

WORDS AND RUMORS OF WORDS  
COMPARATIVE WAR RHETORICS

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by  
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For Andrew

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*Urbs antiqua fuit. . . . Urbs antiqua ruit.*

There once was an ancient city. . . . The ancient city fell.

—Virgil, the *Aeneid*

## **Chapter 1: Introduction and Literature Review**

### **Exposition**

Much has been written about America's implicit and explicit connection to the ancient world and, in particular, to Rome. This analogy is in part been spurred on by the truth that the founders of America's revolutionary period used the Roman Republic as a template for conducting the American experiment (Pearson 2008, 29). But even before that time in the colonial era, such comparisons were popular (Galinsky 1992, 154), suggesting that identification with Rome was stronger and ran deeper than mere copycatting of bylaws, checks and balances.

Of connections drawn between America and Rome, Karl Galinsky writes,

Such analogies fall into two categories of inspiration. Some are based on direct and conscious cultural continuity as in the areas of education, law, government, city planning and neoclassical architecture. The second mode of the classical tradition is less direct but just as vital. It is the discovery of affinities. (1992, 15)

It is these affinities that are of interest herein.

“An obsession with Roman antecedents could hardly have been helped, given the classical education all the founding fathers received” (Murphy 2007, 35). The colonists were more than familiar with ancient history. “Every literate person,” according to Murphy, “would have known the fabled stories of Rome: The rape of the Sabine women; Horatio at the bridge; the sacred temple geese who gave the alarm at the Capitol; Caesar and Brutus on the Ides of March” (Murphy 2007, 35). These stories made for the

colonists and revolutionaries a cultural fabric of historical references much like the D-Day landing and the Watergate burglary make for 21st century Americans (Murphy 2007, 35).

What is more, knowledge of these tales had a direct impact on the attitudes and actions of the people. The Americans adopted core Roman values as their own; “the educated elite of the thirteen colonies were steeped in the Roman code of *virtus*” (Murphy 2007, 36), manly excellence bound by honor. This shows that not only did the forbearers know history’s lessons, they applied the principles of the past to their lives and their constitution. The integration of *virtus*, because it was so central to both Republican (American and Roman) ideologies, demonstrates that as they were nation-building, early Americans in effect tacitly defined themselves as New Romans.

This working definition is seen prominently in the words of the Revolution’s major figures. “The vocabulary of 18th century revolution reverberated with purposeful echoes of Republican Rome as political activists self-consciously assumed the Roman mantle” (Sellers 2004, 347). In the first inaugural address of the new nation, George Washington asserted, “The destiny of the Republican model of government” is “deeply, perhaps. . . finally, staked on the experiment entrusted to the hands of the American people” (Pearson 2008, 29). Indeed, the beginnings of the United States history are treasured in Roman antecedents.

From these beginnings spring complex and fascinating questions for the academic and historian. Rome, of course, fell. Is America vulnerable to its predecessor’s same fate? And will a republic ultimately fall prey to the lure of empire? Although delivering answers to these questions is beyond the scope of this project, the researcher admits these

global inquiries and others are not without influence on the present study.

In his *Are We Rome: The Fall of an Empire and the Fate of America*, Cullen Murphy, the editor at large of *Vanity Fair*, discusses ancient antecedents for contemporary Western society but focuses his efforts less on the Roman Republic on which America was modeled and more on the mighty empire that superseded it. He sees correlations at all points. He writes,

President and emperor, America and Rome—the comparison is by now so familiar, so natural that you just can't help yourself; it comes to mind unbidden, in the reflexive way that the behavior of chimps reminds you of the behavior of people. (Murphy 2007, 5)

His anecdotal evidence follows, thusly:

When a reference is made to an “imperial presidency” or to the president’s aides as a “Praetorian Guard,” or to the deployment abroad of “American legions,” no one quizzically raises an eyebrow and wonders what you could possibly be talking about. To American eyes, Rome is the eagle in the mirror. (Murphy 2007, 5-6)

Who then did Romans see when they turned to look upon their reflection?

History suggests Athena returned their steady gaze.

Classical Greece consisted of several, warring states over which Athens enjoyed dominance. An unmatched sea power, the democratic Athenian state grew to the level of empire by the mid fifth century. Each city-state was personified by a ruling figurehead from mythology. Athena was Athens’ patron, the divine embodiment of wisdom and the protector of the Athenian people and their unique system of government: Democracy.

The link between America and Rome is well-documented, but the express connection between Rome and Greece is substantial, too. In Alan Wardman's *Rome's Debt to Greece*, the relationship between the two powers is explored. Wardman draws parallels between Greek literature and Roman literature, for example, drawing upon "Horace's well-known phrase, 'Captured Greece took her fierce victor captive and brought the arts into rustic Latinum,'" (1976, ix) to drive home his point. Unequivocally, the influence of Greek writing and historiography profoundly changed all of Italy. But, he says "that the Roman experience of Greece did more than set new standards in literary taste. It caused profound changes in Roman society as a whole and modified Roman values" (Wardman 1976, ix). In this, the researcher finds an association; as surely as America was changed to its core by the heavy influence of Roman *virtus*, Rome was shaped by an abiding dedication to Greek value systems.

Because one can demonstrate that as a young country, America idolized the great Roman Republic, looking to it for guidance in the formulation a similar system of government and adopting patrician principles as their own, an investigation into the origin of those principles is warranted. And being that such an investigation yields the fact that these core beliefs were not uniquely Roman but rather were relics of earlier Greek concepts like glory, honor, manliness, integrity, etc., one can conclude that the foundation of the American body politic was built by and is maintained by not only identification with Rome but also with Greece. This can be expressed as a formal logic statement:

If A, then B. And if B, then C. If A, then C.

To rephrase, because American identity hearkens back to Rome and because Roman identity hearkens back to Greece, American identity hearkens back to Greece.

The Romans recognized and celebrated their symbolic ancestry. Ronald Mellor, professor of history at UCLA, says that it was important for the Romans to remember their past because it imbued their present with meaning and served as “a validation of their present greatness” (1999, 1). One distinctly sees the Romans pay tribute to Greece in a bevy of places. The researcher notes three: Myth, literature, archeology.

Virgil’s *Aeneid* tells the story of Aeneas, a prince who flees the burning of Troy and escapes to Italy. Guided by his mother, Aphrodite, Aeneas sails across the Adriatic to settle in Latium, where he conquers the native inhabitants and becomes the ancestor of Romulus and Remus, Rome’s mythical founders. For Romans, the penning of this nationalistic folktale in the late first century BCE solidified a founding myth that was important for various reasons. The Greco-Roman legend of the hero traveling to the peninsula genealogically and narratively linked inhabitants of the eternal city to the greatest event of the ancient world, the Trojan War. It also legitimized the Julio-Claudians as descendents of Greek royalty and deity both. And thirdly, the *Aeneid* reinforced the belief that Roman ideals, such as *virtus*, had distinctly glorious origins.

Plutarch’s *Parallel Lives*, written two hundred year’s after Virgil’s Latin epic, explores the same Greco-Roman tie through the presentation of 23 paired biographies. Famous Greeks are matched with famous Romans, their good and bad characters weighed separately and together. More than writing a history, Plutarch was interested in creating a moralizing work that held the capacity to instruct. In his selection of

noteworthy men and in his matching them with predecessors or contemporaries (as the case may have been), Plutarch was making commentary on how virtue manifests itself in the fates of heroes. Thus, this book weaves together the Greek past with the Roman then-present using a different thread. The parallelisms in *Parallel Lives* are mainly character-based, shifting the focus from blood lineage to some intangible common greatness.

Another place in which one sees evidence of Rome identifying with Greece is in archaeology. “On occasion Roman grandees would obtain classical sculptures from Greece but replace the heads with their own” (Murphy 2007, 47-48). Certainly, this is a less subtle means of making Virgil’s and Plutarch’s same point.

If, then, one accepts ancient Greece as an appropriate place to search for parallels with America, one must determine which eras to study. The defining moments of an age often coincide with great military struggles. The war in Iraq is of interest to the researcher because presently it defines U.S. military conduct abroad. Former president George W. Bush was at the helm at the time of its outbreak, and if any contemporary leader is to be looked at, it should be him. To whom, though, in antiquity ought one compare him? To answer this, the researcher must decide upon a Greek war that is likely to have wielded influence on the Romans (and therefore the Americans) and is similar enough to the Iraq War that precepts in strategy, rhetoric and other areas are likely to have been picked up.

At first blush, the Trojan War might seem to be a good starting point. It was, after all, an event that the Romans considered renowned. The Trojan War, which took place sometime in the 13th or 12th century BCE, was eulogized in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. It

served as the setting of the rising action in the *Aeneid*, also. But while the epic war of Homer and Virgil certainly had an impact on the mythmaking of the Romans, the Peloponnesian War (431-404 BCE) is more fitting. This is partly because the war of the Peloponnesus was waged while Rome was formulating its writing style.

Mellor says, “No Roman wrote historical prose before the end of the third century BCE, more than five centuries after the founding of the city” (1999, 11). Roman historical writing would come to serve as the primary means through which contemporary scholars learn about the classical period (Mellor 1999, 2). Further, Roman historical writing was swayed by attention to Greek writing.

By 265 BCE, Rome had control of the entire Italian peninsula and its cultural life fell increasingly under the influence of Greeks from southern Italy who came to Rome as tutors, slaves and prisoners-of-war. Since the Romans had as yet no indigenous literature, they took what they could from the Greeks. (Mellor 1999, 6)

It would make sense that the Romans would be familiar with the then most current model of writing when developing their own system. At the time, this model was being practiced by Thucydides in his *History of the Peloponnesian War*.

The *History* was written concurrent with the conflict, something highly unusual at this point in antiquity. Hanson says, “Thucydides lives the history of the war that he writes, an account verifiable by eyewitnesses still alive” (2008, xii). The *History* is perhaps history’s premier example of investigative journalism. In his *Archaeology*, the first book of the unfinished eight that comprise the work, the writer says that

he did not trust first impressions . . . even his own. But through inquiry, cross-examination of witnesses (‘tried by the most severe and detailed

tests possible' [1.22.3]), autopsy and apparent inspection of written documents, Thucydides claims an objective inquiry that has 'cost me some labor' (1.22.3). (Hanson 2008, xiv-xv)

The image one gets of Thucydides is that of a "careful and nonpartisan note taker, eager to hunt down the principals themselves" (Hanson 2008, xv). So profound is Thucydides' break away from the hyperbolic, polemical accounts of preceding Homeric historians that "succeeding generations of Greeks and Romans credited Thucydides with establishing objective history" (Hanson 2008, xvi).

His professed and apparent commitment to objectivity ultimately caused the Romans to acquire a distaste for the work; they preferred the theatrical, moralizing writing of later Greek writers like Polybius (Mellor 1999, 7-8). Despite this, penning of the *History* proved impactful. "Subsequent ancient historians were judged largely by the degree to which they followed the canons of accuracy and integrity established by Thucydides" (Hanson 2008, xvii). It should be noted that his work is not without stylization and is sometimes highly focused on the few individuals that best illustrate his personal beliefs about morality and fate, life and conflict (Hanson 2008, xv). Still, for a book written in the fifth century BCE, the *History's* "[clear aim] to be accurate, objective and comprehensive" is remarkable (Hanson 2008, xv).

At times Thucydides may be clearly mistaken in both detail and interpretation, but the extent of his accuracy and analysis astounds in a world where travel was difficult, written sources rarely available, and the physical obstacles to the writing of history substantial. (Hanson 2008, xxii)

In fact, later historians, Polybius among them,

have often won praise as “Thucydidean” precisely because . . . [they show] an awareness of cause and effect, the employment of a strict chronology and evidence of a unity of purpose. . . . And, like Thucydides, these historians appear skeptical of what they hear and read. Often they must outline formally the mechanisms they employ to sort out rumor from fact. (Hanson 2008, xvii)

It is this same detached reporting that makes the *History* an ideal archaeological site for the present textual investigation.

But more than that, Thucydides makes an excellent subject for research because he meant the *History* to be used for this exact purpose. Introducing

a more austere way of writing history in his treatment of the Peloponnesian War, [Thucydides] developed a scientific history intended to be useful to statesmen when similar events recur. He regarded the true utility of history to be for the future, when it would be a “possession for all time” for generations to come. (Mellor 1999, 7)

Thucydides’ “labor” [1.22.3] over the *History* was not in vain. It is “the first and still most famous work in the Western historical tradition, considered essential reading for generals, statesman and liberally educated citizens for more than 2,000 years” (Hanson 2008, back cover).

