**Chapter 5**

**THE POETRY OF ARGUMENT**

We hold a default concept of reason. At rare moments, we may sense that this concept is inadequate to some particular bit of our experience, but that sense does not significantly interfere with the concept. Only exceptionally do we recognize that we have this concept of reason, or recognize the extent to which it grounds our mental space.

We may freely profess doubts about reason, but that is a different thing from scrutinizing our concept of reason, and altogether different from effectively changing our reliance on that concept. Our moments of doubt are unusual singularities in our otherwise comfortable dealings with this concept. Cases that stimulate this doubt seem to us special cases, singularities for which the reliable concept is less than fully adequate. Neither the unusual moment nor the unusual case threatens the substance of the concept. Neither diminishes the scope of its suffusion throughout our thinking. Neither prompts us to overhaul our effective relation to that default concept. As we discussed in the user's manual, we have needs that lead us to combat against reconsidering any such powerful and fundamental default concept. We have the cognitive need of automatic competence and the psychological need of a sense of continuity of self.

In our default concept of reason, reason has certain characteristics: it is a conscious activity; it is both a universal human activity and the highest human activity and hence defines what it means to be human; it is a disembodied activity, in the sense that our rational ability depends upon our capacity to transcend and ignore the body; it is concerned with truth; and, being concerned with truth, it is opposed to the imagination, and certainly to poetic imagination or poetic tools like metaphor; it is peculiar to human beings and a source of pride; its exercise is the definitive ingredient of law, legislation, science, and policy-making. Until recently, this view underlay the discipline of the history of ideas: to trace the products of conscious, rational thought was to trace what was distinctive about our species.¹

The concept of rational argument is at the heart of our concept of reason. When we engage in rational argument, we say that we “reason” with each other. We argue with ourselves, internally, in this manner. Even solitary formal deduction seems to partake of the concept of argument: in formal deduction, when we ask ourselves whether a particular formal transformation is legitimate, and deliberate over that question, we argue
with ourselves. We ask the question, "Is this transformation legitimate?" and try to resolve it. That questioning and those attempts to resolve the question are argument.

Let us begin to reconsider our concept of argument. The result of this reconsideration might be that our concept of rational argument would appear to be a product of poetic thought. The details of this reconsideration might imply that without metaphor, we could not have the concept of argument we have; that without a body, we could not have the concept of argument we have; and that, in particular, without a symmetric body, we could not have the concept of argument we have. This study, then, is an instrument for leading ourselves away from the default concept of reason and argument.

We are familiar with claims that rational argument can degenerate into "mere" metaphors, and we caution ourselves against weakening our arguments by basing them on metaphors and other poetic figures. Locke and Hobbes both warned against the seductions of metaphor in reasoning.\(^2\) We all know that particular arguments use particular metaphors. Deconstructive approaches have made an industry out of locating particular metaphors in particular arguments, with the intent of showing how the metaphor undercuts the argument. But the use of particular metaphors in particular arguments is not the concern of my study.

We are also familiar with claims that there are metaphoric aspects of inference patterns in argument. Stephen Toulmin, in *The Uses of Argument*,\(^3\) for example, noticed that certain kinds of deduction—such as the syllogistic "all A are B, all B are C, therefore all A are C"—are based metaphorically on geometric, or what I would call image-schematic, thinking: C, B, and A are concentric circles, with A contained in B and B contained in C, and therefore with A contained in C. This form of deduction arises through metaphor; its source is our knowledge of containers. Much in the spirit of Toulmin, Mark Johnson, in *The Body in the Mind*, has analyzed the metaphoric basis of various forms of deduction, such as the law of the excluded middle.\(^4\) But the metaphoric origins of inference patterns are not the concern of my study either.

What I do wish to look at is how our very concept of argument itself, in its fundamental constitution, is metaphorical. This has consequences at many stages. The metaphoric understanding of argument guides our notion of what qualifies as a well-formed argument. It guides our notion of the stages of argument. It guides our notion of what tools of argument are available to the rhetor. It guides our notion of the circumstances surrounding argument. It guides our behavior not only in forensic but also in deliberative activity.

I begin by introducing a path-breaking essay by Otto Alvin Loeb Dieter, "Stasis," published in 1950.\(^5\) Although a landmark, this essay is not as widely known as it deserves to be. The 1987 *Handbook of Argumenta-
then moving our right hand back along the same line from right to left. The ending point (C) of the first movement is the starting point of the second movement, which is a counter-movement; and the ending point (A) of that counter-movement is the starting point of the initial movement. Since these are consecutive movements over time along the same line, it is difficult to represent them in a sketch, but I make an attempt:

![Diagram of consecutive movements]

The point moves all the way from A to C. But then a contrary motion takes the point from C back to A. C, in Aristotelian physics, is called stasis. Let us explore what is involved in this statement. First, C is a middle. It is the middle on the total path traveled. Second, it is a point between two contraries, in a consecutive sense. The initial motion and the counter-motion are contraries, and C is the point that is obtained in between these consecutive contrary motions. Third, C is a point of singularity in the nature of the movement. Before it, the movement is to the right, but at it, the rightward movement stops and becomes a lefward movement. Fourth, and relatedly, C is a point of rest.

The concept of stasis depends upon the concept of bilateral symmetry. Stasis can only be understood by someone who already possesses the concept of bilaterally symmetric opposition along an axis. As Dieter points out, had the first movement been along a horizontal axis and the second along a vertical axis, there would have been no stasis, because horizontal and vertical are not bilaterally opposed. If the second motion had formed with the first an acute angle, then there would have been a horizontal component to the second motion, contrary to the first horizontal motion. There thus would have been bilateral opposition, allowing a point of stasis to be constituted. The concept of stasis, whether physical or metaphorical, thus depends upon the prior concept of physical bilateral symmetry.

