

Ethical Learning and Knowledge Generation through Poetic Language: A Quintillion Engagement with Charlie Hebdo in *Charlie Hebdo and other Poems* by Ejaz Rahim

Sonia Bokhari¹ 

¹PhD Scholar, National University of Modern Languages (NUML), Islamabad
Correspondence: sonia.bokhari72@gmail.com¹

ABSTRACT

Study Background: Poet today is supposed to be well-informed and crafty enough to gaze at contemporary issues to enlighten dogma dulled minds. Taking the case of poetry for effective knowledge generation, this study explores the poem “Charlie Hebdo” from *Charlie Hebdo and Other Poems*, (2022) by Ejaz Rahim, as a specimen of poetic art that can speak through history and social context to create the environment of a shared humanity.

Aim of the Study: The research aims to establish the relevance of classical theory of oratory with the contemporary human sciences both in terms of exceptional gifts of speech and excellences of character possessed by the orator.

Methodology: The nature of this study is qualitative and will be based on close textual analysis of the poem. It is a narrative research and textual references are given to substantiate the argument of this research.

Findings: The poem shall be read with reference to Quintillion Theory of Rhetoric, that defines what it means when “Good man speaks well” for the sake of effective communication. Roman Philosopher, Marcos Fabius Quintilianus, author of *Institutio Oratoria* expostulated this theory to define the prerequisites a speaker must have before he involves himself in the act of writing.

Conclusion: The study thereby helps to conclude in favor of a comprehensive institutionalized activity that can fully exploit the capacity of English poetry to meet the challenges of the rapidly advancing world and to catalyze the generation of new knowledge, based on aesthetic and ethical potential that Quintillion expects from his orator in his treatise.

Keywords: Quintillion, Virtuous Rhetoric, Modern Poetry, Knowledge Generation, Social Context.

Introduction

Learning and knowledge generation are today’s keys for progress and enlightenment and for creating positive values and forward-looking attitudes (Rahim, Charlie Hebdo, 2022). The line is taken from

Article History

Received:
September 18, 2022

Revised:
December 26, 2022

Accepted:
December 27, 2022

Published:
December 30, 2022

Rahim's preface to his collection of poetry *Charlie Hebdo and Other Poems* and formulates the theme line of this Research Paper. The study seeks to establish the relevance of Roman Philosopher and educator Marcus Quintillion's art of rhetoric as a highly enabling base on which contemporary scholarship in literature can be built to produce knowledge and awareness among readers.

Rhetoric, according to Quintillion can be exploited as a social process which if employed by a virtuous orator possessing intellectual "competence", can produce an "influence work" (p. 5) among the audience. The ideal orator as a social scientist creates a learning experience for his listeners that helps generate fruitful knowledge and "ways in which people make sense of the world" (p. 8) in which they operate by adopting and developing multiple viewpoints. This process has been explained as: "Good man speaks well" (Prus, 2022). Good man has been described as one who is just and honorable and who works for the good of the people and the prosperity of his society. This implies that a speaker attends to peoples' abilities to take themselves and others into account before engaging into human activity through rhetoric.

The development of Rhetoric as a persuasive endeavor draws its origin from the classical Greek era sometime in the 5th century B.C. The term is derived from the Greek *rhetoria* whereas its synonym oratory, has its roots in the Latin *oratoria* that stands for the art of effective communication. The central conceptual features adopting a pragmatist viewpoint had been developed first by Aristotle (384-322 BCE) in his *Rhetoric* and later by Marcus Tullius Cicero (106- 43BCE), another theorist of ancient rhetoric, in *De Oratore* (Orator).

However, enlightened by his familiarity with the classical Greek literature and the intellectual productions of his contemporaries, Roman rhetorician Marcus Fabius Quintillion (35_ 95 CE) developed a more substantive and detailed analysis in his 12 Volume work *The Institutio Oratoria of Quintilian*. *The Institutio Oratoria* represents the last major surviving manuscripts on Rhetoric from the classical Greek and Latin eras.

