The Rhetorics of Hafez al Assad

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Language is a device that enables us to understand the world. Speech is the expression of understanding (Sophia) which lets us explain situations, construct dialogue, and clarify and investigate the world. The word is the most powerful expression of human ability; without it human beings would have accomplished no more than animals intellectually. Communication is the essential activity that links the various parts of society together and allow them to function as an integrated whole. Rhetoricians understand the importance and power of words. They use strategies that rely on words, which they see as a tool to be use to effect, often in sophisticated ways. They seek to fashion a new reality, which the audience can accept as genuine. Rhetoricians generally do this by eliciting a sense of agreement with the listener and once that feeling of understanding has been established, the task of persuasion can begin.

GJHSS-G Classification : FOR Code: 139999

Strictly as per the compliance and regulations of:
The Rhetorics of Hafez al Assad

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INTRODUCTION

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The article examined the rhetorical devices found in Hafez al Assad's political speech. It hypothesized that Assad's rhetoric would include both stylistic and argumentative rhetorical devices. 5

The first step involved an impressionistic assessment of Assad's political speech. A preliminary reading found several rhetorical features: syntax-based rhetorical devices, semantic-based rhetorical devices, and discourse analysis. When a rhetorical device was identified in one political speech, the researcher looked for the same device in other speeches and calculated its frequency of usage. Finally, a profile was drawn up of the rhetorical devices found in al-Assad's political speech: in other words, the rhetorical and stylistic devices and argumentation that he used.

a) Stylistic rhetoric

A common analytical approach when studying rhetoric is to examine the wording of persuasive messages and the tools of persuasion that speakers and writers use. Influential figures who express their ideas publicly use a variety of argumentation approaches and methods to appeal to their audience's logic and emotions. Stylistic rhetoric targets the emotions and is known as rhetorical appeal. 6 When appealing to the emotions, speakers' use specific elements and structures in their messages in order to arouse given responses in their audience, such as sympathy, empathy, hesitancy, or rejection. 7

According to Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, "persuasive arguments" are arguments which claim things that are only valid for a particular audience. "Convincing arguments" on the other hand are arguments that seek the agreement of all rational people. In other word, a "persuasive arguments" is an argument which takes the viewpoint, beliefs, and needs of a particular audience into account. 8 This might include addressing a particular audience's emotions, which might not be effective if addressed to a universal audience that does not share those particular beliefs or needs. The goal of a speech which is addressed to a universal audience of listeners is to persuade while the goal of a speech which is addressed to a specific audience is to convince. 9

i. Repetition of syntactic elements

Darshan 10 cites Koch's study, 11 showing that Arab political discourse very typically uses rhetorical repetition. This involves rhythmic repetition of phonemes, morphemes, roots, words, phrases and key sentences, sentence paraphrases, the multiple use of syntactic parallels between sentences, structures, and members. Repetition is the key to textual coherence and understanding the whole meaning of a text, which is a feature of discourse. 12

The force of rhetorical repetition is achieved in several ways:

4 Gitay, 2013 (b), p. 120.
5 Landau (1988, p. 17) used the term "שכנוע" for 'persuasion' a term she used to arguments that address the emotions. This contrasts with "盪מ" which refers to "conviction" and refers to arguments that address the intellect.

6 Tsur, 2004, p. 78.
7 Tsur, 2011, pp. 74-75.
8 Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969, p. 28.
9 Perelman, 1994, p. 20.
10 Darshan, 2000, p. 7.
A. Repeated phrases, anaphora, epiphora, repeated members and repeated syntactic patterns create a rhythm, a particular cadence. Word repetition creates a rhythmic musical effect which is produced by both the sounds being repeated and the repetition itself. Repeating a message elicits aesthetic musical pleasure in the listener that helps to embed the message in the listener's mind, arouse the listener, and create an emotional tendency to agree with the speaker almost instinctively. Perelman argued that in order to produce the presence of the message, it is effective to stress undeniable fundamentals at length; Increasing a person focus on them reinforces their presence in the listener's mind. Simply dwelling on a certain subject produces the desired emotion.

In psychology, an emotional connection between a listener and an idea is called identification: A person identifies with real and symbolic objects which agrees with the speaker without considering the content. As a rhetorical device, repetition helps to instill the speaker's ideas in the audience's mind and to use the audience's involuntarily emotional tendency to agree with the speaker without considering the content.

