Application of Aristotle’s Ethos, Pathos, and Logos on Barack Obama’s Speech, ‘Call to Renewal Keynote Address’.

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Abstract

This paper analyses Barack Obama’s persuasive use of language through old-age tools of rhetoric, i.e. ethos, pathos, logos in his speech, “Call to Renewal Keynote Address”. While addressing to his party members, he mentions that the Americans do not feel that they have been created out of ‘nothingness’ and are travelling towards ‘nothingness’. A sense of purpose in life and a sense of protection is what they really need. In order to bridge the gap between the liberal Democrats and the conservative Republicans, Obama speaks from both sides. But it seems that Obama’s real objective in this speech was to find a common ground for both the liberal as well as the conservative Americans. Since he was going to announce his candidature for the 2008 American presidency, he decided to speak such a logical rhetoric in this 2006 speech in which he could get the favours of his opponents (the religiously conservatives), without offending his own fellows, the liberals. Obama comes out as a moderate American who is really different from his other party fellows. Although Obama convinces his listeners through reasoning and logic in almost his every political speech, his present speech is, from first to the last paragraph, full of the use of logical style of talking. He exhausts almost every traditional figure of logos in this speech.

Key Words: Aristotle, rhetoric, ethos, pathos, logos, Barack Obama, speeches
Introduction

Frogel writes about the importance universality of Aristotle’s rhetoric. Aristotle’s The Rhetoric is “a primary text for the study of rhetoric to this day” (Frogel, 2005). About the functions of rhetoric, Longman Dictionary has a bit negative shade of meaning. It alludes to the negative connotations of the word ‘rhetoric’ as it writes: “Language that sounds impressive but is not actually sincere or useful” (Longman Dictionary, 2003). But Beard (2000) opines about the inevitability of rhetorical language even when the listeners do not have any doubt in the sincerity of the speaker. Although opinion could be divided on the function and purpose of rhetoric, it is used in almost every situation of daily life. Hall (2006), for example, examines the nature of rhetoric employed in documentary film. Gallo (2008) has compared Obama’s skills as orator with Martin King Luther, John F Kennedy, and Ronald Reagon. Rowland & Jones (2007) while analyzing one of Obama’s speeches report on how he talks about the American Dream.

Figures of Ethos, Pathos, Logos

Online Stanford Encyclopedia of philosophy while talking about Aristotle’s sense of Ethos writes that the audience will form second order judgment that the propositions put forward by the credible speaker are true and acceptable (http://plato.stanford.edu/). While defining pathos, Halmari writes that it is the process of “creating positive emotions in the minds of the listeners” (Halmari, 2004). Beard talks about logos as simply “persuasion through reasoning” (Beard, 2004). The relevant rhetorical figures which have been employed by Obama in this speech are defined here for the convenience of the readers. These figures and their definitions have been taken from Brigham Young University, America, an on-line source (http://rhetoric.byu.edu/).

1) Anamnesis:

Calling to memory past matters. More specifically, citing a past author from memory.

2) Epicrisis:

When a speaker quotes a certain passage and makes comment upon it.
3) Antirrhesis

Rejecting reprehensively the opinion or authority of someone.

4) Litotes

Deliberate understatement, especially when expressing a thought by denying its opposite. Litotes is usually used to express modesty and humbleness to win audience’s favour.

5) Adhortatio

*A commandment, promise, or exhortation intended to move one's consent or desires.*

6) Aganactesis

*An exclamation proceeding from deep indignation.*

7) Apagoresis

*A statement designed to inhibit someone from doing something.*

8) Descriptio

Vivid description, especially of the consequences of an act, that stirs up its hearers.

9) Epiplexis

* Asking questions in order to chide, to express grief, or to inveigh.*

10) Inter se Pugnaria

Using direct address to reprove someone before an audience openly.
11) **Synonymia**

*The use of several synonyms together to amplify or explain a given subject or term. A kind of repetition that adds force.*

12) **Tricolon**

*Three parallel elements of the same length occurring together in a series.*

13) **Antonomasia**

*Substituting a descriptive phrase for a proper name, or substituting a proper name for a quality associated with it.*

14) **Enthymeme**

Enthymeme is defined as:

The informal method of reasoning typical of rhetorical discourse. The enthymeme is sometimes defined as a "truncated syllogism" since either the major or minor premise found in that more formal method of reasoning is left implied. The enthymeme typically occurs as a conclusion coupled with a reason … A figure of speech which bases a conclusion on the truth of its contrary.