It is to be noted, however, that *The Institutio Oratoria* is very much a statement of the more comprehensive, ongoing nature of one's career-related education as a rhetorician. However, Quintillion incorporates poetry as one of the reflective arts, well suited for an effective oratorical practice since "no such training is regarded as complete if it stop short of music, for the teacher of literature has to speak of metre and rhythm" (Butler H. E., 1920, p. 63) Therefore, this study employs poetry as an influential part of pragmatist philosophy that focuses on human knowing, experiences and life in the making in the light of Quintillion's art of rhetoric.

Marcus Quintillion was an educator and rhetorician from Hispania. His book came around 95 AD. As an extension into the analysis of persuasive art, it carries distinctly informative discussion on the theory and practice of rhetoric. In his book, he introduces rhetoric as the "Art of Speaking Well" since "no man can speak well who is not good himself" (Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, 95) The book was translated by H. E. Butler. This definition includes all the virtues of oratory, linking it to the character of the orator who is responsible for an influence work that concerns emergent features of community life in each area of human endeavor.

While discussing the astute analysis of persuasive interchange developed by Quintillion in his works, Robert Prus informs in his essay on Quintillion's interactionist scholarship: "A more comprehensive reading of Quintilian also alerts us to the temporal, developmental, enacted inter-connectedness of rhetoric with philosophy, history, politics, religion, theatrical productions, fiction, and abstract conceptual representation" (p. 11). Therefore, the comprehensive literary and experientially informed contributions made by Quintillion to the study of interactionist scholarship need be visited to develop the craft of influential fine writings.

Notably, because oratorical venture is an extensive activity, Quintillion emphasizes the development of the "ideal orator" (Prus, p. 11) as one who maintains personal integrity and strives for competence by being resourceful and broadly creative so that he may promote justice through his rhetoric. Personality of the speaker, therefore, is an important prerequisite in the effectiveness of rhetorical exercise.

This concept, however, is in glaring contrast with twentieth century poet and critic T.S.Eliot's modernistic concept of the "extinction of personality" of a creative writer. Eliot's "impersonal theory of poetry" presented in his essay "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (1919), defines the poet in relation to his poetry as: "The progress of the artist is a continuous self-sacrifice, a continual extinction of personality." For him, the man who writes and the man in flesh and blood should be kept apart.

Whereas Eliot characterized rhetoric with indifference, maintaining that "it is language which speaks, not the author" (Eliot, 1919), Quintilian is cited to have encouraged the "speakers to present situations to their imaginations in such vivid or intense manners that they, themselves, become stirred by and act mindfully of the visions or (Eliot, 1919) fantasies of the very situations that they manufactured for this very purpose" (Prus, p. 27).

For Quintilian, there is a conceptual and substantive affinity of oratory with its orator. Therefore, he expressed his confidence that the writer's personality should remain in central view while assessing his or her art. The speaker may generate, neutralize, and redirect the emotional experiences of his listeners or readers through his scholarly ventures. In his view, performers best convey emotionality to others when they, themselves are absorbed by the emotional states they manufacture for the audience.

However, the conceptual differences found between modern and classical rudiments regarding the personality of the poet in relation to his poetry is not a newly built phenomenon. Going back in history, one comes across a well-known divide between Socrates/Plato and Aristotle on art – the moral verses the technical approaches. In *Phaedrus* (370 B.C.E) Plato composed a critical dialogue on the art of rhetoric between his protagonist Socrates and Phaedrus, and later in *Gorgias* (380 B.C.E) and in *Apologia* (390 B.C.E) expressed his deep suspicion of the oratory by condemning the rhetoricians as those involved in "distorting the thoughts of anyone who hears it" (Smith, 2007, p. 44). Later, Aristotle in his *Rhetoric* (350 B.C.E) provided a single most enabling text on rhetoric as a social process.

In Quintilian, however, we receive the knowledge that the strengths of art go hand in hand with those of the artist. Quintilian's material on rhetorical practice presents a rich repository of technique along with the art of speaking as a socially engaged process: "Without natural gifts, technical rules are useless" (Butler, *The Institutio Oratoria of Quintilian*, 1920).

