matter of fact, works of literary narrative fiction (hereafter LNF) never progress with a cogency approaching that of demonstration. This might either be due to the fact that LNF never conforms to a suppositional model; or because even though some LNF does conform to that model, none of it exhibits cogent reasoning in anything like the way that a good argument in physics does when carried out under the scope of a supposition.

This skepticism leaves us with two questions. The first is whether any literary fiction may plausibly be construed on the model of a supposition for the sake of argument. If the answer to this first question is in the affirmative, our next question will be whether, for those works that may be so construed, any of them proceed with cogency in a way justifying the conclusion under the scope of the supposition.

4.2 Forms of Knowledge and the Value of Questions

While bearing these questions in mind, let us also note other ways in which a work of literary fiction might be a source of knowledge beside that adumbrated thus far. The first, which we might call introspective epistemic value, concerns the way in which we might learn about ourselves by contemplating our own reactions to what occurs in the work. Suppose a reader feels revulsion toward a transgender character depicted in a novel. She might feel, in light of considered opinion, that this revulsion is not justified, but also realize that her own sensibilities are not aligned with her intellectual commitments. She has thereby learned something about herself by observing her own reactions to a story. (I assume that insofar as such a case brings to mind the so-called problem of fictional emotions, it only does so superficially: there is no impetus, for instance, to say that the reader's reaction to the transgender character is only "quasi-revulsion" *sensu* Walton.)

Further, an epistemic advance may come not in the form of justifying a propositional conclusion, but rather in the form of posing a good question, the search for

answers to which might force us to consider novel or disturbing issues, and to develop distinctions and other conceptual resources that help us to extend the reach of our knowledge. (Scientific, historical, archeological discoveries all provide rich examples.) Accordingly, *posing a good question* merits treatment as possessing epistemic value, even if readers of the work posing it are not subsequently offered an answer but instead are prompted to seek answers for themselves. Think of stories in which readers are invited to contemplate whether they would risk their lives for a cause they care deeply about, or whether they would sacrifice personal freedoms for increased security provided by the state. It should be clear that a literary-fictional scenario could confront us with such a question, thereby providing a framework in which readers may develop their views about situations that may 1 day confront them, without any reader in fact taking the time and effort to appreciate and occupy that framework. In such a case, that literary work will possess epistemic value that goes unappreciated.

Construing a good question as one the answer to which would enrich our knowledge (including knowledge of ourselves) in some valuable respect, one who poses a good question helps to build a framework in which an intellectual advance can be made. Doing so does not guarantee that such an advance *will* be made: just as one might make knowledge available without its being appreciated (say by writing a book that no one happens to read), an author's question might provide a framework that others do not occupy.

In addition, we do well to avoid myopia about what counts as knowledge. Although the Western epistemological tradition has been dominated by discussion of propositional knowledge (what some call 'knowledge-that') some of LNF's epistemic value is better understood in terms of its ability to provide know-how, including but not limited to knowing how a certain type of experience feels. Frank McCourt in *Angela's Ashes*, describes a family's life of grinding poverty with an affable but alcoholic father. How the kids stay warm, find food, and avoid drunken paternal rampages are all vividly portrayed, enabling readers to imagine experiencing such challenges themselves. In this way, McCourt guides readers toward a partial understanding what growing up in a family of this kind feels like. Another writer might describe a character's reaction to receiving a medical diagnosis of an incurable condition that is expected to claim her life within a year. If the writer delineates that reaction skillfully, she will thereby equip readers with the ability to imagine receiving such news about their own fate. In so doing, these readers will have come to know how it would or might feel to learn something this disturbing about their own prospects.[5]

We have observed that engagement with LNF may help readers acquire self-knowledge, and have noted that some knowledge is know-how rather than propositional. Putting together these two thoughts enables us to contemplate the possibility

[5] I defend the view that empathetic capacity is a skill, and one that can be cultivated by our engagement with literature, in Green (2008), and Green (2010). Green (2016a) argues that empathetic engagement with a work of LNF might make one a better person, but may just as easily make her worse.

of "self-knowledge how": this would be a form of knowledge the possession of which enables one to exercise a skill upon oneself, and more precisely upon one's psychological states. Examples include knowing how to calm oneself down when anxious, how to catch oneself in an act of humblebragging, and how to restrain one's tendency to be overly solicitous toward others. Engagement with LNF can help readers cultivate such self-knowledge how. Imagine a novel in which a character is prone to humblebragging in the presence of those in whom he is romantically interested. As we learn more about this character, we begin to appreciate his insecurity and his desire to compensate for it by underhandedly drawing attention to his more admirable characteristics, or at least his desirable possessions. This appreciation facilitates our asking ourselves whether we might be doing something similar in our own lives: in what situations do I feel insecure, and are those situations ones in which I find myself bringing up my own achievements under the guise of a self-deprecating remark? Progress on this question bids fair to enable me to recognize my own tendency to humblebrag and to learn to restrain that tendency as well: in this way it aids the cultivation of self-knowledge how.

4.3 Common Ground and Some Varieties of Conversation

We sometimes describe authors as being in conversation with their readers, and taking this description literally will shed light on LNF's epistemic value. This approach is in turn consilient with construing an argument not as an abstract sequence of propositions, but rather as a strategy comprising a range of communicative moves taken in anticipation of possible challenges from an interlocutor.

A first step along this author-as-interlocutor path will be to appreciate the varieties of conversation, both in form and aim. Some dyadic conversations are symmetrical in that both speaker and hearer can contribute equally to the conversation as it progresses. Others are asymmetrical. This might either be due to the fact that one speaker is, on the strength of her authority, answering a question for others; or it might be due to the fact that one speaker is attempting to elicit answers to questions from others. The former is a didactic conversation, while the latter is what we might call *socratic*. More broadly, in symmetrical inquiries, speakers pool their information on the way to answering a question about how things are. In symmetrical deliberations we pool information and take into account our preferences as we work to formulate a plan of joint action. In didactic inquiries, one speaker answers a question for an audience; a familiar case of this is an academic lecture, while another is the telling of a story. A didactic deliberation is one in which a speaker tells others how to do something. In socratic inquiries one speaker leads another to answer a theoretical question for herself. In a socratic deliberation, one speaker elicits from another a plan for getting something done. These six different types of conversation are displayed in Fig. 4.1.

With the above taxonomy in mind, we are prepared to see how we may take literally the familiar idea that authors carry on conversations with their readers. To this

		AIM	
		Inquiry (theoretical)	**Deliberation (practical)**
FORM	**Symmetrical:**	Speakers pool their information to answer a theoretical question.	Speakers pool their information & calibrate desires to answer a practical question.
	Asymmetrical: didactic	One speaker answers a theoretical question for her audience.	One speaker shows or tells others how to do something, thereby answering a practical question for them.
	Asymmetrical: socratic	One speaker leads another to answer a theoretical question for herself.	One speaker leads another to answer a practical question for herself.

Fig. 4.1 A taxonomy of conversation-types

end, consider the concept of common ground as it is widely employed in current pragmatics research. As defined by Stalnaker (2014), common ground is defined in terms of the concept of an acceptance state, which is a type of state in which an agent takes a proposition to be true. Belief, conjecture, supposition for the sake of argument, and imagining that something is so, are all acceptance states. By contrast, having a degree of belief in a proposition (such as taking tomorrow's chance of a thunderstorm to be 60%), or forming a mental image of a state of affairs, would not count as acceptance states on the current conception. We may then say that proposition P is common ground (CG) among interlocutors A and B Just in case both A and B accept P, A accepts that B accepts P, B accepts that A accepts P, and so on. This definition of CG does not guarantee that anything it comprises is true: people can accept all manner of falsehoods, either because of beliefs held in error, or due to accepting propositions for the sake of argument or another form of pretence.

Although Stalnaker introduced the notion of common ground to shed light on face-to-face conversations taking place in real time, nothing in the definition of that notion mandates this restriction. With current technology, conversations now span continents with the help of e-mail and a host of other fast-evolving wizardry. Interlocutors need not know each other's identity, but may still build up a body of mutually accepted information that they may presuppose in subsequent speech acts. So too, on a taxonomy permitting asymmetrical-didactic conversation as a particular type, it is not difficult to see how the author of a history of the sinking of the Lusitania, such as Erik Larson in *Dead Wake*, is engaging in a conversation with his readers: he and his readers share a complex question (Why and how did this happen, and what were its implications?) as well as background information as CG, which grows as the narrative progresses. Similarly, Antonio Damasio in *Descartes' Error* reminds readers at numerous points in the text that he thinks of himself as engaging

in conversation with them. We need not take Damasio to be speaking metaphorically. Of course, not all readers of these books will be full participants: some will demur from certain of the author's claims and thus have less CG with him than do other readers. This can also happen when a reader's attention lapses or if the reader has trouble following some of the argument. Because of the potential isolation among readers from one another even for a given work, it seems best to think in terms of CG_{AR}, where 'A' and 'R' refer to the author and reader respectively, with as many such relations as there are readers of a single work.

A natural next step is to wonder if this CG framework can accommodate fictional discourse. In fact, as Green (forth) argues, it does with no further modifications required of the CG approach. Without even harboring a didactic aim, an interlocutor might engage in pretence with another for the sake of irony, humor, or for aesthetic pleasure. Two friends are stretched out on a grassy hill after a picnic as they gaze at the puffy clouds above. One observes: "That one's an eagle about to swoop onto the rabbit over there!" This utterance is not an assertion or other illocutionary act; rather the speaker is making as if to describe what she sees as having a particular set of properties.[6] In spite of this, her interlocutor could well accept what she says, which in turn could become part of CG, as evinced by her ability overtly to presuppose it, say by remarking, "And the rabbit had better hope for a big wind."

Another way of engaging in conversation counting as fictional on the present construal is by exploiting the fact that suppositions are permitted moves in any of the six conversation-types mentioned thus far. As a result of this and of the possibility of utterances inviting acts of imagination for their own sake, we do not require a new subcategory of conversation for works of fiction. Instead, let any such work simply be one of the six already given in which the author presents contents as suppositions, possibly but not necessarily for the sake of argument. We often speak of the "premise" of a novel, and this suggests that at least some novels may also be construed as thought experiments in which the author explores the consequences of what has been supposed: that people change gender on a regular basis (Ursula Le Guin's *The Left Hand of Darkness*); that we live in a society exemplifying the principles of hedonic utilitarianism (Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*); that a distracted moment relishing a map one drew as a child results in the drowning of a neighbor's toddler one had been supervising (Jane Hamilton's *A Map of the World*), that you fall in love with someone who fails to reveal atrocities she has committed during wartime (Bernhard Schlink's, *The Reader*), and so on. In some stories it can be challenging to discern what is being supposed, and the reader may need to struggle with the question for some time before getting her feet in the unfolding narrative (Green 2016a). By contrast, other stories, such as those written primarily for entertainment rather than instruction, may be seen as asymmetrical didactic inquiries in which most of what the author writes has the force of a supposition that is not for

[6] Green (2014) distinguishes between speech acts and act of speech, the latter being mere utterances while the former are acts of speaker meaning that can (but need not) be performed by saying that one is doing so.

the sake of argument, and thus as not aiming to establish anything outside the scope of the fictional work.

Fictional and non-fictional conversations falling into the asymmetrical-didactic category do differ from one another in one principal respect. An author of an historical narrative is always entitled to "reiterate" a content that is widely acknowledged as fact outside of the CG that has been developed thus far with her audience. Thus Erik Larson may draw on currently established medical information to explain how long it will be before victims of the Lusitania's sinking will succumb to hypothermia. By contrast, literary genres serve as filters on what can be reiterated, as well as what can be supposed. Stories involving the supernatural, such as Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, disallow reiteration of the philosophical doctrine of naturalism or any of its implications, though they will usually permit the reiteration of, for instance, facts of human psychology. For a less extreme case, midcentury noir detective stories disallow such challenges as those that ask whether people are really as self-centered and cynical as depicted in novels of this kind. In asking such a question, a reader would tend to reveal her imperfect appreciation of the genre.

A conversation driven by a fictional work may answer questions both internal and external to that work. Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* asks us to imagine a post-apocalyptic planet in which only a handful of people survive to either scavenge what few scraps of food remain, or descend into cannibalism. Internal questions pursued by the conversation this work generates concern only what happens in the story, such as whether the father and son who are its protagonists make it to the coast alive. Externally, matters may be more subtle. For while the author of *The Road* is engaging at a more superficial level in an asymmetrical didactic inquiry with his readers, at a deeper level he may be doing something else. One who seriously engages with this book is forced to ask herself whether she would resort to cannibalism to save her own life. As such, the work also functions as a means of asymmetric socratic inquiry. However, since communication between authors and their readers tends to be unidirectional, the answers that readers develop usually do not become part of CG. That limitation need not prevent the author from achieving her or his goal of provoking readers to face hard questions.

4.4 A Transcendental Strategy

Plumer (2015) offers an alternative approach to understanding how literary fiction can be a source of knowledge. In appreciating its limitations, we will gain a better understanding of how best to proceed with our own. Central to Plumer's enterprise is the idea of a novel being *believable*. (In what follows I will capitalize this word to help us keep its semi-technical sense in mind.) For Plumer, a novel is Believable just in case what occurs in it is (i) internally coherent, and (ii) consistent with our

everyday intuitions about human nature and the causes of human behavior (2015, p. 499).[7] An example of one such intuition might be that a person who is humiliated by others will be prone to seek some form of revenge. Perhaps another intuition is G. B. Shaw's quip that youth is wasted on the young. Spelled out slightly, Shaw's claim might be unpacked as the idea that young people have the health, vigor, and energy to make the most of life, but too often lack the maturity to take advantage of the opportunity.

Plumer next observes that when something is believable we may also ask, what else would have to be true for that to be so? He suggests spelling out this line of thought as a transcendental argument of sorts:

1. This story is Believable.
2. This story is Believable only if such and such principles operate in the real world.
3. Therefore, such and such principles operate in the real world.

Plumer illustrates this line of reasoning with reference to M. Nussbaum's discussion of Henry James' *The Golden Bowl*, particularly its treatment of the character Maggie. Plumer suggests the following line of reasoning:

1. The *Golden Bowl*'s description of Maggie's loves, attentions, and finely responsive mind, is Believable.
2. The *Golden Bowl*'s description of Maggie's loves, attentions, and finely responsive mind, is Believable only if our loves and commitments are so related that infidelity and failure of response are more or less inevitable features even of the best examples of loving.
3. Therefore, our loves and commitments are so related that infidelity and failure of response are more or less inevitable features even of the best examples of loving.

The above argument is obviously valid, so our question should be whether it is sound. Bearing in mind Plumer's construal of Believability, let us simply assume that the first premise is correct. The question is whether the second is. Then the concern will be that very little indeed follows from a novel's Believability. After all, why should we think that James' account of Maggie's loves, attentions and finely responsive mind justify conclusions about anyone other than her?

To sharpen this point, imagine that Henry and William had a little-known younger brother, Chester, who also happened to write a novel much like the *The Golden Bowl,* but instead called *The Pewter Urn,* and in which Maggie's (or perhaps Maggie*'s) loves, attentions, and finely responsive mind *do not* compromise her fidelity or appropriate responsiveness. Surely, Maggie*'s ability to rise above her weaknesses and preserve fidelity and responsiveness to those for whom she cares, would not violate our shared intuitions about human nature? People do, after all,

[7] Plumer observes that a novel does not have to be realistic in order to be Believable, writing, "The events of a novel can be far-fetched or remote, as in a science fiction, fantasy, or allegorical novel… Even with substantial alterations in fiction of physical or psychic reality, if the author's development of these alterations is internally consistent and coherent and exhibits firm 'suspension of the author's disbelief'…this can make the novel believable for the reader." (2015, p. 500)

sometimes manage such things. What is more, Chester's novel need not be a great or even very good one; it need only be Believable. Thus, unless Plumer's transcendental arguments are, after application first to Henry's, and then to Chester's novels, to yield a contradiction, we will have to conclude that very little of substance follows from the fact that a novel is Believable. This in turn provides good reason for doubting the second premise of Plumer's transcendental argument concerning Maggie.

Plumer may well distance himself from particular interpretive claims about novels, such as those of Nussbaum about *The Golden Bowl*. However, until he is able to provide a transcendental argument of the sort that he advocates, concerning a particular work of LNF, that is not susceptible to lampooning in the way that I have adumbrated, his strategy will not be a powerful key for unlocking LNF's epistemic charms.

Observe also that with Believability being defined in terms of widely shared intuitions, we have no guarantee that those intuitions will be correct. Folk psychology has changed over time, and there is little reason to think its current version is immune to revision in light of current or future research about human behavior. What if a social psychologist undertakes a study to determine if it is really true that youth is wasted on the young, while another sets out to ascertain how people respond to humiliation. I would hope that philosophers and other humanists would refrain from asserting with certainty that these empirical studies could not possibly undermine what we know about youth and humiliation. After all, it seems unlikely that we can rule out from the armchair the possibility that a long pattern of confirmation bias has led us to focus on cases of youth being wasted on the young, and of humiliation breeding revenge, while ignoring the less exciting instances of young people appreciating their youth, and of humiliated people making peace with their tormenters.

4.5 Compelling Fictions

Believability seems too weak a criterion to explain literary fiction's epistemic value. However, it is not far removed from another concept that does seem able to help us with our challenge. It is doubtful that there is just one thing that is meant when someone calls a narrative compelling, but one things that is sometimes meant by such an adjective is that the narrative progresses in a way that seems inexorable or at least highly plausible, from a starting point that is consistent with what we believe to be true of human psychology. That narrative can become more compelling when it proceeds from a starting point that is also consistent with what we believe true of the world: the conditions of the work could well be met, as we might say.

Let us start with the first type of case. Naturalism seems to be a well-supported philosophical position, and those of us who accept it tend to look askance at supermarket-checkout magazines' proclamations of the occult, out-of-body experiences, ESP, and the like. However, this leaves open the question whether we devout naturalists could ever find ourselves faced with empirical evidence undermining

that conviction. In *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, David Hume's Cleanthes pushes just this point in arguing, against Philo's hardheaded empiricism, that we can imagine powerful empirical evidence of the divine, or at least of the supernatural:

> Suppose, therefore, that an articulate voice were heard in the clouds, much louder and more melodious than any which human art could ever reach: Suppose, that this voice were extended in the same instant over all nations, and spoke to each nation in its own language and dialect: Suppose, that the words delivered not only contain a just sense and meaning, but convey some instruction altogether worthy of a benevolent being, superior to mankind: could you possibly hesitate a moment concerning the cause of this voice? and must you not instantly ascribe it to some design or purpose? Yet I cannot see but all the same objections (if they merit that appellation) which lie against the system of Theism, may also be produced against this inference. (Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, Part III.)

Hume here has Cleanthes make the point that reason and naturalism do not amount to the same thing, and that one can imagine an epistemic situation in which they would come apart. So too, the main protagonists in Bram Stoker's *Dracula* are quite rational people: one is an accountant, another a medical doctor, and so on. They only accept the existence of the undead after receiving evidence that cannot otherwise be accounted for. We readers can follow this narrative as an engaging story, and on further reflection see that it implicitly argues that commitment to rationality does not by itself guarantee a commitment to naturalism.

The foregoing works depend on "premises" that most of us feel confident are false, and as a result will have a limited hold on us. Yet much LNF requires no far-fetched assumptions for the sake of argument, but instead uses starting points that are either epistemically possible, or close to being epistemically possible. Given the fragility of international peace prevailing in today's world, none of us can in good conscience feel sure that an apocalypse of the sort imagined in Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* could not possibly occur. Given this, the reader of the novel is more likely to feel the force of the question, how far would you go to survive in such a world? Perhaps you'd kill another person to save your own life. But given that in McCarthy's conjured post-apocalyptic world, there is almost nothing living aside from humans, and virtually no food that has been preserved, the reader is also compelled not only to imagine a complete breakdown of civilization as we know it, but also to confront the question whether she would resort to cannibalism in order to avoid starvation.

It is easy, given the relative comfort in which many of us live, facing little danger of starvation, to consider cannibalism unthinkable. McCarthy, however, develops his two protagonists as characters with whom it is natural to sympathize, and who face a life-threatening problem that, as readers, we very much want them to solve. In one passage, the son asks his father whether they would ever eat human flesh to survive, and the father answers emphatically in the negative. Particularly for those readers who are parents, it is natural to wonder whether we would answer in the same way if we were in a situation like that of this father and his son. On the one hand, survival seems the most important aim. On the other, the father's answer to his son's question calls that view into doubt by suggesting that some ways of securing

one's survival may compromise one's principles so profoundly as to make one's survival next to worthless.

A pattern emerging from these cases is that works of LNF that establish something new do so in a way that is *ampliative*. In a physics thought experiment we "learn" that having greater mass does not make an object fall faster, even if such a realization is a matter of making explicit what had been implicit in our physical intuitions. So too, we may see works of LNF that establish something new as offering psychology thought experiments: set out the conditions of a social world, and tell a narrative that proceeds in a way that is plausible by the lights of folk psychology, and that more precisely meets the "could well happen" standard. But just as we can get surprises in physics as we draw out consequences of our intuitions about mass, velocity, and the like; so too, we can be surprised, or at least enlightened, by the path that the author leads us down even while adhering to the relevant constraints. Charlotte Brontë evinces an intuitive grasp of what recently has been called the psychological immune system when she describes Mrs. Reed's reaction, while on her deathbed, to seeing a grown up Jane Eyre who has clearly made something of herself:

> I knew by her stony eye—opaque to tenderness, indissoluble to tears—that she was resolved to consider me bad to the last; because to believe me good would give her no generous pleasure: only a sense of mortification. (Brontë 1847/1984, p. 270)

Recent work in social psychology suggests that we normally expend considerable psychic effort in "spinning" events in such a way as to preserve our self-esteem; some writers have dubbed this the psychological immune system (Wilson, 2002). However, insofar as we judge Mrs. Reed's reaction to her former charge as the kind that could well happen, we are acknowledging that Brontë has shown us that we had an intuitive inkling of the phenomenon even before it became a subject of psychological research.

Our physical intuitions are fallible. While Galileo's thought experiment about falling objects can establish that we are committed to the view that heavier objects don't as such fall faster, whether those experiments also provide knowledge depends on whether our intuitions are roughly correct.

So too, just as we have observed that we can't know a priori that youth is wasted on the young, we cannot pretend to know a priori that people work with a psychological immune system. Our common sense commitment to that effect might instead have been founded in genuine experiences of people behaving in spin-doctoring ways, but with a biased sampling of such experiences. As a result, it might be a commitment that does not rise to the level of knowledge. Nonetheless, it is an epistemic advance for an interlocutor to draw out commitments that were implicit in our everyday experience, and this is what the aforementioned authors do eloquently.

An audience of an overtly suppositional line of reasoning needs to adhere to her skeptical scruples at each step of the dialectic. If there are ways in which the thought experiment is ambiguous, under-described, or subtly begs a question, we need to raise our objections. Otherwise such conviction as the thought experiment may produce will be without epistemic value. So too, if a work of literary fiction is to be

epistemically moving, readers need to be skeptics also. This requires being consistently vigilant in asking whether what happens to the protagonists and other main characters is a plausible outcome of how the author set things up; or, if not, then at least that the situation in which they do find themselves is one that could befall us, even if the fictional context makes the relevant aspects of the situation particularly vivid. If these conditions do not obtain, then the fictional work may be entertaining, but is not likely to possess epistemic value.

This epistemic vigilance in our consumption of literary fiction need not and should not stop with the work's last page. Instead, sharing impressions and question about the work with other careful readers, and keeping an eye out for reviews in reputable magazines, newspapers, and journals, are all part of epistemic vigilance in our consumption of literary fiction. Perhaps a reviewer will raise an alternative course of action for characters in a novel facing a dilemma that even the author seems not to have considered; another reviewer notices an anachronistic element of a novel set in the past. Such observations may in turn show that the novel does not pose a moral problem as urgently as might first have appeared. We might complacently take ourselves to have found epistemic value in a work of literary fiction when in fact we have won conviction without insight.[8]

As Stock (2016) observes, a single sentence in a fictional work might be meant both fictively and as an assertion. When a sentence is so used, a reader may no doubt learn from a novel in which it occurs. The author may have extensive experience in large corporate law firms, or in working with autistic children. Her expertise enables readers to learn from those of her fictive utterances that also function as assertions. However, such learning does not rely crucially rely on the work's status as fictional, and thus provides no support for LC. Instead, I have tried here to show that just as a supposition for the sake of argument can provide ampliative insight in a way that crucially relies on its use of fictional discourse, a work of literary fiction might elucidate our commitments, and thereby make knowledge available in a way that depends crucially on its fictionality.

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[8] I have argued elsewhere (Green 2009) that assertion and cognate acts such as conjecturing fall into the category of costly signaling, in the sense of the notion by that name found in the evolutionary biology of communication. For members of our own species, such signaling is costly because in performing such speech acts we put our credibility at risk, at least in the presence of an epistemically vigilant audience.

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Chapter 5
Analogy, Supposition, and Transcendentality in Narrative Argument

Gilbert Plumer

Abstract Rodden writes, "How do stories *persuade* us? How do they 'move'—and move us? The short answer: by analogies." Rodden's claim is a natural first view, also held by others. This chapter considers the extent to which this view is true and helpful in understanding how fictional narratives, taken as wholes, may be argumentative, comparing it to the two principal (though not necessarily exclusive) alternatives that have been proposed: understanding fictional narratives as exhibiting the structure of suppositional argument, or the structure of a kind of transcendental argument. Three key aspects of understanding a fictional narrative as an argument from analogy are identified. First, the argument will be relativistic or depend in an essential way upon the circumstances or intentions of the auditor or author. Second, in view of the first aspect, the argument will be loose and subjective, and accordingly less likely to yield knowledge. Third, the argument will not exhibit a distinctive structure applicable only to fictional narratives. I find that the third, and sometimes the first and second, of these same three aspects apply to understanding fictional narratives as suppositional arguments. I present considerations that point to a way of establishing that some extended fictions exhibit the structure of a kind of transcendental argument that is neither relativistic nor subjective, is knowledge-generating, and is uniquely applicable to fictional narratives. This supports literary cognitivism—the thesis that "literary fiction can be a source of knowledge in a way that depends crucially on its being fictional."

5.1 Introduction

Rodden (2008) writes, "How do stories *persuade* us? How do they 'move' – and move us? The short answer: by analogies." For example, he proposes that there is such an "enthymematic (…) analogy between our world and the world of [George Orwell's novel] *1984*" (pp. 167–169); it is an "argument against political tyranny and totalitarianism" (p. 156). Rodden's discussion of how narratives may be

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argumentative is a natural first view; one need only consider the seemingly fertile ground for analogical argument provided in general by the fabulous world of talking animals, from which points or morals for the human world can be endlessly fashioned. Although it turns out that Rodden's discussion is vague, others have developed more precise and sophisticated versions of the view that narratives may exhibit the structure of argument from analogy, in particular, Hunt (2009), Govier and Ayers (2012), Walton (2012), and Olmos (2014).

This chapter considers the extent to which this analogical view is true and helpful in understanding how narratives may be argumentative. Are there better alternatives? The two principal alternative (though not necessarily exclusive) approaches that will be discussed and compared are understanding narratives as exhibiting the structure of suppositional argument, and understanding them as exhibiting the structure of a kind of transcendental argument (an account that I have begun to develop elsewhere, especially Plumer 2015a, b, 2016). No other substantial approaches have been proposed, so far as I am aware.

A major restriction of scope is that we will be interested only in *fictional* narration. This is not because nonfictional narration such as history or biography need be any less *vivid* than fictional narration (the chain of thought is not: 'vivid, therefore persuasive, therefore an argument'). Rather, it is because there is a huge theoretical obstacle standing in the way of regarding a nonfictional narration as an argument: by definition, the point of nonfictional narration involves veracity – sticking to the facts, telling what happened – so there is no theoretical room for the creativity that is needed to construct an argument by inventing what happens. Perhaps Aristotle meant something like this when he famously said in the *Poetics* that "poetry is a more serious and philosophical business than history; for poetry speaks more of universals, history of particulars" (1451b5-9). Moreover, ultimately we are interested in good arguments and the knowledge they engender. We are interested in the possible cognitive value of literature and the thesis of literary cognitivism, which Green (2010, p. 352) casts as the thesis that "literary fiction can be a source of knowledge in a way that depends crucially on its being fictional." Again by definition, there is no question that nonfictional narration may yield knowledge. But can fictional narration yield knowledge, and do so at least partly *in virtue of* its being fictional? This is the hard question. It is unremarkable or even trivial that knowledge can be gained from fictional literature in ways that are not dependent on its fictionality, for example, the science in science fiction, the history in historical novels, or the meta-level knowledge that the author wrote such and such. Green himself appears to explain the meaning of the dependence relation he invokes only as the puzzle that the novelist "is under no obligation to tell the truth, so why should we expect to get any from her novels?" (p. 354). This question, which Green's paper does try to answer (as we will see in Sect. 5.4), is often phrased with more than a whiff of paradox as – is there truth in fiction?

There is a great divide, which I hope to help bridge in this chapter, between traditional philosophical aesthetics and argumentation theory in how they tackle these questions, to the point where it is unclear that either side is aware of or appreciates what the other side is doing. Aestheticians are concerned with whether fictional

narratives can be a source of knowledge but tend to forget that argument may provide the justification or evidence needed for knowledge. Argumentation theorists have become concerned with how narratives may be argumentative but pay little attention to the fact that good arguments result in knowledge. Hence, we read such remarks as, on the one hand, "in philosophical aesthetics, the question on the relation between literature and knowledge is perhaps the oldest," going back at least to Greek antiquity (Mikkonen 2011, p. 10). On the other hand, in a 2003 paper Kvernbekk wrote that hers was "a first stab at a huge nexus of problems tying together the concepts of narratives, explanations and arguments," which constituted "largely an unexplored area" (p. 281). Similarly, in 2010 Rooney wrote that "narrative argument (…) has been given woefully little attention in philosophy and informal logic" (p. 216). In any case, there would be a bridge across this divide and the thesis of literary cognitivism would be supported if some narratives exhibit a cogent and special argument structure applicable only to fictional narratives. For then, arguments so-structured could provide knowledge "in a way that depends crucially" and essentially on their embodiment in fictional literature.

Indeed, Ayers (2010, pp. 2, 36–37) suggests a relevant distinction between two senses that the term 'narrative argument' might have:

(i) an argument overtly offered by a story
(ii) an argument that the narrative as a whole expresses in a form or structure possibly unique to narratives

This distinction roughly corresponds to Mikkonen's (2011) between (i) philosophy *in* literature, and (ii) philosophy *through* literature. The possibility indicated by (ii) may be of singular interest for argumentation studies insofar as it seems that for all other kinds of cases, the *source* of an argument need not suggest anything about the argument's form – which makes Ayers skeptical about whether there is a form unique to narratives (p. 37). The (i)/(ii) distinction seems particularly useful for extended fictional narratives on the order of novels, plays, and films. The possibility indicated by (i) is relatively uninteresting; (i) is the more superficial level. The extent to which a story explicitly offers an argument or arguments is the measure of how didactic or polemical the narrative is. In extreme cases, certain characters overstate arguments to the point that they transparently become mouthpieces for the author (e.g., in the novels of Ayn Rand). Arguments offered by stories in sense (i) can have any standard or nonstandard form or scheme (e.g., the *ad hominems* against socialists in Rand's novels). Moreover, arguments offered by stories in sense (i) can be about any topic whatsoever; for example, consider the argument establishing the theoretical possibility in terms of orbital mechanics of sending the spaceship *Hermes* back to rescue a crew member stranded on Mars in Andy Weir's *The Martian* (2014, pp. 236–238).

In contrast, since fictional narratives are all primarily or ultimately about human psychology, action, and society, the subject matter of any fictional narrative argument exhibiting a structure in sense (ii) will fall under the same general category. In terms of subject matter, the primary elements and connective of a narrative inherently are events and causality, not propositions and their logical relations. This

means that any argument at level (ii) would have to be *indirectly* expressed. Insofar as a philosopher touches on the possibility of (ii), there is unanimity about this indirectness (e.g., Hunt 2009, pp. 379–381; Green 2010, p. 351; Mikkonen 2011, *passim*; Lamarque 2014, pp. 122, 138–139). However, the reasons given tend to be rather shallow and are variations of the idea that were "the omitted" material[1] "present, the argument would lose its rhetorical or dramatic force," and of the idea that "stating the omitted proposition may be seen as an artistic vice, for it makes the work look like a moral tale rather than a work of art" (Mikkonen 2011, p. 140). Certainly, the work's literary status (in the sense applied to fiction) would be called into question if its argument at level (ii) were directly expressed by the work itself. The piece might be hard to distinguish from a work of philosophy built around an elaborate 'thought experiment', for instance. But I think the deeper reason is that, in a sense, a fictional narrative cannot be an overt argument any more than there could be logical relations between events. Logical relations, such as presupposition, inconsistency, and entailment obtain between propositions. It is a gross category mistake to think such relations could obtain between events. Instead, 'real' relations obtain between events, as can be seen in any attempt to define 'narrative' or 'story', which in a minimalist sense is a perspectival or selective depiction of at least two temporally-related events in a further nonlogical (especially, causal) relationship (adapted from Lamarque 2004; cf., e.g., Walton 2012, pp. 191, 199). So as mentioned, in their subject matter, the primary elements and connective of narratives are events and causality, not propositions and their logical relations.

The main purpose of this chapter then, recast in light of these points, is to consider the relative merits of the alternatives of analogy, supposition, and transcendentality as putative ways of understanding the argument structure of fictional narrative, especially at level (ii).

5.2 Analogy

The study of analogy and argument from analogy – since they are nearly pervasive in human thinking – is certainly one of the most motivated of intellectual enterprises. It is also one of the most vexed and voluminous. Even in the face of this, my hope is to consider what is most promising for understanding how fictional narratives may be argumentative. Let us start with two portentous definitions of 'analogy', the first two listed in the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*: "inference that if two or more things agree with one another in some respects they will probably agree in others" and "resemblance in some particulars between things otherwise unlike" [http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/analogy]. The first describes the

[1] Mikkonen says "conclusion" here (not my 'material'), but *conclusion* is not really the point. For instance, the level-(ii) argument of Leo Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* is indirect, but the novel's opening sentence is widely regarded as its philosophical conclusion: "All happy families are alike; each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way."

reasoning in an argument from analogy, and the second says what such reasoning is 'from'.

Regarding the second definition, how "otherwise unlike" do the things have to be in order for the comparison to count as an analogy? On the one side, there is the view that the domains of the things compared, while parallel, must be quite distinct, even to the point of metaphor; as Beardsley jibes, "to say that two pigs are both fat is not to analogize" (1975, p. 111; cf., e.g., Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 1958, p. 502; Olmos 2014). On the other side, there is the view represented by Juthe (2005), who holds that "one cannot lay any domain constraints on analogy or arguments by analogy" (p. 9) and cites John Stuart Mill's classic argument for other minds as a "same-domain analogy" (p. 6). Certainly Juthe is right that on one level of analysis, all minds belong to the same domain. Yet one may also reasonably regard the categories of *self* and *other* as two different domains. While the analogy domain question may not be satisfactorily resolvable (because there are always many different true descriptions of the same phenomenon), we should not lose sight of the fact that there would be little point or discursive interest in drawing an analogy unless the things compared were substantially unlike. This might help us avoid confusing other argument patterns, such as a simple induction by enumeration, with that of argument from analogy, as where Walton et al. (2008, p. 56) claim that this is an "example of argument from analogy (…) I infer that a new pair of shoes will wear well on the grounds that I got good wear from other shoes previously purchased from the same store."

Nevertheless, the force of argument from analogy seems in no small part to rest on the very broad principle of rationality: *treat similar cases similarly*. This is perhaps vague enough to command universal assent. There is widespread (but by no means universal) agreement that the basic form of the argument from analogy is, as indicated by the *Merriam-Webster*'s first definition, essentially as follows (Walton et al. 2008, p. 315; Walton 2012, p. 192):

AfA1

Similarity Premise: Generally, case *C1* is similar to case *C2*.
Base Premise: *A* is true (false) in case *C1*.
Conclusion: *A* is true (false) in case *C2*.

After they document some of the diverse exponents of this kind of structure (their first citations are David Hume and Mill), Woods and Hudak say of it that it "is not so much wrong as unhelpful" (1989, p. 126).

For many, I think the reason they find AfA1 unhelpful is the concern that having the first properties in common, as indicated by the "Similarity Premise," might not have anything to do with having the further factor or 'property' (*A*) in common. So for instance, in his version of structure AfA1 Waller (2001, p. 202) adds the premise that having the first properties in common "is relevant to having" *A* in common, evidently taking the argument to be *incomplete* without it. Walton, Reed, and Macagno are a little more circumspect, "reserving application of version two to cases where relevance needs to be decided" (2008, p. 86). But neither sort of move

is allowable because, in the first place, the relevance of the premises to the conclusion is itself a general criterion of argument evaluation, as in Johnson and Blair's (1977) widely utilized RSA criteria for argument cogency: the premises are to be relevant, sufficient, and acceptable. Nothing is gained by having an argument affirm its own quality (on any parameter), in effect 'patting itself on the back'; similarly, naming a store chain "Best Buy" does not make it so. Guarini (2004, pp. 162–163) seems to see this, but fails to take the next logical step, which is that construing the argument to "require" such a relevance premise or to be incomplete without it lands you in an infinite regress of a Lewis Carroll type (1895): a second premise will be needed to affirm the relevance of the first premise claiming relevance, and a third premise will be needed to affirm the relevance of the second premise claiming relevance, and so on without end.

It actually seems to me that there is no more accurate and helpful representation of the structure of argument from analogy than AfA1 or an equivalent. Major deviations all seem to land in serious trouble. Consider how clearly AfA1 applies to the story from Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, II.20 involving the fable, "The Fox and the Hedgehog" (Gibbs 2002 [http://mythfolklore.net/aesopica/oxford/29.htm]):

> Aesop was defending a demagogue at Samos who was on trial for his life when he told this story: "A fox was crossing a river but she got swept by the current into a gully. A long time passed and she couldn't get out. Meanwhile, there were ticks swarming all over the fox's body, making her quite miserable. A hedgehog wandered by and happened to see the fox. He took pity on her and asked if he should remove the ticks, but the fox refused. The hedgehog asked the reason why, and the fox replied, 'These ticks have taken their fill of me and are barely sucking my blood at this point, but if you take these ticks away, others will come and those hungry new ticks will drink up all the blood I have left!' And the same is true for you, people of Samos: this man will do you no harm since he is already wealthy, but if you condemn him to death, others will come who do not have any money, and they will rob you blind!"

Aesop is represented here as arguing for the conclusion that the demagogue at Samos should not be removed (*A* is true in *C2*), just as the ticks on the fox 'making her miserable' should not be removed (*A* is true in *C1*), for they have in common that they have 'taken their fill', and if removed, they will be replaced by other 'bloodsuckers', etc. (the "Similarity Premise"). This is a level-(i) argument, an argument overtly offered by a story (although we do not know whether the story told by Aristotle here about Aesop is fictional, no doubt the story told by Aesop is fictional).

What about level (ii)? The requirement that any level-(ii) argument would have to be indirectly expressed means that the narrative as a whole can directly or overtly exhibit only part of structure AfA1, viz., at most it can describe *C1* (the source case) and propose that *A* is true in *C1* (the "Base Premise"). Anything about *C2* (the target case) has to be filled in by the auditor (the reader, viewer, or listener) or (if you prefer) by a psychological-historical investigation into the intentions of the author. Already, this indicates three key aspects of understanding any level-(ii) argument in a fictional narrative as exhibiting the structure of argument from analogy:

1. First, the argument will be relativistic or depend in an essential way upon the circumstances or intentions of the auditor or author.
2. Second, in view of the first aspect, the argument will be loose and subjective, and accordingly less likely to yield knowledge.
3. Third, the argument will not exhibit a distinctive structure applicable only to fictional narratives.

As we saw above, Rodden plausibly holds that there is such an "enthymematic (…) analogy between our world and the world of *1984*"; it is an "argument against political tyranny and totalitarianism." Or if you prefer to stick with talking and reasoning animals for this theme, take the novel *Animal Farm*, Orwell's cautionary allegory about how good revolutionary intentions can lead to tyranny and totalitarianism (complete with a cult of personality for Napoleon the pig). Or consider the 1993 film, *Groundhog Day*, a fantasy about a television meteorologist who is assigned to cover the February event in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, and who must relive the day over and over again until he lives it right.

The question for Rodden is, which world is "our world"? There are many actual totalitarian regimes that readers could fill in as *C2* (*1984* was first published in 1949, *Animal Farm* in 1945). We are given to understand that Orwell himself intended that the target case for *Animal Farm* was the Bolshevik Revolution and the Soviet Union under Stalin (Napoleon), but there is no necessity that the reader even know this, let alone complete the argument with that particular case as *C2*, in order to derive meaning and application from the novel. Likewise, each viewer of *Groundhog Day* could apply to the particulars of his or her own life (*C2*) the message (*A*) that certain problems will repeat for you until you develop the insight to effectively address them.

Fairly many philosophers and logicians are not happy with structure AfA1 or an equivalent as the basic form of argument from analogy. Various alternatives have been offered, most with a deductivist element (recognized as such or not). Hunt (2009) holds that many fables and much fabulist literature have the structure of a kind of "analogical argument" (esp. pp. 379–380). Hunt sees AfA1 as wanting, for the usual reason that having the first properties in common might not have anything to do with whether the cases have the further factor or property in common (p. 372). Let us illustrate Hunt's view with the "The Eagle and the Arrow" fable from Aesop [http://www.aesopfables.com/cgi/aesop1.cgi?1&TheEagleandtheArrow2]:

> An Eagle was soaring through the air when suddenly it heard the whizz of an Arrow, and felt itself wounded to death. Slowly it fluttered down to the earth, with its life-blood pouring out of it. Looking down upon the Arrow with which it had been pierced, it found that the shaft of the Arrow had been feathered with one of its own plumes. "Alas!" it cried, as it died, "we often give our enemies the means for our own destruction."

The alternative Hunt proposes is that at least literary arguments from analogy have a 'first case/principle/second case' structure, where the principle (here, 'we often give our enemies the means for our own destruction') is in Peircean fashion 'abduced' from the first case (the eagle's plight) – the principle "is supported to the extent that it is a good explanation of the truth of the first case." The second case,

however, is 'deduced' from the principle (p. 373); it is how auditors apply the principle "to guide their own moral conduct or persuade others" (p. 379) – as one might think, 'I had better be careful or I may inadvertently help my rivals by…' Similar to what we saw for structure AfA1, Hunt indicates that often not only the second case, but the principle as well, must be filled in by auditors for fables and fabulist literature (p. 380). An example of adult fabulist literature Hunt mentions (pp. 380–381) is Arthur Miller's 1953 play, *The Crucible*, which fictionalizes the seventeenth-century Salem, Massachusetts witch trials, with parallels to anti-Communist 'witch-hunts' to be supplied by contemporary audiences. Or the parallels might be applied to the (much later) Bill Clinton/Monica Lewinsky hysteria, as Miller himself does in the essay "Clinton in Salem" in his collection *Echoes Down the Corridor*.

Before Hunt, Waller (2001, p. 201) wrote that "deductive arguments by analogy have the following form," one that is akin (albeit in dialogic terms) to Hunt's proposal: "1. We both agree with case *a.* 2. The most plausible reason for believing *a* is the acceptance of principle *C*. 3. *C* implies *b (b* is a case that fits under principle *C).* 4. Therefore, consistency requires the acceptance of *b.*" If abduction is not a distinct operation of reason, additional to the traditional categories of induction and deduction, then the Waller-Hunt form is but a small step from the standard construal of argument from analogy as deductive (Govier 1989, p. 144):

AfA2

1. A has x, y, z.
2. B has x, y, z.
3. A is W.
4. All things which have x, y, z are W.
5. Therefore, B is W.

Govier and others criticize such a construal, pointing out (among other things), that "premises (1, 3) now become logically redundant." On the other hand, for Beardsley (1975, p. 113) and others, this redundancy is a *virtue*: "What makes an analogical argument plausible is always a hidden generalization; but when we make that generalization explicit, we can throw away the rest of the analogy." Hunt does resist this, saying that properties x, y, z, etc. "in the first case must be such as will support a principle which can in turn support the second case" (p. 374). But is this "support" any different than the standard rules of deductive logic – universal generalization (from the first case) and universal instantiation (generating the second case)?

Although we have now stepped into the principal controversy about analogical argument, it should be clear that AfA2 undermines what Aldler evocatively calls the "*second-best* nature of analogical argument" (2007, p. 89). If we were in a position to know or suspect the generalization (4), and able to formulate it, normally we would. But in the many occasions where we are not in such a position, we use AfA1. We want to avoid overgeneralizing and basing generalizations on the wrong features, so we reason from case to case – which "asks us to see, or sense, similarities which we have trouble articulating completely" (Govier 1989, pp. 148–149).

Apparently in an effort to address something like this very aspect of level-(ii) narrative argument from analogy, i.e., that the argument will be loose and subjective, and accordingly less likely to yield knowledge (see above), Walton advocates the notion of "story schemes" in his article "Story Similarity in Arguments from Analogy" (2012). A story scheme represents "the basis of the similarity that supports the similarity premise" in AfA1; it is a "connected series of [types of] events or action," containing "variables, in such a way that many different stories can be instances of it" (pp. 201, 199). Walton applies this notion to a number of examples, including J.J. Thompson's renowned thought experiment in her article "A Defense of Abortion" that compares being pregnant from rape to having a violinist in need of life support involuntarily attached to you.[2] Although Walton does not illustrate the notion of a story scheme with any substantial and purely fictional narrative,[3] presumably it could be. One could spell out a story scheme for *The Crucible*, for instance, that also allows both the anti-Communist 'witch-hunts' and the Bill Clinton/Monica Lewinsky scandal as instantiations. The level of detail of such a scheme could vary, similar to story synopses.

Yet it seems to me that Walton's notion of a story scheme, as indicated by its logical form, is really a variation of the generalization premise (4) in AfA2. Echoing Beardsley, Walton says (p. 201) that the story scheme is what "makes the argument from analogy from the source to the target case plausible" or "strong" if it is a good argument. So with a story scheme, can we now in the manner of Beardsley "throw away the rest of the analogy," that is, premises 1 and 3 in AfA2, or *C1* in AfA1? Doing so would render irrelevant the fictional narrative itself, the very thing we are trying to understand.

Understanding fictional narratives as exhibiting the structure of analogical argument is a natural first view. Like initial philosophical views generally, it is relativistic and subjective. Now let us bring into consideration the comparative merits of the alternatives of transcendentality and supposition as putative ways of holistically understanding narrative argument structure, beginning with transcendentality.

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[2] Here is Walton's story scheme for Thompson's analogical argument, modified only by putting it in the form of a conditional: '**If** person *x* has another person *y* attached to his/her body, and person *x* had no choice about the arrangement, and having *y* attached is an encumbrance for *x*, and having this encumbrance will hinder *x*'s daily activities, and *y* will die if removed from *x*, and *y* can only survive if attached to *x* for 9 months, **then** *x* can make a choice about removing *y*' (p. 201).

[3] In fact, some of Walton's illustrations do not even clearly involve stories, as in the case of the argument from the following analogy: "requiring students to take a course in a Reason and Faith category would be like requiring them to take a course in astronomy and astrology" (pp. 208–209). Where is the depiction of a connected sequence of specific events or actions (p. 199)?

