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Abstract

In this paper, I apply the Discourse Historical Approach (DHA) (e.g. Wodak and Meyer 2009) to discourse on religion. Discourse on religion has been taken for granted (e.g. Chilton 2004: xi) and little is known about its characteristic discourse features. A few studies (e.g. Neuman et al 2001; Muchnik 2005) have explored discourse on religion, focusing on particular features (e.g. irony, and narratives). These studies, however, have overlooked the broader socio-political and historical contexts that intertwine with discourse. The present study aims to fill that gap by exploring processes of persuasion in one speech by the Muslim televangelist Hamza Yusuf. Two main processes will be explored: interdiscursivity and intertextuality. Interdiscursivity indicates that discourses can be linked to discourses on other topics or sub-topics; intertextuality refers to the link to other texts through invoking a topic, an event or a main actor (e.g. Richardson and Wodak 2009b:46). As I will show in the data analysis, the speaker invokes some discourses and dismisses others to serve his specific persuasive intentions. In addition, religious terms are recontextualised in contemporary contexts to link the speech to the religious realm and to present religion as a force of change.

Keywords: Critical Discourse Analysis, the Discourse Historical Approach, persuasion, Muslim televangelism

1. Introduction

As mass media became predominant in the modern age, mediated discourse in the public sphere has become a hybrid genre of information and entertainment (for example, see Corner and Pels 2003; Riegert 2007; Wodak 2009 on the political sphere). In the domain of science, for instance, Fairclough (1995: 8) cites an example of science programs on the BBC in which the conversational style and complex interlocking images are intertwined to give the program a dramatic effect. In the domain of politics, Wodak (2009: 161-186) analyses the depiction of the hero in a popular television series, i.e. *The West Wing* where politics is 'fictionalized'. In the same vein, Thussu (2009: 127-129) points out that war and civil conflicts are dramatized through the use of satellite imagery, war games and re-creating battlefields in the studio. The blurring of information and entertainment has not only affected the spheres of science and politics but also religion. On television, preachers present programs where they answer callers' questions, invite guests, and give speeches (e.g. Lotfy 2009; Zayed 2007); religion has

turned into a mass media commodity converging towards entertainment and consumption (e.g. Echchaibi 2011: 29-33; Lövheim and Axner 2011: 61).

Critical Discourse Analysis, an interdisciplinary approach to the analysis of language has systematically contributed to the deconstruction of mechanisms of persuasion, hegemony and relations of power in political discourse where politics is 'those actions which involve power, or its inverse, resistance' (Chilton and Schäffner 1997: 212). This has entailed an analysis of 'orders of discourse' (Chilton 1998: 691) represented in news, radio-interviews, parliamentary debates etc. from many conceptual and theoretical underpinnings (for example, see Chilton and Schäffner 1997, Chilton 1998, Chilton 2004 on a linguistic-cognitive analysis of persuasion; Van Leeuwen and Wodak 1999, Van Leeuwen 2007 on legitimation; Wodak and Reisigl 1999 on racism; Baker et al. 2008, Baker 2010 on the representation of minorities in UK press). Some interest is given to the discourse of advertising (for example, see Cook 1992; Myers 1999a; 1999b; Myers 2010a; 2010b). Along the continuum of CDA interests, however, discourse on religion seems to be 'a neglected area of research, as has its overlap with politics' (Chilton 2004: xi).

The aim of the present paper is to explore the mechanisms of persuasion in one speech by the Muslim televangelists Hamza Yusuf; Hamza Yusuf is one of the influential figures among Muslims in the Western world (Esposito and Kalin 2009:78), such as the United Kingdom (Gilliat Ray 2010: 166).¹ Using the Discourse Historical Approach, I deconstruct four levels of context (1) the immediate language; (2) the intertextual and interdiscursive relationship between utterances; (3) the extralinguistic social level and (4) the broader sociopolitical and historical contexts (e.g. Wodak and Meyer 2009: 30-31). Thematically, the study is divided into three sections. The first section examines the interaction between religion and media; the second section reviews studies on persuasion in the discourse on religion and in the third section, I apply the Discourse Historical Approach to the speech by Hamza Yusuf.

2. Religion and Mass Media

Historically, the use of television as a medium of religious preaching started in the 1950s in the United States (e.g. Bruce 1990: 29-48) and rose to prominence in the 1980s as televangelists such as Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson and James Robinson gained wide popularity (e.g. Frankl 1987: 3-8; Bruce 1990). Since then, television has been used to mediate 'religion' in the broad sense of the term. Following Durkheim (1965: 59), religion can be defined as a society or group whose members 'are united by the fact that they think the same way in regard to the sacred world and its relations with the profane world and by the fact that they translate these common ideas into common practices'. Research studies (e.g. Muchnik 2005; Neuman et al. 2001; Frankl 1987) have shown that mediated religious communication exists in Christianity, Judaism and Islam.

The use of television in religious communication, however, cannot be examined apart from the wider context of interaction between mass media and religion. Focusing on religious communication on the Internet, Helland

(2004: 23) has shown that both official and non-official Christian organizations have online presence. The website of the Vatican, created in the early 1990s, is one example he cites of the official organizations that have flocked to cyberspace attempting to establish their control over a growing and developing sphere. Virtual churches have chat rooms, forums and devotional services that can be practiced online (p. 32). In a similar way, El Nawawy and Khamis (2009: 2) point out that the proliferation of independent Islamic websites has created new discourses about Islam that could lead to the decentralization of the power of traditional religious authority.

