

CHAPTER 1.

INTRODUCTION

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This volume was inspired by a conversation between Christopher Tindale, Leo Groarke and myself, which took place, maybe not by coincidence at Christopher Tindale's house in Windsor. I remember that, on that occasion, I asked them if there existed an anthology, developed coherently by Canadian scholars, of articles and essays dedicated to argumentation – demarcating, so to speak, a common point of view (if there was one). We spoke briefly on the topic only for them to determine that no such text existed. Immediately this gave rise to the question that brought about the title of this volume: Does there exist something which could be called the Canadian school of argumentation or, at least, a certain way of studying and analyzing argument which would permit some sort of uniform definition for the experts actively studying in this field? Does there exist, then, a Canadian tradition amongst those that make up the greater field of the study of argumentation?

It is well known that in Canada, more precisely in Ontario, in Windsor, there is a research centre – the Centre for Research in Reasoning, Argumentation and Rhetoric (CRRAR) – founded

in 2006. This centre was the result of an important branch of study which goes by the name 'Informal Logic', which began at Windsor, and was established in part to continue that tradition. This field's beginnings and developments are recorded by J. Anthony Blair in the autobiographical essay which opens the collection of this volume. He writes about the studies and research developed by him and Johnson in the early '70s. Blair discusses the difficulties they encountered publishing *Logical Self-Defense* – their volume that expressed “the possibility of such a departure from old-fashioned approaches” (J. A. Blair in this volume) – and how, in 1978, the first “Symposium on Informal Logic” was held in Windsor – even when at that time “there was no dedicated source of literature on informal logic” (*ibid.*). This Symposium was followed, in 1980, by the first international conference, and then, only three years later, by the second, which led to “the creation of the Association for Informal Logic and Critical Thinking (AILACT)” (*ibid.*). In 1984, *Informal Logic* appeared, a “blind-peer-reviewed academic journal, to appear three times a year” (*ibid.*). It was the year in which, among other things, Apple presented the first of the Macintosh series, Carlo Rubbia won the Nobel Prize for Physics and the XXIII Olympic Games took place in Los Angeles. It was also the year in which the Eastern Division of the American Philosophical Association organized a meeting in New York which included AILACT sessions. Blair and other Canadians, like David Hitchcock, took part in the event.

During the conference David and I were approached by two tall strangers with distinctive Dutch accents (and flawless English), who introduced themselves as Frans van Eemeren and Rob Grootendorst, and asked if they could make a presentation during the AILACT session. David pointed out that the agenda had been arranged in advance and was full. Van Eemeren and Grootendorst asked if they might meet with the two of us after the session, and we agreed. We retired to a nearby pub and began a conversation that lasted, over several rounds of draft beer, well into the night, the gist of which was to exchange information. We told them about infor-

mal logic and they told us about their new theory, which they called “Pragma-dialectics” and the newly published monograph in which they presented it, *Speech Acts in Argumentative Discussions* (1984) (copies of which they either gave us then or sent us soon afterwards), and the program they had set up at the University of Amsterdam. It was the beginning of life-long friendships. [...] Soon after our meeting in New York, van Eemeren and Grootendorst asked me if I would serve on the board of a new society they were forming, which they had christened the International Society for the Study of Argumentation (ISSA), and which was going to sponsor an international argumentation conference in Amsterdam the following spring, in June 1986 (*ibid.*)

The rest, as they say, is history: in 1987 “a new journal, to be called *Argumentation*” (*ibid.*) was born and future projects and collaborations led to the radical transformation of the world of argumentation. “In the mid-1970s both Scriven in the U.S.A. and Johnson and Blair in Canada had trouble finding textbook reviewers among their colleagues who would recommend informal logic manuscripts to publishers. A decade later dozens of new informal logic textbooks were competing for adoption” (*ibid.*). And already with “the second ISSA conference in Amsterdam in 1990, an international community of scholarship had been formed” (*ibid.*).

But in all this, in view of the role played in the development of the theory of argumentation by the Canadians, “Is there any basis in any of this for what might be dubbed “the Canadian hypothesis”? Is there some role that is distinctively Canadian, or citizenship aside, a result of factors from Canada that played a role in the emergence of this field?” (*ibid.*) Blair’s negative answer is as follows:

Johnson and I did get support from our university as well as from a small conference fund from the federal government administered by a national research-funding council, but I assume that other countries had similar funding available. Given the entrepreneurial promotion of the pragma-dialectical theory by the Dutch and the readiness for change in the American speech communication com-

munity, it seems likely that argumentation would have developed as a field without participation of Canadian pioneers such as Woods and Walton, Govier, Hitchcock, Gilbert, and Johnson and Blair. Canadians got on board partly because of the Windsor conferences, and because the *Informal Logic* journal cornered the philosophy side of the market as the journal of record for philosophically-oriented theorizing early on. Perhaps I am too close to see it, but I must confess to an inability to recognize anything distinctively Canadian about our contributions (*ibid.*).

This is an authoritative opinion which cannot be ignored. But one might wonder, if it is true, how the texts collected here, this set of essays offered for reading, makes proper sense. In answer to these doubts, I want to propose another interpretation.

John Woods (who is himself “part of the Canadian story” (J. Woods, in this volume)), in his essay, speaks of a “Canadian influence on theories of argument [that] flow from their contributions to informal logic in the aftermath of Charles Hamblin’s call to arms in 1970 for the restoration of the fallacies project to the research programmes of logical theory” (*ibid.*). Embellishing Blair’s story, Woods recalls

the umbrella under which the Windsor conferences are staged is OSSA, the Ontario Society for the Study of Argumentation, in emulation of the earlier example of ISSA, the International Society for the Study of Argumentation, established in Amsterdam as the organizational, congregational and publication centre of pragma-dialectical approach to argument. The name “ISSA” has two virtues which “OSSA” lacks. It is earlier, and it is accurate. OSSA’s active membership is as far-flung as ISSA’s, and there is nothing noticeably Ontarioian about the logics contrived by OSSAnian. A foundational work for the Canadians was published by an Englishman [i.e. Toulmin] who in due course would become an OSSA star (*ibid.*).

Woods makes express reference to the “Windsor approach to formal logic” (*ibid.*), or rather, informal logic, characterized by the fact that “formal logics – certainly those of the 1970s – were mainly about deductive reasoning, whereas most of the best of

human reasoning is deductively invalid. Seen this way formal logics simply miss most of the target set by informal logicians” (*ibid.*). Therefore,

[f]or a good many of Canada’s theorists of argument and reasoning the only point of contact with formal modelling is by way of what is mistakenly called the “translation” rules for mapping natural language arguments to their logical forms in a formal language L – usually that of first-order classical logic. In its standard understanding, translation preserves meanings or at least approximations to them. While natural languages brim with meanings, formal “languages” have none at all. It is not possible to order a hamburger in L or simply to say what your name is (*ibid.*).