We can see this concept of stasis in some of Dieter’s language. He describes the point of stasis as resembling the point at which a piston is at “top-dead center”: the point has gone all the way in one direction, and then will go back in the opposite direction. Expressing stasis in terms of consecutive vertical motions instead of horizontal motions, Dieter writes,

In terms of vertical dimensions, the middle stasis is the point of reversal, that in which both the end of the prior upward motion and the beginning of the subsequent [downward] motion co-exist, consist, or stand still together. Between all opposite, or contrary, motions, movements, functions, or actions, there must needs always be stasis.10

Here, “between” is temporal: stasis occurs temporally between two consecutive motions in time.

Dieter quotes a passage from Cicero in which stasis is expressed metaphorically in terms of motions consecutive in time: “stasis . . . in quod primum insistit quasi ad repugnandum congressa defenso.” Dieter comments on this passage:

i.e., stasis is where (the place at which) the defense, set to meet the attack, first steps into the affray, so to speak, for the purpose of fighting back (or making a “retort,” or staging a “come-back”). The lines of action, as here presented by Cicero, are orientated as they are in Aristotle’s Physics: it is at [the symbol for stasis] that the prior motion comes to rest; the first speaker, i.e., the plaintiff, evidently intends his statement to be a final one, but his “rest” is immediately disturbed, for the defendant, set, as it were, to meet the attack, steps in, puts his foot down, as it were, on the same ground, and insists on using the plaintiff’s resting-place as the starting place of his contrary motion.11

This succession of events in time actually occurs in debate: first one speaker “carries” the argument all the way to the place he seeks; then the second speaker “drives” the point all the way back to the contrary place, the one sought by the second speaker. The physical locations, A and C, are understood as contrary locations, or places, and those contrary places stand, metaphorically, for the contrary claims. C is where the first speaker wishes “to rest his case.” To be at physical location C is metaphorically to have made the claim whose metaphorical location is C. But A is where the counter-speaker wishes the point “to rest.” To be back at physical location A is metaphorically to have made the counter-claim, and to have driven the point all the way back to its beginning. It is important to see that in this model the place where the rhetor wishes to stand—the point he wishes to make—is not the place where he starts but is rather the place he is driving toward.

This model sees stasis in terms of consecutive contrary motions. I label it the consecutive model. It is one that we all possess, and it is expressed conventionally when we talk about “coming back with a counter-claim,” “rebutting the charge,” making a “retort,” or “hurling the opposition back.”

But there is a second model that Dieter uses to express the metaphoric nature of stasis, without recognizing a distinction between the two. In this model, the two contrary motions occur not consecutively but simultaneously. They run into each other, and immobilize each other, as in this sketch:

![Diagram of simultaneous motions]

A B C
I label this the simultaneous model. In it, stasis corresponds to the point where the two contrary forces meet. Dieter expresses this simultaneous model in certain phrases, as we will see in the following passage. This passage is technical, and requires some introduction. Dieter first quotes Cicero from the *De inventione*, in a passage where Cicero is concerned with the process that gives rise to stasis. This process is called *constitutio* or *syntaxis*. Dieter then considers how *syntaxis* and *stasis* both depend upon the simultaneous model:

"We," wrote Cicero, "call this *quaestio ex qua causa nascitur,* a "constitutio." The term is clearly a Latin equivalent for the Greek *syntasis* and admirably meets the requirements of the specific context in which he uses it. That a configuration of forces which might be represented graphically thus, or so, should be called a *syntaxis*, or a *constitutio*, would seem intelligible to any educated Greek or Roman without argument. For the vectors obviously represent opposite, or contrary movements, or motions, on one and the same straight line, in head-on collision, meeting and stopping one another. Between such opposite, or contrary, *kinesis* [κίνησις], or *motus*, there must needs be stasis, or status, single in number, but dual in function, a two-in-one, or a one-in-two. The two forces involved are clearly *hama* [ἡμα], or "standing together" in the sense of 226b18 [of Aristotle's *Physics*], *baptēsthai* [βάπτεσθαι], or "touching" in the sense of 226b25, i.e., "standing in contact with one another" in that their extremes are "together." 12

Behind this thicker of technical terms and references is the simultaneous model. The characteristics of head-on collision, and of each force stopping the other, belong to the simultaneous model but not to the consecutive model. In the consecutive model, the first motion has exhausted its potential energy by the time it reaches the point of stasis; it has "come to rest" on its own at that point of stasis; the first motion does not stop the counter-motion; the counter-motion drives the point back after the first motion has stopped pushing it. But in the simultaneous model, the first motion is full of potential energy at the point of stasis, as is the second motion; they have a head-on collision and they stop each other. This is the simultaneous model, not the consecutive model.

The simultaneous model is also evident in a passage in which Dieter comments on Cicero's use of the word *constitutio* in the *De inventione*. Again, once we get past the technical terms and allusions, we can see the simultaneous model at work in certain parts:

Here in his introduction to rhetorical analysis Cicero has incidentally also proposed a new term for general use in Latin rhetoric, i.e., *constitutio* should be used for *quaestio* in certain contexts. That this change in terminology, however, did not imply any deviation in his theory, or basic thinking, becomes very clear from his subsequent remarks. "A constitution," he explains immediately, "is the original clash, or primary conflict of causes." Causes, according to 101b25 [of Aristotle's *Physics*], are the origin, source, or beginning of every change and every stasis. Two causes of the same species, contrary in dynamics, are the origin, or beginning, of every natural stasis, or constitution: a cause of action and a cause of reaction, or reciprocation. The initial conflict of the causes is the constitution of the controversy. The superficial and observable moving apart or going asunder (— — — ) is the secondary phenomenon; the primary conflict with which the rhetor must concern himself first of all is the originate antagonistic standing — — — or the genetic contrariness, in the immediate, or proximate causes of the whole development: no other understanding or analysis of a controversy is adequate for rhetorical purposes; no one can argue a controversy intelligently who does not thoroughly comprehend the conflict out of which it developed. This interpretation of a *constitutio* is reiterated in I, xiii, 18: "The Question is the individual controversy which develops from the conflict in the causes, that is to say, e.g., the controversy: 'You were not justified in doing it' 'I was justified in doing it.' The conflict of the causes is that in which the *constitutio* (or the "standing together") consists, i.e., not the *amphisbētēsis* [ἀμφισβήτησις], or the 'going apart'." 13

The graphics Dieter uses here (— — — ) and the phrases "originate antagonistic standing" and "standing together" express the simultaneous model.