15) **Sorites**

*A chain of claims and reasons which build upon one another.*

16) **Anthypophora**

*A figure of reasoning in which one asks and then immediately answers one's own questions.*

17) **Paromologia**

*Admitting a weaker point in order to make a stronger one.*
The present analysis is based on the text of the speech provided in Olive’s ‘An American Story’ (2008). The paragraphs have been numbered for the convenience of the readers.

ANALYSIS OF “CALL TO RENEWAL KEYNOTE ADDRESS”

June 28, 2006

Washington, DC

_Ethos Applied_

_Story Telling_

In his efforts to convince the audience, his own party members, of the mistake his party members have been continuously committing ----- that of being so liberal as criticized by the religiously conservative Americans ----- Barack Obama recounts his own life experiences of his need of true belief. He tells that the Americans do not feel that they have been created out of nothingness and are travelling towards nothingness. A sense of purpose in life and a sense of protection is what they really need. Their unseen spirits need the support of ‘The Unseen’. They look at life as an entity which is full of purpose and direction. Furthermore, Democrats are also not against the religion, rather they look at it in their own way. So they should not talk such as they should be misinterpreted by others. To support his argument that every American is religious from inside and needs the support of belief, Obama recounts his own experience with the religion. In paragraph twenty three he tells that although his father was a born Muslim, he discarded religion and declared himself as an atheist. This happened when Obama was just two. His “mother, whose parents were non-practicing Baptists and Methodists, was probably one of the most spiritual and kindest people [he’s] ever known, but grew up with a healthy skepticism of organized religion herself. As a consequence, so did [Obama]” (Olive, 2008). Recounting his story in the next paragraphs he tells that during working in some churches in the latter years of his life, he realized that a belief only is not enough: a real commitment with a definite community of believers is required.
[paragraphs 24, 25, 26]. Last lines of paragraphs twenty and twenty eight reflect his own version of religious belief:

“ … as the months passed in Chicago, I found myself drawn ----- not just to work with the Church, but to be in the Church”.

[Paragraph 27]

“And in its historical struggle for freedom and the rights of man, I was able to see faith as more than just a comfort to the weary or a hedge against death, but rather as an active, palpable agent in the world. As a source of hope”.

[Paragraph 28]

All these paragraphs [23 to 28] in which he tells us his past life exhibit the example of ANAMNESIS which increases the credibility and reliability of the speaker.

Close analysis of the rhetoric of the political speeches of Obama reveals that he is quite adept and mature at using the old-age and traditional tools of rhetoric. For convincing the people of the reliability of his account, he uses the art of narrating his past experiences. The figure of ethos, ANAMNESIS, he used throughout the paragraph twenty three to twenty eight, as mentioned above, again can be seen in paragraph thirty two. The last sentences in paragraphs twenty seven, twenty eight and thirty two are Obama’s comments he declared forcefully, and where he established the reliability of his proposition that the liberals should not overlook the positive and healthy influence of religion in the lives of human beings. See:

“But as the months passed in Chicago, I found myself drawn ----- not just to work with the Church, but to be in the Church”.

[Paragraph 27]

“And in its historical struggle for freedom and the rights of man, I was able to see faith as more than just a comfort to the weary or a hedge against death, but rather an active, palpable agent in the world”.

[Paragraph 28]
“... I submitted myself to His will, and dedicated myself to discovering His truth”[Paragraph 32]

These are very forceful sentences which explicitly declare that the liberals are also religious people. Religion is somewhere in them. They also need religion as much as the conservatives do. These declarations at the end of his story of religious experiences increase the element of ethos.