B. The parallel repetition of sentences is what produces the rhythm of a rhetorical text. That rhythm, which created by the rhetorical musical emphasis, helps in highlighting key ideas, and assists their recall. The parallelism within the rhythmic syntactic pattern creates a parallelism of ideas in the complementary members of the sentence which can either reinforce or oppose an idea, or divide a long idea being developed slowly, into smaller parts.

C. Besides creating a rhythm, syntactic structure can also create a rhythm by interrupting the symmetry in the length and structure of the parallel sentences / clauses on the first connection level. This happens when one part of a sentence on the first level contains other sentence parts which are repeated on the second connection level. A strong break happens in the beginning or middle of the sentence. When it is at the end, it is regarded as part of the rhythm which is generating the rhetorical force. The connection-within-a-connection structure that breaks the rhythm and symmetry serves to focus the listener's attention on the idea. This break in the rhythm focuses the listener's mental energy on the idea that the speaker wishes to highlight, again, in order to persuade the audience.

D. Repeating a lexical element, word, or expression in nearby or more distant sentences enables the speaker to establish continuity between the sentences in the speech and to connect them and give them cohesion.

E. Repetition using synonyms—repeating an argument multiple times with linguistic variations helps the speaker to impress the audience.

F. Sentence repetition—this allows the speaker to buy time to continue his speech. When speakers use stylized repetition they are not seeking to prove what they are saying and convince their audience that it is the truth by using logical proof: they wish rather to communicate a message which is not open to discussion by using repetition—as if that itself were proof.

a. Syntactic parallelism between clauses involving repetition of syntactic patterns and verbal repetition

Balanced, reasoned, rhythmic patterns:

1. Repeating the same word or phrase: "We cannot surrender to threats,"
2. "And we cannot give up before the challenges,"
3. "And we cannot hesitate in the campaign for liberation,"
4. "And we cannot turn our backs on the obstacles."

(Speech by Hafez al-Assad on the 24th anniversary of the March 8 Revolution, 1987)

A parallel syntactical structure with a repeated anaphoric element denotes not + subject + modifier. The nouns "Khoum" and "Toukam" are nouns taken from the same semantic field of giving in and breaking.

Rhythmic patterns with increasing length:

2. "The anniversary of the March 8 Revolution, 1987"

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15 Perelman, 1994, p. 35.
16 Landau, 1988, p. 64.
18 Landau, 1988, p. 57, 64.
They have already
• Tried to control us from the outside, and failed,
• Tried to frighten us with threats, and they failed,
• Tried to infiltrate from within, and gave up,
• And tried to attract us with temptation, and gave up for ever,
• And now they are trying with all their might, including with economic pressures, and are succeeding no more than in any of the failed campaigns which they fought against our proud people.

(Speech by Hafez al-Assad on the 24th anniversary of the March 8 Revolution, 1987)

In the final sentence, the anaphoric element changes to the present tense “They have” This is to emphasize the situation in the present. Before this element, the phrase “how” breaks the rhythm and draws the audience’s attention to the main point in the message. Possibly, the speaker said everything in one breath until he reaches the last sentence, which breaks the rhythm. The final sentence in the pattern is longer than its predecessors and ends what was said before on an impressive final chord.

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Along with my blessing to every one of you, I address my words to you in the noble Arab spirit,
• The spirit of courage and heroism,
• The spirit of courage and heroism,
• The spirit of bravery, devotion, and sacrifice / giving in the face of danger.

(Speech by Hafez al-Assad following the outbreak of the Yom Kippur War)

This is a syntactical repetition consisting of detailed apposition and repetition of the anaphoric element "my world"...

You are very weak, you reactionaries… we will never lose the way,
• Ours is an issue we uphold
• Ours is motherland we love and which we hold on to.

(1982 speech by Hafez al-Assad)

b. Syntactic parallelism between sentence parts involving repetition of syntactic patterns and verbal repetition

Balanced, reasoned, rhythmic patterns

Along with my blessing to every one of you, I address my words to you in the noble Arab spirit,
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Repetition of the preposition "in" with parallelism in the types of location.

Rhythmic patterns with a rising direction

Along with my blessing to every one of you, I address my words to you in the noble Arab spirit,
• The spirit of courage and heroism,
• The spirit of courage and heroism,
• The spirit of bravery, devotion, and sacrifice / giving in the face of danger.

