



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**INVENTIO STRATEGIES IN CALIPH ALI BIN ABI TALIB'S
SELECTED SPEECHES**

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***INVENTIO* STRATEGIES IN CALIPH ALI BIN ABI TALIB'S
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By

QUTREN NADA AHMAD

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in
Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science**

March 2005



DEDICATION

... dedicated to

Kanda, Ali, Narges, Fatma, Husayn and Little Baby

And all admirers of Imam Ali



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science

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Faculty: Modern Languages and Communication

This thesis analysed the rhetorical strategies of Caliph Ali bin Abi Talib through his selected speeches in *Nahjul Balagha*, the most authentic compilation of Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib's speeches.

The research questions were designed to investigate the invention of Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib, within the Classical Canons of Rhetoric. The present study concerned on the extent and the pattern of the usage of *logos*, the usage *pathos* and the usage of *ethos*. However, the analysis of the usage of *pathos* was limited to the elements of arousing fear only.

A total of 75 speeches compiled in the English translation of *Nahjul Balagha* were content analysed. Each speech was coded for types of *logos* used (analogy, irony, divine testimony, peer testimony, factual illustration, hypothetical illustration, specific instance, maxim, oath, supernatural), for types of fear appeal used (death, loss of possessions, difficulties, other elements of arousing fear) and for types of *ethos* used (practical wisdom, moral virtue, trustworthiness, goodwill).

Findings showed Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib used all kinds of rhetorical invention in his speeches. The most popular strategy used by Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib was practical wisdom, followed by analogy, maxim, factual illustration and hypothetical illustration. But in term of *logos*, analogy was the most popular proof. Death was the most consistent strategy used in arousing fear, while practical wisdom was commonly used in term of *ethos*. The findings also revealed that Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib used different invention on different issue of the speech. Overall, Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib's rhetorical strategies are in agreement with the Aristotle's rhetoric.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi sebahagian keperluan untuk ijazah Master Sains

**STRATEGI REKACIPTA DALAM
UCAPAN TERPILIH KHALIFAH ALI BIN ABI TALIB**

Oleh

QUTREN NADA AHMAD

Mac 2005

Pengerusi: Profesor Madya Ezhar Tamam, PhD

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Tesis ini menganalisa strategi retorik Khalifah Ali Bin Abi Talib melalui ucapannya yang terpilih di dalam *Nahjul Balagha* iaitu satu kompilasi ucapan Khalifah Ali Bin Abi Talib yang paling tinggi kesahihannya.

Kenyataan masalah digubal dengan objektif untuk mengenal pasti cara Khalifah Ali Bin Abi Talib mencipta dan mengemukakan hujahnya berdasarkan teori retorik klasik. Kajian ini mengfokuskan kepada tahap dan gaya penggunaan hujah-hujah logik (*logos*), penggunaan hujah-hujah emosi (*pathos*) dan penggunaan hujah-hujah etika (*ethos*). Namun, penganalisan hujah-hujah emosi dihadkan kepada perkara yang menimbulkan perasaan takut sahaja.

Sejumlah 75 ucapan yang terdapat di dalam *Nahjul Balagha* terjemahan Bahasa Inggeris telah dianalisa kandungannya. Setiap ucapan telah dikodkan untuk mengenal pasti jenis-jenis *logos* yang telah digunakan (perumpamaan, ironi, sandaran ilahi, sandaran rakan, huraian berfakta, huraian berandaian, sebutan

ringkas, bidalan, sumpah, kuasa luar biasa), jenis-jenis perkara membangkitkan ketakutan (kematian, kehilangan, kepayahan, perkara lain yang menimbulkan perasaan takut) dan jenis-jenis *ethos* (kebijaksanaan praktikal, akhlak, kebolehpercayaan, baik hati).

Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa Khalifah Ali Bin Abi Talib telah menggunakan kesemua jenis rekacipta retorik di dalam ucapan beliau. Strategi yang paling popular ialah kebijaksanaan praktikal diikuti oleh perumpamaan, maxim, huraian berfakta dan huraian berandaian. Namun, antara semua hujah-hujah logik (*logos*), perumpamaan merupakan hujah yang sangat popular. Kematian merupakan strategi tetap yang digunakan untuk membangkitkan ketakutan, manakala antara hujah etika (*ethos*) kebijaksanaan praktikal adalah satu kebiasaan. Hasil kajian juga mendapati Khalifah Ali Bin Abi Talib telah menggunakan pelbagai hujah untuk pelbagai isu ucapan. Secara keseluruhannya, strategi retorik Khalifah Ali Bin Abi Talib bersesuaian dengan retorik Aristotle.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background

Rhetorical communication is a tool people influence others. It is a form of empowerment. It can change the world in some small way. Throughout history this art has been a vital means of communication. The oldest known handbook on effective speech was written on papyrus in Egypt some 4500 years ago (Lucas, 2001). In Rome, rhetoric played a central role in education and civic life. Aristotle's Rhetoric, composed in the third century B.C is still considered the most important work ever written on its subject (Lucas, 2001). Eloquence as part of rhetorical communication was also highly prized in other cultures including the Arabs.