An in-depth appreciation of the rhetoric criteria requires that social scientists attend to the ways in which people make sense of the world in which they operate. Deriving his inspiration from Shakespeare's Hamlet, Jaques Derrida in his book *Specters of Marx* (1994), equates the responsibility of attending to humanity for a better negotiation of socially contested realities, with doing justice on part of a learned scholar, with a mission "to put dislocated time back on its hinges." Justice, in his terms is a comprehensive literary exercise that works for a noble purpose since it is "a movement of correction, reparation, restitution..." (Derrida, 2006, p. 23) to rectify a fault. Quintilian's definition of oratory emphasizes this purposeful nature of oratory as "virtuous rhetoric since no evil character can speak well" (Prus, 2022, p. 16). Only a literary artist who is virtuous in his undertakings can perform the function in true letter and spirit.

Why Poetry

Poetry as a form of rhetoric, has a persuasive character. Being so, it bears profound relevance for the negotiation of reality. The nature and impact of verse is such that it can also play a significant role in the transmission of prophetic knowledge.

Marnie Hughes Warrington informs in her book *History as Wonder*: "...wonderous forms of writing -as seen in poetry- help us learn not only about what is, but also about what might be" (Warrington, 2019, p. 46). Her argument draws strength from Aristotle's *Poetics* where form is not an unimportant phenomenon. Rather, rhythm and melody are seen as "naturally pleasurable to people" through which, the "poets create worlds which exercise our cognitive powers of recognition" (Warrington, 2019, p. 57) for the sake of general sensemaking. The significance of the term, sense making has been defined earlier, with reference to Quintilian's art of rhetoric.

To examine the proposition, an epic poem by the title “Charlie Hebdo” from *Charlie Hebdo and Other Poems* (2023) by Ejaz Rahim (1945-), is selected for this study. A prominent, contemporary Pakistani poet, Rahim is twice recipient of Patras Bokhari Award from Pakistan Academy of Letters. He received Sitara e Imtiaz in 2007, for his contribution to English poetry in Pakistan. Rahim is also a lifetime member of Pakistan Academy of Letters. He holds Doctorate of Letters from Metropolitan University of Dublin 2009 and is a proud recipient of Daud Kamal Poetry Award in 2022. He has composed as many as 26 collections of poetry of which *Charlie Hebdo and Other Poems* is the latest.

The poem “Charlie Hebdo” selected for this study is taken from the above-mentioned collection of poetry by Ejaz Rahim. The poem’s analysis through the Quintillion lens of virtuous oratory, draws attention to the hitherto relative neglect of classical Greek and Latin scholarship in human sciences and to its enduring importance and relevance for human life, if exhibited in formal writings or speech.

However, as an example of creative art, the poem is an unconscious genius. The study rules out the possibility of any intentional effort on part of the orator to strictly comply with any school of thought on poetry. The whole thing befits naturally to the theoretical compendium of fine writing.

The poem has been organized in form of an epic narrative comprising a little over three hundred lines that span XVI short length sections. The epic experience in the twenty first century has developed an entirely new complexion. Robert Crossley maintains in his book, *Epic Ambitions in Modern Times*, that the epic ambition has survived the test of times among literary artists and that the “taste for epic experience endures in audiences. We simply have to look for the modern epic with fresh eyes not necessarily expecting to find it in the form of long, multibook poems” (Crossley, 2022, p. 17). Therefore, modern epic achievements transcend individual heroes and heroic language. Instead, looking forward to a distinctive creative process, the trend experiments with free verse and history writing.

If we survey the landscape of epic history since the days of Milton’s *Paradise Lost* (1667), modern epic is less didactic and extravagant and more imaginative compared to the ancient epics. Instead of individual heroic figures, it represents “individual within social and cultural contexts” (Crossley, 2022, p. 32). Although, it carries the traditional characteristic of spectacular scenes that evoke wonder; social vision and novelty have now become the essential feature of the modern epic experience.

Intro to the Poem

As an attempt on modern scale epic, “Charlie Hebdo” by Rahim, explores one of the major contemporary issues of the world today i.e., freedom of expression trespassing the matters of ethics, or claims to certain rights hinging upon the sense of moral and ethical responsibility.

Built upon the Charlie Hebdo incident in January 2015, in which two armed Algerian French nationals Cherif and Said Kouachi attacked the office of *Charlie Hebdo* magazine and claimed the lives of 17 of the working staff of the magazine that included the magazine’s editor, four cartoonists and two columnists as well as the guards on duty.

The attack was a planned act of retaliation on part of two Muslim brothers, that took place in response to satirical and blasphemous contents regarding Prophet Muhammad, published in the news weekly in 2005. Hurting the Muslim sentiment, the blasphemous contents became highly symbolic reflecting the core struggle between free expression and the sanctity of religious values.