(Speech by Hafez al-Assad following the outbreak of the Yom Kippur War)
Today we embark on a glorious and heroic brave battle

*To protect our precious country,
*To protect our glorious history,
*To protect the heritage of our fathers and grandfathers.

(Speech by Hafez al-Assad following the outbreak of the Yom Kippur War)

Syntactical repetition of prepositional modifier and repetition of the anaphoric element: "Your country"

Rhythmic patterns with a descending direction

Balanced, reasoned, rhythmic patterns

We stand with the Arab people in its refusal

*To surrender to the occupiers,
*To humiliate itself in front of the thieves,
*To be submissive to those who deviate from the path.

(Speech by Hafez al-Assad on the 24th anniversary of the March 8 Revolution, 1987)

Rhythmic patterns with a rising direction

The repetition postpones the message to the end of the sentence.

For example:

"The repetition of the anaphoric element: "Your country"

Rhythmic curving patterns"
The Revolution has taken great strides towards fulfilling its goals both at home and abroad.

* By conquering many difficulties,
* By realizing much of its potential,
* By overcoming many obstacles,
* By inspiring the Arab struggle for liberation and unity,

until, thanks to its achievements and victories, it became the biggest challenge to the imperialist and Zionist powers and the target of plots, threats, pressure, and libel.

( Speech by Hafez al-Assad on the 24th anniversary of the March 8 Revolution, 1987)

Our revolution

* Is ongoing,
* Strong,
* Loyal to its goals and strategies,
* Loyal to its principles,
* Capable of overcoming challenges,
* Fighting hardships,
* Will not be overcome by enemies,
* Precious
* Thanks to you,
* Thanks to our national unity, thanks to the multitudes of our people and our nation who are faithful to the goals of unity, freedom, and socialism which shape our future.

(Speech by Hafez al-Assad on the 24th anniversary of the March 8 Revolution, 1987)

Syntactical parallelism of predicates repeated in a complex syntactical pattern in terms of length, which does not begin with the same verbal element but rather a recurring grammatical element — a predicate. By repeating the predicates a gradually emerging idea is expressed.
We are strong
In our revolution, in the masses of our people, in their vitality.
In our goals which express the collective conscience of our nation.
In the determination of the masses of our people to struggle and make sacrifices.
In the achievements of our revolution in every area.
In strongly clinging to our goals and strategies.
In our clear vision regarding the world today and the struggles happening in it.
In our awareness of the laws governing the struggle between nations and their enemies in this world.

(Speech by Hafez al-Assad on the 24th anniversary of the March 8 Revolution, 1987)

d. Repetition of a phrase immediately or after a gap

You are very weak, you reactionaries… we will never lose the way… ours is an issue we uphold… ours is motherland we love and which we hold on to… but you, you have no motherland… You, you have no motherland… because your motherland is about your thirsts for blood, and its actions show contempt for the principles and highest ideals of humanity, and for international resolutions and law.

(Speech by Hafez al-Assad following the outbreak of the Yom Kippur War)

Israel has been a whore, it has yielded to temptation, and its leaders’ heads have been filled with sovereignty; they have committed many crimes and they think it is right to use aggression; it (idea of sovereignty) fills their hearts with black hatred towards our people and towards humanity, it controls them completely, it thirsts for blood, and its actions show contempt for the principles and highest ideals of humanity, and for international resolutions and law.

(Speech by Hafez al-Assad following the outbreak of the Yom Kippur War)

The worthy generations that enjoy the achievements of the revolution have built on these achievements and are enjoying them and they have the right to enjoy them…
Wartime is a criterion for nations and a test of their nobility. When a nation experiences greater distress, its pure metal is revealed and its underlying qualities are known throughout history for its masculinity and pride, for its heroism and devotion in the face of death, a guiding threat, or obedience to anyone, or to accept the challenge given to us, and our determination is to meet the challenges against us, to defeat the enemies, and move steadily along the path of our nation and the masses of its Arab peoples, the path of victory.

And we, who are not accustomed to bowing our heads to anyone, or to acceding to threats, or being too despairing to confront fear, or to bending our bodies to aggressors, or obeying orders from outsiders, we say that we accept the challenge given to us, and our decision is to defeat the enemies and thwart their plots, and move steadily along the path of our nation and the masses of its Arab peoples, the path of victory.

