

Tarso B. MAZZOTTI, Alda Judith ALVES-MAZZOTTI  
Universidade Estácio de Sá (Brasil)

## **The Argumentative *A Priori* in the Constitution of Beliefs**

**Abstract:** A theory of social action requires a plausible and verifiable explanation of the beliefs that orient the subjects' conduct. This implies to consider that when people talk about their actions, they show a wide variety of levels of consciousness regarding the validity and adequacy of the beliefs implied in their discourse. Thus, their argumentative mistakes do not necessarily result from internal factors, unknown by them, or from the passive appropriation of received ideas, or even from the use of a primitive logic, but rather from the people's interests, needs, and values, that is, from the implicit or *a priori* hidden in their discourse. In this essay we try to show that arguments of scientists may also have *a priori* that can "contaminate" well-formed arguments used in scientific discourse. We develop the hypothesis that commonplaces are analogous to the *a priori* in Simmel/Boudon model and also to the embodied schemata in Lakoff and Johnson definition. Finally, we show that metaphors are not the only scheme to say the real, since the metonymy and the dissociation of notions are also used and their validity can be established by the negotiation of meanings in rhetorical and dialectical situations.

**Keywords:** theory of social action, situated argumentative procedures, implicit assumptions, Simmel/Boudon model.