The shooting incident prompted a worldwide discussion over whether press freedom mandates bigotry and deliberate provocation that violates the realms of religious sanctity of a particular community which may in turn lead to mutual hatred and universal irritability of one against the other.

Taken as a case study, the poem “Charlie Hebdo” condemns resorting to violence as “wonton” (p. 4) and brutal, yet it calls for a need to observe a halt before indulging into maligning the sanctity of the most sacred of religious symbols that otherwise demand people’s attention as supreme examples of excellence, being “pyramids of God-consciousness” (Rahim, p. 10).

The poem contends that the French vision of equality, fraternity and liberty stands massacred at the altar of free expression when it indulges into invective, name calling and abuse. Speaking well is virtue combined with wisdom and knowledge based on an effective knowledge of civil law, customs and the religion of the state.

Aims and Objectives

The study inclines to maintain modern poetry as a genre of literary rhetoric best suited for an effective communication of new ways of learning and knowledge as expostulated by Quintillion. The proposition of this Research paper is, that Quintillion's set of concepts on the art of virtuous rhetoric may not be very well explored by social scientists today, but this text has great relevance for contemporary scholarship in the human sciences. Drawing the theoretical foundations from *Institutio Oratoria*, the research will establish the argument that there is a conceptual and substantive affinity of oratory with its orator.

Research Methodology

The nature of this research is qualitative, since it involves a close encounter with the poem Charlie Hebdo, the core text selected for this study. Therefore, the method of study employed would be close textual analysis of the text. The selected corpus of poetry would be analyzed inductively to explore the dominant patterns of thought employed in it.

The poem shall be read with reference to Quintillion Theory of Rhetoric that defines what it means when "Good man speaks well" for the sake of effective communication. Since the exercise of virtuous rhetoric may receive its expression through the rhetorical exegesis of poetry, this study goes on to draw conceptual parallels between Quintillion's theory of Rhetoric and the interactionist scholarship that may be exhibited in poetic language.

In his twelve-volume work, Quintillion has demarcated enough space to his long list of prerequisites on the art of speaking well. However, this research article draws Quintillion analytic themes more readily from Robert Prus' *The Institutio Oratoria of Quintillion* (2022) since the book provides "chapter and verse" references to the materials Quintillion presents in his otherwise "highly detailed, informative, and thoughtfully comparative" (Prus, p. 12) text comprising twelve books, that records the experiences of oratory from the classical Roman and Greek eras to his time.

Prus provides an overview of Quintillion's original *Oratoria* by creating titles that help the reader identify some of the major themes of oratory addressed by the author. However, the present study also locates relevant themes from Quintillion's original text translated into English by H. E. Butler in 1920.

The study would now proceed to read the poem as a specimen of Quintillion art of fine oratory, where the aesthetics of art build a case for ethical understanding of things that may lead to a new form of knowledge generation among audiences. Various features of Quintillion's purposive writing will be read against the backdrop of the poem from the beginning to the end.

Findings and Discussion

Developing the Exordium as Honourable, Truthful and Credible Witnesses (Prus, 2022, p. 19):

Assassinations

At Charlie Hebdo in France

By the Kouachis was a wanton act

Of misguided souls

For in my book of beliefs

No matter what the end espoused

Nothing can justify the barbarity

Of shedding blood

Of inflicting grief

On fellow beings

Whatever their faith

Or our own convictions - (Rahim 1)

In his instructive terms, Quintillion expects the orator to prepare his listeners for an introduction to his material that defines “the nature and direction of the case to be presented”. The process of preparing the audience for the ensuing presentation has been named as “developing the exordium” (Prus, p. 19) since in an oratorical practice the listeners are assumed as judges. Accordingly, the poet here, uses the introduction to generate his image as honorable and credible right on the onset to encourage the audience to be favorably disposed towards his stance.

For Quintillion, every matter taken up for rhetorical treatment is a case study around which a comprehensive thesis is built by the speaker. These matters are “*novel, important scandalous, precedent-setting, or are of great concern*” (Prus, p. 19), to the listeners as identified by Quintillion. For that matter, before a speaker embarks on a detailed consideration of the case, he introduces a series of issues and evidence as reference points to the reader.