We have already noted Woods’ reference to a “Canadian influence on theories of argument,” to the “Windsor approach to formal logic,” and to a group of “Canada’s theorists of argument and reasoning” (*ibid.*). Further on, he speaks about “Canadian informalists” or of an “informal logic sector of Canadian approaches to the theory of argument” and notes “that there is, as far as I can see, little concurrent inclination to denounce the popularity of formal semantics in analytical philosophy, which is home turf of Canada’s informal logicians”. On the other hand, “[i]n the years closely following Hamblin, perhaps Canada’s most internationally recognized contribution to the theory of argument lay in fallacy theory” (*ibid.*).

Here and elsewhere Woods allows for the possibility of referring to the Canadians as a group (which he does) and tracing, among them, some common characteristics. The most relevant of which is perhaps that “[e]veryone in the Canadian informal logic community was educated in the analytic tradition. For many of them, perhaps a hefty majority, doing philosophy analytically is simply the preferred way of doing it” (*ibid.*).

The accounts of Blair and Woods are a useful prod and starting point in an attempt to understand the nature of Canadian approaches to the study of argumentation. Another part of the

story is tied to the rise of the Ontario Society for the Study of Argumentation. As Woods points out, it was inspired by ISSA, but in a way that was securely rooted in Ontario. As one of the attendees of the first conference (Leo Groarke) remembers: “Someone, I believe it was Michael Gilbert, sent around an e-mail that said something like: ‘There are ten or twelve of us going to ISSA from Ontario. We are all going to make presentations and listen to our European colleagues and won’t have time to listen to each other. So why don’t we supplement it with a conference at home, in Ontario, where we can listen to each other?’” The end result was the first of eleven OSSA conferences, which proved so popular that they quickly expanded beyond the original vision of a conference for scholars living and working in Ontario.

In embryonic form, the development of OSSA suggests some possible ways to identify and characterize a ‘Canadian’ approach to the study of argumentation. It included, obviously, a geographic context (first Ontario, then Canada) and a community of scholars who share a common background as philosophers in Canadian philosophy departments. One can reasonably expect a certain way of doing philosophy that binds these scholars and makes them recognizable, together with some basic themes expressed in their research. At the same time, one of the most interesting features of this particular community is the extent to which its members move in different directions from a shared foundation that includes little more than the philosophers’ traditional view – that arguments are sets of propositions made up of premises and a conclusion – and an interest in the attempt to apply this to natural language (“informal”) arguments. As Woods suggests, some members of the community embrace fallacy theory, though others reject it. Some retain a pronounced commitment to formal logic, others are notable for the extent to which they reject it. In the long run, some informal logicians are heavily influenced by other trends in argumentation theory (notably rhetoric and pragma-dialectics), while others ultimately reject

the model of rationality which they began with (which emphasizes language and a rejection of emotion).

In keeping with this discussion, some of the essays in this volume critically discuss some key aspects of the traditional approach to logic. One example, the discussion of questions related to missing premises and the nature of logical consequence, analyzed by David Hitchcock, demonstrates this. He notes “the whole tradition of supposing that reasoners and arguers leave unstated a premiss on which they are relying [...] rests on a mistake (Hitchcock 1998). The mistake is to suppose that the only way that a conclusion can follow definitely from premisses is logically. Logical consequence is rather a special kind of consequence, distinguished by the absence of extralogical terms in its articulation” (D. Hitchcock, in this volume).

In his account of the methods of informal logic, Hans V. Hansen recognizes the intrinsic limits of formal logic and its virtues, contrasting them with the developments characteristic of informal logic. He at once offers us a range of ways to approach informal logic and a common definition which can encompass all of them, reformulating informal logic as a field comprised of “the set of methods of non-formal illative evaluation” (H.V. Hansen, in this volume).

In a manner relevant to this attempt to understand Canadian approaches to argumentation, Trudy Govier’s essay opens the theory of argumentation to the social aspects of group dynamics. She discusses the “compositional phenomenon” that is “the application of intentional language to groups”: by assuming “that groups, small or large, organized or not, can do things” she considers “responses that would purport to eliminate” the compositional phenomenon (T. Govier, in this volume). “Then [she] move[s] on to set it in the context of the theory of argument,” by discussing “the Fallacy of Composition, in which we mistakenly infer conclusions about wholes or groups from premises about parts or individuals.” It is a fallacy that “is genuinely a fal-

lacy, and an important one – but that the gap underlying this fallacy can be plausibly bridged in some cases” (*ibid.*). Govier rightly observes that “there is much to learn by logically probing claims about ‘the Danes’, ‘the West’, ‘Muslims’, and so on” provided that we remember that “the gap defining the Fallacy of Composition can be bridged insofar as group structures and relationships provide contexts for people to think together and act on the basis of their joint deliberations” (*ibid.*). This does seem present in the case of ‘Canadian informal logicians,’ who have thought together and acted on the basis of these deliberations, though this does not imply that they speak (or act) with a unitary voice.

Here it is worth returning to the opinion of Blair which started us on this investigation – and which expressed a negative point of view about the possibility of recognizing “anything distinctively Canadian about our contributions” (J.A. Blair, in this volume). At this point we can affirm sufficient clues to sustain the idea that there is, fundamentally, a certain tradition of thought or approach among the ‘Canadians’: that of informal logic and of the analytical approach to philosophy, with a particular way of looking at argumentation and reasoning, and a geographical context which spurred them to share – and often to debate – their respective points of view. This is not to say that only Canadian scholars have developed the informal logic orientation or that only Canadians are involved in its study: but it does seem that this tradition exists and that it was born and was developed in Canada, with a notable connection to Windsor.

Of course, the existence of an informal logic tradition might seem tenuous and peculiar, because we will also see that it contains no shortage of disagreements and contrasts. We will talk about this soon enough, but it may already be clear that the Canadian school of argumentation is, to the extent that it is a school, quite different from the way we would usually understand other schools. It is useful to compare pragma-dialectics, which not only has a central seat of origin, but, above all, is

recognized by a founder that has generated a series of pupils working on common themes, who have developed the theory by applying it to various fields of knowledge (excluding some differences that naturally exist between the different developments of pragma-dialectics). In the case of Canadian argumentation scholarship, the situation is largely different: yes, there is a seat (Windsor), but the commonality of the scholars who work there, assuming that there is one, is defined by the themes they work on and from the approach they use; certainly not from the presence of a common 'master' or 'founder'. Insofar as this does not exist, one might argue that there is no basic element that would allow us to recognize the existence of a school.