**Appeal to Authority**

Obama talks about the crucial neglect of religion by the liberal members of his own party, the Democrats. He mentions at the very beginning that his party should try to bridge the gap between the religious minded Americans and the secular Americans. His view about the role of religion in politics takes the shape as he mentions that the Democrats should not give the image of the anti-religious, non-believer liberals to the masses. He views Democrats’ nonbeliever image as the disconnect between the party and the American people. To substantiate his proposition he uses the technique of ANAMNESIS and recalls in paragraph four his own contestant, Mr. Alan Keyes, who ran against him for the seat in US Senate General Election in 2004. He mentions the real name of a person along with two more names, Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson. By giving the reference of these people he tries to convince the addresses of the correctness of his proposition that their own image of the nonbeliever leaders of the nation is increasing distance between them and the masses. The mention of Mr. Keyes is a point of reference as Obama lets the audience recall his statement he passed on about Obama during his campaign for a seat in 2004 US Senate Election. Obama quotes Mr. Keyes’ words in the inverted commas to increase the elements of ethos in his account. Mr. Keyes spoke that Christ will not vote for Obama as the latter is not Christ’s favourite. Obama also mentions that Mr. Keyes spoke like Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson. The mention of these two names was also a point of reference to substantiate his view. Now, the addressees already knew these two persons and their ideologies. Jerry Falwell was a religious minded, Christian-based political lobbyist, who took the abortionists, lesbians, gays and the feminists as the Pagans (Olive, 2008). Pat Robertson once described feminism a “socialist, anti-family political movement that encourages women to leave
their husbands, kill their children, practice witchcraft, destroy capitalism, and become lesbians” (Olive, 2008). These words and the ideologies of these persons were well-known to the addressees. By just mentioning their names in his speech and telling the audience that Mr. Keyes, who once remarked about Obama that Christ was not on Obama’s side, has a mature style of rhetoric of Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson, Obama strengthens his own idea that Democrats should first bridge the gap between the liberal and religiously conservative Americans. This reference to the real public remark of Mr. Keyes and of two real politicians known to the public strengthens his ethos and reliability.

Paragraph five and six are the examples of EPICRISIS. Here Obama quotes Mr. Keyes in paragraph five and then comments in paragraph six:

“Jesus Christ would not vote for Barack Obama. Christ would not vote for Barack Obama because Barack Obama has behaved in a way that it is inconceivable for Christ to have behaved”
[paragraph 5].

And:

“Jesus Christ would not vote for Obama”.

This style of rhetoric increases his reliability. Obama further recalls to the public that Mr. Keyes remarked that Obama calls himself a Christian yet he does not oppose abortion and favours a lifestyle quite opposite to that prescribed by Bible. So, Obama’s stance in the present speech of bridging the gap between the liberals and the conservatives and for its imperative need as the masses were misinterpreting the Democrats, gets strengthened by the reference to Mr. Keyes’ remarks about him.

Obama strengthens his proposal of having a dire need of bridging the gap between the liberal and the conservative Americans in paragraph nineteen. He promotes the idea throughout this speech that the Republicans always use Democrats’ liberal philosophy of atheism as a political tool against them. He brought his party fellows’ attention towards the need of bridging this gap. This speech reflects such proposition. In
paragraph nineteen, he overtly announces that a very large fraction of Americans is of the religious people. To substantiate his statement, he provides the statistical data in percentage as a point of reliable reference. This reference to the mathematical count in percentage of the religious Americans is his act of looking towards a reliable authority, the statistical data authority, when he mentions that the 90% of the whole Americans “believe in God” and 70% of them are the members of an organized religion. 38% of them believe that they are committed Christians. He further mentions that a pretty good number of Americans believe in the supernatural agency of heavens and angels, than they believe in the scientific theory of evolution. This statistical count in percentage makes his account more reliable. Hence element of ethos in this speech gets strengthened.

One-sentence paragraph thirty is the example of LITOTES, a figure of ethos. “Faith doesn’t mean that you don’t have doubts”. This one-sentence paragraph is an understatement made by the speaker deliberately: faith is attaining of that spiritual situation where all doubts vanish. Faith means attaining doubtlessness. But Obama puts this notion of faith as an understatement by denying that faith is the condition of doubtlessness. By reversing the old-age definition of faith in his deliberately made understatement, he challenges the authority of the old-age convention of faith. Consequently, draws the attention of the listeners to his statement, and convinces them of the truth of his statement. This adds to his ethos.