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2015-02-14
We are strong in our national unity, which was always our sharpest weapon in the battle, thanks to the determination of the masses of our people to maintain the tradition of their glorious struggle, and make all the necessary sacrifices, so that Syria can remain free, determined of the masses of our people to maintain always our sharpest weapon in the battle, thanks to the progress, and socialism.

(Speech by Hafez al-Assad on the 24th anniversary of the March 8 Revolution, 1987)

If Lebanon is divided, the Israelis will say Don’t believe those Arabs if they can’t live together. If Muslim Arabs can’t live with Christian Arab, then how could we live with Jewish and non-Arab Jews from all over the world, from the west and the east? This slogan will be proved to be wrong. Israel wants a split so it can get rid of the accusation of racism. The U.N. agreed a nationalist banner. If the Lebanese Arabs cannot live together in one country despite living together for many years, it gives them [the Israelis] practical proof [ammunation] for negating the concept of [Arab] nationalism. More than that, I say that dividing Lebanon is the biggest blow to Islam which is the religion of the vast majority of the Arab nation, because they want to portray present day Islam as an extreme religion which prevents its believers from living side by side with others even if they are part of the same nation. It is a plot against Islam and against Muslims, which I want to stress, and I want this truth to be known.

I said this often in conversations with the relevant parties both within and outside Lebanon. It is a plot against Islam and a plot against Arabism which benefits the enemy. It is a plot against Islam and a plot against Arabism which benefits the enemy, Zionism and benefits Israel.

(Speech by Hafez al-Assad at his meeting with the Local Administration District Council members, 20.7.1976)
The Rhétorics of Hafez al-Assad

The schemers wanted us to give in and they gave in. They used all kind of cunning tactics and their tactics all failed. They did not achieve even a single goal. They did everything they could and we destroyed them in the past and we will destroy them in the future. The values, the values we stress everywhere: in the schools, in the field, in the factory, and over many years; the values that we cling to, that we express and talk about at every opportunity — they are not for consumption and not for building; they are values, they are symbols which express the truth of our feelings, the truth of our lives, the truth we hold sacred.

(20.7.1976)

Speech by Hafez al-Assad at his meeting with the Local Administration District Council members, 20.7.1976.

ii. Ending speech unit with a summarizing statement

The values, those values we stress everywhere: in the schools, in the field, in the factory, and over many years; the values that we cling to, that we express and talk about at every opportunity — they are not for consumption and not for building; they are values, they are symbols which express the truth of our feelings, the truth of our lives, the truth we hold sacred.

(20.7.1976)

Speech by Hafez al-Assad at his meeting with the Local Administration District Council members, 20.7.1976.

You are very weak, you reactionaries... we will never lose the way... ours is an issue we uphold... ours is motherland we love and which we hold on to... but you, you have no motherland... You, you have no motherland... because your motherland is about your opportunistic interests... your greed... your opportunism... your motherland is a place of injustice and repression... a place of hatred and exploitation... of reactionary policies. My sons, his motherland...

(28.7.1982)

Speech by Hafez al-Assad (20.7.1976)

You are very weak, you reactionaries... we will never lose the way... ours is an issue we uphold... ours is motherland we love and which we hold on to... but you, you have no motherland... You, you have no motherland... because your motherland is about your opportunistic interests... your greed... your opportunism... your motherland is a place of injustice and repression... a place of hatred and exploitation... of reactionary policies. My sons, his motherland...

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Speech by Hafez al-Assad at his meeting with the Local Administration District Council members, 20.7.1976.
If Lebanon is divided, the Israelis will say Don’t believe those Arabs if they can’t live together. If Muslim Arabs can’t live with Christian Arab, then how could we live with Jewish and non-Arab Jews from all over the world, from the west and the east? This slogan will be proved to be wrong. Israel wants a split so it can get rid of the accusation of racism. The U.N. agreed a resolution saying that Zionism is a racist organization — and this is a major achievement for the Palestinian issue and the Arab struggle. Why racist? Because it is a country that gathers people from everywhere who have nothing in common but religion in order to make a nation out of them and establish a state for this people. And if Lebanon is split between the Muslims and the Christians, Israel will say: why is it racist? Israel is based on religion and Lebanon is a state or mini states which are also based on religion. So either we are all racists or none of us are racists. A divided Lebanon means you cannot accuse Israel of racism.

(Speech by Hafez al-Assad at his meeting with the Local Administration District Council members, 20.7.1976)

iii. Creating a sense of closeness between the speaker and the audience by juxtaposing the personal pronouns “I” and “You” — this helps to bolster the audience’s faith in the leader’s credibility.