The *History* will be the primary classical text used by the researcher. It relays the tale of Athens versus Sparta and her Peloponnesian allies during nearly three decades of violence. Thucydides gives accounts of both sides, and either Greek city-state could possibly serve as a model for contemporary U.S. foreign policy rhetoric. To determine which side to study, a brief survey of the contenders is in order.

The Spartans describe themselves as simple, masculine, adhering to the principles of old, more concerned with action than art and strong. Their “ideal of fair dealing is based on the principle that if you do not injure others, you need not risk your own fortunes in preventing others from injuring you” (Thuc. 1.17.1). The contemporary equivalent of a Spartan might be expressed best in the rugged visage of a cowboy. By contrast, Athens is called “the school of Hellas” (Thuc. 2.41.1). Athens was home to some of the greatest minds of Western philosophy: Aristotle and Plato, to name two. The Athenians were learned, cosmopolitan, “addicted to innovation” (Thuc. 1.70.2), “ever engaged in getting” (Thuc. 1.70.8) and unquestionably skilled in the art of rhetoric. In a speech the Spartans made on the cusp of war, they describe their soon-to-be adversaries as “adventurous beyond their power and daring beyond their judgment, and in danger they are sanguine” (Thuc. 1.70.3).

Seemingly, George W. Bush would fit the description of a Spartan. Decried in the media for his cowboy-style leadership, which is described in a 2004 article of *Texas Monthly* as “squinty-eyed moral clarity, shoot-from-the-hip decisiveness and go-it-alone gunslinging” (Ennis, 2004), Bush appears to affect a Spartan swagger. But the twice-elected Texas governor was Ivy League educated, the son of the 41st president and a native of Connecticut. He has much more in common with Athenian leadership than he does with Spartan.

His domestic and foreign policies are also in keeping with that of Athens’. Being a democracy, Athens boasted “equal justice to all in their private differences” (Thuc. 2.37.1), an often-imitated constitution that afforded opportunity to all citizens regardless of social standing (Thuc. 2.37.1) and an economy so robust that the “fruits of other

countries” (Thuc. 2.38.2) and “the produce of the world” (Thuc. 2.38.2) were familiar luxuries. The city-state shared, too, a criticism often made of America: “When hostilities began,” explains Emeritus Professor of Classics at Princeton T. J. Luce, “the main issue of the war was plain. Sparta and her allies were determined to check the untrammelled growth of Athens” (1997, 67).

It has now been demonstrated that ancient Greece is a good and likely parallel to modern America, that the events of the Peloponnesian War as recorded in the *History* probably had influence on several successive military campaigns throughout time and, that of the two major powers engaged in that war, Athens is more like the United States and Bush is more like an Athenian. Being that this is so, Pericles, the commander of the Athenians during the first two years of struggle, is the only acceptable foil to George W. Bush. Thucydides, by way of brief introduction, describes him, thusly:

For being the most powerful man of his time, and the leading Athenian statesman, he opposed the Spartans in everything and would have no concessions, but ever urged the Athenians on to war. (Thuc. 1.127.3)

### **Statement of the question**

In the *Agricola* by Tacitus, a commanding officer in the opposing camp stands up to give a speech to his men. Before going to battle with the Romans, the officer attacks their foe’s expansionist military tactics, saying of mighty Rome, *Ubi solitudinem faciunt pacem appellant* (Tacitus *Agri.* 30). The Latin phrase translates to mean, “They make a desert and call it peace.” Caius Cornelius Tacitus, himself a Roman orator, lawyer and

senator, was craftily chastising his Caesars' insistence on conquest with a critique that could easily be made of today's America.

In this fourth Gulf War (i.e., the war on terror or the Iraq War), the United States government has sought to extend influence both militarily and rhetorically. Verbiage disseminated by U.S. government and picked up by the media dehumanizes the enemy, serving to monger fear among the populace, accordingly encouraging unsighted support of power and rallying support of prolonged conflict. This thesis will look at how governments convince their people to go to war and to continue fighting unpopular wars by exploring the relationship between contemporary and classical war rhetoric. Focusing on the military campaigns of George W. Bush and those of ancient Athens, the researcher will review ways in which governments wield words to build and maintain great empires.

More specifically, this thesis will answer to what extent is Bush's oratory similar to that of Pericles. How do the words used by the United States government in the 43rd president's State of the Union Addresses and other major foreign policy speeches from his first-term compare to the words used by Pericles as recorded by Thucydides in the *History of the Peloponnesian War*? And, in the event that there be shared rhetorical stylings, what might such an existence say about American culture? In drawing parallels between the rhetoric, this textual analysis and dramatist critique will seek to elucidate how the modern day United States views itself and its place in the world.

### **The study justified as journalistic**

The present study can be deemed journalistic for two reasons.

Number one: The act of finding possible explanations of and motivations behind a current event (here, the Iraq War) is doing a type of journalism. Writer Walter Lippmann believed it was the press's privileged role to translate and distill the actions of policy-making elites. This thesis seeks to meet Lippmann's obligation.

Number two: The origins of what is today considered journalism began as a search for identity. Logographers, *logopoiói* in the Greek, were individuals who wrote on nearly any subject but did so in prose (Luce 1997,10). The popularity of their craft was in part due to the fact that in the sixth and fifth centuries BCE "prose was increasingly viewed as the proper vehicle to expound specialized subjects relating to the contemporary world, such as travel, medicine, physical science, speech-writing and the like" (Luce 1997, 10). The prose-writing process was

fueled by historical impulses—or so they seem to us: Namely, a desire to put myths and legends into a temporal sequence, to synchronize them and then construct genealogies that would connect the persons of mythology to men of contemporary Greece. (Luce 1997, 10)

Humans wanted to understand where they came from and how their lives fit into what they believed to be true about the natural world. Because in those days there was no uniform system of dating, they traversed the past through the conduit of genealogy (Luce 1997, 11). To them, history became real once they could establish a bloodline through which to trace decent from the gods, to the demigods, to the heroes, to themselves. In that the researcher is seeking connect an aspect of the American present with its distant past, this thesis follows in the tradition of the *logopoiói*.

Journalistic and scholastic interest in this topic should be equally strong. Although journalists should always pay attention to the words given to them by people in positions of power, the media must exercise increased caution in wartime. A commitment to independence from faction becomes all the more vital during times when national security is in danger; with Lippmann's "policy-making elites" employing rhetorical prowess to convince the populace there is a threat, the press's watchdog role becomes critical. The journalist must go beyond reporting truths. The journalist must plumb the words used to formulate the truths (or "truths") they are handed.

Regardless of zealous dedication to objectivity, an inherent risk all journalists face during times of national strife is developing a sense of blind advocacy. When corroborating sources becomes difficult, as many times is the case during wartime, a good journalist may have little alternative but to rely on a politician's verbiage in reporting to the people.

Governments engaged in open hostilities, then, hold unfair advantage over the Fourth Estate. If an emperor or president or Caesar or king should choose to take advantage of the imbalance of power, swaying popular opinion through the conduit of the media, the media become a propagandistic tool. Napoleon Bonaparte demonstrated his understanding of the prodigious power of the press when he said, "I fear newspapers more than a hundred thousand bayonets" (Bird et al. 254). One needs but little imagination to see how the legendary military strategist and others like him before and since might be tempted by the lure of making the media an unwitting but close wartime ally.

## **Explication of rhetoric, war rhetoric and the rhetoric of war**

Emerson called it “an epidemic insanity.” For Byron, it was “a brain-spattering, windpipe-slitting art” and, for von Clausewitz, “the continuation of politics by other means.”

Talk of war on and off the field of battle is a hearty topic. Discussion of war and conflict dates back to mankind’s first skirmish and probably before. The subject is immense, spanning several disciplines, including, but not limited to, political philosophy, law, history and ethics. In the sixth century BCE, Sun Tzu’s *Art of War* was outlining military stratagem, and a thousand years later Machiavelli was discussing psychological warfare in the *Prince*. The millennia-long dialogue has spawned a rich environment for rhetorical study.

### **Rhetoric**

Frustratingly difficult to define, rhetoric, the study not necessarily the oratory, can be explained as meaning. But rhetoric has meant many things to many thinkers:

For the ancient Sophists of Greece, such as Gorgias, the traveling teachers who first began talking and thinking about rhetoric, it simply meant the ability to plan and deliver effective public speaking. Plato, the philosophical adversary of the Sophists, saw rhetoric instead as flattery or pandering: saying to an audience whatever it wanted to hear so as to win its favor. For Aristotle, the first great systematizer of rhetorical theory, rhetoric meant to ability to discover the available means of persuasion in any situation. The Roman statesman Cicero thought of rhetoric as an important tool of statesmanship. One hundred years later, the Roman Quintilian used rhetoric mainly as a pedagogical device to teach young people. In the Renaissance, Peter Rasmus thought of rhetoric as verbal embellishment and style. I. A. Richards, in the twentieth century, argued

that rhetoric is the study of misunderstandings and its remedies.  
(Brummett 2000, 2)

Ramage suggests rhetoric be looked upon as “a ‘way,’ a distinctly and robustly Western version of the Chinese ‘Tao’ or the Navajo ‘Dine’” (2006, 1). And Kenneth Burke, whose literary theory will be employed in this thesis, understood rhetoric to mean inducing among people cooperation (Brummett 2000, 2). Each of these definitions is accurate in that each emphasizes an aspect or capacity of rhetoric important to the theorist. Rhetoric has innumerable meanings, each valid.

The study of rhetoric, the study of meaning, is all encompassing. Nearly every academic discipline has contributed to the study of rhetoric. Its far-reaching roots contribute to its vast capabilities for application; rhetorical criticism can be utilized to derive meaning from pop culture to historical events laden with gravitas.

### **War rhetoric and rhetoric of war**

Expanding the definition of rhetoric as the pursuit of understanding in human dealings, war rhetoric is not only that terminology which seeks to convince a people to begin conflict or to support ongoing conflict, but is also the search for meaning in war. To distinguish between the two aspects of the term throughout, propaganda, political speeches and the like will be called war rhetoric; the philosophical quest will be deemed the rhetoric of war.

For the purposes of this thesis, the researcher will adopt Richard F. Miller’s definition of war rhetoric as follows: “The words, deeds, or words coupled with deeds whose purpose is to recruit, instruct or exhort soldiers for battle” (2008, 4). The

researcher would like to add, though, the purpose of encouraging civilians to believe in the war effort.

Miller argues, “Battle speeches are best understood in the context of the tactical events that prompt their creation,” (2008, 8). This is very much in keeping with the rhetorical tradition. Rhetorical analysis, which will be addressed at greater length in Chapter 2, depends heavily on background (Burke’s scene).

In his *In Words and Deeds: Battle Speeches in History*, Miller makes an important consideration: Were some of what scholarship recognizes as great speeches ever made at all (2008, 12)? The question is a valid one, especially considering the tumultuous backdrop against which much of the oratory was delivered. Also, with particularly old texts, such as Pericles’ Funeral Oration, whose considerable length should raise a thoughtful critic’s eyebrow, how much of what was said is recorded accurately?

A remarkable feature of the *History* is the large number of speeches that are quoted in it. This reflects both the importance of oratory in ancient society and Thucydides’ intentions as a historian. (Edinger 1978, 7)

Thucydides’ exhaustibility, though, calls in to question the authenticity of his report for even in a world consumed with speech-writing and speech-delivery, remembering verbatim any, let alone all, of his 141 recorded speeches is suspect. This problem is raised by the historian himself:

As for the speeches in this history, some were delivered before the war broke out, others while it was in progress. I heard some of them myself, while I learned about others from various sources. In all cases it was difficult to remember them word for word, so my practice in writing has

been to give the speakers the words that I thought would have been demanded of them by the circumstances, while keeping as closely as possible to the argument they actually used. (Thuc. 1.22.1)

Some of what will be studied in this thesis, then, is fabricated. This admission does not discredit the validity of the research, however, because ultimately it is not what transpired but what culture believes took place that is of this project's concern. The researcher is wholly interested in the appeals inherent within war rhetoric and what shaping effect they might have on the rhetoric of war.