The simultaneous model is the more common metaphoric model of stasis. In 1966, Lee S. Hultzén published a paper that not only cites Dieter, but, according to the footnotes, was read by Dieter in manuscript. Hultzén offers the simultaneous model:

**STATUS**—The condition of opposition where the movement of a rhetorical procedure is brought to a stand by the confrontation of assertion with denial. The category of opposition in such a situation. As a corollary, the rhetorical procedure can resume movement toward ultimate decision only when the static impasse ceases to be, in that the efficient audience efficiently agrees with the assertion or denial, i.e., puts aside the contradictory and so resolves the opposition. 14

Of course, we all possess the simultaneous model of argumentative conflict, and we express it conventionally when we talk of "having reached an impasse," "blunting the force of the charge," "being at a stand-off," or "having a head-on collision" with someone in an argument.

The simultaneous model has components that are absent from the consecutive model. In the simultaneous model, the opposed forces are in
equilibrium, but have potential energy. If one of the two forces disappears, the other moves. If one of the forces grows weaker, it must fall back under the stronger force, which advances upon it. In the metaphoric understanding of argument, it is a metaphorical entailment that if one opponent "gives way," the other will advance. It is a metaphorical entailment that if one opponent "grows weak," he may have to "fall back" because the other opponent "puts pressure" on him.

When we talk of argument in everyday language, we mix the simultaneous and the consecutive models. Dieter does this too, using the consecutive and simultaneous models not only in different passages but even in the same passage. Earlier, we saw a passage in which Dieter used a graphic (→→→) expressing the simultaneous model, and used the words "originating antagonistic standing" and "standing together," which probably express the simultaneous model. But in the same passage, Dieter uses phrases expressing the consecutive model, when he speaks of "a cause of action and a cause of reaction, or reciprocation." He thus blends the two models.

We also saw earlier a passage from Cicero in which stasis was conceived of as the point at which a prior motion comes to rest and from which it is then driven back: "the first speaker, i.e., the plaintiff, evidently intends his statement to be a final one, but his 'rest' is immediately disturbed, for the defendant, set, as it were, to meet the attack, steps in, puts his foot down, as it were, on the same ground, and insists on using the plaintiff's resting-place as the starting place of his contrary motion." This is the consecutive model of stasis. In the immediately subsequent sentence, Dieter, again with a wealth of allusions, uses the simultaneous model of stasis:

Like the two brothers mentioned by Aristotle (1167a22, cf. Euphides, Phoenicis, 588), plaintiff and defendant both insist on having one and the same thing, each for his own purpose, both desire "to have things their own way," to rule, to dominate, to be supreme, and consequently, they stasiasein, or make stasis with one another, i.e., block one another.15

Here, Dieter has switched to the simultaneous model. The characteristic of "blocking one another" belongs not to the consecutive model, but to the simultaneous model. We can see this as follows. In the consecutive model, the stasis point is C. The first speaker does not want to go any further than C. He has reached his point. He is not blocked. "Blocked" implies that he has not yet reached his point. It is only in the simultaneous model that the first speaker, or the first motion, has not reached his point, C, and can be said therefore to be blocked.

Dieter reveals his confusion of the two models when he presents a diagram of Cicero's concept of stasis. The diagram works from bottom to top, beginning at I and ending at 6:16

1. ____________________________
2. ____________________________
3. ____________________________
4. ____________________________
5. ____________________________
6. ____________________________

A  B  C

amphisbētēsis (ἀμφισβήτησις), controversy. "I borrowed it." "You did not borrow it."

a reiterated Answer, intensified to controvert the restated Charge. "Most assuredly, I did borrow it."

a renewed Charge, modified and intensified to controvert the Answer. "You most certainly did not borrow it."

status (στάσις), zetēma (ζητημα), stasis, quaestio, prima conficiendum. "You stole it." "I borrowed it."

an Answer in which there is a denial of the Charge. "I did not steal, I borrowed it."

a positive assertion, an incrimination, a Charge. "You stole my horse."

I have added to this diagram only the markers for points "A," "B," and "C." Let us now look carefully at stages 1, 2, and 3. Under the consecutive model, the point where the first movement ends should be the point where the second movement begins, and the point where the second movement ends should be the point where the first movement began. But if 3 is the combination of 1 and 2, then the points do not fall where they should fall according to the consecutive model. 1 should end at C, but ends at B. 2 should end at A, but ends at B. The picture in 3 is a representation of the consecutive model as equivalent to the simultaneous model.

It is easy to see why Dieter conflates the consecutive physical event with the simultaneous physical event. Earlier, we moved our left hand to the right and then moved our right hand to the left along the same line. That was a consecutive model. If we make those two motions simultaneously, the two hands run into each other in the middle, and immobilize each other. They put pressure on each other. If one force grows weak, it falls back, and gives way as the other advances. This is the simultaneous model.

Each of the two models of stasis contains a concept of a stasis point, and these two concepts of the stasis point, although not identical, cohere in crucial ways, making it easy to think of these two concepts as equivalent. Both points are middles: stasis in the consecutive model is the middle of the entire out-and-back reciprocating movement of the initial point; stasis in the simultaneous model is the middle of the line segment.
between the two extremes. Both are between contraries: the consecutive stasis lies temporally between two consecutive contrary motions in time; the simultaneous stasis lies spatially between the contrary poles opposites of the line segment. Both are points of singularity in the nature of the movement: in the consecutive model, stasis is where the first motion to the right stops and becomes a leftward movement; in the simultaneous model, stasis is where the character of both forces changes from advance to arrest. Finally, both are points of rest: in the consecutive model, stasis is the location where the moving point would stand at rest if not impinged upon by the second force; in the simultaneous model, stasis is where both forces are arrested, stopped.