5.3 Transcendentality

It is always reasonable to ask about an extended fictional narrative: is it successful 'make-believe'? But for any such plot/character development complex that is believable, we can ask: what principles or generalizations would have to be true about the real world (of human psychology, action, and society) in order for the fictional complex to be believable? Because this also always seems a reasonable question to ask, and because it can be an unanalyzed datum or given that an extended fictional narrative is indeed believable, the following *transcendental* argument scheme is generated:

(1) This is believable.
(2) This is believable only if such and such principles operate in the real world (of human psychology, action, and society).
(3) Therefore, such and such principles operate in the real world.

The believability premise, (1), of this level-(ii) argument is a proposition about the narrative; it is not a self-referential claim made by the narrative (although in deviant cases such as parts of Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones* the novel explicitly, if ironically, claims about itself that it is believable[4]). If (1) were an implicit or explicit claim made by the narrative, the question of whether this claim itself is believable would arise, and so on into an unpleasant regress. The idea is that in virtue of *being* believable (not claiming to be believable), an extended fictional narrative makes an argument telling us something about the real world. (2) expresses the specific inference license or rule that allows the narrative to be an argument, according to the present theory; it is not something that the author of any such narrative need intend or even be aware of. (3) is the conclusion. It indicates which principles operate in the real world, which is primarily of human nature given the subject matter of fictional narratives. As a possible illustration, consider Nussbaum (1990, pp. 139–140) on Henry James' *The Golden Bowl*:

> The claim that our loves and commitments are so related that infidelity and failure of response are more or less inevitable features even of the best examples of loving is a claim for which a philosophical text would have a hard time mounting direct argument. It is only when, as here, we study the loves and attentions of a finely responsive mind such as Maggie's, through all the contingent complexities of a tangled human life, that (…) we have something like a persuasive argument that these features hold of human life in general.

As applied here, the conclusion (3) is the generalized "claim that our loves and commitments are so related that infidelity and failure of response are more or less inevitable features even of the best examples of loving," which is implicated (2) by the

[4] For example: "As truth distinguishes our writings from those of idle romances which are filled with monsters, the productions, not of nature, but of distempered brains…" (1st para. of Ch. I, Book IV); "Examine your heart, my good reader, and resolve whether you do believe these matters with me. If you do, you may now proceed to their exemplification in the following pages: if you do not, you have, I assure you, already read more than you have understood…" (last para. of Ch. I, Book VI).

believability (1), we may take Nussbaum to be alleging, of the plot/character development complex: "the loves and attentions of a finely responsive mind such as Maggie's, through all the contingent complexities of a tangled human life."

The Nussbaum quotation also illustrates what is not all that uncommon: a vague, undeveloped recognition of a transcendental structure of narrative argument. Here is another example: Rodden (2008, p. 155) says "in more didactic novels such as George Orwell's *1984*, we are often aware of a presence arranging and evaluating ideas and characters in building a convincing argument." I am trying to shed some light on how *characters* can be 'arranged' into an argument (which refers to level (ii)) – not, trivially, how (e.g.) the speeches of characters sometimes overtly state arguments (which refers to level (i)).

These considerations mean that (1)–(3) constitute a schematic *meta*-level representation of the transcendental argument of a believable fictional narrative, which, at the object level, is only indirectly expressed by the narrative.

In what does believability consist? Believability seems to be determined mostly by what can be called the 'internal' and 'external' coherence of the event complex. I take Schultz (1979, p. 233) to be succinctly explicating internal coherence where he says: "the events must be *motivated* in terms of one another (…) either one event is a causal (or otherwise probable) consequence of another; or some event's happening provides a character with a reason or motive for making another event happen." 'Real' connections of efficient, final, and material causes (using Aristotle's terminology), and any probabilistic counterparts, are required. The narrative is not believable if in it things keep happening for no apparent reason or in a way that is inadequately connected with the other events in the narrative. Certainly, this applies to some degree to James Joyce's *Ulysses* and William Burroughs' *Naked Lunch*, for example.

But even if the events of a narrative are fully connected, the narrative may still not be believable because those connections do not cohere well with our widely shared basic intuitions about how human psychology and society not only actually, but necessarily work. This is the main component of external coherence. The believability of an extended fictional narrative requires that its plot, characters, and fine descriptions be developed in ways that generally conform to our fundamental shared intuitions about human nature. A work such as Max Beerbohm's *Zuleika Dobson* seems fully to recognize this requirement in its intentional violation of it.[5]

An extended fictional narrative does not have to be realistic in order to be believable. The events depicted can be far-fetched or remote, as in a science fiction, fantasy, or allegorical narrative. Extremism of this sort seems to have little effect on believability so long as the events related are reasonably well-connected, and our

[5] Consider this description of the novel: "…an ironic fantasy of Oxford undergraduate life a 100 or so years ago. The characters' speech and motives are absurd in about equal measure, but one would be missing the point to hold this against the work. For the author is plainly not seeking psychological verisimilitude (…) The interest of the work is essentially that of a *tour de force*: how long can the author retain our interest while so consciously eschewing psychological plausibility?" (Currie 2012, p. 29 & n. 7).

fundamental shared assumptions about human nature, and about physical nature of course, are generally respected. Even with substantial alterations in fiction of physical or psychic reality, if the author's development of these alterations is internally consistent and coherent and exhibits firm and 'willing suspension of the author's disbelief' (adapting Coleridge's phrase from 1817, p. 314), and if the author successfully depicts the characters as believing what is going on as if it is normal, this can make the narrative believable for the audience. There may be a kind of transference or transitivity of the suspension of disbelief here. For such a narrative, trusting the characters and watching them for signs seems analogous to watching flight attendants for signs the flight is going well or badly—a kind of 'reality check', as it were. On the other hand, a narrative may push the envelope regarding physical nature (a possible example is H. P. Lovecraft's novella *The Call of Cthulhu*) or psychic reality (Beerbohm's *Zukeila Dobson* seems to be an example, as mentioned), to the point where neither we, nor the characters, nor the author really understand what is going on. Here, believability breaks down, and consequently, no argument can get off the ground.

Failing to be believable is one thing, the inapplicability of the category is another. The question of whether it is believable or not hardly pertains to shorter fictional narratives on the order of brief fables, parables, and narrative advertisements and jokes; it is not really the 'game' in play or an appropriate standard to apply. Rather, such narratives aim at being charming or arresting, and especially at being moving through the emotional resolution packed by their point or message. But whatever they aim at, it seems that there is *too little room* provided in such a piece to substantiate any notion that it is believable. In the shortest, there is almost no plot or character development, or fine description, so there could not be significant external coherence, and there is little more to provide internal coherence.[6] Thus, a shorter fictional narrative cannot exhibit a level-(ii) transcendental argument, although a level-(ii) argument from analogy could apply (as we saw with the "The Eagle and the Arrow" fable).

It seems that generally, believability is experienced by the auditor as a simple, unanalyzed datum or measure of the narrative, continuously updated as one progresses through the narrative and imaginatively engages with it. And, as Aristotle said about judging the happiness of a person, you do not know for sure about believability until you reach the narrative's end. The experience of a narrative's believability is one thing, but determining which specific truths of human nature are implicated may be quite another and may lie in the province of literary criticism.

[6] Compare Doody (2009, pp. 155–157): "Fiction knows that fable packs the punch, has the charge it wants. At the same time, the prose fiction novel knows that the fable lacks what the Novel always wants to offer – full characterization and length (…) 'This is all you need to know, for my point', says the philosopher, brusquely finishing his fable so he can get on with the job. 'Wait, wait', cries the Novel. 'This is the job! I want to know more and I don't care so much about your point. For your point might not be true if we knew more. Let us test it by *amplifcatio*' (…) No parable is safe (…) We know the story of the Prodigal Son (…) 'But', says the Novel, 'that's a great story, but I want to know more' (…) And so Henry Fielding writes the whole story anew in *Tom Jones*, the story of the wronged Prodigious Son and the father who must in the end seek forgiveness."

The experience of believability might prompt one to reflect on what truths about human nature are implicated. But there is no necessity in this. The narrative's transcendental argument is there, in the work itself as a whole, whether or not anybody notices.

Here we see an apparently sharp contrast with the first aspect of any level-(ii) argument from analogy, viz., that such an argument will be relativistic or depend in an essential way upon the circumstances or intentions of the auditor or author. As discussed in Sect. 5.2, a level-(ii) argument from analogy at most can describe the source case and indicate that a principle (possibly complex) is true in that case, such as *Groundhog Day*'s basic message that certain problems will repeat for you until you develop the insight to effectively address them. Anything about the target case has to be filled in by the auditor or (if you prefer) by a psychological-historical investigation into the intentions of the author.

But is the contrast really so sharp? Transcendental arguments on the order, for example, of Davidson's directed against skepticism about other minds (1991, pp. 159–160), reason that since certain aspects of our experience or inner world are undeniable, the external world must have certain features, on the grounds that its having these features is a necessary condition of our experience being the way it is. In my representation, the argument of a believable fictional narrative is of this type. Stroud (1968) famously objected to such transcendental arguments that they are too 'ambitious' (the terminology is Stern's, 2007) – that the only condition and conclusion that could be licensed is that we must *think* or *conceive* of the external world as having certain features, not that it actually does. The objection as applied to the case of fictional narratives is that it would be enough to allow our experience of believability if having this experience implicated only that we *perceive* the real world as operating in accordance with certain principles. Although this modest version is more subjective than the ambitious one, it is still not seriously relativistic given that it involves how collectively we must conceive of the real world. It would, however, be seriously relativistic if believability were fundamentally relative.

No doubt in certain cases I may find a work of extended fictional narration believable, whereas you do not. Yet it seems that there is no fundamental relativity of believability because there is such a thing as human nature, which we all share and to which we have significant introspective or 'privileged' access, or at least psychological attunement.[7] As Nagel (1979, Ch. 12) forcefully argued, because after all we are human, we know *what it is like* to be human in a way we do not know *what it is like* to have a different nature, such as a bat's (and perceive the world primarily through echolocation, be capable of flying, etc.). The believable narrative taps into and relies on these facts, bringing operant principles to the fore – which

[7] A recent influential article on introspection (Schwitzgebel 2008) poses little threat to my points here concerning human nature and its operant principles, because the focus of the article is on the untrustworthiness of introspection of immediate conscious experience. Differences among auditors in the perceived believability of an extended fictional narrative may be largely attributable to relatively extraneous factors, such as the setting of the narrative. For example, if I could get past the fantastic details of J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, I think I could better appreciate these novels as implicating truths of human nature.

allows it to function as a perfectly effective psychological 'trigger' (cf. Gaiman 2015, p. xiii). If this general idea were not true, then it would be pretty inexplicable that there is widespread agreement about which novels are good novels, for example. Being believable is a central necessary condition for an extended fictional narrative to be good. So in the transcendental narrative argument, the leap from the inner to outer worlds is limited and facilitated. The leap is from psychological factors that make the narrative believable (primarily, internal and external coherence) to the real world of human psychology, action, and society – which is the basic subject matter of all fictional narratives. The inner and outer worlds of the narrative argument are significantly the same; it is not as if the worlds are distinct as, for example, thought and a brain in a vat, as in Putnam's memorable transcendental argument (1981, Ch. 1).

Such philosophical considerations indicate that the principles evoked in the transcendental narrative argument resonate in believability largely because they are *true* of human nature; they indicate that some ambitious version of the argument is justified. Of course, however, a lot more would be needed to establish this (I do further develop the position by addressing putative empirical counterexamples, in Plumer 2015b). Yet these considerations at least point out a path to establishing that there is a type of level-(ii) argument exhibited by some fictional narratives that is essentially neither relativistic nor subjective, unlike narrative argument from analogy, which is inherently both – and accordingly less likely to yield knowledge.

If my position is correct, then the transcendental argument, (1)–(3) above, is not only valid (as a case of *modus ponens*) but is in a certain way probabilistically sound. At the object level of any fictional narrative, given that premise (1) is true and that our fundamental shared intuitions about human nature are generally true, the conclusion (3) is unlikely to be mistaken. However, at the interpretive meta-level, perhaps especially where the literary critic attempts to directly state which specific truths of human nature are implicated (i.e., flesh out premise (2)), no doubt errors may be committed. Nevertheless, this interpretive enterprise is worth pursuing, for it articulates, insofar as it is successful, the narrative's contribution to human knowledge. Through the reflective work of progressing through the believable fictional narrative and perceiving what survives or dominates in the various situations and conflicts, intuitions held by the auditor about human nature become *justified* true beliefs, i.e., knowledge (if they are not already justified for the auditor otherwise).[8]

This provides a way of substantiating the thesis of literary cognitivism, which in Sect. 5.1 we saw Green (2010, p. 352) define as the thesis that "literary fiction can be a source of knowledge *in a way that depends crucially on its being fictional*" (emphasis added). The transcendental argument scheme, (1)–(3) above, elucidates this dependence of knowledge on fictionality in that it is a distinctive structure applicable only to fictional narratives. The reason is the inclusion and pattern of

[8] With this and the point above that being believable is a central necessary condition for an extended fictional narrative to be good, the present account appears to satisfy the requirement of "aesthetic cognitivism" that "a necessary relation between the capacity of a work to provide knowledge and the success (or lack thereof) of that work *qua* art must be established" (McGregor 2016, p. 327).

occurrence of the predicate *believable* in the scheme. Believability with respect to fictional stories is quite a different thing than it is with respect to nonfictional stories or anything else. Being believable does not entail that something is on its way to being believed, for that route is never taken for something you know to be fiction. With respect to fictional stories, internal and external coherence constitute more or less all there is to believability. With respect to nonfictional stories or anything else, belief may be the only thing there is to believability (possibility is logically implied by actuality). Hence, it is problematic to analyze "believability" ("credibility," "plausibility") indifferently as it pertains to these two story domains, as do Fisher (1987) and Olmos (2013, 2015). As a further indication of its robustness, my transcendental approach suggests a solution to the much-discussed 'paradox of fiction/of fictional emotions' (i.e., how can it be that we have what appear to be genuine emotional responses to what we know is a fictional narrative?), a solution that I think uniquely gives believability a critical role (I develop this solution in Plumer 2015b). Adapting a favorite example, we may be horrified by the events depicted in a horror film because they are believable; yet because we don't believe them, we don't flee the theatre.

In contrast, there is no reason to think that either of the argument from analogy structures, AfA1 or AfA2, is distinctive in being applicable only to fictional narratives. The same is true of the Waller-Hunt 'first case/principle/second case' structure even if abduction is a distinct operation of reason, since abduction would not be restricted to operating only on fictional narratives. Interestingly, from different considerations Govier and Ayers arrive at a result similar to one above, viz., that any arguments provided by shorter fictions (they focus on parables) "do not seem to have a distinctively narrative form: some are analogies, while others appear to be [standard] deductive arguments or generalizing inductive ones" (2012, p. 188). But for longer fictions, I have tried to show that there is a structure that gives an affirmative answer to their question "of great interest (…) whether there is such a thing as a distinctive narrative type of argument" (p. 163, n. 2). Now the question is, is there more than one?

5.4 Supposition

The *premise* of a fictional narrative, as the term is normally used, is a counterfactual supposition. If it were factual or known to be factual, it would not really be a premise or supposition; it might be, for example, the topic of a work of nonfiction. But arguments are composed of premises and a conclusion, and we often 'suppose, for the sake of argument, that…' So, what is the connection?

The notion that there is a connection is fairly common. It usually appears as the idea that many fictional narratives, even including extended ones, can reasonably be regarded as 'thought experiments'. There are extremist versions of this view; for instance, Swirski devotes a book (2007) to arguing that "the capacity of literary fictions for generating nonfictional knowledge owes to their capacity for doing what

philosophy and science do – generating thought experiments" (p. 4). However, the greater tendency appears to be toward the more moderate idea that many fictional narratives can usefully be regarded as comparable or analogous to thought experiments (e.g., Carroll 2002; Green 2010; Mikkonen 2011). Yet even this may be misleading in view of considerations such as one we saw in Sect. 5.1 that any narrative argument at level (ii) would have to be *indirectly* expressed. Indirectness is not a hallmark of thought experiments. Moreover, as Maioli argues (2014, pp. 638–639) is Hume's view, "there is an important difference between a thought experiment, which isolates one specific aspect of experience, and the broad representations of life that novels sought to provide" – where sometimes "the variables at play are too numerous to be controlled by human prognosis." For example, Palmer (1973, p. 8) maintains that Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa* is "a novel in which the central character [whom he regards as Lovelace] breaks the bonds of control of the author and reveals unconscious impulses which Richardson 'did not understand himself'."

Thus, it may be best to drop the thought experiment model and consider the basic idea of making a fictional supposition and seeing what would, or could very well, follow. This can take various forms. It could involve propositional or *de dicto* supposition; for instance, Weir's *The Martian* considers what would happen if a (resourceful) astronaut was mistakenly left for dead on Mars by his companions, and had to single-handedly engineer the conditions of his long-term survival for any hope of rescue. Or it could involve *de se* supposition or imaging "in which I suppose, concerning myself, that I am in some way different from the way I in fact am" (Green 2010, p. 262). For instance, reading Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* could make me feel what it would be like to experience systematic racial oppression. With a little more critical interpretation, one can see a narrative as proposing an explanation of a compelling supposition, as Hunt (2006, pp. 401–402) takes Plato's attribution to *anamnesis* of the mathematical knowledge of the untutored slave boy *Meno* elicited through Socratic questioning. One can see a fictional narrative as generalizing from a supposed example, as Nussbaum understands Henry James' *The Golden Bowl*, or as constructing a supposed counterexample to a generalization, as Carroll (2002, p. 10) takes Graham Greene's *The Third Man*, where the generalization is "when loyalty to a friend conflicts with loyalty to a cause, one ought to choose in favor of the friend." Or one can see a narrative as working out the negative "implications" of a fictional supposition, as in Green's representation of Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* as an "implicit" *reductio ad absurdum* argument (2010, p. 360):

1. Suppose a society were organized along the lines dictated by hedonistic utilitarianism.
2. In such a world, people would lack freedom of thought, freedom of expression, and the ability to cultivate the capacities for critical reflection on their surroundings.
3. Therefore, in such a world, life would be intolerable to all but those who have lost the capacity for the activities mentioned in premise (2).
4. Therefore such a world would be unacceptable.
5. Therefore, hedonistic utilitarianism is an incorrect theory of how to achieve happiness.

Notice that as the critical interpretation is increased, there is a transition in the meaning of making a fictional supposition and seeing what would 'follow', from evoking a preponderance of 'real' and probabilistic (mostly causal) consequences to more logical or conceptual consequences. Such interpretation may be erroneous. Erroneous relative to what? Given that the fiction is a believable narrative, you know my story – relative to the level-(ii) argument that is there, in the work as a whole, whether or not anybody notices or (mis)interprets it.

Understanding fictional narratives as exhibiting the structure of suppositional argument is generally an improvement over understanding them as exhibiting the structure of argument from analogy, insofar as the latter but not the former depends in an essential way upon the circumstances or intentions of the auditor or author, which makes a path to knowledge subjective and more difficult. This advantage disappears for *de se* supposition or imagining, if Green is right that it "can as easily be the source of illusion as knowledge" in view of widely accepted empirical evidence that we are often poor judges of our own psychology. However, in "disciplined *de se* imagining" a relevantly knowledgeable author can function in effect as a "source of [reliable] testimony" (2010, pp. 362–363); surely, Ellison's *Invisible Man* would be a case in point.

At any rate, clearly the suppositional, like the analogical, is not a distinctive argument structure applicable only to fictional narratives. The supposition in a suppositional argument (or an indirect or conditional proof) could simply be an epistemic possibility ('suppose *X*, which for all we know, occurs sometime'). Or it could be probabilistic (e.g., 'suppose *X*, which could very well happen') or abstract (as in a mathematical argument). But even if the suppositional structure or scheme is tweaked so that it exclusively involves concrete counterfactual or fictional supposition, it would still not be applicable only to fictional narratives since thought experiments that are not particularly narrative may exhibit such a scheme. Furthermore, such a scheme would not be restricted to level (ii), as in the case of the overall level (i) argument in the *Meno*.

5.5 Conclusion

The main purpose of this chapter has been to consider the relative merits of the alternatives of analogy, supposition, and transcendentality as putative ways of holistically understanding the argument structure of a fictional narrative. Through highlighting the idea that good argument yields knowledge, I have tried to help bridge the divide between argumentation theory and traditional philosophical aesthetics in how they approach the question of the cognitive value of literature, instead of perpetuating a narrow focus on only one of these elements (argument or knowledge, respectively).

We have found that literature and other narrative can be rich and argumentative enough to allow its extended fictions to be holistically understood as exhibiting the structures of analogical, suppositional, and a kind of transcendental argument.

These are not necessarily exclusive ways of cognizing narrative, except that the transcendental alone is a distinctively *narrative* type of argument in being applicable only to fictional narratives. What makes the transcendental scheme unique is its incorporation of the believability predicate, a notion that is quite different with respect to fictional stories than it is with respect to nonfictional stories or anything else. For fiction, what grounds believability is basically internal and external coherence, whereas for nonfiction, believability may be grounded simply by belief. If I am right, we have an intuitive grasp of human nature and the principles that govern it. A narrative may evoke these principles in its storytelling, which makes the narrative believable if it is otherwise coherent. So the believability of a fictional story is a mark or sign that there is truth there, and for the appropriately reflective auditor, this contact with truth becomes knowledge.[9]

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Chapter 6
Parables: Crossroads Between the Cognitive Theory of Metaphor and Argumentation Theory

Eduardo de Bustos

Abstract Parables are considered a form of expanded metaphors, with varying levels of complexity in their narrative structure. They are defined by their perlocutionary purpose, meaning that they typically aim to convey a moral or spiritual teaching. This meaning is an indirect meaning, in the sense that it is inferred under structural and contextual constraints. Two kinds of parables are analyzed: conventional parables, such as the religious parables of the *Gospel*, and *open texture* parables, exemplified by Kafka's parable "My destination". The aim of this chapter is threefold. After a brief consideration on the nature of parables and some comments on the kind of knowledge they convey, the mechanisms whereby the meaning of the parable is accessed are examined. Section 6.5 details the structural requirements for working out the meaning of parables. These encompass the preservation of formal principles, such as the principle of invariance. Finally, Sect. 6.6 defines the conditions for such inferred meaning to be integrated into an analogy-based argument, that is, the requirements that allow parables to be used relevantly in argumentative exchanges.

6.1 Introduction

Parables, whitin which I have taken to include fables, are considered a form of expanded metaphors, with varying levels of complexity in their narrative structure. They are defined by their perlocutionary purpose, meaning that they typically aim to convey a moral or spiritual teaching (Stern 2005). This meaning is an indirect meaning, in the sense that it is inferred under structural and contextual constraints.

The aim of this chapter is threefold. In Sects. 6.3 and 6.4 the mechanisms whereby the meaning of the parable is accessed are examined. The key question is whether such mechanisms are equivalent to the one involved in the production and understanding of metaphors.

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Section 6.5 details the structural requirements for working out the meaning of the parables. These encompass the preservation of formal principles, such as the principle of invariance (Lakoff 1990).

Finally, Sect. 6.6 defines the conditions for such inferred meaning to be integrated into an analogy-based argument. Particularly, the requirements that allow parables to be used relevantly in argumentative exchanges (Walton 2003).

It should be noted that our objectives diverge somewhat from those of T. Govier y L. Ayers (2012), who also analyze the relationship between parables and arguments. Their objective is fundamentally normative, aiming to understand whether parables reconstructed as arguments can constitute "valid reasons" in an argumentation. Such reasons can be understood as propositions which act as premises in an argument, allowing us to infer, as a conclusion, the core message or lesson of a parable (Govier and Ayers 2012, p. 185).

The present chapter eschews examining the normative aspects of parables as arguments. Rather, it is limited to highlight the structural constraints the interpretation of a parable is subject to and to analyze the conditions under which its use can be relevant and effective. Relevance must not be understood as a normative concept but as a descriptive one, depending fundamentally on the context and common ground (Clark 1996) within which an argumentative exchange takes place. This can be defined as a set of common beliefs and knowledge claims, either shared or attributed by the narrator or arguer to the audience.

6.2 Parables and Knowledge

Parables are stories which exist solely because of a perlocutionary objective. In a significant number of cases they are religious parables, which aim to influence an audience's moral values. However, parables lacking a religious dimension also exist, which can be referred to as secular, lay or literary parables. These include fables, often centered on anthropomorphized animal characters. From here on, the term 'parable' will be understood broadly, encompassing both religious and literary parables.

Despite their narrative character (or, alternatively, as a result of it), parables have an epistemic dimension: they are fundamentally vessels of knowledge, something that allows us to equate or assimilate them to metaphors. Thus, they convey a concept or message that is very difficult to paraphrase o rephrase without the context of the story in which it is told.

The knowledge which is transmitted by a parable in the most paradigmatic examples exhibits the following two fundamental features:

(i) Such knowledge is *not purely propositional*, since this would allow us to express it, in equally satisfactory terms, by means of a paraphrased string of statements.[1]
(ii) It is rendered *unique* by the fact that it is only possible to transmit it by means of a parable. The clearest examples are the biblical parables of the *Gospel*, which Maimonides asserted to be teachings of Jesus transmittable *only* by means of parables,[2] not only because it was the ideal pedagogical tool for a broad, heterogeneous and largely uneducated public, but also because parables were conceptual tools inherently necessary to communicate the content of his doctrines.[3]

6.3 Metaphor and Parables

As extended metaphors, with a narrative form, parables have been characterized as presenting a target domain that is not explicitly expressed inthem. In other words, the parabolic narrative does not refer explicitly to what the intended metaphor is actually about. In such cases, the audience or reader is expected to infer the target domain by him or herself. In the cases where the parable is set in a highly conventionalized form, the inference can be rather straightforward, requiring little cognitive effort. A typical example could be the "Parable of the Prodigal Son"[4] that features commonly in Church sermons. Parishioners easily comprehend that the father's generous welcome to his lost son is a metaphor for the divine relation with those who stray and later return to the fold of the Church.

However, numerous other cases exist where the specification of the target domain is not so simple and can be subject to the context in which the parable is read. The implications of this is that the parable loses its rigidity and uniqueness, becoming subject to interpretation, a process that renders its meaning indeterminate. Such situations have a direct impact on the utility of the parable as an argumentative resource.

The conventional and institutionalized nature of parables generally diminishes their utility in dynamic (as opposed to oratorial) contexts of argumentation, particularly as a result of the semantic rigidity which such nature entails. A paradigmatic case would be that of a priest who relates a parable during a sermon, accompanied

[1] As the well known quote from Shakespeare expresses: "Thou shalt never get such a secret from me but by a parable" (*Two Gentlemen of Verona* 2.5.34–35).

[2] In fact, Maimonides contended that all biblical stories should be interpreted in a non-literal way. For him, such an interpretation (metaphoric, allegoric, parabolic) was the true philosophical one, compatible, but different from the literal interpretation offered by institutional interpreters (rabbis, theologians) (see Yvry 2005)

[3] As stated in the *Gospels*: "Jesus told the crowds all these things in parables; without a parable he told them nothing" (Matt 13:34; cf. Mark 4:33–34).

[4] Luke 15: 11–32.

by his interpretation as to its meaning to the congregation. The sermon is the setting within which meaning is ascribed to this particular parable and the priest will attempt to provide an explicit meaning, or even paraphrase whichever original meaning he considers the parable aims to provide. In such cases, parables have a didactic or expressive purpose whereby a certain form of knowledge or Christian value (e.g. generosity) is conveyed. However, the context is not one that allows for discussion or debate – it is asymmetrical and there is no room for the faithful to argue as to the actual meaning of the parable, nor for exploring alternative or novel understandings of its actual meaning in other contexts.

Nevertheless, parables can become valid means of communication oriented towards argumentation outside the realms of such asymmetrical contexts. This is true even if we limit ourselves to Christian parables. The "Parable of the Prodigal Son", for example, illustrates the relationship between the Church and its members, but it can also be assimilated to any relationship between an individual and a community to which he or she belongs. A successful football player returning to his first club or an actual parent-child relationship (e.g. Prince Hal–Harry with Falstaff or King Henry IV in Shakespeare's drama).[5]

The structure of a parable is fundamentally narrative, relating events, that feature characters and action, with a storyline. The actions are driven by an underlying metaphor and a projection between two domains, the source domain and the target domain. Within a religious context, the "Parable of the Prodigal Son" is understood to convey the following underlying metaphor:

THE CHURCH IS THE FATHER.
THE FAITHFUL (parishioner) IS THE SON

The parable's leitmotif is constituted by the relationships of belonging and alienation or loss and these are projected on the target domain. Just as children belong to the father, in accordance with the traditional patriarchal notions, the faithful belong to the Church. As a result, any conceivable relationship between a child and a parent can be projected in the target domain.

It should nevertheless be noted that the correlation between the parable and its internalized metaphor is not a closed one, but one that can shift in scope, becoming either more specific or more generalized through re-contextualization.

The following section details the cognitive mechanism underlying metaphors and parables, while analyzing how parables function as open narrations that are tailored to fit specific methods of communication, including debating or argumentation tools.

6.4 Open Parables

Let's take, for example Kafka's parable "My Destination":

[5] See Tiffany (2011).

> I gave orders for my horse to be brought round from the stables. The servant did not understand me. I myself went to the stable, saddled my horse and mounted. In the distance I heard a bugle call, I asked him what this meant. He knew nothing and had heard nothing. At the gate he stopped me, asking: "Where are you riding to, master?" "I don't know," I said, "only away from here, away from here. Always away from here, only by doing so can I reach my destination." "And so you know your destination?" he asked. "Yes," I answered, "didn't I say so? Away-From-Here, that is my destination." "You have no provisions with you," he said. "I need none," I said, "the journey is so long that I must die of hunger if I don't get anything on the way. No provisions can save me. For it is, fortunately, a truly immense journey".[6]

When reading a parable of this nature, several questions immediately come to mind:

1. Is this passage an actual parable?
2. Does it have a precise meaning, which can be identified?
3. Which underlying metaphors allow us to make sense of this parable?

Regarding the first question, it is essential to highlight two points which may allow us to consider (or at least not immediately discard) such a text as a parable. Firstly, there is no need for a parable to feature the use of individual metaphorical images or ornate language. Metaphorical expressions as such are not necessarily a key feature of parables as a genre. In fact, many traditional parables (both religious and secular) are narrated literally, whereby one character is not directly meant to represent another person or thing. The father in the "Parable of the Prodigal Son" is a father in the literal sense. What is not literal is the corresponding projection of the father onto the Church as an institution.

Furthermore, the literary works of Kafka, notably *The Castle* or *The Metamorphosis*, both of which are rich in metaphorical and parabolic meaning, invite us to conceive this tract too as one of the kind. In fact, it has been often argued that Kafka was strongly inspired and drew heavily from the Bible and the Hassidic tradition, within which parables played a significant role.[7]

However, the key consideration to be made in answering our first question is that, as it happens with metaphors, attributing a literal meaning to this text renders the narration absurd in its particular context. Both as an element of a larger storyline or as an isolated text, the parabolic narration does not allow for a literal interpretation in the context in which it is delivered. This does not necessarily imply that the audience or reader will firstly assign a literal meaning and then attempt to attribute an alternative or hidden meaning upon finding the literal one unsatisfactory. Such a two-step process would be similar to the one originally proposed for the computation of metaphorical meaning (Searle 1978, 1979). However, as it has been argued in the case of metaphorical interpretation, it is reasonable to think that the audience or the reader *immediately* captures the non-literal nature of the parabolic narration, without the need to compute first a literal meaning.

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[6] In F. Kafka (1979). There are shorter versions of this parable, even with other name, "The departure" (Kafka 1971). The edition and translation of Kafka's works have always been a conflictive issue (Durrani 2002).

[7] For instance, Bruce (2002).

Although there are no experimental data on the characteristics of the processing of parabolic narrations, it can be reasonably assumed that, as in the case of metaphors, there will be no significant differences in immediacy and accessibility between the literal interpretation of a conventional narrative and the parabolic one, at least in the case where it is appropriately contextualized.[8] The rationale is basically analogical and conjectural: as parables are extended and narrative metaphors, it is plausible that the same interpretive procedures of metaphors apply in the case of parabolic narrations.

As is the case for all acts of communication, the interpretation of metaphors relies essentially on the reconstruction of their intentional component: by allocating meaning, the audience may attempt to discern the communicative intention of the speaker or author in a way that is consistent with his or her behavior. This process of interpretation will allow behavior to appear as relevant, coherent and communicatively rational (Sperber and Wilson 1995).

This also applies to parables. The audience is required to hypothesize on what is being conveyed in order to understand the narrative. Qualifying a text as parabolic thus implies a requirement of interpreting it in a way that goes beyond the literal meaning.[9] The reason is that parables carry, by definition, a practical or *normative* component. Anyone employing them, be it Jesus or Kafka, uses them to convey not how things are done, but how they *should be* done.

The reconstruction of the parabolic meaning not only should cover the scope of what is meant, but also the normative character that accompanies it, given the context in which it occurs. In classic pragmatic terms, it can be argued that understanding the meaning of parables requires capturing both their illocutionary point and their perlocutionary intention.

Such considerations allow us to address the level of specification of the meaning of the parabolic narrative, i.e., to examine whether a fixed result of the interpretative process is required with an immutable meaning attributed each parable and whether the meaning of parables is immune to contextual variation.

This would ammount to look for answers to the second and third questions posed in relation to Kafka's text quoted above. A plausible conjecture is certain parables do not have a precise meaning and are characterized by a degree of constitutive or formal indeterminacy. In this sense, it would be possible to assimilate them to type-expressions of a language or, more accurately, "type-stories".[10]

In the same way that, within a language, a *type-expression* is an abstract entity not specifying a full proposition (Recanati 2004), a parable, as a *type-narrative*, does not univocally determine its meaning. As a result, its application in a communicative context, be it discursive or argumentative, will constitute a pattern, mold, or framework within which different meanings or heterogeneous applications can be inserted.

[8] Recanati (2004)

[9] See Snodgrass (2008); Wierzbicka (2001).

[10] They can be considered as story schemes as well (Walton 2012).

Kafka's parable and its possible meanings can be taken by way of example. We can easily argue, without overstretching the text, that there is a definite notion that the parable is conveying: the idea that the location of a person's identity, the protagonist's authentic self, is always in a distant unreachable location. However, such an impression is an abstract scheme within which components perform the function of *variables*, indeterminate elements acquiring value only within the context of a particular communicative situation.

One immediate and obvious interpretation is that the parable "My destination" speaks of the identity of the individual, his self, his struggle to achieve it. Generally speaking, it can be argued that the parable *expresses* this meaning. However, this is not necessarily the case, since it may refer to F. Kafka's concrete case and identity, his essential restlessness and his need to go somewhere far away. The parable provides no indication that, at the end of his voyage, there will be some important reward, recognition or affirmation of self. What seems central is that the journey itself is, *fortunately*, a very long one.

It is understandable now why for hermeneutic critics, for *meaning hunters*, Kafka is considered big game. The scope for interpretation of his texts is unmatched and, as a result, he has been inserted in a religious tradition of hermetic works.[11]

Thus, by allowing us to depart from the constraints of historical plausibility, other interpretations of the parable may apply, opening the parable to the realm of imagination. As an example, the parable could be applied to any quest for identity, be it individual or collective. It may be a parable for the acquisition of a national identity or for the construction of an either objective or utopian society. Typical nationalist narratives, which draw heavily from fiction, involve the acquisition of identity and self-awareness by a nation after a long and difficult journey. Moreover, a common feature of such narratives is the imperative of being "elsewhere" in order to achieve the objective of national fulfillment. As in Kafka's narrative, the journey somehow takes primacy over the final objective, the latter somehow becoming the embodiment of the former.

Both interpretations, the search of a personal or a national identity, are not unrelated. Formal or structural ties link them. If both are plausible, it is because they emanate from a common underlying metaphor. This leads us to our third and final question: How do parables acquire meaning and how do they relate to the metaphors that structure them?

In the present case, the parable relates to the construction of identity and self-identity in juxtaposition to the notions of alienation, absence or distance from self. G. Lakoff (1996) and Lakoff and Johnson (1999) have analyzed the set of metaphors that structure the concepts of *subject* and *self*. In broad terms, their analysis reveals that the concept of individual identity and related concepts, such as inner life, are related to the notions of subject and self. In fact, the self is considered the l*ocation* of identity, but that identity can only be understood in relation to the notion of subject. According to Lakoff and Johnson (1999), a general metaphor underlies the relationship between the self and the subject. In this metaphorical relationship,

[11] See Leavitt (2012)

the subject is part of the target domain, in other words, it is the thematic concept that has been structured in metaphorical terms.

The general metaphorical projection can be summarized as follows:

The subject has a self (or more than one self)

A person > the subject
A person or thing > a self
A relationship (of belonging or inclusion) > the subject- the self

Within this general framework, several sub-metaphors contribute to structure the concepts of subject and self. Among them, it should be noted, by its relevance to the present case, the following:

Self-control is control of an object

A person > the subject
A physical object > the self
Relationship of control > Control of the self by the subject
Lack of control > Psychologically uncontrolled

The importance of this metaphor is that it is linked to the physical experience of manipulating objects. According to Lakoff and Johnson (1999, p. 270), this is one of the five fundamental metaphors of the *inner* life. The experience of control is fundamentally an experience of mastery of the body. It is not only the corporal consciousness, defined as the perception of the limits or contours of the body, its weight, the forms it reacts to, the environment, etc., but also the body's relationship with other objects.

For the analysis of Kafka's parable, and his idea of otherness, there are certainly relevant links between the notions of self and spatial location. These are the corresponding metaphors:

(I) **Self-control as the location in a place**

A person > a subject
A normal place > the self
To be in a normal place > to be under control
Not to be in a normal place > to have no control

(II) **The multiple self**

A person > a subject
Other persons > other subjects
The social roles > the values assigned to roles
To be in the same place > to have the same values
To be in a different place > to have different values

The first of these two metaphors relates to the control of one's own body, or self, but from the perspective of an experiential relationship with the environment. From this point of view, there are "normal" environments, to which the self is accustomed by

habit, familiarity or learning, and strange or alien ones, where the self feels insecure, threatened or likely to lose control. This is often accompanied by a theory of common sense about the naturalness of the locations of the self. There are certain "natural" environments for the individual, which are those in which he or she has developed and adjusted to environmental pressures. On the other hand, there are other environments in which the self is out of place or simply beside itself, in which it not only experiences a sense of strangeness, but also the possibility of losing control in its relationship with the environment.

A journey is such a situation, whereby one is, by definition, outside her natural environment. One is not oneself, but another. These links express the ways in which the psychological and spatial concepts are related. The stability of the self –its authenticity– is a projection of the notion of permanence in a place, in an environment that eliminates the, understandably so called, *Kafkaesque anxiety*. The movement, the journey, is a response to the anxiety and, at least in the case of Kafka's parable; it leaves open the possibility that this anxiety is prolonged and even permanent.

So how is this metaphor of the subject/self related to other possible interpretations, such as those aiming at the articulation of a concept of collective identity? Elsewhere (Bustos 2000, 2012) I have analyzed how the concept of collective identity, particularly the concept of nation, is structurally linked to the concept of personal identity, and how metaphors associated with the concept of identity (the real self) articulate the main notions of collective identity. The core of the metaphorical constitution of national identity is a projection of the essential or general metaphor of individual identity, consisting of the following correlations:

Subject > people or ethnic group
Self > Nation
Relationship subject/self > relationship people/nation

According to this metaphor, the subject has an identity secured by a self in the same way that a people or ethnic community has, or should have, a nation within which resides the "character" or "personality" of the people, i.e. a set of distinctive features that distinguish them from other peoples or ethnic groups. The relationship is typically conceived in terms of membership: In the same way that the subject has a self, the nation belongs to a people. Moreover, this sense of belonging is not simply logical or formal, but is a semantic one. The nation must collect, in its "essence", in its "personality", a set of stereotypes by means of which those belonging to the community (tribe, race, people…) will be capable of perceiving themselves.

Particularly relevant is the projection of the metaphor of the *spatially located* self:

The control as location in a place

Subject > people
Self > Nation
To be in a normal place > to have a sovereign territory

This metaphor is the underlying rationale of both the territorial aspirations of nationalist ideologies, and the claims over an ancestral land. Just as the self experiences alienation and estrangement when it is perceived in a place far outside from her natural place, a nationalist can only conceive her nation tied to a particular place, a land in which her identity cannot find obstacles. Lacking a natural location, the nationalist will wander abroad in a permanent search for the recovery of such a place. One could argue that the biblical myth of paradise is nothing but a symbolic transposition of that mental and cognitive experience of the location of the self. In the same way, the wandering of the Jewish people, under the leadership of Moses, is another realization of the search for the collective self.

The feeling of unease which, at an individual psychological level, drives the need to travel, to go elsewhere, translates, at the collective level, the malaise that produces the absence of location for a collective entity (the people, the nation).

What allows us to say that both plausible interpretations of the parable are interrelated is a formal, structural principle. This formal principle ensures that any plausible interpretation of a *type-narrative*, such as a parable, must respect the formal constraints imposed by the underlying metaphors articulating the narrative. G. Lakoff (1990) describes this principle as a *principle of invariance*.

6.5 The Principle of Invariance and Interpretation

According to the *principle of invariance*, metaphoric projections must preserve the cognitive topology of the source domain into the target domain. Such preservation does not need be complete, but can also be partial. In other words, it is not necessary that all the elements and relationships of the source domain be transferred into the target domain: the correlation may affect only some of these elements and relationships, those considered relevant to having a cognitive and communicative effect. Despite being a requirement that only affects a portion of the source and target domains, it has been deemed too rigid by some authors (Forceville 1995; Stockwell 1999).[12] But without that requirement, it is very difficult to describe and predict the range of permissible interpretations of a metaphor or the relative heterogeneity of interpretations of a metaphorical narrative, as in the case of parables.

In the case of a conventional parable, as the one about the Prodigal Son, it seems natural to require that, whatever the application or interpretation that is made of the parable, a fundamental common feature must be the existence of certain elements and certain relationships between them: namely, a son (or equivalent figure), a father (or equivalent figure), and a relationship of separation and reunion or

[12] Forceville's and Stockwell's critiques question the unidirectionality of the principle of invariance. According to the principle of invariance, the cognitive topology of the source domain has to be preserved in the target domain, without any possibility of the target domain to transfer at least part of its structure to the source domain. The theory of blended mental spaces (Fauconnier and Turner 2002) modifies this shortcoming of the principle of invariance.

reconciliation between both. As mentioned above, in the traditional religious interpretation, the son represents a member of the Church who becomes separated, estranged or voluntarily renounces his membership for a brief period. The father represents the institution of the Church and the relationship of welcome is projected onto the desire for reconciliation regarding the reprobate and the faithful and the generosity that this entails. In any unconventional application of the parable of the prodigal son, the minimum structure must be preserved. For example, suppose a part of a territory wants to secede from a nation or state, and takes steps leading to such separation.[13] There is a willingness of estrangement between that community and the broader community to which it belongs. However, perhaps through a process of reflection, regardless of whether effective secession has been achieved, it decides to return to the wider community (the whole Nation) and be reintegrated into it. Far from reproaching its past actions, the Nation willingly welcomes this return and accepts the fickle community. In this scenario, the parable of the prodigal son is applicable for both the description of the situation and its categorization, due to the preservation of the structure of the original parable: the son is projected onto the unfaithful community and the father onto the full nation, along with the corresponding relationship of momentary estrangement, reintegration and final reconciliation.

As discussed, the interpretation of highly conventionalized parables such as biblical ones, does not offer great difficulties and it is relatively easy to identify the structural requirements governing their interpretative processes in different applications and contextual situations.

The case of original parables such as Kafka's "My destination" can be more difficult. In these *open texture* parables, as one could describe them, there is a break with the conventional components of the underlying metaphor, be it due to the deletion of the projected elements or the unspecified relationships in the source domain.

Underlying metaphors of parables are based on *image schemas* (Johnson 1987; Lakoff 1987). These are static and dynamic stylizations representing both the components in a metaphor as well as the relationships that exist between them that result in patterns of neural activation structures through which metaphors are linked to the neuromotor system.[14] The dynamic conventional metaphor underlying Kafka's parable specifies an element (the traveler) that moves through a path (usually conceived as rectilinear) until a point that is a point of arrival and that, in the case of this metaphor, is usually death (Borodinsky 2000). In Kafka's parable nonetheless we see a departure from this formal structure, since the emphasis is on both the traveler and the nature of the journey itself, without any mention of a final destination. The parable suggests that we should consider the voyage itself to be the purpose of travelling.

The fact that the parable of the destination does not fit into any conventional metaphor with the usual image schema of start–path–end contributes not only to its

[13] Think of the Basque Country and Spain, Scotland and the United Kingdom, the U.K. and Europe, etc.

[14] Lakoff (2008).

originality but also to its open texture. It is open to different interpretations or applications. The parable states that life is a journey but also asserts that this journey may well have no final destination. That there is no purpose in life but living it.

But, regardless of the open character of the parable, it cannot be interpreted as capable of stating *anything* or legitimately receiving *any* interpretation. As much altered as the resulting structure may be, in relation to the original metaphor or image schema, it preserves part of that structure that therefore restricts the interpretations that can be considered reasonable. Any interpretation that could have aspirations of appropriateness or legitimacy must respect the structural constraints of the parabolic narrative and the structural constraints emanating from the underlying metaphors and image schemas.

6.6 Parables and Argumentative Contexts: Causes of (Ir)Relevance

So far, only the formal structural constraints on a parable's interpretation have been discussed. These constraints allow us to make certain generalizations about the meaning attributable to a parable, thereby defining the categories of possible communicative uses. However, besides these constraints, we may also consider the pragmatic constraints that define their appropriate use in specific contexts. In argumentative contexts, in particular, the use of parables can be understood as limited by these two kinds of constraints: the pragmatic and the formal.

In order to further limit the scope of our analysis, it is possible to examine parables specifically within the argumentative context of a critical discussion (Walton 2006).

Within a critical discussion, relevance or irrelevance may be attributed, according to the analysis of Van Eemeren and Grootendorst (2004), to each of the elements of a speech or text, rather than examining it holistically. Relevance does not qualify argumentation as such, but only the elements that constitute it. As a result, a parable's contribution to a wider argument would be evaluated in terms of its value to the overall discourse. In general terms, parables are not to be considered arguments by themselves, but may be supportive elements of an argument. They will seldom carry the burden of the proof, but would be additional elements or methods of illustrating an argument (Garssen 2009). In such a case, they would have to fulfill the second pragmatic condition stated by Kienpointner (2012, p. 115) for arguments based on figurative analogies.

From a pragmatic perspective, argumentative behavior can be considered as a succession of speech acts within which the parable becomes a macro-speech act, one subsumed in the global speech act that is the argumentation itself.

As such speech act, the introduction of a parable can be qualified as either relevant or irrelevant in the terms already analyzed and explained elsewhere (Van Eemeren and Grootendorst 2004; Bustos 2014). Intuitively construed, the question

to be answered when a parable is evaluated in an argumentative context is "how is the story relevant to the argument?" In order to answer this question, it is essential to consider the internal communicative context, i.e. the nature of the speaker and audience's shared knowledge. This requires us to distinguish the *emic* dimension (i.e. what participants in the discussion think and the knowledge attributed to the audience) from the *ethical* dimension (i.e. what an impartial observer or analyst may consider objective). Whereas participants in a discussion may consider it relevant, this does not necessarily imply a judgement of objective relevance. This is because both the arguer and audience may ascribe a meaning to the parable that may not actually be a correct one. For instance, in using pragmatic parameters or criteria to perform an evaluation of the relevance of a metaphor or analogy, we may take into account the relative distance or closeness between its target and source domains (Kienpointner 2012, p. 114), with an intermediate distance between both domains being required for a "positive" evaluation, i.e. neither too far nor too close.