“In 1902, Theodore C. Burgess wrote a dissertation titled ‘Epideictic Literature’ that broadly surveyed ancient speeches belonging to that genre that also included battle speeches” (Miller 2008, 22). In his processing the texts, Burgess derived one dozen types of battle speech appeals (Miller 2008, 22). His list follows:

1. Remember your glorious ancestry, their great deeds, their public spirit, that they have prevailed over the enemy before, and so forth;
2. With such ancestry, do not disgrace your heritage;
3. A comparison of our forces with those of the enemy;
4. In war, it is valor, not mere numbers, that prevails;
5. Great prizes await the victors;
6. The auspices are favorable, the gods are our allies;
7. Death in battle is glorious;
8. Defeat equals disgrace;
9. We have conquered this enemy before;
10. The wrongs suffered from this enemy; the war is just;
11. Patriotism;
12. Our commander is superior to that of the enemy. (Burgess 1902, 212-214 paraphrased in Miller 2008, 22)

Although created from speeches attributed to Julius Caesar, Alexander the Great, Xenophon, Hannibal, Augustus, Scipio Africanus, Fabius, Cyrus, Marc Antony and

Severus, a number of the appeals seem familiar to the American ear. This thesis examines the distinct possibility that contemporary battle speeches follow the same pattern in an attempt to motivate present day culture to “remember your glorious ancestry . . .” (Burgess 1902, 212).

Modern war rhetoric and indeed all modern bureaucratic rhetoric in the West are plagued by anti-intellectualism (Lim 2008, xi). Anti-intellectualism does not equate unintelligence, which “pertains to the first-order functions of the mind which grasps, manipulates, adjusts and so forth” (Lim 2008, xi). Rather anti-intellectualism consists of “rhetoric that is linguistically simplistic, reliant on platitudes or partisan slogans, short on argument and long on emotive and human-interest appeals” (Lim 2008, xi).

For Kenneth Burke, democratic political language serves to “sharpen up the pointless and blunt the too sharply pointed.” More specifically, presidential rhetorical efforts have been described as “a linguistic struggle,” “rarely an occasion for original thought,” like “dogs barking idiotically through endless nights,” “bordering on demagoguery,” and “pontification cum anecdotalism.” (Lim 2008, 4)

A movement such as this would likely turn to the ancients for quick, powerful turns of phrase and well-understood (if only to the subconscious) allusions.

Professor Jeffrey Record from the Department of Strategy and International Security at the U.S. Air Force’s Air War College says that

not least among the influences on presidents’ use of force is what presidents believe history teaches about using force . . . presidents cannot help but reason by historical analogy to some degree during a crisis involving possible use of force. (2002, 3)

Record goes on in his book *Making War, Thinking History* to allude to the idea that American presidents borrow rhetoric from the past. When a president chooses war, “their reasoning may be sound or faulty, but reason by historical analogy they do” (2002, 3). Wars of choice are shaped by presidential attention to the decisions of history.

### **The question of “empire”**

When the U.S. occupation of Iraq in 2003 and its extension of military bases through the region and into Central Asia after 2001 was characterized as a new form of colonialism or at least imperialism, many Americans blanched. How could the United States be considered in such terms? (Ryan 2007, 7)

### **As incipient empire: The Spanish-American War**

After the U.S. Census Bureau announced the closing of the frontier in 1890, the American economy backslid into a frightening recession. Factories and farms were producing more than could be consumed, and people began tossing around the idea that new markets for American goods needed to be found (Pearson 2008, 116). With the economic slump worsening, the railroad system failing, “crops rotting” (Pearson 2008, 116) and industrial workers striking, “agitation for political action to open markets for American goods” (Pearson 2008, 116) became tremendous.

A group of intellectuals rose up in support of expansion. They espoused the idea that the “energies of expansion” (Pearson 2008, 116) would not dissolve just because manifest destiny was attained; rather,

the demands for a vigorous foreign policy, for an interoceanic canal, for a revival of our power upon the seas and for the extension of American

influence to outlying islands and adjoining countries [were] indications that the movement will continue. (Zimmerman 2002, 24)

Continue it did. President Roosevelt, presumably operating with the advice of his life-long friend Captain A. T. Mahan, strengthened the United States' naval power and began construction of the Panama Canal in 1904. The Pacific was opened to America, and "the biggest imperial success" (Pearson 2008, 120), Hawaii, was attained during the Cleveland administration. But perhaps the clearest example of expansionism came in 1898 when

the need for more markets to pull the country out of severe economic conditions, the desire to expand the nation's power by constructing a fleet and acquiring naval bases and the idea that conquest brought liberty and civilization to barbarian peoples all combined to lead the United States to ignore President Washington's warning against "foreign entanglements." (Pearson 2008, 123)

Monte Pearson, author of *Perils of Empire: The Roman Republic and The American Republic*, writes, "All that was needed was an opportunity to jump into the imperial arena. That opportunity came just 90 miles from the Florida coast" (2008, 123).

The later half of the 19th century saw the contraction of the mighty Spanish Empire. By 1898, all that remained were Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippines and a few islands scattered in the Pacific Ocean (Pearson 2008, 123). Cuba was fighting for independence, and opportunistic America chose to become "entangled" in the struggle. America sent a battleship, the USS *Maine*, to Havana with combined intents of indicating national interest and pressuring the Spanish into reconciliation. Apparently, the overt

gesture put too much pressure on the Spanish; the warship was blown up, and war between the United States and Spain became unavoidable (Pearson 2008, 123).

Americans were fiercely supportive of the war. Pearson says they rallied behind President McKinley and were “dazzled by the shining promise of Cuban independence” (2008, 123).

Despite the presence of an amendment attached to the declaration of war that made clear the U.S. had no “intention to exercise sovereignty, jurisdiction or control over said island except for the pacification thereof” (Library of Congress in Pearson), the American people, frightened by their worsening domestic predicaments, seemed hungry to stretch their imperial muscles. Pearson cites an 1898 editorial published in the *Washington Post* on the eve of war:

A new consciousness seems to have come upon us—the consciousness of strength—and with it a new appetite, the yearning to show our strength... Ambition, interest, land hunger, pride, the mere joy of fighting, whatever it may be, we are animated by a new sensation. We are face to face with a strange destiny. The taste of Empire is in the mouth of the people even as the taste of blood in the jungle. . . (Zinn 1984, 3)

The Spanish-American War was quick and decisive. Stranded without a navy, the Spanish military in Cuba was overcome by American forces within weeks. When the Peace Treaty of Paris was signed in December of that year, the United States annexed Cuba, Puerto Rico and Guam and was sold the Philippines for \$20 million (Pearson 2008, 124).

What happened next is of key importance. The U.S. had promised before the war that Cuba would gain its independence, but the conquering nation did not want to relinquish possession of the island.

As Secretary of War Elihu Root put it, “The trouble with Cuba is that, although technically a foreign country, practically and morally it occupies an intermediate position, since we have required it to become part of our political and military system, and to form a part of our lines of exterior defense”. (Pearson 2008, 126)

Furthermore, the majority of the American people did not want to make good on their pre-war vow. Businesses flooded into Cuba, and resentment manifested itself in some, spilling over into words dripping with racism (Pearson 2008, 125-126). One *New York Times* editorial professed America should become “permanent possessors of Cuba if the Cubans prove to be altogether incapable of self-government” (Kinzer 2004, 40). One senator said, “Self-government only applies to those who are capable of self-government. We govern the Indians without their consent. We govern the territories without their consent. We govern our children without their consent” (Katz 2009). One general wrote off the Cuban army as “a lot of degenerates, absolutely devoid of honor or gratitude . . . no more capable of self-government than the savages of Africa” (Zimmerman 2002, 294).

A compromise was reached with a law colloquially known as the Platt Amendment. The amendment delineated conditions required for the removal of U.S. troops left in Cuba after the Spanish-American War and named the terms of future relations between the two countries. As Pearson explains, it

stipulated that the United States would end its military occupation of Cuba if the Cubans adopted a constitution that gave the United States the right

to have military bases on the island, to veto treaties between Cuba and other nations and to supervise the Cuban treasury. (2008, 126)

The Cubans interpreted this legislation as a slap in the face, but, backed into a corner and eager to finally gain independence, the government of Cuba acquiesced. The Platt Amendment was included in the Cuban constitution, where it wielded power and drummed up antipathy for three decades. Although revoked in 1934, the United States to this day retains control of Guantánamo Bay.

With the Platt Amendment, the United States, then still a young country, realized that it could expand what concurrent powers of the day called a “sphere of influence.” This was arguably America’s first taste of empire. With a glimmer of what could be, America took over the bankrupt Dominican Republic and hastened to justify its new hands-on foreign policy with an addition to the Monroe Doctrine, the Roosevelt Corollary:

If a nation . . . keeps order and pays its obligations, it need fear no interference from the United States. Chronic wrongdoing, or an impotence which results in a general loosening of the ties of civilized society may . . . ultimately require intervention by some civilized nation. (U.S. Dept. of State paraphrased in Pearson)

“Some civilized nation” (U.S. Dept. of State)? Let there be no doubt. This amendment refers unequivocally to the United States. Its declaration meant the United States of America, the only “civilized” nation in the Western hemisphere, retained the right to meddle in the affairs of any Latin American country (Pearson 2008, 130). And the United States exercised this self-given right. Between the turn of the 20th century (four years before Roosevelt announced his corollary) and the year 1934, U.S. marines

were dispatched to enforce stability in Columbia four times, Haiti two times, Honduras seven times, Mexico three times and Nicaragua five times (Pearson 2008, 131). In response to these incredible numbers, Pearson offers an interesting observation made in the *Dynamics of Global Dominance*:

America, the country that had less than one hundred years prior proclaimed the Monroe Doctrine, a document calling for the cessation of European colonizing of the New World, “now found itself in the anomalous position of replacing Spain as a colonial ruler and repressing national independence movements” throughout Central and South America. (Abernathy 2000, 192)

“While all actions were taken in the name of liberty and free markets, the U.S. became more and more involved in the domestic affairs of other nations, something distinctly unlike the ideals of the founding fathers” (Pearson 2008, 130).

### **As philosophical empire: Neo-Marxism, social constructionism and “soft power”**

Two grand theories will be employed in the construction of a definition of the word “empire”: Neo-Marxism and social constructionism.

In the 18th century, Karl Marx put forth a theory that defined human beings as primarily social and historical creatures. Marx’ theory states that all human struggle can be reduced to class relations (McQuail 1994, 76). “Ultimately,” says McQuail, everything becomes “instruments of control by a ruling class” (1994, 76).

The superstructure controls the base; however, the base conditions the superstructure. Put another way, the superstructure is a series of legal and political institutions built upon the foundation of the base (i.e., social consciousness). This

relationship is reflexive. In classical Marxism, the base-superstructure metaphor refers to the control of more concrete entities (e.g., laborers). In later Marxisms, the metaphor is extended to include concepts (e.g., media). Neo-Marxism, because it concerns itself with the oppression of ideas rather than the oppression of material structures, proves especially relevant here. In mass media theory, neo-Marxism posits that people are oppressed by those who control the culture. Here, the mass media would constitute the superstructure and the audience the base. Expanded, government would constitute the superstructure and mass media the base.

The second theory to be used is social constructionism. The term social constructionism refers to the sociological concept that humans create and agree upon the existence of certain institutions. Time, for instance, constitutes one of these constructs. Despite the fact that its existence is arbitrary, society acts as if time does, in fact exist. The clock ticking through the day has no meaning other than what we attribute to it, and in our day-to-day interactions with one another we reinforce the clock's attributed importance.

Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann argued in 1966 that all of what people know, the sum of human knowledge, is learned and upheld through social interactions. The presentation of this theory begins with two individuals, A and B. (Berger and Luckmann [1966] 2007, 45). For simplicity's sake, A and B live in seclusion on a desert island, and their interactions with each other quickly become typifications (Berger and Luckmann [1966] 2007, 45). Habit

relieves both individuals of a considerable amount of tension. They save time and effort, not only in whatever external tasks they might be engaged in separately or

jointly, but in terms of their respective psychological economies. Their life together is now defined by a widening sphere of taken-for-granted routines. (Berger and Luckmann [1966] 2007, 45)

Typification, then, is mutually beneficial, laying the foundation for Berger and Luckmann's explanation for the existence of institutions. Should A and B have a child, the situation changes "quantitatively" (Berger and Luckmann [1966] 2007, 46). "The appearance of a third party changes the character of the ongoing social interaction between A and B" (Berger and Luckmann [1966] 2007, 46). The individuals' typifications take on meaning for the child; "the institutional world, which existed in *statu nascendi* in the original situation of A and B, is now passed on to other" (Berger and Luckmann [1966] 2007, 46). More than habit, typifications become traditions, how things are to be done. While an individual's goings-on may be inconsequential to him or her, they shape how others conduct their business and come to understand the world. Extending this notion, mankind leans on one another to make sense of the world around them. Without constant reinforcement, concepts of what is would crumble. In a political sense, governments must reiterate threats and enemy frames to maintain their existence and thus make a case for war. Social construction of reality has phenomenological roots and postmodern reaches. It will be utilized tacitly in conjunction with Kenneth Burke.