We will return to these considerations later. For the moment it may be said that elements of commonality have emerged (geographical connections, a common field of study and common training), even if they concern a knowledge in constant evolution. That evolution continues in this collection, in, for example, Ralph Johnson's work on one of the contributions he made to informal logic in "Argumentation as Dialectical" (Blair and Johnson 1987[...]) where the seeds of the proposal regarding the dialectical tier may be found" (R. Johnson, in this volume).

Johnson, like Blair, remembers the beginning of the informal logic movement, which started "more than 30 years ago with the tradition in which we had been raised which I have baptized FDL," that is "the traditional logical perspective on argument" that failed to take into account the "gaps between that theory and argumentative practice" (*ibid.*).

In real life arguments have various purposes; but no mention of purpose in FDL. In real life arguments, we often have to go with premises that are not known to be true (Hamblin); no provision for that in FDL. In real life, good arguments often fall short of validity; no provision for that in FDL. In real life, there are good arguments for and good arguments against a particular proposition or proposal (Hamblin); no provision for that in FDL. In real life, good

arguments typically confront objections and other dialectical material; but no mention of that in FDL (*ibid.*).

The rejection of FDL led to the development of a theory meant to “bring the conception more into line with best practices” (*ibid.*). This development was assisted, in the early and mid 80s, by two developments: “a connection between our project and the critical thinking movement in North America [...]the many different initiatives outside of logic, among them the pragma-dialectical approach to argumentation, and the broad international and multidisciplinary community working on argumentation theory” (*ibid.*). In this context, a “theory of argument that gives proper credit to arguments which, if not sound, are yet good, or good enough, and to arguments in which the arguer acknowledges and comes to terms with what [Johnson] call[s] dialectical obligations” (*ibid.*) was developed.

Part of that rethinking took the form of proposing that dealing with one’s dialectical obligations is an essential component of the very idea of argument, robustly considered. Arguments in the paradigmatic sense require a dialectical tier in which the arguer discharges his or her dialectical obligations: i.e., anticipate objections, deals with alternative positions, etc. That proposal had the following two presuppositions. First, the focus is on the use of argument to achieve rational persuasion. [...]. Second, the focus in the first instance is on argument as it expresses itself in texts (such as found in newspaper editorials, journal articles, books etc.), as distinguished from an oral argument between two participants, which is what dialogue logics [...] and the pragma-dialectical approach take as their focal point. (This is roughly the distinction between product-driven and process-driven theories.) (*ibid.*).

This last quotation raises a potentially problematic point for our analysis (soon to be joined by others): in fact, within informal logic there is a very strong debate, which has touched, among other things, the arguments put forward by Johnson. He himself reminded us: “since I originally proposed that arguments require a dialectical tier, many commentators have weighed in with

objections and challenges. Originally Govier, then Leff, Hitchcock, Tindale, Groarke, Hansen, van Rees and Wyatt – to mention just those who have gone on record with objections to that proposal” (*ibid.*). Johnson answers some of these criticisms in his essay and it is not up to us to judge whether the answer is final or not. In the current discussion the point of note is the disagreement that characterizes the debate.

To the extent that we have found the existence of a certain common tradition of thought among Canadian scholars who practice informal logic, we must also note that there is within it, a strong debate. We can see this in the differences of approach between product-driven and process-driven theories. For example, the approach of Johnson and that developed by Krabbe and Walton. This diversity of vision does not, however, negate the hypothesis that there is a Canadian ‘school.’ No one would deny that there was a school like Plato’s Academy (perhaps the archetype of the school model) just because those who belonged to it at various times had partly different (and sometimes radically different) views which gave rise to real philosophical debate. Indeed, the existence of such debate shows that there is a certain number of scholars who, arguing among themselves on common themes, prove that a community exists and recognizes itself.

Johnson himself speaks of it when he notes that his “proposal might also be seen as a counterpoise to the tendency to broaden the range of argument” (*ibid.*), expressed by Groarke’s visual argumentation and Gilbert’s multi-modal argumentation. As Johnson himself notices, “if we are going to adjust our theories and approaches to include such specimens (which my proposal makes provision for), then it seems to me imperative – as a matter of balance – that we should also adjust in the other direction by also emphasizing the more developed forms of argument – those with a dialectical tier” (*ibid.*).

This is a matter we will come back to shortly, partly because the essays of Gilbert and Groarke await us. For the moment we

should observe how this indicates that informal logic is a project still waiting to be completed via a collective enterprise that has grown in parallel with the analysis of Douglas Walton. Walton, with Krabbe, was able to “attempt to systematically classify different types of dialogue representing goal-directed frameworks in which argumentation takes place” (D. Walton, in this volume). It is a work that “has had many citations, as a dialogue typology has had applications in many different fields, including artificial intelligence, law, medicine, discourse analysis, linguistics (especially pragmatics) and education. The purpose of [Walton’s] paper is to survey many of these applications to see how they fit with informal logic” (*ibid.*), something that he does by drawing “an important lesson: [that] distinctions between the various kinds of dialogue can be clarified and formulated more precisely by showing how each of them relies on different approaches to the burden of proof” (*ibid.*).

The analysis conducted by Walton highlights the development (and evolution) of informal logic in a way that underscores its ability to incorporate and extend key notions in a way that is motivated by points of friction and by mutual understandings. One sees a similar push and pull in Sharon Bailin and Mark Battersby, who consider “that argumentation constitutes a significant aspect of critical thinking” (S. Bailin & M. Battersby, in this volume) and note that their “discussion will take as its point of departure three points made by Ralph Johnson:

1. the theory of argumentation should develop out of an understanding of the practice of argumentation;
2. an important feature of the practice of argumentation is that it is dialectical;
3. the pedagogy of argumentation should include this dialectical dimension (*ibid.*).

The essay by Bailin and Battersby emphasizes this third strand of thought, highlighting the usefulness of argumentation in the field of pedagogy. In the process, they emphasize the transversal nature of argumentation as a form of knowledge (something demonstrated by the reference to the legal context that closes the analysis of Balin and Battersby, which is not accidental). This makes it a true and proper method of knowledge itself, in a way that makes it a typical form of educational process. Thus, “thinking about argumentation in terms of rational persuasion may have the result of reinforcing students’ tendencies to try to find support for and persuade others of positions they already hold [...]. Adding a dialectical tier is a move in the right direction in that it imposes a requirement to look beyond one’s own arguments” (*ibid.*), as long as the dialectical dimension is recognized in its proper, expanded role

truly recognizing [that] the dialectical dimension means more than simply discharging one’s dialectical obligation to address criticisms and objections to particular arguments. Rather, taking seriously the dialectical dimension means focusing not on particular arguments, but instead on the debate and an evaluation of competing cases in order to make a reasoned judgment on an issue (*ibid.*).