I believe that you and I are optimists, and we need to be optimists and to choose this optimism in our constant and ongoing efforts to achieve more success.

(Speech by Hafez al-Assad at his meeting with the Local Administration District Council members, 20.7.1976)
Our armed forces have proved in the past that they deserve the faith which our people and our nation have in them. Greetings of Peace to you Oh Sons in the Armed Forces wherever you are.

(Speech by Hafez al-Assad on the 24th anniversary of the March 8 Revolution, 1987)

• Oh our brother citizens,
• Oh our friends,
• Oh sirs who are present, our revolution, the March 8 Revolution...

(Speech by Hafez al-Assad on the 24th anniversary of the March 8 Revolution, 1987)

vii. Figures of speech

Among the textual ornaments which have received a respected place in literary writing we find the various types of figures of speech. They include similes, metaphors, personification, allusion, metonymy, etc. What they share is a semantic shift from one area to another based on similarity between analogous ideas.

a. Metaphor

For at least 3 decades, researchers and political theorists have been interested in how metaphors are used as persuasive devices. The metaphor is the most recognized figure of speech. It is a linguistic device that is used to transfer meaning from one sphere to another. It is a semantic deviation from the original meaning of a word, any word, taken from any part of speech. For example, the word "gap" in the phrase "he has a gap in his education" means "a lack" metaphorically.

In contrast to their traditional linguist counterparts, cognitive linguists see metaphors not as

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22 In this example, the anaphoric element "اثناء" is repeated.

23 Weinberg, 2006, P.52.


rhetorical embellishment but as part of human thinking. Metaphorical expressions are seen as expressions that nourish our world view and form our thinking, and thus our actions themselves. These are metaphors that grasp concepts in one sphere via another sphere: a sphere that borrows, and is the goal, a different sphere that lends, and is the source. Thus, for example, the identification “Time is money” allows us to relate to time metaphorically in terms of money:\n\n\n---

27 Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, pp. 3-6; Carpenter & Thompson, 1999, p. 83.
28 Thompson, 1996, pp. 185.
i. Rhetorical questions

Among other things, a speaker's arguments in political ideological discourse are based on patterns of indirect speech and rhetorical questions, which are part of a textual tapestry and an intentionally woven argumentative fabric. The rhetorical question is one of the most important aspects of argumentative rhetoric. It is an indirect speech act that seeks to express an emphatic assertion, with no expectation of a reply in most cases.\(^\text{30}\)

Landau discussed rhetorical questions at length highlighting three central types of rhetorical question\(^\text{31}\): “Yes-No” questions that open with the question “Have / Has?” etc., for example: the questions “Could it be that…?” “Is it true that…?” Positive rhetorical questions like this express strong negative assertions while negative rhetorical questions express strong positive assertions\(^\text{32}\), for example: Could it be that they actually have the right to speak for this country’s residents? Rhetorical questions that start with a completion question word, such as “What?” “How?” “Why?” etc., apart from the question word “Have / Has?” for example: Which country besides Israel has compromised so much? and choice questions that are basically assertions which reject the first option and strongly approve the second option. For example: Could it be that you are genuinely worried about citizens' welfare, homes, and children, or do you just want their money perhaps in order to control and go on controlling and eat your ill at our expense?

Landau suggested that of the three types of rhetorical questions, rhetorical choice questions provide the most emphasis. She discussed at length the impact of including these questions in the text—rhetorical questions at the end of a sequence of declarative sentences, a series of rhetorical questions on one subject, putting a rhetorical question in a complex sentence, and splitting rhetorical questions.\(^\text{33}\)

Livnat\(^\text{34}\) discussed Fruchtman’s basic distinction between emotive and presentational texts\(^\text{35}\). According to this distinction, persuasive texts are also emotional and their emotional character helps to convey their concealed message of persuasion. The writer uses the implicit information to convey his or her attitude toward the events and to try to influence the reader's views. Livnat identified several linguistic stratagems that expose the implicit information encoded in the text and divided them into four categories: syntactic stratagems, poetic stratagems, semantic stratagems, and stratagems linked to logical structures. According to Livnat, a rhetorical question is a linguistic stratagem that

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32 Quirk & Greenbaum, 1989, p. 200.


is linked to logical structures and aimed at increasing the text's emotiveness and directing the emotions produced in the reader in the particular direction the writer wishes:

43. And so in this way the democratic process is made clear, and in this way the reader is expected to offer an opinion in response. In contrast to other types of questions, this question does not seek information, it does not assert something like a rhetorical question, it does not contain the answer, and the purpose of the question is to focus the reader's mind on what the speaker says next. In answering the question, the speaker can present his criticism and say what is on his mind.36

We gave Beirut security and our brothers in Lebanon a climate of national discourse, but what did the others give?

