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AT-TAKILLAH : JURNAL PENDIDIKAN DAN KEISLAMAN

## Retorica of Belles Lettrees

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### KEYWORD

Retorika Belles Lettres, Periode Modern, The law of Belles Lettres

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### A B S T R A C T

The second direction of rhetoric in the modern period is known as the belles lettre movement, this term in French, literally means "good or beautiful letters". This was a deviation from the rationalists and elocutionists because this form of literature valued the aesthetic qualities of writing more than any informative value it had. The scope of rhetoric expanded to include all the fine arts of that time such as poetry, music, drama, gardening, architecture, as well as oral discourse, writing and criticism.

## INTRODUCTION

Rhetoric comes from the English word "rhetoric" and comes from the Latin word "rhetorica" which means the science of speech. Rhetoric as a science has rational, empirical, general and accumulative characteristics (Harsoyo in Susanto, 1988: 73-74). Rhetoric (rhetoric, rhetorica) is often understood as the art of oratory. The art of using language effectively. The art of speaking well is achieved based on natural talent and technical skills. Rhetoric is a science and art that teaches people to be skilled at composing effective speech. Rhetoric is also the art of "manipulating" conversation (the art of fake speech). Rhetoric, apart from being a science of speaking, is also recognized by many experts as a tradition that gave birth to the study of communication science. However, currently, as described above, Rhetoric knowledge only has a very small portion in the study of Communication science, namely through Rhetoric and Public Speaking courses. In fact, communication academics and scientists should master theoretical and practical knowledge in rhetoric, including the ability or skill of giving speeches.

The first school of Rhetoric in modern times, which emphasized psychological processes, was known as the epistemological school. Epistemology discusses the “theory of knowledge”; origins, nature, methods, and limits of human knowledge. Epistemological thinkers tried to study classical Rhetoric in the light of the development of cognitive psychology (discussing mental processes). George Campbell (1719-1796), in his book *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, examined the writings of Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian with a faculty psychology approach (not faculty psychology). Faculty psychology seeks to explain the causes of human behavior in the abilities of the human soul: understanding, memory, imagination, feelings and will. Rhetoric, according to Campbell's definition, must be directed at efforts to "enlighten understanding, please the imagination, move the feelings, and influence the will".

The second movement of modern rhetoric is known as the *belles lettres* (French: beautiful writing) movement. *Belletrist* rhetoric prioritizes the beauty of language, the aesthetic aspects of the message, sometimes ignoring the informative aspects. Hugh Blair (1718-1800) wrote *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*. Here he explains the relationship between Rhetoric, literature, and criticism. He introduced the faculty of taste, namely the ability to derive pleasure from encounters with anything beautiful. In the twentieth century, Rhetoric benefited from developments in modern science, especially behavioral sciences such as psychology and sociology. The term Rhetoric is starting to be replaced by speech, speech communication, or oral communication, or public speaking. In its broadest sense, the term *belles-lettres* (from French, literally “fine letters”) can refer to any literary work. *Belles-lettres* is a literary style originating in 17th century France, signifying writing in style and service to civilized society. British people mostly use the French term but sometimes translate it as ‘polite letters’. *Belle-lettres* displays a linguistic self-awareness that attests to the superior education of both writer and reader, who were united more through literature than through life.

According to one of the literature professors who occupied the chair of rhetoric and *belles lettres* established for Hugh Blair, Blair was the first to realize that “Rhetoric” in modern times actually means “criticism.” Rhetoric and composition began to be included in literary criticism at the same time as modern literature emerged. Modern rhetoric is marked by the emergence of the Renaissance or Age of Enlightenment around the 1200s. According to Jalaluddin Rahmat, there are three schools of modern rhetoric, one of which is:

### **1. Flow of Belles Lettres**

*Belles Lettres* means beautiful writing in French. *Belletrist*'s rhetoric was originally used like fine art to distinguish artistic literature from scientific or philosophical writing. However, since the 19th century, the term has more often been used simply to denote the category of elegant essay writing and light literary chatter, which was widely

published in England in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The figure of this school is Hugh Blair who wrote *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*. He connected rhetoric, literature and criticism to give rise to the study of taste, namely the ability to gain pleasure from encounters with anything beautiful. You will love to see beautiful music and dance, beautiful views, beautiful speeches. This taste will reach perfection when sensory pleasure is combined with reason. It is the ratio that explains the sources of pleasure.