Nevertheless, this criterion is stated without any mention of the contextual relativity in which the argumentation is embedded. There is no *caveat* as to the accessibility of the participants in the argumentation to those domains, nor to their evaluation of the cognitive distance that may separate the domains implied in the analogy: the cognitive "closeness" of domains radically depends on the beliefs of the arguers and then on the shared knowledge of the speaker and her audience. Two bullfighting aficionados will easily comprehend an analogy constructed from elements of this rite, no matter the distance between bullfighting and the domain on which it is projected, as judged from an external point of view.

As in the case of metaphors, it is reasonable to assume that there is a *gradient* in the interpretation. The more conventional a parable is (the prodigal son, for example), the simpler its interpretation and its integration in the shared knowledge of the speaker and audience. Conversely, the less conventional the parable, the less likely for an agreement to be reached between opposite interpretative proposals. In the case of Kafka's parable about destination, a mismatch in interpretation would not be surprising. Variations in the interpretations of an unconventional parable make it difficult to disentangle the issue of interpretation. If speaker and audience cannot agree on its interpretation, how will they recognize that their use in a critical discussion is relevant? In such a case, an *emic* assessment of the relevance becomes impossible. So could an *ethical* evaluation clarify the question? Where an impartial observer of the discussion reaches any form of conclusion regarding the relevance of an unconventional parable, would such an assessment have any validity?

It may be the case that the assessment of the observer concludes that the speaker or her audience are behaving irrationally. The proponent of the parable can be sincerely convinced of its relevance; she can believe that it constitutes a valuable element of reasoning and that, if the audience refuses to admit it, it is because she is unable to interpret its inclusion correctly. Maybe the audience cannot assign a precise meaning to that parable. Maybe the speaker may think that the audience acts in bad faith denying that the parable is relevant to the case of discussion. The same could be said if the audience does not accept the appropriateness of the argumentative behavior of the proponent of the parable.

It is possible that the ethical perspective may have some role in the normative dimension of any argumentative exchange, but it certainly does not seem to contribute anything to the understanding of the behavior of those who are involved in such critical discussion.

In any case, keeping the analysis in its *emic* dimension, within the participants' cognitive context (Sperber and Wilson 1986, 1995), we must recognize at least two reasons for the irrelevance of the application of a parable in a critical discussion or in an argumentative exchange. Firstly, as mentioned, failures may occur in the interpretation of the parable by both the arguer and her audience. They may both misassign the correct meaning to the parable, becoming unable to judge whether its application, in the argumentative step in question, is relevant or not.

Secondly, it is possible that, even if the arguer and her audience agree on an interpretation, they will not agree that its application, at the argumentative stage in question, is adequate. Typically, the audience may question the applicability of the parable.

The proponent is subject, as in any communicative behavior, to a *presumption of relevance* (Sperber and Wilson 1995): if she behaves in a certain way, linguistically speaking, it is because she thinks that her conduct is relevant, that it adds value to the discussion. Such a presumption of relevance is not only a cognitive one affecting the speaker's contribution to the communicative exchange, it is also argumentative. This presumption refers to the performance of the macro speech that the argumentation is: the contribution of the parable is *prima facie* relevant to the argumentation, at the stage where it is.

Returning to the conventional parable of the Prodigal Son, it may be that the generic meaning of this parable is clear to both arguer and interlocutor while there is an essential disagreement about its application in a particular argumentative stage. This requires us to distinguish between at least two argumentative functions a parable can perform: (1) laying out the argumentative framework, (2) providing reasons to discard or accept a line of argument.[15]

Regarding the first function, when the parable is introduced with the idea of describing or categorizing a given situation, it sets the argumentative limits and reasons that may be provided in the discussion. As such, it can be included in the set of strategic maneuvers before the argument development (Van Eemeren 2010; Bustos 2015). If the character of the prodigal son is projected onto a territory that has split from a nation, then the corresponding argument will be oriented in those same terms, inviting to reasoning based on the associated projections, i.e., positing the elements and the corresponding relations of the parable. Thus, the figure of the magnanimous father in the original parable will be projected onto the nation that suffers secession; the parent-son relationship will be projected on the relationship between the nation and the independent territory, and so on.

[15] Kienpointner (2012) contends that the functions of an argument to be pro or contra are not symmetric. Figurative analogies (the parables among them) are more justified, according to him, when they express contra arguments against the position of an arguer. That is, it is more difficult for them to constitute a reason that proves (by itself) the rightness of a standpoint.

From a *functional* point of view, the parable performs, in this context, the same function as the *biased naming* (Macagno and Walton 2010) or the introduction of a *descriptive metaphor* (Bustos 2015). In other words, it limits the set of argumentative movements, discriminating which ones are admissible and which are not. In formal or structural terms, the introduction of the parable mirrors the analogy relationships, which may arise between the situation described and the parabolic narration. When the hearer calls into question the relevance of a parable to describe a situation, she is questioning that the relations of analogy between the specific narrative and the specific situation hold, or that such relations are sufficient to justify its introduction.[16]

The argument scheme after the introduction of a parable to define a situation usually corresponds to the one proposed by Walton (2014) for an argument from analogy, in the amended version. According to this scheme a basic premise is given, which sets out a description of a situation: "A situation is described in C1" (Walton 2014, p. 24). In this description, a metaphor may appear, or a conventional parable may be proposed. The description of the situation may include elements that, as mentioned above, can play the role of setting a framework from which to argue. The metaphors or parables put forward determine a range of derivative premises: "A may be plausibly drawn as an acceptable conclusion in case C1" (Walton 2014). These derived premises are the result of inferences arising from the description of the situation. If the description of the situation is made in terms of, for example, the parable of the prodigal son, there is an invitation to think that, in the description of the situation, there will be an equivalent to the father figure, a relationship of reversed remoteness, etc. The corresponding premise of similarity can be applied: "Generally, case C1 is similar to the case C2" and this makes it possible to draw the corresponding conclusion: "A may be plausibly drawn as an acceptable conclusion in C2" (Walton 2014, p. 24).

According to Walton, the extraction of that conclusion depends on the audience towards which the argument is directed. In terms of a cognitive conception of context, it depends on the knowledge shared by speaker and audience and on the acceptance by the latter of the description of the situation. If the audience accepts the introduction of the parable, she will have to accept the corresponding projections generally inferred from the parable. If, in the example analyzed, it is considered that there is a valid identification between a son and a secessionist part of a nation, then the participants will also apply the corresponding projections between the father figure and the whole nation, and the relations of affiliation, withdrawal and recovery of integrity (house, family, etc.).

[16] That is, she is questioning whether the Relevance Similarity Premise holds (Kienpointner 2012, p. 114).

6.7 Conclusion

The argumentative nature of a parable must be understood according to the different perspectives that have been analyzed: namely the formal and the functional. In formal terms, we have described the structural limitations in the interpretation of parables, showing how the scope of these interpretations is related to their degree of conventionality. In highly conventionalized parables, it is easier that speaker and audience reach an initial agreement that will facilitate any consideration of its argumentative relevance. In other less conventional cases, such as Kafka's parable "My destination", any judgement about their relevance depends critically on their meaning, and on the capacity of speaker and audience to assess that this is sufficiently established. The consideration of their cognitive relevance is a previous step to the assessment of their argumentative relevance. O*pen texture parables*, such as those similar to "My destination", may have slightly different interpretations in different argumentative communities or in different times, but those different interpretations have to preserve a formal, structural core, that to a certain point restricts interpretive freedom.

On the other hand, besides the *cognitive relevance* linked to any parable's "meaning", argumentative contexts demand from us the assessment of the proper *argumentative relevance* of the parable. This has to be analyzed by distinguishing the different functions that the introduction of the parable may play in a context of critical argumentation. Firstly, such function may be the setting of an argumentative framework that validates the kind of reasons that can be provided in the course of an argumentation. Secondly, the basic mechanism by which the parables can have argumentative relevance is the projection of the metaphorical narrative structure onto the issue subject to critical argumentation. This projection is based on relations of similarity and complies with the argumentative scheme for an argument from analogy identified and described by Walton (2014).

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Part II
Argumentative Narratives in Context

Chapter 7
Narratives and Pragmatic Arguments: Ivens' *The 400 Million*

Paul van den Hoven

Abstract Narratives and pragmatic arguments maintain a tight but complex relation. Narratives are a proto-scientific method to empirically investigate actions. In narratives, actions are explored, explained, interpreted, and evaluated. The action is a central element in a causal chain of events: motive – action – consequences. Storytelling is a way to summarize, share, preserve and accumulate narrative investigations. Pragmatic argumentation is another method to evaluate actions. Pragmatic arguments evaluate actions in terms of their observed or predicted consequences. Therefore, pragmatic argumentation is an abstract, intellectual complement of the narrative. Rhetorically, storytelling is supposed to appeal to reason, just as a pragmatic argument appeals to reason. Both devices are employed to support standpoints in which an action is positively or negatively evaluated, encouraged or discouraged. The rhetorical dynamics, however, differ. The justifying force of the narrative is primary, its causality is direct, motivated, embodied. The justifying force of the pragmatic argument is apodictic, grounded on abstract generalized regularities. We see this complex relation reflected in creating a documentary. In this chapter, I elaborate on the connection between narrative and pragmatic argument and illustrate its application to Joris Ivens's 1939 documentary *The 400 Million*.

7.1 Introduction

Actions can be positively or negatively evaluated, encouraged or discouraged, according to their (expected) consequences. Such justifications are conveyed by telling a story as well as by presenting a pragmatic argument, both of which are meant to appeal to reason. In this chapter, I investigate the relation between stories and pragmatic arguments. Both discourse formats evaluate actions in terms of the (expected) consequences of the action. Both need to be evaluated on how the content relates to reality and on its relevance for the standpoint about the action. But the sources of their justifying force differ to some extent. I argue that the justifying force of the narrative is explanatory; its causality is direct, motivated, and

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embodied. On the other hand, the justifying force of the pragmatic argument is apodictic, grounded on abstract, generalized regularities.

In Sect. 7.2, the scheme underlying a story is compared with the scheme of a pragmatic argument. This analysis explores how the formats can be mapped onto each other. The central action in the narrative, constituting the hero and her helpers or the villain and her partners, can be mapped onto the action that is evaluated in the pragmatic argument. The narrative format, however, tends to reveal the abductive and inductive processes that underlie the construction of a narrative causal chain, while the pragmatic argument format tends to suggest a (quasi-)deductive process that begins from an abstract generalization of a causal relation. In argument theory (Walton et al. 2008, pp. 100–102, 332–333; Van den Hoven 2015b, pp. 247–251), the scheme of the pragmatic argument focuses on the (theoretically expected or empirically observed) consequences that follow the action and neglect any relation with the factors that caused the situation, giving rise to the action. Where the narrative develops a meaningful connection between the cause that creates a situation behind an action and the consequences of that action, the pragmatic argument relies on a single, given, abstract regularity.

In Sect. 7.3, the differences between the story format and the argument format are explored. In our modern era, the rationality of the pragmatic argument is in higher esteem than that of the narrative. Enthymemes employing abstract, empirically or theoretically motivated regularities reflect the Enlightenment ideals. However, in practice, we observe that the formal distinctions between the theoretical models subside. Often a pragmatic argument extends the causal chain to what precedes the action, just as in the narrative.

Cultural anthropologists emphasize the centrality of narrative, which can connect observed effects of action with abductive processes that explain those effects in terms of addressing the causes. A story invites its meaning to be extended to new situations, by means of analogy or induction. The lesson of the epilogue is more general than the story as such, though not presented as an abstract regularity. Such narrative explanations constitute a primary human need. The rational, intellectual argumentation foregoes this deep-rooted need.

In Sect. 7.4, the relation between narrative and pragmatic argument is illustrated. In discourses that propagate, advise, or evaluate human responses to a new situation, both formats are employed in what seems a carefully designed combination. Joris Ivens's 1939 documentary *The 400 Million* about the Sino-Japanese war supports the standpoint that Western countries should ally with the Chinese against the Japanese because this may restore the Chinese democratic process of modernization (Bakker 2009). This type of discourse, bringing a message that resembles propaganda, employs the narrative appeal to reason in combination with verbal argumentative elements. Both devices complement each other in the construction of a pragmatic appeal to reason.[1]

[1] In this chapter, I use the term *pragmatic appeal to reason* to refer to any appeal to reason that evaluates an action from its consequences, not looking at the discourse format that dominates. Pragmatic argument is reserved for the prototypical verbal format of verbal expressions with a

In Sect. 7.5, I summarize the theoretical implications of having two intertwined rhetorical devices supporting a standpoint. If one intends to develop an argument theory towards a normative theory about discursive appeal to reason, one needs to include narrative devices as potential argumentative means, extending the concept of argumentation to any move in a discussion that appeals to reason. This would imply dissociating argumentation as a specific discourse surface structure (verbal propositions, typically connected with discourse markers such as "since", "because", "the argument is", "this leads to the conclusions that", and so on) from argumentation as a discursive appeal to reason, justifying or refuting a standpoint. The challenge is to investigate relations between discourse structures that present verbal enthymemes and discourse structures that present appeals to reason in any other format.

7.2 The Structure of Narratives and Pragmatic Arguments

7.2.1 Narratives

Evolutionary anthropologists explain the importance of storytelling from the human need to culturally adapt to new situations, and literary scholars consider storytelling to be central to the development of human culture (Black and Bower 1980; Sarbin 1986; Sugiyama 2001; Gottschall 2013). Stories have a format that summarizes the interpretation and evaluation of goal-directed actions in response to situations that require adaptations. The cognitive narrative scheme that underlies a story entails the human disposition to interpret the act of an intelligent being as caused by something that precedes the act and as directed towards a goal. Its effectiveness is evaluated in terms of the coherency in a causal chain that starts with what caused the new situation and ends with the result of the action. If the action is successful, this is because it adequately addresses the factors that caused the initial situation, with the right motives and the right means. If an action fails, it is because it neglects the causes, departing from wrong motives or selecting wrong means.

Scholars from different theoretical backgrounds have developed general models of the narrative scheme. Kafalenos combines insights from Todorov and Propp in her scheme that assumes five stages (2006, pp. 1–26). This scheme shows how two causal sequences are meaningfully connected. An intelligent being starts to act when an event changes its environment in such a way that a response is required. This is the first causality. The central action intends to change this situation again. That is the second causality. This action therefore connects both causalities because

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well-delineated propositional content, ordered in a specific, (informal) logical structure. In Sect. 7.5, I briefly discuss the issue whether argument theory should or should not consider all discourse formats argumentative as soon as they are approached as an appeal to reason in a critical discussion (a *material* definition of argumentation).

it is an attempt to redress the disturbance caused by the initial event. From this perspective on actions follows the core of the narrative scheme.

1. There is a certain state of relative rest, balance, equilibrium at the outset (*preparation*).
2. Subsequently there is a disruption of this equilibrium by some event (*complication*).
3. The recognition that there has been a disruption leads to a "task" for a protagonist to try to reinstall a new equilibrium (*transference*).
4. There will be attempts to respond adequately to the disruption and to install a new equilibrium, often opposed by antagonistic forces (*struggle*).
5. This results in failure or in a resolution – a new equilibrium – and in an evaluation (*recognition*).

Children already use the scheme to interpret acts (Mancuso 1986; Sutton-Smith 1986; Brown and Hurtig 1983). The scheme seems part of a universal cognitive apparatus. Labov (1981) observed that besides the elements of this narrative syntagm, two more elements appear time and again in storytelling, indicating its specific explanatory function. Firstly, an audience expects the storyteller to make clear why a story is told. If this *motive to tell* is not obvious from the context or formulated explicitly by the storyteller, the audience will ask the storyteller for it. Closely related to this motive to tell is the lesson stories convey, a message that transcends the story as such. Labov calls this the *epilogue* because when made explicit, it often takes the form of an epilogue.

A motive to tell and an epilogue are part of the cognitive scheme. Both elements indicate that the prototypical narrative not only temporally connects two causalities, but explores the connections in a meaningful way. Kafalenos (2006, pp. 62–103) emphasizes this connection. When rising flood waters threaten homes (complication), the C-actants (the ones who take up the assignment and perform the central action) are named sandbaggers:

> The decisions to become a sandbagger links the activity (sandbagging) to the motivation (the flooding), and links the motivation (the flooding) to the activity (sandbagging). Function C creates the causal link between C-actant's intentional action [..] and the situation that motivates that action [..] (Kafalenos 2006, pp. 63).

The narrative chain is a syntagm that is ordered along a timeline, because causality presupposes time. The cause precedes the effect. The narrative chain starts with the initial equilibrium and (if the struggle is successful) ends with a new equilibrium. The storyteller, however, can start a story at any moment on the narrative timeline and reorder its elements. The storyteller can start *ab ovo*, or *medias in res*, at the moment of the transference, somewhere in the struggle or even during the recognition.

In Sect. 7.4, I demonstrate that Ivens starts with an element from the struggle, then jumps back in time to a scene situated even before the complication, and then emphasizes the transference. If a story has not yet come to an end – for example because the struggle is still going on – the storyteller can speculate about the

outcome, or the possibility of a bad outcome. In that case, these speculations and evaluations are an interpretation. Playing with the relation between narrative order (*sjuzhet*) and plot order (*fabula*) is an important instrument in the construction of the coherence between the two causal sequences.

7.2.2 Pragmatic Arguments

The pragmatic argument (Perelman 1959[2]) is also named the means-end argument or argument from consequences (Walton et al. 2008, pp. 100–102). The pragmatic argument has become dominant in modern society. Most communities nowadays are characterized by a high degree of *pragmatism*, and are relatively less determined by *idealism* or, expressed in negative terms, *dogmatism*. This means that in such communities most proposals for action are evaluated on the basis of their practical outcome (which results in pragmatic arguments), and not on the basis of their cohering with or following from "higher" norms and principles (which would result in arguments based on a normative rule). The pragmatic principle is that action A is preferred over action B if the (expected) expediency of action A is better than that of action B.

The pragmatic argument has a number of subtypes, leading to a different emphasis in its presentation and different subordinate arguments. Firstly, one can evaluate a future action, or an action that has already taken place. Secondly, one can propagate an action or advise against an action. One can propagate an action as it leads to desirable situations, prevents harmful situations, or causes minimal damage. One can advise against an action because it leads to harmful situations, obstructs desirable situations, or, compared with an alternative, accrues greater cost than necessary. Scheme 7.1 represents one positive subtype.

Standpoint	Action A is desirable.
Data	*Why do you think so?* (1) Action A leads to B and (2) B is a desired situation.
Inference rule	*What has A got to do with B?* If an action leads to a desired situation, that action is desirable.
Ground	*On what is this inference rule grounded?* (norm) Act in a way that optimizes gain and minimizes loss.

Scheme 7.1 Positive pragmatic argument

[2] In March 1957 Chaim Perelman used the term pragmatic argument in a university lecture at University College in the University of London, in French. None other than Sir Alfred Jules Ayer translated the lecture into English. In January 1959 it was published as "Pragmatic arguments" in *Philosophy*.

This general scheme indicates the complexity of the pragmatic argument. It combines a regularity with an evaluation, both of which may need further support. It presupposes the action to be feasible, which may not be evident. Besides this, gains and losses, benefits and costs, always run parallel. So in important pragmatic argumentations, complicated comparative assessments of pros and cons are often needed.[3] Finally, nobody accepts the pragmatic principle unconditionally, so it may need further support that no other type of argument overrides the desirability of practicing the action. The list of possible issues, leading to subordinate arguments, therefore includes[4]:

1. Is B indeed a desired situation?
2. Does A indeed lead to B?
3. Is carrying out action A realistically possible?
4. Is the standpoint supported by a balance between benefits and costs?
   (a) Besides B, what effects does A have and how are these effects valued?
   (b) Are there risks involved in taking action A, and if so how do these risks need to be evaluated?
5. Is there not a cheaper/more efficient way to achieve B, taking the answers to question 4 into account?
6. Is practicing A consistent with other, fundamental values?

In practice, we recognize the pragmatic argument often as underlying complex and lengthy argumentations because many subordinate arguments can be required to meet possible objections. The scheme with the critical questions reveals that it is hard if not impossible to develop an absolutely decisive, incontestable pragmatic argumentation. Inevitably, humans have to make complex choices based on pros and cons on very different dimensions, and a debate will develop among opponents that contest each other's pragmatic argumentations.

By contrast, in many discourses only a regularity can be expressed, even though the audience immediately senses that the rhetor actually intends to convey a pragmatic argument. This can be understood if one looks at the data in the standard scheme; the first required data is a regularity and the second is a normative statement about its effect. When a rhetor argues "A leads to B" and it is evident that B is

[3] After a learned expose about variations of the argument scheme, with examples from a diversity of philosophers, Perelman (1959) concentrates on the problems of assessing a situation in which both sides bring up pragmatic arguments. In particular, he discusses Bentham's utilitarian calculus.

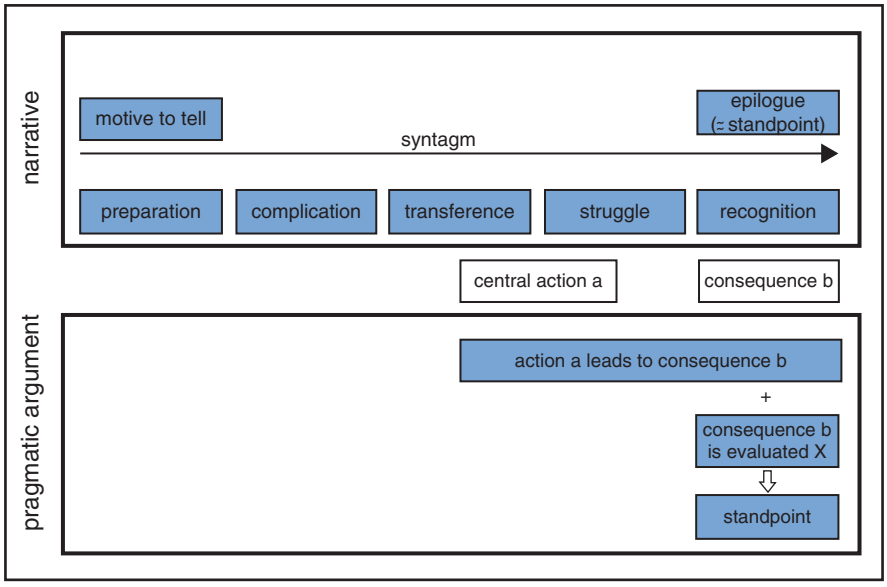
[4] This list of critical questions is more comprehensive than the one given by Walton et al. (2008), p. 333) who only mention question 2 and 4. Of course, question 6 is of a slightly different character than the other questions. One can argue that in all cases the application of an argument begs the critical question whether there is another argument that is more powerful. But that is not the issue here. The issue is whether in the specific domain, pragmatism of a certain kind is accepted, or that the pragmatic norm is overruled by some moral norm. An institution can for example state that any beneficial action that violates an issued moral code is unacceptable, even if its benefits are substantial.

desirable, he does not need to state the second data explicitly, declaring that A is (in principle) a desirable action. So, in many discourses, only the regularity with its supporting arguments will be presented. Discourse interpretation is a process in which audiences activate cognitive schemata and rhetors know they will; the pragmatic argument scheme is especially dominant in our modern societies and therefore audiences are ready to activate this scheme.

7.2.3 Mapping

When we map the pragmatic argument onto the narrative scheme, we see that the scheme of the pragmatic argument overlaps with the struggle and the recognition stages. There is no overlap with the preparation and complication stages, and therefore the transference in the narrative is not transference in the pragmatic argument, but an action. One premise of the argument connects this action with its (expected or observed) consequences and the other premise formulates the evaluation of these consequences (Scheme 7.2).

The mapping scheme indicates that a minimal story is more complex than a minimal pragmatic argument. This is because the narrative scheme contains more related elements than that of the pragmatic argument. More important, the nature of the narrative scheme commands richer descriptions. The central action, as element



Scheme 7.2 Mapping the pragmatic argument on the narrative

in the syntagm, is a motivated action and therefore requires an actor with some psychological identity. The consequences are part of the recognition and therefore require attributing praise or blame to someone or something with an identity. Such commands are absent in the formal scheme of the pragmatic argument.

The mapping explains why both formats are fit to support a standpoint evaluating an action. It also explains why one format can easily summon the other during the cognitive processing of the discourse. A discourse in an argumentative format can summon an underlying story (compare Van den Hoven 2015b, pp. 127–128). Formally, the argument focuses on the effects of the action, but these *effects* include neutralizing the negative force that caused an undesired situation preceding the action. For example: "Performing certain rituals is advisable because it will bring prosperity, and prosperity is desirable" is a very straightforward pragmatic argument. In practice, however, one will encounter extensions such as: "Faithful people performing the rituals will soothe the anger of the Gods and bring prosperity", indicating the relation of the act (performing the rituals) to what precedes the action. Discourses predominantly employing narrative devices can invite – and are often meant to invite – their audiences to activate the pragmatic argument. Many lengthy documentaries employ a pragmatic format, showing the desirability of an action by showing the unacceptability of a situation for which an action is required. In Sect. 7.4, we discuss an example of a frequently employed relation between narrative, comparison and (pragmatic) argument.

7.3 Comparing the Rhetorical Force of Both Formats

The syntax of the narrative scheme is fit to investigate and understand human actions as an adaptive response to new challenges. A coherent narrative hypothesizes about the causal dynamics that explain observations from reality. Standpoints evaluating the action result from this hypothetical construction. A story taken from the Old Testament (*Numbers* 25) is a prototypical example.

> While the Israelites were camped at Acacia, some of the men had sex with Moabite women. These women then invited the men to ceremonies where sacrifices were offered to their gods. The men ate the meat from the sacrifices and worshiped the Moabite gods. The Lord was angry with Israel because they had worshiped the god Baal Peor. So he said to Moses, "Take the Israelite leaders who are responsible for this and have them killed in front of my sacred tent where everyone can see. Maybe then I will stop being angry with the Israelites." Moses told Israel's officials, "Each of you must put to death any of your men who worshiped Baal." Later, Moses and the people were at the sacred tent, crying, when one of the Israelite men brought a Midianite woman to meet his family. Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron the priest, saw the couple and left the crowd. He found a spear and followed the man into his tent, where he ran the spear through the man and into the woman's stomach. The Lord immediately stopped punishing Israel with a deadly disease, but twenty-four thousand Israelites had already died.

There may have been a number of shared memories. At the time, men had sex with women from another tribe and adapted to their rituals. Tribe members died from

diseases. As a response, some of these men were massacred, including a memorable killing of one of them. The disease then disappears. These primary, embodied memories are organized in a coherent narrative.

Prototypical narratives are anthropocentrically framed. In the totality of circumstances that may be considered condition *sine qua non* for the transference and recognition, human actions are foregrounded. Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron the priest, takes up the assignment to kill the sinners. Struggle is dramatized. One specific man and his wife are singled out. In the narrative we encounter a world with recognizable feelings and responses, real people. These primary, embodied memories are transformed into a coherent sequence that helps to explain them and learn from them. This is the case in this proto-scientific world of the Old Testament as well as in many realms of our modern world.

If a human culture develops standard strategies to respond to complications that disturb an existing equilibrium, reporting can replace. An a priori, abstract regularity can account for the choice of a response to a situation. This is the transition from a narrative into a pragmatic argument. A primary discourse world can be transformed into an intellectual, abstract world. We may think of the following two pragmatic arguments as an abstract counterpart of Numbers 25.

> It is advisable not to worship any other god than The Lord, because worshipping any other god than The Lord brings down the wrath of The Lord on all people.

> It is advisable to kill all who by their behavior brought down the wrath of The Lord, because only killing all who by their behavior brought down the wrath of The Lord can stop the disasters that His wrath brings over the entire community.

This transformation replaces the narrative abductive reasoning (that invites analogical application) with two abstract regularities (that invite quasi-deductive application in an enthymeme). Of course, discussants can disagree about the validity of these general regularities or their application in a specific situation. The scheme of the pragmatic argument in Sect. 7.2.2. sums up several potential issues. But the rhetor claims to rely on this generalized knowledge and to deduce from this knowledge her standpoint.

Contrasting the two formats this analysis emphasizes the different rationalities from which they borrow their justifying force. One can say, referring to the famous concept of Pierre Bourdieu (1987), that the narrative belongs to the habitus in a proto-scientific realm while formal argumentation belongs to a scientific and institutionalized realm. In our days, narratives fit in with the realm of daily life, but also to the realm of the courtroom when we try to understand what has happened (Kjus 2010). Argumentation, in our days, fits in with the realm of modernist, Enlightenment ideology that dominates most of our institutions.

Formulated from a different perspective, one can say that rule-based codification of experiences is required to facilitate the argumentative format. This insight puts the differences between the formats more elaborately. The narrative scheme is prior to the pragmatic argument scheme. Great codifications coincide with changes in the habitus. And the reverse, significant changes in the perception of rationality go

along with changes in the preference for specific discursive practices (Heritier 2014).

These are broad claims that require nuances. But in many realms, this transition is documented. Approaching the relation between narratives and pragmatic argumentation within this framework explains why underlying narratives are often called upon to construct the explanatory force of a pragmatic argument. The argumentative discourse format invites the audience to activate a scenario and mentally develop a storyline (compare Van den Hoven 2015b, pp. 127–133; Bex 2015). One may adhere to the rule that worshipping any other god than The Lord brings down His wrath on all people, but then this rule may still be formatted as a prototypical story. This is why framing by means of a pragmatic argument goes so well with justifying the desirability of the action within the storytelling format. We see this in courtroom practice (Bex 2009; Kjus 2010), as well as in documentaries.

7.4 *The 400 Million*

Joris Ivens's 1939 documentary *The 400 Million* tells the story of a peaceful and prosperous Chinese population (preparation) being invaded and molested by the Japanese (complication); the population fighting against the intruder (transference) winning one battle, suffering revenge, preparing to fight on (struggle), hopefully to restore a new equilibrium in which China can continue to develop into a modern democratic republic (recognition). This documentary film is meant to be read as conveying an appeal to reason. It is a call to the Western world to participate in this struggle and support the Chinese population ("motive to tell").

The film is rhetorically complex. The pragmatic appeal to reason is not conveyed in a straightforward argumentative format. The documentary opens with a text that employs an argumentative device. It conveys an analogy, supporting the standpoint that "Europe and Asia have become the western and eastern front of the same assault on democracy". The story is told in five major parts. First, we see the bombing of a Chinese city by the Japanese (2.30–7). Second, we see peaceful China, while a lengthy story is told about its development into a modern democratic republic under Sun Yat Sen (7–16.30). Third, the history of the Japanese aggression is told (16.30–19.30). Fourth, we witness the Chinese reaction, starting a guerilla war, building a modernized army, and training civilians to liberate the country (19.30–39.00). Fifth, a soldier, sergeant Wong, tells the story of the first battle won by the Chinese, the battle of Tai'erzhuang (39.00–51.50). Finally, after the screen has turned black briefly, we return to the Japanese bombing, now understanding that this was the Japanese revenge for their Tai'erzhuang defeat (51.50–54.00). The plot is structured by means of two probing comparisons:

– The horror of the Japanese bombing is directly contrasted with the peacefulness of the Chinese people and the greatness of their history.

– And the courage of the Chinese laymen in the guerilla war is directly contrasted with the cowardliness of Japanese air strikes on civilian people.

On occasion, the voice-over conveys arguments, most pronounced in the final scene, supporting a standpoint that the Chinese will prevail. All these elements together convey the intended evaluation, the "epilogue".

Before analyzing the relations between these devices, I sketch the context of the documentary to show that the documentary film indeed intends to convey a pragmatic appeal to reason, asserting that the European-Western non-fascist world should identify with and support the Chinese people (Sect. 7.4.1). Then I look at the functional relation between the storytelling and the argumentative parts in supporting the standpoint (Sect. 7.4.2). Finally, I look at the construction of the plot that supports the appeal to reason (Sect. 7.4.3).

7.4.1 The Standpoint Conveyed by The 400 Million

"Of the pioneers of documentary film, Joris Ivens can be considered as one of the most emblematic figures" (Aitken 2005, p. 653; entry by Kees Bakker). "Ivens used his camera in his roles as both political activist and humanitarian film maker" (Aitken 2005, p. 432; entry by Kent Taylor Anderson). In 1938, Ivens came to China to shoot *The 400 Million*. He was known as a "cinematic combatant". A year earlier, he had finished *The Spanish earth*, a documentary about the war of the Republicans against Franco's Nationalists. Ivens famously stated: "I never pursue passive art and never get interested in pleasing the spectator" (Devarrieux 1979, p. 25); "I am an international combatant expressing thought with films" (Devarrieux 1979, p. 29). These quotes illustrate that Ivens intends to convey and support standpoints about social and political issues by means of his film discourses.

Although Ivens visited China for the first time in 1938, he was not anonymous. He was received by Chiang Kai-shek, Song Meiling (the wife of Chiang Kai-shek) and Song Qinglin (the second wife of Sun Yat-sen, leader of the 1911 revolution). He also met Zhou En-lai who was serving in the Eighth Route Army in Wuhan. During production, Ivens moved between guerilla units, communist party members, and the nationalist army, much to the dismay and suspicion of each faction (Aitken 2005, p. 432). Ivens developed sympathy with the Communist party, becoming a life-long friend of Zhou En-lai, but in the film, he emphasizes the value of the coalition between nationalists and communists. His secret gesture of passing his camera on to the Red Army before leaving China is a significant statement of solidarity but (necessarily) beyond the text of *The 400 Million*.

The shooting of *The 400 Million* took 8 months. It premiered in March 1939, in New York. *The 400 Million* is a classical sound documentary, based on partisan journalism. Ivens used "the film medium to interpret creatively and in social terms the life of the people as it exists in reality" (Rotha 1952). He does not hesitate to

organize a mise-en-scène, synthetically edit separate shots into a narrative, or add fictional elements in an attempt to create more personalized elements. He explores the "narrative regions between fiction and non-interventionist 'spontaneous' shooting" (Waugh 2009, p. 15). Ivens' puts the emphasis on balance – neither "naturalism" nor "re-enactment" should dominate (Waugh 2009, p. 13). Ivens himself described this mode in a note during the filming as "halfway between Hollywood and newsreel" (quoted in Waugh 2009, p. 15).

Bakker summarizes the rhetorical goal of *The 400 Million* as:

> The 400 Million is an agitation film for the American people: it was made to raise awareness of the struggle of the Chinese people to prevent America from exporting scrap metal to Japan (who would turn into bombs) and eventually to raise money to help the Chinese people (2009, p. 22).

Indeed, the documentary has a brief scene of the harbor of San Francisco (18.45–19.13). Scrap is shipped. The voice-over condemns this while images of Japanese factories and shooting Japanese soldiers appear.

> This iron will fall on a Chinese city. The United States ships 54% of war materials that go to Japan. Scrap iron and broken machinery are melted down in Tokyo and those shells will go into Japanese guns.

Also a brief shot (25.00–25.20) captures a parade in New York during which money is collected, followed by a shot of Song Meiling receiving a $6000 American cheque.

The dominant standpoint supported by the documentary, however, seems a more general call to the Western world to save the Chinese people from isolation and abandon neutrality. Frank Capra acknowledges this; he later uses portions of Ivens' film as part of his World War II propaganda film, *Why We Fight* (1942–1945). This standpoint is conveyed predominantly by means of a pragmatic appeal to reason, pointing at severe consequences for the (Western) world if the feudal "ally of the Roman-Berlin axis" destroys this ancient civilization that was well on its way to develop into a modern, Western-oriented, democratic society.

7.4.2 The Pragmatic Appeal to Reason in The 400 Million

An important line of pragmatic reasoning in *The 400 Million* is based on evaluating the possible negative consequences of not supporting and the possible gains from supporting the Chinese. No support means ending the democratic development of the largest population in the world, and allowing the Japanese to expropriate enormous resources. Support means maintaining a persistent, successful opposition against the Japanese, saving an ally from the Roman-Berlin axis, which may restore the Chinese democratic modernization project.

The appeal to reason is predominantly conveyed by the story. The narrative and its specific plot organization construct the main elements (see Sect. 7.4.3). The text

at the opening of the documentary and the voice-over at the end frame their verbal messages as predominantly pragmatic.

The very first sentences of the opening text convey a proposition that generalizes the struggle and announces its potentially damaging consequences for everybody.

> The war in the Far East is no isolated conflict between China and Japan. It is a struggle involving one fifth of the world's population, and one whose outcome will have tremendous importance in the history of mankind.

The second paragraph urges verbally the good forces to be saved and the evil forces to be prevented from gaining position. Both elements fit into a pragmatic argument, but they are not presented in a discourse structure that is characterized by many argumentative indicators. In the third paragraph, the analogy that Western interests are at stake is explicitly formulated. Together these verbal statements construct the frame that makes the story part of a pragmatic appeal, even before the storytelling starts.

> On one side – China – which has enriched the world for 4,000 years with its treasures of art and wisdom. On the other side – the rulers of Japan – determined to capture all China, and with the aid of her immense resources, seize the world for her empire. China was forced into this war to protect its national independence, its freedom, and its precious culture.
>
> On the one side, the Japanese military machine, ally of the Roman-Berlin axis, brutal and merciless. On the other side, just as in Europe, the peaceful masses of humanity – victims of fascist attack.
>
> Europe and Asia have become the western and eastern front of the same assault on democracy.

Final sentences of the voice-over emphasize once more, who are the good and who are the evil, and the relevance of taking part in this conflict. Here, one other element is emphasized that is relevant for the pragmatic appeal. Supporting the Chinese people is feasible, and may restore the positive situation of the past. Notwithstanding the suffering under an oppressive enemy – winning a small battle that leads to a horrific retaliation –, the Chinese people are determined to win. One can recognize this as an answer to question 3 in the scheme of the pragmatic argument, the feasibility.

> When the Japanese general staff learned about their loss at Tai'erzhuang they struck back. They took revenge for their defeat. They bombed the open cities of China. They bombed the unarmed population. These are not easy things to look at. But as Americans we had to see them. We saw the building, the destruction, the suffering and the hope of victory. Tai'erzhuang is taken. The Chinese will march all night in the streets to celebrate their first victory. Here is a great people, one fifth of the human race, fighting in defense of their freedom, their fine culture and their independence against the pitiless attack of undeclared war. Will these people win? They believe they can. They say it may take them 10 years or more and they fully realize the suffering they have to endure. But they have weapons to fight with and they understand why they are fighting. In the end those are the things that mean victory. THE END

Even though the verbal elements of the voice-over are limited, it is clear that the opening and the closure are, in particular, used to frame the information conveyed by the discourse as a whole. This supports the position of sceptics on the

impossibility of purely non-verbal argumentation, who often argue that the relations between elements of an appeal to reason are hard to express without using verbal means.

7.4.3 The Rhetorical Meaning of the Plot Structure

The appeal to reason is predominantly conveyed by the story. The construction of the plot fills in the pragmatic frame. The choice to break the temporal order of the story (*sjuzhet*) and create a plot (*fabula*) that opens with a scene that is latest in time is significant. After showing the text, the frame turns black for a moment before the first shot appears. We hear a drumroll, followed by composed music, fitting the images. The voice-over, speaking only a few lines every now and then, is a male with a probing but composed voice. In 51 shots, of 4 s on average, we see the bombing of a civilian neighborhood and its effects. In 19 shots of about the same length, we see people on the run, trying to escape from the area. Some of the most dramatic shots are handheld close-ups, positioning the camera as an agent on the spot and involved in the action. Then we turn to an interior area in the far west of China, symbolic of China before the Japanese invasion. Music changes. The editing slows down significantly, using much lengthier shots. The camera is placed on a tripod. The first long panning shot lasts 18 s.

This editing was done by Helen van Dongen who also edited Ivens' *The Spanish earth*. One reason to place the bombing scene at the opening, even though this scene captures later events in the timeline of the story, is to create a rounded unity: the scene is taken up again at the end. It seems the decision was taken quite late in the editing process, but reasons are not documented. Certainly, it creates an optimal contrast between the cruelty of Japanese bombing of women and children, and the peacefulness of pre-invasion China at the onset of its modernization. It can hardly be a coincidence that this order perfectly serves the pragmatic appeal.

Five full minutes of extreme human suffering, constructed from documented materials, was impressive; the innovative use of close-ups by a handheld camera intrinsically calls upon the humanitarian need to support. These images prove the evilness of the Japanese feudal forces against the Chinese population and the suffering of the Chinese population caused by the extreme immorality of the Japanese. It follows from the discussion in Sect. 7.3 that a pragmatic appeal to reason can be tightly interwoven with evaluations based on a general humanitarian norm. In the narrative scheme, consequences of an action can include neutralizing negative forces that caused the necessity of the action. If these forces are considered inherently immoral, the overlap between the purely pragmatic norm and the purely moral norm is a fact. This is what we see happen in *The 400 Million*.

The story, however, also needs to portray China as a recognizable, potentially powerful ally. It needs to show the future of China when it survives the Japanese

assault as desirable for the West. Even more, the subtext of a backwards, feudal China needs to be neutralized. The horrific opening scene allows a subsequent emphasis on the strengths and the positive values of the Chinese culture on its road to modernity, which may make it a strong ally in the struggle against anti-democratic forces. This antithesis is constructed by cinematographic contrasts: contrast in topic, contrast in camera-movement, contrast in music, and contrast in editing rhythm.

After a lengthy episode that conveys these potential gains, the remainder of the film is dedicated to the issue of feasibility. The Chinese people are capable, and determined to prevail: "[…] they have weapons to fight with and they understand why they are fighting. In the end those are the things that mean victory."

7.5 Conclusion

The formal structures underlying storytelling and pragmatic argumentation make clear that an appeal to reason in a story form can be transformed into an appeal to reason in an argument form, preserving the core of the topical materials. The crucial distinction is that the pragmatic argument projects a generalized regularity onto a current situation, while the narrative gives the storyteller opportunities to explore the situation as embodying a meaningful causal chain, and to employ the coherency of this causality. Evolutionary anthropologists teach us that narratives based on abduction (in which a desired new situation is explained in terms of effectively addressing the presumed cause of the old situation) are told and retold to convey lessons for comparable situations in the future. The narrative flourishes in new situations, unknown or not yet fully understood. The pragmatic argument flourishes in contexts in which established regularities and shared evaluations are available.

In our modern society, we accept many empirically and theoretically grounded models; the pragmatic argument serves as a sign of this scientific rationality. Still, a coherent narrative is a primary way to fit (proposed) actions into our perceived reality (Kjus 2010; Van den Hoven 2015b). This may explain why in many contexts the two formats merge (Bex 2015). An established regularity (with its attached values) corresponds with the epilogue of the narrative.

If we accept the narrative as (a crucial part of) an appeal to reason and accept its complex relation to an argument scheme, then obviously we expect argument theory to deal with the narrative. Scholars have reached similar conclusions concerning non-verbal discourses, as they rethink the limiting focus of argument theories on one prototypical verbal discourse format (Bateman and Wildfeuer 2014; Birdsell and Groarke 2007; Blair 1996, 2015; Dove 2012, 2013; Gilbert 1994, 1997; Groarke 2009, 2015; Kjeldsen 2012, 2015; Roque 2012; Van den Hoven 2012a, b, 2015a, b; Van den Hoven and Yang 2013).

The notion of strategic maneuvering, an extension of the pragma-dialectical framework (Van Eemeren and Houtlosser 2006, 2009; Van Eemeren 2010), helps deal with formats that deviate from the prototypical verbal argumentative discourse formats. The core idea in this approach is that a strategic rhetor tries to reconcile both dialectical goals (resolving a difference of opinion in a reasonable way) and rhetorical goals (maximizing effectiveness by choosing and performing dialectically relevant moves in a way that may best convince the prospective audience). Van Eemeren distinguishes three aspects of strategic maneuvering: choices made from the topical potential, adaptation to the audience, and presentational choices (Van Eemeren 2010, pp. 93–127). The same dialectical move can be rhetorically varied by making different choices, maximizing its effectiveness. Arguing the same standpoint with a story or a pragmatic argument would then be considered making (slightly) different choices from a topical potential, combined with making different presentational choices.

This theoretical approach would imply that opting for storytelling (as opposed to a pragmatic argument) as an appeal to reason affects the effectiveness of what would be considered the same dialectical move. In light of the analyses presented above, this does not seem satisfying.[5] On the contrary, the type of reasoning the formats appeal to differ. The way the narrative constructs causality appeals to abductive reasoning, based on primary ideas about coherence, analogy, or inductive reasoning; meanwhile, the pragmatic argument appeals foremost to (quasi-)deductive reasoning, departing from a generalized regularity and an evaluation as premises that, if necessary, may require further subordinate arguments.

Acknowledging this difference would require a different response from argument theory, at least if one intends to develop a general theory about discursive appeals to reason. It suggests to abandon the idea that every discourse can and should be reconstructed (Van Eemeren and Grootendorst 2004; Van Eemeren and Houtlosser 2009), or standardized (Govier 2010), or dressed (Woods 1995) in the prototypical verbal format, with a well-delineated propositional content, ordered in a specific, (informal) logical structure. The idea that an appeal to reason can be separated from its presentation as such and, more importantly, that this process of reconstruction does not interfere with successive analyses and evaluations of the reasonableness of the reconstructed argumentation, seems grounded on the assumption that the prototypical verbal format covers all that can count as an appeal to reason.

Documentaries and other discourse practices that propagate, advise, or evaluate a human response to a *new* situation (i.e. religious scriptures) utilize carefully con-

[5] At one point in his book, Van Eemeren seems to share this idea that presentational choices are not neutral towards the dialectical dimension of the discourse: "[R]ecognizing the unbreakable connection between expression and content observed already in antiquity […] my starting point is that whenever something is at one time expressed differently than it was expressed at another time it is pragmatically no longer 'the same thing'" (Van Eemeren 2010, p. 119). Taken to its consequences, this would mean that the narrative format and the argumentative format convey, also in Van Eemeren's view, different dialectical moves and should therefore appear as different arguments in a dialectical reconstruction, potentially influencing the assessment of dialectical reasonableness.

structed discourses that deliberately mix narrative and argumentative formats. Similar observations can be made in courtroom discourses (Bex 2015). It seems advisable to keep in mind Max Black's view on the metaphor:

> Somebody seriously making a metaphorical statement […] might reasonably claim that he meant just what he said, having chosen the words most apt to express his thought, attitudes, and feelings (reprinted as Black 1994: 22).

Reducing the deliberate choice not to use the prototypical verbal format as either abandoning an appeal to reason or as presentational variations that only affect persuasive effectiveness, seems untenable.

Argument theory should develop in a direction that explores varied, complex presentations through which appeals to reason are discursively constructed. The aim is to understand the specifics of each format. The prototypical verbal format should be approached then as one particular format with specific features, among others. Social and cultural analyses such as those presented by Latour (1993) explain the dominance of the prototypical verbal format in our modernist Enlightenment era, while anthropological analyses explain the role of the narrative format in developing human cultures, and developmental psychological analyses explain why the narrative scheme plays a part in construing the rhetorical force of pragmatic arguments.

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Chapter 8
The Sample Convention, or, When Fictionalized Narratives Can Double as Historical Testimony

Leona Toker

Abstract The paper deals with the cases when fictionalized narratives can double as historical evidence to mass violence. These are the cases of narratives written by people who have experienced the atrocities and trials that they give account of but who represent the historical realities not in a directly factographic mode (that is, not as memoirs or autobiographies) but with the use of what Dorrit Cohn has termed "the signposts of fictionality." The problem is particularly acute in the case of writers, such as the Gulag writer Varlam Shalamov, who deliberately blur the borderlines between their directly autobiographical (or rather memoiristic) stories and their fictionalized narratives. According to Wolfgang Iser's *The Fictive and the Imaginary*, fiction is characterized by selection and recombination of material under the aegis of the "as if convention." Yet selection and recombination occur also in narratives that obey what Philippe Lejeune calls "the autobiographical pact." It is the "as if convention" which, when clearly operative, presents the narrative as fictional or at least fictionalized. However, in narratives of testimony this convention is often neutralized by what I call "the sample convention": a mimetic staging of a pattern of events or relationships to show the mechanics of the ways in which unbelievable events could actually take place. The sample convention is used to demonstrate how things worked, not in one case, but in the experience of many people—with possible variations but with serially recurrent regularities. The paper discusses the narratological aspects of the sample convention, prominently including "serial iterativity," with examples mainly from Gulag narratives. It then shows in what sense narratives of testimony, which are usually driven by specific ethical goals, can also function as arguments.