The use of the Internet as a platform of religious communication seems to be more prominent in minority contexts. In her study on Muslims in the United Kingdom, Gilliat-Ray (2010: 162-166) notes that since the 1970s, religious preaching seems to have been dominated by post Second World War immigrants coming from various Muslim countries. One consequence is that imams working in British mosques seem to understand the questions asked to them but fail to understand the context of the question; this has led to the increasing use of the Internet for religious advice among young British Muslims.

Despite the growing visibility of televangelists' discourse, little is known about the mechanisms of persuasion Muslims televangelists use to appeal to their audience. This can be contextualized in the little interest given to discourse on religion from a critical discourse perspective (for example, see Chilton 2004: xi and Garner 2005: 2). As the present study analyzes one speech by the Muslim televangelist Hamza Yusuf from a critical point of view, it aims to fill a gap in research. This takes me to the following section.

3. Persuasion

Persuasion is defined as 'the process of trying to alter, modify or change the saliency of the values, wants, beliefs and action of others' (O'Shaughnessy and O'Shaughnessy 2004: 5). A massive amount of studies have examined persuasion in discourse on politics and advertising (for example, see Sornig 1989; Wodak 1989; Pardo 2001; Ferrari 2007 in discourse on politics; O'Shaughnessy and O'Shaughnessy 2004, Simpson 2001, Fuertes-Olivera et al 2001 in discourse on advertising). Due to space limitations, I limit my coming review to studies on religious discourse (e.g. Schmidt and Kess 1986; Neuman et al 2001; Muchnik 2005).

One of the earliest studies that have examined discourse on religion is that of Schmidt and Kess (1986). They compared findings by Lakoff (1982) and Geis (1982) on persuasive language in television advertising to an analysis of a chosen sample of promotional segments of Christian televangelists' programs. Common features were found in the two samples. These included linguistic novelty such as coinage of new terms (e.g. 'possibility thinking' p. 43), innovating syntactic constructions (e.g. 'God wants to prosper you' as opposite to 'make you prosper' p. 42) and violating the semantic selectional restrictions on nouns (e.g. 'Some of the problems are positive' p. 43), where the attributive adjective 'positive' was used to describe 'problems', conventionally considered to be undesirable and negative. Another persuasive feature was the repetition

of the name of the evangelist to get the audience to remember the name of the evangelist (pp. 44- 49). Imperative structures were used to influence the audience; they were categorized into two types: direct commands (e.g. Tell Rex you want to share with him in taking the message of Christ p.60), and indirect ones (Why not call your friends, neighbors and loved ones to tune in to the program p. 60). Schmidt and Kess (1986) showed that more forms of indirect commands were used in televangelists' programs as opposed to television advertisements in which direct commands were mostly used. Results of the study indicated that televangelists' programs and television advertisements were parallel in terms of the use of persuasive devices, except for the use of rhetorical questions, and the odd use of definite articles which were not featured in the televangelists' data sample investigated.

Focusing on discourse on religion, Neuman et al. (2001) explored rhetorical rationality in Jewish fundamentalist rhetoric. They examined the prologue of an Israeli preacher on the incident of an Israeli minister saying that one of the achievements of Israel in the field of agriculture was the production of seedless watermelons. The authors pointed out that the preacher used 'watermelon' as a metaphor of the Israeli society, showing the contrast it had between what appears on the surface (the green rind of the watermelon) and the hidden reality (the red flesh within it) (p. 557). The authors suggested that the incident of the watermelon was used by the preacher as an anecdote of the Israeli minister, attacking the secular system as a rival to the Orthodox one by using irony (e.g. I do not know if he meant it, but to say such a thing ...seedless watermelons (audience laughs) - is not simple (audience laughs) p. 555). Other rhetorical features examined by the authors were the use of color associations and doubling back in which a word was repeated in two subsequent clauses to intensify the argument (e.g. A watermelon on the outside is green. Green says something good p. 557). By giving more examples, Neuman et al counter-argued the labeling of fundamentalist rhetoric by liberals as irrational and lacking argument.

In the same vein, Muchnik (2005) analyzed the persuasive devices of a Jewish preacher who made heavy use of 'pseudo-logical devices'. Muchnik argued that the preacher played on the emotions of the audience rather than their logic (pp. 378-381). For example, the preacher repeatedly used the words 'proof', 'scientific evidence', and 'conclusion' without giving evidence to support his claims (p. 381). The natural dysfunction of senses after death, for instance, was presented as 'scientific' evidence that souls exist; introducing an ungrounded assumption as a 'conclusion' that souls see and hear (pp. 383-4). In addition to the heavy use of pseudo-logical devices, the author explained that the preacher engaged the audience in a dialogue leading the audience to respond to his questions in an expected manner, e.g. 'Ah, that's great! Am I scary or funny? (Audience): Funny!' (p. 392). Another device was the use of funny words taken from everyday slang; this was designed to bring the listeners close to the speaker and create a sense of immediacy and intimacy (p. 389). Muchnik gave more examples of rhetorical effects, showing that the speaker played on the audience's emotions rather than their reason.