(Speech by Hafez al-Assad at the 24th anniversary of the March 8 Revolution, 1987)

45. And so in this way the democratic process is made clear, and in this way the reader is expected to offer an opinion in response. In contrast to other types of questions, this question does not seek information, it does not assert something like a rhetorical question, it does not contain the answer, and the audience is not expected to offer an opinion in response. The purpose of the question is to focus the reader's mind on what the speaker says next. In answering the question, the speaker can present his criticism and say what is on his mind.36

We find this strategy of asking a "real" question as opposed to a rhetorical question in theatrical texts, where it serves as a plot device. A "real" question obliges an answer and is considered a new element, not a repetition or paraphrase. The answer given connects the parts of the text thus moving the plot forward. This technique, which is used for convincing others, is similar to the rhetorical question, though not identical. In this case, the speaker employs a question and answer structure in order to rouse the listener to think more

broadly about something the speaker assumes the listener has not previously considered:38 If Lebanon is divided, the Israelis will say Don't believe those Arabs if they can't live together, If Muslim Arabs can't live with Christian Arab, how could we live with Jewish and non-Arab Jews from all over the world, from the west and the east? This slogan will be proved to be wrong. Israel wants a split so it can get rid of the accusation of racism. The U.N. agreed a resolution saying that Zionism is a racist organization — an admission that Israel wants a split to get rid of the alleged racism of the Arab side.

In order to convince their audiences, speakers may draw on the literary, religious, or folk sources associated with that audience's society or culture. These sources consist of poetry, sayings, proverbs, sacred writings, and myths.

According to Aristotle, these sources fall into two categories39: A. Sources that are accepted and taken for granted, whose validity needs no proof. They include laws, contracts, and sacred writings. These sources are termed "arguments outside the art of speech".

B. Intellectual or emotional sources, such as sayings, proverbs, and myths which are quoted in order to prove things that are not obvious.

Myths nourish argumentation. According to Sivan's definition, myths are a form of political allegory, handed down in writing through the generations40. A myth is structured as a dramatic story with heroes and villains and usually depicts an historical event. The mythical historical event is presented as larger than life; its heroes having the aura of epic heroes, despite being ordinary mortals. Myths speak to the emotions, carry the masses along, and leaving rationality behind. Their stories are handed down to subsequent generations, and form the basis of an organized belief whose believers have no need for logical persuasion41.

Sivan suggested that political myths have two functions42:

A. Interpretive function - Myths allow people to turn to the past for precedents and archetypes that will help them understand and interpret contemporary ideals. This involves drawing inferences from past events to present day issues.

B. Behavioral function—Myths rouse people to political action. For example: to defend a political or social order warranted by the myth.

Cassirer wrote regarding the interpretive function, that myths arise at times of crisis when human logic fails and people turn to the power of the myth. Regarding the behavioral function, Cassirer argued that political myths drive political action.

These persuasion devices are divided into two groups according to Arabic linguistic rhetoric43:

1. "qībās - verses from the Qur'ān or ḫāliq;
2. Īāḍīm-quotations from songs / poetry, prose, proverbs. According to Al-İămwyī, the quotation which is used retains the same structure, order of words, and original meaning as the Qur'ān, though it might not retain the Qur'ānic form, say, by adding a word or letter; deleting a word or letter; or changing the word order of a sentence. The original meaning of the Qur'ānic quotation can also

38 Shaked, 2009, p. 141.
39 Spiegel, 1993, p. 73.
41 Sivan, 1988, pp. 9-11
42 Sivan, 1988, p. 73, pp. 78-79.
be altered to transmit a different teaching, the one the speaker wishes to transmit to his or her audience. When a speaker uses quotations he or she relies on the reader's acquaintance with the cultural tradition underlying the quotation. If the reader is unfamiliar with the cultural tradition he will not understand it fully, and it will usually seem quite strange. As known, in Arab culture, the Qur'an is regarded as the highest form of Arabic. Its style and language defy all efforts at imitation. Its absolute truth is made holy by seal of Allah, its verses are perceived as truths requiring no proof. It is easy to understand why speakers seek to harness these verses for their own ends and exploit their effect on the audience.