This paper addresses the issue of the potential of fictionalized narratives to provide historical evidence; it focuses on narratives of the plight of Gulag prisoners. The narratives in question are those of "flesh witnesses" (Harari 2009), that is, people

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who have experienced the trials that they give account of, who have been there, and borne the pain first hand, in the flesh, rather than those writers who represent what they have only attempted to imagine. My argument is that what I call "the sample convention" largely neutralizes the "as-if convention," the major distinctive feature of fictional narrative.

This agenda raises the stakes. On the one hand, laying the grounds for Holocaust historiography in *The Destruction of European Jews* (1961), Raul Hilberg abstained from including even strictly factographic survivor memoirs among his sources, considering them subjective and unreliable. Since the mid-1960s, that is, since the turn to survivor testimony registered ex-tempore by Elie Wiesel ("So we turned to the victims, the survivors. They were asked to bare themselves, to delve into the innermost recesses of their being, and tell, and tell again," 1970, p. 7) and comprehensively discussed by Annette Wieviorka in *The Era of the Witness* (2006; *L'Ère du témoin*, 2002), the imbalance between archival and narrative sources has been redressed. Saul Friedländer's two-volume *Nazi Germany and the Jews* (1997, 2007) makes use of both. On the other hand, early studies of the Gulag were massively indebted to survivor narratives because of the paucity, inaccessibility, and unreliability of archival materials—largely redressed after the "Second Russian Revolution" of the 1990s. Yet apart from scholarship, in the history of the collective memorialization of the Gulag it was fiction rather than memoir literature that played the central role.

The first texts on Gulag experience to be published after the public condemnation of Stalinist crimes at the 22nd Congress of the Soviet Communist Party in 1962[1] were fictional—Solzhenitsyn's novella *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* and Georgy Shelest's short story "The Nugget" which came out in the newspaper *Izvestiya* a day before (and in competition with) the publication of *Ivan Denisovich* in the journal *Novyi mir*. It was to Solzhenitsyn's novella that millions of readers in the Soviet Union as well as abroad were indebted for an initial understanding of what it may have been like in the camps, the places to which, unless executed, people had disappeared from among their midst. The standing of this narrative is singular: its representation of camp realities purports to be harsh whereas in fact it is "lightened," self-censored in a way that would enable it to squeeze through the various layers of Soviet censorship and, as a result, encourage the writing of other potential witnesses, even if without paving their way towards publication.[2] Solzhenitsyn's presenting a relatively mild case of Gulag prisoner's suffering had two more major consequences: it laid the ground for the mass reader's gradual immersion in the extremely painful subject, and it made space for innumerable emendations, supplementations, and revisions of the treatment of the Soviet concentration camp as a new literary subject.

[1] Khrushchev's "secret speech" at the 20th Congress sent shock waves around the world but did not open the floodgates of publication in the USSR.

[2] On the paradigmatic narrative method of *Ivan Denisovich* see Toker (2000, pp. 190–196).

Solzhenitsyn had spent over 2 years in a camp of the kind portrayed in the story. Hence in the terms suggested by Philippe Lejeune (1989, p. 27), the story offers the reader a "phantasmatic pact." This pact is different from what Lejeune calls the "autobiographical pact," characteristic of memoirs and autobiographies, first-person narratives in which the focal character, the narrator, and the author bear the same name and can be identified with one another (Lejeune 1989, p. 12). The "phantasmatic pact" is an indirect form of the autobiographical one: the protagonist is not to be identified with the individual in the "author line" but is a phantasm placed in that individual's autobiographical space. Whereas the term "the autobiographical pact" has gained broad currency, the notion of the "phantasmatic pact" has not been widely adopted,[3] perhaps because its connotations of fantasy do not quite suit either the writers' ethical drives or the readers' expectations. I shall not suggest alternative terminology except for opting for the term "the factographic pact" rather than "the autobiographical pact." I shall illustrate the workings of the "sample convention," *literalizing* the "autobiographical space" (Lejeune 1989, pp. 26ff) as a specific socio-historical chronotope, a setting which the writers in question had known directly and intimately. If the focal characters who act, feel, and think in these settings are not to be identified with the authors, how can such narratives double as historical testimony?

Moreover, in so far as recourse to testimony is needed in order to confront doubt, and in so far as each narrative of testimony also pursues specific ethical goals in addition to making a cognitive contribution, I shall also suggests a way in which fictionalized narratives by witnesses function as implicit arguments.

8.1 To Be Read as Testimony, to Be Analyzed as Art

An account of multifunctionality is partly facilitated but accrues new complications when writers deliberately blur the borderlines between factographic and fictionalized narratives. This happens in Shalamov's *Kolyma Tales* as well as his later collections, "The Revival of the Larch" and "The Glove, or KR-2"; the stories of Shalamov's one-time friend Georgy Demidov, especially his collection *Chudnaia planeta* (*Wonder Planet*), present a somewhat similar case. If one defines fiction, following Wolfgang Iser, in terms of *selection* and *recombination* of the material[4] under the aegis of the "as if" convention (1993, p. 4–21), only the latter feature will be found specific to fiction: any kind of life writing also involves selection and various kinds of recombination of material. Whereas all the features of the purely factographic mode can be imitated, or even faked in fictional narratives (as in the notorious cases of Wilkomisky and Demidenko), and one needs external

[3] One of the exceptions is Sorensen (2014, esp. pp. 170–176).

[4] For a discussion of the inroads of fictionalization into factography see Eakin (1985). Eakin sees the autobiographical "I" as an evolving fictional self, where fiction is not always a narratological category but rather a form of reflection.

verification procedures for the maintenance of the factographic pact, reversing the problem, one can say that the fictional character of a narrative has clear structural "signposts." These "signposts" have been discussed in detail by Dorrit Cohn (1999, pp. 109–132); they prominently include inside views of third-person characters, shifting internal focalization, the use of the first-person narrator whose name does not coincide with that of the author, sustained scenic presentation of remembered episodes of the past based on the "perfect-memory" convention of first-person fictional narratives (by contrast, one might add, with brief sound-bites or flashes of scenes which one could well imagine having imprinted themselves into the narrator's memory), sustained scenic staging of episodes that the narrator could not have witnessed, and scenic presentation of events that happened at the same time in different places. What all these signpost of fictionality produce are the two main criteria for the presence of the "as if" convention: (1) the ascription of recognizable actions, thoughts, and features to non-documented, non-documentable subjects or (2) the ascription of non-documented, or non-documentable actions, thoughts, or features to recognizable historical personages (Toker 1997, p. 190).

For establishing the fictionality of the narrative (the "as if" convention), any one of the above criteria is sufficient, except in some of the culturally-determined cases when the third-person subject, whether protagonist or observer, is to be identified with the first-person narrator or the person referred to in the "author line."[5] Less definitive symptoms of fictionalization, the ones that make us suspect fictionalization in first-person narratives, are contradictory versions of the same events or a non-coincidence of small details pertaining to the same events in different stories by the same author (a recurrent feature in Shalamov's corpus). These are ambiguous markers since they can be accounted for by honest mistakes of the memory or by shifts in the author's understanding. Conducive to the sense of fictionalization are also the vagueness of public verification landmarks, such as dates and toponyms,[6] as well as the name-change convention: when, even if for their own protection, real people appear in stories under aliases, the details of the events in which they take part can likewise be fully expected to have been modified or recombined (see Rimmon-Kenan 2006; Toker 2012). Yet—this needs and bears repeating—a fictional narrative may also be set in a concrete location at a specific time-period and be told by a first-person narrator without straining the reader's belief in the power of that narrator's retrospective memory—yet still be fictional, or at least fictionalized. Shalamov's *Kolyma Tales* contain such stories (e.g., the stories "The Love of Captain Tolly," and "The Almaznyi Spring", in which the first-person narrator's scarf is lost in different mutually exclusive ways).[7] In his collections, the structure of which was of major importance to him, these narratives are wedged between stories in which

[5] The latter condition is applicable to ancient Roman memoirs, usually written in the third person, such as Julius Ceasar's *De bello Gallico.* A special, and complicated, modern case is Gertrude Stein's *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas.*

[6] But then it can be objected that our memory seldom has time-tags, though it is more retentive of the consciousness of place.

[7] On this repetition-in-difference see also Jurgenson 2005, pp. 332–333.

the first-person narrator is indistinguishable from the one in the "autobiographical pact" but public-verification landmarks are vague or absent, and, on the other hand, stories characterized by clear signposts of fictionality, even if we are invited to read their third-person focalizers as avatars or aliases of the author himself at some point in his camp ordeal.[8] Study of Shalamov's poetics (see, Toker 2000, pp. 150–160) has lead me to the conclusion that the collocation of the stories of these three kinds in the same collection invites the reader to endorse both the autobiographical and the phantasmatic pacts at the same time, since the epistemological status of each narrative irradiates on that of the others.[9] As a result, we are invited to read *all* the stories as testimony to the experience of Gulag victims but ask of *all* of them the kind of questions that we ask about the narrative art of fiction—questions about symbolism, about the function of certain details of reference, about the meaning of the sequence of narrative details, or about the thematic relationships between features of the different characters portrayed.

The latter part of the reader's task is similar to the traditional methods of narrative analysis. But what is involved in the first task, reading the possibly or definitely fictional narratives by eyewitness authors as historical testimony? To attempt to answer this question it is necessary to distinguish between attention to the plot of these narratives and attention to their setting, their "autobiographical spaces."

8.2 The Setting

The setting of a narrative has the geographical, historical, topographical, social, and cultural aspects. The geographical and historical aspects may include precise public-verification landmarks, such as names of specific camps in many of Shalamov's and Demidov's stories as well as in factographic narratives such as Evgenia Ginzburg's and Dimitri Panin's memoirs and the autobiographical chapters in Solzhenitsyn's *The Gulag Archipelago*. These aspects of the setting belong to what, in 1984, Benjamin Harshaw (1984) called "External Fields of Reference"; in specific narratives they are often suppressed or left vague.

The topographical aspect of the narrative's chronotope belongs to what Harshaw calls the Internal Field of Reference and is usually functional, though in camp narratives it too is based on the corresponding architectural practices. The social aspect of the setting is a question of milieu—that of nation-state and class in nineteenth century novels and that of the prisoners (common prisoners or "prominents") or the guards (the latter in Dovlatov's novel *Zona*) in Gulag narratives. The cultural setting is a matter of practices among which people had to orient themselves, and this,

[8] For different views on the relationship of Shalamov's protagonists to his own experience see Apanowich 2002; Jurgenson 2003, pp. 270–296, and Young 2011, pp. 360–364.

[9] Endorsement, however, does not rule out hesitation as to whether some of the stories are directly autobiographical or fictionalized.

alongside with the prisoners' ethical and psychological responses, is the main subject of fictionalized narratives as historical testimony.[10]

The practices in question involve the conditions under which the prisoners were held at different times and in different places and the ways in which they adapted or failed to adapt to those conditions. The main factor in the predicament of the Gulag prisoner was calorie deficit: the amount of energy that the prisoners expended on forced hard labor was not compensated by their rations. The techniques of survival therefore involved various attempts to escape or stave off the consequence of this imbalance—the gradual (yet sometimes very fast) descent into physical depletion, scurvy, pellagra, dementia, and death—to stave this off either by obtaining more food or, more reliably, by getting a work assignment away from the toughest forms of forced labor.

For the political prisoners (that is, those sentenced, most often unjustly, under the "political" 58th article of the Stalinist criminal code) a moral danger, in addition to the physical one, came from the policies of the camp authorities who often had to resort to an assortment of underhand or draconian acts in pursuit of their own vested interests. Other threatening factors, often deadly, were secret police operatives and informers on the one hand and criminal convicts on the other. The precarious navigation between the Scylla of depletion and the Charybdis of moral surrender involved a set of practices and counter-practices under the sign of chronic hunger and personality changes that it produced.

The radical deprivation of the prisoners in the camps meant also specific shifts in the value of small items of personal property (a spoon, a scarf, a sweater, boots) and minor actions or gestures. Some of Shalamov's stories trace the shifts in the scale of significances, showing the importance of minor acts or things; others stage and explain the cultural codes unknown to the people who have not been in the camps—for instance, the story "On Tick" shows that wearing of the cross was not a sign of religious affiliation but a status symbol among the criminals, as was the possession of a pillow, or that cheating at cards was part of the game but the payment of card games was a sacred matter of life and death. Almost throughout, the stories also show the interdependence of language on camp practices: like Nazi camp survivors Primo Levi and Charlotte Delbo, Shalamov also points to the semantic shifts that familiar standard words, such as cold, supper, shoes, work, have undergone in the camps (see Consonni 2012). His vocabulary reflects the specific terminology, the language furnishing the prison and camp universe—the nomenclature of camp

[10] See Bernard Harrison rejection of the mutual exclusiveness of the two views of meaning in language: a view which treats language as a "device for describing the nature of empirical reality," with meaning seen as "dependent on natural conditions" and the view of meaning as "determined," though never definitively, "internally to language, through the relations of words to one another" (2011, p. 411). In collaboration with Patricia Hanna (Hanna and Harrison 2004) and following Wittgenstein, he adds a third option: "meaning arises as a result of the roles assigned to linguistic expressions in the conduct of practices. The connection between language and reality […] is forged not by a *direct* link between linguistic expression and item or aspect of reality, but by the multifarious ways in which *practices* engage with the complex realities revealed to us by experience" (2011, p. 412).

functionaries and words like ration, production, quota, *balanda* (prison soup), *fraiery* (suckers—non-criminal prisoners), planks (for sleeping), *parasha* (slop-bucket), etc. The mutually explanatory homogeneous parts of his sentences convey the need for paraphrase and rediscription in order to render the qualia of camp experience. At times he also uses the specific camp neologisms, usually coming from the criminal jargon—this feature recurs much more often in the stories of Demidov. One of the most immediate ways in which Shalamov's, Demidov's, and Solzhenitsyn's stories, both factographic and fictionalized, testify to the nature of the institution is in the deployment of the newspeak of the Gulag—both the necessary terms of daily life and official discourse. In the story "Sententia," Shalamov enumerates most of the words needed for everyday functioning of the depleted "goner" in the camp:

> Get up, go to work, dinner, end of work, rest, citizen chief, may I speak, shovel, trench, yes sir, drill, pick, it's cold outside, rain, cold soup, hot soup, bread ration, leave me the butt—these few dozen words were all I had needed for years (1994, p. 289).

Shalamov's positive characters are distinguished by an avoidance of the language of the perpetrators in their speech. On the other hand, his sadistic camp bosses cover their cruelty or callousness by terms from official discourse, prominently including the term "enemies of the people." Yet one of the particularly painful moments comes at the end of the sketch "Lazarson" in his collection "Vishera: An Antinovel," where a crooked but sympathetically represented camp foreman slips into hurling the potentially deadly official term "wrecker" (*vreditel'*) when angry with a fellow-prisoner (1998 IV, p. 190).

The practices that form the cultural setting of Gulag stories, the regularities of concentration-camp experience, often do not apply to camps that are totally new or under construction.[11] The reader estimates their value as evidence on the basis of the grim internal logic of the world of the camps as evoked in the stories (the practices "make sense")[12] as well as on the basis of their consistency with the practices

[11] Among the most cruel episodes of camp experience is being brought to the site of a new camp whose infrastructure has not yet been constructed (from many of them production results were required before people had any shelter). The subject, studied by historians such as, for instance, Lynn Viola and Nicholas Werth, is not frequently dealt with in survivor memoirs, for the plain reason that there were few survivors of such operations. One finds a harrowing account between the lines in the memoirs of a "perpetrator," Fyodor Mochulsky, an engineer who at one point was in charge of a new railroad-building camp where prisoners had to sleep on the ground in the open at temperatures well below freezing. Mochulsky claims that he endangered his own freedom by spending the first two weeks building camp facilities while presenting false accounts of progress in the construction of the railway to the authorities (Mochulsky 2011, pp. 31–38).

[12] One of the features liable to discredit the truth-value of Ka-Tzetnik's Holocaust novels *House of Dolls* and *Moni* (by contrast with his first novel *Salamandra*, translated into English as *Sunrise over Hell*) is precisely the *hypetrophy* of construed regularities in two dystopias—a Nazi *Kraft-durch-Freude* brothel camp and pedophiliac-homosexual practices of the kapos in Auschwitz. Whereas the latter phenomenon is a matter of common knowledge, and there is some evidence of the (formerly contested) use of Jewish women as sex slaves by the Nazis, in reality such phenomena were much more messy. Though Ka-Tzetnik was a prisoner in Auschwitz, he did not have direct familiarity with these two subspaces of the Holocaust map; hence these two novels do not belong to the same category as slightly fictionalized works discussed in this article. For important recent discus-

represented in other works of Gulag literature, in particular memoirs: as in court proceedings, evidence is convincing if it comes from at least two independent sources. In those cases where a certain regularity is not supported by other sources and especially when it is not sufficiently supported by the coherence of the Internal Field of Reference, one should perhaps think of it the way Carlo Ginzburg (1992) thinks about events of which there is only one witness: the usable fact is not the event itself but the attesting to it by that single witness. That single witness is often a person who by some statistically miraculous chance survived the catastrophe that he gives account of.

8.3 Serial Iterativity

It is in the issue of the testimonial value of the *plots* of fictionalized stories that new complications arise. The events represented and/or the subjects of those events are not referential: in principle they fall squarely under the as-if convention. However, their representation may include features that go a long way towards neutralizing this convention. These features are different in the case of the stories that are represented as typical and those which I would call not typical but typifying.

The typical stories are the ones that show how things used to unfold.[13] They often exemplify the practices that form the socio-cultural setting of the narratives. In other words, their mode is that of "sample"—and it is the "sample" convention that makes the as-if convention inoperative despite the signposts of fictionality. Sample episodes can sometimes be found in factographical narratives as well. When Dimitri Panin wishes to explain to his readers how in the camps a person can be sold for a cigarette, he offers us an imaginary scene (realistic enough but one that he, the memoirist, did not directly observe), in which the NKVD (political police) operative uses the young criminals' nicotine hunger to persuade them to make depositions against a political prisoner (1976, p. 117).[14]

In fictionalized stories, this "let us imagine" procedure is less explicit, except in the story where it is practically laid bare—Shalamov's "The Snake Charmer." This story, in the first cycle of the *Kolyma Tales* collection, starts with a prologue-type conversation between the first-person narrator and the prisoner Platonov, a former movie scriptwriter, who mentions that he had survived the camp Jankhar, one of the

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sions of Ka-Tzetnik's work, and polemics with his critics, see Popkin 2002; Abramowich 2007; Milner 2008; Wallen 2014; and Rogovin 2016.

[13] This is the case of narrative functioning as an answer to the "how question" rather than "why question" (cf. Kvernbekk 2003, pp. 271f), providing a staged explanation of iterative events as credible evidence.

[14] For a more detailed discussion of this part of Panin's memoir see Toker (2000, pp. 132–133). Panin was the prototype of Sologdin in Solzhenitsyn's novel *The First Circle*, and Solzhenitsyn protested against his capitalizing on this relationship in calling his 1973 memoirs *Zapiski Sologdina* (*The Notebooks of Sologdin*). A later (1991) Russian edition came under the title *Lubianka-Ekibastuz: Lagernye zapiski* (*Lubianka-Ekibastuz: Camp Notes*).

worst in Kolyma, by entertaining the hardened-criminal prisoners with stories from Dumas, Conan Doyle, and H. G. Wells. The status of such bardic intellectual story-tellers was protected: the criminals supplied them with food, clothing, tobacco, and respect. "If I survive," says Platonov to the narrator, "I'll write a story about it. I even have a title: 'The Snake Charmer.'" Yet Platonov soon dies of a heart attack. The prologue part of the story ends as follows: "I loved Platonov, and I will attempt to write his story — 'The Snake Charmer'" (1994, p. 87). There follows a story of how an intellectual called Platonov is recruited for the story-teller's position after his ordeal at lumbering. The texture of that narrative-within-narrative is woven out of typical details (reveille, roll-call, abuse by guards, long walk to the worksite, hauling logs, thoughts about man's stamina exceeding that of farm animals in the camps, card-playing criminals who refuse to work and who terrorize and abuse the intellectual team-mate, their chief's pleasure in having his heels scratched by a sycophant or sex-slave, and their abrupt change of attitude to the abused intellectual on learning that he can tell stories). The story ends with a young thief apologizing to Platonov for having pushed him, and asking him not to tell on him to the chief of the criminals. The punchline of the story is "'I won't tell,' said Platonov" (p. 92). Indeed, it is the narrator who tells the story instead, imagining how it was all likely to have been, on the basis of his observations of similar cases.

In terms of the repetition-relation between actions and their narrative representation, events can be singulative (what happened once is told once), iterative (what happened many times is told once), and repetitive (what happened once is told many times).[15] This classification calls for an amendment: factographic literature often also contains what can be called "serial iterativity." Though Shalamov's stories are written in the singulative rather than iterative mode, the sample convention (e. g. with both the plot and the setting of the inset story of "The Snake Charmer" woven out of typical details) presents the plot events as basically iterative, serial, a synecdoche for the way things used to happen.[16]

The expression for the telling of stories to criminal prisoners in the camps was *tiskat' romany* ("squeezing novels"). In "Sketches of the Criminal World" (especially in the essay "Kak tiskayut romany" ["How 'Novels' Are Squeezed"]) Shalamov explains the peculiar tastes to which these stories had to cater. Read in the context of "The Sketches," the first-person narrator's refusal to engage in this activity can be understood not merely on moral grounds—telling "novels" to the criminals is like scratching their chief's heels—but also on ethical grounds: he does not wish his language and talent as a writer to be contaminated by vulgarized discourse. This motivation may be similar to the reason why Shalamov likewise refused to adopt any of the official discourse in order to push his stories through Soviet censorship—by contrast with, for instance, Solzhenitsyn's famous "lightening" of *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* or his representation of the prisoner getting carried away with his work at the forced-labor site.

[15] See ch. 3 in Gérard Genette's *Narrative Discourse* (1980).

[16] See also Toker (2016) for a discussion of serial iterativity in Shalamov's "Wheelbarrow I" and "Wheelbarrow II."

Andrei Platonov's adaptation to camp conditions by telling stories to the criminals is echoed in the memoirs of other Gulag veterans, in particular, Alexander Dolgun (1975). The case was fairly typical, and Shalamov treats it as such. Since it is not Platonov who is writing this story but the narrator doing it "for him," the details of the story are realistic rather than referential: the minuter particulars may not have been the experience of Platonov (or whoever Shalamov may have meant by Platonov, bearer of the pen-name of a famous writer Andrei Platonov, as if to suggest that many great talents were wasted in the camps) but such things happened in some of these ways to numerous others. The main plot event is implicitly iterative, not in the sense that it happened to the same character many times (as, for instance, in the case of the young protagonist's weekly walks to the market with his aunt in Joyce's "Araby") but, by way of serial iterativity, in the sense that it happened, with variations, to many people.

Shalamov's story "An Individual Assignment" likewise represents an answer to the question about a grim regularity of Kolyma camps in the winter of 1938: how would it happen that prisoners were executed if they did not reach 30% of the work quota. Almost all the details of the plot are "typical": the displeasure of the overseer, the ruling that the protagonist, Dugaev, should work alone rather than with a partner the next day, the reiteration of the result ("25 percent") at the end of that next day, the pro-forma summons to the interrogator. The protagonist's associates see these events as signs and, as their gestures indicate, recognize their meaning, which remains obscure to the protagonist who has not had enough time to learn the camp semiotics. Executions for "sabotage" based on non-fulfillment of the quota by depleted political prisoners were a daily event in 1938, when great numbers of victims of the Great Purge, which had culminated in 1937, flowed from interrogation prisons to the camps and turned into an expendable work force. This fact, along with memories of the names of the executed being read out loud at daily roll calls, is repeatedly mentioned in Shalamov's works, as well as in other sources. Dugaev's fate is, thus, a sample of a serial crime.

The reader is not given any of Dugaev's individualizing features: we only know that he was arrested when he was a young University student and that he got depleted very fast in the camp, before he had had a chance to study much of its codes. The sparse character portrayal is characteristic of numerous stories in *Kolyma Tales*, and it is usually associated with the focus being on the prisoners at the stage of depletion in which individual traits have been obliterated by starvation and physical suffering. The non-individualization of the characters is, thus, consistent with the realistic representation of camp conditions. Yet it also has a role in the attesting function of the stories: the more individualized the characters, the weaker the "sample" convention. Shalamov's art lies in activating the sample convention without making his stories schematic. This balancing is helped by symbolic action, such as Dugaev's partner's glance at the stars, his beginning to fuss nervously in the mine face when Dugaev is scheduled for an individual assignment, his offering Dugaev a cigarette (the topos of the "last-wish"). The art of the "sample" also includes the semiotic density of detail, and the ultimate paradox when, having understood everything, Dugaev regrets only that he has not refused to work on his last day, after the verdict

had been signed. The paradox also evokes the sense of "the disnarrated" (Prince 1988): what would Dugaev's inner experience have been, if the deadly meaning of his being scheduled for the "individual assignment" had been clear to him from the start?

The latter question is partly answered in Georgy Demidov's story "The Intellectual (The Cauchy Criterion)." This story, a third-person-center-of-consciousness narrative at the end of which the protagonist, the focal character, presumably dies, is an approach to that most painful and mysterious point in a captive's experience: watching the death of others and knowing that one is himself headed for this kind of end. In Holocaust memoirs this experience is often presented from the outside: the condemned victim of the in-camp selection for the gas-chambers, one who knows that he is the condemned, like others before him (e.g., Beppo in Primo Levi's *If This Is a Man*), is usually presented as seen by another, from the point of view of the survivor, who would like to imagine the exhausted victim's indifference to life and death but feels, deep down, that this is not so, at least not with every victim (not for instance, with the still strong René). Demidov "lightens" the issue by tracing the thought process of a brilliant scientist who has survived many of his fellow sufferers in the camp by being able to abstract his attention from camp realities and direct it to, for instance, the mathematical re-description of their trajectory on the way to the work site or the calculation of the calorie deficit. Each morning the prisoners have to climb a steep hill, which is where they often succumb to exhaustion and are then demonstratively beaten and often finished off by the brutal impatient guards. The unnamed protagonist views this climb in terms of its mathematical features, and on the represented day (an undated sample day) he feels that he too has reached a point of exhaustion against which his spiritual power is no longer effective: "Oh well, he has reached the height where the curve of the ascent satisfies the Cauchy criterion. Can it be that on this day he will not be able to surmount this maximum?" (Demidov 2008, p. 113). And, indeed, having watched, from the outside, and iteratively, how the others succumbed to the heart attack on the steep ascent, on this day the protagonist watches his own singulative agony from inside his failing body.

The serial iterativity of "the Intellectual's" heart attack is partly subverted by his being to some extent individualized. He stands out from the crowd as a brilliant mathematician with vast humanitarian interests, with the strong body of a descendant from a long line of peasants, and with experience of physical work from his impecunious student days. Paradoxically, this individualization weakens the sense of the "as if" convention if the reader knows how closely these features of the protagonist resemble those of the author himself and knows also that Demidov had stood at the threshold of death several times in his camp experience. Moreover, the individualization is only partial: as in Shalamov's stories, the protagonist's family relationships and similar personal matters are elided—both because the sample convention demands a measure of de-individualization and because suppression of such memories was a typical form of the "goners" psychological self-defense. The sense of this story being a sample, operating to disable the as-if convention, is reinforced by the iterative and repeated references to the death of other members of the team before the protagonist: the protagonist knows well how it would happen; he

has been staving off his own turn. By leaving the protagonist unnamed otherwise than through nicknames "the Intellectual" in his former life and "the Scientist" in the camp, the story further generalizes his case, reinforcing Demidov's recurrent theme of the regime's destruction of the most talented people in the country. The protagonist's experience thus "makes sense" iteratively; in addition, he functions as an exponent of the theme that runs like a red thread through most of Demidov's narratives: the Gulag has swallowed up huge numbers of extremely gifted people who could otherwise have worked happily and fruitfully to the greater glory of their country. The "Intellectual" is a sample representative not only of a form of in-camp death but also of this mass destruction of the country's extraordinary intellectual potential.

Another way to describe the connection of the sample convention and the seriality of the crimes that its material illustrates is in terms of Keith J. Donnellan's (1966) distinction between definite statements of the attributive kind and of the identifying kind.[17] One of Donnellan's examples—from a much better moral universe—is the question "Who is the man drinking a Martini?" If this question is asked at the gathering of a teetotaler association, the action of drinking a Martini may be attributive: someone is *breaking the rules*; the *identity* of that person is a secondary issue. But if this question is asked in a bar, its purpose is to identify a specific male—perhaps because his looks have attracted the speaker's attention; in this case such a question may well be substituted by the question "Who is the man in the blue shirt?" (Abbott 2003). The non-referentiality of Shalamov's protagonists means that features, actions, states, and events attributed to his characters are serial: they have happened, in one way or another, to one person or another.[18] We can safely assume that someone would, in Donnellan's words, "fit the description" (1966, p. 291).

8.4 The Typical and the Typifying

Whereas the sample convention mainly represents serial events, fictionalized stories also sometimes focus on events that are not typical but can be considered as *typifying*: exceptional events, either excesses of brutality or extraordinary feats of survival, or else striking workings of chance. These events are typifying attestation to camp regularities in the sense that they could have happened in this specific way only under the conditions prevailing in the universe of the camps: the camps are the necessary but not the sufficient conditions for them. Stories that contain such

[17] "A speaker who uses a definite description attributively in an assertion states something about whoever or whatever is the so-and-so. A speaker who uses a definite description referentially in an assertion, on the other hand, uses the description to enable his audience to pick out whom or what he is talking about and states something about that person or thing" (Donnellan 1966, p. 285).

[18] For insightful remarks on different specific cases of the blurring of borderlines between characters, and between characters and the "real people" on whom they are modeled, see Mikhailik (2011, pp. 131–138).

extraordinary events usually involve a large measure of reference to typical camp practices and regularities: they stage a tension between the regular and the exceptional. In Shalamov's "On Tick," the second text in his first story cycle ("Kolyma Tales"), the card game between criminals is described with the help of multiple details that are presented as signs of status or common camp practices. For a long time the story seems to be a camp version of the "gambler's bad streak" topos; it unfolds as a routine event, even though the topos makes one expect a catastrophe. But in the "bad streak" topos the catastrophe usually overtakes the losing gambler (as in Pushkin's *The Queen of Spades* to which Shalamov's story alludes)—this expectation is thwarted when the crisis of "On Tick" is the quick, skillful, and unostentatious murder of the political prisoner who has been helping the narrator to prepare firewood for the criminals' barracks in exchange for soup. That man is killed because he refuses to part with his woolen sweater from home, an item which the losing gambler confiscates in order to pay his card debt.

Thus the iterative sample details of the story suddenly yield to an exceptional event. And yet the first-person narrator's unemotional comment on that event, "Now I had to find a new partner to cut wood with" (Shalamov 1994, p. 10), which to most readers is no less shocking than the story of the murder itself, shows that in the longer run murder is so much in the nature of things and that the narrator is so depleted and so inured to similar brutalities that any emotional outrage on his part is impossible. The exception—still rare enough not to preempt the hungry political prisoners' "paid" service in the criminals' barracks—thus emerges as a typifying event, familiar to the long-timers, another case of a serial crime. It is up to the reader to imagine the first-person narrator as the author's self-representation or as just an anonymized sample of the condition to which the body and the spirit of a run-off-the-mill political prisoner has been reduced by a long span of camp experience, with its "prescribed hunger" (Levi 1987, p. 43).

A different effect is produced by the combination of the typical and the typifying in Demidov's most famous (and first published) story "The Stiff" ("Dubar'"). This narrative, like Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, opens with a typical in-camp reveille, one of the toughest moments of the prisoner's day. Demidov amends Solzhenitsyn's representation of the prisoner's morning by describing an adaptation strategy which Solzhenitsyn elides, the skill of prolonging "the half-asleep half-waking state" for several hours after getting up, sometimes even the whole time on the way to the work-site (Demidov 2008, p. 18). Like Solzhenitsyn, Demidov here appears to represent a lucky day: one of its first events is the foreman's announcement that owing to weather conditions (extreme cold) the prisoners will not work on this day. The protagonist-narrator's rest is, however, interrupted by a summons to an extra assignment, that of digging a grave for "a stiff"—an arduous task in the regions of permafrost but not an untypical event. What is unusual is that his task on this day involves not only grave-digging but also burial: the corpse that he is handed is that of a new-born baby. As in Solzhenitsyn's novella, the narrative time devoted to the passage of the story time that it takes the protagonist-narrator to reach the topographical spot where he has to prepare and perform the burial is filled with a paradigm of details pertaining to camp experience in general and to this

particular camp and its commander in particular. This, as in Solzhenitsyn's *Ivan Denisovich*, not only frames the information without losing hold on the reader's interest but also produces the impression of the representational time, the time of the reading, approximating the represented time (see Sternberg 1978, pp. 14–16, 288), the time of the action: we walk to the burial site together with the protagonist, listening to his explanations given in his role as the narrator. At a certain point we move from the information coming from the retrospective position of the narrator to the account of his encounters and vicissitudes as the protagonist of the episode. The climax of the story is staged as such an encounter: to explain his actions to an overseer the protagonist has to uncover the face of the "stiff"; and at this moment he is overwhelmed by a gush of admiration and tenderness for the beautiful baby who did not survive its coming into the camp world, tenderness mixed with the sense of guilt. This is the extraordinary moment of the story, one that stands out from the plethora of camp routines, one that shows also that the protagonist is still at a stage when his emotions are not deenergized. The story ends with the symbolic act of the atheistic protagonist – constructing a makeshift cross over the shallow grave of the baby, as a traditional gesture of minimal respect for the helpless, unnamed, unregistered, unmourned human being, not to be remembered except by himself. Like Shalamov's relatively austere "On Tick," this detail-rich story likewise represents a typifying event, of the kind that could only happen in the camps, not routinely but as a result of a (statistically rare) confluence of a number of determining factors, each representing a regularity of camp practice. If Demidov's "The Intellectual (the Cauchy Criterion)" and Shalamov's "The Individual Assignment" represent the maximal end of the paradigm of the sample-convention, "Dubar'" and such stories by Shalamov's as "Captain Tolly's Love," focusing on the typifying rather than the typical, stand at the minimal part of this spectrum, still representing a sample, even if in a less obvious way.

8.5 Narrative Testimony as Implicit Argument

While the sample convention largely disables the "as if" convention of fictionalized narratives and serves the attesting function of factographic narratives, it is hardly ever the only pragmatic function of the narratives: it usually combines with the function of these narratives as *arguments*.[19] The authors of documentary prose usually wish to make a statement, to intervene in the state of public opinion or collective memory, whether the story of their experience is evidence that supports their arguments or whether it is the material that leads up to the argument-as-conclusion. The argument in question is not necessarily the one that is made in the introduction or in authorial discursive comments: it is often observed that the plot and the materials in Shalamov's stories tend to contradict his authorial generalizing comments, as

[19] Factographic prose is, *par excellence*, a multifunctional artistic object whose different functions become marked at different stages of reception (see Mukařovský 1970).

if the writer were determined both to practice his freedom of opinion and to refrain from imposing his opinions on the reader. In the preface to her memoirs *Journey into the Whirlwind* (*Krutoi marshrut*, 1967) former Gulag prisoner Evgenia Ginzburg notes her wish to let the younger generation know that she and her cohorts had been arrested, prosecuted, and tormented in the camps unjustly: that they were innocent of any resistance to the regime (eventually she moves to the realization that they were not innocent, but their guilt lay precisely in the failure to resist the regime), yet the main argument that her story eventually makes is about the unnaturalness, the perverseness, the illogicality of what happened to her and her fellow-sufferers: unlike Shalamov, who conjures up the psyche of a prisoner depleted by hunger disease, Ginzburg, whose camp experience was in many ways lighter, keeps staging a "normal" person's un-subdued outrage and disgust at what she gets to know during her camp ordeal.[20] The argument about the injustice of Stalinist repressions and of camp-world practices is a common denominator of Gulag literature; in that sense the mutual support of the evidence marshaled throughout this corpus is overwhelming. Each author, however, also tends to make subsidiary arguments—Demidov, as noted above, constantly points to the destruction of the country's extraordinary human resources; Shalamov offers different implicit or explicit subsidiary arguments in many of his stories, such as the argument about the shift of the moral barriers in the camp universe and about the ways of resisting this shift, or about the tension between ethical principles and personality changes wrought by chronic starvation.

The function of both the general and the subsidiary arguments is rhetorical: the writers wish not only to tell their stories, to attest, to confess, to accuse, but also to affect the mind-sets of their audiences. In *Rhetoric* Aristotle tells us that whereas dialectics works on the basis of syllogisms, rhetoric makes use of enthymemes, the constructs that differ from syllogisms in that one of their premises is either missing or not generally applicable. As the most famous syllogism goes, "All men a mortal" (premise 1), "Socrates is a man" (premise 2), "Socrates is mortal" (conclusion). The argument constructed in Shalamov's fictionalized "An Individual Assignment" is as follows: "Most political prisoners, unless 'dragged out' of general hard labor, got lethally depleted in a matter of weeks" (premise 1, based on the External Field of Reference), "Dugaev was a political prisoner in the winter of 1938" (premise 2, part of the sample convention); "Dugaev was one of the lethally depleted in the winter of 1938" (conclusion, in terms of the logic of the sample). This argument is an enthymeme because premise 1 is a matter of a dominant tendency rather than of an absolute rule; it is an empirical generalization which would admit of exceptions. This enthymeme is then followed by another: "Dugaev was lethally depleted and could not fulfill 30 percent of the work quota" (premise 1, part of the sample convention); "In the winter of 1938, prisoners who did not fulfill 30 per cent of the

[20] However, many of the events that Ginzburg narrates are "twice-told tales"—she admits that she used to tell them orally to her friends before writing them down. The question to which this may give rise is whether the emotions with which the events are told pertain to those experienced in real time or those felt (or "having to be" felt) at the time of composition.

quota were liable to be executed for sabotage" (premise 2); conclusion: "Dugaev was executed." This too is an enthymeme: premise 2 is also an empirical observation about a generality that did admit of possible exceptions, one of them, a case of chance survival, is represented in Shalamov's story "Handwriting." The kernel events of the plot of "Individual Assignment" unfold on the pattern of the enthymeme rather than according to the traditional formulae of conflict, quest, or Bildung.[21]

What the sample convention supplies is generalized evidence that forms an empirical premise that is vulnerable to counterexamples rather than universally applicable. Evidence is needed in the cases where there is doubt; and it is doubt that fiction-as-enthymeme addresses. When Shalamov's stories were first written, their cumulative argument served the indictment of Stalin's repressive regime by showing the meaning of its policies in terms of human experience. At present, parts of this argument are redundant: the multi-million crimes of the Gulag are a matter of common knowledge, though it is unfortunately less well known that forced-labor camps still exist in Putin's Russia and, though in many ways less deadly, still signify disproportionate and often unjust suffering of the inmates.[22] And yet the argument is still necessary for new reasons: though the injustices of the Stalin regime are these days largely acknowledged, there is a neo-pragmatic tendency to regard the Gulag as ultimately beneficial to the country's infrastructure, industrialization, and other short- or long-term benefits. While this view of the camps is still a matter of debate, the argument made by Gulag stories like Shalamov's, Solzhenitsyn's, or Demidov's is that none of economic achievements, whether actual or seeming, were worth their cost in human suffering, in corruption, in the waste of human potential, in broken lives. The time when we might be justified in reading these stories exclusively for their aesthetic function has not yet come, but even when it comes, the ways in which they double as evidence and argument will have to be regarded as an integral part of their artistic achievement.

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[21] This is the case of a fictionalized work *as* a sequence of enthymemes. On the use of enthymemes *in* fictional works see Toker (2006). On the relationship of the general and the particular in explanation theory see Kvernbekk (2003, pp. 273–75).

[22] See the letter of the Pussy Riot singer Nadezhda Tolokonnikova from one of the camps, *The Guardian* September 23, 2013.

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Chapter 9
From Narrative Arguments to Arguments That Narrate

Adrien Frenay and Marion Carel

Abstract Based on the study of an article written by Maurice Barrès on the 25 August, 1914, the present chapter aims at showing that studies of the relations between narration and argument must take into account not only narrative arguments but also arguments that narrate. On the ground of an analysis of the organization of contents (foregrounding and backgrounding) by means of the Semantic Blocks Theory (Carel M, *L'entrelacement argumentatif. Lexique, discours et blocs sémantiques*. Honoré Champion, Paris, 2011), it shows that the argumentative structure, in the foreground of the text, can produce and manage the narrative one. Finally, we draw conclusions regarding presupposition, textual organisation and utterance acts: (a) presupposed contents can complete main contents; (b) on a textual scale, backgrounded contents can build up a secondary structure, here a narrative one, and therefore a single text may hold several structures; (c) utterances acts may be described by the backgrounded contents.

9.1 Introduction

It is a fact traditionally acknowledged that narration and argumentation have separate aims and are therefore two distinct textual types. However, it has been well established that narration may have argumentative quality. These narrative arguments are considered as premisses leading to a conclusion or as a way to induce the moral of the story, whether or not this moral is made explicit.

Conversely, we intend to examine the narrative quality of argumentation by means of the Semantic Blocks Theory presented in Carel (2011), which tries to describe how we apprehend our world thanks to language rather than whether our words reflect the world.

In order to do so, we will focus on an article written by Maurice Barrès, a novelist, politician and member of the French Academy, published in *L'Écho de Paris* on 25 August, 1914. Leader of the far right League of the Patriots since the eve of

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the war, he promoted French, pro-war propaganda almost daily. Barrès' columns combine argumentation and narration, at the same time. "L'Aigle survole le Rossignol" aims to persuade the French people that the war is a "miracle" and to tell the story of the greatness of the youth, France (and Barrès).

On 25 August, Barrès develops an idea already expressed on the 5th: war as regeneration, resurrection. This rather strange idea was common at the time and shared by numerous French and German journalists and intellectuals. This regeneration would occur in the field of literature as young writers will undoubtedly benefit from their experience of war and would become, thanks to this experience, better writers and better men, freed from whining lyricism, able to build a renewed nation on the basis of a vigorous, manly nationalism. Writers are compared to nightingales, weeping over their private tales, who have the opportunity to become eagles and raise their creation above personal suffering and other petty subjects to address broader issues and questions of national concern

It goes without saying that Maurice Barrès wants to persuade the reader of this article that the war is, counterintuitive as that may seem, fertile and fruitful, and that it will help regenerate, through literature, a nation which is seen, in the beginning of the twentieth century, as ill and corrupted. The war is also the opportunity to take revenge and to recover Alsace and Lorraine. The article can thus be read as an argument: we are able to find a thesis and a line of argument which aims to persuade. And indeed, this text was read by young people at the time as powerful and inspiring, contributing to the pride they feel to be sent to the front.

It seems that Maurice Barrès, in doing so, tells us something about youth, the war and himself, as if a narrative emanated from the argument. We intend to study here how this narrative is managed by the argument that is, how argumentation operates narratively.

Rather than assessing the argumentative power of narratives, when they are followed by a moral or when they are set in an argument, we will try to demonstrate that this specific text is an argumentative and narrative one at the same time, moreover, that its narrative traits arise from the argumentative features of the text. Barrès wrote what we call an argument that narrates, an argument from which one can infer a story – regardless whether this story tells us about Barrès, the war, young writers or France as a nation.

After briefly sketching out the theoretical context of the argumentation-narration issue, we will introduce the Semantic Blocks Theory and then examine Barrès' article to bring to light how the argumentative structure produces the narrative one. We will thus study Barrès' article from a semantic point of view.

9.2 Barrès' Article: French Original Text and English Translation

"L'Aigle survole le Rossignol", Maurice Barrès, *L'Echo de Paris*, 25th August 1914.

La France a toute sa jeunesse aux armées. Le sang le plus pur et le plus chaud de la race. Nul de nous ne peut penser à rien d'autre qu'à ce trésor en danger. Mais que

parlons-nous de danger, quand ils ne veulent voir que l'honneur et la joie du combat ? Nous les saluons en masse, nos défenseurs, et puis successivement chacun de ceux que nous connaissons. Je songe aux jeunes gens de ma profession, à mes frères en esprit, aux jeunes littérateurs dont je reçois chaque jour des billets si nobles. Leurs images se lèvent devant moi, vêtues de capotes, coiffées de képis. Mais bientôt je me laisse distraire du décor où je ne suis pas habitué à les voir. Me voici transporté dans un monde prochain et dans une atmosphère sublime. J'assiste à leur retour glorieux, et déjà je discerne par quel épanouissement la jeune littérature, au sortir des leçons de la guerre, sera récompensée de la part qu'elle prend au colossal effort.

Qu'elle sera belle, après la victoire, la France régénérée ! C'est un monde nouveau qui commence. Tous les ordres d'activité se déploieront avec plus d'élan. L'esprit surtout sera élargi, ennobli, soulevé. Nous aurons des livres issus des plus graves expériences humaines, et des poèmes chargés des vertus de la bataille. J'entrevois une haute culture virile, savante et limpide pour tous. Ce sera fini de bêler et de niaiser, et les jeunes artistes qui, dans cette minute, mêlés à tous les rangs d'une nation exaltée, surmontent les alternatives de la peur et du courage, ne cesseront plus de porter leurs regards sur les grands intérêts de la vie des peuples, en même temps que sur les parties divines de l'âme.

Comment de telles épreuves ne nous perfectionneraient-elles pas ? Comment ne nous feraient-elles pas plus vivants ? La guerre va émouvoir ce qui gisait dans notre être le plus profond et nous le révéler. Dès maintenant chacun de nous comprend qu'il n'est pas à lui seul un être complet et achevé ; nous ne sommes plus tentés de justifier nos particularités, nos humeurs, notre fantaisie ; nous nous courbons et nous rangeons dans un plus vaste ensemble, la raison nationale, la patrie, toutes les dures et douces lois de la vie en société. Jamais d'une manière aussi claire et aussi pressante qu'aujourd'hui nous ne nous sommes sentis dépendants d'un grand tout. Il n'est pas un de nous qui n'ait vu son amour propre, son attachement à sa propre personne, se fondre en effusion de respect ou d'enthousiasme.

Les événements viennent de passer sur nous comme le vent sur les épis de blé, et remplis d'humilité, de bonne volonté, de piété, nous nous courbons et redressons avec tout le champ sous l'orage. Mais en même temps que chacun acquiert le sens de l'ensemble, la sympathie mutuelle s'est développée. L'estime des individus les uns pour les autres est une conséquence de la guerre. On regarde avec plaisir un enfant qui veut s'engager, une mère qui l'en remercie, un pauvre qui ne récrimine pas, un riche qui joyeusement découvre à braver la mort un nouveau condiment de la vie.