In terms of Quintillion’s theory of rhetoric, the ability to develop “reference points” to define things in their generic form right on the onset, is known as “forensic” or “evaluative oratory”. Acknowledging his debt to Aristotle’s intellectual contributions, Quintilian posits his points of reference as Aristotle’s categories: “These are *essence* (whether a thing is), *quality, quantity, relation* (competence or capacity and comparison), *when, where, doing, suffering, possessing, and position* (condition)” (Prus, p. 17). This implies that a rhetorician formulates a hypothesis by the application of cause to the cases at hand.

Once the assortment of these points identifies the objects of praise or blame, the speaker tends to develop the viewpoints of his audience on honor with an intention to pursue virtuous objectives. The objects of praise or blame may be gods, individuals, groups, or cities.

If read, against the backdrop of reference points, the word “Assassinations” at the start of “Charlie Hebdo” informs the *essence* and the *quantity*, “Charlie Hebdo in France/ By the Kuachis...” shares the *when* and *where* of the case, the “wanton act” as *doing*, and *suffering* is reported as “shedding blood” and “inflicting pain”, and lastly, *position* is established through: “Nothing can justify the barbarity.” The targets of blame are introduced as “misguided souls”, namely the assassins at Charlie Hebdo. (Rahim, p. 4)

Once the exordium is developed by the speaker, after having shared all the reference points with the reader, the poet goes on to establish his position as an honorable and credible witness to an event, he feels responsible to voice his opinion about.

Maintaining Conceptual and substantive affinity between Power Philosophy and Religion (Butler, p. 15):

Science and Technology are sources

Of knowledge and power

But they fall short

Of the hidden kingdom

Of purpose and meaning

Unless they drink together

With philosophy and religion

At love's heart healing fountain. (Rahim III)

In the realm of literary appraisals, values are of profound importance. As established earlier, poetry as a form of art and literary expression provides an aesthetic combination of these values for the benefit of humanity.

The highly enabling base on which *Institutio Oratoria* is built, informs that the orator as a social scientist, is supposed to be morally upright, fully knowledgeable, enjoying in-depth understanding of a subject with an aim to stress the importance of ethical appeal to the reader and to create the environment of a shared humanity. Genius artistic expressions arise when the unique voice of a singular self, works upon the principle of universal truth.

That process of enabling humanity to make general understanding of things with good voice and gifts of technical rules, has been referred to as "our ideal orator bearing a "genuine title to the name of a philosopher" (Butler, p. 15) by Quintillion.

Philosophy is one of the powers of eloquence. It is best suited in the form of literature, that is "a necessity for boys and the delight of old age" (Butler, p. 65) . Providing a rich store of expression, philosophy and the values of religion, stimulate the imagination of the audience to enhance the educative effect. Perfect eloquence is therefore, not beyond the reach of human intellectual competence.

The concept of intellectual competence has been elaborated as being resourceful with broader stocks of knowledge. It is challenging in nature because the aim lies in refocusing on the issues at hand, to reestablish the new order of justice in the face of moral decadence or corruption of the time.

Rahim envisages the same phenomenon as: "Ethics, Philosophy and Science all have a profound organic relationship with the kingdom of Art, Literature and Poetry but not one that is propagandist or instrumental" (Rahim, p. xvii). This implies that an ideal orator is astutely familiar with all areas of philosophy: physics, ethics, morality, and human relations. Therefore, he conceptualizes cases in their comprehensive ways so that people can locate themselves within the shared frame of reference to develop the world view of a broader community.

The authority of the speaker carries a lot of weight if he has to awaken the minds of his audience and transfer his passion to them: "For he, who will have all men trust his judgement as to what is expedient and honorable should both possess and be regarded as possessing genuine wisdom and excellence of character" (Butler, p. 485). Therefore, the contemporary impasse cannot be broken merely by appeal to law but by an appeal to the law of human values, residing in religion and philosophy: "as a lever of transformation and of actual living" (Rahim, Charlie Hebdo, 2022). And for that matter, poetry may serve as an effective scholarly venture since words may gain authority due to the skillful use of poetic devices.

In an effective language, the poet dreams of a dignified sense of co-existence by appealing to a hands-on collaboration of power with the universal values provided by philosophy and religion so that they may acquire greater penetration into the minds of the audience.