EPICRISIS is found in paragraph thirty eight. Obama conveys that the most towering politicians of the American political history like Lincoln and Luther King took the aid of religious register in their famous speeches, “the judgments of the Lord” and “I have a Dream”, respectively. So Obama quotes the exact phrases of their speeches in the inverted commas, and then makes an affirmative comment on it. The last sentence of the paragraph is a comment on the influence and power of these speeches. He comments that through the religious register both the politicians were able to move the nation and make the people accept their political philosophy. Obama’s this method of persuasion motivates the audience as first quoting the phrases from their speeches and then making a comment on them establishes his credibility. This way of taking Lincoln and King as a reference of supreme authority fosters the element of ethos.
Referring a famous person to substantiate his account and viewpoint is one of Obama’s favourite tools of influencing his audience. Paragraphs forty three and forty seven exhibit this technique. In paragraph forty three he says that the government officials should employ more tax money in educating poor children. They should be provided with every information and education. They should be given a feeling that “every child is loved and cherished”. To substantiate his account he refers Marian Wright Edelman, a US activist. Marian Edelman is a “prominent US children’s-rights activist, founder and president of the Children’s Defense Fund” (Olive, 2008). His referring to her as authority substantiates his account and persuades the audience in accepting his views.

In paragraph forty seven Obama mentions the names of five famous political leaders of American history: Frederick Douglass, Abraham Lincoln, Williams Jennings Bryan, Dorothy Day and Martin Luther King. Frederick Douglass was the candidate for American presidency against Abraham Lincoln. Williams Jennings Bryan was “three-time Democratic nominee for US President, best known for his crusade against Darwinism” (Olive, 2008). Dorothy Day was a US social activist, devout Catholic and journalist by profession. Martin Luther King was a US pastor, social activist and a famous icon in African–American civil rights movement. The speaker mentions all these names and reinforces the subject of this speech by mentioning that all these political figures of American history were motivated by faith. He further mentions that these historic figures used religious register in their political language and motivated their audience to accept their views. Moreover, he mentions that American law is based on Judeo-Christian tradition. By saying this he introduces another authority ----- American law ----- to reinforce his theme of the speech. All these references to the authorities substantiate Obama’s stance of bridging the gap between religion and politics.

Paragraph fifty eight exhibits another figure of ethos, ANTIRRHESIS. Read the following sentences of paragraph fifty eight:
“Now this is going to be difficult for some who believe in the inerrancy of the Bible, as many evangelicals do. But in a pluralistic democracy, we have no choice” (Olive, 2008).

The speaker rejects the authority of evangelicals by mentioning that America is a pluralistic society where Americans can not follow the blind and unreasonable religious concepts practically. Here his rejection of the authority of the evangelicals through ANTIRRHESIS reinforces his credibility.

**Pathos Applied**

**Figures of Pathos**

Obama uses every kind of the traditional figure of speech in his rhetoric of political speeches. Paragraph thirty five is the example of the figure of pathos SYNONYMIA. Obama passes on the same message and repeats the same proposition in different words in this paragraph. He proposes that if “we ignore the debate” that who is better person as a religious man ----- a Christian, a Muslim, or a Jew ----- the liberals will be providing a clear space to their political opponents to fill that space and talk about all that to win peoples’ favours in elections. This message he repeats through different angles and different phrases in this paragraph introduced by adjunct “when” and conjunction “or”. This use of SYNONYMIA produces force in his proposition and increases the element of pathos.

Paragraph thirty six shows Obama’s mastery of the technique of DESCRIPTIO, another figure of pathos. The speaker describes the situation in which people like Alan Keyes, Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson (the conservative religious-minded members of the Republican Party) will continue to politically exploit the common Americans in the name of religion, if the Democrats do not realize the role of religion in the social, spiritual and political life of the Americans. This clear-cut description in very plain language is a sort of warning to the Democrats to understand the situation and act accordingly, otherwise consequences will be dire.
The same paragraph can be taken as an example of AGANACTESIS, another figure of pathos which is “an exclamation proceeding from deep indignation” (http://rhetoric.byu.edu/). “If / then” linguistic structure of this one-sentence paragraph is indicative of Obama’s warning in an annoyed tone to his fellow Democrats in which he very explicitly shows them the negative consequences of their political anti-religious policy.

Paragraph thirty six is also an example of another figure of pathos, INTER SE PUGNANTIA. Here the speaker openly takes the names of the real persons of his opposite party. He calls out the names of Alan Keyes, Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson, all are the Republicans. By warning his own party members, he openly criticizes these three Republicans giving the message that if the Democrats will not fill the religious gap in their political approach, the Republicans will do this. The use of “then” before the proper names of these Republicans is a warning to the Democrats as well as an open negative criticism on these three Republicans in an indirect way.

APAGORESIS, another figure of pathos, is found in paragraphs thirty nine, forty one and forty eight. See the last sentence of paragraph thirty nine:

“Our fear of getting "preachy" may also lead us to discount the role that values and culture play in some of our most urgent social problems”.