The extent to which informal logic has been extended beyond the narrow view of argument that gave rise to it (embedded within analytic philosophy) is already evident in the essay by Robert Pinto and, mostly, in the multimodal argumentation of Michael Gilbert, the visual argumentation of Leo Groarke, and the overall re-evaluation of the rhetoric due to Christopher Tindale. From this point of view, according to us, it is not by chance that it is from a previous book by Tindale (1999) that Robert Pinto makes the moves for proposing his general account of having and giving reasons in order to “shed any light on why there are different “cultures of theorizing” about argumentation – theorizing about practices which turn on the presentation and exchange of reasons” (R. Pinto, in this volume). Tindale (1999)

called attention to the logical, dialectical and rhetorical perspectives, and Pinto reminds us (by offering in a few lines the picture of the different theories we may have) that

within each of these there are a variety of ways in which the perspectives can unfold or develop. Formal and informal logic represent quite different species of “logical” perspective on argument, and themselves divide into varieties of sub-species. The formal dialectic [...], the “controversy-oriented approach to the theory of knowledge” [...], the pragmatic-dialectic approach of the Amsterdam school, and the somewhat different dialogue approach that Walton takes [...] are among the quite different species of dialectical approach. And finally you will find just some of often quite different approaches that may be classed as rhetorical in Aristotle, Cicero, Perelman, Wenzel, Tindale himself, as well as in the design theoretic approach to normative pragmatics inspired by the work of Scott Jacobs and Fred Kauffeld [...]. However, across this broad spectrum of “cultures of theorizing” there appears to be general agreement that arguing involves offering and/or exchanging *reasons*. My aim in what follows is to outline a general account of reasons – of what it is to have them and of what is required to offer or present them (*ibid.*).

By doing this, Pinto helps us to better understand what an argument is by putting into question the reason-giving process, the role played by the speaker and, mainly, by the hearer. The same concepts of arguments, argumentation, reasons and rationality, and normativity (since for him the force of reasons is normative), are disputed. Finally, according to Pinto, it is possible to claim that “the varieties of *logical* perspective tend to emphasize questions about what is a reason for what” (*ibid.*), while “the value of making dialogue the preferred context for studying argumentation – which might be seen as lying at the heart of *dialectical* perspectives – is [...] most clearly seen when we recognize the important effect that undermining and overriding considerations have on the force of reasons” (*ibid.*). The last perspective, the rhetorical, with his “value of emphasizing the effect of argument on audience” (*ibid.*) seems to Pinto “quite real” (*ibid.*). In fact

if an argument fails to persuade an audience, the fault *may* lie in the audience's failure to accept what they *see* it is reasonable for them to accept, or it may lie in the arguer's failure to make it *manifest* to the audience that it is reasonable for them to accept what the arguer wants them to accept. Adopting a rhetorical perspective requires getting clear about what it will take to get an audience in a proper frame of mind to accept what they'll be shown it is reasonable to accept, as well as getting clear about what it will take to make it *manifest* to the audience that it is reasonable to accept what the arguer wants them to accept (*ibid.*).

In our view, such a conclusion could be read as an indication for a better understanding of the development of informal logic. To such an extent, what Catherine Hundleby discusses about Govier's account of adversariality in argumentation could play a deep role. In this latter case, the issue is about responses given by Govier (1999) to "the feminist critiques of adversarial assumptions about argumentation" (C. Hundleby, in this volume). Hundleby dissents from Govier's – but also from Walton's (2007) – accounts of politeness, according to which "politeness can reduce adversariality to a necessary minimum" (C. Hundleby, in this volume). According to her, in fact, "the gendered quality of politeness disadvantages and even disqualifies some arguers via differentially gendered measures of aggression" (*ibid.*). And, since "feminism is intrinsically controversial" (*ibid.*), it "demands adversarial engagement that politeness restricts from some of those, notably women, whose interests demand change" (*ibid.*).

Behind this discussion, and for reasons clarified by Hundleby herself in her essay, what is at stake here is the theoretical foundation of argumentation, and of concepts such as persuasiveness, cogency and rationality of the premises and their relevance, that is considered to be the basis for cogent argumentation, by considering again the role played by the dialectical tier. In any case, what seems to be clear is that a distinction between "arguing with people" and "arguing against people" should be made, so to leave room for "collaborative exchanges of reasons [...] [that] may

be means for rational persuasion” (*ibid.*), for example in science and education, where “we argue without disputing a claim” (*ibid.*). From this point of view, it can be said that “we may exchange reasons without opposing each other’s ideas – never mind opposing each other personally. Adversariality is not necessary or even ideal for argumentation, despite its value for democratic politics and critical thinking” (*ibid.*). In any case, until now, “these non-adversarial practices deserve to count as forms of argument, and argumentation theorists such as Govier seem to deny them that status only because they presume that argumentation must be adversarial” (*ibid.*).

From a more general point of view, this last remark gives to Hundleby the possibility to underline one of the characters she still finds in informal logic, that is “idealization”. In fact, according to her,

despite the intention of Govier and others to account for real reasoning practices, idealization or ideal theory persists in informal logic. While all philosophy may be normative and ideal in a generic sense, the type of abstraction and its degree may impede philosophers’ ability to address concrete problems. Misguided abstraction can make our ideals too idealized or idealized in the wrong ways. Failing to account for how gendered communication practices including politeness affect norms of argumentation and for human logical frailty makes Govier’s picture of the argumentative adversary problematically abstract and idealized (*ibid.*).

In Hundleby’s opinion, “the oppositional mode appears universally productive only because the adversaries we have in mind are abstract” (*ibid.*), but “adversarial modes of reasoning have neither foundational nor over-riding value as means for rational persuasion” (*ibid.*), since we may have “rational persuasion among people who may disagree or doubt a proposition under consideration, but who need not have contradictory opinions” (*ibid.*). At the same time, idealization is what makes it difficult (or even impossible) to consider in a proper way the role of the arguers

themselves, which is ignored by “every major approach to argumentation theory” (*ibid.*). This counts in order to remember that “philosophers must abstract away from concrete situations – whether epistemic, ethical, or argumentative – in order to develop ideals in the broad philosophical sense of norms” (*ibid.*). But, at the same time, “we must take care not to abstract away from what we recognize to be problems demanding attention” (*ibid.*).