These two models share a prior basis. They are coherently structured by our prior understanding of force dynamics, and in particular the force dynamics of a bilaterally symmetric human body. Mapping the domain of force dynamics metaphorically onto the domain of propositions creates this concept of rhetorical stasis, and hence our concept of argument.

There is in fact a third way in which force dynamics structures our concept of argument. It is not discussed by Dieter, but fits deliberative rhetoric, coheres with both the simultaneous and consecutive models, and is conventionally expressed in our language. To introduce this third way, I must return to the observation that in the metaphor of stasis, propositions correspond metaphorically to places. Propositions are located metaphorically on a surface like the earth’s surface. Contrary propositions are located in contrary places on this surface. Someone who tries to move an opponent to the proposition he prefers can be viewed, as in the first two models, as trying to push the opponent to that place. But equivalently—and this gives us the third way—he can be seen as trying to pull the opponent to that place. In this model, the rhetor is already at his preferred place, pulling toward it, rather than distant from the place, pushing toward it. Rhetoric does not favor this model, since it wishes to see the rhetor standing firmly on his proposition only once he has won his case, not before. Still, there are moments when rhetoricians use this third model. Arne Naess, for example, characterizes the pro-ant-contra survey of arguments for and against the opinion as a “tug of war,” which uses the model of pulling rather than the model of pushing.17

So far, we have seen ways in which the central component of our concept of argument, stasis, is metaphorical. The source of the metaphor is the domain of forces. The target of the metaphor is the concept of argument. Physical locations on the surface in the source correspond to intellectual propositions in the target. Being at a location on the surface corresponds to establishing the proposition. Spatially contrary locations correspond to intellectually contrary propositions. Contrary physical forces correspond to attempts to establish contrary intellectual propositions. The success of one contrary force over another, which drives the “point of contention”

to a certain location, corresponds to establishing one of two contrary intellectual propositions and defeating the other.

Now let us consider how this metaphoric model provides us not only with the central concept of stasis, but also with other associated components in our larger model of argument.

The condition achieved in the two models of opposition is stasis. The process of achieving this condition is called by classical rhetoricians sytasis, a word we have already encountered in a passage from Cicero. The consecutive model of stasis and the simultaneous model of stasis are models not only of a condition achieved, but also of the process of achieving that condition, namely, stasis. Dieter recognizes that the model of stasis is also a model of sytasis. He draws the point very clearly, immediately subsequent to the passage we saw earlier, in which he discusses Cicero’s concept of constitutio:

[T]he vectors obviously represent opposite, or contrary movements. . . . Clearly, then, this is not only a stasis, or a status, but also a sytasis and a constitutio, i.e., a constitution in the sense of the formative, or generative action or process of constituting, as well as in the sense of the composite substance, or corporate being, concrete of matter and form, thereby constituted, made to consist, or brought into existence. That this terminology was well suited for use in context with generation and genesis may likewise easily be demonstrated.18

The force-dynamic metaphor gives us our conception of both stasis and sytasis. But that is just the beginning of what it gives to our default concept of argument. It is part of the source domain of conflicting forces that they occur upon a surface like the surface of the earth. This surface is the source of another part of our concept of argument, namely, the concept of common ground. An argument can be constituted only if there is some common ground that contains the two contrary propositions. If there is no ground for physical forces to meet upon, then they cannot meet, and therefore cannot achieve stasis. Metaphorically, if there is no common intellectual ground, then the two contrary assertions cannot meet; they therefore cannot achieve stasis; they therefore by definition cannot constitute an argument. In the absence of common ground, there may be plenty of squabbling and accusation, but there will be no constitution of a legitimate argument.

Arguments come in different kinds, and with different sorts of circumstances. These kinds and circumstances are understood in the classical metaphor in terms of the kind of ground upon which stasis is constituted, and upon the nature of the environment. As Dieter writes,

Just as every kinesis is a motion of a specific thing so every stasis is an individual event, a real occurrence involving specific things, surrounded and sup-
Every individual argument will have its own individual set of circumstances. There are, however, four major types of circumstances in classical rhetoric. They are the four major grounds upon which stasis can be constituted. One sort of ground concerns Fact or Being or Existence or Conjecture (an sit), as in the opposed claims, “You injured me!” versus “I didn’t do anything!” The second ground concerns Definition (quid sit), as in the opposed claims, “You injured me!” versus “What I did does not count as an injury!” This is the ground of interpretation, including legal interpretation of a statute and literary interpretation of a text. It is sometimes called the “legal” ground. The third ground concerns Quality (quale sit), as in the opposed claims, “You injured me!” versus “And a good thing too, since I did it to stop you from committing treason!” This is a ground of right versus wrong, and is sometimes called the “juridical” ground. The fourth and last ground concerns Objection, as in the opposing claims, “You injured me!” versus “This court is not the appropriate place to consider such a charge!” This ground is sometimes omitted in classical treatments of grounds.26

Let us turn now to another part of our concept of argument that derives from this force-dynamic metaphor. Two forces can achieve stasis, but they can also fail to achieve stasis. Just as the metaphor gives us a way to understand how stasis can be achieved, so it gives us a way to understand how stasis can fail to be achieved. Two forces that achieve stasis are called astasistic. Two forces that fail to achieve stasis are called astasistic or astatic, and are of two kinds. The first kind of astasistic forces are the synestotic. Synestotic claims are those that reinforce, complement, or continue each other. They are understood metaphorically as two parallel forces. Parallel forces do not achieve stasis. The second kind of astasistic forces are the asystatic. Asystatic claims are those that do not constitute an argument because there is some deficiency in the claims or the context. Metaphorically, they are understood in terms of deficient motions. For example, an environment can be inadequate as a medium for motion because it is nonexistent or partly nonexistent. Metaphorically, a ground can be inadequate to permit the constituting of an argument because it is partly unknown or in some way intellectually deficient. Adequate motion cannot exist in inadequate circumstances or in an inadequate medium; metaphorically, claims adequate to constitute an argu-

ment cannot exist in an inadequate topography of knowledge or in other inadequate circumstances.