Obama openly declares that Democrats’ avoidance of getting into preachers’ role may lead them into thinking the valuable role the culture and traditional morality plays in solving the social problems. The negation of the positive role played by religion can be harmful. So, very wisely and indirectly he inhibits and discourages this thinking of the Democrats, through the skillful use of APAGORESIS. Now see some lines of paragraph forty one:

I believe in keeping guns out of our inner cities, and that our leaders must say so in the face of the gun manufacturers' lobby - but I also believe that when a gang-banger shoots indiscriminately into a crowd because he feels somebody disrespected him, we've got a moral problem. There's a hole in that young man's heart - a hole that the government alone cannot fix (Olive, 2008).
Obama makes a strong comment that this “hole [of moral vacuum] government alone cannot fix”. In other words he inhibits his fellow party members of sticking to their religion-hatred policy. Last clause indirectly advises the democrats to give up their hatred of religion. This is an indirect example of APAGORESIS. Now consider the following lines of paragraph forty eight:

Moreover, if we progressives shed some of these biases, we might recognize some overlapping values that both religious and secular people share when it comes to the moral and material direction of our country (Olive, 2008).

The speaker in a suggestive tone delivers the audience a message that they should shed their biases and try to locate the similarities between the secular and the religious people. In this suggestive tone, he inhibits his fellow party members to follow their biases against the religious-minded people.

TRICOLON can be located in paragraph fifty. See the first sentence of paragraph fifty:

“And by the way, we need Christians on Capitol Hill, Jews on Capitol Hill and Muslims on Capitol Hill talking about the estate tax”.

The underlined noun phrases are syntactically of same structure: ‘h q’, and ‘q’ having the structure ‘p c’. These noun phrases are the good use of TRICOLON. It is a sort of parallelism of language to motivate the audience.

Read paragraph fifty three:

While I’ve already laid out some of the work that progressive leaders need to do, I want to talk a little bit about what conservative leaders need to do — some truths they need to acknowledge (Olive, 2008).

ANTONOMASIA can be traced out in the paragraph fifty three. The underlined phrases ----- progressive leaders, conservative leaders ----- are the example of ANTONOMASIA as “progressive leaders” stands for the Democrats and the
“conservative leaders” stands for the Republicans. This figure of pathos is used to create intimacy between the speaker and the listeners. It gives the audience a flattering idea that all of them (including speaker) know each other and the thing they are talking about quite very well.

First sentence of paragraph fifty five is the example of APAGORESIS:

“Moreover, given the increasing diversity of America's population, the dangers of sectarianism have never been greater”.

This statement indirectly suggests that the struggle for the cause of any one specific religion in a pluralistic society should be given up as bigger problem ----- the problem of sectarianism ----- should be solved. This indirect advice of restraining from sticking unreasonably and blindly to a religion is a forceful figure of pathos for persuading the audience.

Paragraph fifty six displays two means of persuasion: ATHYPOPHORA (figure of Logos) and EPIPLEXIS (figure of pathos). ATHYPOPHORA in this paragraph will be discussed in the relevant section. As EPIPLEXIS is “asking questions in order to chide, to express grief, or to inveigh” (http://rhetoric.byu.edu/), the speaker asks six questions, one after another, in this paragraph. These questions are puzzling as well as they chide the audience and inveigh the listeners. These questions mention the religiously conservative Americans’ inability at deciding any one option out of the two regarding their choice among different versions of the Bible. They also express their inability at deciding a specific passage of Scripture as the model for their public policy, Leviticus or Deuteronomy. Moreover, one question expresses his doubt regarding the applicability of the Sermon on the Mount passage on US State Defense Department. All these questions inveigh the religiously conservative people and suggest that religion should be guided by practical logic and reasoning.

Paragraphs fifty nine, sixty and sixty one are the example of DESCRIPTIO. This figure of pathos is a “vivid description, especially of the consequences of an act that stirs up its hearers” (http://rhetoric.byu.edu/). In these paragraphs Obama recounts the story of Abraham and Isaac. He mentions “Abraham passes God’s test of devotion”,
when God ordered him to offer Him his son, Isaac. Paragraph sixty one is the vivid description of the consequences of following the example of Abraham in the modern times. Obama elaborates that offering of sons by their fathers to God is not applicable in modern times as the result of such practice will lead to a severe action taken against fathers by the Department of Children and Family Services. This example of DEScriptio motivates the audience in affirmation of Obama’s stance.