Continuing, society reinforces itself by means of what Althusser calls ideological state apparatuses, or ISAs (McQuail 1994, 76). An example of an ISA would be waiting in line. Human beings regulate themselves. When ISAs fail to work, repressive state apparatuses, or RSAs, step in (McQuail 1994, 77). Examples of RSAs would be the

National Guard, police, etc. Both “allow the capitalist state to survive without recourse to direct violence” (McQuail 1994, 77).

Marxism and social construction of reality tie together here: the superstructure does much to convince the base that their power ought not be questioned, but the base much more than the superstructure that oppresses it convinces itself through societal reinforcement of the common belief.

Using terminology explicated above, it is possible to define imperialism as extending the influence of the superstructure to affect other bases. More simply, though, imperialism is the extension of control or authority by one country over foreign countries. American imperialism, therefore, would likely include the War in Iraq because of the professed goal to spread democracy. Similarly, in the time of the Greeks, military campaigns to protect against the threat of rivals included extending political influence over foreign city-states, one of the most famous such campaigns being the Peloponnesian War.

The researcher’s theoretical definition of the word “empire” reverberates through what Pearson describes as “new empire.” He elucidates his concept, thusly,

The new empire is based on a complex web of unequal economic and military relationships. These relationships provide American decision-makers with an unhealthy amount of power over the lives and fates of the residents of nations caught up in the web. Many people believe that without colonies there is no empire, but it is equally useful to think of an empire as a realm where one nation, the United States, uses its power to get other countries to put American interests ahead of the interests of their own populations. (Pearson 2008, 7)

Ever harkening back to antiquity, Murphy echoes the sentiments of both the researcher and Pearson, saying, “Leaving aside the knotty and partly semantic issue of what an empire is, and whether the United States truly is one, Rome and America are the most powerful actors in their worlds, by many orders of magnitude” (2007, 14). Their might is expressed militarily and, through the conduits of “the ‘soft power’ of language culture, commerce, technology and ideas,” rhetorically (Murphy 2007, 14).

### **As allegorical empire: America (New Rome) and Rome (New Athens)**

“Empire” is a loaded word. “Empire,” like empires themselves, demands a reaction and “American Empire” even more so. One is either turned off by the term immediately or intrigued. A response of indifference would be unexpected. “American Empire” requires an opinion.

There is no agreement within the academic community regarding whether the world’s predominant super-power has yet evolved into an empire. There are those that advocate America is reveling in the throes of a pre-imperial, Roman-like Republic, “a time of elections, civil liberties, the rule of law, public debates and successful armies” (Pearson 2008, 4). Others believe America is enjoying a Pax Americana, the revival of the early Roman Empire (Murphy 2007, 7). Subscribing to this view, William Kristol, editor of the conservative *Weekly Standard*, curtly says, “If people want to say we’re an imperial power, fine” (Murphy 2007, 7). “Charles Krauthammer, the *pontifex maximus* of this outlook, has written, ‘America is no mere international citizen. It is the dominant power in the world, more dominant than any since Rome’” (Murphy 2007, 7). He continues with “America is in a position to reshape norms, alter expectations and create

new realities. How? By unapologetic and implacable demonstrations of will” (Murphy 2007, 7). Echoing both points in a 2003 edition of the *New York Times Magazine*, Harvard Professor Michael Ignatieff, a journalist as well as philosopher, questions, “What word but ‘empire’ describes the awesome thing America is becoming?” (Pearson 2008, 3). There are those who would quibble over Ignatieff’s verb tense. Some would say America burst into empire status long ago and is now experiencing a decline. U.S. President Richard Nixon was in this camp: “When the great civilizations of the past became prosperous, they fell victims to decadence, which in the long run destroys a culture. The United States is now entering this phase” (Murphy 2002, 32). Declinists, not their term but Murphy’s, “see this same incipient American Empire as dangerously overcommitted abroad and rusted out at home, like Rome in its last two centuries” (Murphy 2007, 7).

Academia acknowledges myriad end dates of the Roman Empire, ranging from 476-1453 CE, and more than 200 possible reasons have been given in response to the question, “What caused Rome’s demise?” With there being wild speculation about the decline and fall of an empire scholarship knows to have existed, it should be little wonder that facts concerning the American Empire, should it exist at all, are disputed.

One rare point of consensus: “America’s ‘seemingly imperial power,’ in the words of the Harvard political scientist Joseph Nye, ‘is more dominant perhaps than any other since the Roman Empire’” (Murphy 2007, 65).

### **Statement of scholarly intent**

The researcher endeavors to support her hypothesis that there exists a relationship between contemporary American war rhetorics and classical Athenian war rhetorics by employing hermeneutical and phenomenological methodologies in the study of symbolic appeals and *prima facie* appeals, respectively, common to Bush and Pericles.

## **Chapter 2: Methodology**

The research methodology for this study is a textual analysis coupled with dramatist rhetorical critique, qualitative endeavors both.

### **Language as literature**

Kenneth Burke, considered in many circles to be the 21st century's foremost rhetorician, developed the dramatist model of literary critique (Brummett 2000, 741). Dramatism (sometimes called logology) assumes that all language holds symbolic meaning and that words constitute reality's driving force, "the grounding for human reality and motivation" (Brummett 2006, 179). With Burke's analytical method, critics attempt to uncover the meaning beneath words in order to study perceptions of the world. This is possible because human communication is necessarily inherently metaphoric.

Burke defines his coined term, dramatism, as

a method of analysis and a corresponding critique of terminology designed to show that the most direct route to the study of human relations and human motives via a methodological inquiry into cycles or clusters of terms and their functions. (1989, 135)

Put another way, the individual's choice of words betrays his or her rhetorical ambitions.

Vocabulary, allusions and turns of phrase provide insight into the psyche of the rhetor and give clues as to his or her persuasive intention. For Burke, information conveyed to the recipient of a message is secondary to the "real" message, which speaks to a perhaps

shared, perhaps unconscious paradigm. Burke goes on to elucidate dramatism not only as “a theory of language” (1966, vii) but also “a philosophy of language based on that theory and methods of analysis developed in accordance with the theory and the philosophy” (1966, vii). Thus, Burke’s rhetorical method expands to become “equipment for living” (Burke [1941] 2000, 757). Equipped with dramatism, the lucky critic makes sense of his or her range of experience.

The Burkean and Aristotelian understandings of what rhetoric amounts to are quite similar on their respective faces. The former posits it is “the use of words by human agents to form attitudes or to induce actions in other human agents” (Burke 1950, 41). Armed with this definition, one might venture to plant Burke’s concept of rhetoric squarely within the confines of persuasion (McPhail 1995, 77) alongside the classical definition, which is locating the available means of persuasion in any situation (Brummett 2000, 2). But this would be too narrow an understanding. Though rhetoric may be a tool of persuasion, it is not synonymous with persuasion. Burke’s expanded definition drives home the point: Dramatism is “the use of language as a symbolic means of inducing cooperation in beings that by nature respond to symbols,” ([1955] 1969, 43). The dramatist critic seeks to understand why sets of words have the powerful capacity to persuade and to rally, to stir, to chastise, etc.

This endeavor to uncover broadens the meaning of Burkean rhetoric to necessarily include the interpretation of linguistic signs and symbols. A sign, according to this methodology, is simply “something that induces you to think about something other than itself—and everything has that potential” (Brummett 2006, 8). Signs may take on

indexical meaning, iconic meaning and/or symbolic meaning (Brummett 2006, 8). It is when signs become symbolic that interpretation becomes most interesting, for symbols can take on lives of their own, as the maxim goes. According to Barry Brummett, a Burkean scholar at the University of Texas at Austin, the dramatist critic “examine[s] the ways that signs (especially symbols) change, interrelate with one another, lead from one to another and suggest or discourage linkages to other signs” (2006, 179) because dramatism presupposes that symbolic operations “are the sources of perception and motivation” (2006, 179).

As has been suggested and could be expected from a science based on the symbolic translation of guttural utterances (i.e. speech) and corresponding scribbles (i.e. text), the discipline of dramatism is rather fluid. This elasticity however, rarely shows itself to be pliable when not under scrutiny. This is because in everyday life, human beings take words for entities with fixed meanings. Individuals operate as though words are neither metaphoric nor fallible. In truth, one cannot encapsulate the essence of a thing with the “complicated systems of sputtering, hissing, gurgling, clucking, and cooing noises called language” (Hayakawa 1991, 6). Rather one must operate within a highly symbolic world where an individual can only hope his or her interpretation of symbols match others’ interpretations. This wishy-washiness allows the dramatist critic to examine the crafted reality of the rhetor.

Under Burkean thought, language reflects but also deflects and selects reality. To roughly paraphrase Brummett, the world is seen in certain ways and reacted to with certain motivations because of and through the symbols we use (2006, 179). Language

helps humans process what they experience, while at the same time shaping how they experience. This reflexive relationship is at the crux of dramatist theory.

Drama is begotten by choice:

Active choice, as opposed to the sheer force of circumstance, is the most important prerequisite for drama. If one cannot choose, one cannot act, Burke explains. Because man is endowed with the capacity to make a choice, or act in a certain way, his choice inevitably leads to drama. No choice, no drama. (Pesheva 2005, 41)

In Burke's words: "If action then drama; if drama then conflict" (1989, 280). The take-away point is that humans are not just symbol-using creatures; they are symbol-choosing ones. When an individual opens his or her mouth to speak or sits down at a keyboard to type, he or she sifts through thousands of similes and anecdotes, words and phrases to choose how best to express thought. Being as there is no equation for communication, human beings must make (sometimes split-second) subjective, linguistic elections. It is the outcome of countless elections that dramatism surveys.

### **Pillars of dramatism**

Centrally important is the understanding that any text within this rhetorical approach constitutes literature (Brummett 2000, 742). This assumption resurfaces again and again. As literature, any text is potentially ripe for dramatist research. Burke's broad interpretation of what counts as literary widens the playing field for the critic; many texts not taken as aesthetic under other disciplines are fair game under dramatism (Brummett 2000, 742). Political texts, in particular, are rich, and Burke himself subjects both John

F. Kennedy's inaugural address and Adolf Hitler's autobiography to his own rhetorical analyses.

Because political speech is literary (or dramatic) it possesses devices associated with narrative. The author of *Frustrated Empire: U.S. Foreign Policy, 9/11 to Iraq* waxes on the topic in the first chapter of his book. Although not a Burkean scholar, David Ryan understands the high importance of narratives:

They create the framework and the stories that help us understand how our world works. "Our world" is often defined or understood to the extent that people share and assimilate the dominant cultural narratives ... Narratives keep people together and they set them apart. They justify what we do and undermine and cast doubt on what others say and do. Ultimately, narratives or the cumulative stories we tell ourselves, our culture and our nations sustain an international order that is often cruel and unjust. The stories of "others" seem strange and incredible because they do not comport with our understanding of "our" world. (Ryan 2007, 2)

A Burkean analysis involves "narratizing" the text. This is possible, dramatists argue, because the defining "characteristics of stories and dramas underlie all symbolic behavior" (Brummett 2006, 182). Dramatism truly operates as though the entire world is a stage. Expanding the bard's famed metaphor, one sees that Burke's world consists of characters, plots, motifs, scripts, etc. The critic is thus charged to pore over scripts (i.e. texts) looking for narrative devices.

### **The pentad**

"In *A Grammar of Motives*, Burke develops and applies what has become his most widely used method for rhetorical criticism, the pentad, which can be used for

microscopic analysis of language” (Brock 1995, 12). Five terms are given to facilitate interpretation: Act, scene, agent, agency, purpose. Burke offers this by way of definition:

In a rounded statement about motives, you must have some word that names the act (names what took place in thought or deed), and another that names the scene (the background of the act, the situation in which it occurred); also, you must indicate what person or kind of person (agent) performed the act, what means or instruments he used (agency), and the purpose. ([1945] 2000, xv)

The theatrical nature of the pentad is apparent. Also clear is the relative simplicity of Burke’s concept. Its straightforwardness allows for its application to countless projects, and these terms themselves represent a starting-off point for the critic (Brock 1995, 13). If he or she should flounder with any term, Burke offers what he calls “a set of scattered substitutes,” helpful, theorist-approved, pentadic synonyms:

For “act”—substitute words like “response,” “transaction,” “conduct,” “operation,” “behavior”;

For “scene”—substitute words like “environment,” “conditions,” “circumstances,” “stimulus,” “situation”;

For “agent”—substitute words like “individual,” “person,” “ego,” “subject”;

For “agency”—substitute words like “instrument,” “method,” “means,” “intermediate step,” “resources”;

For “purpose”—substitute words like “ideal,” “target,” “drive,” “impulse,” or the one (“value”) now so much in favor possibly because it’s a dignified synonym for “price.” (2000, 40)

“Pentadic criticism,” says Brummett, “operates on the assumption that texts and authors of texts will tend toward explaining the world consistently using one or a simple combination” (2006, 186) of the five terms. The critic might create a ratio and use that

ratio to study texts, the idea being that unconscious tendencies to explain why the world is, was or will be a certain way might be revealed (Brummett 2006, 186).