From a different perspective, Bhatia (2007) compared discourse on politics and discourse on religion by investigating the linguistic and rhetorical tools used in speeches by Osama bin Laden and George W. Bush. One linguistic

device he examined is the use of the metaphor of 'evil' by both speakers (pp. 510- 512). Bush labels 'the acts of terror' as 'evil' (p. 510), invoking the biblical concepts of 'good' and 'evil', whereas bin Laden refers to America as 'evil', fortifying it with a murder metaphor in which 'Bush and his gang' are conceptualized as killers, 'stabbing into the truth' (p. 511). Another metaphor is the 'light versus dark' (pp. 517-518). To George Bush, terrorists 'operate in shadows' and the war on terror is 'a story of light overcoming darkness' (p. 517). Similarly, bin Laden described Bush as 'blurred ...by the darkness of black gold' (p. 518). Besides the use of religious metaphors, both speakers appealed to religion as an authority: to bin Laden, fighting the United States 'is commanded by religion' (p. 520), and to Bush, it is 'martyrdom' (p. 520). Bhatia concluded that both speakers used the same rhetorical tools to objectify their conceptions of reality as an absolute truth. Though Bhatia's study gave some insight into the persuasive linguistic devices used by both speakers, it provided little insight as to how the socio-political and historical contexts intertwined with discourse.

Perhaps the study by Chilton (2004) is the only study that deconstructed the process of persuasion in religious discourse in terms of the presuppositions implied in particular speech acts and the role the speakers assumed about themselves. Like Bhatia's study (2007), he analyzed speeches by Osama Bin Laden and George Bush. He noted that both speakers performed similar speech acts: Bin Laden asked God to 'grant (suicide bombers) Paradise' (p. 179), and 'mete (the hypocrites) the punishment they deserve' (p. 179); George Bush asked God to 'bless the soul of the departed' (p. 178) and thanked God for 'the promise of a life to come' (p. 178). One underlying assumption Chilton points out is that both speakers assumed clerical authority: while Bin Laden assumed he is the envoy of God, George Bush, as he blessed America and the souls of the dead, assumed a priestly role (p. 192). In this way, both speakers drew on approximate belief systems (pp. 189-190).

Another element Chilton (2004: 189-193) focused on is the use of history as a moral authority. While George Bush declared that 'our responsibility to history is already clear... to rid the world of evil' (p. 191), bin Laden drew on historical narratives mapping them onto contemporary political circumstances. The United States was referred to as 'the Hubal', which 'all hypocrite ones stood behind it'. One significant point Chilton made is the allusions that this conceptual framework was likely to trigger: 'If Hubal is America, if the hypocrites are Saudi Arabia (and similar states), and if bin Laden is calling for the destruction of Hubal, then bin Laden himself is potentially available to fill the conceptual slot 'Mohammed' or at least 'prophet' (p. 180). To put it differently, by recontextualizing one element from the early Islamic tradition, i.e. 'Hubal' and putting it in the context of the attacks against America, bin Laden gave the utterance a new meaning, i.e. 'he' (bin Laden/the prophet) will destroy America as the Prophet destroyed 'Hubal'. Hence, the persuasive force of the analogy.

To conclude, few studies have analyzed persuasion in discourse on religion. Studies by Neuman et al (2001); Muchnik (2005) and Bhatia (2007) focused on the rhetorical effectiveness of some discourse features as irony, humor, and personal stories. The study by Chilton (2004) approached discourse from a cognitive perspective as it focused on the presuppositions of particular speech

acts and the implications triggered by the use of specific metaphors and analogies. While these studies provided some insight into the use of linguistic persuasion in discourse on religion, they rarely linked processes of persuasion to the wider discourse context in terms of the socio-political context of the audience, the medium through which the discourse is mediated and the processes of recontextualisation and interdiscursivity (see Reisigl and Wodak 2009 on the Discourse Historical Approach). This is what the present study attempts to do using the Discourse Historical Approach as a conceptual and methodological framework.

4. *The Discourse Historical Approach*

The Discourse Historical Approach (DHA) falls under the umbrella of Critical Discourse Analysis. The DHA takes into account four levels of context: (1) text-internal; (2) the intertextual and interdiscursive relationship between discourses/genres; (3) the extralinguistic social level and 4-the broader sociopolitical and historical contexts (see Wodak and Meyer 2009; Reisigl and Wodak 2009: 89; and Richardson and Wodak 2009b: 46).

Intertextuality refers to the link to other texts through invoking a topic, an event or a main actor. Taking an element from its context is de-contextualization, while inserting it into a new context is re-contextualization (e.g. see Reisigl and Wodak (2009: 90).

As a result of this process of taking an element from one context (i.e. de-contextualization) and inserting it in a new context (i.e. recontextualisation), the de-contextualized elements can partly acquire new meanings (e.g. Reisigl and Wodak 2009: 90). This can be illustrated, as Reisigl and Wodak (ibid.) point out, when particular discursive elements, rather than others, are discretely re-inserted in newspapers' coverage/commentary on speech events where they (partly) acquire new meanings.

Another possible discursive function of re-contextualization is that ideologies of past discourses are reproduced in contemporary contexts. This is shown, for instance, in studies by Richardson and Wodak (2009a, 2009b) on contemporary discourses on immigration in the United Kingdom and Austria. Austrian and British far-right groups, they have pointed out, recontextualize anti-Semitic and fascist ideologies, reproducing contemporary exclusionary rhetoric, mostly towards blacks and Muslims. The recontextualized terms acquire new meanings while retaining some of their connotations (e.g. see Richardson and Wodak (2009b: 52-54) on their commentary on the use of the term 'cleansing' the city of Graz in Austria from 'beggars' and 'refugees' in one political leaflet by FPÖ (Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs).