Ainsi les expériences terribles où nous sommes plongés corps et âmes nous invitent, nous obligent à réviser nos idées, à les mettre au point. Pour ma part, Dieu merci, grâce à ma province et à ma famille qui m'ont ouvert la voie droite et préparé de naissance à discerner ce qu'il y a d'ignoble dans la masse germanique, je n'ai jamais partagé l'erreur de ceux qui se mettaient à l'école de ces pédants peints en barbares. J'ai toujours connu les Allemands comme dénués de fierté chevaleresque, et hier encore, en lisant les Mémoires de Richard Wagner*, je notais à plusieurs reprises, en marge de mon exemplaire, que voilà un maître de qui le génie n'empêche*

pas qu'il a des parties de goujat. Mais plus près de moi, en France, ai-je toujours suffisamment compris des dispositions affectueuses et nobles ?

Demain, il n'y aura plus de place dans aucun esprit pour l'anarchie, mais en revanche il faudra accorder plus de crédit à l'individu. Dès aujourd'hui, nous voyons mille sources jaillir autour de nous que nous n'avions jamais soupçonnées.

Écrivains, déchirez la page interrompue ; poètes, abandonnez votre chanson, fût-ce au milieu d'une strophe, et si fort qu'elle ressemble à votre âme. Jetez même un adieu rapide à votre cœur d'hier. En revenant du Rhin, vous serez montés si haut, avec des ailes si fortes, que vous surpasserez tous vos rêves, comme l'aigle survole le rossignol. Le destin nous entraîne. Les maîtres ont fini leur enseignement et vous, de vos mains heureuses, vous saisissez le fruit du miracle, le fruit formé à notre insu dans les années que nous croyions stériles.

«The Eagle soars above the Nightingale»

All France's youth is in the army. The purest and warmest blood of the race. Not one of us can think of anything else but this treasure in peril. But how can we talk of peril, when they want to see only the honour and joy of combat? We hail them all, our defenders, and then, one after the other, those we know personally. I think of the young men of my profession, my spiritual brothers, the young writers from whom I receive, every day, such noble letters. Their images arise before my eyes, clothed in greatcoats, kepis on their heads. But I soon let myself be distracted from this setting in which I'm not accustomed to seeing them. Here am I, transported to a world to come, to a sublime atmosphere. I see their glorious return, and I can already see how this youthful literature will blossom, when it emerges from the war's instruction, as a reward for their contribution to the colossal effort.

How beautiful, after victory, France regenerate will be! A new world is beginning. All forms of activity will be conducted with greater impetus. Above all, her mind will be enlarged, ennobled, elevated. We will have books arising from humanity's most grave experiences, and poems shot through with the virtues of battle. I make out a high, virile culture, learned and clear to all. Bleating and dilly-dallying will be over and gone, and the young artists who, at this very minute, interspersed amongst all ranks of an exalted nation, are overcoming the choice between fear and bravery, will unfailingly set their sights on the great interests of the lives of peoples and, at the same time, on the divine elements of the soul.

How could such trials not hone us to perfection? How could they not invigorate us? The war will stir up what was lying in the greatest depths of our being and reveal it to us. From now on, each of us understands that we are not, on our own, complete and finished beings; we are no longer tempted to defend our singularities, our moods, our flights of fancy; we bend to and align ourselves with a greater entity, the national cause, the fatherland, all the hard and sweet laws governing life in society. Never so clearly and urgently as today have we felt ourselves depend upon a greater whole. Not a single one of us has not seen his pride, his attachment to his own person, melt away into effusive respect or enthusiasm.

Events have blown down upon us like the wind on ears of wheat, and, filled with humility, good will and piety, we bend and rise again along with the whole field beneath the storm. Yet as each of us gains a sense of the whole, mutual sympathy has

arisen. Esteem for one another is a consequence of the war. We look with pleasure upon a child who wants to sign up, a mother who thanks him for it, a poor man who doesn't protest, a rich man who joyfully finds, in the confrontation with death, new spice in life.

Thus, the terrible experiences in which we're immersed, body and soul, invite us, oblige us, to revise our ideas, to sharpen them. In my case, thanks be to God, and thanks to my province and my family who set me on the right path and taught me from birth to identify that which is vile in the German masses, I have never fallen into the error of those who wanted to take instruction from those pedants painted as barbarians. I've always known the Germans to be deprived of chivalrous pride, and, only yesterday, when reading Richard Wagner's Memoirs*, I noted several times in the margins of my copy that here we have a master whose genius doesn't hold boorishness at bay . But closer to home, in France, have I always taken sufficient account of affectionate and noble dispositions?*

Tomorrow, there will be no place in any mind for anarchy anymore, however the individual must be given greater credit. This very day, we see a thousand fountains we had never suspected spring up around us.

Writers, tear up the interrupted page; poets, abandon your song, be it in mid-verse and powerful enough to mirror your soul. Bid even a quick farewell to the heart that was yours yesterday. When you return from the Rhine, you will ascend so high, upon wings so strong, that you will surpass all your dreams, as the eagle soars above the nightingale. Destiny draws us on. The teachers have finished their lesson and you, with your happy hands, you seize the miraculous fruit, the fruit that grew unbeknownst to us during the years we believed sterile.

9.3 Narratives and Arguments

9.3.1 Two Distinct Textual Types

Narratives and arguments have been so far studied separately, as their aims seem different. According to Danblon (2014, p. 9, our translation), argumentation is "a superior function of language whose intricate goal is to persuade someone, most often in order to make him take a decision"; whereas narration's aim is to:

> [d]epict events, to give meaning to a specific situation, to set up a narrative with which a community or a person will be able to identify; […] *to give meaning* to the human environment *via* the dynamic depiction of what is happening, of what happened and of what might happen.

This distinction matches our impressions as readers as we can easily and swiftly tell if the text that we are reading is an argument or a narrative. We do not need to collect a large amount of clues to tell which is which. A political discourse unfolds a clear line of argument and is uttered with the sole intention of winning support. A novel describes characters and sequences of events. It does not seem to serve the purpose of persuading someone to vote for the author when the reading is over.

9.3.2 *Narrative and* Narrating *Argument*

Yet, there are lines of argument that use examples which look like small, embedded narratives and there are films and novels with a message. First, Danblon (2014) reminds us that according to Aristotle, the narrative function is of utmost importance in some forms of argumentation. Adam (2014, pp. 19–20) shows that *exemplum* is an effective device when building up an argument. Danblon (2014, p. 10) adds that the tool one resorts to in deliberative discourse is narrative.

Second, we can find arguments within narratives. In *Un Amour de Swann* (*A Love of Swann's*), Proust portrays his character thanks to a long series of argumentative speeches that convey a temporal impression: arguments describing a time of crisis in Swann's life. Once he has been excluded from Verdurin's circle, Swann's speeches reveal his jealousy. He tries to talk Odette out of going to the opera with the clique or wants to convince himself that visiting the castle of Pierrefonds, though he usually loathes it, is something he could and even should do. These speeches, which seem to be uttered multiple times, even though we don't know if they are actually delivered, sum up this time of crisis as effectively as a narrator would have done. Although Odette refuses to see Swann because she gives in to the pressure of Mme Verdurin in spite of their love, Swann argues in such a way that he progressively convinces himself he is being put aside precisely because they are in love. His argumentative discourse enable him to give meaning to a situation in which he is ill at ease and to turn it into one in which his exclusion is the sign of courtly love, and it does so just as well as a narrator's commentary would have done. In this respect, his speeches are more than mere interrupting periods within the whole narrative. They look like narratives and seem to act as such.

Moreover, in some whodunits, it is precisely the arguments carefully produced by the private eye when the right moment has arrived which set up the narrative. In *Crime on the Orient Express*, Poirot gathers the alleged culprits in the same room and begins to think out loud. His scenarios are just so many theses which he thrives on sustaining or abandoning in turn, to the utter irritation of the suspects. In this case, would it be possible to say that the narrative *consists in* a series of arguments – or rather that arguments are *narrating*?

9.3.3 *Toward a* Narrating *Argument*

Argumentation and narration thus appear to be entangled. Indeed, Danblon (2014, p. 15, our translation) concludes her introduction in the following manner:

> The reason we obstinately persist in thinking of argumentation and narration in different ways seems to be due to our representation of our own rationality rather than to our empirical observation, in which they are intertwined.

Admittedly, following Adam (2005), one could distinguish argumentative sequences from narrative sequences. One could moreover infer the argumentative or narrative

quality of a text from its 'compositional structure' and its 'prevailing sequence'. But one would also have to admit, again following Adam (2005, pp. 205–206, our translation), that:

> [t]he theoretical propositions relating to narrative, descriptive, argumentative, explanatory and dialogical, sequential (proto)types […] may have suggested that any text was exclusively settled by these layouts of sequences. Texts are, in fact, very smoothly structured, and their plans, whether fixed or accidental, are predominant.

"L'Aigle survole le Rossignol" is a propaganda article that glorifies war. It could thus be read as built on a classic oratorical plan, including an *exordium*, a *narratio*, a *confirmatio*, a *peroratio*. However the feeling that something is told is not located in one specific area (*narratio*) and cannot be reduced to one or two examples supporting the main thesis. We do feel that something is told, but we are unable to locate the story itself.

Our hypothesis, which runs counter to "representation of our own rationality", is that what an argument produces is not limited to reasoning, conviction and persuasion. "L'Aigle survole le Rossignol" is an example of an argument that yields narratives which appear *because* the text is an argument, but do not operate argumentatively. For instance, one of the aforementioned narratives produced by the argument relates to Barrès himself and depicts him as a committed intellectual. But the argument (see 9.3.5 then 9.5) is not dependent on (either in terms of *logos*, or *ethos*) on his account of himself. In the same way, the thesis about the improvement of the French young men through war does not depend on a narrative focusing on the process of their transformation. The text's foreground, which is argumentative, does not call upon any narrative to support it, not even as a stage whithin it development. Yet, in the background, readers are invited to group together order entities scattered all throughout Barrès' article in chronological order. Therefore, the argument narrates, in the background, the state of French youth in 1914, their feelings at the beginning of the war and their post-war destiny (see 9.3.6 then 9.6).

In order to confirm this hypothesis, we will show how these narratives overrun the argumentative goal of the author and how they are built up through linguistic entities managed by the main persuasive structure.

9.3.4 "L'Aigle survole le Rossignol": A Propaganda Article

"L'Aigle survole le Rossignol", like all the other articles written by Maurice Barrès in August 1914, are propaganda articles campaigning for war. Some articles are reports on domestic or external matters (about speeches delivered in the French Assembly on 5 August; about the Alsace front on 6 and 10 August; about Alsace or Alsatians on 14, 22 and 23 August); some deal with solidarity organizations (goodwill gathering on 9 August; the enthusiastic reception of Alsatians at the École Alsacienne on 11 August; the Secours National and the Red Cross on 13 August); some focus on the elderly and non-combatants facing war (their role in social

organisation on 13, 15 and 21 August); some address military topics (the comparative merits of the French and German armies, 17 August; praise for military staff, 20 August); some focus on youth (the eagerness of the youth to go to the front, 7 August). On 22 August, France loses the battle of Rossignol. Casualties are heavy on the French side.

On 25 August, Maurice Barrès writes about young French writers. As the title of the article tells us, readers are to understand that war will turn them into eagles, that the pitiful cry of the nightingale produced by lyric poets and writers is no longer of value in a country which is on the verge of complete regeneration, a country where individual recriminations should give way to the nation's general interest. Victoriously returning from the front, young writers will take part in the regeneration of their country, fortified by their experience in war. According to Barrès, the war is paradoxically fruitful for France.

We can easily bring out the salient points in this line of argument. According to Barrès, the war is a miracle. It is profitable for French literature and for the nation itself because both will be enhanced. Even though war endangers young people, Barrès incites us to take up the point of view of the young writers who send him letters. Where one might see bloodshed, they see national pride and honour and Barrès foretells their triumphal return as if he were witnessing it (§1). When they return home, they will abandon their lyric poems to promote great, manly values which will shape a greater nation (§2). Not only will war broaden the range of French literature and improve the whole country, but it has already made the people more vigorous. The war awakens and enlivens a renewed sense of respect and patriotic enthusiasm (§3). Furthermore, it turns ordinary, individualistic behaviour rooted in self-esteem into a shared feeling of "mutual sympathy" (§4). The war also enables the French people to take a new look at themselves and to acknowledge errors and negligence (§5–6). Therefore, in light of such benefits, writers should immediately stop writing and go to harvest the fruits of battle (§7).

This despicable but well written line of argument uses several key elements to persuade, amongst which we find the paradoxical assertion that war means life, two days after a bloodbath; the enthusiastic vision of young writers returning home victorious, basking in the glow of pride and honour; the list of the benefits of war.

Moreover, the argumentative quality of the article is confirmed by the way it was interpreted at the time as, alternately, effective or deceptive. Before going to the front, the young artist Eugène-Emmanuel Lemercier, on 26 August 1914, read this article as a powerful and effective text which "corresponds completely to what I feel".[1] But on 23 October, after crossing the "zone of horrors",[2] he is not convinced anymore. The only thing that remains is the "beauty" of the prose: "I've read 'L'Aigle et le Rossignol' again. It has the same beauty, but it is not even in tune anymore. Now, nothing exists apart from the absolute present." Convincing because it glorified the urge of youth to defend their country and because it foreshadowed a

[1] Lemercier, E-E. (1916), letter written on the 26th August 1914 (our translation).

[2] *Ibid*., 23rd October 1914 (our translation).

bright future, the article loses its power of conviction to one who has had an actual experience of war.

Barrès puts forth arguments to prove that the war will be and even already is beneficial for France. These arguments are interpreted as such. The article is an argument, from a reader-response point of view as well as from the point of view of authorial intention.

We will now argue that two narratives emerge on the argumentative surface of this article.

9.3.5 First Narrative: An Account of Oneself

The first narrative yielded by the whole argument structure is an account of the self. Barrès tells us about his thoughts, his readings and his childhood.

Admittedly, the dream-like vision of victory (§1) could be seen simply as a rhetorical device used "to have the reader experience what is said"[3] – an *enargia*.

In the same way, Barrès' textual presence, which becomes explicit when he speaks about the letters he receives from young writers, his childhood and education and about his reading of "*Richard Wagner's Memoirs"*, could be considered as contributing to narratives designed to enhance persuasion.

Yet, we may say that these elements do more than that. The narrative built by these autobiographical details exceeds the persuasive aim because it serves to characterize the author himself more than it serves to defend the article's thesis. Indeed, mentioning that he receives daily letters from young writers is of course a way to quote his source while simultaneously putting him on a pedestal, affirming his status as an accomplished writer who is above the crowd of aspiring young ones. One could also argue that it enables Barrès to strengthen his *ethos*: he would be perceived by the reader as credible because he has expertise. However, the author is a member of the French Academy and lacks neither public nor peer acknowledgment at the time. It is more likely that Barrès, by getting involved in the argument, seeks to be seen both as a politician and a man of letters. He wants to set himself up as a leader of "non-combatant France" and as a member of the French Academy. Modelling himself on Voltaire, Lamartine or Zola, Barrès seeks to become the writer and the advocate of a cause – a committed intellectual. At the crossroads of letters and political action, he tries to embody the French nation.[4] His *ethos* here is of no

[3] Denis d'Halycarnasse, *Lysias*.

[4] According to Montherlant (*Carnets. Années 1930 à 1944*, Gallimard, Paris, 1957, pp. 264–265) quoted in Michel Winock (2006 [1997], p. 166): "Montherlant relates an anecdote regarding Barrès: 'I engage…', said Barrès in August 1914. Cries of 'bravo!' masked the rest of the sentence so that nobody heard that it continued thus : 'I engage myself to write a daily article for *L'Écho de Paris* during the rest of the war.' This led to a long misunderstanding. Montherlant explains Barrès' attitude thus: 'He chose his daily article policy for two reasons. 1° Vanity: the desire to impose his presence constantly, to identify little by little with the national cause, and 2° a sincere love for this national cause, which he would rather serve in this trifling weekly way, because this seemed more urgent to him, than through the grand service of creating long-lasting work on the sidelines." (our translation).

assistance to prove his point on war; on the contrary, war enables him to gain a certain status.

The account of himself goes beyond the aim of the article, which is to recover from the battle of Rossignol and glorify war. It doesn't help prove his point on war, and the same could be said about his commentary on Wagner. From within the argumentative structure, then, there emanates a narrative that is hardly related to the thesis.

9.3.6 Second Narrative: Becoming Eagles

Along with the autobiographical narrative, the article says something about war and youth but does not dedicate specific moments to their stories. Youth and war are part of a story that the reader has to gather himself from the argumentative effort.

Thanks to the thesis (the war is a miracle) and the title, we can infer that in the aftermath of Rossignol, never directly referred to in the article, Barrès wants to avoid any return to past lyricism which the battle's losses might have encouraged. Young writers are encouraged "to tear up the interrupted page". Poets are asked to "abandon [their] song, be it in mid-verse and powerful enough to mirror [their] soul". Going to the front is the catalyst for change in France In the denouement, the characters as well as the nation have changed to such an extent that the whole French society, now based on "mutual sympathy", is led by eagles whose cry has risen above nightingales'. The idea of transformation is the core of Barrès' argument.

Saying that the war is a miracle is therefore a way to give meaning to a specific situation: in a nation where lyricism and individualism prevailed, according to Barrès, the war, even if it decimates the youth, turns out to be the factor that transforms the youth into the productive lifeblood of the country's future. The idea of transformation is the core of Barrès' argument.

The narrative pattern which results from this argument has two major distinctive features. Firstly, it is implicit. The fact that we can identify the skeleton of a narrative does not mean in any way that it has been told by a storyteller. We have to infer the structural framework. Meaning is implicitly given to war on behalf of the younger generation in such a way that they can claim it for themselves, just as Eugène Lemercier did before actually going to the front.

Secondly, this pattern does not describe war: Barrès claim that a transformation occurs but he does not tell how it occurs. This may also be attributed to the author's persuasive goal: who could hope to encourage anyone to go to war by describing in detail crime and massacre? By treating war as a catalyst for the transformation of youth from mere weeping hacks into celebrated and feted virile soldiers, Barrès only alludes to the situation of the youth in 1914 and to their situation at the end of the war. He thereby gives this situation a meaning and this meaning allows us to

affirm he is narrating. Consequently, the argumentative structure, which relies on a comparison of two moments – before and after the experience of war – as well as on the idea of transformation, implies a narrative.

Having shown that it is possible to discern narratives in the persuasive effort we are now going to show, thanks to the Semantic Blocks Theory, how these narratives (his account of himself, and of the young writers' transformation) are linguistically managed by the main argumentative structure.

9.4 The Semantic Blocks Theory (SBT)

9.4.1 General Thesis: Linguistic Meaning Is Argumentative

SBT is a radical version of *Argumentation dans la langue* (ADL) theory (Anscombre and Ducrot 1983).

ADL theory claims that linguistic meaning is construed by both descriptive entities and evaluative entities: descriptive entities indicate which things in the world are talked about and assign truth value; evaluative entities express the speaker's perspective on the situation. Thus, ADL theory conflicts with referential semantic theories (e.g. Occam, Frege, current formal semantics theories) which maintain that linguistic meaning is only about the truth value of sentences.

Furthermore, ADL theory claims that the evaluative entities of linguistic meaning are argumentative. According to Anscombre and Ducrot, evaluative entities give hints on words' argumentative potential. Two facts support this hypothesis.

Firstly, some words' linguistic meaning alludes to argumentation. The word *mais (but)*[5] points out that the utterances it connects sustain opposite theses (Ducrot 1980). Therefore, arguing is not only a specific way to use language; language itself has something to do with argumentation. Argumentation is considered a semantic phenomenon.

Secondly, sometimes the argumentative potential of utterances cannot be inferred from the facts utterances describe. This is the case when the word *presque (almost)* is used in an utterance.

(1) *J'ai presque gagné la course.*
I almost won the race.

[5] In this article, all the text samples have been translated into English. However, our conclusions concern the samples in French.

Let's suppose that the speaker of (1) admits the generally accepted viewpoint that winning is positive. The speaker of (1) has not won the race but he can go on with (2) and not with (3).

(2) *Je suis content.*
I am happy.

(3) *Je suis mécontent*.
I am unhappy.

Utterance (1) and *j'ai gagné la course* are co-oriented.[6] The fact which is described is of no help to support the argument.

These two linguistic phenomena relate to discourse words (Ducrot 1980). Anscombre and Ducrot (1983) then put forward the idea that the argumentative potential of words is not limited to discourse words but can be extended to content words. The meaning of (4),

(4) *Faire des efforts*
To make efforts.

involves the following contents:

[the more we make efforts, the more we succeed];
[the more we make efforts, the more we get tired];
etc.

SBT goes a step further. According to this theory, it is not possible to isolate descriptive entities in the linguistic meaning of a word or of a sentence. SBT advances the hypothesis that linguistic meaning is only made by argumentative entities.

9.4.2 Linguistic Hypotheses

9.4.2.1 First Hypothesis: Utterances Can Be Paraphrased by Argumentative Chainings

We call "argumentative chaining"[7] a sequence of two sentences connected by the connectives *donc* (*therefore*) or *pourtant* (*however*), or by any connective that has a similar meaning. SBT represents the meaning of an utterance by argumentative chainings.

[6] A speaker who does not admit the generally accepted viewpoint that winning is positive might go on with (3). He would also go on with (3) after *j'ai gagné la course*. Thus, remains the fact that *j'ai presque gagné* and *j'ai gagné* are co-oriented, even if *j'ai presque gagné* means the speaker has lost the race.

[7] Or simply "chaining".

Let's say (5) and (6) are from a dialogue about Pierre and Marie, who have children and are recently divorced. Let's say (7) is an utterance of the French Prime Minister on 14 November, 2015.

(5) — *Ça va se passer comment pour les enfants ?*
What about the kids?

(6) — *Tu sais, Pierre et Marie sont en guerre.*
Well, you know, Pierre and Marie are at war

(7) *Nous sommes en guerre.*
We are at war.

(6) can be paraphrased by (8) and (7) by (9):

(8) Even if children ought to be protected, Pierre and Marie don't care about them.
(9) We are threatened, so we fight.

Because it is a semantic theory, SBT aims to predict the possibility of paraphrasing (6) by (8) and (7) by (9).

9.4.2.2 Second Hypothesis: Argumentative Chainings Particularise Argumentative Templates

Utterance (9) is not made up of an argument leading to a conclusion. It is considered as a whole, built on the argumentative template[8] (11) that it particularises. Likewise, (8) is not made up of an ineffective argument linked to the opposite of its conclusion. It is considered as a whole, built on the argumentative template (10) that it particularises (Carel 2011).

(10) PRECIEUX PT DETRUIT
PRECIOUS HOWEVER DESTROYED

(11) ETRE MENACE DC SE BATTRE
TO BE THREATENED THEREFORE TO FIGHT

[8] Or simply 'template'.

9.4.2.3 Third Hypothesis: Words' Linguistic Meaning Is Built Only on Templates

SBT suggests that templates (10) and (11) are parts of the meaning of the verb phrase *être en guerre* (*to be at war*) and of the word *guerre* (*war*). According to SBT, the linguistic meaning of *guerre* (*war*) only includes templates. Templates are evaluative entities. They reflect a perspective on the world and not the world itself. Thus, according to SBT, words mean only evaluative entities.

9.4.2.4 Fourth Hypothesis: When Used, Words Can Supply, Transform or Particularise Templates

In an utterance, some words provide a template, some words particularise a template, and some other words transform a template.

(12) *La France mènera une guerre propre.*
France will wage a clean war

In (12), the word *guerre* (*war*) provides the template (10). The adjective *propre* (*clean*) transforms this template into a new one:

(13) PRÉCIEUX DC NEG DÉTRUIT
PRECIOUS THEREFORE NEG DESTROYED

The term *La France* (*France*) particularises the template as follows:

(14) Si quelque chose est précieux, la France ne le détruira pas.
If something is precious, France will not destroy it.

9.4.2.5 SBT in Brief

SBT associates argumentative templates to words (analysis of word meaning) and associates argumentative chainings to utterances (analysis of utterance meaning). It explains how argumentative templates signified by words are transformed into argumentative chainings (analysis of word combinatory).

9.4.3 Organization of Contents: Foregrounding and Backgrounding

Since Bakhtine, it is customary to discern several voices speaking in a text. However, polyphony is not limited to a text. An utterance may have several contents.

Polyphonist theories (for instance, Ducrot 1984; Nølke et al. 2005) generally admit that the speaker allocates each of these contents to a voice. This voice is said to be vouching for the truth value of the content or to be the source of the speaker's knowledge. According to polyphonist theories, information about content source distinguishes some expressions from each other and thus is included in word meaning.

SBT rules out this hypothesis. Admittedly, the contents are not all enunciated in the same way, but that difference does not result from a difference in content source. It results from a difference in tone. SBT describes the various tones thanks to chainings. For instance, SBT does not say that the speaker is the source of a given content. It says that the speaker's utterance communicates the following chaining: "I am saying it because I am thinking it right now."

The plurality of contents in an utterance is organized. Polyphonist theories generally postulate that the role of a given content in the overall organization of an utterance can be inferred from the voice that evokes it. As SBT associates argumentative chainings rather than voices with given contents to describe the speaker's involvement, new settings are necessary to study the way contents are organized.

SBT describes the way contents are organized in the following way: a content can be foregrounded, backgrounded or excluded.

We will focus on foregrounded and backgrounded contents here. As in a painting, some entities are foregrounded and some are set in the background. Foregrounded contents are the explicit reason speakers talk. In other words, speakers declare they talk in order to communicate foregrounded contents. According to Ducrot (1972), foregrounded contents make up the text's structure. Backgrounded contents are additional. We will show that, in Barrès' article, these backgrounded contents build a narrative.

9.4.4 The SBT Applied to "L'Aigle Survole le Rossignol"

SBT is not a persuasion theory but a semantic theory. Its tools describe word meaning, the function of connectives, utterance meaning and text structure – be it persuasive, narrative, or poetic. The argumentative chainings it uses to describe meaning are not reasonings but particularise templates. They reflect the evaluative – and not descriptive – nature of language.

To identify Barrès' account of himself in his article, we will look at representative examples of the phenomenon we notice in the whole argument (part 4) In the first paragraph, Barrès produces two consecutive descriptions, the first one describing the young people he knows going to the front; the second one describing them returning from the front. We will analyse certain words (*je songe* (*I think/ I can see*)*; mais* (*but*)), which build up the argumentative structure and make the transition between the two descriptions (part 5.2 and 5.3). We will also analyse the words *je reçois* (*I receive*) which relate not only to his train of thoughts but also to his position as a writer (part 5.4). We will show that the whole paragraph, which is a persua-

sive effort intending to prove that young people are courageous and fearless, becomes progressively an autobiographical narrative. We will conclude that from within its very structure, the argument is reprocessed as narrative. In this way, Barrès' argument is a *narrating* one (part 5.5).

The narrative that deals specifically with young writers and their poetic production will be analysed in part 5. We show that along with the contents that contribute to the persuasive effort, the contents about the young writers are established in the background. We will then show that the thesis –that war is a highly beneficial training for young writers–, not only shapes the foregrounded contents' structure but also leads the reader to organize the scattered backgrounded contents as a narrative.

9.5 Narrating Argument 1: An Account of Oneself

Barrès account of himself in the first paragraph appears when he conjures up the image of youth, at first at the army, then returning from the front, beaming and blossoming into useful writers, all casualty risks eclipsed, in order to persuade the reader that the war is beneficial. This image consists of two parts. These parts are managed by the transitionary words (*mais bientôt je me laisse distraire /but I soon let myself be distracted*). We are going to show that the setting up of this vivid example leads to a reprocessing of some linguistic entities which are finally considered as parts of an autobiographical narrative. These linguistic entities are located in (16). (15) precedes (16). (17) leads to the reprocessing of (16).

(15) *Nous les saluons en masse, nos défenseurs, et puis successivement chacun de ceux que nous connaissons.*
We hail them all, our defenders, and then, one after the other, those we know personally.

(16) *Je songe aux jeunes gens de ma profession, à mes frères en esprit, aux jeunes litterateurs dont je reçois chaque jour des billets si nobles.*
I think of <I can see now> the young men of my profession, my spiritual brothers, the young writers from whom I receive, every day, such noble letters.

(17) *Mais bientôt je me laisse distraire du décor où je ne suis pas habitué à les voir.*
But I soon let myself be distracted from this setting in which I'm not accustomed to seeing them.

Utterance (16) can be read as a vivid, persuasive example and as an autobiographical element, depending on whether it is linked with (15) or (17).

9.5.1 "Attributive" and "Modal" Readings

When in the present tense and in the first person, thinking and saying verbs (e.g. *to think*, *to say*) can be read in two different ways.

On the one hand, the clause "Je (I) + verb + p" may foreground the *je (I)* that is thinking or speaking of (p), so that (p) is backgrounded. We call this reading "attributive".

Example:

(18) A – *Et toi, qu'en penses-tu ?*
And you, what do you think about that?
B – *Je pense que nous devrions recruter Pierre.*
I think that we should recruit Pierre.
A – *Bon. La majorité est donc d'accord pour choisir Pierre*.
Well then. The majority, therefore, agrees on chosing Pierre.

In this example, speaker A reads the clause uttered by the speaker B in an "attributive" way. In order to conclude, he foregrounds the main clause. A attributes to the *je (I)* in (B) an opinion.

On the other hand, the clause "je (I) + verb + p" may foreground (p) – so that the fact that it is *je* (I) that is thinking or speaking of (p) is backgrounded. We call this reading "modal".

Example:

(19) C – *Qu'est-ce qu'on fait ?*
What should we do?
D – *Je pense que Pierre ne viendra plus. Partons.*
I don't think Pierre will come anymore. Let's be off.

In this example, *Partons* is understood as the conclusion of the previous utterance only if it is the subordinate clause (*Pierre ne viendra plus*) that is foregrounded. The fact that D is describing himself as thinking what he is saying (*je pense que*) is backgrounded.

To return to Barrès' article, (16) appears at first to clarify the utterance (15) as an example or a vivid depiction increasing persuasion: the reading is "modal". However, the reading is "attributive" once (16) is linked with (17), within the scope of *mais (but)*.

9.5.2 *Modal Reading of* je songe *(I Think /I Can See Now): Barrès Provides a Tangible Example of Young People Yearning to Go to the Front*

(15) *Nous les saluons en masse, nos défenseurs, et puis successivement chacun de ceux que nous connaissons.*
We hail them all, our defenders, and then, one after the other, those we know personally.

(16) (16a) *Je songe* (16b) *aux jeunes gens de ma profession, à mes frères enesprit, aux jeunes littérateurs dont je reçois chaque jour des billets si nobles.*
(16a) *I think of* <*I can see now*> (16b) *the young men of my profession, my spiritual brothers, the young writers from whom I receive, every day, such noble letters.*

At first, (16) is read as a clarifying example of what is said in the previous sentence (15). (16) makes it clear who the author knows and hails. The verb phrase (16a) *je songe* (*I think of / I can see now*) adds a comment regarding the way the speaker utters the prepositional phrase (16b). (16a) indicates the presence of a speaker who thereby stresses the existence of young people who see pride and honour in war by naming them. (16a) is used to show how the speaker engages in his utterance.

This modal reading of (16) communicates foregrounded as well as backgrounded contents:

(16)	(16a) *Je songe* (16b) *aux jeunes gens de ma profession, à mes frères en esprit, aux jeunes littérateurs dont je reçois chaque jour des billets si nobles.* (16a) *I think of* <*I can see now*> (16b) *the young men of my profession, my spiritual brothers, the young writers from whom I receive, every day, such noble letters.*
Foregrounded	(16b) [young writers I know are serving in the army][9]
Backgrounded	(16a) [I am thinking of <I can see now> (16b)]

These contents can be particularised by the following chainings:

Foregrounded	(16b) I know the young writers that send me noble letters, so I hail them
Backgrounded	(16a) I am saying (16b) because I am thinking of (16b) at the moment

[9] From now on, the excerpt quoted from Barrès, its intuitive content and the argumentative chaining that analyses the content, bear the same number. The excerpt is quoted in italics; the intuitive content is enclosed in square brackets; the chainings are in Roman characters.

This modal reading is possible because one of the foregrounded contents in (15) corresponds to (16b):

(15) We know some of the the young people serving in the army personally, so we hail them.

The content (15) and the content (16b) share the same concern for the young people Barrès knows. (16b) provides a vivid example of (15) and thus strengthens the persuasive effort.

The modal reading of *Je songe* (a) enables us to see that *je songe* introduces evidence that the youth wants to go to the front and (b) underlines the speaker's involvement in the persuasive effort.

9.5.3 Attributive Reading of je songe (I Think/I Can See Now): *Barrès Says He Is Having a Prophetic Vision*

(16) (16a) *Je songe* (16b) *aux jeunes gens de ma profession, à mes frères en esprit, aux jeunes littérateurs dont je reçois chaque jour des billets si nobles*.
(16a) *I think of <I can see now>* (16b) *the young men of my profession, my spiritual brothers, the young writers from whom I receive, every day, such noble letters*

(17) *Mais bientôt je me laisse distraire du décor où je ne suis pas habitué à les voir.*
But I soon let myself be distracted from this setting in which I'm not accustomed to seeing them.

(18) *Me voici transporté dans un monde prochain et dans une atmosphère sublime.*
Here am I, transported to a world to come, to a sublime atmosphere

(19) *J'assiste à leur retour glorieux, et déjà je discerne par quel épanouissement la jeune littérature, au sortir des leçons de la guerre, sera récompensée de la part qu'elle prend au colossal effort.*
I see their glorious return, and I can already see how this youthful literature will blossom, when it emerges from the war's instruction, as a reward for their contribution to the colossal effort.

Within the scope of *mais* (*but*) in (17), (16) may be read in retrospect as a description of the way Barrès stages his prophetic vision. Utterances (18) and (19) also deal

with what Barrès sees. This vision is built up in successive phases: first, in (16), he sees young writers eager to take arms; then suddenly, in (17) and (18) he is projected into the future, where he witnesses their glorious march and concludes that war will be beneficial (19). The verbs (*songer* (*to think/see*), *se laisser distraire* (*to let oneself be distracted*), *voir (to see*), *être transporté* (*to be transported*), *assister (to see)*, *discerner (to see/perceive)* place Barrès in the position of a spectator.

The connective *mais* (*but*) initiates the reprocessing of (16). It means that the sentence which follows contradicts an argument conveyed by the previous sentence. As (17) means he ceases to think of the young writers, we can say that (16) is actually attributing thoughts to *je* (*I*): it communicates primarily that Barrès is thinking of them right now. In (17), the fact that *je (I)* is thinking of these writers is no longer true, since he is distracted (*je me laisse distraire / I let myself be distracted*). In other words, (17), thanks to *mais* (*but*) and the meaning of the verb *distraire* (to distract), refocuses on what was at first backgrounded: the content of *je songe* (*I think/see*). *Je songe* is now interpreted as "attributive".

(16)	(16a) *Je songe* (16b) *aux jeunes gens de ma profession, à mes frères en esprit, aux jeunes littérateurs dont je reçois chaque jour des billets si nobles*. (16a) *I think of <I can see now>* (16b) *the young men of my profession, my spiritual brothers, the young writers from whom I receive, every day, such noble letters.*
(17)	*Mais bientôt je me laisse distraire du décor où je ne suis pas habitué à les voir.* *But I soon let myself be distracted from this setting in which I'm not accustomed to seeing them.*
Foregrounded	(16–17a) [I am thinking of <I can see now> (16b)]
Backgrounded	(16–17b) [young writers I know are serving in the army]

Moreover, time has passed when (17) appears as the vision unfolds in such a way that a more accurate description of (16) and (17), can be made when reading (17), as a result of the following chainings:

(16)	(16a) *Je songe* (16b) *aux jeunes gens de ma profession, à mes frères en esprit, aux jeunes littérateurs dont je reçois chaque jour des billets si nobles*. (16a) *I think of <I can see now>* (16b) *the young men of my profession, my spiritual brothers, the young writers from whom I receive, every day, such noble letters.*
(17)	*Mais bientôt je me laisse distraire du décor où je ne suis pas habitué à les voir.* *But I soon let myself be distracted from this setting in which I'm not accustomed to seeing them.*
Foregrounded	(16–17a) I was seeing (16–17b) however I am no longer seeing them in this way
Backgrounded	(16–17a) I know the young writers from whom I receive such noble letters so I hail them

The shift from a modal to an attributive reading caused by the sequence (16–17) has two consequences. Firstly, the contents which were backgrounded are now foregrounded and vice versa. Secondly, the chainings which particularise the aforesaid contents change according to whether (16) is read within the scope of (15) or (17).

The author is writing a live report on the train of his thoughts. After saying he sees the young writers, Barrès describes himself being carried away to attend their military parade (*cf. supra* utterances (18) and (19)). In this context, the phrase *je songe* is no longer a way for the speaker to engage in the utterance act.

(16) appears initially as an example clarifying (15), and is eventually read as part of Barrès' train of thought. It therefore has its contents rearranged in such a way that they are inverted and particularised by different chainings. It becomes a report that gives meaning to Barrès' situation as a non-combatant committed writer. We can now say that the general argumentative scheme, by shifting focus through the use of *mais*, has become a small account of Barrès' train of thought.

The same can also be said about (21) and (22).

(20) *La France a toute sa jeunesse aux armées.*
All France's youth is in the army.

(21) (21a) *Nul de nous ne peut penser à rien d'autre qu'à* (21b)
ce trésor en danger.
(21a) *Not one of us can think of anything else but* (21b)
this treasure in peril.

(22) *Mais que parlons-nous de danger, quand ils ne veulent voir que l'honneur et la joie du combat ?*
But how can we talk of peril, when they want to see only the honour and joy of combat?

The content of (21) is the result of a selection in the meaning of *aux armées* (*to be in the army*) that chooses the semantic entity [to be in peril]. At first, the content of (21) dealing with the train of thoughts of the author is backgrounded. The backgrounded content is used to show how the speaker is engaged in the utterance act.

(21)	(21a) *Nul de nous ne peut penser à rien d'autrequ'à* (21b) *ce trésor en danger.* (21a) *Not one of us can think of anything else but* (21b) *this treasure in peril.*
Foregrounded	(21b) [young people are in peril]
Backgrounded	(21a) [I am thinking of young people in peril]

These contents can be particularised by the following chainings:

(21)	(21a) *Nul de nous ne peut penser à rien d'autre qu'à* (21b) *ce trésor en danger* (21a) *Not one of us can think of anything else but* (21b) *this treasure in peril.*
Foregrounded	(21b) young people are in peril so we think of them
Backgrounded	(21a) I say (21b) because I am thinking of them

Once (22) appears along with the connective *mais* (*but*), (21) is reprocessed. The focus shifts from the peril in which young people find themselves into the act of speaking about or thinking of. The content that was then backgrounded is now foregrounded.

(21)	(21a) *Nul de nous ne peut penser à rien d'autre qu'à* (21b) *ce trésor en danger.* (21a) *Not one of us can think of anything else but* (21b) *this treasure in peril*
(22)	*Mais que parlons-nous de danger, quand ils ne veulent voir que l'honneur et la joie du combat ?* *But how can we talk of peril, when they want to see only the honour and joy of combat?*
Foregrounded	(21–22a) [I am thinking of young people in peril]
Backgrounded	(21–22b) [young people are in peril]

These contents can be particularised by the following chainings:

(21)	(21a) *Nul de nous ne peut penser à rien d'autre qu'à* (21b) *ce trésor en danger.* (21a) *Not one of us can think of anything else but* (21b) *this treasure in peril*
(22)	*Mais que parlons-nous de danger, quand ils ne veulent voir que l'honneur et la joie du combat ?* *But how can we talk of peril, when they want to see only the honour and joy of combat?*
Foregrounded	(21–22a) I was thinking of young people in peril however I am no more thinking of it
Backgrounded	(21–22b) young people are in peril however I am not thinking of it

The refocusing foregrounds Barrès' train of thoughts.

We have shown that the following expressions *mais bientôt je me laisse distraire* (*but I soon let myself be distracted*) and *mais pourquoi parlons-nous* (*but how can we talk of*) have two functions. Their primary function is to organise the argument, their secondary function is to bring out a narrative: contents related to the train of

thoughts of Barrès, which are at first backgrounded, are then foregrounded. Along with the argument, there emerges a narrative organised by the main persuasive structure.

9.5.4 From the Account of Barrès' Train of Thought to an Autobiographical Narrative

The narrative organised by the argumentation in this article is not limited to the account of Barrès' train of thought. This account is enriched throughout the article by backgrounded contents related to Barrès' position as a writer.

9.5.4.1 *Aux jeunes gens de ma Profession* (*the Young of My Profession*): Barrès Characterises His Social Group

The speaker of (16) relegates several contents corresponding to (16b) to the background. These contents are not linked with the persuasive effort.

(16)	(16a) *Je songe* (16b) *aux jeunes gens de ma profession, à mes frères en esprit, aux jeunes littérateurs dont je reçois chaque jour des billets si nobles*. (16a) *I think of* <*I can see now*> (16b) *the young men of my profession, my spiritual brothers, the young writers from whom I receive, every day, such noble letters.*
Backgrounded	(16b) [I have a profession] [there are young people in my profession] [I have spiritual brothers] [the young people in my profession are my spiritual brothers] [*etc*.]

Like the account of Barrès' thoughts, the aforementioned contents relate to Barrès. Bound together, they form a general autobiographical narrative. In the foreground, Barrès tells the reader what he is thinking right now. In the background, he tells the reader he is part of a group of writers which has a social function (they share a profession) and a specific form of sociability (they are brothers), where old and young are united.

9.5.4.2 *Je reçois* (*I Receive*): Barrès Says He Is a Great Writer

In the background, Barrès also says he is a great writer.

(15) *Nous les saluons en masse, nos défenseurs, et puis successivement chacun de ceux que nous connaissons*.
We hail them all, our defenders, and then, one after the other, those we know personally

(16) (16a) *Je songe* (16b) *aux jeunes gens de ma profession, à mes frères en esprit, aux jeunes litterateurs dont je reçois chaque jour des billets si nobles*.
(16a) *I think of <I can see now>* (16b) *the young men of my profession, my spiritual brothers, the young writers from whom I receive, every day, such noble letters*

(17) *Mais bientôt je me laisse distraire du décor où je ne suis pas habitué à les voir.*
But I soon let myself be distracted from this setting in which I'm not accustomed to seeing them.

To show that he says in the background that he is a great writer, we must analyse *je reçois* (*I receive*) as we analysed *je songe* (*I think of / I can see now*).

Firstly, (16b) is read within the scope of (15) so that the reading is modal. Barrès speaks about young writers. When (16) is read within the scope of (17) and turns into an account of Barrès' train of thought, *je reçois* (*I receive*), like *je songe* I think of / I can see now*)*, is read as attributive. In this reading, Barrès is no longer speaking about the young writers but saying he is considered a great writer himself.

(16)	(16a) *Je songe* (16b) *aux jeunes gens de ma profession, à mes frères en esprit, aux jeunes littérateurs dont je reçois chaque jour des billets si nobles*. (16a) *I think of <I can see now>* (16b) *the young men of my profession, my spiritual brothers, the young writers from whom I receive, every day, such noble letters.*
(17)	*Mais bientôt je me laisse distraire du décor où je ne suis pas habitué à les voir.* *But I soon let myself be distracted from this setting in which I'm not accustomed to seeing them.*
Middlegrounded	[I receive noble letters written by young writers]
Backgrounded	[the young writers are noble]

It's because *je reçois des billets si nobles* (*I receive such noble letters*) is part of a subordinate clause that we can say its main content is set in the middle ground. The other content is backgrounded. These contents can be particularised by the following chainings:

(16)	(16a) *Je songe* (16b) *aux jeunes gens de ma profession, à mes frères en esprit, aux jeunes littérateurs dont je reçois chaque jour des billets si nobles*. (16a) *I think of <I can see now>* (16b) *the young men of my profession, my spiritual brothers, the young writers from whom I receive, every day, such noble letters.*
(17)	*Mais bientôt je me laisse distraire du décor où je ne suis pas habitué à les voir.* *But I soon let myself be distracted from this setting in which I'm not accustomed to seeing them.*
Middlegrounded	I am someone who receives letters written by young writers so I am important in their eyes
Backgrounded	The enemy is threatening us so young writers want to fight

The specificly noble nature of the young writers lies once again in their will to fight but receiving letters now means that Barrès is important at the time. The account of Barrès' train of thought is thus enriched, becoming an autobiographical narrative as well. Barrès says he is considered a great writer, one most capable of embodying the whole nation.

9.5.4.3 *En lisant les* Mémoires de Richard Wagner (*When Reading* Richard Wagner's Memoirs) : The Narrative Expands

This autobiographical narrative is expanded in the other paragraphs. It emerges in paragraph 5:

(23) *J'ai toujours connu les Allemands comme dénués de fierté chevaleresque et, hier encore, en lisant les* Mémoires de Richard Wagner*, je notais à plusieurs reprises, en marge de mon exemplaire, que voilà un maître de qui le génie n'empêche pas qu'il a des parties de goujat.*
I've always known the Germans to be deprived of chivalrous pride, and, only yesterday, when reading Richard Wagner's Memoirs, I noted several times in the margins of my copy that here we have a master whose genius doesn't hold boorishness at bay.

Barrès tells us about a day in his life as a writer: he receives letters (§1), reads the *Mémoires de Richard Wagner* (§5), and takes notes while reading.

9.5.5 *A Committed Intellectual at the Head of the "Ministry of the Word"*

Barrès' account of himself appears at the point *je songe* (*I think / I can see now*) and *je reçois* (*I* receive) are reprocessed. These reprocessings are triggered by the very words used to construct the text's persuasive structure. The narrative is enriched with backgrounded contents relating to Barrès. These contents are not used to enhance the persuasive effort. Rather, they enable Barrès to present himself as a committed intellectual at the head of the "ministry of the word",[10] as the "eulogist of nationalism" – or, after Romain Rolland in 1914, as the "nightingale of the carnage".[11]

The argument is narrating inasmuch as it foregrounds contents relating to Barrès himself when contents relating to the persuasive effort are backgrounded. A narrative surfaces and engulfs the argument.

9.6 Narrating Argument 2: The Transformation of Young Writers into Eagles

There is another story to be found at the background level, one which is constructed by presupposed entities: the transformation of young writers into eagles.

Indeed, presupposed entities have two semantic roles. The first concerns the sentence that expresses them and the second concerns the text as a whole. Regarding the sentence that expresses them, presupposed entities complement what is asserted. Regarding the text, presupposed entities, while not a part of the main textual structure, which is formed by what is asserted, are able to build up a secondary structure.

In Barrès' article, the main structure is persuasive and presupposed entities build up a secondary structure that is narrative. This narrative role of presupposed entities is enabled by the persuasive thesis in which war will be a beneficial experience for young writers.

Thus, considering that (a) presupposed entities relating to the young writers are welded to entities from the main persuasive textual structure and that (b) it is the main persuasive textual structure that enables these entities to constitute a narrative, we conclude that arguments are narrating.

[10] Barrès (1931, p. 200), quoted in Rambaud (2012).

[11] Romain Rolland (1952, p. 152) goes on: "[…] now he thrives on the freshly-dug graves" (our translation).

9.6.1 Presupposition

9.6.1.1 The Linguistic Phenomenon

An entity[12] is presupposed when a speaker, even if he is not asserting it, cannot deny alluding to it and having admitted it. A presupposed entity cannot be denied or questioned and does not take part in the main textual structure.

The speaker of utterances (23), (24) and (15) presupposes the entities (23a), (24a) and (15a):

(23) *J'ai toujours connu les Allemands comme dénués de fierté chevaleresque et, hier encore, en lisant les* Mémoires de Richard Wagner*, je notais à plusieurs reprises, en marge de mon exemplaire, que voilà un maître de qui le génie n'empêche pas qu'il a des parties de goujat.*
I've always known the Germans to be deprived of chivalrous pride, and, only yesterday, when reading Richard Wagner's Memoirs, I noted several times in the margins of my copy that here we have a master whose genius doesn't hold boorishness at bay.
(23a) [Richard Wagner is a genius.]