By focusing on one aspect of a scenario, the rhetor necessarily downplays another. In “Permanence and Change,” the theorist writes that “seeing is also a way of not seeing—a focus on object A involves a neglect of object B” (1954, 49). Only one element can enjoy the spotlight; the four remaining are obscured in the text. Paired as ratios, the terms create potential relations, such as agency-act or purpose-agent. Ten combinations, “principles of determination” (Burke 1989, 15), are possible as “one term influences the other as its context” (Brock 1995, 12). “The ‘ratio’ procedure allows the analyst to determine what terms or terms dominate the rhetorical situation, that is, what aspect or aspects the rhetor deems most important” (Pesheva 2005, 36). Pesheva gives the following example: A dramatist analysis of Sen. Edward Kennedy’s speech after his involvement in a fatal 1969 car crash, for instance, reveals a prevalence of scene terms over agent terms, thus suggesting to the researcher that Kennedy hoped for his audience to consider him a victim of unfortunate circumstances (Foss 1996). Had the ratio been reversed with a high number of agent terms, one might have concluded the rhetor was solely to blame and acted in spite of a favorable scenic context.

Burke explains the relevant handiness of his pentad, saying,

Men may violently disagree about the purposes behind a given act, or about the character of the person who did it, or how he did it, or in what kind of situation he acted; or they may even insist upon totally different words to name the act itself. But be that as it may, any complete statement about motives will offer some kind of answers to these five

questions... (1969, xv)

Who (Agent)? What (Act)? When and where (Scene)? Why (Purpose)? How (Agency)?

To the newsman, these inquiries are rote. “But be that as it may,” Burke says not just the answers but the number of times these answers appear in the literature is key. The pentadic ratio is incontestable. A relative predominance of an element or elements over others yields clues to motivations, drives and philosophical biases. The rhetor shapes how he or she wishes the audience to perceive. *A Grammar of Motives* puts forth this illustration: Rhetoricians might come to view Judas as saint rather than sinner; his betrayal of Christ made possible the redemption of the world (1969, xxi). In journalistic circles, this phenomenon is deemed “framing.” Here, the pentad illustrates the subjectivity of reality and the susceptibility of audiences to linguistic tricks.

Although this thesis will not employ the pentadic method directly, familiarity with the capabilities of the pentad is core to understanding Burke’s analytic device.

### **Identification**

The Burkean concept of identification is of more importance here. It is fleshed out in the final three chapters of *A Rhetoric of Motives* and proves central to the understanding of several concepts. In fact, Burke considered this subject significant enough to advocate that the term “identification” replace the traditional “persuasion” as rhetoric’s primary buzzword (Brock 1995, 14).

Identification, for Burke, means having like interests, ways of thinking and

speech habits (Brummett 2000, 743). In other words, identification means making similar choices. “A is not identical with his colleague, B. But insofar as their interests are joined, A is identified with B” (Burke [1950] 2000, 768). Or, even if their interests are not joined, A may still identify with B “if he assumes that they are [joined], or is persuaded to believe so,” says Burke ([1950] 2000, 768).

Here are the ambiguities of substance. In being identified with B, A is “substantially one” with a person other than himself. Yet, at the same time he remains unique, an individual locus of motives. Thus he is both joined and separate, at once a distinct substance and consubstantial with another. (Burke [1950] 2000, 768)

Substance is what one is made of: Motivations, perceptions, language, etc. (Brummett 2000, 743). When two individuals share an underlying position, a substance, they are said to have consubstantiality (Brummett 2000, 743). “Identification through consubstantiality is therefore Burke’s master vision of how rhetoric might work, beyond the narrower purposes of persuasion and gaining advantage” (Brummett 2000, 743). Wielding influence is not the end goal. Rather, it is a byproduct of successful rhetoric, the mark of which is attained consubstantiality. When individuals recognize themselves in others, they develop a vocabulary and value system that allows them to tackle problems collectively.

Just as there is no drama without choice, there can be no unity without division. “Burke describes identification as a simultaneous unity and division in which a person’s perception can alternately be focused on the ‘oneness’ or the ‘separation’” (Brock 1995, 15). Humans are ever always already vacillating between the two poles; neither complete

oneness nor absolute separation can be achieved, only degrees therein. The cyclical nature of moving through oneness to separation and back toward oneness is the essence of Burke's guilt-redemption process and is "the plot of the whole play" (Griffin 2009), the sum and reduction of all human drama, the "root of all rhetoric" (Griffin 2009).

**Terms of order: Mortification, scapegoating, transcendence**

Burke turns to basic Christian theology in the *Rhetoric of Religion*. In this book, he asserts that the guilt-redemption cycle is the universal narrative. As such, this rhetorical motif appears and reappears in various texts.

To understand the cycle, one must recall how Burke surveys the scene: Language is "equipment for living" (Burke [1941] 2000, 757) meant to aid audiences in the resolution of day-to-day problems (Brummett 2006, 183). Problems arise out of perceived differences, which people are threatened by, says Burke (Brummett 2006, 183). In an attempt to overcome differences, human beings order and organize the world around them into hierarchies (Brummett 2006, 183). Through experience and language, humans build this social order, operating within it. Guidelines are put in place to maintain order and reinforce consubstantiality with others. Certainly, abiding by established albeit arbitrary guidelines reinforces consubstantiality (i.e., unity) with others. Yet no one can live (for very long, anyhow) within the constructed hierarchies and not break some of the guidelines (Brummett 2006, 184). When rules are broken, division occurs. The result is guilt (i.e. anxiety, strain, shame, repulsion, etc.). Brummett explains, "We are always violating the rules, or at least thinking of violating them. Such

violations create feelings of guilt, and the violations must somehow be dealt with so that the hierarchy may be restored” (2006, 184).

Borrowing from the poetic nature of Genesis, where Burke found the inspiration for his guilt-redemption cycle and also what he considers the first and best example of it, the theorist explains his cycle:

Here are the steps  
In the Iron Law of History  
That welds Order and Sacrifice:

Order leads to Guilt  
(for who can keep the commandments!)  
Guilt needs Redemption

(for who would not be cleansed!)  
Redemption needs Redeemer  
(which is to say, a Victim!)

Order  
Through Guilt  
To Victimage  
(hence: Cult of the Kill) . . . (Burke 1961, 4-5)

Peppered throughout this poem are several as-yet-to-be-explicated concepts. Important now is the most central idea that the inevitable guilt each individual experiences must be handled. “Guilt needs Redemption” (1961, 4), as Burke says, and “the violations must be dealt with so that hierarchy may be restored” (2006, 184), as Brummett says. Language and, in specific, drama helps individuals purge these guilty feelings usually in one of three main ways: mortification, scapegoating and transcendence.

Mortification amounts to self-kill, blaming oneself for transgressions and sacrificially facing the music. Theologically, mortification means the “putting to death” of one’s sin. This concept is seen clearly in Colossians wherein Paul admonishes the church to “put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: Sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry” (3:5). The apostle is advocating for a symbolic death, not literal bloodshed. And he asks that the brethren slay sinful drives within themselves.

In a similar way, the theorist suggests certain texts ask that audiences rhetorically confess and repent. A text that advocates mortification advocates readers take ownership of their violations, quash within themselves the temptation to violate order and plead forgiveness.

Scapegoating, or victimage, is another route toward expulsion of guilty feelings. As the term suggests, scapegoating describes the act of as substituting someone or something in place of the guilty party. The scapegoat (rather than one’s own self) becomes the sacrifice.

In ancient Greece, scapegoating was practiced as a ceremonial rite in which an unfortunate person, likely a beggar or criminal, was driven out of the community or stoned in response to a natural or military calamity. The Old Testament book of Leviticus describes a different scapegoating rite as part of the Judaic Day of Atonement:

He is to lay both hands on the head of the live goat and confess over it all the wickedness and rebellion of the Israelites—all their sins—and put them on the goat’s head. He shall send the goat away into the desert in the care of a man appointed for the task. The goat will carry on itself all their

sins to a solitary place; and the man shall release it in the desert. (16:21-22)

Both of these examples illustrate the innate desire to restore order by banishing not the source of disorder but symptoms of it. Taken together, these historic cases show the natural tendency to believe that guilt can be transferred.

Psychoanalytic theory describes a defense mechanism common to those with personality disorders called projection. Burke understands scapegoating as designating and sacrificing a worthy external villain. There are a few ways to go about finding such an entity, as delineated in “The Philosophy of Literary Form”:

- a. make him worthy legalistically by making him an offender against moral or legal justice, thus deserving of what he gets
- b. make him worthy fatalistically by giving pointers in the plot that hint the audience . . . make him a “marked man and so prepares itself to relinquish him”
- c. make him worthy of the sacrifice by a subtle kind of poetic justice, as in making the sacrificial vessel “too good for this world,” hence of the highest value, hence the most perfect sacrifice, as is the case with Christ. (Pesheva 2005, 41)

The scapegoat takes the place of the individual. After his or her transgression is placed upon it and after it is (actually or symbolically) slain, the individual experiences rebirth. This sacrifice, though, must be one that the audience identifies with in order for this mechanism to prove effective. Pesheva explains, “The scapegoat is charismatic and consubstantial with the audience” (2005, 40).

The third course of possible action, transcendence, is the most abstract. In mortification, succinct and simple, individuals realize themselves as transgressors and punish themselves. In scapegoating, individuals project their transgressions onto another and punish that. Here, in transcendence, individuals explain away the transgression, making it out to be not a transgression and thus not necessitating punishment.

Brummett provides the real-life example of a president dealing with the guilty feelings after having lied to Congress; he or she might justify the violation saying he or she acted disingenuously because the greater concerns of national security required it of him or her (2006, 184). “A guilt-inducing action” may be seen as “not truly a source of guilt because it is required by a different, higher or nobler hierarchy” (Brummett 2006, 184). In philosophy, this tendency is labeled utilitarianism.

Another way one might see transcendence come into play is through the redefinition of a violating act. “When approached from a certain point of view, A and B are opposites. We mean by ‘transcendence’ the adoption of another point of view from which they cease to be opposites” (Burke 1989, 275). One example: Heads I win; tails you lose (Burke 1989, 273). Another: Burke understood war not as its own entity but as a form of bastardized peace. Transcendence showcases the susceptibility of language to rhetorical manipulation. One can put a proverbial spin on a situation and get away with not having to bloody one’s hands.

Returning now to Burke’s guilt-redemption poem, the reader notices anew the last line, which reads, “(hence:) Cult of the Kill” (1961, 5). Burke is referring to the

necessary impulse humans experience as a result of day-to-day, unjustifiable (i.e. unable to be transcended) guilty feelings. The only way to deal with them is to symbolically “put them to death”. Slaying becomes then an evil that must be endured. To exist within a society, there is no way around it.

Burke reminds that “The desire to kill . . . is better viewed in terms of a desire to kill the principle that someone or something stands for,” not literal homicide (Pesheva 2005, 5). Still, symbolic slaughter is ever-present and inescapable, even when transcendence is employed; when reimagining a scenario as different, the individual must rely on symbolic violence, for the rebirth of a symbol requires the death of it. “That is: the killing of something is the changing of it . . .” (Burke 1969, 20).

To borrow a line from *Macbeth*, humans as rhetorical creatures find themselves “in blood / Steeped in so far that, would I wade no more / Returning were as tedious as go o’er” (Shakespeare 3.4.136).

### **Literary forms**

Burke alludes in several of his works to the idea that all narratives work within classical literary frames, genres such as comedy or tragedy (Brummett 2006, 183).

Comedy amounts to the sort of “text that pictures the guilty act in question as committed by the comic fool” who has “[mistakenly] . . . [embarrassed] him or her by revealing the error of the action to all” (Brummett 2006, 185). Typically, the comedic genre depicts the guilty act as inevitable because of some common human flaw (Brummett 2006, 185). The reader should note that “if the fool’s guilt mirrors a person’s own guilt, then by experiencing the comic text, that person has vicariously reintegrated

himself or herself back into the community, and the hierarchy as well” according to dramatism (Brummett 2006, 185).

Tragedy, by contrast, witnesses the action being carried out by a tragic hero, whose guilty perpetration necessitates punishment or destruction (Brummett 2006, 185). As is the case in comedy, committing the guilty act is inevitable because of an impossible situation or character flaw (Brummett 2006, 185). The difference is that the hero must pay a penalty; correction is not an option in this genre. Therefore, “when audience members experience a tragic text, then, they see their own guilt purged by seeing it punished or destroyed” (Brummett 2006, 185).