As for interdiscursivity, it indicates that discourses can be linked to discourses on other topics or sub-topics (e.g. see Reisigl and Wodak 2009a: 90-93). For instance, discourse on climate change may contain discourses on finance and health and discourse on exclusion can possibly link to discourses on education and employment (e.g. Reisigl and Wodak 2009: 90-93 and Richardson and Wodak 2009b: 46).

While recontextualisation is used in discourse on politics to justify discriminatory practices (e.g. see Richardson and Wodak 2009b), in discourse on religion, it functions as a persuasive device. This is illustrated in the coming sections.

4.1 An Overview of Hamza Yusuf's Speech²

It is perhaps important at the outset to delineate the genre in which the speech falls into: basically, it is a monologic discourse that has characteristics of public speaking (Garner 2009: 59); for example, the use of restatement (e.g. repeating an identical syntactic structure varying word/s to draw the attention of the listener to the unpredicted element). It also inserts quotes from the Quran, sayings by the Prophet and makes use of historical and religious allusions. In that sense, it has 'a civil-religious nexus' (Hashem 2010: 54).

The speech entitled 'Planning for Tomorrow' was given in a conference in Washington DC on eradicating malaria in Africa. The conference was sponsored by 'United for Change', an NGO that aims at 'increasing the awareness of and sympathy for issues requiring the attention and action of the Muslim community'.³

The conference's program had five consecutive sessions: 'Unleashing the Potential of the Ummah'; 'Vision for the Muslim Community'; 'Malaria: Ethical, Political and Scientific Dimensions'; 'Living with Malaria'; and 'Planning for Tomorrow'. Hamza Yusuf's speech, therefore, 'Planning for Tomorrow', acted as an 'epilogue' to the conference; hence its persuasive intent. The speech lasted for 43 minutes, and is accessible in many websites. On You Tube, it has, to date, 37 thousand views.⁴

As shown above, the overriding theme of the speech is malaria in Africa; however, Hamza Yusuf uses malaria as a metaphor of corruption⁵, presenting religion as a way out and urging Muslims 'to rise as an umma- Muslim community- to the challenge'. Structurally, the speech mainly follows the problem/solution⁶ rhetorical mode where in most topics introduced a problem is described and a solution is presented. For instance, on the topic of economic corruption, the speaker argues that most of the people who have looted the government of the United States of America (e.g. Berni Madof) had a course in business ethics in Yale or Harvard; however, this education-he continues- did not benefit them in their human behaviour. The speaker then referred to the solution: this is what the Prophet refers to when he talks about 'intention', 'niyya' that has to be- the speaker says- for the sake of God.

4.2 The Audience: Socio-historical Context

The immediate audience of the speech is American Muslims. However, the fact that the conference was video-recorded and broadcast on You Tube shows that the speaker is aware that he is addressing an international audience that may happen to be Americans/Muslims or not. Most relevant here is that the speech was given in 2009; in the post 9/11 era, drastic changes took place in the relationship between Muslims and Western countries. Many European countries tightened their immigration rules, specifically targeting immigrants from Muslim countries (Cesari 2010: 20-22).

In addition, anti-Muslim sentiment was clearly voiced in some journalistic writing (see Richardson 2004), and in the anti-immigrant rhetoric of right-wing parties (see Richardson and Wodak 2009b). Besides, many books produced by some acclaimed journalists and intellectuals (e.g. Christopher Caldwell 2009, Oriana Fallaci 2002, and Michel Houellebecq 2003) advocated the argument of the incompatibility between Islam and the West, and that Europe is succumbing to an 'Islamic culture' (Cesari 2009: 2).

Although the British Runnymede Trust first used Islamophobia as a term in 1997, the term attracted more attention after 9/11. Alongside Xenophobia and Anti-Semitism, Islamophobia is now acknowledged as a form of intolerance (e.g. Bunzl 2007).

The rise of anti-Muslim sentiments has undoubtedly inflicted Muslims. To quote El-Nawawy and Khamis 2009:

Most Muslims now find themselves (mis)perceived, at best, as an isolated and excluded minority of 'anti-Western fanatics' who resist integration and anti-Western interaction with other cultures and faiths or at worse, a group of 'terrorists' who can violently attack Others or threaten their safety and security. (p. 4)

Within that context the televangelist Hamza Yusuf gave his speech.

4.3 Interdiscursivity

As stated earlier, interdiscursivity indicates that discourses are linked to each other through topics on other discourses (Reisigl and Wodak 2009: 90; Richardson and Wodak 2009b: 46). The speech has many hybrid discourses, including discourse on disease, discourse on corruption and discourse on religion. Discourse on disease is presented through many topics on the description of malaria symptoms (e.g. fever, blood defecation), the suffering of children in Africa and the history of fighting malaria in the different places (e.g. United States of America and Italy). Discourse on corruption is established through references to economic corruption and political corruption (e.g. Berni Madof and the war in Iraq). As we will see, discourse on religion is interwoven with discourse topics on disease and corruption. Figure 1 represents some selected discourse topics on disease and corruption.