Early history of Islam witnessed the rise of great orators like the Prophet Muhammad, Peace be Upon Him and His Progeny (PBUH) and Caliph Ali bin Abi Talib. Besides the Hadith of the Holy Prophet, the speeches of Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib have become important literatures of the Arabs. Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib the fourth caliph of the Islamic Empire in his days was celebrated by his supporters as an inspirational orator and opinion leader. After his demise, his words, sermons and letters provide the later generation references to various disciplines of study. His significant role in the history of Islam, particularly as an opinion leader and as a very important source of multi-knowledge cannot be ignored.

Many historians and Muslim scholars write about Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib with regards to his characters, ideas and historical story. But to this point only few of the published works found deal specifically with his rhetorical strategies. Most of the works on his rhetorical strategies scope their works on the style of the language used by the Caliph. The Muslim linguistic scholars study the Caliph's speeches in a discipline called *Ilm Al-Balagha*.

Although in the Islamic context *Ilm Al-Balagha* (literally means the study of eloquence) is translated as "rhetoric", it gives slightly different technical meaning when compared with the meaning used by the communication scholars. According to Smyth (1992), Muslim scholars have referred to *Ilm Al-Balagha* as rhetoric because of the specific points of coincidence between the art of persuasion and the study of eloquence. He elaborated that these similarities should not lead one to believe that the goals or objects of rhetoric and *Ilm Al Balagha* are all alike. They are contextually different.

Smyth (1992) viewed rhetoric as a study of persuasive communication in particular, political communication. Dixon (1971) when defining rhetoric omits eloquent as its element. Most of the researchers in the communication discipline relate the orators with solely persuasive communications, which are not necessarily eloquent speech.

Although the speeches of Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib are characterised by the highest level of Arabic eloquence, this research analysed the rhetorical strategies of Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib using the term of rhetoric in its meaning of persuasive speech within the

communication discipline. However, it was not the purpose of this study to provide a complete and detail description of the rhetoric of Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib. This study focused only on the invention made by Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib in his selected speeches.

The Rational of Choosing Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib Not the Other Caliph

Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib was an opinion leader from before he was elected as the caliph. During the leadership of the first Caliph [11-13 A.H / 632-4 A.D] and the second Caliph [13-23 A.H / 634-44 A.D], Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib was consulted in their policies and political settings.

Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib had admirers of his own who supported him more than they supported the other caliphs. They were known in the history as *Shia li Ali*, the supporters of Ali. This situation might suggest that Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib has somehow possessed some extraordinary reasons to attract his supporters.

Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib had made many more speeches that have been recorded as compare to other caliphs. According to Waris Hassan (1979), Al-Mas'udi found the first caliph, (Caliph) Abu Bakar to have not made many speeches which have been recorded. Only few speeches have been preserved including the prime address at *Al-Saqifa* of Banu Sa'idah.

The second caliph, Umar Al-Khattab was more concerned with practical politics and less talented in *balagha* or eloquence speech. Al- Mas'udi described (Caliph) Umar Al-Khattab's speeches were not necessarily designed to contain linguistic decor or rhymed synonyms (Waris Hassan, 1979). The second caliph used to make a short speech. It was clear when he was confronted with such important task to mobilise people to go to war against Persian Empire (Waris Hassan, 1979). He was reported to have made a speech which was very short, "*Hijaz* is no longer the place for you; and the Prophet had promised you the conquest of Persia. So go to the land of Persians" (cited in Waris Hassan, 1979, p.8).

The third caliph showed the sign of not being used to public speaking when once he stood on the pulpit not knowing what to say for quite a while (Waris Hassan, 1979). As it is not recorded in the history that the third Caliph was an excellent orator, the researcher did not find the need to analyse his speeches.

As compared to the former caliphs, Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib's speeches, sayings and letters are well preserved and were so highly valued and venerated by the learned Muslims.

Within only a century of his demise, his speeches, letters and sayings were taught and read as the last word on the philosophy of monotheism and as very effective sermon toward piety, a guiding beacon towards truth and justice, marvellous eulogies of the Prophet and the Quran, convincing discourses of the spiritual values of Islam, source of discussions about *tawheed*, masterpiece of literature and a model of the art of rhetoric (cited in Jafri, 1984, p.15).

Allama Shaykh Kamaluddin ibn Muhammad ibn Talha Shafi'i [652H] in his famous book *Matalibus Su'al fi Manaqib Ale Rasul* writes: The fourth merit of Imam Ali was his eloquence and rhetoric.

He was such an authority in these arts that none can aspire to rise up to the level of the dust of his shoes... (cited in Jafri, 1984, p.18).

Al-Zein, Al-Sidani & Ghandour (1989) among the contemporary translators of the words of Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib, agreed that the speeches of Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib are at the highest level of Arabic eloquence. Most books about Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib would mention that there are so many Muslim and Christian Arab scholars, theologians, philosophers and historians who praise the sermons, letters and sayings of Ali Bin Abi Talib that if one wants to quote, it will cover a big volume.