In a certain sense, this kind of methodological suggestion – which draws attention to the concrete dimensions of argumentation – seems to be seriously taken into consideration, among others, by Michael Gilbert. For his part, Gilbert “would like to take this opportunity to examine [his] now post-teenage theory in light of the developments in our discipline” (M. Gilbert, in this volume). He does this by declaring the reasons why his perspective has not found acceptance, precisely in the context of informal logic. On one hand, Gilbert believes “that Argumentation Theory is a vital discipline that can be used to understand and hone the tools people draw on to communicate with each other, embrace agreement and avoid violence”, on the other, he believes that “arguing is not a linear process with clearly defined edges and readily identifiable components” (*ibid.*). Rather, according to Gilbert, “(virtually) every argument contains at least a minimal emotional component”, even if “there is nothing irrational about the non-logical modes” – “emotion and whatever logical sense goes into an argument are inseparable” (*ibid.*). It is a sign of the debate between different minds mentioned earlier. In the eyes of Gilbert, it appears that “the ability to diagram an argument, investigate it for fallacies, apply a Pragma-Dialectic analysis, are all vital tools for the argumentation analyst. Nonetheless, my sense that the richness of communication was being missed by not applying these tools within the various modes, by not applying them in a finer way, led me to believe that a great deal of importance was lost to the analyst” (*ibid.*).

One very interesting factor that has come to the fore in the 20 or so years since I began promulgating multi-modal argumentation has been just where and where not it has, if you will, caught on. It has *not* been a major success in Argumentation Theory as performed in Canada, the United States, or Holland; three places where Argumentation Theory has definitely taken hold. These are all countries where the logical mode and the critical-logical model are dominant. While certainly eschewing formal logic as a model for marketplace argumentation, its replacement, informal logic or pragma-dialectics, is also quite structured and linear. Most importantly, it is product-orientated. Arguments are artifacts that are viewed and examined in isolation from context and situation. The arguer is irrelevant to the analysis of the dispute on pain of fallacy, i.e., argumentum ad hominem. The self-same argument given in dramatically different circumstances by very different interlocutors and audiences with very different goals and backgrounds would be assessed in the very same way. [...] [A]n argument is a series of messages centred on an avowed disagreement. Everything that touches on the comprehension *and interpretation* of those messages is part of the argument. This includes the relevant emotions, physical location, personalities of the arguer and audience, gender of the arguer and audience, actions of the participants, and even possibly the weather. To say that Informal Logic and pragma-dialectics do not make room for such factors is an understatement. Multi-modal argumentation as well as Coalescent Argumentation have been well received in other places. One in particular, is Mexico [...] including Spain [...] my work appeals to the Latin soul (*ibid.*).

This is a strong opinion we leave for further debate. Here it suffices to say that Gilbert and multi-modal argumentation are part of the Canadian ‘school’ this book presents. His is work by a Canadian philosopher which is a reaction to the shared account of argument that gave rise to informal logic – work which broadens our understanding of argumentation and allows us to better understand its connotations.

Even if multi-modal argumentation has not been a major success in Canada, within informal logic, it has not been ignored. Johnson criticizes it, but also recognizes it (and visual argumentation), when he declares that his proposal might “be

seen as a counterpoise to the tendency to broaden the range of argument” (R. Johnson, in this volume). This usefully highlights an important counterpoint that has informed the discussion within informal logic – one element pushing to expand, the other pushing to limit the range of argument. As Johnson suggests, the goal can be seen as a matter of balance between these different approaches – between two branches that unfurl from the same trunk.

Looking from overseas, it seems that (to extend the analogy), wanting to cut one or the other branch would risk losing the vital sap of this tree, which finds its peculiar characteristic precisely in its luxuriant being. At the same time, it is absolutely normal for different approaches to be unraveled from the same ‘school’, eventually even potentially conflicting: this is how the Lyceum was born from the Academy, for example. Considered from this point of view, Aristotelian philosophy is perhaps less antagonistic to Platonic philosophy than many common readings would have us think. Taking note of these kinds of developments and recognizing them can serve to affirm one’s own identity, in noting them in the case of informal logic, one can say that the proposal in this volume has been satisfied.

Leo Groarke uses his essay as an opportunity to “present a state-of-the-art account of visual argument that reflects what we have learned from the discussions that have occurred over the intervening twenty years after the publication of the first papers on visual argument” (L. Groarke, in this volume). Groarke emphasizes how “[i]n many ways, a growing interest in visual – and multimodal – argument has been driven, not by theoretical discussions of argument, but by the desire to explain the reality that visuals are widely used in real life arguments” (*ibid.*). “Acknowledging visual argument is an important first step toward an inclusive theory of argument” (*ibid.*) – the development of the ART approach provides Groarke with an opportunity to reply to Johnson and “his rejection of visual argument”

(*ibid.*) (in keeping with his preference for a narrower conception of argument that excludes visual and multimodal argumentation).

Johnson 2005 has written that: “The ... problem for a theory of visual argument is to deal with the related issue of how to ‘convert’ the visuals, which are the components of a visual argument, into reasons which can function as premises that are supposed to lead to a conclusion, so that the machinery of informal logic can be applied to the resulting argument.” But the method I propose suggests that it is a mistake to think that we need to ‘convert’ the components of a visual argument into reasons that can function as premises or conclusions. No conversion is necessary. All we need to do is recognize these elements and the way that they are used in argument. [...] The problem Johnson focuses on is not, inherent in visual arguments, but in his and other traditional approaches to argument, which define the key components of an argument in terms of words (either as sentences or as the propositions they refer to). If one assumes this view, then the only way to make room for visual argument components is by finding some way to convert them into verbal analogues that can play the role of premise or conclusion. The way to overcome this challenge is not by finding a way to convert visuals, but by giving up on this assumption and adopting a more expansive view of argument. Doing so can help us better recognize the argumentative roles that visuals can, qua visuals, perform (*ibid.*).

In the study of real life arguing, this seems very sensible and usefully highlights an ongoing evolution: informal logic arising as a ‘heterodox’ development of the traditional approaches to argumentation that remained confined within the narrow logistical boundaries, too far, as we have seen, if our interest is real life argumentation. On this point, specifically, Gilbert and Groarke (and others) have embraced multimodal and visual argumentation and expanded the scope of informal logic beyond approaches to argument “which define the key components of an argument in terms of words” (*ibid.*). Instead, these contributors to informal logic take a further step forward along the path started by informal logic’s attempt to expand what began as a narrowly

defined conception of argument. As Groarke says, he is interested in “adopting a more expansive view of argument” because “[d]oing so can help us better recognize the argumentative roles that visuals can, qua visuals, perform”, but also, in our opinion, to better understand and recognize the nature of argument qua argument. Here it should not be forgotten how the classical tradition assigned an important role to what, *mutatis mutandis*, could be considered a multimodal or visual aspect of argument, that is, the *actio*. This is a central element that is broadly developed with Cicero and Quintilian, a central element of the ‘rhetorical reticulum’ which plays a key role in their very precise conception of argumentation.