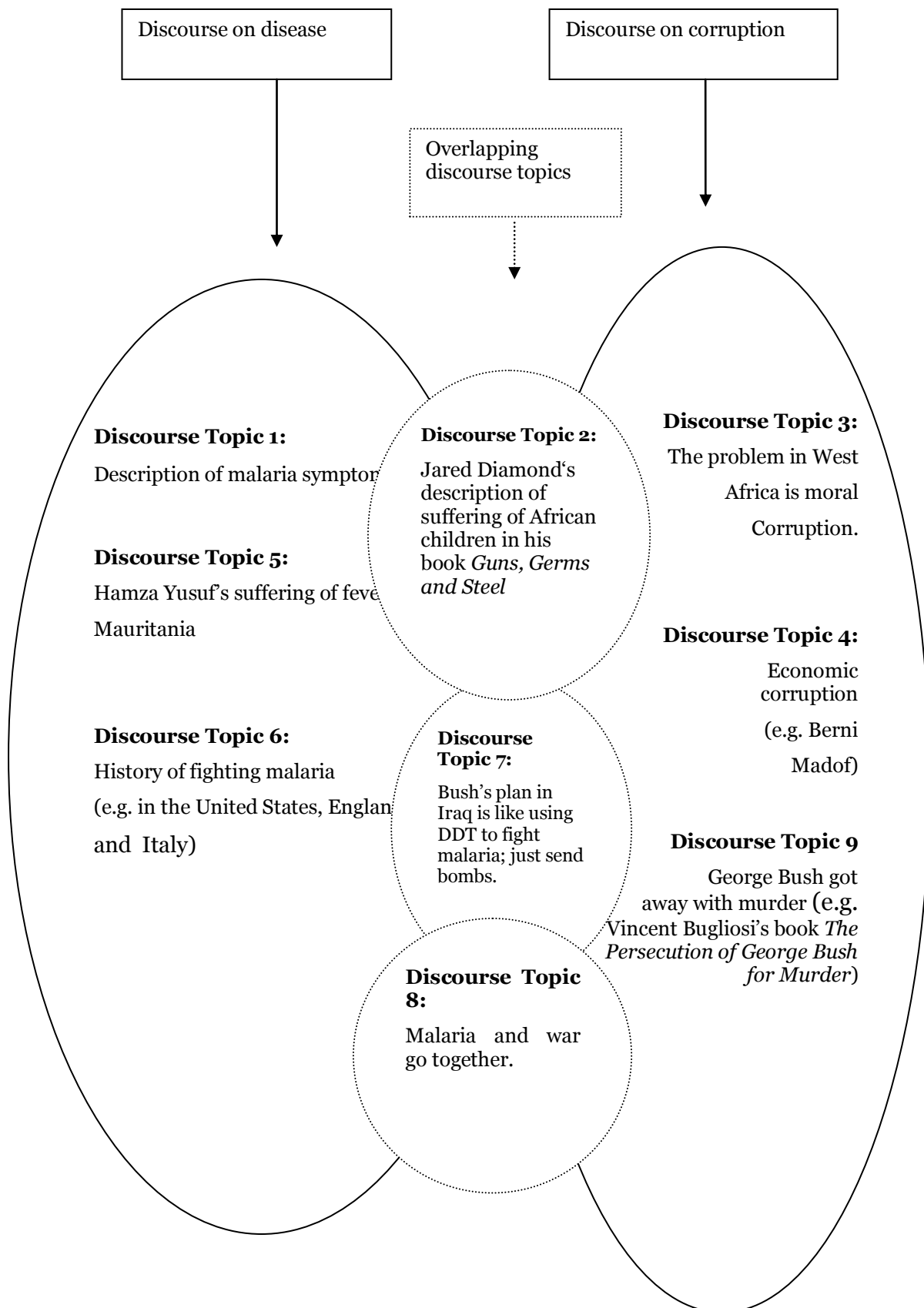


Figure 1. Contiguous and overlapping discourse topics on disease and corruption

Drawing on the figure above, one discourse topic triggered in the speech is racism. The speaker refers to Jared Diamond's *Guns, Germs and Steel*⁷ (1997) presenting a description of the predicament of malaria in Africa; however, the topic of racism is also invoked:

There's a man who wrote a book called guns germs and something other, steel, guns, germs and steel. Anyway, they did a documentary on that and he's a scientist that studies disease and when he was in Africa; he was in West Africa sub-Saharan African; and he was in a malaria clinic; and if everybody saw that documentary; it's the most powerful moment, I think, in that documentary when he literally breaks down and starts crying. He's a PhD American scientist; his name is Jared Diamond; wrote a very callous book about the influence of gun germs and steal on civilizations and their rises and falls; and there he was confronted with the reality of the disease right in front of him and seeing little children dying from the disease and he broke down; it had a serious impact on him.

Interestingly, *Guns, Germs, and Steel: A Short History of Everybody for the Last 13,000 Years* (1997) explains why Eurasian societies conquered populations of other areas and maintained dominance. The writer draws on geography, undermining the claim that Eurasian hegemony is due to Eurasian intellectual, moral or inherent genetic superiority. In his reply to the historian William H McNeill, published in the New York Book Review, (June 1997) Diamond wrote⁸:

Historians' failure to explain history's broadest pattern leaves us with a huge moral gap. In the absence of convincing explanations, many (most?) people resort, consciously or unconsciously, to racist assumptions: the conquerors supposedly had superior IQ or culture. That prevalence of racist theories, as loathsome as they are unsupported, is the strongest reason for studying the long-term factors behind human history.

The reference to the book/documentary served to develop the speaker's argument of the predicament of children in Africa; yet the debate about the superiority of the Europeans, triggered by the book is inherent in the text.

Racism is also invoked by inserting a quotation for Benjamin Rush, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence (Dwight 1876):

Benjamin Rush said just as clearing a land destroys it; that's when we go and cut everything down destroys it, cultivating land, and I mean by that and he said: 'draining its swamps, burning its brush, removing its weeds, taking away the unwholesome of fact of too much moisture in the land, makes it healthy; renders the land healthy'. He said malaria will not be eradicated until we cultivate the land, land cultivation.