There are other ways in which two claims can be asystatic, and all are understood through the same metaphor. Suppose two opponents direct the same charge at each other, in such a way that anything said by one may be equally said by the other. Then these two “movements” are too “like” to constitute stasis: it is said that there are only ostensibly two movements, that they can be seen under analysis to be one movement; consequently, they do not constitute stasis. Or suppose that the peristasis is such that all the possible arguments belong to one side. Then only one movement exists; the second, counter-movement cannot happen. Therefore, no stasis. Lastly, a conflict may be asystatic because it is internally conflicted; such an internal conflict is also understood in terms of the force-dynamic metaphor: “Critical analysis of a matter of this kind reveals an aporos, i.e., an aporia. The movements in a matter such as this are so indistinct, unstable, fluctuating, and confusing that it is impossible for any one to find a logical way through it.”27 Aporia is the unexpected failure of the usually successful projection of force-dynamic knowledge onto argument. As such, individual aporias and the general rhetorical concept of aporia are grounded in stable patterns that give them, by contrast, their existence.

It is important to see that in these situations the force-dynamic metaphor provides the rhetor with the principal mental instrument he is to use in trying to understand any sort of rational encounter. The metaphor gives the strategy for Noesis, which is cogitation or how to think about the encounter. In trying to understand the nature and category of the rational encounter, the rhetor is to try to locate metaphorical forces, to determine whether they are “contrary,” to determine whether the forces are “in the same direction,” to determine whether they are “stable,” and so on. The rhetor is to map from the domain of force dynamics onto the domain of rational proposition. A particular image-schematic structure of forces will be mapped onto the rational propositions that the rhetor is considering. Knowing which particular image-schematic structure can be mapped metaphorically just is knowing the nature of the argument; in particular, it is knowing whether one is dealing with a constituted argument, what sort of argument has been constituted if one has been constituted, and how the argument fails to be constituted if it fails.

As a corollary, this metaphor gives the rhetor a strategy for constituting the argument to his best advantage. If the rhetor wishes to constitute the argument upon a particular ground, he must find a way to map onto the conflicting propositions an appropriate force-dynamic conflict of the preferred sort. If the rhetor fails to do this, he will not be allowed to conduct his argument upon that preferred ground. If his opponent suc-
ceeds in mapping onto the propositions a force-dynamic conflict of the sort the opponent prefers, then the opponent will be allowed to conduct the argument upon the opponent’s preferred ground.

So far, we have put into place two parts of the metaphoric concept of argument. The first part is that propositions are places in an intellectual topography. This first part contains the further detail that contrary propositions are contrary places and that the common ground of two contrary propositions is the ground that contains both. The second part is that an assertion of a proposition is a force directed toward the place of that proposition. This second part contains the further detail that contrary assertions are contrary rectilinear forces; that an argument is constituted by the impasse created when these two forces meet head-on; and that the midpoint between the two contrary extremes corresponds to the question of the argument. For example, when one proposition, “You committed an immoral act!” is met with the contrary proposition, “I did not commit that act!” then the stastistic midground corresponds to the question of the argument, “Did the defendant commit this act?” This is a stasis of conjecture. Similarly, when the proposition “You committed an immoral act!” is met with the contrary proposition “It was not immoral!” then the stastically midground corresponds to the question of the argument, “Was this act immoral?” This is a different stasis, one of definition.

A little more metaphoric work gives us some other parts of our extended concept of argument in addition to the two parts just summarized. In our common experience, force is often exerted by agents, and in particular, by human beings. If we add to the metaphor already in place the additional information that these forces in argument are exerted by intentional agents, then the conflict is not merely between forces, but between agents who intend to exert force, who do so, who understand the nature of forces, and who have an interest in succeeding. This gives us the common metaphor that RATIONAL ARGUMENT IS COMBAT BETWEEN INTENTIONAL AGENTS. In actual combat, much depends upon the ground chosen, and actual combatants jockey for ground, trying to gain advantage by determining the ground upon which the conflict will occur. In metaphoric combat, which is to say argument, combatants try to pick the metaphorical ground upon which the metaphorical stasis will be constituted, because particular grounds give them particular sorts of advantage and disadvantage. Classical rhetorical theory lays this metaphor out explicitly and in conscious detail, as David Goodwin notes:

The place where [the combatants] meet provides the terrain, and consequently, many of the argumentative options open to the disputants. The terrain dictates, for instance, who has the high ground (namely, presumption), and what maneuvers are most likely to work against the opponent. Obviously, from the defender’s position, establishing that no crime oc-

curred or that he was elsewhere at the time provides a better defense than conceding everything and then arguing from mitigating circumstances. If possible, then, stopping the attacker on the beaches—in this case, on the issue of Conjecture—opens up strategic possibilities not available once the argument shifts to other grounds. So far, we have considered how metaphor provides us with our concept of the topography of propositions, the constitution of argument upon that topography, the processes by which an argument comes to be constituted or fails to be constituted, the nature or ground of the argument, the opportunities available to human beings engaged in argument, and the strategies available to human beings engaged in argument.