Both the epistemological and belles letters schools focus on speech preparation which includes structuring the message and using language.

The Laws of Belletristic Rhetoric (*Belles Lettres*) are a group of principles or guidelines used in writing literary works or writings that have aesthetic and beautiful value. There are several laws of Belletristic rhetoric related to writing, including:

1. The Law of Beauty (*Loi du Beau*). Namely writing in a beautiful, attractive style, and paying attention to the aesthetics of the language. Choosing the right words, using creative language styles, and using rhetorical figures such as metaphors, symbols, and comparisons help create beauty in writing.
2. The Law of Continuity (*Loi de la Continuite*), namely writing by following a continuous narrative flow and maintaining the consistency of the story or ideas conveyed. Use good structure, connect paragraphs logically, and pay attention to the flow of information and discourse development.
3. Law of Harmony (*Loi de l' Harmonie*). Namely writing by paying attention to the harmony between content and form. The ideas conveyed should be in line with the language style, tone and atmosphere that you want to convey in the writing and also help create harmony.
4. Law of Authenticity (*Loi de l'Originalite*). Namely writing in a unique and original style. Creating work that has characteristics and differentiates it from other writings. Trying a new approach, a fresh point of view, or an innovative writing style is part of the law of authenticity in writing
5. Law of Unity (*Loi de l'Unite*). Namely writing by maintaining unity or cohesion in the writing. Avoid deviations or sudden changes in the storyline or ideas conveyed following the predetermined theme or main idea and maintain consistency in the writing.
6. Law of Readability (*Loi de la Lisibilite*). That is, writing by paying attention to the readability of the writing. Use clear sentences, structures that are easy to understand, and avoid using complicated or too technical words. Write in language that can be understood by a wide range of readers. The laws of Belletristic rhetoric help determine the quality of literary writing and make it more interesting, beautiful and memorable for readers.

## METHOD

This research uses qualitative research, the type of research used is library research, namely literature study of various references relevant to the subject of belles lettres rhetoric. Meanwhile, the data sources in this research are primary data sources and secondary data sources. Primary data is data obtained from library materials that are related to this research. What the author uses consists of reference books on rhetoric textbooks. Secondary data is data collected from library research, research reports, books and literature.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Belles lettres rhetoric is a term that combines the concepts of rhetoric with literary aesthetics. In general, it refers to an approach to the art of communication that focuses not only on the effectiveness of persuasion, but also on the beauty and style of language. Here is a more detailed explanation:

a. Rhetoric: The art of effective and persuasive speaking and writing. Rhetoric involves the use of various techniques to influence an audience, such as ethos (credibility), pathos (emotional appeal), and logos (logic).

b. Belles lettres: French term meaning "beautiful literature." It refers to literary works that are valued primarily for their aesthetic and artistic value, rather than simply for their content or message.

So it can be concluded that the rhetoric of belles lettres emphasizes the importance of beauty and elegance in conveying messages. This approach is often seen in speeches, essays, and writings that seek to not only convey information or arguments, but also delight and captivate an audience through the use of beautiful and elegant language.

The Middle Ages lasted for a thousand years (400-1400). During this long period of time, the legacy of Greek civilization was ignored in Europe. The encounter between Europeans and Islam led to the preservation and development of Greek treasures during the Crusades and the Renaissance in . One of the Renaissance thinkers who revived people's interest in rhetoric was Peter Rams. He divided his rhetoric into two parts. Inventio and dispositio are part of logic (Aristotle, 2018).