Burke’s genres are meant to illustrate the point that engagement with texts is very real and can be personal. Rather than falling into the category of esoteric theory, they are “meant to explain how people experience all kinds of discourse” and also by experiencing, frame one’s reference (Brummett 2006, 185).

### **“The intentional fallacy”**

New Criticism, a type of formalist literary theory, was developed in the 1920s and quickly gained popularity stateside. The 1944 G.I. Bill, which guaranteed a college education to returning soldiers, left institutions of higher learning strapped for resources. With the veterans (many of them unschooled) flooding American universities post-WWII, the straightforward, no-nonsense practicality of New Criticism allowed stretched-thin professors and overwhelmed students to breathe easy.

Devoid of complicated philosophy, New Criticism advocates a close reading of the text and rejects as heretical any extra-textual influences. New Critics approach a text

as if it existed in a vacuum. Neither the reader's response nor the author's intention is to be considered. This precept is core. Yale English professor W. K. Wimsatt in collaboration with Monroe Beardsley, a philosopher of aesthetics, elucidate, saying the widespread assumption that intent is of primary importance when studying a text is fallacious (1954). "The design or intention of the author is neither available nor desirable as a standard for judging the success of a work of literary art" (Wimsatt and Beardsley 1954, 3).

Ignoring social and historical contexts may seem counterintuitive, but the New Critics (Wimsatt and Beardsley among them) profess that the only way to correctly critique a text is to look at its internal evidence alone (1954, 10). That is, dismissing all else, focus on the words. Confront the text. Wimsatt and Beardsley assert that readers should divorce their minds of politics, religion, ethnicity... any biographical tidbit that might be known about the author. This is because the text "is detached from the author at birth and goes about the world beyond his power to intend about it or control it" (Wimsatt and Beardsley 1954, 5). Roland Barthes expounds upon this idea in the *Death of the Author*. "To give a text an author is to impose a limit on that text, to furnish it with a final signified, to close the writing" (Barthes [1967] 1977, 147).

Studying the separate statements these literary critics made of their chosen method, one might get the sense that to follow the New Critics (or formalists) meant to adhere to a strict set of rules. Russian theorist Boris Eichenbaum writes, "The so-called formal method grew out of a struggle for a science of literature that would be both independent and factual" (1968, 868). But he hastens to add,

We are surrounded by eclectics and latecomers who would turn the formal method into some kind of inflexible formalistic system in order to provide themselves with a working vocabulary, a program and a name. A program is a very handy thing for critics, but not at all characteristic of our method. Our scientific approach has had no such prefabricated program or doctrine, and has none. In our studies, we value a theory only as a working hypothesis to help us discover and interpret facts; that is, we determine the validity of the facts and use them as the material for our research. We are not concerned with definitions, for which the latecomers thirst; nor do we build general theories, which so delight eclectics. We posit specific principles and adhere to them insofar as the material justifies them. If the material demands their refinements or change, we change or refine them. In this sense we are quite free from our own theories—as science must be free to the extent that theory and conviction are distinct.” (Eichenbaum 1968, 868)

New Criticism, therefore, more than allows its practitioners to take liberties in their interpretations as long as they stay within the sanctified confines of the text.

One of the methods to be employed, textual analysis, descends from this New Criticism tradition. Defined in generalities, textual analysis is a “technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages” (Holsti 1969). In order to conduct a textual analysis, the first order of business is to explicitly define the text.

Ten primary texts are mined for similarities here: three classical, seven contemporary. They are Pericles’ first speech to the Athenians as recorded in Book One of the *History*, Pericles’ Funeral Oration as recorded in Book Two and Pericles’ final speech to the Athenians as recorded in Book Two. From the modern age, seven of George W. Bush’s speeches from his first presidential term come under review. In chronological order, they are the February 27, 2001 Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on Administration Goals; the September 20, 2001 Address Before a Joint

Session of Congress on the United States Response to the Terrorist Attacks of September 11 (hereafter “Response to Attacks”); the January 29, 2002 Address Before a Joint Session of Congress on the State of the Union (hereafter State of the Union Address); the January 28, 2003 State of the Union Address; the March 17, 2003 Address to the Nation on Iraq (hereafter “Message to Saddam”); the March 19, 2003 Address to the Nation on Iraq (hereafter “War Message”) and the January 20, 2004 State of the Union Address.

Thucydides includes in his *History* only three speeches from the Athenian commander. The sum of Periclean rhetoric is examined herein. Because President Bush made hundreds of speeches during his two terms in office, it was necessary for the researcher to determine which texts yielded themselves best for comparative study. It was determined that speeches from Bush’s first term (2001-2004) were appropriate subject matter. The reasoning for this determination is both historical and practical.

Historically speaking, Pericles, himself also a democratically elected leader, died of plague shortly after his re-election. No speeches from his second term are included in the *History*. This being a comparative study of war rhetorics, the researcher wishes to narrowly tailor the scope of her inquiry, to compare apples to apples, as it were. If texts from Bush’s second term were included with no companion speeches from Pericles’ second term, analysis of these texts would be inconclusive.

From a practicality standpoint, one notes that the vast majority of Bush’s war rhetoric is contained in the speeches from his first term. The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the impetus for war, took place less than eight months after Bush swore the Oath of Office. Stunned by the sudden realization of vulnerability, America rallied behind the new president. For a time, Bush benefited from near-unanimous

nationwide support of his militaristic ambitions. David Ryan in *Frustrated Empire: U.S. Foreign Policy, 9/11 to Iraq*, remembers, “The flag, ‘Old Glory,’ was an almost omnipresent and powerful symbol in the early days after 9/11” (2007, 21). The *Economist* likewise noted in a September 22, 2001 article the proliferation of waving-in-the-wind patriotism:

The whole country is aflutter with flags. They fly at half-mast from federal buildings. They fly from every other house and car you pass as you walk down the street. Huge flags decorate sports stadiums, tiny ones dangle from baby carriages. Wal-Mart and K-Mart have sold more than a half million flags in the past week. (Ryan 2007, 22)

War was declared on Osama Bin Laden’s terrorist organization, al-Qaeda, September 20. Eager to retaliate, America approved of Operation Enduring Freedom, launched October 7, which turned Afghanistan, the country suspected of harboring Bin Laden, into a war zone. Over time, the American people grew weary; “U.S. objectives were vague, broad and encompassed issues unrelated to 9/11” (Ryan 2007, 1).

In January and February of 2003, the Bush administration presented its case to the United Nations that U.S. troops should be authorized to remove Hussein from power—and the world paused. The vast majority of the world’s people did not see any linkage between al-Qaeda and Hussein, between terrorist acts in New York and a secular state weakened by years of rigid sanctions. Evidence for the existence of weapons of mass destruction was flimsy, while the existence of vast oil reserves was obvious. The grand alliance against terrorism quickly unraveled, a fact punctuated by the mass rallies of February 15, 2003, when hundreds of thousands of people, in nations all over the globe, took to the streets to oppose and invasion of Iraq. When the U.N. Security Council finally, after weeks of debate refused to authorize an invasion, the United States found itself outside the boundaries of international law. The Bush administration launched an attack upon Iraq anyway and, after the country was occupied, a new debate erupted over the power and intentions of the United States, the world’s lone super-power. (Pearson 2008, 2-3)

These major events leading up to and following the declarations of war took place between the years 2001-2004. As this is the case, Bush's first term without question holds the most shimmering examples of contemporary American war rhetoric. So while claims about the whole of Bush's presidency will be impossible to make, conclusions about seminal years are attainable. The researcher makes the conscious choice to sacrifice breadth for depth.

Of the scores of public addresses made by President Bush during his first term, seven were selected. The researcher's criteria for selection were as follows: The speech must have been heard by a significant portion of the American populace, and the speech must have dealt in large part with foreign policy. These necessities directed the researcher to three State of the Union Addresses; the president's first speech before a joint congress; the speech declaring war on terror, Response to Attacks; the speech announcing an ultimatum to Saddam Hussein, Message to Saddam; and the speech announcing war in Iraq, War Message.

That all of these speeches were televised is purposeful only in that the broadcasting of them reached a larger audience. While visuals certainly carry rhetorical heft, imagery will not be treated in the present study except for that which is literary, or inherent in the text.

### **Plan of action**

Before getting to the brass tacks of how this research will be done, it is perhaps useful to argue next that it should be done from a non-dramatist perspective. The

comparison between war rhetorics in and of itself ought to be justified from textual analysis' vista.

Looking meticulously at the rhetoric of these two leaders is reasonable; in ancient Greece, participation in rhetoric was viewed as an art worthy of critique, and today's politicians carefully have turns of phrase selected for them, creating nuance and meaning, as if setting the stage for a play.

Traditionally, rhetoric was considered an art form, a game, an expression of creative talents. According Wardman, having good rhetoric meant being successful at the game (1976, 120). "The speeches of Greek orators were fine specimens of what could be achieved by political rhetoric in a civilized society" (Wardman 1976, 120). Pericles was a rhetorician, meaning that people recognized him as a wordsmith. Rhetoric, like theater, was a form of entertainment. (Here, although it does not need to, language fits neatly into Burkean thought.) And despite the fact that, arguably, George W. Bush is not known for his speaking ability, his words were belabored over by speechwriters as if the crafting of his speech were an art form. Therefore, even ignoring Burkean theory, the primary texts under examination are worthy of close scrutiny.

This chapter will be immediately followed by an analysis of primary source materials, to include the texts of Pericles' three speeches as recorded by Thucydides in the *History* and the transcripts of seven of Bush's televised speeches from the years 2001-2004. In keeping with the minimum-context principles of textual analysis, Bush's speeches were deconstructed. Unraveling his lines of argument produced 165 individual statements that were then codified in accordance with Burgess' taxonomy of appeals

usual to classical war rhetoric. Periclean rhetoric was similarly systematized, and complimentary statements made by the Athenian statesman ensue presentation of the Bush-ean rhetoric.

Next, in the fourth chapter, a dramatist analysis of the combined texts will be done; the researcher will explore symbolic interactions between the classical and contemporary war rhetorics. The researcher will illuminate five uncovered themes common to both Pericles and Bush, namely: attention to setting, allusions to naval strength, leadership during unpopular war, armor of the fallen and the “unprecedented.” And the researcher will fathom the contemporary texts in search of evidence supporting the formation of consubstantiality on the basis of shared (real or imagined) Greek heritage.

### **In defense of the methodologies**

Burke’s dramatism is preoccupied with the hermeneutics of suspicion. That is to say that a Burkean analysis is archeological; the researcher is ever digging beneath the surface in search of masked symbols. In stark contrast is the process of textual analysis, which shuns evidence not literally in black and white (i.e., written on the page). How might these two methodologies be reconciled to each other?

If one be somewhat bothered by the ostensibly uncomplimentary relationship between the chosen methodologies, trust that both profess the unrivaled power of language, be it written or spoken.

To conduct a study of this nature, it is necessary to find and employ a rhetorical critique that takes “literature and the powers of the word . . . seriously,” (Rueckert 1994, 71). Burke’s dramatism does this as does textual analysis.

Textual analysis holds human language in such high esteem that it eschews any commentary not inherent within the text. The words will speak perfectly for themselves; they need not author’s intention or reader’s interpretation. This methodology opines words lift from the two-dimensional page and swirl heavenward. They are imbued with an apparent truth that should not be sullied by hyper focus on what the author meant. The text belongs not to the author; it is larger than any one person. The text belongs to the public (Wimsatt and Beardsley, 5).

Dramatism, likewise, imbues language with not only fascinating fluidity but also incredible strength. To that end, McPhail writes,

Because Burke’s rhetoric lives in the flexibility of language and revels in the transcending of fixed distinctions, it offers the possibility of an affirmation of the generative capacities of language as powerful and humanistically motivated . . . . (McPhail 1995, 92)

Dissimilar to New Criticism, Burkean literary theory holds that language’s true meaning is latent. Being symbolic, all words express something other than what is immediately obvious. The text is merely a façade. It should not be implied from this striking chiaroscuro, however, that dramatism has less faith in language than does textual analysis. On the contrary, Burke finds another strength of language: The ability to tap into the subconscious, accessing infinite meaning.

One step further, dramatism embraces the position that word use mirrors the surrounding world. “Men seek for vocabularies that will be faithful reflections of reality. To this end, they must develop vocabularies that are selections of reality. And any selection of reality must, in certain circumstances, function as a deflection of reality” (Burke [1945] 2000, 59). Semantics, then, also dictates to some extent how people interpret the world around them. Ergo, manipulation of language in turn manipulates perceived reality.