Now let us consider how the metaphor provides us with our concept of how an argument proceeds. Constituting an argument is different from conducting an argument. Dieter is quite clear in saying that the metaphor provides us not merely with an understanding of the concept of argument or an understanding of the structure of a particular stasis, but also with a concept of how in performance to conduct an argument:

Hermagoras represented stasis as that which in rhetoric performs a most important function, i.e., that which serves as the guiding principle of both rhetorical Noesis and Poiesis. In rhetorical analysis [Noesis], the subject matter is intellectually laid hold upon, or “grasped” and investigated logically with reference to its stasis, i.e., to determine whether it be asystatic, synestotic, or stastic, and if stastic, what type of stasis it exhibits. In Speechmaking [Poiesis], the stasis is rhetorically “handled,” “managed,” or treated in two speeches: opposing rhetors present to a third party as the judge both a synecbon and an aition, i.e., an argument why the stasis should be maintained and established permanently as well as a reason why it ought to be resolved in a contrary motion. Both speakers strengthen their causes with proofs drawn from the special topoi which rhetoric has devised for their use. The judge considers the stasis in the light of both the synecbon and the aition, i.e., he weighs the krinomenon, or the thing to be judged, and in accordance with his verdict, reached with the cooperation of the rhetors, will be the final disposition, conclusion, end, or settlement of the stasis (Cf. diaisthsis, Sextus Empiricus, Against the Rhetoricians II, 62). Hence, it was from actual rhetorical practice that Hermagoras derived his functional description of stasis (Quintilian, III, vi, 21, and Rheteros Graeci, vii, 173 and v. 78, 10) as that (1) with reference to which a subject matter is investigated and analyzed in Noesis, and (2) that with reference to which (in Poiesis) both speakers must present arguments in their speeches. The first part of an argument is to constitute it; the second part is to conduct it successfully to an end. To succeed in conducting an argument is metaphorically to move from stasis to the place corresponding to the
proposition one prefers. In the source domain, such movement is accomplished either through strengthening the force on one side, or weakening the force on the other, or both. We project this metaphorically onto the domain of argument: we understand evidence for one side as "strengthening" its vector according to the persuasiveness of the evidence, and evidence against the other side as "weakening" the other side according to the persuasiveness of the negative evidence. We try to make opposing evidence look "weaker" and make our own evidence look "stronger."

During combat on a certain ground, when one side is losing, the losing side may redirect the opponent in an attempt to shift to different ground, so as to gain advantage. Metaphorically, the losing side may attempt to move to another ground so as to reconstitute the argument and thereby to gain advantage.

These are the limits of the classical analysis of the concept of argument in terms of the force-dynamic metaphor. But modern theorists who have considered the theory of stasis and argument have added to it. Here we will see that what they have done, rather than offering a different concept of argument, extends the metaphorical concept of argument.

In considering the utility of stasis theory for modern rhetoric, various theorists have commented upon the inadequacy of the classical taxonomy of grounds. Jeanne Fahnestock and Marie Secor, for example, have proposed that a modern theory of stasis would have—in addition to the classical grounds of Conjecture, Definition, Quality, and Objection—a major stasis for questions of Causal Agency. "We suggest elevating to the level of stasis a question that classical rhetoricians did not ignore, though they did not single it out for the overwhelming importance it has acquired since the age of Newton: the question ‘What caused it?’"25 Fahnestock and Secor's proposal preserves and depends upon the metaphorical understanding of stasis as an impasse between contrary forces, and suggests that when such an impasse occurs upon the ground of causal agency, the impasse should qualify as a stasis of the same rank as stasis on the classical grounds of Conjecture or Existence, Definition, Quality, and Objection. Certainly Hart and Honoré's work on Causation in the Law would support Fahnestock and Secor's claim.26 Fahnestock and Secor further show some complicated ways in which stasis can be recursive—so that one stasis can give rise to another stasis—and show the ways in which one stasis can entail, by virtue of hierarchy, another stasis.27

Lee Hultzén has offered another proposal for adding new grounds to the theory of stasis provided by this metaphor.28 Forensic rhetoric concerns adjudication. Deliberative rhetoric concerns what we might call the setting of policy, the making of choices between alternatives. Hultzén argues that the classical grounds of Conjecture, Definition, Quality, and Objection are complete for forensic but not for deliberative, and offers

four new grounds for deliberative: Malum or Ill ("Is there this ill in the present state of affairs?"); Sanctabilis or Reformatibility ("Is this ill curable, caused by a reformable condition?"); Remedium or Remedy ("Will the proposed remedy actually cure us of this ill?"); and Pretium or Cost ("Will the cure cost too much?"). Hultzén argues that the classical questions of Conjecture, Definition, and Quality apply to each of these four new grounds, thereby producing twelve types of stasis for deliberative.

In 1958, Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca, in their landmark work La Nouvelle Rhétorique, observed that in some cases, the ground of the stasis virtually determines the future of the argument. They give a demonstration in which a Romanticist confronts a Classicist in an effort to determine upon whose ground the argument will be constituted.29 David Goodwin has built upon this work to argue that modern rhetoric must reconsider the classical geography of stasies:

"While we might retain the concept of argument as motion, we could not, at the same time, transpose the classical geography of stasies places or grounds on to the map of contemporary rhetorical theory. . . . When Classicist argues with Romanticist, or Hegelian with Marxist, the issue to be resolved is, on whose grounds will the conflict rest? The decision in such a case is all: establishing whose set of categories, arranged in which order, will in turn determine the nature and resolution of the conflict at hand. Contemporary argumentation, then, makes stasis itself the object of debate. . . . The first, most important, and comprehensive grounds on which modern argument rests is not Conjecture, as in classical theory, but on whether the debate can be relocated or transferred (translatio is another classical term for metalepsis) to a different jurisdiction, system of rules and values, or procedural context, one more favorable to the case or more unfavorable to the claims of the opponent."

Goodwin considers the strategies available to a rhetor for reconfiguring his opponent's argument to his own advantage by shifting the ground. Both Chaim Perelman and Kenneth Burke, he notes, have offered models of argument suitable for analyzing meta-stasis.