Citing ancient sources returns the reader to the ancient historical situation. Readers now have to compare the text in the present with the original text they recall, thus enriching and deepening the present text. Thus, when people quote verses in their writing they are relying on the reader's familiarity with the cultural tradition which is cited. Readers who are unfamiliar with that tradition cannot grasp it fully.

According to Landau there are several reasons for quoting sources such as sacred writings:

A. To reinforce the speaker's message by offering proof and support from the sources that his opinion or actions are justified; to disprove the opponent's position, and to criticize the opponent for an action linked to the quotation.

B. For purely stylistic reasons, to beautify the text—the speaker has a tendency to use these quotations when speaking and either consciously or unconsciously and sprinkles his speech with them. They have no persuasive rhetorical value.

C. Manipulation - the speaker quotes a verse out of context and interprets it symbolically so that it fits in with new ideas on contemporary issues. For example, Darshan cites Bengo's ideas regarding the manipulative use of quotations from outside sources. Bengo recalled that Sadaam Hussein quoted verses from the Al-Anfal Surra in order to justify his genocidal campaign against the Kurds, which involved the use of chemical weapons, and was known as the Al-Anfal campaign.

D. Architextonic use - establish ideas by citing verses. Each new idea in a speech is preceded by a new verse. Another structure involves the use of several verses to present a single idea.

a. Qur'anic quotations

45 Darshan, 2000, p. 110.
47 Darshan, 2000, p. 110.

We preach peace and work towards peace for our people and all the peoples of the world, and we are engaged in defending ourselves so we can live in peace. Go with the blessings of Allah and if Allah will send you victory one can defeat them. Peace be with you. (Speech by Hafez al-Assad following the outbreak of the Yom Kippur War)

The aim of this sentence is to support the argument that the Muslim nation will ultimately defeat its enemies because it is righteous and worthy.

b. Myths

i. The myth of the Crusades

This crusades myth relates to the historic invasion of the Middle East by European forces in the 11th-13th centuries before the final defeat of the crusaders in the thirteenth century through jihad. The crusader myth symbolizes the endless struggle between aggressor and victim, with the West in the role of the eternal conqueror and the Arabs in the role of the eternal victim.
and pride, for its heroism and devotion in the face of death, a people that carried the message of light and faith to all over the world, and the whole world saw it united in its lofty qualities and noble qualities. Oh you grandchildren of Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Ali, may Allah always delight in you. Oh you grandchildren of Khalid, Abu Ubaidah, Saad, and Salah al-Din, the conscience of our nation calls to us and our martyrs' spirits speak to us to embody the values of al-Yarmouk, al-Qadisiyah, Hattin, and Ein Jaloth. The multitudes of us are the sons of Khalid, Abu Ubaidah, Saad, and Salah al-Din, we are the sons of the Muslim military leaders Khalid ibn al-Walid, Abu Ubaidah ibn al-Jarrah, Saad ibn Abi Waqqas and Salah al-Din who are considered the companions of the Prophet Mohammad. By addressing them this way, al-Assad makes the audience feel part of the Islamic victories against the West in battles like the Battle of Yarmouk, the Battle of Uhud, the Battle of Hattin, and the Battle of Ain Jalut. He argues that Israel will finally surrender the way the West has surrendered in the nuclear threat against the lives of human beings on this planet is not restricted to a particular state or a particular nuclear threat. The question of protecting ourselves from the nuclear threat against the lives of human beings on this planet is not restricted to a particular state or a particular nuclear threat. We must not subjugate our strategy and goals to temporary circumstances or transient factors. We must use these temporary circumstances and transient factors. We must bend them and take action to shape them until they suit our strategy and goals.

The question of protecting ourselves from the nuclear threat against the lives of human beings on this planet is not restricted to a particular state or a particular nuclear threat. We must use these temporary circumstances and transient factors. We must bend them and take action to shape them until they suit our strategy and goals.

We are not aggressive and we were never aggressive, but we stop those who act aggressively towards us.

We do not seek anyone’s death. We stop those who wish to kill our people.