The second last paragraph, paragraph seventy seven, exhibits ADHOrTATIO. The speaker mentions that he slept at the night when he wrote his answer back to the doctor (he mentioned in his previous paragraphs) with the hope that all Americans can live with each other responding each others’ beliefs. He further mentions that this is the prayer which is worth praying and the most precious. This exhortation of Obama moves the audience and persuades them in favour of his views. Obama seems immensely successful in his appeal to pathos.

**Logos Applied**

**Logical Selection of Lexical Expressions**

Obama’s subject matter of this speech is the link between religion and politics. He speaks from both parties logically. He offers his views regarding a positive role of religion in the social and spiritual lives of the humans; he also does not forget to mention that blind and conservatively unreasonable religion is not applicable in the pluralistic society of America. So, he speaks both from the side of his own party members / the liberal Democrats and his opponents / the conservative Republicans. Throughout the speech he focuses on the point that both the liberal Americans and the conservative Americans should understand each other without biases and must find a common moderate ground, acceptable for all American communities. He uses expressions in the support of both the fractions. He also displays his own moderate expressions for bridging the gap between the conservative and the liberal Americans. Following tables demonstrate his support for the Democrats, Republicans, and in the end his own moderate views respectively. He does so quite logically to win the majority of opinion in his favour.
Table 1: List of connotative expressions supporting Democrats’ pluralism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lexical Items / Expressions Supporting Democrats</th>
<th>Paragraph No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secular America</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immoral and godless</td>
<td>04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We live in a pluralistic society</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can not impose my religious views on others</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing is more transparent than inauthentic expressions of faith</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would we go with James Dobson’s or Al Sharpton’s?</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which passage of Scripture should guide our public policy?</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Should we just stick to the Sermon on the Mount?</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let’s read our Bibles.</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folks haven’t been reading their Bibles.</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religiously motivated translate their concern into universal, rather than religion-specific, values.</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best we can do is act in accordance with … common laws or basic reason</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reconciliation between faith and … pluralism requires some sense of proportion … [from] both sides.</td>
<td>62, 63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: List of connotative expressions supporting Republican’s belief

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lexical Items / Expressions Supporting Republicans</th>
<th>Paragraph No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religious America</td>
<td>03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alan Keyes</td>
<td>04, 05, 07, 08, 11, 13, 18, 36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jerry Falwell</td>
<td>04, 36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pat Robertson</td>
<td>04, 36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christ will not vote for Barack Obama</td>
<td>05, 06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative leaders</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelical Christians</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The power of faith in peoples’ lives</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Americans are a religious people</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ninety percent of us believe in God</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventy percent affiliate with an organized religion</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thirty eight percent call themselves committed Christians</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More people in America believe in angels than they do in evolution</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A narrative arc</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relieve a chronic loneliness</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To realize that something was missing</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Found myself drawn in the church</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: The speaker’s own moderate expressions bridging the gap between the conservative and liberal Americans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Obama’s expressions as a bridge between Republicans and Democrats</th>
<th>Paragraph No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Today I’d … offer some thoughts about how we can sort through some of the often bitter arguments that we’ve been seeing over the last several years</td>
<td>02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s time … to reconcile faith with our modern, pluralistic democracy</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faith as more than just a comfort to the weary or a hedge against death, but rather as an active, palpable agent in the world</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faith does not mean that you don’t have doubts</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt that I heard God’s spirit beckoning me.</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I submitted myself to His will.</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As progressives, we cannot abandon the field of religious discourse.</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When we discuss religion only in the negative sense … others will fill the vacuum.</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Imagine Lincoln’s … address without reference to “the judgments of the Lord” or King’s “I have a Dream” speech without reference to “all of God’s children.”

Our fear of getting “preachy” may also lead us to discount the role that values and culture play in some of our most urgent social problems.

I believe that when a gangbanger shoots indiscriminately … we’ve got a moral problem.

There is a hole in that young man’s heart ----- a hole that the government alone cannot fix.

I am not suggesting that every progressive suddenly latch on to religious terminology.

Frederick Douglass, Abraham Lincoln, Williams Jennings Bryan, Dorothy Day, Martin Luther King … used religious language to argue for their cause.