Attending to Memory/History to Draw Parallels (Prus, p. 38) :

The Holy Prophet's teachings

Were greeted by Makkah's

Tribal Oligarchs, the Quraish,

With laughter and sarcasm

Loaded with derision

And though fourteenth centuries

Have since passed

Banter and satire

With rank hostility remain

The favourite fodder

Of the New Quraish. (Rahim VII)

Memory has been considered as the “treasure-house of eloquence” by Quintillion. An astute orator realizes the fullness of its powers to reproduce and present several remote facts, laws, rulings, and sayings that may be consistent with the events under discussion. Therefore, Quintillion argues that “extempore eloquence, in my opinion, depends on no mental activity so much as memory” (Butler, p.213) since it helps to import parallel precedents from history to achieve oratorical excellence.

In his Book V, Quintillion turns to “paradigmatic proofs”, using this term to refer to inferences based on comparisons, particularly those involving historical parallels. The arguments may be “generated to draw similarities or contrasts of the case at hand with

external reference points” (Prus, p. 24). Citations may be made from general lessons of history. The poet, therefore, may draw from an unlimited number of resources from a wide range of poets, politicians, gods, or others as authorities.

Acknowledging the Exceptional Potency of Ethnohistorical Resources for the Sake of Effective Delivery, an Extended Range of Scholarship (Prus, p. 42):

Could one say:

Fundamental freedoms need

To be championed

With circumspection

Like Muses and Magi

Not Medusas and Gorgons. (Rahim IX)

The integration of mythology and historical references is an important method of expression for the orator. Oratory says Quintilian, as “the highest gift of providence to man, needs the assistance of many arts” (p. 163), of which a thorough acquaintance with history, is one. A philosopher poet may derive valuable advantages from the “verdicts of antiquity” (Butler, p. 163).

This part of the poem raises an “indefinite question” which in terms of Greek philosophy may be maintained without any definite reference to specific people, time, or place. Quintillion cites Corneliuss Celsus (25 BC-50AD) as having maintained that the orator opts not to speak on any subject “unless there is some question involved in it.” This is how according to Greeks; a “thesis” is evolved, since these propositions gain the status of questions, as are well suited for a “philosophical discussion” (Butler, p. 399).

The poem, “Charlie Hebdo”, builds on its core theme, by questioning the provision of unbridled liberty to people regarding some fundamental rights, claimed by humanity at large. Classical references to “Muses and Magi /Not Medusas and Gorgons” (Rahim, p. 9) serve as rich materials for the art of persuasive speech. Even though the readers’ decision remains final, the poet “convey[s] the impression of thoroughly believing in the case... [he] represent(s)” (Prus, p. 19). This is how, the poet is able to maintain a consistent focus on the strong aspects of his case and portray himself as credible and truthful.

Building Challenges around Inconsistencies Found in Existing Knowledge, Abilities and Interests of Specific Documents (Prus, 2022, p. 21):

How Ironic it seems

We have the time and devotion

To unravel the miracles
Working inside earth worms
And fruit flies and hummingbird
 But for those beings
 Whose minds and works are
Pyramids of God consciousness
 And human striving
 We have honed tools
To trade invective and abuse
Doused in mindlessness! (Rahim XI)

Envisioning the Quintillion frame of reference, (Bk V), one expects that “speakers may challenge the knowledge, abilities and interests of the authors of specific documents, as well as the timing of documents.” They may build questions around “inconsistencies of specific written documents, evidence claims or features of the case” (Prus, p. 21). While discussing controversial issues, greater eloquence is required to be effective when the poet searches for discrepancies found in the issues he chooses to challenge. By so doing, the theme of discussion assumes the shape of a moral essay or *chria* as Quintillian informs about the classical version of the term. (Butler H. E., p. 237). The moral essay formulated in the poem draws attention to a hitherto ignored phenomenon regarding certain trends in research and consequent declamation practices.

Praise and denunciation of a document or law requires “greater powers”, on part of the poet. Therefore, the exercise to set forth a case for *chria* or moral essay formulates “the most serious tasks of rhetoric” (Butler, p. 241). The more sensitive the issue, the more acuteness of acumen ship and care it demands.