By using both a philosophy that trusts linguistics to reveal itself to the reader and a philosophy that trusts the reader to unearth linguistics’ meaning, the researcher hopes to catch any statements made by either rhetor, Pericles or Bush, that may yield significance. In the subsequent two chapters, this thesis embarks on a canvass of how persons in positions of authority, in the textual analysis, show themselves to adhere to like oratorical stylings and, in the dramatist critique, be shown to interpret or reinterpret reality similarly.

### Chapter 3: Textual Analysis

#### Burgess' appeals

Statements taken from Bush's speeches can be categorized according to a dozen battle speech appeals (*topoi*) recurrent in classical war speeches. Burgess identifies these *topoi*, here condensed by the researcher, in "Epideictic Literature" as the following: A command to remember your glorious ancestry, a command to not disgrace your heritage, a comparison of forces, a declaration that valor prevails, a declaration that great prizes await the victor, a declaration that the gods are our allies, a declaration that death in battle is glorious, a declaration that defeat equals disgrace, a declaration that this enemy has been conquered before, a declaration that this is a just war, an appeal to patriotism, a comparison of military commanders.

This study chooses to employ nine of the 12 *topoi*, casting aside the declaration that death in battle is glorious, the appeal to patriotism and a comparison of military commanders. The first and last are antiquated beliefs that neither show themselves readily in Bush's addresses nor lend themselves readily to modernization. The appeal to patriotism is, in the researcher's opinion, too vague to measure appropriately. And, although many of the statements culled from Bush's addresses are patriotic through and through, they are better studied in the context of other tenets. This concession adds considerable depth to the categorical analysis. Thus, many of the appeals discussed in this chapter are hued red, white and blue despite not having been explicitly labeled as patriotic.

There exists notable overlap among some of the statements contained herein. That is to say that some elaborate statements could arguably have been cited as good examples of two or even three disparate *topoi*. Should the reader disagree with the classification of a statement codified here, he or she should take this difference of opinion as verification of multidimensionality.

One final point of note regarding classification: The researcher found the declaration that defeat equals disgrace so rich and prolific that creating subcategories for this appeal was necessary. These subcategories include the principle of no concession, the principle of no surrender, a declaration that we will not fail in battle and a declaration that victory will come in time.

### **Remember your glorious ancestry**

In his 1902 dissertation, Burgess explains his first tenet as an appeal to:

The ancestry—their glorious deeds, how they dared zealously for the state, regarding the public interests as personal and personal interests as public. They toiled joyously, kept the old possessions, and acquired new. Especial reference is made to their achievements against the very enemy with whom battle is now impending. (Burgess 1902, 212)

One sees these calls through each of Bush's speeches studied at present. In fact, this one tenet effectively sums up many of the commonalities between the rhetoric of Bush and the rhetoric of Pericles. For the purposes of this exercise, then, the researcher will instead utilize Miller's paraphrase, "remember your glorious ancestry..." (2008, 22), and address the other aspects of this tenet in subsequent *topoi*.

Appeals to history are ubiquitous in Bush's speeches. Specifically, the commander in chief makes many mentions to the founding of the nation. In 2003, he says, "Our founders dedicated this country to the cause of human dignity ... This conviction leads us into the world to help the afflicted and defend the peace and confound the designs of evil men" (Jan., 112). In 2002, he states, "Our enemies send other people's children on missions of suicide and murder. They embrace tyranny and death as a cause and a creed. We stand for a different choice, made long ago, on the day of our founding. We affirm it again today" (139). Both excerpts suggest that the values of the founding fathers are alive and well, guiding present action.

Bush refers to the sacrifice made by American forbearers, stating, "This Nation fights reluctantly because we know the cost, and we dread the days of mourning that always come" (Jan. 2003, 116). Here, "always come" invokes inevitability, a cyclical view of history. "Americans understand the costs of conflict because we have paid them in the past. War has no certainty except the certainty of sacrifice" (U.S. President Mar. 17, 2003, 340). The president would not be able to make this argument if the impending conflict were altogether new or different. Because they "understand the costs of conflict," it can be deduced that Bush believes Americans are intimately familiar with the situation at hand, even though at this point, war in Iraq has not been declared. War, therefore, is routine. And what is expected of the citizenry during wartime is ingrained in the public's consciousness. Bush is effectively stating that the country has been down this same road before and that that road to war was in the past traveled by brave men worthy of emulation.

He continues appealing to the glorious ancestry by asserting that there is little difference between the present age and the age of the progenitorship: “The technologies of war have changed. The risks and suffering of war have not” (Jan. 2003, 116). The subtext here indicates that grandparents and great-grandparents faced the same challenge of war and did not shy away from it.

Also, the word “history” comes up repeatedly, many times personified as a beckoning agent. History calls upon America to act. Bush says, “And we go forward with confidence because this call of history has come to the right country” (Jan. 2003, 116).

#### *Periclean examples*

I shall begin with our ancestors: it is both just and proper that they should have the honor of the first mention on an occasion like the present. They dwelt in the country without break in the succession from generation to generation, and handed it down free to the present time by their valor. And if our more remote ancestors deserve praise, much more do our own fathers, who added to their inheritance the empire, which we now possess, and spared no pains to be able to leave their acquisitions to us of the present generation. (2.36.1-2)

Such is the Athens for which these men, in the assertion of their resolve not to lose her, nobly fought and died. . . (2.41.5)

Remember, too, that if your country has the greatest name in all the world, it is because she never bent before disaster; because she has expended more life and effort in war than any other city, and has won for herself a power greater than any hitherto known, the memory of which will descend to the latest posterity. . .(2.64.3)

### **Do not disgrace your ancestry**

The image of deified history calling upon its servant and prophet, America, continues in Burgess' second recognized commonplace: "With such ancestry, do not disgrace your heritage" (1912, 212). Extrapolating, the researcher takes this to mean, "Make your ancestors proud by embracing your duty." In his 2002 address, Bush asserts that "history has called America and our allies to action, and it both our responsibility and our privilege to fight freedom's fight" (135). Later in 2004, he says, "Americans are rising to the tasks of history, and they expect the same from us. In their efforts, their enterprise and their character, the American people are showing that the state of our union is confident and strong" (95). These appeals are similar to the appeals to history but exhibit one caveat: The call of history is coupled with responsibility. To shirk responsibility would be to disgrace the glorious ancestry.

Repeatedly, Bush reminds the people that they are answering the call and fulfilling the duty:

We were reminded that we are citizens, with obligations to each other, to our country and to history. (2002, 138)

Americans are a resolute people who have risen to every test of our time. Adversity has revealed the character of our country, to the world, and to ourselves. (Jan. 2003, 116)

America this evening is a nation of great responsibilities. And we are rising to meet them. (2004, 94)

What is more, Bush reminds that those who came before answered the same call and fulfilled the same duty. In this, he makes the argument twice over that while circumstances may have changed, the core similarity between American past and present,

that its nature is to step up, has remained fixed. The president, for instance, emphasizes that “the threat is new; America’s duty is familiar” (Jan. 2003, 113) and “the work of building a new Iraq is hard, and it is right. And America has always been willing to do what it takes for what is right” (2004, 96).

Interestingly, in March 17’s Message to Saddam, Bush makes the nation’s charge personal, saying, “That duty falls to me as Commander in Chief, by the oath I have sworn, by the oath I will keep” (Mar. 17, 2003, 339).

### *Periclean examples*

We must not fall behind [our fathers], but must resist our enemies in any way and in every way, and attempt to hand down our power to our posterity unimpaired. (1.144.3)

Rather, the admiration of the present and succeeding ages will be ours, since we have not left our power without witness, but have show it by mighty proofs. (2.41.4)

Great will be your glory in not falling short of your natural character... (2.45.2)

Since then a state can support the misfortunes of private citizens, while they cannot support hers, it is surely the duty of everyone to be forward in her defense. (2.60.4)

Your fathers receiving these possessions not from others, but from themselves, did not let slip what their labor had acquired, but delivered them safe to you; and in this respect at least you must prove yourselves their equals, remember that to lose what one has got is more disgraceful than to be thwarted in getting, and you must confront your enemies not merely with spirit but with disdain. (2.62.3)

Again, your country has a right to your services in sustaining the glories of her position. These are a common source of pride to you all, and you cannot decline the burdens of empire and still expect to share its honors. (2.63.1)

### **Our forces are superior to that of our enemies**

The third tenet, a comparison of forces, might have originally been a comparison of military might. But in Bush's speeches, a comparison of governing principles occurs more often. The driving syllogism throughout is that the terrorists, and not only their horrific acts, equate with evil. Bush makes this allegory famously in his 2002 address when speaking of Iraq, North Korea and Iran: "States like these and their terrorist allies, constitute an axis of evil, arming to threaten the peace of the world" (135). He continues the metaphor with "our enemies believed America was weak and materialistic, that we would splinter in fear and selfishness. They were as wrong as they are evil" (2002, 137).

Bush condemns the enemies' actions too, using the same language. When speaking of Saddam Hussein's war crimes, Bush says, "If this is not evil, then evil has no meaning" (Jan. 2003, 116). He says, "The terrorists continue to plot against America and the civilized world," (2004, 95) thusly painting them as barbarians. Along the same lines: "This is a regime that has something to hide from the civilized world" (U.S. President 2002, 135). Bush pits the first world against the third world.

Terrorists are referred to as "thugs," (U.S. President 2004, 95 and 96) bullies and individuals who "have no regard for conventions of war or rules of morality" (U.S. President Mar. 19, 2003, 343). These descriptions connote an enemy who antagonizes the do-gooders of the free world. "Peaceful efforts to disarm the Iraqi regime have failed again and again—because we are not dealing with peaceful men" (U.S. President Mar. 17, 2003, 338). Other characterizations are less kind: Terrorists are cast as criminals. Once in 2003 and for a second time in 2004, Bush refers to what he calls "outlaw

regimes” (Jan., 113 and 95), the “gravest danger in the war on terror...the gravest danger facing America and the world” (U.S. President Jan. 2003, 113).

“These enemies,” he says, “view the entire world as a battlefield” (U.S. President 2002, 134). In other words, they do not see the world like Americans do; they are an “other”. More than that, Bush makes them out to be less than human. “My hope is that all nations will heed our call, and eliminate the terrorist parasites who threaten their countries and our own” (U.S. President 2002, 135).

Further descriptions of the United States’ enemies range from cowardly deserters to hypocritical Pharisees:

Men who ran away from our troops in battle are now dispersed and attack from the shadows. (2004, 95)

We are not deceived by their pretenses of piety. We have seen their kind before. (Sept. 2001, 1349)

The second half of the latter statement returns yet again to the idea that Americans have gone up against similar scoundrels in previous conflicts. Bush seems to be saying, “We have fought this battle before.” Further, he asserts that his government is wise to their ploys, saying that despite sheep’s clothing, “. . . we know their true nature” (2002, 135).

And Bush turns the attacks on the Twin Towers into an assault on cherished ideology:

“They hate what we see right here in this chamber—a democratically elected government” (Sept. 2001, 1348).

Terrorists, therefore, become barbaric, subhuman pestilence, hell-bent on destruction.

*Periclean example*

Confidence can indeed a blissful ignorance impart, ay, even to a coward's breast, but disdain is the privilege of those who, like us, have been assured by reflections of their superiority to their adversary. (2.62.4)

**Valor prevails**

Next up is the commonality that “in war, it is valor, not mere numbers, that prevails” (Miller 2008, 22). This manifests itself as endorsements of the U.S. military's goodness and bravery.

In many of his addresses, the president speaks directly to the troops. He encourages them to act with honor, saying, “The enemies you confront will come to know your skill and bravery. The people you liberate will witness the honorable and decent spirit of the American military” (Mar. 19, 2003, 343). Not only will this rightness of character typify the soldiers, but it will also serve as a compass: “Your honor will guide you. You believe in America, and America believes in you” (Jan. 2003, 116). Principles as guides, it seems, proves a frequent image of Bush's.

He continues by stating, “The qualities of courage and compassion that we strive for in America also determine our conduct abroad” (Jan. 2003, 112). One sees now that it is not only military personal being governed by nobler principles. Higher ups dictating foreign policy are subject to these qualities, as well.