Rhetoric, on the other hand, concerns only enunciation and pronunciation. Ramus's taxonomy continued for several generations. The first rhetorical school in modern times to emphasize psychological processes was called the epistemological school. Epistemology is related to the "theory of knowledge", namely the origins, nature, methods and limits of human knowledge. Epistemological thinkers have tried to examine classical rhetoric, emphasizing the development of cognitive psychology (i.e. psychology that discusses mental processes). Psychology attempts to explain the causes of human behavior based on the abilities of the human soul: thoughts, memory, imagination, emotions and will (Hermawan, 2018). Rhetoric, according to Campbell's definition, should be directed at "enlightening the understanding, entertaining the imagination, exciting the emotions, and influencing the will."

The second modern school of rhetoric is known as the belles lettres (French: beautiful writing) movement. Belletrist rhetoric prioritizes the beauty of language, the aesthetic aspects of the message, sometimes ignoring the informative aspect (Rakhmat, 2008, p. 13). The first school (epistemology) and the second school (fiction) focus primarily on speech preparation, message structure, and language use. The third movement is called the speech movement and is actually focused on the art of delivering a speech. During its development, the death penalty movement received criticism for its excessive focus and dedication to technology. The speaker follows the speaker but does not do this. Speaks and moves spontaneously and the movements become artificial (Sobur, 2016).

However, the speaker succeeded in conducting empirical research before formulating a "recipe" for delivering a speech. Rhetoric is no longer a science that is only based on "brain games" or solely the result of rational considerations. Rhetoric, like other scientific disciplines, is formulated based on empirical research findings. In the 20th century, rhetoric refers to the development of modern science, especially

behavioral sciences such as psychology and sociology. The term rhetoric is increasingly being replaced by language, vocal communication, oral communication, or public speaking. The following are some of the latest rhetoric figures (Suhandang, 2009).

1) James A. Winans

He was a pioneer in the use of modern psychology in his speeches. His book *Public Speaker*, published in 1917, used the psychological theories of William and E.B. Tichenor. Consistent with James' theory that behavior is determined by attention, Winans defines belief as "the process that produces adequate and complete attention to a proposition."

He explains the importance of arousing emotions through psychological motives such as personal gain, social obligation, and religious obligation. This is a very valuable discussion about conversation and how to make a speech. Winans was the founder of the American Speech Communication Association (1950)

2) Charles Henry Woolbert

He is also the founder of the American Speech Communication Association. The psychology that really influenced him this time was John B. Watson's behaviorism. It is not surprising that Woolbert views "vocal communication" as a behavioral science. For him, the process of composing a speech is an activity of the whole organism. Language is an expression of individuality. Logic is the most important basis of belief. According to Woolbert, when preparing a speech, you should consider the following: (1) research your purpose, (2) know your audience and situation, and (3) suit your audience and situation, (4) Choose sentences that have a logical relationship. His famous book is "Fundamentals of Speech".

### 3) Alan H. Monoa

This book uses many quotes from his book *Principles and Types of Speech*. Beginning in the mid-1920s, Monoret and his colleagues studied motivational processes. Monore's greatest service is the way it organizes messages. According to Monore, messages need to be structured based on human thought processes, which he calls "motivated circuits."

Other modern speech scholars we should mention include A.E. Phillips (*Effective Speaker*, 1908), Brembeck and Howell (*Persuasion: A Means of Social Control*, 1952), R.T. Oliver (*The Psychology of Persuasive Speech*, 1942). In Germany, apart from the "famous" Hitler, who wrote the books *Mein Kampf*, Naumann (*The Art of Speech*, 1941), Desior (*Speech as Art*, 1984), and Dammache (*The National Movement*), 1918) was also a pioneer . of contemporary rhetoric.

## CONCLUSION

From the presentation or explanation above, the author can conclude that in accordance with the paper "history of the development of rhetoric in Europe and Indonesia" the author concludes that the development of rhetoric in Europe is divided into four eras, namely in Greece, Rome, the Middle Ages and the modern era. Meanwhile, the development of rhetoric in Indonesia is a little difficult to dig deeper because we only find speaking activities in traditional ceremonies that can be understood as cultural heritage.

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