These models are extensions of the same metaphor with which we have been dealing. Perelman points out that conflict arises not only between points contained in a common ground, but also between different grounds, different general places, different loci. "[T]o the classical locus of the superiority of the lasting, one may oppose the romantic locus of the superiority of that which is precarious and fleeting."

For example, there is a stasis between the propositions "X is superior to Y" and "No, it is not!" but this conflict can occur in either the classical locus of the superiority of the lasting or the romantic locus of the superiority of that which is precarious and fleeting. Opponents in this argument try to drive each
other first to the preferred ground, and then to the preferred place within the preferred ground.

Burke’s model is subtle but similar. For Burke, there are twenty different types of ground. In any issue, there are five elements: scene, act, agent, purpose, and agency. Choosing all possible pairs of these terms produces twenty dyadic ratios (such as agent-purpose), each with its own priorities. Any conflict can be considered according to the characteristic orientation or bias of any of these twenty ratios. Applying the ratio to any conflict reconfigures it upon a different ground. Just as opponents in Perelman’s different loci cannot constitute an argument, so opponents inhabiting different dyadic ratios cannot constitute an argument. They can, however, be belligerent in ways that do not technically constitute argument. Goodwin writes, “As Burke points out, much philosophic warfare, if not actual war, occurs because one ratio remakes the whole world in its image, blind to the existence and claims of other ratios.”

Let us step back for a moment for a panoramic view. We began with a metaphor in which argument is understood as the conflict of bilaterally opposed forces, and showed that if we add to this metaphor the information that the forces are exerted by intentional agents, the result is the basic metaphor RATIONAL ARGUMENT IS COMBAT BETWEEN INTENTIONAL AGENTS.

That is the bottom-up view. Now consider the top-down view. There is a very large, very general, very productive metaphor, THE MIND IS A BODY MOVING IN SPACE, studied by Eve Sweetser. This metaphor shares much with the force-dynamic metaphor for argument: there is a space that contains a surface; the surface corresponds metaphorically to an intellectual topography; locations on the surface correspond to propositions; movement occurs in this space.

THE MIND IS A BODY MOVING IN SPACE contains yet further information. The mind and its thinking are understood metaphorically as a sentient human being moving within this space, over this intellectual topography. It is quite possible for there to be only one agent in this metaphor, as in “My mind is wandering.”

THE MIND IS A BODY MOVING IN SPACE gives us a general metaphorical understanding of thinking and the thinker: the thinker is an agent moving over an intellectual topography, from point to point, taking in the view, considering different locations, trying to see how to get from one location to another. This metaphor does not require the presence of an adversary.

Consider the proverb, “Vanity is the quicksand of reason.” Our understanding of this proverb relies upon our knowledge that THE MIND IS A BODY MOVING IN SPACE. Here, reason is personified as an agent moving over a terrain. Progress in thought is understood metaphorically as dis-

tance traveled over that terrain. Lack of progress in thought corresponds metaphorically to “getting stuck.” In the source domain, one of the things that can immobilize the traveler is quicksand. In the target domain, vanity is understood metaphorically as quicksand, as something that can immobilize reason. This understanding does not require a personified adversary. It requires the concept of a journey, but not the concept of combat.

When Stephen Toulmin considers argument in The Uses of Argument, he is principally concerned with the process of conducting an argument, which is to say, with how a rhetor argues toward his proposition after stasis has been achieved. The model he offers of making arguments is an extension of the metaphor THE MIND IS A BODY MOVING IN SPACE. Toulmin describes an argument as a movement from accepted data through a warrant to a claim. Data, according to Toulmin, are what you have to go on. The claim is where you are going. The warrant provides how to get there. Indeed, the warrant is that part of an argument that authorizes the mental leap involved in advancing from data to claim. The job of the warrant is to carry the data to the claim.

If we now add to the metaphor that THE MIND IS A BODY MOVING IN SPACE certain special information, we get a special case. Let us add that there are two human beings in this space, not just one, and that each wishes to drive the other to a contrary location. Then the result is RATIONAL ARGUMENT IS COMBAT.

RATIONAL ARGUMENT IS COMBAT is not the only instantiation of the MIND IS A BODY MOVING IN SPACE, and thus not the only concept of argument available under THE MIND IS A BODY MOVING IN SPACE. There are many things that can happen when two agents moving contrarily in space encounter one another and bring each other to a stop. One of the things that can happen is combat. But persuasion is also a possibility. Instead of killing one’s opponent, one might persuade one’s opponent. Instead of viewing one’s opponent as an enemy, one might view one’s opponent as a potential ally. There is yet another choice that declines combat in favor of courtship. Here, we move away from the concept of argument used in classical rhetoric. We retain all of the metaphoric understanding of argument as a force-dynamic event, but we decline to understand the two opposed forces as combatants. As Goodwin notes, it is this alternative understanding of argument that Burke seems to have offered: “Ideally, the rhetorical understanding offered by a new stasis theory will court us with the promise of profound co-operation, persuading us by example to abandon negative for positive closure and the rituals of killing for the rituals of courtship.”

We began this study with Dieter’s observation that theoreticians considered stasis as if it were an autonomous concept, born from one man’s
mind, and related to nothing else. We followed Dieter to see that stasis is a metaphorizing concept, a case where argument is understood in terms of motion, or at least in terms of a model of motion in Aristotle’s *Physics*. We then noted that Dieter, and others, conflated two different models of stasis without recognizing the conflations. We found the reason for Dieter’s conflations: there is something much more fundamental upon which the concept of stasis is based, namely, our everyday understanding of force dynamics. We then explored the way force dynamics structures our concept of argument in many of its components, including stasis, the process of achieving or failing to achieve stasis, and the process of conducting an argument. We then saw that this force-dynamic understanding of argument was part of the metaphor RATIONAL ARGUMENT IS COMBAT, which is a special case of the larger, more flexible, and more productive metaphor THE MIND IS A BODY MOVING IN SPACE. So we have gone from viewing our concept of argument as autonomous to viewing it as coherent with our most common metaphorical view of the mind in all its operation. Our embodied knowledge of force dynamics and stasis is the basis for both the concept of stasis in physics and the concept of stasis in argument.