Literature Studies on Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib

There were numerous books written on Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib. The works can be divided into fourteen classifications i.e. biography, contributions, correspondence, diction, fiction, *hadith*, literature, language, legends, military, oratory, quotations, views on science, and *Nahjul Balaghah*.

Most of the works we can find on Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib are on his biography. Many writers have presented a complete and thorough account of Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib's life, his leadership and the Islamic history that relates to him. One of the earliest works that we can find on the biography of Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib is written by Al-Mufid [1022H]. Earlier writer such as Al-Tabari [838-923]H also writes on Caliph Ali bin Abi Talib in a history book entitled *The Community Divided*, re-published in 1997.

The most important work is a compilation of Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib's speeches, letters and maxims by Muhammad Ibn Al-Husayn Al-Sharif Al-Radhi (Sayyid Radhi) [969/70–1016]. However, Sayyid Radhi was not the first compiler. According to the famous book of biographies, *Rijalul Kabir*, the first compiler was Zaid Ibn Wahab Jahmi [90H] one of the *Hadith* narrators. This would suggest that Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib's sermons and speeches have been compiled since thirty years after his demise. There were many more compilations but the authentic compilation by Sayyid Radhi entitled *Nahjul Balagha* is the most popular work with regards to the fourth Caliph. This important compilation, on which Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib himself is the actual author, has attracted many commentators to write on *Nahjul Balaghah* itself. Ibn Abi Al-Hadid [1900] in his book *Syar-hun Nahjul Balaghah* writes on exegesis of *Nahjul Balaghah*. Mughniyah (1979) writes *Fi Zilal Nahj Al-Balaghah* (under the shadow of *Nahjul Balaghah*). Waris Hassan (1979) offers a critical study of *Nahj Al-Balaghah* as his Ph.D thesis in the University of Edinburgh. Al-Khatib (1985) focuses on the sources of *Nahjul Balaghah*.

Nahjul Balaghah also attracted the translators. Peak of Eloquence published in 1984 is an English translation of *Nahjul Balaghah*. It is also translated in *Bahasa Indonesia* entitled *Mutiara Nahjul Balaghah* in 1991 and reprinted in 1993.

Some of the writers focussed on the correspondence. Most of them compiled solely the letters of the Caliph. They gathered the letters sent by the Caliph to certain individuals. Some of the letters are found in the other's biography. For example, Al-Fadli (1996) who writes on Malik Al-Asytar, the chief of the Caliph's armed force, put together the letters of Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib to Malik Al-Asytar.

Few published works discuss specifically on the contribution of Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib. Al-Adib (1979) writes on the contribution of Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib on education.

Most of the writers are interested in the significant role of Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib in the Islamic history. Not less are inquisitive in his thoughts and in the contents of his speeches. Some of the works are interested on literature and language. Al-Ghaffar (1988) who writes on literature, illustrates the words of Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib as the Arabic poetry.

None of the works found deal specifically with the rhetorical strategy of Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib particularly in term of the invention of the speeches. Al-Hufi (1977) writes “*Al-Balaghah Al-Imam Ali*” or The Rhetoric of *Imam Ali* (Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib), yet it is in the light of the eloquence of the speeches. In most books, including *Nahjul Balaghah*, many biographers mentioned on the excellent skill possessed by Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib in oratory, however these are just passing remarks.

In addition, very few communication scholars had ever attempted to analyse the rhetoric of Muslim speakers. This study offered a content analysis of the speeches of Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib as a Muslim prominent speaker with regards to the invention applied. (Since the speeches of a speaker are influenced by historical and political settings and in order to present a general view to the readers, the researcher described the biography of Caliph Ali Bin Abi Talib and historical and political setting at Appendix A).

Statement of Problem

Persuasive communication contains of assertion of the speaker's opinion or point of view. The speaker asserts his point of view by appealing to his audience's reasoning and emotion. Steer (195) explains that persuasive arguments use facts, opinions and beliefs. This would suggest that, the rhetoric of a speaker would depend on how he invents the ideas of the speech. Under the classical canons of invention, there are three types of proof i.e. logical (persuasive *logos*), emotional (persuasive *pathos*) and ethical (persuasive *ethos*), that the speaker would use to invent his views to the audience (Aristotle, 1973); Dixon, 1971). In contemporary language, many authors of public speaking book refer the canons of invention as the supporting materials in speech.

In religion like Islam that is spread partly through preaching or more appropriate to be termed as *dakwah*, the process of persuasive communication is never stop, given that Islam is spread because of *dakwah* and *dakwah* is done because of Islam. According to Sambas as cited by (Machendrawaty & Kusnawan, 2003), *dakwah* has two dimensions. The first is to tell the truth of life that must be understood and accepted by human being. Secondly, it is based on human rationality and no force. Because of this, in the process of preaching, *dakwah* is rich in methods. *Dakwah* faces with the dynamic of human life and their activities. Therefore the method of *dakwah* should be adapted to the surroundings of the people.

In *dakwah*, one of the preaching methods is *khutbah* or delivering sermon. Sermon involves one way communication where when it happens, the speaker is active and the