Informal logic’s relationship to rhetoric is the subject of the last essay collected here, that of Christopher Tindale, who proposes a further expansion of informal logic’s account of argumentation – a repositioning of argumentation that is aligned with rhetoric, in a way that “is closely related to that which can be extracted from Aristotle” (C. Tindale, in this volume). To this end, Tindale considers it necessary to overcome, first of all, the “static” concept of argument that lies “behind the way many informal logicians talk about arguments” (*ibid.*). This confirms the advances of theories like that of Johnson, which suggests that informal logic did not begin with the more formal models of argument, but with the ““new” dialectical tier. It is this tier that deserves attention because it begins to push in the direction of a more rhetorical conception of argument (without quite reaching it)” (*ibid.*). Tindale’s essay provides a more detailed discussion of the relationship between rhetoric and informal logic and the debate that arose in response to Johnson’s account of the dialectical tier. In an attempt to understand the relationship between informal logic and other views of argument, the important point is his suggestion that Johnson’s resistance to rhetorical elements may depend on the fact that “the concept of rhetoric implicated in these discussions is not as modern as his concept of argument”

(*ibid.*). Seen from this point of view, we can say that informal logic has traveled, so to speak, at ‘two-speeds’: quickly forward toward a more expansive view of argumentation, but at times more slowly, in a way that is reluctant to embrace the broader aspects of argumentation evident in the essays by Gilbert, Groarke and Tindale. Tindale writes:

The definition of informal logic drawn from Blair and Johnson is still very much a logical one. They would judge informal logic to be just that – a logic. By contrast, another informal logician, Douglas Walton, sees informal logic to be essentially dialectical. [...]. [But] it simply means that for Walton an argument will be something that arises in a dialogue. [...] In agreement with what we have seen in the traditional model, an “argument” for Walton is simply “made up of statements called premises and conclusions” (*ibid.*).

There is no shortage of “suggestions of a more dynamic sense of argument here [as we see in Hitchcock’s analysis]. But they are only suggestions” (*ibid.*). To make suggestions for a more dynamic account of argument something more is required: “it is important to establish rhetoric’s relation to informal logic. Like other theories of argument and argumentation, informal logic was developed without any positive engagement with the traditions of rhetoric. Thus, bringing rhetoric into informal logic (or vice versa) is a difficult project because informal logic is already established” (*ibid.*).

In Tindale we can discern an echo of the words of Woods, who recalled how a characteristic feature of the Canadian tradition is a common philosophical training of an analytical type: previously this allowed us to identify a common characteristic among scholars belonging to that tradition. Now we can confirm this, but we must also observe how it has been a limiting factor as well. It is, in fact, precisely because of this analytical training that it was difficult, in the early days of informal logic, to attribute to rhetoric the role in understanding real life arguments that would seem to be its due. As Tindale notes, “philosophically trained

informal logicians were likely unaware that rhetoric could have anything other than a pejorative sense” (*ibid.*). More recently the situation seems to be changing:

Recent decades have seen members of the rhetoric and speech communication communities enter into fruitful discussions with those from the informal logic community, discussions that have encouraged a more accurate appreciation of the wider senses “rhetoric” can have, including the positive. [...] It is difficult, then, to see the pejorative sense of rhetoric promoted in the work of serious informal logicians. If anything, there is a tendency toward neglect rather than dismissal [...] What is still lacking in mainstream informal logic, then, is a full engagement with positive rhetoric, and that might begin with the explicit recognition of a more dynamic conception of “argument” (*ibid.*)

According to Tindale, the latter could account for the fact that “an argument is alive; it is a message of activated potential. In terms of particularly important Aristotelian terms that capture the way he conceived natural and social objects, an argument is a potentiality (*dunamis*) and two actualities (*energeia*)” (*ibid.*).

Here it is worth noting that this appears connected to a certain idea of logic as *logos* which, by itself, expresses a dynamic concept of logic, typically Aristotelian (strongly opposed by the Megarians and, later, by the Stoics, who instead cultivated precisely the static vision that will then become typical of traditional approaches): Tindale himself underscores this when he observes that “the poetic has a movement, so too must logic itself: logic has a life, and its structures have internal movement. This sense needs to be transported to the study of argumentation” (*ibid.*).

As interesting as they are, arguments concerning the study of the possible developments of the theory of argumentation push our gaze beyond the confines of the present volume and the present essay. The latter is focused on a different question: the ques-

tion whether there is a ‘Canadian overview on argumentation’. From what we have learned and can see, it seems that the question from which this volume developed can be answered in part although not definitively. The various minds that make up the variegated universe of informal logic (here only partially represented) have something in common (they spring, one might say, from the same roots) but this is not enough to speak of a tradition of unitary thought. In this regard, Woods expresses some scepticism about the possibility of a “Canadian brand” of logic.

The Canadian brand was never as well-defined and organizationally and doctrinally sustained as the Amsterdam brand. Brands, as we know, come and go, and these two have flourished for decades now. It remains to be seen how well they hold up in the years and decades ahead. Judged from where we are now on the Canadian scene, there are clear signs of where the country’s research efforts are likely to be directed. One of them is logical structure of argument and reasoning in legal contexts. Another signals a renewed alliance with cognitive, experimental and social psychology, neurobiology and the other empirical branches of cognitive science. In one of its streams, we see an effort to do for logic what Quine and others have done for epistemology, namely to give it the naturalized form which has been intermittently in play *in logic* since Bacon, Mill, Husserl, Dewey, and later Toulmin, notwithstanding the intense efforts of Frege and others to make all of logic dance to the tune of mathematics. Also of note are the already mentioned efforts to build alliances with computer science and AI, in a way perhaps of exposing how the mathematics of software engineering might leaven the insights of those whose purpose is the elucidation of human argument on the ground. Also of growing importance is the exposure of human argument-making to the plethora of work already under the belt of theories of defeasible, default and non-monotonic consequence. Whether any of this outreach will lead to new Canadian brands remains to be seen. Ray Reiter’s paper on the logic of default reasoning, was published when he was a member of UBC’s mathematics department prior to his departure for the University of Toronto. Although a foundational contribution by a Canadian, no one thinks of default logics as carrying a Canadian brand. In the theory of argument the Canadian brand is, like all brands, a fleeting thing. I foresee no successor to that Canadian

throne holding sway for the next forty-seven years (J. Woods, in this volume).

Surely it must be granted that a Canadian school of logic in the strong sense does not exist. There is no common school of thought comparable to the “Amsterdam brand” which is “well-defined and organizationally and doctrinally sustained” (*ibid.*).