The use of Benjamin Rush's quotation is intended to lend support to the speaker's argument that malaria has to be eradicated. Interestingly, however, Benjamin Rush is predicated by Hamza Yusuf as 'one of the staunchest anti-slavery founders of this country...he felt that ignoring the problem of racism was one of the biggest mistakes that the founders had done'. The oscillation between Benjamin Rush's effort to fight slavery and malaria binds the discourse on malaria to that of anti-slavery; one implication is that racism has to be eradicated like malaria.

The topics of economy and politics are also presented. The speaker refers to Adam Smith's book *Wealth of Nations* (1990):

Adam Smith, before he wrote *The Wealth of Nations*, wrote a book on moral sentiments saying that the basis of commerce was morality, that every transaction is a moral transaction because it gives each of the people in the transaction a chance to honor the other and not cheat them; and this leads to a win-win situation which is necessary for civil society; that's a different type of capitalism than the type of capitalism we see when it is the dog eat dog world.

The use of Adam Smith's quotation is in line with many examples the speaker uses that support his argument on the prevalence of economic corruption (e.g. Berni Madof, John Delinger, and Emerald). The speaker introduces the solution: 'Islam is an economic religion'.

Another example of interdiscursivity occurs when the speaker refers to the legal system of the United States through a reference to the book *The Persecution of George Book for Murder* by Vincent Bugliosi (2008) in which he 'sets forth the legal architecture and incontrovertible evidence that President Bush took this nation to war in Iraq under false pretenses—a war that has not only caused the deaths of American soldiers but also over 100,000 innocent Iraqi men, women, and children'⁹. George Bush, Hamza Yusuf says, committed a felony of the first type and should be persecuted. Again, commenting on what he perceives as an injustice, he comments: 'this is what the Prophet came to eradicate, not malaria'.

Looking into Hamza Yusuf's perspective towards his arguments on moral corruption, one finds that he perceives moral corruption as permeating a wide context, i.e. the world or the planet:

We are living on a planet where the two largest enterprises are armaments and drugs... to numb people and obviate them from the pain of living in a planet whose two major priorities are building weapons and selling them, and making drugs and pushing them; that's what is going on; that's what's going on.

The conjuring up of 'a planet' or in another instance 'a world' is not in fact limited to that speech. In another speech¹⁰, broadcast on the Internet in March 2006, the same perception is conveyed:

We (Muslims) are a historical community; we are part of a historical process; we are here for a purpose; we are in the United States of America in large numbers; and we should be utilizing that fact; we have a job to do; and that job is about reconciling; because we don't want a planet to disintegrate into more war, into more hatred, into more violence, into more conflict, into more human suffering. We don't want that...

Thus, the perception of a globe, to which Muslims and non-Muslims are presumably connected, is one feature of Hamza Yusuf's discourse realized in the above texts (e.g. see commentary by Richardson and Wodak (2009b: 45) on text as a realization of discourse).

One question that arises here is whether this perception of a 'planet' is a result of the phenomenon of globalization itself, i.e. the increase in the number of people moving across borders, the easiness of communication and the spread

of many forms of information technologies (e.g. see Mandaville 2007: 312); or whether it is related to the context of Muslims in the post 9/11 era. As a televangelist whose discourse is mediated on the Internet and satellite channels, it seems that Hamza Yusuf cannot but see the world as one single geographical unit, i.e. the planet.

This perception of a globe seems to be, as well, related to the context of Muslims in the post 9/11 era. Muslims have become more aware of some exclusionary practices targeting them from restrictions on immigration rules in Europe to the predominance of discourses that perceive Islam as the static backward Other (e.g. see El Nawawy and Khamis 2009; Cesari 2009; 2010 on the socio-political context of Muslims after 9/11 and Richardson 2004 on the misrepresentation of Muslims in British broadsheet newspapers).

As Hamza Yusuf presents Islam as a solution to some 'global' problems, he is literally turning the tables on these exclusionary discourses, presenting Islam as a dynamic entity, appealing to a wider context of audiences, i.e. 'humans' by large; hence, the persuasive use of this global appeal in painting an image of Islam as a force that can take the globe out of some of its major problems.

4.4 Intertextuality

One of the uses of intertextuality in Hamza Yusuf's speech is to bind the casual style of the speech to the spiritual realm. The speaker makes use of an informal style; he starts, for example, by narrating a personal story about his childhood:

When I became Muslim one of the benefits of having personality like that (being dare in his childhood) is that I would do things that I think more rational people would be hesitant to do and one of them was going to West Africa with really little or no means; and you must join a Bedouin tribe out there and drinking water that they drank without ever thinking about any bacteria. I used to just say 'bismilah allazi la jađoro mza esmihi faj? la filard wala filsama? wa howa elsamiđ el zalim' (in the name of Allah whose mention prevents all evils) and I was convinced that that was enough, which is why you need that 'hadith' (saying) with also 'eđqelha wa tawakkal' (consult your reasons), you know, tie your camel and trusting God.

In the above quotation, Hamza Yusuf imports two sayings by the Prophet; these serve to link the 'ordinary'/'customary' discourse of the speech (Hashem 2010: 55) to the religious realm. The use of the logical sequence 'that's why' shows that he believes that one needs not to take the saying of the Prophet for granted but to balance it against other sayings.