(24) *Mais en même temps que chacun acquiert le sens de l'ensemble, la sympathie mutuelle s'est développée*
Yet as each of us gains a sense of the whole, mutual sympathy has arisen.
(24a) [each and every person gains a sense of the whole.]

(15) *Nous les saluons en masse, nos défenseurs, et puis chacun de ceux que nous connaissons*
We hail them all, our defenders, and then, one after the other, those we know personally
(15a) [each of us knows at least one of our defenders.]

9.6.1.2 Description of the Phenomenon

Frege, Russell and Ducrot share the idea that the presupposition phenomenon happens on a sentence scale and that it always has the same cause. They disagree about the nature of this cause and consequently describe the phenomenon differently.

According to Frege, presupposed entities are never communicated when a sentence is uttered. They are merely prerequisite assumptions that allow a sentence to

[12] In this article, the word *entity* refers to word's semantic value. It does not refer to any particular word.

be assigned a truth-value. According to Russell, presupposed entities are communicated. Linked thanks to ∧ (*and*), each presupposed entity forms with a main entity a unique content. According to Ducrot (1972), the presupposed entity and the main entity are both communicated by the speaker, but on two distinct modes as they result from two distinct illocutionary acts: the main entity is "asserted"; the presupposed entity is "presupposed".

We agree with Russell and Ducrot that presupposed entities are communicated. But we make out three different kinds of presupposition: argumentative presupposition, aggregated enunciative presupposition and non-aggregated enunciative presupposition.

A. Argumentative and Enunciative Presupposition

Following Russell, we say that (23a) [Richard Wagner is a genius] is linked with the main entity of (23) [Richard Wagner is a boor] and that they form a unique asserted content. Yet, the connective is not ∧ (*and*) but rather *even if*, so that (23) means:

(23) Even if Richard Wagner is a genius, he is a boor

In this case, (23a) is said to result from an argumentative presupposition.

The same cannot be said of (24a) and (15a). (24) does not forge an argumentative bond between the presupposed entity (24a) [each and every person gains a sense of the whole] and the main entity (24b) [mutual sympathy has arisen]. In other words, the argumentative chaining "(24a) therefore (24b)" does not express the meaning of (24). Here, *en meme temps que* (*as*) is not an equivalent to *so* or *therefore.* Likewise, (15) does not link (15a) [each of us knows at least one of our defenders] and (15b) [we hail each of the defenders we know] with *therefore* or *however*.

Following Ducrot, we say that (24a) and (15a) result from an enunciative presupposition. They are backgrounded contents whereas main entities are foregrounded contents.[13] In this respect, we say that in the case of an enunciative presupposition, the presupposed entity and the main one form two distinct contents. In the case of an argumentative presupposition, the presupposed entity and the main one form a unique content.

B. Aggregated and Non Aggregated Enunciative Presuppositions

(24a) and (15a) result from two distinct kinds of enunciative presupposition. (24a) is linked with the foregrounded content (24b). (15a) is not linked with the foregrounded content (15b).

[13] We use foregrounding and backgrounding to describe two different linguistic phenomena: in 9.5 they enable us to describe the speaker's involvement; in 9.6 they enable us to describe presupposition.

(24)	*Mais en même temps que chacun acquiert le sens de l'ensemble, la sympathie mutuelle s'est développée* *Yet as each of us gains a sense of the whole, mutual sympathy has arisen.*
Foregrounded	(24b) [mutual sympathy has arisen]
Backgrounded – aggregated	(24a) [each and every person gains the sense of the whole]

(15)	*Nous les saluons en masse, nos défenseurs, et puis chacun de ceux qui nous connaissons* *We hail them all, our defenders, and then, one after the other, those we know personally.*
Foregrounded	(15b) [we hail each of the defenders we know]
Backgrounded – non aggregated	(15a) [each of us knows at least one of our defenders]

(24) is built by aggregating the foregrounded content (24b) with the backgrounded content (24a). When the speaker says *en même temps* (*as*), this creates a period of time that contains the unique event jointly formed by (24a) and (24b). We thus say that (24a) is a presupposed aggregated enunciative content.

Conversely, (15a) is not directly linked with the foregrounded content (15b), even if they are both communicated. (15a) hardly enriches (15b) – Frege would even say (15a) is not communicated. Following Ducrot, we hypothesise that (15a) is communicated. However, we affirm that it is not aggregated.

Presupposition is not a homogeneous phenomenon on the sentence scale. A presupposed entity may be strongly linked to the main content (argumentative presupposition); the entities may be moderately linked (aggregated enunciative presupposition); or they may be loosely linked (non-aggregated enunciative presupposition).

C. Presupposed Entities and Textual Structure

On a textual scale, Ducrot (1972) showed that the main entities constitute a structure from which presupposed entities are excluded. We intend to show that presupposed entities can also constitute a structure – from which main entities are not necessarily excluded. We will study the presupposed entities relating to the young writers on a sentence scale in order to show on a textual scale another way of building a narrating argument.

9.6.2 *About the Young Writers: The Function of Presupposed Entities on a Sentence Scale*

Presupposed contents relating to the young writers are found in paragraphs 1, 2 and 7. We will focus on two examples.

9.6.2.1 First Example: *ils ne veulent voir que l'honneur et la joie du combat (They Want to See only the Honour and Joy of Combat)*

The first example (25) follows the connective *quand* (when) in (22):

(22) *Mais que parlons-nous de danger, quand ils ne veulent voir que l'honneur et la joie du combat ?*
But how can we talk of peril, when they want to see only the honour and joy of combat?
(25) *ils ne veulent voir que l'honneur et la joie du combat.*
they want to see only the honour and joy of combat.

(22) is a rhetorical question. (25) is used as an argument to support the content (26):

(26) *Mais que parlons-nous de danger*
But how can we talk of peril
[we must not speak about peril]

The locution "*ne… que*" *(only / no more than…)* in (25) is, according to Nølke (1983), paradigmatising. That is, (25) does not only communicate

(25a) [they see honour and joy of combat]

but also another entity:

(25b) [they do not see X]

where X belongs to the same paradigm as *honour* and *joy*. The co-text identifies X with [peril]. Thus, (25) communicates:

(25)	*ils ne veulent voir que l'honneur et la joie du combat* *they want to see only the honour and joy of combat.*
Foregrounded	(25b) [they do not see peril in combat]
Backgrounded – aggregated	(25a) [they see honour and joy of combat]

Furthermore, the locution *ne… que* highlights that the main entity is the negative one. (25b) is asserted by the speaker; it is the argument that supports (26). (25a) is a presupposed entity.

(25a) is not an argumentative presupposed entity. (25a) and (25b) do not form an argumentative chaining. Although it is linguistically possible to link (25a) and (25b) with *therefore*, the chaining "(25a) therefore (25b)" does not express the meaning of (25). The paradigmatising function of *ne… que* in (25) consists in listing similar entities (peril, honour, joy, *etc*.) belonging to the same paradigm (war); it does not forge an argumentative bond between them.

Yet (25a) completes (25b). Thanks to the link between (25a) and (25b), the young writers, heedless of danger, appear brave and not reckless.

Thus (25a) is an aggregated enunciative presupposed content. On a sentence scale, (25a) is moderately linked with (25b) – without, on a textual scale, taking part in the main persuasive effort.

9.6.2.2 Second Example: *ce sera fini de bêler et de niaiser (Bleating and Dilly-Dallying Will Be over and Gone)*

The second example (28) is taken from the second paragraph, in (27):

(27) *ce sera fini de bêler et de niaiser, et les jeunes artistes qui, dans cette minute, mêlés à tous les rangs d'une nation exaltée, surmontent les alternatives de la peur et du courage, ne cesseront plus de porter leurs regards sur les grands intérêts de la vie des peuples, en même temps que sur les parties divines de l'âme.*
Bleating and dilly-dallying will be over and gone, and the young artists who, at this very minute, interspersed amongst all ranks of an exalted nation, are overcoming the choice between fear and bravery, will unfailingly set their sights on the great interests of the lives of peoples and, at the same time, on the divine elements of the soul.

(28) *ce sera fini de bêler et de niaiser*
bleating and dilly-dallying will be over and gone

Like *cesser* (*to stop*), the verb *finir* (here: *to be over and gone*) presupposes that the finished action has happened before. The speaker of (28) presupposes (28a) and asserts (28b):

(28a) [young artists were bleating and dilly-dallying]
(28b) [young artists will neither bleat nor dilly-dally]

Grouped together *via* the meaning of *finir* (*to be over and gone*), the speaker forges a bond between (28a) and (28b). (28a) and (28b) are not mere facets of an event.

By saying (28), the speaker signals a change. Thus, (28a) is strongly linked to (28b), so that the argumentative chaining (28) is expressed:

(28) young artists were bleating and dilly-dallying, however they will neither bleat nor dilly-dally

(28a) is therefore an argumentative presupposed entity of (28).

9.6.2.3 Presupposed Contents Relating to Young Writers

Whe have shown that Barrès' text contains some presupposed entities relating to young writers. These entities are linked, either strongly or moderately, to entities belonging to the main persuasive structure. The same could be said about the following presupposed entities:

(29a) [young artists are interspersed amongst all ranks of an exalted nation]
(30a) [they are clothed in greatcoats, with kepis on their heads]
(31a) [young artists overcome the choice between fear and bravery]
(32a) [they have interrupted their books]
(33a) [they have started writing a song powerful enough to mirror their souls]
(34a) [they will come back from the Rhine]
(35a) [they will rise]

We will show now that, on a textual scale, these presupposed entities participate in the building of a narrative.

9.6.3 Story of the Young Writers: The Function of Presupposed Entities on a Textual Scale

The content's function on a sentence scale is not the same as its function on a textual scale. The difference is especially clear when considering presupposed entities. A presupposed entity can be linked to a main entity on a sentence scale and can be linked to another presupposed entity on a textual scale. In this way, linked together, presupposed entities can build up secondary structures.

9.6.3.1 An Example of a Secondary Structure

Many texts display a secondary structure. This phenomenon happens for instance when Flaubert speaks about Félicité and her parrot Loulou:

(36) (37) *Elle l'avait posé sur l'herbe pour le rafraîchir, s'absenta une minute ;*
(38) *et, quand elle revint, plus de perroquet !*[14]
(37) *She had put him down on the grass to cool him down, went away for only a minute;*(38) *and, when she came back, no more parrot!*

The semi-colon divides the excerpt into two utterances (37) and (38). The first one, because of the meaning of the verb *s'absenter* (*to go away for a moment*) presupposes:

(37a) [She will come back]

The use of *quand* (*when*) in (37) presupposes (Le Draoulec 2006; Carel 2016):

(38a) [She came back]

These presupposed entities are linked together as the return announced in (37a) happens in (38a). They build up a secondary structure which represents the passage of time. This secondary structure supports the main one so the story unfolds in a linear fashion. Here, the secondary structure and the main structure are narrative but sometimes the two structures are of a different nature. In Barrès' article, the main structure is persuasive and the secondary structure is narrative.

9.6.3.2 Barrès' Article: A Secondary Structure Narrates the Transformation of Young Writers into Eagles

Barrès' article contains an example of a secondary narrative structure. Indeed, the contents relating to the young writers are not merely thematically gathered in the background. They constitute a narrative that gives meaning to the experience of war.

The main argumentative structure supports the idea that the war will turn young writers into real writers. This thesis organises the entities dealing with young writers. We can make out three moments which bring together contents that are not expressed in the text in a chronological order. The contents are presupposed contents or main entities.

a) The setup:
(28a) [young artists were bleating and dilly-dallying]
(32a) [they have interrupted their books]
(33a) [they had started writing a song powerful enough to mirror their souls]

[14] Gustave Flaubert, *Trois Contes, Un cœur simple*, Gallimard, coll. « Folio classique », 2003, p. 64.

b) The catalyst, war, triggers the transformation process:
(25b) [they do not see they are in peril]
(30a) [they are clothed in greatcoats, with kepis on their heads]
(29a) [young artists are interspersed amongst all ranks of an exalted nation]
(31a) [young artists overcome the choice between fear and bravery]
(35a) [young artists will rise]

c) The resolution, the result of the transformation:
(28b) [young artists won't bleat or dilly-dally]
(34a) [young artists will come back from the Rhine]
(39) [young artists will surpass all their dreams]

This secondary structure is a narrative. Mostly built up thanks to presupposed contents, it also contains some main contents (for instance: [young artists will surpass all their dreams]).

9.6.4 A War Narrative

The narrative relating to the young writers is primarily constructed by presupposed contents. These presupposed contents take on the form of a narrative with the help of the thesis which is supported by the persuasive structure. Contrary to the account of oneself that is developed in the foreground, this narrative dealing with the young writers unfolds in the background.

The young writers are thereby firstly described as being transformed into eagles and secondly as taking part in the nation's enthusiasm. Thus Barrès' argument integrates them into a broader, comprehensive narrative about war involving heroes with whom the readers will be able to identify.

9.7 Conclusion

This study of "L'Aigle survole le Rossignol" has allowed us to re-examine the relations between argumentation and narration. We have shown that this text is at once narrative and argumentative, and that the narrative structure is managed by the persuasive structure. Furthermore, we can now draw three conclusions regarding presupposition, textual organisation and argumentation.

The hypothesis put forward by Ducrot (1972) whereby presupposed contents are communicated by the speaker is supported. Firstly, we have shown that presupposed contents can complete main contents – this being the case with argumentative presupposed contents and aggregated enunciative presupposed contents. Secondly, we claim that they can function on a textual scale to build up a secondary structure.

Therefore, a single text may hold several structures: a secondary structure built up by presupposed contents may be added to the main structure. Our study thus concurs with Harald Weinrich's conclusion on texts (Weinrich 1973). According to him, the main contents of a text are, depending on the tense of the utterance, divided into several structures: a sequence of events (when uttered in *passé simple*), a general description of society (when uttered in *imparfait*), *etc*. We show that we can add to these structures the one constructed by presupposed contents.

Barrès' persuasive argumentation produces two narratives: an account of himself and the story of the young writers' transformation, each triggered by a part of the main persuasive structure. The account of himself appears when Barrès makes a transition between two arguments through reprocessing and foregrounding (modal reading *vs*. attributive reading). The story of the young writers' transformation is organised by the thesis itself which enables the reader to group together presupposed contents which form a secondary, narrative structure in the background.

Consequently, our hypothesis that studies of the relations between narration and argument must take into account not only narrative arguments but also arguments that narrate

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Chapter 10
Narrative as Argument in Atul Gawande's "On Washing Hands" and "Letting Go"

James Phelan

Abstract This essay responds to scholarly skepticism about narrative as argument, due to its reliance on hindsight effects (because such and such happened, then so and so must be the causes), and its tendency to develop inadequate analogies or to overgeneralize from single cases. The essay contends that, while some uses of narrative as argument display these problems, they are not inherent in narrative itself. It offers warrants for that contention by (a) proposing a conception of narrative as rhetoric and (b) using that conception to analyze two essays by Atul Gawande, "On Washing Hands" (2007) and "Letting Go" (2014) that rely heavily on narrative as part of their larger problem-solution argumentative structure. The analysis leads to the conclusion that a skillful author can, depending on his or her overall purposes, use narrative either as a mode of argument in itself or as a means of supporting arguments made through non-narrative means—and can even use both approaches within a single piece.

Kvernbekk (2003) and Govier and Ayers (2012) express a skeptical view about the epistemological validity of narratives as arguments. Grounding her analysis in an understanding of narratives as "a form of causal explanation" (p. 275), Kvernbekk contends that narratives play fast and loose with the logic of argument, as a comparison of the two modes indicates. Arguments achieve validity by (a) proceeding from premises whose adequacy is established outside the argument, e.g., "all humans are mortal," and "Caius is human" (my examples not Kvernbekk's), and (b) following the logic of the interrelation of the premises and other relevant matters whatever it leads, e.g., "Caius is mortal." Narratives, by contrast, suffer from hindsight effects. They begin with the conclusion (e.g. "Donald Trump has won the nomination of the Republican Party") and then work backward to causes and even premises ("Donald Trump has such and such characteristics"; "Candidates with such and such characteristics appeal to Republican voters in 2016").

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Defining narrative as "a sequence of events told from a point of view," Govier and Ayers examine two main strategies in parables that have an argumentative point: analogy and instantiation (they identify symbolization as a third strategy but do not examine it closely). They find that analogy is problematic because "the things compared are likely to differ in respects highly relevant to the conclusion," and instantiation is problematic because often the single example is ultimately "not representative of the broader class" (p. 186).[1]

Not surprisingly, if one grants these authors their premises—their definitions of narrative, and their views of how it works—then their conclusions are generally persuasive.[2] In this essay, however, I contend that those premises are based on a partial understanding of narrative, and that a different, more capacious understanding allows us to recognize diverse ways in which narrative can not only *add to* the validity and persuasiveness of arguments but also function as a *mode* of valid argument. My expanded view is rooted in a conception of narrative as rhetoric, and I demonstrate its consequences through an analysis of two essays by Atul Gawande: "On Washing Hands," and "Letting Go". Gawande is both a practicing surgeon (at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston), a staff writer for *The New Yorker*, and the author of four best-selling books, including *Better* (2007), which includes "On Washing Hands," and *Being Mortal* (2014), which includes "Letting Go." Gawande's work is frequently taught in medical humanities courses, and it is of special interest to scholars and teachers in the "narrative medicine" movement, which is built on the premise that increasing narrative competence of health care practitioners can improve patient outcomes. Scholars in this movement are drawn to Gawande's writing precisely because he relies so much on storytelling as he advances his arguments about various dimensions of medical practice. But I am not aware of any previous scholar who has taken on the task on closely examining just how he handles the relation between narrative and argument in his work. I choose "On Washing Hands" and "Letting Go" as my two case studies because (1) together they give a fair, if incomplete, portrait of Gawande's strategies with narrative, (2) they provide a good test case for my twin claims about narrative as both a means and a mode of argument.

[1] Not all commentators are as skeptical about narrative's role in argument. For a good summary of more positive views, see Olmos (2013).

[2] Govier and Ayers do run the risk of exemplifying the problem of instantiation they identify by drawing general conclusions about narrative from their analysis of only one kind of narrative, the parable. But on the whole, they, like Kvernbekk, carefully seek to ground their conclusions in sound reasoning.

10.1 Narrative as Rhetoric

In my rhetorical approach to narrative, I define narrative not as "a form of causal explanation" or the "a sequence of events told from some point of view" but as "somebody telling somebody else on some occasion and for some purpose(s) that something happened" (see Phelan 1996, 2005, 2007, 2017 for further discussion). Understanding narrative as rhetoric has five salient consequences for my analysis of Gawande's practice.

(1) The definition sidesteps the opposition between narrative-as-process and narrative-as-product by conceiving of narrative as action: somebody trying to accomplish something by telling a story.
(2) The conception is open-ended about the various somethings tellers seek to accomplish—about, that is, narrative's possible purposes. Thus, in this view, narrative can function either as a supplement to argument—as when it illustrates a more general point—or as argument by another means. When narrative functions as argument by another means, the somebody telling implicitly contends that story is a more effective way of persuading the somebody told than syllogistic or another kind of analytical reasoning. In other words, the teller decides that his or her case about a particular set of phenomena requires either the big picture appeal of a story that abstracts from concrete particulars or the nuances and complexities accompanying the detailed representation of those particulars—or, indeed, some combination of the two (Phelan 2008). While some storytelling can be skewed by hindsight effects or other ways of distorting the phenomena under discussion, narrative is not intrinsically less—or more—valid than other modes of argument.
(3) The conception gives greater weight to tellers and audiences than to the elements of narrative—event, character, plot, time, space, perspective, and so on. In the rhetorical view, tellers and audiences are the constants of narrative, while the elements are variable resources that tellers deploy in different ways depending on their audiences and their purposes. In practical terms, then, this conception leads to the conclusion that in some narratives plot will be the most important resource, but in others, character will be, and so on—depending on the nature of the teller's purpose in relation to his or her audience. This same logic applies to causality: some narratives rely on causality to link their events but others do not, preferring analogy, metonymy, symbolization, or some other device(s) as a principle of connection.
(4) The emphasis on tellers, audiences, and purposes leads to a recognition that narrative communication is often a multi-layered phenomenon. Tellers use the resources at their disposal in order to engage their audience's intellects, emotions, ethical values, and aesthetic responses. Of special relevance to Gawande's practice is the way he engages his audience in the ethical layer of his narratives. This layer itself has two components, an ethics of the told—involving moral judgments about the actions of the people he describes, including himself; and

an ethics of the telling, involving moral judgments about his handling of his materials, including his self-descriptions.

(5) Tellers typically engage their audiences in three related but analytically distinct kinds of interest related to three simultaneously existing components of narrative:

- **Mimetic**—the ways in which the representation of characters, events, and/or other objects are realistic (in fiction), referential (in nonfiction), or, indeed, depart from conventions of realism or referentiality; when narratives are used within arguments, their mimetic components typically function both to ground ideas in actual experiences of real people and to help audiences connect with both the ideas and situations;
- **Thematic**—(similar to Govier and Ayers' *instantiation*) the ways in which the representation of characters, events, and/or other objects is itself representative of larger groups or of particular sets of ideas; when narratives are used within arguments, authors will often (but by no means always) explicitly articulate their thematic points; when narratives are used as arguments, their authors often leave the thematic points implicit—or off-load them on to a character; since Govier and Ayers cast doubt on the validity of instantiation, I will pay special attention to that issue in my analysis of Gawande's practice;
- **and Synthetic**—the ways in which the representation of characters, events, or other objects is itself a construction that performs particular functions in the narrative; in some literary fiction, the synthetic component of narrative gets foregrounded, but when narratives are used within arguments, it typically remains in the background, even as its particular functions are often crucial to the argument's effectiveness (or lack thereof).

These points about narrative as rhetoric should become clearer as I work through my analysis of Gawande's essays.

10.2 "On Washing Hands"

In "On Washing Hands," Gawande skillfully adapts the problem-solution argumentative structure for his specific purposes. The problem is how to get hospital workers to comply with the injunction to wash their hands in order to prevent the spread of bacterial infection. The solution is to ask the workers what to do to increase compliance and then implement their ideas. This core structure lends itself to several straightforward arguments with straightforward theses. One such thesis would be: in order to change workers' behavior, it is better to work from the bottom up (that is, by drawing on their knowledge and their proposals) than from the top down (by having administrators or others impose solutions on the workers). Another thesis would be: in a complex system that is not working well, identify examples of "positive deviance," that is, behaviors that produce positive outcomes, and build on them.

In adapting the problem-solution structure, however, Gawande does not construct a straightforward argument with a straightforward thesis. Instead, he uses several mini-narratives in combination with exposition and with thematizing commentary to alter his audience's understanding of both the problem and the solution. Indeed, he uses the ending to the central narrative as a way to temper his audience's enthusiasm for the solution. Consequently, his thesis can be paraphrased as follows: the problem of getting physicians to wash their hands is so intractable that even the "most fascinating idea anyone has had to solve the problem in a century" (Gawande 2007, p. 27) may not succeed.

In a 2012 interview, Gawande states that "my audience, first and foremost is, for lack of a better word, citizens—reading citizens, whether they are doctors or not. I'm really writing for people, asking them to take off their hats in whatever they do and asking them to step into the shoes of the people and problems that I'm trying to write about" (Flynn 2012). This description not only provides a general motive for his frequent turn to storytelling, but it also illuminates his handling of their mimetic components: he depicts real people and situations in order to facilitate his audience's cognitive and affective engagement with the issues he addresses.

Across the whole essay, Gawande makes particularly effective use of two interrelated resources of narrative: (1) character, including the mimetic, thematic, and synthetic components of his own representation of himself; and (2) plot, which, in this case, involves a simple conflict between two groups of characters, the two infection control specialists in his hospital, Deborah Yokoe and Susan Marino, and "clinicians like me" (Gawande 2007, p. 14). While character remains important throughout, the simple plot, for most of the essay, remains subordinate to the exposition of the problem and the solution. But Gawande uses his ending to give that plot a new prominence, even as he leaves it unresolved. This move significantly complicates the solution. Let's take a closer look.

"On Washing Hands" has three main parts:

1. the presentation of the problem, which begins with the first paragraph and continues until Gawande's iterative narrative about his own failures to wash his hands as he goes about his work (pp. 13–23); this longest part has several subparts (mini-narratives, passages of exposition, thematizing conclusions) but they all contribute to giving the audience a sense of the intractability of the problem;
2. the presentation of the solution in the stories he tells about Paul O'Neill and Jon Lloyd's work in a Pittsburgh veteran's hospital (pp. 23–27); and
3. the final mini-narrative, separated from the rest of the argument by white space, which modifies the problem-solution structure of the argument. Gawande's most important uses of the resources of narrative involve his handling of his own character at the end of part one and in the coda. In order to get at the effects of these moves, however, I need to place them within the context of the rest of the essay.

Gawande's approach to audience is immediately evident in his introduction of his hospital's two infection control experts, Deborah Yokoe and Susan Marino. Gawande uses the narrative of Yokoe and Marino's efforts to control the spread of infection as the backbone of the essay's structure—he opens with it, returns to it throughout part

one, and ends with it—*yet the account is not causally related to the solution.* The idea of working bottom up comes not from Yokoe and Marino but from Jon Lloyd, a surgeon at a Pittsburgh veterans hospital, and it is not an idea that has been implemented at Gawande's hospital (Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston) at the time of his writing the essay. In fact, if Gawande were interested in constructing an argument whose primary appeal was to his audience's reason, he wouldn't need to include Yokoe and Marino at all. Instead, he could have presented the problem, cited statistics to establish its recalcitrance, and then offered a narrative about Lloyd's solution, followed by the relevant statistics to confirm its success.

But such an approach would not have been as conducive to getting his audience to appreciate the difficulty of the problem and so he invites that audience to "step into the shoes" of (a) Yokoe and Marino, whom he depicts right from the beginning as two skilled and dedicated people facing a difficult task, and (b) himself, whom he depicts as a doctor who wants to be part of the solution but is often part of the problem. Indeed, this opposition-within-shared-objective is the germ for the simple, but ultimately unresolved, plot running through the essay, which is itself a crucial component of Gawande's overall argument.

In his first two paragraphs, Gawande carefully sets up the contrast. He begins by focusing on Yokoe and Marino, giving them just a few individualizing traits, and highlighting the difficulty of their job:

> One December day, I took a tour of my hospital with Deborah Yokoe, an infectious disease specialist, and Susan Marino, a microbiologist. They work in our hospital's infection-control unit. Their full-time job, and that of three others in the unit, is to stop the spread of infection in the hospital. This is not flashy work and they are not flashy people. Yokoe is forty-five years old, gentle-voiced, and dimpled. She wears sneakers at work. Marino is in her fifties and reserved by nature. But they have coped with influenza epidemics, Legionnaires' disease, fatal bacterial meningitis [and much more]. (p. 13)

With these sketchy mimetic portraits of Yokoe and Marino, Gawande makes it easier for his audience of "reading citizens" to step into their shoes: Yokoe and Marino are "not flashy people," and Gawande gives each just a few identifying traits to support this characterization. But by then emphasizing the details of their work, he adds a new dimension to their portraits: they are ordinary people doing extraordinary things. Furthermore, their ability to "cope with" all manner of dangerous diseases indicates that they are very good at what they do, and their persistence in their difficult work makes them ethically admirable. In this way, Gawande signals to his audience that they are the "good guys" in his simple plot. At the same time, by limiting his mimetic portraits of Yokoe and Marino, Gawande also gestures toward their representative function: the reference to "our hospital's infection-control unit" indicates that other hospitals have such units with their own team of workers.

In his second paragraph, Gawande moves to state the problem the essay will address:

> The hardest part of the infection control team's job, Yokoe says, is not coping with the variety of the contagions they encounter or the panic that sometimes occurs among patients and staff. Instead, their greatest difficulty is getting clinicians like me to do the one thing that consistently halts the spread of infections: wash our hands. (p. 14)

Gawande effectively links the mimetic and the thematic components of the narrative as he identifies the "bad guys" that make Yokoe and Marino's job so difficult—"clinicians like me." Indeed, that phrase is a clear mimetic-thematic hybrid, one that emphasizes both Gawande's individuality and his representativeness. Furthermore, the very need for an infection-control unit validates Gawande's claim for representativeness: if he were the only offender, Yokoe and Marino would not be needed.

At the same time, the phrase "clinicians like me" introduces a difference between Gawande as author (the agent orchestrating the whole essay) and Gawande as character (the clinician) that he will draw on throughout the essay and that is crucial to the relation between the ethics of the told and the ethics of the telling here. Gawande the character acts deficiently, but Gawande the author is admirably honest about his failings. That discrepancy in turn creates a narrative tension that not only drives the audience's interest in hearing more but also makes the difficulty of the problem surprising: why should it be so hard for clinicians, even ones as obviously well-intentioned as Gawande, to do something as simple as wash their hands?

From here Gawande makes several moves designed to deepen his audience's understanding of that difficulty. Continuing to build the mimetic component of the narrative, he details various unsuccessful efforts (e.g., signs, incentives, report cards) that Yokoe and Marino have made to improve the clinicians' behavior. He also expands the thematic component of their quest by linking the current problem to a longer history, one which has a compelling mimetic character at its center: the nineteenth-century Viennese obstetrician Ignac Semmelweis, who figured out that physicians' failures to wash their hands led to infections in new mothers. Gawande reports that Semmelweis became such a fanatical crusader for handwashing that he was very quick to pass harsh and hasty judgment on other, less fanatical doctors. Consequently, he ended up doing more harm than good. "Semmelweis was a genius," Gawande writes, "but he was also a lunatic, and that made him a failed genius" (p. 17).

Gawande provides the thematic bridge from the Semmelweis narrative back to the present with this elegant transition: "One hundred and forty years of doctors' plagues later, however, you have to wonder if what's needed to stop them is precisely a lunatic" (p. 17). At this point, Gawande shifts from narrative to exposition as the main mode of the essay, explaining how easily bacteria can spread, and how difficult it is to combat that spread even as he interweaves details about Yokoe and Marino's efforts in his hospital.

He then turns to thematic summary and personal narrative to round off part one:

> Stopping the epidemics spreading in our hospitals is not a problem of ignorance—of not having the know-how about what to do. It is a problem of compliance—a failure of an individual to apply that know-how correctly. But achieving compliance is hard. […] The people who are most careful in the surgical theater are frequently the very ones who are least careful on the hospital ward. I know because I have realized I am one of them. I generally try to be as scrupulous outside the operating room as I am inside. And I do pretty well, if I do say so myself. But then I blow it. It happens almost every day. I walk into a patient's hospital room, and I am thinking about what I have to tell him concerning his operation, or about his family, who might be standing there looking worried, or about the funny little joke the resident just told me, and I completely forget about getting a squirt of that gel into my

> palms, no matter how many laminated reminder signs have been hung on the walls. Sometimes I do remember, but before I can find the dispenser, the patient puts his hand out in greeting and I think it is too strange not to go ahead and take it. On occasion I even think Screw it—I'm late, I have to get a move on, and what difference does it really make what I do this one time? (p. 23)

Gawande uses this iterative narrative—one telling of what he does on multiple occasions (with variations among those occasions)—as simultaneously the strongest mimetic-thematic statement of the problem and the complication of the simple plot of opposition between Yokoe and Marino's efforts and the behavior of "clinicians like me." Furthermore, although it is a narrative rooted in causality, it is not determined by its ending and does not suffer from hindsight effects. As the iterative mode indicates, Gawande's narrative is responding less to the question "what happened?" and more to the question, "why is there a gap between know-how and compliance?" His answer is effective because it is rooted both in the authority of his experience and in his representative status. To put the point another way, his turn to storytelling with its account of diverse causes of the gap between know-how and compliance invites his audience to infer the larger conclusion that the overarching cause is the intersection of human nature and the demands of contemporary medical practice.

In addition, Gawande's handling of this iterative narrative implicitly invites his audience to compare his self-evaluation—"I do pretty well"—with a hypothetical evaluation from Yokoe and Marino: Gawande the author admits that Gawande the clinician "blow[s] it […] almost every day" and then gives the mimetic details of the how and why. The second implicit invitation is to imagine the behavior of a clinician who does not do "pretty well." As a result, the ethical weight of this plot complication is all on the side of Yokoe and Marino. Nevertheless, Gawande's account of the how and why again makes it easy for his audience to step into his shoes and appreciate the gap between knowledge and intention, on the one hand (I know I should wash and I always mean to) and behavior on the other (there's always a good reason I don't). In other words, Gawande's iterative narrative shows that the simple plot is ethically more complicated than good guys vs. bad guys because the representative bad guy means well yet acts badly in totally understandable ways—indeed, ways that are often connected to his interest in doing well by his patients. With this complication of the simple plot, Gawande also effects a shift in the relation between the ethics of the told and the ethics of the telling. Because Gawande presents this iterative narrative as the culmination of his case for the intractability of the problem, and because it is so easy to step into his clinician's shoes, his behavior appears less ethically deficient. Furthermore, the ethics of the telling become less about his honesty in revealing his deficiencies and more about his scrupulosity in exposing the problem and trying to get to the bottom of it. In other words, Gawande the author is now established as a serious-minded inquirer into a problem that he honestly admits he is a part of. His audience wants him to find the solution as much for his own sake as for that of his patients.

After this iterative narrative, Gawande moves right to the solution by telling the linked stories of Paul O'Neill and Jon Lloyd in the Pittsburgh veterans' hospital. O'Neill made a 140-bed unit his target, and then hired a young engineer named

Peter Perreiah, who changed the question for clinicians from "Why don't you wash your hands?" to "Why can't you wash them?" O'Neill then made changes in response to their answers, most of which were designed to make hospital rooms more like operating rooms. The results were impressive in that unit, but when only one other unit adopted the same changes, O'Neill got discouraged and left. Lloyd, however, a surgeon who had worked with Perreiah, persisted and applied the idea of "positive deviance" to the problem. This application involved yet another shift: from "why can't you wash your hands?" to "how can we harness your ideas about solving the problem to an effective solution?" The response this time was overwhelmingly positive, and within a year, "the entire hospital saw its MRSA (*Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus*) wound infection rates drop to zero."

Again Gawande relies on the mimetic component of narrative to help his audience step into the shoes of his characters, but his focus is less on their individual traits, especially in comparison to his treatment of Semmelweis, and more on their problem-solving abilities. This strategy makes good sense within the problem-solution structure of the argument: even as Gawande represents O'Neill, Perreiah, and Lloyd as admirable innovators, he wants to maintain the primary emphasis on the quest for the solution and the solution itself.

Gawande then ends part two by consolidating his conclusions about the solution:

> The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Jewish Healthcare Foundation recently launched a multimillion-dollar initiative to implement this approach in ten more hospitals across the country. Lloyd cautions that it remains to be seen whether the Pittsburgh results will last. It also remains to be seen if the success can be duplicated nationally. But nothing else has worked, and this is the most fascinating idea anyone has had to solve the problem in a century. (p. 27)

If Gawande had not introduced his simple plot, he could have used this paragraph as an effective conclusion to the whole essay. The difficult problem now has a plausible solution even as its difficulty means that any claims about "mission accomplished!" are premature. Such cautious optimism would hit just the right note. Indeed, Gawande's one use of extra white space between paragraphs signals that he believes he has come to one endpoint in the essay. But Gawande has one more move to make after that white space, a return to his simple plot via a return to the tour of the hospital with Yokoe and Marino that Gawande mentioned in the very first paragraph.

Gawande notes that on the door of one of his own patients there is a sign indicating the presence of MRSA or VRE (*Vancomycin-resistant enterococci*). Gawande the author then briefly tells the story of this patient, a 62 year old man, on whom Gawande the clinician had performed a splenectomy, and who, after initially doing well, had contracted sepsis and whose central line had become infected and had to be removed. Gawande then concludes both this story and the essay as a whole in two sentences that gradually erase the difference between Gawande the author and Gawande the clinician: "Until that moment, when I stood there looking at the sign on his door, it had not occurred to me that I might have given him that infection. But the truth is I may have. One of us did" (p. 28).

By ending this way, Gawande shifts the emphasis in the problem-solution structure back to the problem, and that emphasis points in two directions—toward its importance and toward its intractability. More specifically, this mini-narrative effectively rounds off the simple plot of the essay by underlining one last time the gap between the infection fighters and the clinicians. In addition, it picks up the point of the iterative narrative at the end of part one and shows the dire consequences of what "blowing it" can mean. To be sure, Gawande is careful not to pinpoint any specific failure of handwashing and thus careful not to say that he is definitely the cause of the patient's infection. Such specifics would detract from the effectiveness of the ending because it would significantly alter the ethics of the told: Gawande the clinician would be guilty of malpractice. In addition, such specifics would misalign the relation between the mimetic and the thematic by overemphasizing Gawande as individual clinician, when his concern throughout has been with "clinicians like me." By placing himself among several possible culprits, Gawande reinforces his own representative status even as he highlights the urgency of the problem.

So far, so good. But the second direction of the shift back to the problem—toward its intractability—is logically more questionable. From Kvernbekk's perspective, this final turn toward narrative would appear deficient: not only has the solution developed independently of Yokoe and Marino but they have also not yet implemented it in their hospital. How, then, can Gawande even appear to be questioning it? Because he uses his storytelling to tap into a different logic than that of temporally restricted cause-and-effect. Although positive deviance is a promising means for increasing the compliance of "clinicians like me," his story-telling invites some skepticism about its ability to fully close the gap between know-how and compliance. Compliance depends on individuals, and individuals, despite their best intentions, make mistakes—often because those intentions come into conflict with others. In other words, Gawande uses storytelling and the authority of experience not to undermine the solution but to end on a note of caution about its efficacy. Given the phenomena that Gawande explores through his stories—the long history of failed compliance, the conscientious efforts of Yokoe and Marino his own behavior—he has logically earned the right to hit that note.

10.3 "Letting Go"

In this piece, Gawande again works with the problem-solution structure, though this time he fully endorses the solution. He uses narrative to unpack the phenomena related to both problem and solution, and again he relies on narrative's affective and ethical dimensions. "Letting Go" (2010, 2014) is longer and more complexly organized than "On Washing Hands," and I do not have space for a full analysis. But looking at Gawande's different uses of features that we saw in "On Washing Hands" will shed light on both essays and on the larger issue of the relation between narrative and argument. These features are (a) a central story threaded throughout the essay and (b) his representation of himself as an acting physician. In addition, I'll

discuss his handling of an important objection to his solution, one that is itself based in a narrative.

Gawande poses the problem in his first paragraph: "as people's capacities wane whether through age or ill health, making their lives better often requires curbing our purely medical imperatives—resisting the urge to fiddle and fix and control. It was not hard to see how important this idea could be for the patients I encountered in my daily practice—people facing mortal circumstances at every phase of life. But it posed a difficult question: When should we try to fix and when should we not?" (2014, p. 149).[3]

It's easy to imagine someone deciding that a proper solution to this problem requires an algorithm based on such variables as "probable extension of life," "cost of treatment," and "severity of side effects of treatment." But Gawande looks for the solution—and looks to persuade his audience for the solution—in narratives and his thematizing of them. That solution can be summarized as follows: "deciding when to try to fix a patient's decline requires knowing her story—who she is, what she values, how she got to this point; in current practice, however, we choose to fix more frequently than we should, much to the detriment of our patients; consequently, both doctors and patients need to learn the art of letting go."

The central story is that of Sara Monopoli, a young woman, with a supportive family, who learns just before the birth of her first child that she has lung cancer. Gawande tells Sara's story in four main segments, located in the beginning, the middle (two segments), and the end, and the departures from it place Sara's story within the broader context of the problem. This context includes such issues as medicine's increased technological capacity to extend life without necessarily extending quality of life; the high costs of such technological interventions; the increased frequency of dying's becoming a long, drawn-out process; the loss of the *ars moriendi*; hospice as an alternative to the hospital; the difficulty of doctor-patient communication about end-of-life decisions; the positive benefits of planning ahead for end-of-life decision-making; and more. Gawande uses this context in part to persuade his audience that he and they are right in thematizing Sara's story. The story itself then functions as an argument in support of his solution to the problem.

At the time of her initial diagnosis in June, Sara and her husband Rich are determined to beat the cancer, "to figure this out" and "find the right treatment" (p. 150). When one chemotherapy doesn't work, they switch to another. By Thanksgiving, she has tried three without success. Indeed, the cancer has spread throughout both lungs, to the liver, and to other parts of her body. As Gawande puts it in his overt thematizing of Sara's story, her situation poses

> the difficult question, one for everyone living in our era of modern medicine: What do we want Sara and her doctors to do now? Or, to put it another way, if you were the one who had metastatic cancer—or, for that matter, any similarly advanced and incurable condition—what would you want your doctors to do? (p. 153).

[3] I use the version of the essay in *Being Mortal* (Chapter 6) rather than the version originally published in *The New Yorker*, because it is the more recent version. This opening paragraph does not appear in the earlier version.

Sara's answer is to keep fighting: she begins a fourth chemotherapy. But that too fails to arrest the cancer and she then develops pneumonia. Finally, aided by the intervention of her primary care physician, Chuck Morris, Sara and Rich decide to stop her increasingly painful and futile struggle. She continues the antibiotics for her pneumonia, takes a small dose of morphine to ease her breathing but refuses any further procedures. She soon falls into unconsciousness. Gawande concludes her story—and the essay—this way.

> Her father and sister still thought she might rally. But when the others had stepped out of the room, Rich knelt down weeping beside Sara and whispered in her ear. "It's okay to let go," he said. "You don't have to fight anymore. I will see you soon."
>
> Later that morning, her breathing changed, slowing. Rich said, "Sara just kind of startled. She let a long breath out. Then she just stopped." (pp. 189–190).

Sara's story is narrative as argument because Gawande shapes his representation of character and event into a case for the value of letting go. Indeed, he shapes the materials so that the story shows that Sara needlessly endured physical pain and a significantly diminished quality of life as she pursued an impossible cure. But does this narrative as argument suffer from hindsight effects? After all, Gawande uses Sara's story because he knows its outcome. If Sara and her doctors had found a treatment to halt the spread of cancer—a possibility that of course exists as Sara makes her choices—then her experiences could not support Gawande's argument. Gawande implicitly responds to this objection in his handling of the other strands of the essay, especially Stephen Jay Gould's counternarrative. But before I turn to examine that material, I want to dig a little deeper into Gawande's shaping of Sara's story and into his own self-representation.

The contrast between Gawande's handling of character and plot in Sara's story and his handling of them in "On Washing Hands" is instructive. First, he paints a fuller mimetic portrait of Sara than he does of Yokoe and Marino, and he clearly relates that portrait to her thematic function: she is young, optimistic, determined—the proverbial fighter against cancer. Gawande also does more with the affective dimension of her story. Her youth, her new motherhood, and her being the victim of a random visitation of illness on the human body: all these things make Sara extremely sympathetic and make the overall trajectory of her plot similar to that of a tragedy: the audience desires her to succeed in her fight but increasingly comes to expect her to lose that fight. Second, where Gawande gives Yokoe and Marino the thematic function of representative, conscientious infection specialists, he gives Sara a double thematic function. In addition to representing all the "fighters" against cancer, Sara represents those who learn that, after a certain point, it's not a question of giving up but of letting go, all those who come to recognize that death is part of life and the quality of one's last days can be enhanced once one becomes willing to let go.

Furthermore, whereas the simple plot of "On Washing Hands" develops from the conflict between Yokoe and Marino and "clinicians like me," the engine of Sara's plot is not conflict between persons but rather that between Sara's desire to keep fighting and the progress of her cancer. To be sure, Gawande notes that Sara's

oncologist, Dr. Marcoux, enables Sara's pursuit more than sound and sober medical judgment would warrant, but Gawande is not hard on Marcoux's decisions to go along with Sara's wishes—and without Sara's wishes Marcoux would not have gone to such extraordinary lengths. Finally, in contrast to "On Washing Hands," the plot of Sara's story reaches a satisfactory and stable resolution, not only for her and her family but for the argument as a whole. By accepting death, Sara gains some small measure of control over her final hours, something that provides some solace to both her husband and to Gawande's audience. By ending the essay with the end of Sara's story, Gawande reinforces his advocacy for his solution.

Gawande makes his own character less central to the essay than he does in "On Washing Hands," but he gives his clinician self two important synthetic functions. The first is one we have seen in "On Washing Hands": he depicts himself as similar to other doctors whose practice is far from perfect. After noting that Marcoux has been less than candid with Sara and her family, Gawande thematizes the situation:

> Talking about dying is enormously fraught. When you have a patient like Sara Monopoli, the last thing you want to do is grapple with the truth. I know, because [doctor] Marcoux wasn't the only one avoiding that conversation. I was, too (p. 169).

Gawande explains that he was called to consult on Sara's case when she also developed thyroid cancer. Faced with her determination to beat both cancers and her interest in having surgery on her thyroid, Gawande cannot bring himself to tell her that she will most likely die from the lung cancer before her thyroid cancer advances to a point where it needs to be treated. But he also does more than withhold this information:

> After one of her chemotherapies seem to shrink the thyroid cancer slightly, I even raised with her the possibility that an experimental therapy could work against both her cancers, which was sheer fantasy. Discussing a fantasy was easier—less emotional, less explosive, less prone to misunderstanding—than discussing what was happening before my eyes. (p. 169)

In some ways, the relation between the ethics of the told and the ethics of the telling here is similar to the one in the iterative narrative in "On Washing Hands." Gawande the author admits to the ethical deficiencies of Gawande the clinician, and both the honesty about the deficiencies and the understandable reasons for them somewhat mitigate the audience's negative judgments. But here those judgments are more strongly negative, because they are about the clinician's direct one-on-one encounter with Sara, a character for whom Gawande the author has evoked considerable sympathy. It is not surprising, then, that Gawande then balances this self-representation with a later one in which he recounts what happens when he speaks more candidly to another patient with metastatic colon cancer. Remembering his "timid" approach with Sara, he decides to be more forthcoming, when she asks him to tell her more about her cancer. Although he struggles and it takes him more than a single conversation, he does tell the patient that the cancer had spread to her ovaries and lymph nodes, that "we don't have a cure" and that the goal of treatment is to "prolong your life" (p. 181). Later in their relationship, he asked this patient and her husband about these initial conversations:

> They didn't remember them very fondly. "That one phrase you used—'prolong your life'—it just…" She didn't want to sound critical.
>
> "It was kind of blunt," her husband said.
>
> "It sounded harsh," she echoed. She felt as if I'd dropped her off a cliff (p. 181).

Gawande doesn't comment further, but instead lets the narrative details imply his thematic point: many patients don't want candor from their doctors, when candor means telling someone that the end is near. In this way, Gawande uses his self-representation as another powerful illustration of the problem: both doctors and patients need to embrace the art of letting go.

The second synthetic function Gawande gives to his clinician self is that of surrogate for the audience. Again the comparison with "On Washing Hands" is instructive. In both essays, Gawande recounts a story of accompanying experts on their rounds. In "On Washing Hands," Gawande the author features Yokoe and Marino's expertise but he does not put himself in the role of an ignorant student—doing so would interfere with his point about the gap between knowledge and compliance. In "Letting Go," however, as he accompanies the hospice nurse Sarah Creed on her rounds, he does represent himself as needing instruction:

> I confessed that I was confused by what Creed was doing. A lot of it seemed to be about extending Cox's life. Wasn't the goal of hospice to let nature take its course?
>
> "That's not the goal," Creed said. The difference between standard medical care and hospice is not the difference between treating and doing nothing, she explained. The difference was in the priorities. In ordinary medicine, the goal is to extend life. We'll sacrifice the quality of your existence now […] for the chance of gaining time later. Hospice deploys nurses, doctors, chaplains, and social workers to help people with a fatal illness have the fullest possible lives right now. (p. 161)

Of course as Sarah Creed instructs Gawande the clinician, Gawande the author instructs his audience of reading citizens. And Gawande the author wants to clear up any potential confusion in his audience about the goals of hospice because he sees its emphasis on the quality of the patient's life as providing a much better alternative to "treat until the last possible moment" than "do nothing." Furthermore, Gawande's putting his clinician self so clearly in the student role here has some carryover effects for the rest of the essay. Gawande does not set himself up as having all the answers about end-of-life decision-making but instead represents himself as learning more about its complexities—even as he clearly finds the default of treating until the last possible moment inadequate.