At the same time, Woods is speaking of logic in a much broader sense than that which is the focus of the present book. Here the question is whether *informal* logic is in some sense a school of thought that can be understood as a Canadian contribution to argumentation theory – itself understood as an attempt to understand real life reasoning. In this regard there is much of note – as this volume demonstrates, a group of distinguished Canadian scholars widely recognized for their work in informal logic and argumentation theory; the common origins in philosophy departments and analytic philosophy that have already been noted; a major journal (*Informal Logic*) that has been publishing for forty years; many scholarly books (like those in this series); and countless texts and numerous conferences within a tradition of scholarship that continues in Windsor, in Ontario, and in other provinces. The result is a number of shared issues which are shared even though those within the tradition disagree with and debate one another. At the very least this seems to make possible the talk of a shared Canadian spirit in informal logic in the same sense that we speak of Italian cuisine or French wines which do not correspond in an exact or precise way to a unique brand, but are nevertheless indicative of a group identity that everyone can recognize.

In an attempt to understand the school issue in an examination of Canadian contributions to informal logic and argumentation theory, it is very useful to look to the 5th-4th century

BC Athens, Greece. It is well known that in this period the city experienced “the Sophists’ arguments, the Socratic method and, later, the birth and development of the schools of Socrates, which we call “minor” in comparison to Plato. These are the school of asceticism of Antisthenes, which later became “cynical” with Diogenes of Sinope, the Dialectical school of Euclid of Megara and the hedonistic school of Aristippus of Cyrene. All of these men were (with the exception of Diogenes) a few years older than Plato” [E. Berti, 2010, 5. Our translation]. Among these schools’ examples, the dialectical school of Euclid of Megara, also referred to as ‘Megarians’, can help us understand why it is possible to speak today of a ‘Canadian school’ or, more correctly, of ‘Canadians’ with reference to the theory of argumentation.

It is well understood that the Megarian school expresses a philosophical approach similar to the Eleatics and contrary to Aristotle. However, a careful reading of the sources does not allow us to confirm without reservation that Euclid of Megara founded a school, it cannot definitively be said to have existed as a school (at least in the terms in which we are used to defining schools).

K. von Fritz has thoroughly criticized the very assumption of the existence of a Megarian school, namely the validity of that perspective of integration between Eleatism and Socratism which he considered instead a later doxographic scheme. [...] The Megarian school, like all the other so-called Socratic schools, is a particular type of school: it is characterized not by a purely theoretical tradition of doctrine (like the Eleatics or the Atomists), nor by a community of scientific research (like the Peripatetic school or the Academy), nor by a strictly dogmatic or all-encompassing concept (such as Stoicism or Epicureanism), but rather by an ideal of education and life skills training for the students, without any precondition for the training of new teachers. [...] This means that when we talk about “school”, specifically the minor Socratics, we mean something very different from the Peripatetic, the Stoa and the Garden: there are no compulsory dogmas and well-constructed systems, but

only, as K. von Fritz has argued, the aim of “educating and training students for life” (G. Giannantoni, 1990, 44-45. Our translation).

Specifically with regard to the ‘Megarians’:

it is good to understand the meaning of “school”: if it is used to designate a stable and lasting educational and scientific organization in which a group of people carries out a common preparatory work, teaching and learning of knowledge, this term finds this use only in the case of the Platonic Academy, which became the most advanced scientific and cultural institution in the ancient world [...]; recent criticism has gained the conviction that the classification in schools of other Socratics is above all the result of the work of schematization systematically made by the authors of successions of philosophers. However, in this case we must observe that the same work of “scholastic” systemization, accomplished by Hellenistic historiography, cannot have appeared on an arbitrary basis and without some connection to the historical reality of the facts. [...] What has been said is also significant in clarifying the way in which one speaks of a Megarian “school”, whose foundation is attributed from sources to Euclid. These – who were, undoubtedly, among the most devoted disciples of Socrates [...] – had to build around themselves – as indeed did the other Socratics – a circle of followers, with the intent to continue, in possible ways, the work of the teacher. Therefore, this also had to be a school of life for life (L. Montoneri, 1984, 26-27. Our translation).

And so, “although we speak of the “Megarian school”, one of the so-called minor Socratic schools, this classification appears hardly applicable, perhaps even out of place, given that this presumed school does not exist as a solid and unique institution nor do its members profess common and unanimously accepted doctrine” (D. Pesce & E. Spinelli, 2006, 7218. Our Translation).

The Megarian school, in the strongest sense of the term, did not exist and that is why here we referred to it as a ‘school’ (in scare quotes). But there certainly existed a circle of thinkers (including Plato himself) who gathered in Megara (probably around Euclid) after the death of Socrates (that Euclid certainly knew and spent time together with Plato, See G. Giannantoni,

1990, 36; W.C. Kneale & M. Kneale, 1962, 14) and that was, assuredly, still thriving in the days of Aristotle. The individual philosophers who were part of it were characterized as “being followers of the Eleatism” (G. Giannantoni, 1990, 44. Our translation) and the group, as a whole, was known by the “appellations of “eristic” and “dialectical”” (*ibid.*, p.46), with the clarification that this should not lead to the error of thinking that who was labeled as such could for this reason only be ascribed as belonging to that group.

This suggests that the meaning that Plato and Aristotle attributed to the term *dialecticós* “does not signify belonging to a particular school, but rather the one who practices a certain philosophical or argumentative method” (*ibid.*, p. 47). Likewise, the well-known polemics of Aristotle, laid out in his *Metaphysics*, should be understood in a similar way, since when we speak of the “Megarians” [Arist., *Metaph.* 3, 1046b 29] it is very likely that this should be understood as “a doctrinal and non-institutional denomination: [meaning] “those who refer to Megarian doctrines” and not “to those who belong to the Megarian school”” (G. Giannantoni, 1990, 49. Our translation). In effect, the Aristotelian formula “evidently had to allow the contemporaries of the Stagirians to easily identify the group of thinkers who he intended to refer to as representatives of a specific speculative point of view that he criticized” (L. Montoneri, 1984, 27. Our translation). This point of view is later identified with the appellation “Megarian doctrines” (Arist., *Metaph.* 3, 1047a 13), whose most noted scholar Aristotle identified, not as Euclid of Megara, but as Eubulis of Miletus, who harbored a strong hostility towards Aristotle, which was then transmitted to the Stoics (see W.C. Kneale & M. Kneale, 1962, 139).

This long digression allows us to highlight the important fact that there are in the history of philosophy (from its very beginnings) many ways to talk about “school,” and that there are dif-

ferent ways to be a school (that in this case, in effect, “to be can be said in many ways”). A school can, for example, be identified:

- as a solid and unique institution, the members of which profess common and unanimously accepted doctrines and, therefore, as a stable and lasting teaching and scientific organization in which a group of people carries out a common process of preparation, teaching and learning of knowledge, recognizing authority, by experience, seniority or ability, of the founder (or group of founders);
- but also as a circle of scholars who meet with the intent to continue, in possible ways and with an educational ideal, the work of others, with the possibility of identifying some characteristic traits that allow, for each ‘product’, to be identified by its name brand, created and fine-tuned by a single entity;
- or, finally, even as a group of philosophers that can be denoted by a common appellation because they practice a certain philosophical or argumentative method, in the presence of an affective, amicable relationship or in any case, we would say today, with a common link between the components.