Besides tying the speech to the spiritual realm, the speaker recontextualizes religious elements giving them contemporary meanings. For example, he imports the word 'fetra' from the context of the Quran:

Much of the problem in these countries (West Africa) does not have to do with poverty; it doesn't have to do with inability or lack of human resources, all of the other things that are used in criteria; it gets reduced to one simple major problem, corruption, morality, basic human ethics; and this is a crisis that there's only two things that can address this crisis; there is only two things one is '*fetra fetra*'; people that have an access to their original nature. This is why

you may meet people who are not necessarily religious but they are morally upright people because they are connected to their 'fetra', but the other thing that addresses this problem is religion itself; the beauty of Islam is the religion of 'fetra' that it addresses human nature; it recognizes our weakness and addresses how to deal with these weaknesses in the book of God 'subhano wa t3aala' (God the glory) and in the 'sunna' of the Prophet (life of the Prophet) 'salla allah 3alih wa salam' (Peace be upon him).

In the Quran, 'fetra' means creation: 'It would not be reasonable in me if I did not serve Him Who created me, and to Whom ye shall [all] be brought back (Yusuf Ali Translation- 22, Yasin). The speaker, however, conflates the two meanings: the general meaning of the word 'fetra' in Arabic i.e. 'inherent nature' and its specific meaning in the Quran, i.e. 'God's creation'. By using 'fetra' from the context of the Quran in the context of corruption in Africa, the word acquires a new meaning, i.e. 'fetra' or religion is capable of fighting corruption in Africa. By re-contextualizing the word, he is thus objectifying religion, making it a force of change.

Another example of intertextuality occurs when the speaker recontextualizes the word 'hokm el gahillia' (Law of Ignorance) from the Quran in the context of Vincent Bugliosi's appeal to persecute George Bush for murder:

Vincent Bugliosi said we cannot have a legal system of law and order when there are people above the law; this is 'hokm el gahillia' (the Law of ignorance); that is what the Prophet came to eradicate not malaria; he came to eradicate injustice and when you eradicate injustice, you eradicate things like malaria because they are intricately bound.

Historically, 'hokm el gahillia' (Law of Ignorance) is the era that preceded Islam in the Arab peninsula and is generally known for its gross injustices towards women and slaves. This is documented in many instances in the Quran. One verse, Al Maida: 53, refers to that era:

(If they turn away from the Law of Allah) do they desire judgment according to the Law of Ignorance? But for those who have certainty of belief whose judgment can be better than Allah's? 11

By recontextualizing the term 'hokm el gahillia', the speaker is mapping that historical context onto the context of the political injustices in the twenty first century. In other words, via recontextualisation, Islamic history becomes a dynamic boundary applicable to the contemporary context. Furthermore, the sentence 'this is what the Prophet came to eradicate, not malaria' has some pre-suppositions that are worth looking at: first, the Prophet could possibly eradicate malaria; second, this is not, however, what he came for. The Prophet –in that representation– could deal with contemporary problems such as malaria in Africa and corruption.

Another example of intertextuality occurs when Hamza Yusuf recontextualizes the word 'fever' from one saying by the Prophet in the context of fighting malaria in Africa:

The prophet 'salla allah 3alih wa salam' (peace be upon him) was pointing to symptoms but indicating what's really going on, 'tadaza laho'; they (the body parts) respond with their immune system. The 'sahar' (insomnia) and 'the

fever' are only acts of the symptoms of a body responding to some harm; this is what our 'umma' is like, the believers to believers are like a building... In another metaphor, he said 'we are like a building, we support one another'.

The Prophet in the above excerpt has the ability to manifest 'contemporary' problems, i.e. 'indicating what's really going on'.

The use of the Arabic 'umma' in the above excerpt (rather than 'Muslims/believers') cannot be dismissed. Umma refers to the idea of a unity among Muslims that transcends geographical boundaries; it is therefore 'an imagined community' (Mandaville 1999: 23). Schmidt (2005) refers to 'umma' as a religious ideal: 'to take part in a border-crossing community that includes believers worldwide and raises ambitions for what the believers ought to be – unified, innately connected, characterized by profound mutual loyalty and the practice of high moral standards' (p. 577).

That the 'umma' is like a body (that's sick) not only underscores that the Muslim community is suffering, but it puts the ideal vision of an umma at stake: if power is insinuated/imagined in the concept of the 'umma', then 'the umma' is no longer powerful. Juxtaposing the ideal vision- steeped in history- with the contemporary reality serves to urge the audience to take the expected action: 'to rise as an umma to the challenge'.

It is important to mention here that the notion of the 'umma' - the community of believers- seems to be a clear and self-explanatory notion to the majority of Muslims (e.g. see Mandaville 2007: 62, 65 on the umma during the Prophet's life). However, it is interesting that the speaker has chosen-via repetition- to make sure the notion is clearly understood; he explains the metaphor in another saying by the Prophet that says that the umma, in terms of unity, is like a building. This shows that the speaker seems to have in mind non-Muslim addresses that he wishes to address. This seems in line with the global appeal referred to above and with the referential ambiguity in his sentence 'we are living in a planet' where 'we' possibly oscillates between three audiences: Muslims, Americans and humans.

5. Conclusion

To sum up, in the present study, I have attempted to deconstruct the various levels of context in one speech by the Muslim televangelist Hamza Yusuf. One level of context is the medium through the speech is mediated, i.e. the Internet. As stated earlier, one feature of media discourse is the blurring of entertainment and information (Thussu 2007: 7-8). This is manifest in the use of personal stories that are dramatized¹²; for example, when the speaker narrated the hazards of his stay in West Africa that put him on the verge of death. It is also shown when the speaker recontextualized religious terms to tie his speech to the religious realm; for example, when he inserted sayings by the Prophet in one personal story about his visit to West Africa.