This point takes us to Gawande's handling of Stephen Jay Gould's counternarrative, which Gould has recounted in a famous essay, "The Median Isn't the Message." Gawande explains that at age 40 Gould was diagnosed with abdominal mesothelioma, a rare and incurable cancer with a median survival period of 8 months after discovery. But as Gould examined patient-survival curves more closely, he noticed that

> the curve was skewed to the right, with a long tail, however slender, of patients who lived many years longer than the eight-month median. This is where he found solace. He could imagine himself surviving far out along that long tail. And survive he did. Following surgery

> and experimental chemotherapy, he live twenty more years before dying, in 2002, at the age of sixty, from a lung cancer unrelated to his original disease. (p. 171)

Gawande rounds off the story by quoting from "The Median Isn't the Message":

> "It has become, in my view, a bit too trendy to regard the acceptance of death as something tantamount to intrinsic dignity. […] I prefer the more martial view that death is the ultimate enemy—and I find nothing reproachable in those who rage mightily against the dying of the light." (p. 171)

By bringing in Gould's story, Gawande, in effect, takes on the challenges of Kvernbekk and Govier and Ayers about hindsight effects and overgeneralizing from a single story. These skeptics could point to Gould's story and say, "it is at least as compelling as Sara's story, and it supports a very different conclusion." These challenges cannot themselves be easily met with another story, and Gawande does not take that approach. Instead, he responds directly, admitting first that it's fine to look for the long tail of possibility as Gould did. But then he adds the crucial caveat: as long as we also "prepare for the outcome that's vastly more probable" (p. 171). Furthermore, the real problem is

> That we've built our medical system and culture around that long tail. We've created a multitrillion-dollar edifice for dispensing the medical-equivalent of lottery tickets—and have only the rudiments of a system to prepare patients for the near certainty that those tickets will not win. Hope is not a plan, but hope is our plan. (p. 172)

In effect, Gawande argues that Gould's counternarrative is the one that has been mistakenly thematized by "our medical system and culture," and that Sara's story is far more representative of the way we live and die now.

10.4 Conclusion

This look at Gawande's practice in two essays through the lens provided by a conception of narrative as rhetoric leads to the following conclusions—or better, hypotheses that are worth further testing in future work.

1. The skeptics about narrative's efficacy for argument point to possible rather than necessary pitfalls. The efficacy of narrative for argument depends not on its intrinsic nature but rather on the skill of its author.
2. Because narrative often highlights individual characters and plots, its efficacy for argument will often depend on how it thematizes those materials. A skillful author such as Gawande can orchestrate that thematizing in multiple ways: appealing to the authority of experience, providing larger contexts for individual stories, addressing counternarratives, and more.
3. More generally, a skillful author can use the resources of narrative in various ways for different argumentative purposes—the mimetic functions of characters can be more or less developed, plots can be resolved or unresolved, the distinction between the authorial-I and the character-I can be deployed to different

degrees and for different effects. In other words, conceiving of narrative as rhetoric leads away from a priori notions of what narrative and its elements will or must do and toward an openness about the range of things tellers and audiences have done—and might do in the future.

4. In that connection, a skillful author can, depending on his or her overall purposes, use narrative either as a mode of argument in itself or as a means of supporting arguments made through non-narrative means—and can even use both approaches within a single piece. Gawande, for example, uses the simple plot with its unresolved ending in "On Washing Hands" not as the main argument but as a means to significantly qualify that argument. And in "Letting Go," he uses the story of Sara Monopoli, appropriately buttressed by the other stories and his thematizing of them, as itself an argument for the virtues of accepting mortality.

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Chapter 11
On Thought Experiments and Other Narratives in Scientific Argument

Paula Olmos

Abstract In this chapter, I claim that, in what relates to their putative argumentative character and assessment, the lot of well-known thought experiments (in both Science and Philosophy) is similar to that of the classical fables, as analyzed elsewhere (Olmos 2014). The short, condensed and schematic narratives provided by either classical fables or thought experiments carry an argumentative potential that can be (and in fact has been) variously used as basis for construing arguments according to different schemes in different settings. We have to analyze and assess each real concrete "argument in use" as pertaining to its own argumentative aims in its own context and try not to prejudge the form (analogy or other) it is going to take. Moreover, our analysis and our assessment of such "narrative arguments in use" would be, typically, argumentative practices themselves, in which our interpretation and our positive or negative appraisal of their relative strength will be, typically and preferably supported by reasons, and could be likewise contested.

11.1 Introduction

When I presented my first paper on the topic of the potential argumentative character of narratives, in the 10th OSSA Conference (Olmos 2013), C.W. Tindale, acting as commentator, pointed out the need for any conscientious account of narrative argumentation "to accommodate a clearly argumentative type of narrative popular with philosophers—the thought experiment or hypothetical case" (Tindale 2013, p. 4). He was specifically thinking of such particularly imaginative philosophical thought experiments as J.J. Thomson's "hooked-up violinist" (1971) or D. Parfit's "teletransporter" (1984), in which the inner plausibility of the stories is not precisely construed by mirroring usual expectations in the real world. Claims and conclusions, purportedly about our own world and condition, are nevertheless presented as supported by this peculiar kind of discursive means, and our goal as argumentation scholars should be to understand how this is done, interpreted and assessed.

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Thought experiments, generally but not always, of a somewhat less fantastic character, are also occasionally used as justificatory resources in Science, in empirical and experimental Science, to be more precise. Sometimes this is because the kind of experiment described in them cannot be materially implemented, due to some some kind of technological impediment, material impossibility or ethical concern. Elgin (2014, p. 227) offers, in this sense, an example that presents all these three problematic characteristics:

> Sometimes an actual experiment of the sort envisioned cannot be carried out. It is impossible or impracticable. By imagining a person's experience while riding in an elevator in the absence of a gravitational field and his experience while at rest in the presence of a gravitational field, Einstein showed the equivalence of gravitational and inertial mass. To actually run the experiment would require placing an unconscious subject in a windowless enclosure, sending him to a region of outer space distant from any significant source of gravity, restoring him to consciousness, and querying him about his experiences. This is morally, practically, and physically unfeasible.

Some other times, resource to thought experiments is prompted by the scientists' consciousness that real-life results would not exactly match their theoretical predictions, these being based on a selection of a few properties ideally evolving within a causally controlled scenario that might be, again, technically unworkable. In some other cases, still, a simply narrated or discursively described experiment is deemed to convey a state of affairs so ordinary and obvious as to dispense with material implementation. When this is so, the thought experiment is usually and accordingly of a more explanatory than predictive (or justificatory) character. In any case, scientific claims and conclusions are again, in certain occasions, presented as supported by this kind of discursive evidential means, and subsequently discussed as founded on seriously advanced evidence, and, again, our goal, as argumentation scholars, should be to understand how this is done, interpreted and assessed.

This is precisely what I try to do in the present chapter, revising part of the literature on thought experiments and their disputed argumentative character produced by authors working on epistemology and philosophy of science, and trying to accommodate and offer solutions to the particular problems posed by this kind of evidence within the framework and the characteristically discursive and communicative approach of argumentation studies. But before that, let me clarify two preliminary points regarding the *narrative* and the relatively *fictitious* nature of *scientific* thought experiments.

Firstly, it is probably not obvious (or perhaps it is less obvious in Science than it is in Philosohpy) that thought experiments should be considered "narratives". They are not always presented as the kind of complex and typically non-linear compound of actions and events that characterize such a term. And, as I have claimed elsewhere (Olmos 2015, 2016), my focus on dealing with the argumentative qualities of narrative discourse is centered on cases in which the particular linguistic features and genre-specific qualities of narration play a significant role. In the case of 'practical arguments', for example, I have argued that:

> [an] argument involving a one-step outcome for an action (i.e. the typical example of a 'practical syllogism'), supported or supportable by a simple rule as a warrant (typically the

> normative, evaluative, or means/ends premise of a traditional 'practical syllogism'), would not count for me as a 'narrative argument'; although in some sense we could say that there is an underlying *narrativity* or *narrative rationality*, according to Walter Fisher's account (Fisher 1989 [1987]), in such characterizations of our purposeful actions. The labels 'narrative discourse', 'narrative argument' or 'argumentative/persuasive narrative discourse' will be saved for cases that explicitly involve a more complex (typically non-linear) succession or compound of events, typically with several agents/factors involved presented with the intention and expectation to be understood and assessed somehow *as a whole*.

In the case of thought experiments in both Science and Philosophy we may deal with a variety of presentations that not always will respond to this characterization in a straightforward way. Nevertheless, as I will claim along this chapter, thought experiments, as they involve the *detailed* description of an imagined scenario and of the actions (many times collective actions) and events taking place in it, are especially apt for a narrative presentation and understanding—as it happens with real experiments, for that matter, as we will see later. Moreover, as I am interested in the way argumentative discussions about proposed thought experiments proceed, such a narrative quality or texture could be something that may be added or characteristically *increased* through a process of further explicitation and complication of their initial plot and set-up.

Secondly, as the examples selected by C.W. Tindale reveal, *philosophical* thought experiments typically share with literature a certain freedom to propose somewhat *fantastic*, unrealistic scenarios, something that is, by contrast, usually less evident in scientific contexts.[1] Apart from the already mentioned material impracticability of many of them, *scientific* thought experiments should show, in principle, the real occurrence of natural phenomena *as if* subjected to material experimentation. This deters us, in principle, from considering fiction and fantasy as central traits associated to the narrative means for arguing and persuading we are interested in.

Nevertheless, as we will see, the relation between results and outcomes in the real world and what some scientific thought experiments claim to reveal might be not so simple. The use of schematized or simplified domains that do not comply with all the characteristics of the real world might be indispensable in many cases, as are artificial *laboratory conditions* for many real experiments. This is why the use of *fictions* (models, idealizations, imaginary unrealistic scenarios and the like) in scientific practice has been lately a prominent issue among philosophers of science (Godfrey-Smith 2009; Suárez [ed.] 2009).

As already mentioned, I have recently dedicated some time and efforts to reflect on the presence and significance of narratives in (or as) practical arguments (Olmos 2012, 2014, 2015, 2016), especially in the realm or *sphere* of public discourse (Goodnight 1982). This seems to be the most obvious field for such a topic within argumentation studies ever since Aristotle's hints about the deliberative and political use of *paradeigmata* in his *Rhetoric* (1394a ff, Cf. Olmos 2014). However, I

[1] For a discussion about the relations between thought experiments and literary fiction and its bearing on the controversy of the cognitive theory of literature, see Carroll (2002), more or less on the cognitivist side, and Egan (2016), on the anti-cognitivist. Typically, these authors refer to and make use of *philosophical* thought experiments.

would like now to concentrate on the presence, significance and justificatory status of narratives playing an argumentative role in the kind of epistemic, theoretical contexts of academic and scientific debate—belonging instead within the *technical sphere of argument* (Goonight 1982)—among which scientific thought experiments represent a particularly intriguing category.

11.2 Thought Experiments in Argumentation Theory

As it happens with other argumentative uses of narrative discourse, there has been a certain neglect regarding this kind of justificatory means on the part of argumentation studies.[2] For their part, epistemologists and philosophers of science have been in the last decades working on some closely related issues, as the use of narrative patterns of explanation in certain disciplines (Richards 1992; Martínez 1997; Barahona and Martínez 1998), on the one hand, or on the epistemological status of thought experiments (Norton 1991, 1996, 2004; Brown 1991, 2004; Sorensen 1992; Bishop 1999),[3] on the other. But, in my opinion, their insights have not fully benefitted from the new, non-deductivistic and communication-based approaches to argument advocated by argumentation studies. Neither have many researchers within our field shown enough awareness regarding existing debates on these topics, so closely connected with our central aims.

There are, nevertheless some interesting exceptions to this last remark. L. Souder (1998, 2003) has tried to approach certain thought experiments—focusing especially on philosophical ones such as J. Searle's 'Chinese Room' and the already mentioned J. Thomson's 'violinist case'—from the point of view of argumentation theory, assuming, in the first place, their communicative nature and exploring the subsequent dialogical practices of discussion they usually bring about in philosophical literature. Conscious of the novelty of his approach, Souder maintains that "previous analyses of thought experiments have come largely from philosophy, where the focus has been on truth value and validity. But these approaches seem to view argument monologically" (1998, p. 1). Siding with Souder, the 'thought experiments' that I am interested in would be those that come up in communicative practices and only insofar as they appear in them and have a specific role in them. In this sense, the term 'thought' present in the expression—usually considered a rendition of the German *Gedankenexperiment*, while the Italian and Spanish versions use the term 'mental' instead—would just qualify the *experimental* element in it, that is, its not being *materially* executed,[4] but not imply its confinement to mental activity, as

[2] It is this relative neglect—save for some significant exceptions—that this volume tries definitely to overcome.

[3] These are but a few samples of the nineties' "explosive growth in the literature on thought experiments […] explored from many perspectives" (Norton 1996, p. 334).

[4] R. Sorenson (1992, p. 6) defines thought experiments as those "that purport to deal with their questions by contemplation of their design rather than by execution".

they are *linguistically* articulated and communicated with certain purposes. We could never know of 'thought experiments' that were just *thought* and they would have no relevance for either Science or Philosophy. As to the *roles* and functions they may play in such communicative practices, I admit these might be various,[5] but the idea that, in many cases, the thought experiment articulates a kind of reason or part of a reason (or argumentative line) for a specific claim deserves further inquiry, although it should not be taken for granted that this is always going to be the case.

The lot of well-known and repeatedly used and commented upon thought experiments (in both Science and Philosophy) might be, in this sense, similar to that of the classical fables. As I have argued elsewhere (Olmos 2014), the short, condensed and schematic narratives provided by classical fables carry an argumentative potential that can be—and in fact has been—variously used as basis for construing arguments according to different schemes in different settings. However, we have to analyze and assess each real concrete case (the *fable in use*) as pertaining to its own (argumentative or other) aim in its own context and try not to prejudge the form (analogy or other) and the role (justificatory or other) it is going to take.

Moreover, the analysis and even more specially the critique of such potential *arguments in use* will be argumentative practices themselves, in which subsequent interpretations and positive or negative appraisals of their relative strength will be typically and preferably supported by reasons. Thus, our interest could and should extend (as Souder illustrates) to the context of their reception and discussion.

Souder, in particular, explores the common presence of interested and rhetorically oriented varieties of the *same* thought experiment ("amended versions", in his own terms) in philosophical discussions. This indicates that those taking part in those discussions are assuming that the original version encodes a kind of *prima facie* good enough or plausible reason for a claim that might be, nevertheless, weakened (or alternatively strengthened, in the case of sympathetic amendments) by introducing new information, new insights or interpretations, exposing presuppositions, rejecting some details, mentioning some exception to certain rule or generality, etc.—i.e., by responding to it as one would to any proposed argument in an argumentative setting. Such an approach could bring about a conceptual discussion about the problematic *individualization* of the thought experiment in question, but reveals, nevertheless, the way in which debates about claims based on such imagined scenarios proceed.

[5] I have already mentioned *explanatory* uses, even though, as I will latter claim, in science most explanations are tentative and, thus, subject to further justification by argument. Other kinds of uses as the modelling or representation of fragments of reality, in a more or less schematic or even metaphorical way, might come up as well, although, again, this is usually preparatory for some kind of argumentative goal. In his commentary on Souder (1998, an OSSA paper), D.H. Cohen (1998) insisted, precisely, on cautioning the author about possible different uses of 'thought experiments' besides the argumentative one, making a parallel with his own work on metaphors: "they can be used *rhetorically*, in arguments; *interpretively*, in explanations; and *heuristically*, in the process of discovery […] they succeed insofar as (in reverse order): i) they *reveal* something important, insightful, or even just true; or ii) they *communicate* something ineffable, profound, or even just difficult to articulate; or iii) they *persuade* the hearer of something controversial, counterintuitive, or even just at issue" (Cohen 1998, p. 2).

An interesting insight offered by Souder's analysis is that what usually happens is that the amended version does not directly attack, for example, a presupposition of the original thought experiment in its explicit propositional form (that is, by directly arguing against it), but typically re-tells again the story in a way that does not pressupose it.[6] Souder's revealing example consists of the *amended versions* of Searle's (1981) Chinese Room by Cole (1991) and Churchland (1990) in which the original report in first-person is dropped in favour of a third-person account. As Souder remarks: "Cole's amended version of the Chinese room does not cooperate with Searle's expectation that the readers will act as simulators of Searle's place in the scenario" (1998, p. 5), a position that, in this case, is essential to emphasize "the subjective nature of the mental" and the *epistemic privilege* upon one's own consciousness. As I have pointed out elsewhere, this perceived and sometimes acted upon constraint to understand and assess story-like arguments thus presented *as wholes* could be a significant characteristic associated to narrative modes of arguing.[7]

With a somewhat similar spirit as Souder, but with the more concrete aim of taking part in the mainstream epistemological discussion about the argumentative or non-argumentative nature of scientific thought experiments, F. Migura (2015) has recently defended the argumentative side of this dispute by reinterpreting Michael A. Bishop's counterexample to John D. Norton's (1991, 1996) account of thought experiments in science as "merely picturesque arguments". Norton's epistemologically demystifying characterization of scientific thought experiments was responded by Bishop (1999) with a counterexample: the so called *Clock-in-the-box* thought experiment, used by both Albert Einstein and Niels Bohr to support different conclusions. Bishop claimed consequently that it could not be *an/one* argument. Migura (2015) reinterprets Bishop's account in a way that still allows him to support Norton's argumentative characterization, by claiming that what Bohr did was not simply draw a different conclusion from a fixed *state of affairs* or *set of premises* but

[6] Working on the particularities and *dangers* of what he calls 'steep cliff arguments', Suits (1999) also emphasizes this possibility of answering (or even in some cases counter-arguing) a story told in an argumentative setting and leading the audience to certain conclusions with a different and differing story: "Steep Cliff arguments rely on a contrast between expectations quite natural to one context (and sometimes especially prepared and strengthened in that context) and weaker tendencies apparently appropriate to another. The stronger habits prevail, and the result is that unless we are on guard, we too quickly accept the former and reject the latter. Sometimes we can do something to balance the prejudgment by working out a story wherein we begin in the other context instead. But of course this might not establish the falsity of the original conclusion; a counterstory is not necessarily a counterargument." (Suits 1999, p. 137).

[7] Offering a critical analysis of recent work on thought experiments, especially T.S. Gendler's (1998, 2004) 'constructivist account', Camilleri (2014)—drawing also on Gooding (1993, 1994)—acknowledges these compact quality of the contents of thought experiments which is somehow betrayed by certain logical reconstructions: "Typically, a TE provides a scenario in which certain background assumptions (such as mediativity of speed and additivity of weight) must be considered together as part of a whole problem complex. Mere deductive reasoning cannot do this, because it simply takes the set of independent premises of the deductive argument as a given." (Camilleri 2014, p. 1710).

criticize Einstein's argument by unveiling some of its presuppositions and their incompatibilities. As in Souder's dialogical approach, Migura's reinterpretation of Bohr's response appears as a most *natural* reaction to an argument, which implies using the common tools of argument evaluation and criticism to try to oppose it (counter argue) in an argumentative setting.

In this case, there was an evident context of subsequent discussion and an 'amended version' ready at hand that has served Migura's purposes. However, the debate (and misunderstandings) between Norton, Bishop and Migura reveals the necessity to pay attention to the communicative practices involved in presenting, interpreting and discussing the specific proposal of a thought experiment in its own discursive context. In some sense, I side with Bishop's contention that the thought experiment *in itself* is not already (or not automatically) an argument. It cannot be in isolation. It seems, though, that in the particular case these authors are discussing—as moreover could be expected, taking in account the argumentative character of most scientific practice—its proponent (i.e. Einstein) in fact presented an argument through it and Bohr's dialectical response (as exposed by Migura) was consistent with this view.

Migura (as does Bishop himself) employs, nevertheless, a rather traditional notion of argument as a set of premises *implying* a conclusion and, accordingly, a likewise traditional idea of argument criticism as a qualitative and non comparative task. Thus, what he tries to conduct—or expose as "Bohr's response"—is the identification of downright failures in the opponent's argument. He looks for false or contradictory premises (or hidden presuppositions) that would *invalidate* a logical derivation in what becomes a consciously conducted *find-the-fault-in-the-argument* task. The same happens somehow in Norton's own response to Bishop (2004, pp. 63–64). In this more recent paper, Norton, following traditional logical assessment, assumes that if we have two arguments with contradictory conclusions "it then follows that at least one of the arguments is not sound; it has a false premise or a fallacious inference" (p. 51). Although he later indicates that he is willing to work with a broader notion of argument (p. 52) he finally assumes that the traditional deductive-inductive distinction is going to be enough for epistemic and scientific settings.

I suggest that the more alternative view that, in most contexts—and this includes consciously fallible science—, if we have two arguments with contradictory or just somehow differing conclusions what follows is that we may interestingly weigh one against the other, looking for criteria to compare their relative strengths, not necessarily disproving any of them, would better support his argumentative account of thought experiments and bring it closer to our discussions and explicitly non-deductivistic theoretical framework in argumentation theory.[8]

[8] Norton seems to have heard something about such new approaches but, at least in 2004, he did not seem to expect too much of them: "I do not expect thought experiments to require logics not already in the standard repertoire. This is, of course, not a decisive argument. Perhaps the logicians have been just lazy or blind" (2004, p. 55).

Finally, the recent article by E.O. Popa (2015) also shows awareness of these epistemological discussions (pp. 72–75), developing alternatively a pragmatic (and explicitly pragma-dialectical) approach to the analysis of thought experiments as clusters of argumentative moves made within a communicative interchange that might be modelled as a critical discussion (van Eemeren and Grootendorst 1984, 2004). An important methodological strength of Popa's paper is the careful distinction he traces between such philosophical discussions, supposedly about "the nature of thought experiments" (p. 75) and their epistemological status—usually conducted, as I have already emphasized, independently of the communicative practices in which these appear—[9] and his own approach, that assumes that "all entities that have received the label 'thought experiment' can be described as events in which one scholar aims to contribute to an academic dispute by putting forward a series of *speech acts*" (p. 76).

The next step, according to this setting, would be to study those concrete speech acts and determine their argumentative or non-argumentative nature. Popa's response is also carefully qualified. Thought experiments *in context* (i.e. *in use*) typically include, at some point, an explicit argument (the explicit support of a claim), but are also usually *complex texts* including "a variety of argumentative moves" (that is, moves made within a critical discussion, not all of them arguments). Popa concludes, thus, that "thought experiments are not just arguments" (p. 84) being nevertheless, in most cases, inescapably argumentative.

Popa is also worried about trying to solve what for him and many other argumentation theorist is a problem: i.e. the usual presence of *directive* speech acts as basic constituents (premises) of the most clearly identifiable argumentative elements of any 'thought experiment'. As Popa contends, imagined scenarios are not *asserted* but just *supposed* in thought experiments, and, accordingly, a 'proposal' (which is, in fact, a special kind of *directive* with also a *commissive* element in it, cfr. Vega 2013) is either explicitly or tacitly made by the arguer to the audience to engage in the action of supposing. That means that, either explicitly or tacitly, there is usually a "let us suppose that…" involved in thought experiments. As Popa himself assumes that arguments should be made of assertives, his *solution* finally gets rather complicated, trying somehow to locate the 'assertive within the directive'. An alternative, and to me more natural strategy could be to accept directives as usual means to communicate and convey reasons for claims. This strategy has been recently employed by H. Marraud (2016) as a way to account for the workings of visual argumentation and it seems it could also be helpful to analyse the 'invitation to supposing' usually present in thought experiments and other narrative ways of arguing.

Assuming, accordingly, that this theoretical difficulty might be solved, the interesting task would be for us to take a more careful look at the peculiar kind of reason or reasons communicated and conveyed through this more general mechanism in

[9] And which finally force the diverse analysts to reconstruct the object of their study according to their different assumptions, something which results in misunderstandings as "they do not seem to share enough common ground" (Popa 2015, p. 75).

the case of thought experiments, and more particularly, in thought experiments advanced in scientific contexts. This is where the specifically *narrative* aspects of such argumentative means become relevant, a somewhat missing element in Migura's and Popa's analyses, that tend to see the contents of the proposed *scenario* (the thought experiment itself) just as a series of independent, and independently assessable propositions (see specially Popa 2015, p. 80). Neither is the notion of 'experiment' and the problematic relations between the actual and virtual manipulation of reality sufficiently examined and exploited in these approaches. I will try to overcome these shortcomings in the following sections.

My interest in trying to account for the use and argumentative character of thought experiments in theoretical (epistemic) settings belongs, in any case, within a wider project to recast some recalcitrant issues that have traditionally concerned philosophers of science with the help of the new conceptual and analytical tools provided by argumentation theory. I will accordingly present, some preliminary and admittedly general points regarding my own approach to argumentative and explanatory practices in science and then, I will try to explore the different roles narratives and narrative modes of arguing may play in these practices.

11.3 Argument, Explanation and Experiments in Science

Science is an argumentative field par excellence. Toulmin et al. (1978) acknowledged this fact and dedicated chapter 27 of their well-known textbook to revise typical kinds of arguments presented in scientific settings. Their emphasis on explicit communicative practices (in line with the already mentioned 'pragmatic approach' by Souder or Popa) is to be noted. In fact, they do not identify the institution of science within a human culture just with the presence of "some body of collective ideas that are generally accepted as providing the most accurate and complete account of the workings of nature" (p. 313). Instead, they further demand that "those ideas and conceptions are articulately expressed and open to public criticism" (p. 314), and this is where argumentation—as something different from reasoning, regardless of the book's title—enters.[10]

[10] I need to make a comment here on the, to my view, unfortunate title Toulmin, Rieke and Janik gave to their excellent textbook: *An Introduction to Reasoning*. The book is all about argument and not about reasoning (Marraud 2013, pp. 11–12), if we agree to distinguish these two concepts, something that, I admit, is not thus far a matter of consensus but which I maintain (with others) would be clarifying and benefitial to our discussions. Toulmin, Rieke and Janik's book is about communicative and articulated practices and not about solitary, mental inference; i.e. about the public, overt and deliberate presentation to others of data, warrants and backing theories (allegedly of a varied nature) as support for identifiable claims. In line with this interpretation, Toulmin, Rieke and Janik specifically address the characteristics of argumentative forums and the roles of communicative, interactive and critical agents involved in them. In the case of scientific argument: "this means looking at the professional scientific world of university departments and scientific societies, learned journals, Nobel prizes, referees and the rest, for it is these professional institutions that determine the character of the *forums* within which scientific argumentation proceeds and is judged" (1978, p. 316).

Among other more practical and operative endeavours that I will here put aside, Science—and I'll restrict myself to natural science—[11] is supposed to work out and publicly offer general theories about natural phenomena.[12] Sometimes the purpose of these theories is to explain how these collectively acknowledged (either observable to all or, in any case, intersubjectively agreed upon) phenomena have come to be; others to foresee or predict whether and under which circumstances the same or similar phenomena will happen or may be induced to happen again—there might be other purposes, but let us restrict ourselves to these two traditional paradigms. The first aim is achieved through offering scientific explanations and the second by offering scientific (and, in this case, *predictive*) arguments. Not all scientific theories are intended to or supposed to serve both purposes (not even in different contexts)[13] and the traditional Hempelian idea of the *formal* symmetry between both models has proved of little use.

In any case, as scientific explanations are usually considered just *tentative explanations* or, better, 'explanatory hypotheses', much scientific effort is, precisely, dedicated to support their, generally challenged, explanatory power and status. This is, of course, done through different kinds of (meta-explanatory) arguments, among which those of the abductive type are usually found, at least in the first steps of a process of advancing hypotheses.[14] Even though philosophers of science have

[11] For a discussion about the use of thought experiments in the human sciences, *viz*. history, see De Mey and Weber (2003).

[12] Even though, in many occasions, the core object of study under the label 'Argumentation in Science' has been identified with the less theoretical and the more pragmatic and *public sphere* topics (technological, therapeutic, communicational, political) related to the scientific endeavour (which are probably considered more appropriate for dialectical and rhetorical analysis), I claim that argumentation theory could also help clarify the processes of discovery and justification of the allegedly *hard produce* of science in the form of theoretical commitments—even if these may ultimately depend on pragmatic ones, as pragmatist philosophers of science have defended. In this sense, I will not take much advantage of certain approaches like the one advocated by Taylor and Jarvis (2000) in their article on "The role of narrative as a form of evidence in modern academic debate". They concentrate, in fact, on public sphere debates of academic (and this includes scientific) topics and on the dangers of not accepting certain kinds of testimonial concerns in them, isolating thus the *technical sphere of argument* from a social reality that could be conveyed by means of *personal narratives*. Their main concern is "the problem of technocratic elites"—"an exclusive reliance on technical forms of knowledge is dangerous as it serves to desensitize community members to the social reality of the information that is being read" (p. 7/14)—and they try to "demonstrate that some issues cannot be grasped unless presented in a format other than traditional technical discourse" (p. 6/14). My focus is rather different, concentrating on the role of narratives in more *internal* scientific practices and *prima facie* theoretical arguments.

[13] About the explanatory and non-predictive character of, for example, evolutionary biology, see E. Mayr's classical article "Cause and effect in biology" (1961).

[14] I defend the usefulness of the distinction between a simple abductive argument used to advance a hypothesis and based on its mere capacity to explain the phenomenon involved, and the more elaborate and meta-argumentative defense of the best contextually available hypothesis by comparatively weighing the explanatory power (and possibly other supporting reasons) of different hypotheses. This latter process has been labelled "inference to the best explanation", but an argumentative and communication-based approach to it could certainly favour a designation change.

dedicated volume after volume to explore the nature of 'scientific explanation' and have repeatedly proclaimed that the basic aim of science is to explain phenomena, my impression is that genuinely explanatory discourse is just found in contexts where science has reached a (however temporary and fallible) consensus. Science teachers (or journalists) *explain* phenomena to their pupils (or lay readers) by offering them the theories that are considered right-enough and explanatory-enough in that particular historical moment and in the particular discipline involved. But scientists, among themselves and through their specialized publications (the kind of forums mentioned by Toulmin, Riecke and Janik), usually *discuss* controversial explanations and support them by arguing.

Their argumentative reasons (grounds, warrants, backings, cfr. TRJ 1979, pp. 334–337) include, apart from other more entrenched theories, quantitative or qualitative factual data and evidence obtained from observation and especially from experimentation, i.e. from the manipulation of reality. As many philosophers specially interested in the experimental aspects of science have pointed out,[15] scientific phenomena are not simply given to us by the *passive* observation of our surrounding world, but are, in many cases, induced and produced in laboratories, through human agency and technology. And even when this is not exactly so, certain human—usually collective—actions are implemented towards securing relevant data: expeditions to unexplored regions, carefully planned diggings, conscientious and protocolized measurements and descriptions, etc.

One of the most intriguing features of science is precisely the difficult and problematic articulation between all these *particular* pieces of evidence, observations, details and data and the *generality* theories aspire to; an articulation that is, precisely, carried out by argumentative and explanatory practices. In any case, *modern empirical science* is supposed to start precisely when such general theories are not anymore looked for and justified as strictly deriving from *other* general theories and assumptions (*v.g.* of an ontological nature) or from *generalities* directly observed and *grasped from* reality, but are finally considered as (nothing more than) *more or less* supported by a careful, detailed and rigorous, but also situated and eventful, securing of *particular* data.

Historically-oriented philosophers and sociologists of science, who have explored the novelty of experimental science in the seventeenth century, have pointed out the characteristic uniqueness and eventfulness acquired by 'experimental reports' according to this new scientific spirit. And the term 'narrative' has been significantly employed to characterize this quality. Thus, S. Shapin (1984), in his classical study about Robert Boyle's pneumatic scientific practice, mentions the *narrative* and *circumstantial* character of Boyle's experimental reporting as a means to "involving a wider community and soliciting its participation in the making of factual experimental knowledge" (p. 511). And this is not just a contemporary interpretation of Boyle's intentions. As Shapin documents (pp. 492–493), the scientist

[15] Particularly philosophers of the so called 'Stanford School' like, Peter Galison, Nancy Cartwright or Ian Hacking.

himself justifies his 'prolix' way of describing and recounting his laboratory practices in the introductory pages of *New Experiments Physico-Mechanical* (1660). Boyle offers here three reasons for the use of such a 'literary technique' (as Shapin qualifies it):

(i) a detailed *circumstantial* report would facilitate replication;
(ii) the novelty of the experiments and the conclusions extracted from them demand such density of circumstantial details "to keep the reader from distrusting them";
(iii) according to Boyle's own words: "these narratives [are to be] as standing records in our new pneumatics, and [readers] need not reiterate themselves an experiment to have as distinct an idea of it, as may suffice them to ground their reflexions and speculations upon".[16]

Shapin is not the only contemporary researcher to have focused on the textual character of the communicative counterpart of seventeenth century experimental science and to have emphasized its *narrative* quality. In a paper significantly entitled "Narratives, Anecdotes, and Experiments: Turning Experience into Science in the Seventeenth Century", Peter Dear (1991, pp. 137–138) goes as far as defining an experiment in this contexts thus:

> An 'experiment' will be a historical event in which an investigator experiences the behaviour of a contrived setup, or apparatus, and uses, or might use, a report of that historical event as an element in constructing an argument intended to establish or promote a knowledge-claim. An experiment, therefore, is only an experiment if it appears as one in scientific discourse, or might well do so given the context in which it was created.

According to this definition and characterization, employed by the author as a normative standard to identify *modern experimental science*, Dear has come (1990, 1995) to the conclusion that Galileo's own scientific experiences with inclined planes (as recounted in his *Discorsi*) did not really meet its terms. His contention is that Galileo's accounts have more in common with an almost Aristotelian-like observation of indefinite, non-situated phenomena—something revealed by the repeated use of time expressions as "often", "many times", "more than a 100 times"—than with the minute and detailed report of a unique, particular occasion.

The Spanish historian of science José Romo has nevertheless convincingly discussed and qualified this conclusion (2005) in a way that becomes rather relevant for our own purposes. Romo uses not only the published and polished text of the *Discorsi* but also evidence from Galileo's own manuscript notes to reveal that, even though we have evidence from them that Galileo conducted experiments in basically the way *modern experimental science* would require—drawing precise diagrams of the concrete elements' disposition, annotating particularized and detailed results of different trials, and describing circumstantial deviations from expected outcomes (Romo 2005, pp. 9–12)—, he decided, for some reason, not to make use of them in his communicative practices. In the *Discorsi*, in fact, Galileo recounts

[16] Quoted by Shapin (1984, p. 492).

instead what has been finally considered (after much discussion and even contemporary replications: Koyré 1939, 1953; Settle 1961; Naylor 1974, 1980) an *imaginary experiment*, an idealized scenario whose exact results would have never been obtained in the real, material world, in which too many untractable variables for Galileo's technology and conceptual frame (material friction, inexact time measure, unawareness of rotational effects) would have prevented it.

Dear himself (1990, p. 682, n. 61) qualifies Galileo's inclined plane devices and results from the *Discorsi* as an example of "contrived experience" or even "thought experiment" that supposedly presents us with a "universalized account of procedure" in contrast with the fellows of the Royal Society's real experiments "couched in terms of discrete historical events". But, even though Dear has offered some grounds for depriving Galileo's account of its *narrative* quality as supposedly depicting a particular event (*viz.* the intemporal time expressions) there are other aspects, emphasized by Romo, and supported by what we may learn from Galileo's real practices by studying his manuscripts, that bring it back to its concrete experimental and, thus, eventful setting.

It is clear that scientific experiments were, from the very beginning of modern science, required to be minutely and precisely conceived as situated and particular historical events. This is also because the specific material details of their preparation, implementation, exact setting (time and space coordinates), particular artifacts used, phases and outcomes matter a great deal for several of their purposes: either exact or consciously modified replications, credibility, intersubjective witnessing.[17] These particularized features make of them appropriate *narrative material*, a characteristic that (especially in some contexts) has resulted in the specific qualities of their literary presentation, for communication and justification purposes.

Now, it is precisely because these particular and situated experiences called *experiments* are intended to ultimately support rather general conclusions (in the form of scientific hypotheses, or put forward explanatory patterns), that the pains taken by each of the agents (or individual members of a research team) in taking care of all the parameters involved, and particularly in avoiding or minimizing possible local effects by precise actions or choices, become of the utmost importance for the validation of the theories allegedly justified by them. Somehow paradoxically, the more detailed and individualized the report, the more relevant it could eventually become for an ideally envisaged generalization.

[17] S. Shapin insists on the non-generic but explicitly *particular* character of all the elements involved in a experiment and exposes the pains taken by Boyle to emphasize and document this aspect in his publications: "Figure 1, for example, is an engraving of his <Boyle's> original air-pump, appended to the *New Experiments*. Producing these kinds of images was an expensive business in the mid-seventeenth century and natural philosophers used them sparingly. As we see, Figure 1 is not a schematized line-drawing but an attempt at detailed naturalistic representation, complete with the conventions of shadowing and cut-away sections of parts. This is not a picture of the 'idea' of an air-pump but of a particular existing air-pump. The same applies to Boyle's pictorial representations of his particular pneumatic experiments: in one, we are shown a mouse lying dead in the receiver; in another, images of the experimenters. Boyle devoted great attention to the manufacture of these engravings, sometimes consulting directly with artist and engraver, sometimes by way of Hooke" (Shapin 1984, pp. 491–492).

It seems, moreover, that, at least in the context of *modern experimental science*, purportedly scientific 'thought or imaginary experiments' not only *share* but almost *inherit* such requirements from real experiments.[18] Against Dear, who seems to think that the only explanation for Galileo's strange and deviant behaviour in his communicative practices is that he had not really assumed the modern notion of experiment as a historical event, Romo suggest that, in his *Discorsi*, Galileo in fact tries to convey the idea that he has really and successfully implemented the experience, giving (albeit, it seems, contrived) details about the way he has tried to avoid some material problems (Romo 2005, pp. 19–20). We may consider this very negatively as almost cheating, but, on the other side, it shows Galileo's awareness of (at least part of) the material difficulties that would have made (that in fact had made) the real experiment somehow unsuccessful and, *in the circumstances*, more misleading and less useful than its imaginary counterpart.

J.R. Brown (2004, pp. 23–25), a conscious antagonist of Norton's argumentative and "*epistemically* unremarkable" account of thought experiments, uses precisely some examples of even more clearly and explicitly *non-actually-implemented* experiments exposed by Galileo (about free falling objects) to support his own 'platonic account' of scientific thought experiments. According to Brown, *a priori* knowledge of the workings of nature and its laws could be just *grasped* through them (with no argument involved), transcending thus, moreover, the—allegedly all-encompassing—*a posteriori empiricism* of science: i.e. the idea that all of our knowledge of the world ultimately derives from sense experience (hence, his Platonism).

But, *first*, in order for such a *grasping* to take place and become, thus, part of science (which is, according to Toulmin, Rieke and Janik, something more 'social' than a mere unsituated, *floating* corpus of knowledge) we have counted on a scientist's communicative practice of giving reasons for her claims through exposing something which is, for certain purposes, very much like a detailed and narrated experiment—even if it was never implemented or could have never been as successful, due to the difficulties of controlling a causally complex scenario. This goes against Brown's insistence that thought experiments should not be analysed as arguments, but also against Norton's idea that something is an argument if it can be *reconstructed* (and he reconstructs a lot, looking for hidden assumptions and supposedly *required* premises) as a structure of premises *implying* a conclusion.[19] From a more pragmatic, funtional and dialogical point of view, something is an argument if it constitutes "an open and deliberate attempt to persuade rationally by giving [someone] reasons for some claim" (Marraud 2016).

[18] As Souder (1998, p. 2) points out, "Even the conveyance of thought experiments seems modeled after the reports of real experiments."

[19] Norton (2004, p. 64) complains of some misunderstandings on the part of other philosophers (he mentions explicitly Gooding and Hacking) that have claimed that he demands "that the argument in a thought experiment must be *deductive*". In theory (in his explicit comments), he does not, but his reconstructing practice is rather conducted in line with that ideal. Against 'deductivistic' reconstructions of thought experiments (and enthymemes in general), see also, Crick (2004).

And, *second*, it seems that the scientists' awareness and laborious identification of the material circumstances (and physical variables) that may, prevent the success of real experiments (lack of vacuum, presence of friction, etc.) and their resource, in such cases, to thought experiments can easily be considered as empirically and experimentally acquired. As Norton points out (2004, pp. 49–50), empirical knowledge of the natural world makes part of the construction of any scientific thought experiment: "It may enter as explicitly held knowledge of the world. [For example, in the case discussed] We assert on the authority of an empirical theory, special relativity, that a moving rod shrinks in the direction of its motion. Or it may enter as tacit knowledge. We just know that the space of our experience never runs out."[20]

Perhaps, an even more useful insight to tackle our possible epistemological concern or puzzlement before the use of 'imaginary' experiments in allegedly empirical science could be Nancy Cartwright's (1983, 1999) conception of science (and particularly physics) as an inquiry into natural casual powers and tendencies that do not necessarily yield a constant behaviour of real objects in causally complex and uncontrolled circumstances. According to Cartwright's expressive title (1983), the laws of Physics *lie* to us or, better, convey to us, instead of mere facts (Cartwright 1980), dispositions and capacities for certain behaviours of *controlled* systems *in isolation* (for example, in sophisticated laboratory conditions).

These conditions are not always technically attainable but might be plausibly described—and, thus, proposed to the audience's imagination—and their expected outcomes credibly revealed according to such theoretical commitments as might be collectively considered in a certain moment to be correct—and thus become, for the interlocutors in question (an audience of scientists, as it is to be expected) as somehow *akin* to reports of real experiments, at least in what relates to their justificatory use in scientific discussions. The use of a scientifically trained and enlightened imagination (and this alone would account for its empirical grounds) might be just another resource in the hands of the scientist, besides observation in more or less uncontrolled settings, manipulation in tightly controlled conditions, modelling,[21] theorising or others.

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[20] The role of "tacit knowledge" in the construction and understanding of thought experiments is one of the central points of T.S. Gendler's (1998, 2004) *constructivist* account according to which thought experiments have a central role in reshaping the conceptual framework with which we tackle natural phenomena. In addition, Gendler's view of thought experiments has also been branded as *rhetorical* taking in account the invitational aspects it assumes as typical of the conduction of thought experiments (Crick 2004, p. 25).

[21] There is surely a close connection between the ways scientific models and thought experiments work and the reflections advanced by some philosophers on the representational characteristics of models could be of some help in this discussion. Contessa (2014) offers a nice summary of such reflections from the seminal work of M. Hesse (1963) onwards. At the beginning of her account on scientific modelling, Contessa claims that: "any attempt to apply the <sc. scientific > theory directly to the real-world system in all its complexity seems to be doomed to failure" (2014, p. 120), which seems a reasonable justification to explore a variety of alternative means to tackle the relations between scientific knowledge and the empirical world. In some sense, 'thought experiments' seem to be a *narrative* version (or variety) of models. Nersessian (1993) and Palmieri (2003) talk about thought experiments in terms of mental modelling and simulations as cognitive

Which details and provisos, besides the ones offered in first place, are going to be required from the proponent of a thought experiment in a scientific open-ended discussion, which are going to be subsequently refined or discussed, which are going to be rejected or modified, perhaps, by her scientific interlocutors, in order for her proposal to be considered relevant, enlightening and grounded on the commitments of current empirical science is, again, an empirical and contextual question. But, in any case, the practice of communicating and justifying scientific ideas and theories as based on imaginary experimentation has proved to be a common, persistent and fruitful way of offering reasons in science.

11.4 Thought Experiments and Other Narrative Ways of Giving Reasons in Science

John Norton's characterization of thought experiments as arguments mentions in particular two conditions: the first one allegedly associated with the thought-like character of the argument, the second with its experiment-like character:

> Thought experiments are arguments which:
>
> (i) posit hypothetical or counterfactual states of affairs, and
> (ii) invoke particulars irrelevant to the generality of the conclusion (Norton 1991, p. 129; 1996, p. 336).

Condition (ii) speaks precisely of the density and minuteness of detail that is associated with narratives and, as we have seen, explicitly demanded from experimental reports as part of their evidential support. But according to his rather traditional idea of argument, Norton is eager to get rid of these *irrelevant* particulars:

> I investigated strategies to expel them from the argument. Further, on my view, these elements are always eliminable without compromising our ability to arrive at conclusions […] The claim that any thought experiment can be replaced by an argument without the character of a thought experiment, I called the 'elimination thesis' (Norton 1996, p. 336).

> The epistemic power of the thought experiment comes from what is common to the many formulations –the argument. The variable details, visualized so powerfully, are epistemically neutral; changing them does not change the outcome (Norton 2004, p. 60).

So Norton's reconstructions are a conscious attempt to *dismantle* precisely and explicitly the *narrative* aspects of thought experiments in order to expose their (traditionally understood) argumentative structure. As I have been trying to suggest, I do not think this is necessary or even useful, nor very revealing of the way they may work as means to offer reasons for their claims. It might be, after all, that it is in those *particulars* (or in the mere fact that *there are* particulars depicting an experiment-like concrete situation) that the strength and compelling power of such

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resources. However, while their insights could be useful for the mental activities associated to thought experiments (reasoning and inferential processes), they somehow leave aside the communicational features related to their argumentative use.

arguments reside. The alternative pragmatic (communicative) and dialogical (open-ended) understanding of argument that has been invoked throughout the paper, in which the relevance of the practice of giving reasons as it really takes place in argumentative settings is assumed, should lead us along a very different path.

Although the fallibility of science is generally acknowledged by most philosophers, the resistance to abandon a demonstrative (or quasi-demonstrative) paradigm for its justificatory practices is proving rather stronger than could be expected. Some interesting insights that might reverse this impression have, nevertheless, come from philosophers of science precisely interested in the explanatory role of *narratives* in certain particular sciences. Narrative patterns of explanation have been considered useful and legitimate modes for elucidating acknowledged facts (phenomena) in all so called *historical sciences*, comprising not only those pertaining to human history (the typical expression of historiographical results *being* narrative), but also "historical natural sciences" as *geology* and most notably *evolutionary biology*—even *astrophysics*, for that matter (Richards 1992; López Beltrán 1998; Barahona and Martínez, eds., 1998).

Such sciences have attained a stage (although this could change in due course) in which one of their main tasks is trying to reconstruct the way *particular* events have come to happen by means of *historical/narrative* explanations: e.g. the formation of one particular stratum, the evolution of one particular species, the explosion of one particular cluster of matter and energy. Although these explanations assume (substantial) physical restrictions as to what is and is not deemed possible at certain points and we count on hypothesis regarding the effectiveness of common mechanisms and processes (amounting, in evolutionary biology, for example, to concrete evolutionary theories), such natural but haphazard events, are not supposed to be the *necessary* outcome of the workings of "concrete natural laws".[22] They cannot (some would say *yet*) be apprehended *nomologically*, cannot be just *subsumed* under a general rule: each event remains unique, tied to its own causally complex history.

