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### “RHETORICAL DEVICES EMPLOYED BY DR. TAHIR UL QADRI IN HIS SPEECH AT PEACE FOR HUMANITY CONFERENCE: A RELIGIOUS DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

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#### **ABSTRACT:**

Logos, ethos and pathos are the famous rhetorical devices used as argumentative tools. In this study, a speech by Dr. Tahir ul Qadri delivered at Peace for Humanity Conference in Wembley, London in 2011 has been critically analyzed in terms of Aristotelian theory of art of persuasion. The research was done by applying qualitative method of analysis on the text of speech. It involved application of Aristotelian theory of art of persuasion given in his book, 'Rhetoric'. It was concluded that the speaker powerfully plays with the words and language to create powerful persuasive effects in his speech.

#### **LITERATURE REVIEW:**

Aristotelian theory of rhetoric was used by many researchers to study and examine rhetorical or persuasive discourse in the talk and speeches of politicians and other people. Su-Hie Ting (2018) applied Aristotelian theory of rhetorics in his study on informal requests which university students make to their teachers. Mori (2016) made an analysis of three speeches delivered at the United Nations General Assembly and studied how three devices ethos, logos and pathos were employed in these speeches to make them convincing and

affective. Mori (2016) also examined how Rouhani used ethos to defend his character and logos to prove Iran's goodness against the allegations imposed by USA against Iran.

### **INTRODUCTION:**

Greek philosopher, Aristotle wrote a famous book named 'Rhetoric' in which he presented his famous theory of rhetoric about how one can make one's speech more effective in terms of persuasion. This theory is often referred to as Aristotelian theory of Rhetoric. There are different types of persuasive devices that a speaker can use in order to gain attention of the audience. The employment of these persuasive devices in a speech invokes the emotions of listeners and also makes them attentive. Among these several persuasive devices are classical concepts of logos, ethos and pathos and also other persuasive devices like self-representation and negative others-presentation. There are three areas in which a speaker can appeal his listeners or audience. Rhetoric has always been an important tool in the history that religious and other leaders have always been using to convince their audience. It creates a deeper influence in the words that you are using.

In this study, these three major rhetorical strategies have been analyzed in a famous speech delivered by Dr Tahir ul Qadri in peace and humanity conference held at Webley, London on 24<sup>th</sup> of September, 2011 by Minhaj ul Quran International UK. Many great scholars, spiritual leaders and renowned personalities belonging to different religions and cultures attended this event and collective prayers were offered for peace in the world. Many people from asia, Eurpe , America and Arab world, including the vice chancellor of Al-Azhar University, attended this conference. Candles were also lit for peace.

The conference and its key note speech delivered by Tahir ul Qadri were held at a time when there was much bad name given to muslims and Islams in the west. And muslims were looked down by eyes of western scholarship. Dr Tahir ul Qadri, though not native English speaker, employs beautifully the persuasive devices to convince the European audience in specific and the whole world in general that Islam stands for world peace and harmony and inter-religious harmony and mutual co-existence.

### **RESEARCH METHOD:**

The text of speech obtained through online sources like YouTube and daily motion has been critically analyzed and examined by using qualitative research method. Aristotelian theory of rhetoric presented in his famous ancient Greek treaties on rhetoric was employed on conducting this research. Four modes of persuasions; Logos, Pathos, Ethos and Kairos were carefully examined by a very close and focused listening of the video speech found on the youtube.. <https://youtu.be/vDIzxHB3Hdc>

### **RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:**

- i. To find out how effectively Aristotelian modes of persuasion has been employed by Dr Tahir ul Qadri.

- ii. To find out how the speaker has used different rhetorical devices to convince the world that Islam is a religion of peace.
- iii. To find out how effectively language and words can be used to propagate and promote a claim or an agenda in a more convincing manner.

### **THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS**

Religious discourse includes the speeches or the written texts of religious scholars on some religious issues. Dr. Tahir ul Qadri is a leading Muslim scholar from Pakistan who addressed this global conference on inter-religions harmony and peaceful mutual co-existence and quoted references from classical Islamic teachings and creates a common ground for peace and harmony among the people having different faiths.

Rhetoric, according to Aristotle, is;

‘A faculty of considering all the possible means of persuasion on every subject’ (Aristotle, 350 B.C) his study

Uses Aristotle’s rhetorical theory (350 B.C.E) of persuasion and other persuasive strategies; use of the personal

Pronoun, word choice, positive self-presentation, and negative others presentation and predication strategy

(Khalil et al., 2017).

He has also used many other persuasive devices in his speech.

### **DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:**

#### ***Preliminary Ethos:***

“Is what the audience preliminary knows about the speaker (writer), in other words, what it knows about speaker’s authority, marital status and social status” (Amossy, 2000, p. 63, as cited in Mshvenieradze, 2013, p. 1940)

The audience gathered at the hall was already familiar with many accomplishments and scholarly achievements of Dr Tahir ul qadri like his recent Fatwa on Terrorism and religious declaration against all the activities of militant extremist groups of Muslims spreading terrorism on the name of Jihad. This Fatwa was widely broadcasted and discussed in western media as well. Many orientalist and western scholars had admired and acknowledged his endeavours in this domain of religious discourse.