The discursive construction of religion as a dynamic force of change seemed to interpret the instances of interdiscursivity used. In a speech on 'malaria in Africa', Hamza Yusuf has, surprisingly, invoked many overlapping topics in many domains: economy (e.g. capitalism), politics (e.g. the legal system of the

United States and the persecution of George Bush), and society (e.g. moral corruption, racism and slavery). In this way, he presents religion in 'holistic' terms as an alternative approach to life and as a solution to some 'global' problems. Equally important, by recontextualizing particular elements, the speaker dismissed some discourses and invoked others; for example, he dismissed (the false) presumptions of the European superiority and invoked (opposition) discourse on the war in Iraq. Put that way, religion is no longer divorced from life but rather becomes a dynamic force that interacts with contemporary discourses and contested realities.

In addition, the speaker recontextualized religious terms endowing them with new meanings. For example, he conflated two meanings of the word 'fetra' (innate nature/creation), and recontextualised the word 'fever' from the saying of the Prophet in the context of fighting malaria in Africa. In this way, recontextualisation not only tied the speech to the religious realm but also presented religion as a force of change, serving the speaker's specific persuasive intention.

The present study has focused on the use of intertextuality and interdiscursivity as two persuasive processes in one speech by the televangelist Hamza Yusuf; many questions are yet to be explored; for example, what rhetorical features do Muslim televangelists use to appeal to their audience, what arguments do they employ and how these relate to the socio-political and historical contexts of Muslims in the twenty first century. These are some of the questions that can be recommended for future research.

Notes

- ¹ Hamza Yusuf is the founder of the Zaytuna Institute in Berkeley, California, the United States, which aims to 'train students in the varied sciences of Islam, while also instilling in them a sophisticated understanding of the intellectual history and culture of the West': <http://www.zaytunacollege.org/about/> accessed February 29, 2012.
- ² For the transcription of Arabic excerpts, the present study uses the morpho-phonemic transcription system adapted from Harrell (1957), Hafez (1991) and IPA. It includes twelve vowel symbols and twenty-four consonant symbols. This includes six short vowels:

/a/ as in ka3b (heel), xadha (he took it)

/â/ as in hârb (war), țârii?â (way), koorâ (ball)

/i/ as in nisiit (I forgot), kalbi bonni (my dog is brown)

/e/ as in fehem (he understood), mejja (one hundred), fekr (thought)

/o/ as in forb (drink n.)

/u/ as in musiiqâ (music)

and six long vowels, their length shown by doubling the symbol:

/aa/ as in gaari (current), saa3a (hour), faat (he passed)

- /â/ as in gââri (my neighbor), fââr (mouse)
 /ii/ as in diin (religion), ṭwiilâ (long), xamsiin (fifty)
 /ee/ as in deen (debt), lee (why), ʔetneen (two)
 /oo/ as in ʔooṭ (one of the two halves of a match), koorâ (ball)
 /uu/ as in ʔuut (kick the ball), fuul (beans), ʔâlâ ṭuul (right away)

The consonant symbols are those of IPA; /b/, /t/, /d/, /k/, /g/, /m/, /n/, /l/, /f/, /v/, /s/, /z/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /h/, /w/ and /j/ have similar values to those used in transcribing English sounds. The following are specific to Arabic:

- /ʔ/ as in ʔaam (he rose), noʔṭâ (point), ʔawwel (first)
 /q/ as in qâwi (strong), qânuun (law)
 /r/ as in wârâ (behind)
 /x/ as in xamsiin (fifty), xaaf (he was frightened)
 /ʕ/ as in ṭâṭjejâ (covering)
 /ħ/ as in waħda (one)
 /ʒ/ as in ʒârd (width)

- 3 The link to the website: <http://www.unitedforchange.com/about/> accessed September 25, 2011
- 4 The link to the speech : http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yt-iTYC_S9M accessed October 2, 2012
- 5 The speaker, for instance, says: ‘We have a history of war and malaria that’s, and that’s why when you sell these countries weapons, when you sell these countries weapons you are depriving them of health care programs, you are depriving them of sanitary water... and you are giving them malaria, you are giving them yellow fever, you are giving them HIV Aids, that’s what you are doing’.
- 6 As its name suggests, in the problem/solution organizational mode, a problem is introduced and a solution is presented; there are four basic elements of the problem/solution organizational mode: situation, problem, solution, and evaluation (e.g. see Hoey 2001: 123-126).
- 7 The book won the Pulitzer Prize in 1998 and was made into a documentary in 2005.
- 8 The link to the review is: <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/1997/jun/26/guns-germs-and-steel/> accessed September 25, 2011
- 9 The quotation is taken from the book website <http://www.prosecutionofbush.com/about.php> accessed September 25, 2011.
- 10 The quotation is taken from Hamza Yusuf’s speech entitled ‘Changing the tide: Islam in America’; broadcast on You Tube in March 2006, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WfEIGw8NtNA> accessed October 2, 2012
- 11 Surah Al-Maida, verse 50, El Sayyid Abul A’l Mawdudi’s translation: <http://www.islamawakened.com/quran/5/50/default.htm> accessed October 2, 2012
- 12 For example, in her work on politicotainment, Wodak (2011: 163) points out that ‘emotionalisation, personalization, aestheticization, decreased distance and dramatization allow for easy identification by viewers and for comprehensibility’.

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