It is, thus, usually assumed that in these "historical natural sciences" the task generally undertaken by scientist is providing a particular *historical explanation* of an acknowledged fact or event or set of data. There is usually little *prediction* in such sciences. We have already mentioned the, in principle, non-predictive character of evolutionary biology (see note 10), although it is not inconceivable that prediction may be tried as supported by the warrants suggested by certain concrete evolutionary theories: i.e. we may reasonably discuss and support the projection of a future evolution of a species in certain environmental circumstances. There are, probably, more serious attempts at prediction in geology, regarding the future development of a certain formation in its specific scenery. Causality might be considered just *a little bit less* complex or more easily simplifiable in such a field. In any case, the *predictability* of a realm seems to be more a matter of degree (linked to the degree of causal complexity) than a qualitative feature.

As Robert Richards claims, precisely in his relevant work on narrative explanations (Richards 1992):

[22] On the problematic status of laws in biology, see Caponi (2014).

> Our confidence in prediction will fall off in direct logarithmic proportion to the distance projected, the complexity of the events, and (as a dimension of complexity) their responsiveness to circumstances. That is why evolutionists cannot make many predictions of consequence. I should add physicists are not logically better off; their projected systems are usually simpler and, as far as circumstances go, dead. But they cannot more accurately predict the exact trajectory of a falling leaf on a blustery Chicago day than Darwin could have divined the rise and evolutionary development of the HIV virus (Richards 1992, pp. 36–37).

But even though prediction—and less so a "simply-warranted", *nomological* prediction—is not the usual task assumed by a discipline like evolutionary biology, other kinds of arguments may often appear in such a field. Depending on the kind and availability of other evidences and experimental proofs (helping to reduce or *triangulate* the alternatives), an evolutionary biologist may well be in a position to support the effective role or even existence of the processes and entities appearing and operating in a certain narrative account, *precisely because* such a narrative account provides a good explanation for the well-known fact or event or set of data at hand. That would be an abductive (meta-explanatory) argument using as grounds the alleged explanatory virtues of a narrative explanation, a kind of account that the field has already assumed as scientifically relevant. So the acceptability of narrative explanations implies, in such a case, the acceptability of some kinds of narrative arguments in scientific discussions.

Now, is it just because *we have nothing better* (not yet discovered simple "natural laws") that such kind of historical/narrative accounts (i.e. narrative explanations, very tentative narrative predictions, meta-explanatory abductions involving narrative explanations) are accepted as scientific in some natural sciences? Or is it, instead, a sign of maturity, of the fact that some disciplines have assumed a greater degree of complexity, at a certain scientific stage? That's controversial, of course, but for Richards, at least: "When the barriers are down, we will see, not that historical narrative fails as a scientific explanation, but that much of science succeeds only as historical narrative." (Richards 1992, p. 40).

This may sound perhaps too extreme. However, it seems that whenever science has to deal with particular situations or events: either as unique objects of study or as unique evidential scenarios (either imaginary or real) whose eventful details matter for scientific conclusions or scientific accounts, narratives and narrative ways of giving reasons keep coming out, threatening simplistic and simply nomological paradigms of explanation and argument in science.

11.5 Conclusion

My strategy in the paper has been to concentrate both on the characteristics and the standards of *scientific argument* as defined by its field-dependent features (according to Toulmin et al. 1978) and on the special traits of thought experiments as characteristically *narrative* means of giving reasons. One of my contentions is that,

contrary to the analysis made of thought experiments by some epistemologists, such narratives should not be reduced to a series of independent premises, a move that makes them lose their narrative character. I have also claimed that if thought experiments have some evidential bearing on empirical science this has to do, in part, with their closeness to real experiments, which have also been historically understood as providing detailed narratives regarding singular events's and which, many times, are just successful (or could just be successful) under very particular and controlled conditions (sometimes materially impracticable). Narrative explanations in historical sciences such as geology or evolutionary biology also attest to the widespread presence of narrative justifying means in scientific argument. In the end, narrativity is much more present in the empirical sciences than has been traditionally acknowledge and it should not be seen as posing a more problematic threat to empiricism than *nomicity* (to which it seems to be opposed).

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Chapter 12
How to Win Wars: The Role of the War Narrative

Tone Kvernbekk and Ola Bøe-Hansen

Abstract One might think it is obvious in a military conflict who has won and who has lost. But is it? It seems to be commonly accepted that the Americans actually lost the Vietnam War, even though they won all or most of the actual battles on the ground. Wars, modern military theory states, are not won on the battlefield – they are won in people's minds, in the cognitive domain. To secure the support of the population for participating in military operations a government must therefore present good, persuasive reasons. Such reasons have come to be called "war narratives". A war narrative can be seen as a reason whose job it is to bolster the conclusion that participation in a war, often far away from home territory, is legitimate and right. In this chapter we discuss the content and function of war narratives: what they say; why they arise; the audiences they are aimed at, and how they fare over time. This latter issue is particularly important, we suggest, because war narratives may erode if or when counter-evidence piles up as military events unfold. If that happens the narrative becomes a liability to its narrator. The audience becomes skeptical and retracts its support – the narrative fails to persuade and the war might be lost.

12.1 Introduction

One might think it is obvious in a military conflict who has won and who has lost. But is it? It is commonly accepted that the Americans actually lost the Vietnam War, even though they won all or most of the actual battles on the ground. Wars, modern military theory states, are not won on the battlefield. They are won in people's minds. The Norwegian Joint Operational Doctrine explicitly declares that at the end of the day wars are won or lost in the cognitive domain (2007, p. 70). By the same token, the people who "ensure" victory are at a safe distance from the battlefield. As we hope to show in this chapter, this is not as far-fetched as it may sound.

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It seems somewhat narrow to look at the cognitive domain exclusively, and we would like to expand it into what we might call a socio-cognitive domain. This would include cultural, political, social and historical features as well as individual interpretation and understanding. In the midst of this complex socio-cognitive domain stands the war narrative. Broadly speaking war narratives offer a framework for understanding a conflict, for the political rhetoric that surrounds warfare, and for justifying the war in public opinion. A great tangle of issues are thus involved in and with the war narrative, as it finds itself at the center of narrative, rhetoric, argumentation, strategic communication, psychology, ideology, truth, trustworthiness, policy, tactics and military struggle.

We shall explore a select few of these possible issues, with a specific view to the couplings of narrative, rhetoric and argumentation. Our pathway through the tangle of issues will take the shape of a spiral; the main idea being that there is an internal drive here that will unfold itself and take us from issue to issue. This unfolding will be spelled out as we go along, here we shall just briefly lay out the stops we plan to make on our way.

We begin *in medias res* with the war narrative, its presumed content and role, and introduce some concrete examples. The next stop is the concept of a rhetorical situation and from here there is but a small step to the socio-cognitive domain, where wars are supposedly won. Around the next bend in our spiral therefore lies the notion of audience; or rather plural and composite audiences – those to whom the narrative is told and who are meant to believe and accept it. At this point a complication enters the picture because the audience is not just a domestic audience but also a foreign audience, and alongside the domestic war narrative runs the enemy's counter-narrative. We thus get two narratives, two composite audiences and two narrators. Next the spiral drives us onward to temporality, a well-known feature of narratives. What happens to the (domestic) war narrative in the course of time? Here confirming and disconfirming evidence enter the stage, and the issue of the truth of the war narrative arises. If counter-evidence piles up, the narrative erodes, we suggest. Sufficiently eroded, it will at some point in time become a liability to the narrator, and that brings us to a new rhetorical situation in which the war narrative might have to be revised. And then our spiral turns in on itself and brings us back to the war narrative. Is the war then won? We shall see.

12.2 Narratives and War Narratives

"Narrative" derives from the Latin *narrare*, which means "telling", and *gnarus*, which means "having knowledge of something". As Jerome Bruner (2002) points out, storytelling is found in all cultures. There is no known language that does not mark narrative essentials such as actor, action, object, beginnings and endings, plot, narrator and audience. As Aristotle (1982) suggested, these elements should hang together in a coherent, meaningful whole. A story begins at a non-random beginning,

proceeds through a middle and comes to a non-random closure or ending. While the story-telling impulse is universal, the stories themselves may vary in both content and intended and actual functions, and we ourselves may vary in what we think stories do for us and how.

The term narrative itself is somewhat elusive. In the past 35 years or so there has been an explosion of narrative research and the term has come to take on a wide variety of meanings. It can refer to ideologies, over-arching research paradigms, entire life stories, folk tales, lies, interview excerpts and historical analyses. Riessman and Speedy (2007) argue that the term has come to mean anything and everything and that conceptual specificity has been lost with popularization. Our own spiral walk is not dependent on any particular understanding of narrative; the minimal constituents of narratives suggested by Bruner will by and large suffice. However we would like to make one amendment: Kenneth Burke's classical idea that stories are driven by Trouble with a capital T (Burke 1945). On Burke's account, both fictional and factual stories minimally feature an actor, in some recognizable context, who tries to achieve a goal by some means or other. Trouble is defined as some form of mismatch or imbalance between the story elements. For example, the means the actor had at his or her disposal were inadequate to attain the goal; the actions performed were misguided, the actor misunderstood the plot, the hero was interrupted by the enemy, the context changed unexpectedly, or some such thing. Trouble, for Burke, thus designates a plan that went awry and did not come to fruition, and the absence of a result itself requires an explanatory story. The idea of Trouble is evidently highly pertinent in the context of war narratives, but we will adapt it to our own purposes.

A war narrative is a sub-category of narrative, a narrative confined to a certain area of human life. The term was coined by Michael Vlahos (2006), and he describes it as follows,

> First, it is the organizing framework for policy. Policy cannot exist without an interlocking foundation of "truths" that people easily accept because they appear to be self-evident and undeniable.
>
> Second, this "story" works as a framework precisely because it represents just such an existential vision. The "truths" that it asserts are culturally impossible to disassemble or even criticize.
>
> Third, having presented a war logic that is beyond dispute, the narrative then serves practically as the anointed rhetorical handbook for how the war is to be argued and described (p. 1).

Vlahos calls this a narrative even though he does not make explicit use of any of the narrative essentials referred to above. On the other hand we can recognize the presence of a plot, of Trouble – there is a war going on or about to begin. We recognize the importance of coherence and meaningfulness in Vlahos' undeniable and easily acceptable truths. There is an audience here ("people") and there is a narrator; albeit an implicit one. We would also like to highlight the goal; hidden in Vlahos' formulations as an "existential vision" and a "war logic beyond dispute." In military vernacular the goal is talked of as the desired end-state, and this is evidently of the

greatest importance. More specifically, the major elements found in most (but not necessarily all) war narratives are the parties to the conflict, a definition of the nature of the conflict, the stakes involved, the desired end-state, an identification of the means and an estimate of the duration of the war (Ornatowski 2012). Some turns further into our spiral we shall come back to the issue of the end-state and discuss what might happen if the desired end-state does not correspond to the actual end-state, or what might happen if there is no perceived ending at all. For the moment we sum up that war narratives are rather unorthodox narratives, but that this is the established usage of the term. A war narrative is not the story of e.g. WW1, how it began, developed and ended, told after the fact. It is an existential and ideological vision of why "we" should enter the war, designed to convey the why, what and how of the conflict and justify the decision (De Graaf et al. 2015). War narratives are presented before the fact, not after.

War narratives come in many sizes and shapes, and below we provide some examples. Note the existential vision in play, the magnitude of the Trouble, the what and the how. To stay with WW1, here is the last paragraph of President Woodrow Wilson's speech to the Congress in April 1917 (Web 1):

> It is a fearful thing to lead this great peaceful people into war, into the most terrible and disastrous of all wars, civilization itself seeming to be in the balance. But the right is more precious than peace, and we shall fight for the things we have always carried nearest our hearts – for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own governments, for the rights and liberties of small nations, for a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at last free.

Another American example is the speech made by President George W. Bush in September 2001, when he declared war on Al Qaeda. Here are some snippets:

> Tonight, we are a country awakened to danger and called to defend freedom. Our grief has turned to anger and anger to resolution. […] On September the 11th, enemies of freedom committed an act of war against our country. Americans have known wars, but for the past 136 years they have been wars on foreign soil, except for one Sunday in 1941. […] Al Qaeda is to terror what the Mafia is to crime. But its goal is not making money, its goal is remaking the world and imposing its radical beliefs on people everywhere. […] Now, this war will not be like the war against Iraq a decade ago, with decisive liberation of territory and a swift conclusion. […] Americans should not expect one battle, but a lengthy campaign unlike any other we have ever seen (Web 2).

The Norwegian war narrative on Afghanistan is, by comparison, more pedestrian and much less poetic than Wilson's narrative. An evaluation report from June 2016 states that Norway had three main aims for its involvement, listed in the following order: be a good ally and fight alongside the USA and NATO; against international terrorism, and for a better Afghanistan. The report talks of all three as aims; we would just like to point out here that only the two latter aims can be construed as desired end-states. The first is a reason, not an aim, and has in fact never been explicitly declared as an aim by the authorities.

12.3 The Rhetorical Situation

Now why would any narrator produce a war narrative? We take the view that a war narrative is a verbal response to what Lloyd Bitzer (1968) calls a rhetorical situation. He defines it as "a natural context of persons, events, objects, relations, and an exigence which strongly invites utterance" (p. 5). Something has happened; there are general feelings of concern, the public needs to make sense of what is going on. For example, immediately after the July 22 attack at Utøya outside Oslo in 2011, there arose in Norway a situation of shock, disbelief, grief and helplessness: what had just hit us? How to make sense of a tragedy of such magnitude? What to say, what to do? This situation can be understood as a rhetorical situation. It called out for somebody to step up and speak and in the days following the attack several people did. But the most memorable response to the rhetorical situation was that of the Mayor of Oslo, who was able to put into words the facts of the situation, the mixture of feelings and the remedy – not revenge, but standing together and supporting one another. A different kind of rhetorical situation arose when the Norwegian government was asked to participate in protecting the Libyan city of Bengazi, which Colonel Muammar Gaddafi had threatened to obliterate. To the situation belonged news coverage of Gaddafi's actions and utterances, the general situation in Libya, as well as the UN Security Council's authorization of NATO to "take all necessary measures" to protect civilians.

An exigence, Bitzer says, is an imperfection marked by urgency; a defect, an obstacle, something waiting to be done. A rhetor's decision to address the exigence and speak to the situation is based mainly on the perceived urgency of the exigence, and perhaps also on the rhetor's reading of the public. Although Bitzer's account has met with some criticism, we find his main ideas fruitful for our purposes here. Obviously, in the case of war narratives we do not deal with just any kind of exigence, as the war narratives show. In the Libya case, the exigence was both clear and urgent. The response from the authorities came in the form of a war narrative which centered on responsibility to protect civilians and an end-state centered on democracy in Libya. The war logic stated that in order to achieve democracy, the dictator had to be toppled. To this end the Norwegian government decided to deploy a squadron of F-16 fighter aircraft.

As suggested above, a war narrative is produced prior to the military action, to rehearse the reasons, the stakes, the nature of the conflict and the desired end-state, and to create legitimacy and support for the planned military involvement. The war narrative is meant to fit the relevant features and pressing issues of the situation; to answer the urgency and speak to the significance and magnitude of the events. This may be more or less difficult, depending on the structure of the situation. The rhetorical situation after Utøya July 22 was chaotic and enormously complex; it involved the entire nation, strong emotions and many different hypotheses as to who could have done it. The Libya decision scenario is no less complex but much more structured; there are facts on the ground, the UN Security Council issued two clear resolutions, and the country had obligations to its allies, among other things.

On Bitzer's understanding, a war narrative would count as a piece of rhetorical discourse because it comes into being as a response to a rhetorical situation. The situation precedes the rhetoric, calls it into existence. In some cases one might conceivably turn this around and argue that the discourse comes first and the situation is created (or perhaps manipulated) in response, but this objection to Bitzer need not concern us here. The important point is that war narratives are connected to certain situations and arise in response to an exigence of considerable urgency and magnitude.

12.4 The Socio-Cognitive Domain

There are two main reasons why the socio-cognitive domain (Goldman 2007) should figure as a topos in our spiral. The first and most obvious one is that this is a domain in which wars supposedly are won. "People's minds" are not a private entity, and in so far as minds can be located, surely this is the domain where we find them. The second is that rhetorical situations, as outlined above, themselves need a context. A rhetorical situation arises in the wake of some event or exigence that demands a response, but the exigence by no means determines the nature of the response. The larger socio-cognitive context also plays a part, influencing how the exigence is perceived and therefore its urgency. The rhetor, or the narrator of the war narrative, must to some extent take the features of this domain into account. The interpretation of the exigence will influence the acceptability of the war narrative and the proposed war logic.

So what is a socio-cognitive domain, and what do we find there? Some things we have already placed there; people, events, an exigence of some kind. According to Christopher Tindale (1992), a cognitive domain – or cognitive environment, as Tindale calls it – is a set of facts and assumptions which an individual or a group is capable of representing and accepting as true. Cognitive domains may be different for each of us, but portions of it will surely be shared, as the idea of a war narrative clearly presupposes. The cognitive domain will not tell us what people actually know or assume, but it will tell us what they can be expected to know or assume, Tindale argues.

If the war is to be won here, the domain must be such that the exigence and its urgency is interpreted in a way that makes the war narrative attractive, relevant and believable and hence can support a country's decision to deploy fighter aircraft to Libya or a President's decision to lead a nation into war. Reception and understanding of the war narrative, Emily Goldman (2007) suggests, is mediated by the social dimensions of the socio-cognitive domain. This makes good sense, both argumentatively and psychologically, because social, emotional and interactional dimensions strongly influence uptake. Events, information and narrative are interpreted through cultural, historical, political and social experiences. Goldman does not mention emotions and values, but we could perhaps add emotions and (national) values to this interpretive filter. What kind of nation are we? Which international role do we

want to play? What if any are our previous experiences with war? How people understand themselves and their country, the country's history and values, will evidently play a part in how they understand the rhetorical situation and make sense of the war narrative.

In the social domain (or in its political corner) we also find the narrator, the producer and teller of the war narrative. While the teller may be one person, such as a President or a Prime Minister, the producer is a composite entity loosely called "the authorities". The parliament, members of government, major coalition leaders, major opposition leaders, the defense staff, military leaders. Norway is asked to join in airstrikes against Libyan targets. In response to this rhetorical situation a war narrative is generated, describing the nature of the conflict, the adversaries and the allies, the policy goals, the stakes, the duration and the means. The very insertion of the war narrative into the socio-cognitive domain amounts to a change in the cognitive domain: why and how the authorities propose to respond to a given exigence is made known to the citizens. The war narrative is then interpreted, discussed, criticized, understood or misunderstood (or ignored, by some). But changing the cognitive domain is only a necessary, not a sufficient, condition if a war is to be won – in addition a certain change must take place in people's minds. The parallel between rhetoric and strategic communication is conspicuous. Goldman argues that strategic communication at heart is a perception strategy, aimed at aligning the perceptions or understandings of key audiences with the policy goals. So what does it take to change the cognitive environment such that the people's understandings are aligned with policy goals? It clearly takes more than the telling of a war narrative to achieve such alignment. For example, rather than being told just once, a war narrative must be kept alive in the socio-cognitive domain and occur continuously. It also requires that the policy goal, the desired end-state is clearly formulated – this is an issue to which we shall return in a subsequent section. There should be a consistent core message that flows from the policy goal, Goldman suggests: here is what we want, this is why it is good, and this is how we shall achieve it.

Strategic communication is receiver-centric. Narrators must use their knowledge about the cognitive domain; i.e. their knowledge of what people could be expected to assume or believe. They – referring here to the composite nature of the narrator – must employ words and messages the audience will understand, and above all the narrator must use communication channels that the audience trusts and uses, which may not at all be the news media that the narrator would normally use or trust. As Jamie Shea, NATO's spokesperson during Operation Allied Force, puts it, "Winning the media campaign is just as important as winning the military campaign" (2002, p. 167). The term "winning" suggests competition. And here we find another important feature of the socio-cognitive domain: its noisiness. Many different things, domestic and foreign, are going on at the same time and information from all kinds of sources pours in. For what, exactly, is the narrator of a war narrative up against here? The war narrative competes with numerous other stories and bits of information stemming from other governments, enemy channels and national news media, as well as from private security companies and international NGOs. All compete in the socio-cognitive domain to make their story heard, convey their version of the

conflict and their suggestions for possible courses of action (Bøe-Hansen 2014, p. 56). We must remember here that the war narrative is the official story, the authorities' story. Some of the other stories may corroborate the official war narrative; some may provide stark contrasts. Any player in this particular field must be aware that information is abundant and strategic communication cannot depend on controlling access to and dissemination of information, for the simple reason that information no longer can be controlled in the way it once could.

12.5 The Audience

Bitzer expands on his idea of the rhetorical situation by adding that the actual or potential exigence "can be completely or partially removed if discourse, introduced into the situation, can so constrain human decision or action as to bring about the significant modification of the exigence" (1968, p. 6). But who is to be constrained, and how? It is time to take a closer look at the audience.

On Bitzer's view the audience is a main constituent of any rhetorical situation – it is after all the audience that is to be constrained in decision and action. It is a well-known feature of rhetoric that the success of an argument is judged in terms of audience uptake (Tindale 2013). John Rodden (2008) shares the same view: the aim of rhetoric is not proof but assent. Military strategic communication takes the receiver-centeredness even further. The British National Security Council defines strategic communication as follows:

> The systematic and coordinated use of all means of communication to deliver UK national security objectives by *influencing the attitudes and behaviours* of individuals, groups and states (DCDC 2012, 1–2, emphasis added).

This definition also comes in a version especially adapted to the armed forces: "Advancing national interests by using all Defence means of communication to influence the attitudes and behaviours of people" (DCDC 2012, 1–1). The American version is equally clear. In the Joint Publication 3–13 Information Operations we can read that,

> Strategic communication constitutes focused USG efforts to *understand and engage key audiences in order to create, strengthen, or preserve conditions favorable for the advancement of USG interests*, policies, and objectives through the use of coordinated programs, plans, themes, messages, and products synchronized with the actions of all elements of national power (JFC 2006, I-10, emphasis added).

These doctrines do not beat about the bush. They want to shape the cognitive domain tightly and thereby shape the mind, attitudes, and behavior of the audience. Decision and action are constrained to increase the probability that the audience will support the war narrative.

Chaïm Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca define audience as "the gathering of those whom the speaker wants to influence by his or her arguments" (1969, p. 19). It can sometimes be the speaker, who needs to convince him- or herself of

what is the better way to respond to a given exigence. The audience may be a universal audience or a particular audience. Whichever it is, the gathering is far from stable, they argue. Oneself as audience makes good sense in the case of the war narrative; it may well be that authorities construct a war narrative at least partly to convince themselves of the rightness of military involvement. But equally importantly, the audience is the people in whose minds wars are won or lost. But what kind of audience is this?

How can we characterize the kind of mass audience which is implied in the case of war narratives? The importance of this audience is abundantly clear – it decides whether wars are won or lost. Christopher Tindale (2013) describes audiences as complex and changing; they may be actual, potential or virtual, particular or universal. And, we might add, intended or unintended. Any narrator must presuppose a lot about the nature and identity of the audience, as does our composite narrator, the authorities.

So who are "people"? Let us begin by tentatively distinguishing between local and global audiences. Even the local, national kind of audience we are dealing with here is composite and heterogeneous, comprised of different groups and individuals. One sub-audience for our narrator would be fellow politicians and other stakeholders, even those whom the narrator has good reason to think will be opposed to the war. Such groups belong to the intended audience although presumably the target is not to get their assent.

Maybe for the most part the intended audience is what Trudy Govier calls a "noninteractive, heterogeneous audience whose views are unknown and unpredictable" (1999, p. 187). A general public, in other words – an entity composed of a wide range of types of people. Would, for example, this mass audience accept the desired end-state envisioned by the war narrative? The reasons for going to war? Would it believe the authorities' rendering of the means to be used? The risk involved? Tindale comments,

> Some intended audiences are comprised of such diverse elements that it is difficult to be sure who is being addressed and on what terms. Composite audiences invariably divide along group lines, and different groups subscribe to different perspectives that affect their beliefs and alter how they will react to aspects of a discourse. Advocating that an arguer know her audience's beliefs and attitudes brings this problem to the fore. Even when such diverse elements are identified, the question remains how such diversity can be accommodated in argumentation (2013, pp. 511–512).

How is it at all possible to seek the assent of such a complex, diverse audience? Some observations are in order. First, if Tindale is right, to "understand and engage" an audience and "influence their behavior" becomes a daunting task, to say the least. Second, the narrator knows that there are groups that will be highly skeptical and opposed. Third, what does it mean to be persuaded by a war narrative? The importance attached to the war narrative at the outset presupposes that we have some idea of what assent is and what kind of assent are we after or can expect. Wholehearted? Grudging? Silent? More than half the population? An assent judged to be large enough, whatever that might mean?

Fourth, a war narrative is not just any argument aiming at influencing the mind of the audience. As Vlahos points out, there is an existential element to the war narrative. The stakes are high, quite literally life and death not only for "our" people but for insurgents and civilians. Johnson (2013) makes the point that the narrator's idea of the audience is not the audience. But perhaps the very nature of the war narrative helps us make reasonable assumptions about the audience after all, even if it is non-interactive and unknown? A war narrative is a national matter and therefore it is a kind of story that lends itself well to both logos, ethos and pathos. As we have seen, it may appeal to who we are as a nation, our self-understanding and our basic values. If the audience, diverse as it is, accepts such appeals as relevant, it might pave the way for assent. For the audience to accept appeals to "national values" as relevant, the appeals would have to fit into the socio-cognitive domain and be made sense of through cultural, historical and social experiences, as well as prejudices and national vanities. Narrators do have some knowledge that might allow them to formulate at least rough ideas of the composition of the audience and of what might make it tick. Especially so in the case of the war narrative, we suggest: the sheer magnitude and urgency of the issue at hand may make it easier for a war narrative to get attention and influence people. The war narrative speaks to us as citizens, as a nation.

Fifth, the narrator must come through as authentic. Any perceived whiff of insincerity in the narrator would be counter-productive, we surmise. This is an issue we shall come back to. We shall also come back to the issue of logos when we explore various aspects of temporality below. But first let us further complicate the issue of the audience.

Thus far we have looked at the domestic audience. But since military operations by and large are international, they attract attention from audiences well beyond the domestic one. As briefly suggested above, political and military leaders, journalists, businesspeople, private security companies and NGOs want attention to their version of what the war is all about and how single events might fit into the larger picture. The Target Audience Triangle below shows the audience typology usually employed in military and/or strategic discussions: domestic audience, international audience, and the audience found in the operations theater (Fig. 12.1).

Rhetorical theory tells us that the question of audience typology is quite complex and can be dealt with in different ways. We have so far focused on composition of audience and argued that the audience for a war narrative is a highly complex, composite entity with some known groups and some noninteractive groups whose views are perhaps unknown but not unknowable. With the triangle the audience gets even more complex, simply because it gets bigger. The noninteractive unknown part increases dramatically with the inclusion of operations and international audience.

In the domestic arena there are three audiences: political leadership (including the narrator), population, and (deployed) military personnel and their families. The latter audience is the one carrying the heaviest burdens in international operations. Soldiers can become heroes but also scapegoats. For them the official war narrative, its logic, its meaningfulness and legitimacy is evidently of the greatest importance.

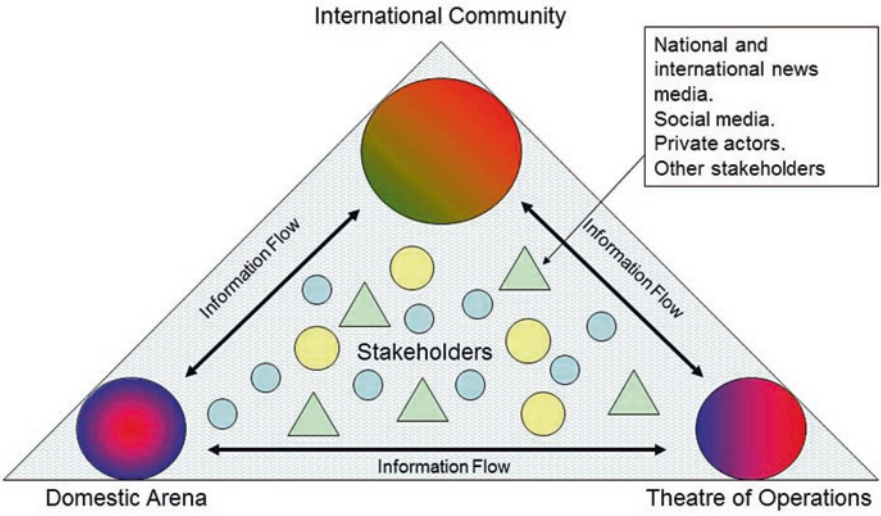

Fig. 12.1 Target audience triangle (Bøe-Hansen 2014, p. 57)

In the international arena we also find three audiences. First we have other nations contributing military forces, either as a member of an alliance or because they are in some other way mandated to support the military effort. This complicates matters. The alliance, for example NATO, will have a war narrative highlighting not only the desired end-state but also the joint effort of the members. Each contributing country will have its own war narrative. Two things worthy of mention follow from this. First, the coherence and mutual consistency of all the war narratives is a matter of some concern. Second, our war narrative also has an audience in the other contributing countries and we are the audience of another country's war narrative.

The second international audience is comprised of regional countries. If the operation takes place in Libya, audiences to our war narrative are found in Egypt, Tunisia or Algeria. These audiences might take a great interest in the war narrative, because the power balance in the region may shift as a result of the operation, and because the conflict might spread. The third audience worth mentioning is international humanitarian organizations. They may influence the narrative of the operation or downright refute it.

Turning now to the operations arena; again there are three target audiences: civilian population, own troops, and enemy, all of which must be regarded as complex composite audiences. We should remind ourselves here that our war narrative also targets these audiences, to justify our military presence in their country. As Bøe-Hansen (2014) points out, information is abundant and we may have problems getting our narrative heard. And what reasons do we have anyway to think that our war narrative will seem at all credible to the people who experience its implementation? Own troops are deployed to e.g. Libya or Afghanistan armed with their national war

narrative. But they also have access to other information, through the internet, news media and social media and they know how the war narrative fares at home.

The audience that really stands out is the opponent or enemy. The enemy is a composite entity, consisting of counter-state, insurgents and rebel groups with shifting allegiances. The enemy will know the other target audiences in the operations arena better than the international forces and will therefore have a much better knowledge of what buttons to push in order to achieve support for their own cause in the local community.

In summary: the audience of a war narrative is endlessly varied, complex and changing. It stands to reason that no war narrative will ever get the assent of all target audiences shown in the triangle, but the important audience is the domestic one. On the other hand a politician from any involved state will have to bear in mind that any utterance about the war might be heard in all these arenas, interpreted through local social, cultural and experiential filters before entering the minds of the people.

12.6 Counter-Narratives

Not only is the enemy considered one of our audiences; they also produce their own counter-narrative that competes for the attention of the same target audiences: mainly the local populace and the international community. Goldman (2007) thinks that the Western states will rely on logos and rational arguments in their war narratives, but as our examples suggest there can be much pathos and emotional appeal in Western war narratives. Counter-states will, however, always perceive the situation as an existential war for them – after all the war takes place on their territory. They face a militarily superior opponent and it is imperative for them to employ unconventional means. Thus, insurgents often have a well-developed information system with connections to global information and communication channels. The purpose is the same as that of a war narrative: to influence the cognitive domain sufficiently to shape people's minds. A victory in the cognitive domain makes efforts in the physical, military domain relatively less important. The opponents on the operations arena put forward a competing narrative, based on their own perceptions, values and goals, and with a clear existential twist: they are fighting for their existence. Just as they are our audience, we become theirs.

In 1996 Osama bin Laden presented Al Qaeda's war narrative (Web 3). The existential vision invokes religious beliefs and the concept of martyrdom, and – more to the point here – the common fight of all Muslims for liberation from oppression and disrespect:

> It is no secret to you, my brothers, that the people of Islam have been afflicted with oppression, hostility, and injustice by the Judeo-Christian alliance and its supporters. This shows our enemies' belief that Muslims' blood is the cheapest and that their property and wealth is merely loot. Your blood has been spilt in Palestine and Iraq […]. Men of the radiant future of our umma of Muhammad, raise the banner of jihad up high against the Judeo-American

> alliance that has occupied the holy places of Islam. […] The martyr has a guarantee from God: He forgives him at the first drop of his blood and shows him his seat in Heaven.

We should note here that this counter-narrative (and others like it) is immensely strong in its appeal to its own domestic audience. The exigence it speaks to is dramatic and people are willing to sacrifice their lives for the cause it argues.

12.7 Temporality

We now find ourselves in a situation with numerous unwieldy audiences and (at least) two competing narratives. It is time to bring temporality into the mix. Temporality is part of the definition of narrative, captured in the beginning-middle-ending structure. The events told of in a story are played out in time: in the beginning Trouble haunts the protagonist, random or nonrandom events upset his plans, but usually some closure is reached in the end. Some narrativists, most notably Hayden White (1978) and Arthur Danto (1985), make the ending part and parcel of the story: it is the ending, often understood as the point of the whole story, which determines the beginning of the story and thereby serves as the main criterion for selecting which actions, events and sequences are to become part of the story. It is not until we know how something ends that we also know where, when and how it began. But how do we know that something is an ending? No phenomenon, event or experience comes with the label "ending".

We have already seen that war narratives evade the usual narrative vocabulary. When temporality is brought into the picture the untypicality of war narratives qua narratives is further strengthened. Narratives are generally thought to be retrospective (Ricoeur 1984). But at the time of its inception a war narrative is prospective in character; it projects a future end-state. And contra White and Danto, the beginning is thought to be known; it is, for example, taken to be aggressive actions by one state against another, the sudden presence of warships in neutral waters, etc. Thus a rhetorical situation arises and demands a response. We might also think we know the middle; in the shape of the war logic – the envisioned sequence of action and achievements that will lead to the desired end result. Until the armed forces are deployed and the war logic put in motion, the middle is also prospective. At this point the war narrative is about something that (we hope) is going to happen, not a story of what actually took place.

But temporality dictates that things will change, and several issues are involved. Let us begin with the question of the persuasion's durability (Tindale 2013). Durability concerns the lasting effects of the war narrative over time. It will be recalled that the war narrative should in some way or other constrain human decision or action in order to bring about a modification of the exigence, as Bitzer (1968) argued. Some kinds of experiences are clearly longer lasting than others; Tindale suggests that for example religious conversion experiences tend to be long lasting. So is a war narrative a kind of argument which could create conviction and lasting

commitment in people's minds? That depends on a number of factors, some of which we shall tease out below.

To begin with, a war narrative should never be told just once. Emily Goldman (2007) suggests that strategic communication should aim at shaping memories, shaping the past and shaping the audiences' plans for the future. In so far as this is at all possible, it surely requires a constant repetition of the message in the socio-cognitive domain. We opt for something less demanding and suggest that the war narrative at least should be kept alive in the socio-cognitive domain and occur regularly, but perhaps not repeated too often. This increases the probability that the domestic audience engages with the narrative, and reduces the probability that they forget it. As we shall come back to, this is a double-edged sword.

Furthermore, as indicated in a previous section, the durability of a war narrative may be influenced by its content. It appeals to national values and obligations, to a deep sense of "who we are" – as Vlahos states; there is an existential dimension to it. That is to say, the war narrative possesses certain intrinsic features that may contribute to its durability, and the frequency of its appearance might reinforce this tendency.

It is our hypothesis that temporality causes problems for war narratives. There are several sides to this, but the ones to be investigated here concern the playing out in time of the war narrative and its proposed logic. The famous military theorist Carl von Clausewitz (1976, p. 261) wisely said that it is impossible to predict the results of a war. But when a modern war narrative is inserted into a rhetorical situation, it comes with an estimate of the duration of the war and a desired end-state. What happens if the desired end-state does not ensue when it should? Or if a completely different ending comes about? Or if there is no discernible ending at all? At some point in time there is a shift here from prospective to retrospective story – when the estimated duration is up, both narrator and audience will begin to ask if things actually did go as expected. This shift to retrospection has (or can have) big consequences for the war narrative: it can begin to erode. Let us look at some temporal factors with potential eroding powers.

First, there may be no ending. The Norwegian war narrative about Afghanistan is a case in point. It still has not ended, after 15 years. The initially proposed war logic might not have been entirely clear on the issue of the duration of Norway's military commitment, but surely the desired end-state was supposed to ensue long before 15 years had passed. At some point the war narrative will no longer be perceived as undisputed. The war logic has not delivered what it promised, and the narrative begins to erode. As we suggested above, pinpointing an ending may be more difficult that one might think. Take the famous "Mission Accomplished" banner displayed when President Bush gave his talk on board an aircraft carrier in May 2003. The term "accomplished" definitely signals an ending, and the speech was widely understood as declaring that the war had been brought to a successful and swift end. With the ensuing Iraqi insurgency it quickly became obvious that the assumed ending was not the ending after all. In fairness to Bush, it should be noted that he also stated that the mission would continue, but this was trumped by the banner.

By contrast, the war in Libya was relatively swift and only lasted 7 months. The Libya war narrative was therefore not challenged before Col. Gaddafi was killed by his own countrymen and NATO declared victory and terminated the operation. NATO's engagement thus ended with the conclusion that the military desired end-state had been achieved (to remove Gaddafi from power). The political end-state, however, was not achieved and the situation today, in retrospect, is judged to be worse than it was before the air campaign. Absence of desired results clearly erodes the war narrative.

Second and closely related to the first, as a way of dealing with the failure to attain the desired end-state, the narrator may redefine the end-state as time moves on. A clear and worthy end-state is of enormous importance for a war narrative and its prospects of gaining assent. At its commencement the Norwegian war narrative of Afghanistan had war on terror as its primary desired end-state, along with a "better Afghanistan." The Taliban regime was to be overthrown and replaced by a new democratic system of governance. But as the war went on and the desired end-state was nowhere in sight, the narrative was changed. That is to say, the desired end-state was revised; first to nation-building by improving governance, then to building of schools and to gender equality, women's rights and education for girls. This kind of political fickleness serves to erode the narrative; in so far as the key domestic audience interprets it as lack of a clear goal for Norwegian military presence in Afghanistan. If the desired end-state is constantly redefined, it may suggest to the audience that we do not really know what we are doing there. It may suggest that the authorities are insincere, and/or that the war logic was poorly conceived at the outset, that the authorities really did not understand the nature of the Trouble or know the best means to deal with it. This is even more troublesome for the deployed personnel, if they perceive that they put their lives at risk for no clear purpose. This is why keeping the war narrative alive in the socio-cognitive domain is a double-edged sword: the audience can compare the different versions. And that may seriously erode the narrative.

Third, there is a price to pay which only becomes visible in time. There is the number of military and civilian casualties. The people in the operations arena may be far away, but the death of innocent civilians, especially children, never fails to make an impression. Here we must also count misdeeds done by own soldiers; actions by deployed personnel that breach the codes of soldier behavior will serve to strain the narrative. And how many dead soldiers are we prepared to bring home, from a war that takes place on foreign territory? This price becomes more costly if the purpose of the war is unclear or shifting. There are also financial costs – the Norwegian military presence in Afghanistan is to date calculated to have cost some 20 billion Norwegian Kroner (appx. 3 billion US Dollars) (Official Norwegian Reports 2016). That is a lot of money spent on changing desired end-states that only to a small extent have been reached. The key audience might eventually make the judgment that the price is too high.

Fourth, there is the accumulation of (negative) evidence. At this point the relation between narrative, rhetoric and argument shifts, or perhaps we could say that war

narratives straddle the distinction between rhetoric and argumentation. Let us spell out some issues.

During the playing out of the war logic, as described by the war narrative, information will be collected as to how the war is going. The narrative changes temporal status from prospective to retrospective, and as the war unfolds the retrospective view develops with it. Truth comes into the picture; more specifically the truth of elements in the beginning-middle-ending sequence – the truth of the sub-premises, if you will. Is the war going the way the narrator said it would? Are there more casualties than expected? More damage to local infrastructure? Radicalization of local youth? Are there negative side-effects? Does the narrator fail to report? How the narrator handles negative evidence is crucial for the war narrative, we maintain. As suggested in a previous section, information is abundant; it comes into the socio-cognitive domain from various sources including hostile ones. Social media allows incidents to be reported in real-time, and often these will challenge the narrative. If the government is caught under-communicating, suppressing or lying about events and incidents, the war narrative will suffer massive erosion. Thus, while truth formerly was said to be the first casualty of war, the situation nowadays rather seems to be that the narrator of a war narrative cannot afford to tell anything but the truth. A case in point is the suppression of data about targets bombed by Norwegian fighters during the air campaign in Libya. Norwegian authorities argued that the information was classified due to operational security, whereas the Norwegian targets actually were reported in the New York Times. Suspicion of unnecessary secrecy immediately arose in the domestic key audience; expressed in hot debates in the news media. The authorities were forced to release the information.

The problem of narrative erosion puts the nature of war narratives in sharp relief. On the one hand the nature of the war narrative is clearly rhetorical. It is receiver-centric and aims at audience acceptance. On the other hand the erosion that inevitably sets in at some point suggests that epistemic criteria such as truth, logic, probability and a meaningful whole might be important. At some point the audience wants to know whether the narrative is true, and this we can only tell in retrospect. "Truth" in this case means the correspondence theory of truth and largely refers to facts; empirical data and information that can be checked, verified or falsified. As Johnson (2013) points out, this goes beyond audience acceptance and focuses instead on the quality of the argument; most notably truth and relevance of premises, clarity of propositions, internal consistency, and whether the evidence adds up to the conclusion. Thus, while war narratives in their prospective stage lean toward rhetoric, they lean toward classical argumentation and epistemic values in their retrospective stage. Johnson goes on to argue that one can never know whether one's argument actually did achieve acceptance; "there is no mechanism for determining whether one's argument has been accepted by one's audience" (p. 542). But while this may be true for "ordinary" arguments, it is not true for war narratives. We have problematized briefly what "assent" might mean, but when a domestic population

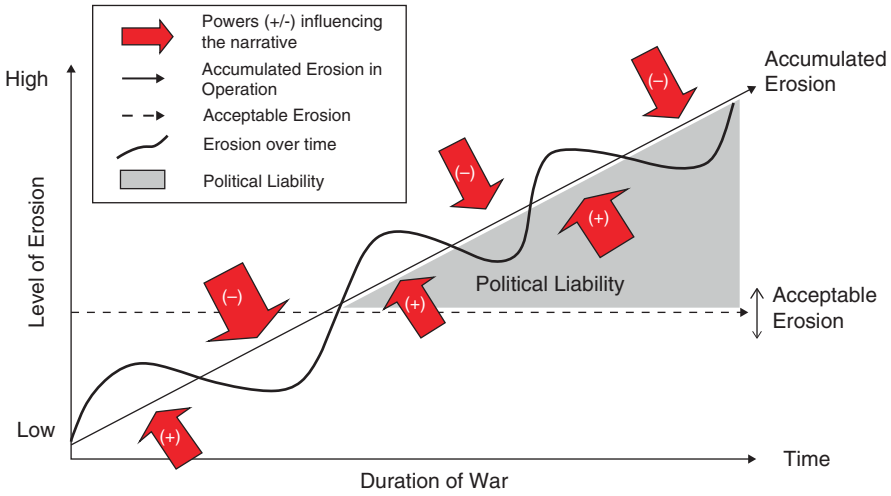

Fig. 12.2 Erosion of war narrative (Adapted from Bøe-Hansen 2013, p. 53)

no longer supports the nation's war efforts, this will surely be known to the authorities. The technological development that allows an audience to receive information from many sources in real-time also allows the same audience to make its views known to the authorities. Of course the audience is complex; it will judge the evidence differently and draw different inferences concerning the viability of the war narrative. But the point is that with social media audiences are not as noninteractive as they once used to be. They have ways of making their views known.

The temporal development and possible erosion of a war narrative can be illustrated in the figure below. In the end, we suggest, all war narratives are bound to become a political liability.

Just for the record; there will also be positive evidence; in the form of things that are judged to have improved. A dictator has been removed, schools have been built and are in use, a local election has been held. Figure 12.2 illustrates the possible erosion in time of a war narrative. As the war logic is progressing from beginning via a middle toward some ending (which may not be in sight, as in Afghanistan) it is exposed to various breaches, events and factors that chip away at the credibility and acceptability of the narrative. There is a tipping point here somewhere, we argue, where the war narrative is sufficiently eroded to become a political liability to the narrator. This is a complex picture with factors both supporting and undermining the narrative. The plus factors represent destabilizing factors and forces which increase the erosion while the minus factors represent forces that maintain and strengthen the narrative. All war narratives can handle some destabilizing factors, but when the tipping point is reached, the key domestic audience loses faith in the war narrative.

12.8 A New Rhetorical Situation

Here our spiral turns back on itself. When a war narrative has eroded so much it has become a political liability, we find ourselves in a new rhetorical situation. The military deployment has not yielded the desired results, and the war narrative might have been changed one time too many. Evidently a new rhetorical situation of this sort requires a response. But what kind of exigence are we dealing with now? Partly the new exigence may consist in a form of void: we have tried for many years to get results, for instance in Afghanistan, but we have failed. So what should we do now? Partly the new exigence may consist in the domestic audience (other audiences as well) losing their trust in the authorities. The original war narrative itself may be beyond repair at this time, but could a different rhetorical response be devised to repair the audience's trust in the authorities? The key domestic audience no longer believes in the war narrative, and without popular support a government cannot continue the war effort. The war is lost in the cognitive domain, and the troops might be called home, as was the case in the Vietnam War.

A current response to the new exigence is not a new (or revised) war narrative, but a regular retrospective narrative that tells the story of how things actually went. The absence of results requires explanation. This is exactly what the report evaluating Norway's engagement in Afghanistan is doing: it tells the story of what went wrong and why the goals were not achieved. It remains to be seen whether the key audience will find this story credible.

12.9 Conclusion

We have in this chapter discussed the nature of war narratives and their possible role in the winning or losing of wars. War narratives are in many ways untypical narratives. They come about as reasons and justifications for wars a country is about to begin or join; they are kept alive in public memory as the war is played out, and at some point they switch from being prospective to being retrospective. This switch in temporality, we have argued, is accompanied by another switch, from rhetoric to argumentation. The initial appeal to national values, existential visions and a sense of "who we are" is gradually replaced by, truth, consistency, clarity and relevance. This happens when events on the ground become empirically accessible and reports start to pour into the socio-cognitive domain of the key domestic audience. The Trouble told of in the war narrative must be correctly described, the parties in the conflict correctly identified, facts much be correctly reported and negative evidence handled. Thus, as the war logic progresses, argumentation virtues become more pronounced. If the narrator is redefining the desired end-state, caught lying or suppressing information, the narrative will erode. At some point, we have suggested, the erosion reaches a tipping point and the war narrative becomes a liability. Audience acceptance never seizes to be important for war narratives, even in their

retrospective phase. The war is, after all, won or lost in the cognitive domain, with the key domestic audience.

It may, however, be more complicated than that to decide whether a war is actually won. The audience is diverse and may give different feedback to the authorities. But there are obviously other issues as well, even though there seems to be no clear set of criteria by which to judge whether a war is won. So what other things might narrators and evaluators of war narratives want to address, with a view to winning the war? First, the kind of war. Swift and intense wars stand a better chance of being won, given that the war is over before the war narrative becomes a liability. The longer a war goes on without resolution or achievement of desired end-state, the more likely it is that the narrative will erode and the war effort will lose public support. Second, the desired end-state. Ambitious political end-states are not advisable from the perspective of winning wars. The further away the war takes place, geographically and culturally, the harder it will be to reach the desired end-state – and to keep it stable should it be achieved. Third, as Burke suggested: it is vital to know the core of the Trouble before trying to fix it. Know the antagonists, your fellow protagonists and rethink possible means.

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