We might recognize some overlapping values that both religious and secular people share when it comes to the moral and the material direction of our country.

We are also a Jewish nation, a Muslim nation, a Buddhist nation, a Hindu nation, and a nation of non-believers.

In a pluralistic society, we have no choice.

We can live with one another in a way that reconciles the beliefs of each …

These tables prove that in order to bridge the gap between the liberal Democrats and the conservative Republicans, Obama speaks from both sides. Table 1 and Table 2 demonstrate this quite clearly. But an interesting feature of this tabular analysis is that Table 3 has a very large data of expressions than the other two tables. This proves that Obama’s real objective in this speech was to find a common ground for both the liberal as well as the conservative Americans. Since he was going to announce his candidature for the 2008 American presidency, he decided to speak such a logical rhetoric in this 2006 speech in which he could get the favours of his opponents (the religiously conservatives), without offending his own fellows, the liberals. Hence through the
logical expressions marked in Table 3, he succeeds in persuading both the Republicans and the Democrats, without offending any one side. Obama comes out as a moderate American who is really different from his other party fellows. He emerges as a person who can be trusted and believed in by all Americans, the voice of America’s new generation which cannot be unheard even by the old ones. His logical selection of lexemes and expressions really makes his opponents not to resist his move towards the 2008 Presidential Chair in Washington.

**Figures of Logos**

Although Obama convinces his listeners through reasoning and logic in almost his every political speech, his present speech is, from first to the last paragraph, full of the use of logical style of talking. He exhausts almost every traditional figure of logos in this speech. This he does for some obvious reason: he addresses his own party mates, the Democrats, and tries to convince them of his proposition that their too much liberal attitude towards life and the polices of the state makes them seem as the non-religious people. Since he has to talk to the political personnels of a political party of the United States, he has to convince them of the correctness of his proposition through the way of reasoning and logic. For this purpose he employs too many figures of logos in this speech. Since these figures cannot be discussed in the previous part of this section, these are analyzed and interpreted here.

SORITES, a figure of logos is a “chain of claims and reasons” (http://rhetoric.byu.edu/). Paragraph thirty five exhibits this tool of logos. All the clauses connected through the semicolon are in fact the chain of reasons for supporting his notion of bridging the gap between religion and politics. Moreover, his use of SORITES lets the audience draw some obvious conclusion by themselves. Conclusion or advice is never absolutely stated (http://rhetoric.byu.edu/). Paragraph thirty five displays such use of language:

Because when we ignore the debate about what it means to be a good Christian or Muslim or Jew … Others will fill the vacuum, those with the most insular
views of faith or those who cynically use religion to justify partisan ends (Olive, 2008).

The obvious conclusion to be drawn is the liberals / Democrats should never ignore and overlook the discussion of the religious matters:

When we discuss religion only in the negative sense of where or how it should not be practiced, rather than in the positive sense of what it tells us about our obligations towards one another … Others will fill the vacuum, those with the most insular views of faith or those who cynically use religion to justify partisan ends (Olive, 2008).

The noticeable conclusion the listeners draw is that the Democrats should not look for the negative role of the religion, rather they should talk about the positive force religion provides to every individual of a society:

When we shy away from religious venues and religious broadcast because we assume that we will be unwelcome … Others will fill the vacuum, those with the most insular views of faith or those who cynically use religion to justify partisan ends (Olive, 2008).

The obvious conclusion Obama’s addressees draw is that they should not shy away from religious places and religious talks in the media.

This way of reasoning through a language implicit reasoning convinces the educated and intellectual listeners, since it lets them get their own conclusion, almost every time in the favour of the speaker. This supports element of logos in the speech.

Paragraph thirty seven displays the use of ENTHYMEME. “If we scrub language of all religious content, we forfeit the imagery and terminology through which millions of Americans understand both their personal morality and social justice”. In this ENTHYMEME, the major premise of the complete syllogism is missing:
Religious register bears the imagery and terminology through which large portion of Americans understand themselves and exchange their sense of personal morality and social justice. (Major premise - omitted).

If our language will have no religious register, it will not have the religious terminology and imagery necessary for Americans to understand one another. (Minor premise - stated).

Our use of language without religious register will forfeit the religious register of its terminology and imagery. So Americans would not communicate their social and moral values with one another. (Conclusion - stated).

This way of reasoning is highly impressive. Persuasion through reason is meant for the educated and intellectual audience. The use of ENTHYMEME and SORITES is a vital way of persuasion, a really impressive technique to strike the minds of the audience.