A “school” can be all these things put together or some or only one of them. A “school” must be more than a clan or random group of people. To exist, it must be recognizable by at least one of the characteristics mentioned here, in keeping with what our philosophical tradition tells us. It can be said that a “school” is, if you want, a vague concept or notion, but sufficiently precise to allow us, as does the history of philosophy, to recognize different instances (or models) of “school”.

With this in mind, we can now give a positive answer to the question which began this volume: in our opinion, and for the reasons we have already stated, one can speak of a ‘Canadian

school of argumentation' because there exists, at the very least, a group of Canadian scholars who practice a certain philosophical method; share common goals (to understand and teach argumentation); read and react to similar texts and ideas; carry out a common process of preparation, teaching and learning of knowledge; work within shared educational and scientific organizations; and are associated with common conferences and research centres.

The Canadian 'school' inevitably deals with works and ideas that constitute a large set of theories that, like the pieces of a mosaic, may not fit together perfectly: but, as figurative arts and music teach us, a possible dissonance does not diminish a fundamental harmony. The testimony that shows this is found in the essays that make up this volume, but also in those that, inevitably, have been left out. It is natural, in fact, that it was necessary to make choices to identify, hopefully in a way that is acceptable for most, the names of the 'Canadian' scholars who were invited to contribute to this collection, who, in turn, chose the material they would contribute.

One of the strengths of the selection is evident in the ways that the opinions we find expressed in the essays collected here demonstrate different perspectives on common themes, but in a way that reflects their dialogue with each other. These are, basically, opinions expressed by people who work or have worked in the same place (in Windsor, in Ontario, in Canada) and who, as we know, have in some cases become friends, to this the writer can personally testify. And it is in this very quality that we find, perhaps, the most important confirmation of the existence of a 'school'. Here there is an echo of Aristotle's words written in remembrance, in all probability, of the twenty years spent in the Academy of Plato (the first real school), which he attended until the age of 37:

And whatever existence means for each class of men, whatever it is for whose sake they value life, in that they wish to occupy themselves with their friends; and so some drink together, others

dice together, others join in athletic exercises and hunting, or in the study of philosophy, each class spending their days together in whatever they love most in life; for since they wish to live with their friends, they do and share in those things which give them the sense of living together (Arist., *Nic. Eth.*, IX, 12).

“Others join ... in the study of philosophy” that characterizes the life of the Academy, translates in English the Greek term “*sumphilosophousin*”, which carries a most auspicious meaning. Indeed, this is

the first time the verb *sumphilosophein* appears in ancient Greek literature and appears to indicate the Aristotelian concept of “that in which each man finds his reason for being”, of “that which men want to live for”, that is, of happiness. The greatest happiness, therefore, for philosophers is not only “philosophizing” (*philosophein*), but doing it with (*sun*) friends, something that Aristotle experienced in the Academy, where they “passed the days” doing what they loved “above all others among the things that compose a life” (E. Berti, 2010, vii-viii. Our Translation).

And, *si parva licet componere magnis*, perhaps this is also true for the experiences that philosophers have made in the course of their lives in the places where they work, together with the people they work with, if they are lucky enough in the choice of their friends, and so it is true for Windsor and for the ‘Canadians’, whose ‘school’ we hope is, from now on, more easily recognizable.

This volume aims to make some contribution in this regard, without any presumption of finality, in the selection of the essays presented here we do not presume to have answered definitively the original quandary. But there is the conviction that, if nothing else, the way in which the problem was posed has a value in itself: as a philosophical question, born of a query resulting from a dialogue between people who were, such as happened to Saint Augustine and his friends in the *otium* of Cassiciacum, in a congenial place; so it was at the home of Christopher Tindale,

amongst friends discussing things they are passionate about (Christopher and Leo). Like any good philosophical experience, it will never really end, but we hope it will become a part of the debate on the subject of the ‘Canadian perspective’ on argumentation and therefore, on argumentation itself.

The proposal of Christopher Tindale, which closes this collection (but which is also the subject of discussion by some of the essays within it), is essentially the first essay of a hypothetical new collection. It allows expressly, from our point of view, the possibility of bringing logic back to argumentation and to rhetoric, at least with the Aristotelian intent (understood as *logos*): in this way it will finally be possible to completely emancipate logic from that typically static style of the formalist approach and, at the same time, free rhetoric from the negative interpretation that has affected it for a very long time. It is well to remember that this negative interpretation, we note in passing, had already begun at the time of Aristotle by those who adopted a logical concept that then became typical of the subsequent formalist developments and which is different and in many ways contrary precisely in relation to the Aristotelian one: we are talking about the developed concept, based on the philosophy of the Eleatics, the Megarians and, later, the Stoics (to whom, for example, we owe the idea – wrong but later in the centuries to become dominant – for rhetorical reasoning, the enthymeme, is a kind of ‘defective’ reasoning – Woods recalls here in his essay).

For our part, we believe that the reclaiming of the Aristotelian lesson, which we would like to call “classical” *tout court*, still waits to be fully implemented, but it is what will turn our discipline back to being the “filosofia prima” from which it cannot be ignored (it is, as it has been pointed out by F. D’Agostini, 2012, “ubiquitous”) and it is necessary as a means itself of educating (as explained by Balin and Battersby). But, as we say, this is another story: that we will have to talk about another time, having already lit the spark here.

Like any book this would not have been possible without the help and support of many people. Therefore, I would like to thank the former Dean of the Faculty of Law of Trent, Giuseppe Nesi, who in 2016 funded a research program between Trent and Windsor Universities. In this regard, I would like to express my sincere thanks to Leo Groarke of Trent University and to Christopher Tindale of The University of Windsor who, with generosity, availability and uncommon friendship, made living in Ontario an authentic philosophical experience. To them (and their families) my gratitude goes also for having welcomed and supported me and this project, and having helped me to complete it; from its birth, to the selection of the authors, even at times interceding with them, up to the publication of the volume in the *Windsor Studies in Argumentation*. My gratitude goes to those who have agreed to contribute to this collection, also for the kindness and warmth shown through their exchanges and letters.

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Obviously, what is written here and the choices made to compose this collection are to be considered my exclusive personal responsibility.

A number of these papers appear here for the first time, others have been published previously. Many thanks to those who have given us permission to reprint these articles. They are noted in the Acknowledgement sections of each chapter.

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