#### ***Discourse ethos:***

It is the Ethos created immediately for the specific situation and during the discourse. (Amossy, 2000, p. 63, as cited in Mshvenieradze, 2013, p. 1940)

While giving a full picture of contemporary terroristic activities and the role of Muslims for the condemnation of terrorism he makes a reference to his book against terrorism as a major work to raise the voice of Muslims against terrorism. He also takes credit of his philosophical and intellectual struggle to condemn terrorism and his continuous struggle to remove the bad label of terrorism on islam and muslims. That was too much popular ideology in the west at that time.

“Silence was broken through 600 pages Fatwa on terrorism and suicide bombing and through continuous Al-Hidaya de-radicalization camps of youth ”

He also refers to his seminars, lectures, academic and theological struggles and contributions which he made in last many years that persuaded his international and especially western audience that he is the most concerning person and a man of credit who made untiring struggles against terrorism.

### ***Pathos:***

“Emotional appeal is legal and it has an important role in persuasive dialogues.” (Walton, 1992)

Many Muslims and non-Muslims sects and scholars of different sects often don't accept each other in collective in their religious ceremonies and religious places like mosques, churches etc. many Muslim sects don't even allow non-Muslims to be in same prayers and prayer places with them. In such religious and political situations Dr Tahir ul Qadri announced “Collective interfaith peace prayers” in his welcome address. It was a unique idea of its type that brought people of different religions closer to Muslims. It had emotional effects. When he announced that the people from different religions will pray to their own Gods and will pray for world peace. This type of activity had emotional appeal for the people around the globe who belonged to different religious groups.

To persuade his audience that terrorism is a serious issue for all human beings he uses highly emotionally appealing expressions like;

‘It split humanity a part’

‘Human life has been deprived of its sacredness’

It provokes their emotions as their sense of being a human is at the stake and humanity is at the stake.

He also uses other expressions full of emotional appeal that convince the audience that the orator is talking about their own cause and problem, ‘terrorism has removed the smiles form the face of millions of innocent people of the world’. To appeal the emotions of Jews representative scholars, he uses the words, ‘my ears of soul can hear Prophet Moses giving the message of peace’

### **USE OF PERSONAL PRONOUNS**

I welcome the Buddhist community from all over the Europe’ here by using personal pronoun ‘I’, he puts himself as the one who believes in interfaith harmony and mutual co-operation. He creates an impression that I have acceptance and tolerance for all the people from any religion.

The speakers uses personal pronouns to give his audience a sense of belonging to them and catches their attention by calling them his brothers and sisters. ‘My brothers and sisters in Islam and my brothers and sisters in humanity’. It is significant in the context where some of the muslim scholars always opposed the idea of calling non-muslims as their brothers and sisters.

So he used personal pronoun my and brings non-muslims closer to him to listen and believe in his words. Inclusive pronoun 'we' (speaker and listener) can be used as a strategy to express solidarity; whereas, exclusive pronoun 'we' (speaker and other/s excluding the listener) can be used to

share responsibility, that is, actions are not only the responsibility of one individual (Wilson, 1990 as cited in

Partington, 2003). He used 1<sup>st</sup> person personal pronoun 'we' in his speech to show solidarity with those who love peace in the world and to exclude extremist and terrorist groups from the discourse.

### ***Repetition of words and phrases:***

Repetition of words and phrases creates persuasive effects in speeches that's why orators have been using this device for the rhetorical or persuasive purposes. Dr Tahir ul Qadri frequently uses this technique in his speeches. As we examine his current speech in our consideration we find repetition of words and phrases in the following sentences:

How many families, men and women elders and children have been decimated by these mass killings?

How many women have become widowed?

How many children orphaned?

How many people have become destitute and homeless?

### ***Logos:***

"We have become embodiment to Abrahamic legacy".

### ***Rhetorical questions:***

How can Muslims be so silent?

How are they totally non-committal about condemning the terrorists?

Other rhetorical devices:

### ***Alliteration:***

In the following sentences of his speech alliteration was found;

'They see it as their **God-given** right to kill', 'hearts have become full of hatred, 'bodies are burning.....'

### ***Kairos:***

It is driving support from the time or place of speech. This peace conference was organized at 24<sup>th</sup> of September, 2011 and he associates it with the historical event of migration of holy Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ towards Medina that also occurred on 24<sup>th</sup> of September 645

and islamic calender begins with this event. So he argued that, ‘

### **CONCLUSION:**

Dr tahir ul Qadri used rhetorical or persuasive devices so powerfully in his speech and had deeper and long last effects in socio-religious perspective of the time. He cleared the image of Islam and Muslims in the west by strong argumentation and powerful rhetorical choices of words and sentences. He tried to convince western scholars of different religious groups that islam is a religion of peace and protects human rights and it is the torch bearer of human welfare and does not stand for their destruction. The use of rhetorical devices like logos, pathos and ethos and some other persuasive devices like frist person personal pronouns and repetitions of words, phrases and sounds and use of rhetorical questions also had influential effect on the audience.

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