Paragraphs forty one and forty two highlight the speaker’s use of PAROMOLOGIA. See lines from paragraph forty one:

I believe in keeping guns out of our inner cities, and that our leaders must say so in the face of the gun manufacturers' lobby - but I also believe that when a gangbanger shoots indiscriminately into a crowd because he feels somebody disrespected him, we've got a moral problem. There's a hole in that young man's heart - a hole that the government alone cannot fix (Olive, 2008).

In this illustration of PAROMOLOGIA, the speaker first admits a point which he thinks as weaker to his reasoning. He admits that he has a firm belief in non-violence and that a violent person should be treated with iron hand. But he makes another point, a stronger one: a gangbanger and a shooter has a moral problem, and that moral problem cannot be solved by the government officials only. For this he needs a religious and moral aid. Now look at paragraph forty two:

I believe in vigorous enforcement of our non-discrimination laws. But I also believe that a transformation of conscience and a genuine commitment to diversity on the part of the
nation’s CEOs could bring about quicker results than a battalion of lawyers (Olive, 2008).

Obama admits the value of transparent enforcement of non-discrimination laws. But he makes a stronger point that if the government officials admit that the Americans come from pluralistically diverse cultural and religious backgrounds, then the need of the law enforcement agencies might be minimized. This method of admitting a weaker proposition to make a stronger one is a strong persuasive device in a rhetorical discourse.

Paragraphs fifty two and fifty six display another figure of logos, ANTHYPOPHORA. First sentence of paragraph fifty two puts a question mark before the audience because an interrogative sentence has been used:

“So the question is, how do we build on these still-tentative partnerships between religious and secular people of good will?”

Obama asks a question that how would it be possible that both the progressives and the conservatives would find a common ground of understanding? The speaker himself answers the question in rest of the paragraph. He provides different steps to solve the problems.

1. He marks the need of much more effort still to be done for achieving that goal.
2. The biases and the suspicions on each side need to be removed.
3. Both sides should produce some common-ground rules for their common and collaborative understanding.

The use of such question / answer format by employing an appealing figure of reasoning, ANTHYPOPHORA, is a striking technique of persuasion.

Paragraph fifty six demonstrates a long series of questions put one after another:

And even if we did have only Christians in our midst, if we expelled every non-Christian from the United States of America, whose Christianity would we teach in the schools? Would we go with James Dobson's, or Al Sharpton's? Which
passages of Scripture should guide our public policy? Should we go with Leviticus, which suggests slavery is ok and that eating shellfish is abomination? How about Deuteronomy, which suggests stoning your child if he strays from the faith? Or should we just stick to the Sermon on the Mount - a passage that is so radical that it's doubtful that our own Defense Department would survive its application? (Olive, 2008).

These questions are puzzling. The subject matter of these questions is the audiences’ inability at deciding any one option out of the two regarding their choice among different versions of the Bible; their inability at deciding a specific passage of Scriptures, Leviticus or Deuteronomy as the model for their public policy. The last question asks whether the US citizens should follow wholly the Sermon on the Mount? Obama further mentions that if this passage is taken as model, then the US Defense Department will not survive. Through the series of these questions he makes an idea clear to the audience that he should not be taken as a blind proponent of unreasonable religious fixation. His stance in this speech is only that the liberal Democrats should not ignore the part religious values play in the lives of humans. It does not mean that he is taking the side of conservative religious fanatics. Last two sentences of the paragraph are an answer to these questions as well a comment on the American people:

“So before we get carried away, let's read our Bibles. Folks haven't been reading their Bibles”.

Here he claims that folks are not well versed in their Bibles. Hence cannot evaluate anyone’s [indirectly Obama’s] religious approach as right or wrong. He further opines that the American people should interpret the Bible in a logical, practical and reasonable way to create their own Bibles. This technique of ANTHYPOPHORA is an inspiring means of persuading the audience. Obama employs logic as a winning game.
Conclusion

Obama knows how to convince people of what he believes. Though he uses too many figures of ethos and pathos in this speech, yet his use of the figure of logos is prominent here as compared to his other speeches. This might be so as he was addressing an educated group of people about the need of religion even for those who are nonbelievers.

References


“Silva Rhetoricae” (rhetoric.byu.edu). <http://rhetoric.byu.edu/>