In present case, the disparity lies not in the selection of an object of enquiry itself such as “earth worms/And fruit flies and hummingbird” but in the extent and details to which a certain phenomenon is completely overlooked such as the honorable holy figures esteemed as “the Pyramids of God consciousness” (p. 10). The object of blasphemes condemnation here, calls for an in-depth inquiry before the announcement of a “mindless” verdict that borders on “invective” and “abuse” (Rahim, Charlie Hebdo, p. 10).

Judgmental declarations and generalized statements are a completely forbidden ground in philosophical practices. Quintillion talks of some “special rules” which must be “observed both by speakers and writers” in the use of language as a source of communication. They are enlisted as those “based on reason, antiquity, authority, and usage” (Butler, p. 113). The rule of reason does not find any support in case of outright condemnation of sacred figures of antiquity, in verbal or in any form of written expression. Therefore, the absolute right to freedom of expression as an unchecked phenomenon, stands petrified against the backdrop of this study. Hence, the protest is recorded.

Acquiring Perspectives and Developing Theses about ‘What Is’ and ‘What Is Not’ (Butler H. E., p. 237):

When a head is battered
Blood becomes its witness
On earth, but when a heart
 Is torn apart
The sky itself bears testimony
 Of our transgression

The tripple leagacy of France

Liberte', Egalite' Fraternite'

Are like empty slogans

If not reflected like sunbeams

Through love's purifying prism. (Rahim XIII)

As an effective poetic composition, the poem does not stop at problem hinting alone. Rather, an exploration of the realm of contemporary issue is coupled with developing new perspective awareness as well as the ability of perspective taking by the reader. Quintilian calls this practice as one belonging to "the deliberative class of oratory" (Butler, p. 237) . One that helps develop the central "theses" i.e the most copious and useful art of speaking.

Theses, in Quintillion terms "are concerned with the comparison of things and involve questions such as 'Which is preferable...or 'Which deserves the greatest praise'" (Butler H. E., p. 237) . Powers of eloquence, in other words must not serve to strengthen vileness, rather they contribute something of value, such as maxims of moral wisdom, to the existing stock of knowledge.

The word *Comparison* as mentioned in his Book VII, refers to establishing parallels between the essential aspects of a case in hand with those of an external one, that is of a heightened or exaggerated quality otherwise. Such comparisons tend to dramatize the focal matter to "*generate compelling impressions of realism*" as understood by the audience. (Prus, pp. 32-33)

Poetic eloquence can, therefore, proceed with a skillful thrust of subtle arguments to establish its "sway over the emotions of the audience" (Butler H. E., p. 249).Eloquence enables the poet to express sublime thoughts with elevation and pleasing thoughts with a sense of joy and as an expression of art, is in concordance with the emotions of which, it is a masterpiece.

In words of Rahim, as a persuasive means of expression: "the employment of language in poetry bears a personal stamp of the writer but the work itself carries an ambience of human values which have universal import" (Rahim, Charlie Hebdo, 2022, p. xiii). In his view, poetry, as a vehicle of advance in the socio-cultural aspects of human society, has the capacity to open eyes, minds and hearts and the ability to address them "simultaneously, organically, ethically and aesthetically" (Rahim, Charlie Hebdo, 2022). True dignity is therefore, only possible when both head and heart are addressed as sources of human knowledge.

Striving for Oratorial Excellence to Win Cases at Hand (Prus, 2022, p. 19).

In the end it is good to remember

That only two languages are spoken

On this earth

The language of love and peace

And that of war and hatred

All others are dialects and vernaculars. (Rahim XVI)

As *The Institutio Oratoria* unfolds, it becomes apparent that Quintilian places particular emphasis on "winning cases." He encourages his speakers to speak with full confidence and to thoroughly believe "in the cases they represent" (Prus, 2022, p. 19). However, the speakers are not supposed to be overtly critical or eloquent.

The mind should adapt itself to suit the nature of the subject, which is the theme of the speech. Even though it deals with complex cases, it is instructed to be pleasing and direct: "the thought that it is doing something

great fills it with joy” (Butler, p. 53) Therefore, rhetorical exercise depends on the state of the mind, which must be moved to conceive suitable images.