The systematicity of these connections is larger still. I will only mention very briefly the smallest bit of this systematicity. Len Talmey has shown that force dynamics underlies our understanding of certain causal constructions in language; of grammatical classes such as conjunctions, prepositions, and the modal system; and of lexical systems relating to physical, psychological, and social events. Susan Kline has argued that the same model that gives us classical stasis in argument gives us our concept of conditions on speech-acts. George Lakoff and Mark Turner, among others, have considered the understanding of social and psychological situations in terms of force dynamics. Mark Johnson has considered extensively the force-dynamic basis of logic. Eve Sweetser, in her book-length examination of the role of the MIND IS A BODY in semantic structure and semantic change, has argued that this metaphor underlies our understanding of conjunctions, modals, speech-acts, logical necessity, conditionals, and reasoning. As Sweetser writes, the reasoning process is understood metaphorically “as following a spatially linear trajectory sequentially moving from one point to another.”

I will not consider these demonstrations of the conceptual systematicity in which our metaphorizing concept of argument participates. Instead, I will look at a connection that is much more speculative and tenuous than any of those I pass over. I want to consider this connection because of its relation to the concept of stasis in the history of rhetorical thought and in legal practice. Borrowing from Steven Winter, I will consider the concept of standing in the law. To have standing means, very roughly, that one has the right to invoke the authority of a court in judging a case. If you do not have standing, you cannot get a hearing. As Winter has shown in “The Metaphor of Standing and the Problem of Self-Governance” in the 1988 Stanford Law Review, the concept of standing is amorphous. He has also shown that it is metaphorical.

Stasis is not standing, of course. Stasis can be constituted in all sorts of arguments that will never be heard by a court (“You don’t love me!” versus “Yes, I do!”). But there appears to be a force-dynamic structure that is shared by both the concept of stasis and the concept of the events surrounding standing. This force-dynamic structure is exactly the one noted by Dieter, which will bring us back to the starting point of this study.

Winter observes that “it is generally accepted black letter law that the ‘case or controversy’ requirement of article III means that a party who invokes the court’s authority must show personal injury or ‘injury-in-fact.’” But what is the legal concept of an injury? Once an injury has been established, what is the legal concept of legal redress? Winter observes that, in the private rights model of injury and redress, both the injury and the redress involve path in a space. The injury consists of the injured party’s having been moved from his original position to a new position, one of injury. Redress consists of the court’s attempting “to put the plaintiff back in the position he occupied” (or as near as possible) before the occurrence of the legal wrong. This is strongly coherent with the model of stasis. In stasis, the metaphorical ground over which movement occurs is the intellectual topography of propositions. In the private rights model of injury, the metaphorical ground is different: it is the topography of conditions in the private individual’s life. But in both concepts, there is a motion and a counter-motion. In stasis, the first motion is the charge and the second motion is the rejection of the charge. In the private rights model of injury, the first motion is the injury and the second motion is the legal redress that attempts to “restore” the injured party to the previous condition or to a condition metaphorically “near” it.

Let us consider in more detail the relationship between the injury that creates standing and the charge that is the first force involved in the consecutive model of stasis. A charge is often understood as a burden, and there are many uses of the word “charge” that indicate metaphorical burdens. But a charge is also, in combat, a force that displaces its object. A charge laid against us in law or in argument can be thought of as a displacing force, against which we must fight to regain ground. And an injury can be thought of as a displacing force. There is a coherence here between three things: the military charge that drives us away from a pre-
ferred location, the argumentative charge that moves us off our preferred proposition, and the injury that moves us from an original position to a worse position.

The responses to these charges are also coherent. Militarily, we attempt to move the opponent back. Rhetorically, we attempt to drive the opponent back so that we can stand upon the point we prefer. Legally, we ask the court to redress the injury by moving us back to our original condition. In all these cases, the understanding is structured by the same force-dynamic image-schema. That force-dynamic image-schema is symmetric in consisting of action and symmetric reaction. In the military domain, the force-dynamic image-schema is not metaphoric. In the rhetorical and legal situation, the force-dynamic image-schema is projected metaphorically.

We began this investigation with Dieter's observation that prior theorists had viewed our concept of argument as founded on exactly nothing. Stasis, in the view of these theorists, was an autonomous module, a windowless monad, an idiosyncratic notion that gained some currency in the dry and academic world of rhetorical studies. By now, we have seen that our concept of argument is so deeply grounded in poetic thought and the body, and that its many possible exfoliations are so thoroughly motivated and supported by the rest of our conceptual apparatus, that it may indeed, as many have thought, stand as a marker of that which is human, although not in the positivist way it has usually been presented.

By virtue of the body, the brain has an understanding of force-dynamic image-schemas. Our bilaterally symmetric body makes it particularly easy for us to understand oppositional forces, equilibrium between them, and the consequences of strengthening or weakening a force. We can project this knowledge metaphorically onto the domain of propositions, giving us a metaphorical default concept of rational argument as the conflict of two bilaterally opposed forces situated in certain ways in the space of propositions. A common extension of this force-dynamic metaphor is rational argument is combat, which is an instantiation, but only one, of the much more flexible and productive metaphor THE MIND IS A BODY MOVING IN SPACE.

Our default concept of rational argument, which is at the heart of our default concept of reason, is thus not isolated. It is not disembodied, or principally conscious. Rather than opposed to the body and poetic thought, it is their product, and shares this derivation with many of the strongest and most universal parts of our thinking. Far from belonging to any specialized endeavor or academic discipline, it is an inherent part of the rhetoric of everyday life.