We do not enjoy death and destruction, we fight and a primary or “nucleus” clause, which expresses opposing or contrasting ideas. The reader / audience feels positively towards the idea in the nucleus (the thesis in this case). Their understanding of the satellite, which rejects the opposite view to the nucleus, enhances the reader’s positive attitude to the state of affairs described in the nucleus:

i. Antitheses with preceding satellite

We do not enjoy death and destruction, we fight when they try to kill and destroy us.

(Speech by Hafez al-Assad following the outbreak of the Yom Kippur War)
We gave Beirut security and a climate of national discourse to our brothers in Lebanon, but what have the others given?

(Speech by Hafez al-Assad on the 24th anniversary of the March 8 Revolution, 1987)

58. And he said that the people of Lebanon are suffering because of the Sharon government, which is dominated by Lebanese and hosting Palestinian and Baathist elements.

59. We gave Beirut security and a climate of national discourse to our brothers in Lebanon, but what have the others given?

(Speech by Hafez al-Assad on the 24th anniversary of the March 8 Revolution, 1987)

We took an initiative to rescue the Lebanese brothers when the others wanted to drown them; and we refused to accept this and decided to thwart this plan.

(Speech by Hafez al-Assad at his meeting with the Local Administration District Council members, 20.7.1976)

The repetition of the negative “less” as an anaphoric element which connects three subjects strengthens the satellite antithesis which rejects a view that does not agree with the thesis that is presented in the nucleus.

ii. Antithesis with preceding nucleus

55. And we could not watch our sister Lebanon drowning in blood and simply watch her from a distance —as the others did— and send her good wishes and curses —if it was enough for them just to curse her.

(Speech by Hafez al-Assad on the 24th anniversary of the March 8 Revolution, 1987)

Those who ignored [Lebanon’s plight] need to remember that Syria only answered Lebanon’s cry for help when the pogroms began, when the fighting between them intensified to such unprecedented levels, and the threads were tangled up, and the colors intermixed, and the marks of identification were lost, until it was impossible to know who was fighting and killing whom. And at that point we said yes, because out of the thick fog, the fog of blood and fire, we realized what was really behind the killing, and that is what is important, and we went in to fight them. We could not watch our sister Lebanon drowning in blood and simply watch her...
from afar— like the others—and either wish her well or curse her—if they sufficed only with cursing her.

(Speech by Hafez al-Assad on the 24th anniversary of the March 8 Revolution, 1987)

**Summary**

Analysis of the rhetoric in al-Assad's political speeches reveals both stylistic and argumentative devices. The most common ones are: syntax-based rhetorical repetition, metaphor, rhetorical questions, antithesis and highlighting the speaker's behavior while comparing it to reprehensible behavior by others in the same situation.

Hafez al-Assad tends to use the stylistic device of syntactic repetition particularly often in his political speech. He seems aware that syntactical repetition is an especially powerful rhetorical tool. This repetition includes repeating sentences and clauses, repeating parts of sentences, repeating an entire sentence immediately or after a pause, repetition involving synonyms or words from the same semantic field, repeating a word to create a link with the rest of the statement, and repetition involving variation on a unit of discourse. Repeating the message this way gives the listeners' aesthetic musical pleasure, which helps to embed the message in the audience's consciousness, arouses excitement, and creates an emotional inclination to almost instinctively agree with the speaker.

In the political speech of Hafez al-Assad, metaphors and particularly war-related metaphors are used to impressive effect. War-related metaphors such as "bloodthirsty", "drowning in blood", and "bloodbath" arouse the audience's emotions urging listeners to take action or at least to accept the message. The metaphors are emotionally loaded and aim to caution against and deter violence.

Hafez al-Assad often uses an antithesis which begins with a satellite. He apparently thinks that his message is enriched and the positive attitude of the audience towards the nucleus's message is intensified when the antithesis begins with a satellite and rejects the view that disagrees with the nucleus.

Hafez al-Assad seeks to justify his policy and convince his audience of the righteousness of his path by comparing his conduct in a given situation with the disgusting conduct of others in the same situation. This puts him in a positive light and presents him as a politician you can trust.

As an argumentative rhetorical device, rhetorical questions are a very important element in the political speeches of Hafez al-Assad. He is apparently aware of the power of the rhetorical question, especially rhetorical questions at the end of a series of declarative sentences. Rhetorical questions heighten the emotive quality of the text and direct the listeners' emotions in the direction desired by the speaker.

**References Références Referencias**