Rhetoric, “the highest gift of providence to man” (Butler, p. 163), has been defined as a social process that is concerned with action. It can cover a wide range of subjects since it addresses humanity at large. Therefore, it is multi perspectival. As an object-oriented activity, the nature of rhetoric is purposive that might be judicial or liberative. To demonstrate its capacity as judicial, the approach of rhetoric is argumentative and based on dialectic reasoning.

Through reasoning, the speakers enhance the essential features of their case that helps shape the emotions and ensuing decisions of the judges. The oratorial practice becomes a successful attempt to influence the audience as the speakers conclude their presentations. In words of Rahim, "I see the poem as an affirmation of the principle of human dignity and extension of the meaning of the term human dignity, stretching it from the republic of assertion to the realm of feeling” (Rahim, Charlie Hebdo, 2022). The poem draws the conclusion, that exercise of free will and expression becomes self-contradictory, if involved in blasphemy, denunciation, and abuse.

Conclusion

Learning and new forms of knowledge are a challenge that modern world is faced with. Learning can only be done through effective rhetoric. An effective rhetoric is one that is virtuous and influences its receivers towards a better understanding of things as they are. The aim can only be achieved through the artful expressions of an ideal orator. For that matter, Quintillion’s extended dialogue with the aspects of rhetorical practice is uniquely instructive. Learning and knowledge generation is only possible when the orator has mastery over all the departments of knowledge and has the greatest power to express it in words. He should, therefore, be a thorough master of the science and art of speaking. However, technical rules are useless without natural gifts. The first essential in this regard is the good character of the orator. Based on moral philosophy, the excellence of character qualifies virtues such as courage, justice, and self-control. Only then the speaker’s imaginative power and eloquence as a pleader can contribute to the search for wisdom and learning. The best medium that can inhabit the imaginative powers of eloquence are literary genres. Among them, the realm of poetry provides a vast artful canvass with large prospects of social vision participating in the ambition to engage with the world as it is, along with a desire to transform it for the better. For larger themes, modern epic artists may speak to our actual present as well as address our past to articulate the need to understand how we got to be the way we are and how to find a way forward. The analysis of “Charlie Hebdo” as a case study for Quintillion’s conceptualization of a rhetorical endeavor close to perfection, establishes the point that a productive relationship with modern poetry may be devised with wisdom and imagination for the sake of knowledge generation, invention, and innovation to meet the challenges of the modern world.

Acknowledgments

None.

Conflict of Interest

Author has no conflict of interest.

Funding Source

The author received no funding to conduct this study.

ORCID iDs

Sonia Bokhari  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0448-8280>

Reference

- Warrington, M. H. (2019). *History as Wonder*. Oxon, England: Routledge.
- Prus, R. (2022). Influence Work, Resistance, and Educational Life Worlds: Quintilian's Analysis of Roman Oratory as an Instructive ethnohistorical Resource and Conceptual Precursor of Symbolic Interactionist Scholarship. *Qualitative Sociology Review*, XVIII (3), 6-52.
- Derrida, J. (2006). *Specters of Marx*. New York, USA: Routledge Classics.
- Rahim, E. (2022). Charlie Hebdo. In E. Rahim, *Charlie Hebdo* (pp. 4-13). Islamabad, Pakistan: BBL Printers and Binders.
- Crossley, R. (2022). *Epic Ambitions in Modeern Times From Paradise Lost to the New Millenium*. London: Anthem Press.
- T.S.Eliot. (1919, September). Tradition and the Individual Talent. *The Egoist*, 6(4).
- H.E.Butler, t. (1920). *The Institutio Oratoria of Quintillian* (Vol. 1). (T. E.Cappa, Ed.) London, England: Wlliam Heinemann.
- H.E.Butler, t. (1920). *The Institutio Oratoria of Quntilian* (Vol. IV). London: Cambridge,Mass:Harrvard University Presss: London: W.Heinemann.
- Harb, L. (2022, April 21). Retrospective Reads:Arabic Poetics by Lara Harb. (P. U. Hmanities Council News, Interviewer)
- Rahim, E. (2022, October 11). Charlie Hebdo. (S. Bokhari, Interviewer)
- Nicholas.D.Smith. (2007, 01 10). Socrates and Plato on Poetry. *Philosophic Exchange*, 37(1), 43-51.
- (n.d.).
- (n.d.).
- (n.d.).