It is important to note that these qualities of compassion, bravery and honor are winning attributes. As Burgess points out, valor prevails in war. Bush likewise indicates that American principles are second to none: “Deep in the American character, there is honor, and it is stronger than cynicism” (2002, 138). He makes mentions of homeland

displays of bravery seen “in the sacrifice of soldiers, the fierce brotherhood of firefighters, and the bravery and generosity of ordinary citizens” (2002, 138), and he charges the public to mirror the military in their exhibition of valiant character:

Our generation must show courage in a time of blessing, as our nation has always shown in times of crisis. And our courage, issue by issue, can gather to greatness and serve our country. This is the privilege and responsibility we share. And if we work together, we can prove that public service is noble. (Feb. 2001, 357)

### *Periclean examples*

. . . but they are incapacitated from carrying on a war against a power different in character from their own . . . (1.141.6)

That part of our history which tells of the military achievements which gave us our several possessions, or of the ready valor with which either we or our fathers stemmed the tide of Hellenic or foreign aggression, is a them too familiar . . . (2.36.4)

And yet if with habits not of labor but of ease, and courage not of art but of nature, we are still willing to encounter danger, we have the double advantage of not suffering hardships before we need to, and of facing them in the hour of need as fearlessly as those who are never free from them. (2.39.4)

For Athens alone of her contemporaries is found when tested to be greater than her reputation, and alone gives no occasion to her assailants to blush at the antagonist by whom they have been worsted, or to her subjects to question her title to rule by merit. (2.41.3)

### **Great prizes await the victors**

Burgess denotes the fifth tenet as a delineation of the spoils awaiting the triumphant. In his words, “The most magnificent prizes await the victors” (Burgess 1912, 212). To the researcher, this commonplace is among the most interesting because

today's warriors do not share in the same rewards as their classical parallels. Bush does nevertheless promise a great prize to the nation should they prevail: "Lasting peace" (2002, 138).

For Bush, achieving peace is doable only through the spread of American-style government. And, to borrow a biblical allusion, being a lamp in dark places requires a robust military. Bush says this directly in his first address from February 2001: "A strong America is the world's best hope for peace and freedom" (356).

Instead of arguing only that "free nations have a duty to defend our people by uniting against the violent" (Mar. 17, 2003, 341), the president declares there to be opportunity for betterment in rising to the job. This word, "opportunity," is witnessed again and again:

America has a window of opportunity to extend and secure our present peace by promoting a distinctly American internationalism. We will work with our allies and friends to be a force for good and a champion of freedom. (Feb. 2001, 355)

And we have a great opportunity during this time of war to lead the world toward the values that will bring lasting peace. (2002, 138)

This time of adversity offers a unique moment of opportunity—a moment we must seize to change our culture. (2002, 138)

We want to be a nation that serves goals larger than self. We've been offered a unique opportunity and we must not let this moment pass. (2002, 138)

The president urges the people to *carpe diem*, promising "an age of liberty, here and across the world" (Sept. 2001, 1350). The military effort is recast as a humanitarian one. "And above all, we will finish the historic work of democracy in Afghanistan and Iraq, so

those nations can light the way for others, and help transform a troubled part of the world,” says Bush (2004, 97).

Ushering in a new democratic era is a task only America is up for:

The advance of human freedom – the great achievement of our time, and the great hope of every time—now depends on us. Our nation—this generation—will lift a dark threat of violence from our people and our future. We will rally the world to this cause by our efforts, by our courage. We will not tire, we will not falter, and we will not fail. (Sept. 2001, 1350)

Further, if America does not rise to meet what Bush deems its obligation, there can be only suffering: “Once again, this Nation and our friends are all that stand between the world at peace, and a world of chaos and constant alarm. Once again, we are called to defend the safety of our people and the hopes of all mankind” (U.S. President Jan. 2003, 113). But the absence of “a dark threat of violence,” (U.S. President Sept. 2001, 1350) “of chaos and constant alarm” (U.S. President Jan. 2003, 113) is not reward enough. For the president’s rhetorical purposes, superior principles yield the ability, or opportunity, to shape the future: “I know there are struggles ahead and dangers to face. But this country will define our times, not be defined by them” (Sept. 2001, 1350). Therefore, a victorious America is a decisive, defining power in the world, extending the U.S. superstructure to have an impact on bases abroad.

### *Periclean examples*

. . . but the opportunities of war wait for no man. (1.142.1)

Rather, the admiration of the present and succeeding ages will be ours, since we have not left our power without witness, but have shown it by mighty proofs. (2.41.4)

Take these to be your model, and judging happiness to be the fruit of freedom and freedom of valor, never decline the dangers of war. (2.43.4)

The state thus offers a valuable prize, as the garland of victory in this race of valor, for the reward both of those who have fallen and their survivors. And where the rewards for merit are greatest, there are found the best citizens. (2.46.1)

### **God is on our side**

“The auspices are favorable; the gods are our allies” (Burgess 1902, 213). At first glance, Burgess’s sixth commonplace appears antiquated. Still, this mainstay of classical war rhetoric proves very much alive in Bush’s addresses. Because Miller provides no handy paraphrase for this point, the researcher will pick up the well-known, ironic title lyric from Bob Dylan’s 1964 protest ballad “God On Our Side.”

Although it may not be the most creative method of creating otherness, appealing to common religion seems politically effective in that it pits one side against the other without sounding nasty. The trick, it would appear, is hearing what is not said, or in the case of this textual study, reading what remains unwritten.

In his first address as president, Bush inserts two Bible verses without citation into his verbiage. The first is a paraphrase of Luke 12:48, “To whom much has been given, much is expected.” Bush says, “America is a nation at peace, but not a nation at rest. Much has been given to us, and much is expected” (Feb. 2001, 356). Later, he closes with a rewording Matthew 25:21. “Together we can share in the credit of making our country more prosperous and generous and just, and earn from our conscience and from our fellow citizens the highest possible praise: Well done, good and faithful

servants” (Feb. 2001, 357). One unfamiliar with either verse might mistake the above statements for nothing out of the ordinary, but to evangelical Christians, these allusions likely take on the properties of hidden messages. Bush is one of them, a fellow believer, a member of the in-group.

It would be impossible and unfair for this present study to speculate as to whether Bush meant to create a divide among Americans from the inclusion of scripture in the given statements. The following examples, however, appear to be of a more sinister nature.

To begin, shortly after the 9/11 attacks, Bush takes possession of God. “The course of this conflict is not known, yet its outcome is certain. Freedom and fear, justice and cruelty, have always been at war, and we know that God is not neutral between them” (Sept. 2001, 1351). God, in other words, is on America’s side. Because He is “the loving God behind all life and all of history” (U.S. President Jan. 2003, 116) and because “God has planted in every human heart the desire to live in freedom” (U.S. President 2004, 97), the president tacitly declares Him to be an ally on the war on terror.

What though does this do for domestic perceptions of the other side? As Bush states, “God is not neutral” (Sept. 2001, 1351). He cannot be on their side, too. They, then, become either godless heathens or idolaters. The war becomes a crusade. The soldiers begin to look like disciples, doing God’s work and fighting His fight.

If you are not on “our” side, that is America’s side, then you are not on God’s side. Bush claims God as an American ally, and in so doing claims God’s omnipotence. Also, the appeal to God purifies the motive of going to war and the resulting sin of taking another life.

Bush justifies the U.S. way of life, saying, “The liberty we prize is not America’s gift to the world; it is God’s gift to humanity” (Jan. 2003, 116). This statement conjures in the mind of the researcher the image of Prometheus stealing fire from Zeus and gifting it to mankind. If one were to employ this myth, the metaphor of a lamp in darkness, yet another biblical reference (“Your word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.” [Psalm 119:105]), is difficult to ignore as it has been shown already that light and shadow are motifs apparent throughout Bush’s speeches.

An alternative interpretation of his loaded statement is also born out of Greek mythology. Seemingly, God, according to Bush, is the patron of liberty, which in this context might easily be taken to mean democracy. Whether the Judeo-Christian divinity of Bush’s faith professes any political leanings is subject for a thesis of a theological bent; undoubtedly, though, Athena is the goddess of democracy. Indeed, oftentimes it might be more appropriate (if not more forthright) to substitute her name, Athena, for the word “God,” for Bush’s appeals to religion are directed toward a democratic deity.

### *Periclean examples*

For this tenet, Periclean examples are scant. Hanson says Thucydides “does not detect a divine motif in the unfolding of human events and surely does not write his history to confirm the sins of irreverence, hubris and impiety” (2008, xx).

[The administration of our constitution] favors the many instead of the few; this is why it is called a democracy. If we look to the laws, they afford equal justice to all in their private differences. (2.36.1)

Besides, the hand of Heaven must be borne with resignation, that of the enemy with fortitude . . . (2.64.2)

### **Defeat equals disgrace**

The tenet “Defeat equals disgrace” has been separated into four subcategories common to the speech of Bush and Pericles: We will not concede, we will not surrender, we will not fail, we will emerge victorious eventually.

Appealing to the principle of no concession, Bush stares down the specter of terrorism, saying, “We will answer every danger and every enemy that threatens the American people” (Jan. 2003, 109); “we refuse to live in the shadow of this ultimate danger” (2004, 95) and “a future lived at the mercy of terrible threats is no peace at all” (Jan. 2003, 116). America will swing at every pitch. It will not shrink away in fear. More than that, Bush casts the country as being on the offensive; a defensive strategy he equates with indifference, the “price [of which] would be catastrophic” (2002, 135). To this point, he says, “We are now acting because the risks of inaction would be far greater” (Mar. 17, 2003, 340).

Like a gunman holding hostages, Bush lays out a series of orders: “These demands are not open to negotiation or discussion” (Sept. 2001, 1348), he says. The world and, in specific, suspected terrorist states, must play by America’s rules. For starters, he draws a line in the sand. “Every nation in every region now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists” (Sept. 2001, 1349).

He makes it clear that America will not hesitate to act or wait for the approval of other nations:

But some governments will be timid in the face of terror. And make no mistake about it: If they do not act, America will. (2002, 135)

Yet the course of this Nation does not depend on the decisions of others. (Jan. 2003, 114)

There is a difference, however, between leading a coalition of many nations, and submitting to the objections of a few. America will never seek a permission slip to defend the security of our country. (2004, 97)

The preferred course of action available to countries with grievances, the UN, is unsatisfactory to Bush. He explains in March 17's Message to Saddam, "The United Nations Security Council has not lived up to its responsibilities, so we will rise to ours" (Mar. 17, 2003, 339). Further, he is displeased with the lack of fortitude some friendly nations display: "These governments share an assessment of the danger, but not our resolve to meet it" (Mar. 17, 2003, 339).

Words and diplomatic overtures are not enough for Bush. "For diplomacy to be effective, words must be credible" (2004, 96), and those words must be backed by certain, swift action so that "no one can now doubt the word of America" (2004, 96). He continues championing his brand of justice, saying, "Terror, unanswered, can not only bring down buildings, it can threaten the stability of legitimate governments. And you know what—we're not going to allow it" (Sept. 2001, 1349), justifying his ready, fire, aim approach with, "If this threat is permitted to fully and suddenly emerge, all actions, all words, and all recriminations would come too late" (Jan. 2003, 115).

#### *Periclean examples*

There is one principle, Athenians, which I hold to through everything, and that is the principle of no concession to the Peloponnesians. (1.140.1)

If you give way, you will instantly have to meet some greater demand, as having been frightened into obedience in the first instance; while a firm refusal will make them clearly understand that they must treat you more as equals. (1.140.5)

Make your decision therefore at once, either to submit before you are harmed, or if we are to go to war, as I for one think we ought, to do so . . . resolved against making concessions. . . (1.141.1)

After military action has already been taken, Bush affirms that the country will not quit fighting for any reason other than victory. Surrender is not an option; this is the principle of no surrender. America is resolute:

Tonight we are a country awakened to danger and called to defend freedom. Our grief has turned to anger, and anger to resolution. (Sept. 2001, 1347)

Even grief recedes with time and grace. But our resolve must not pass. (Sept. 2001, 1350)

In all these days of promise and days of reckoning, we can be confident. In a whirlwind of change, and hope, and peril, our faith is sure, our resolve is firm, and our union is strong. (Jan. 2003, 109)

Should enemies strike our country, they would be attempting to shift our attention with panic and weaken our morale with fear. In this, they would fail. No act of theirs can alter the course or shake the resolve of this country. (Mar. 17, 2003, 340)

The word “resolution” or a variant thereof appears frequently. Synonyms such as “commitment” and “steadfastness” pop up, too:

America is committed to keeping the world’s most dangerous weapons out of the hands of the most dangerous regimes. (2004, 96)

Steadfast in our purpose, we now press on. We have known freedom's price. We have shown freedom's power. And in this great conflict, my fellow Americans, we will see freedom's victory. (2002, 139)

While the relatively high number of dedication references is notable, Bush conveys the same “no surrender” message in less direct language, saying, “I will not forget this wound to our country or those who inflicted it. I will not yield; I will not rest; I will not relent in waging this struggle for freedom and security for the American people” (Sept. 2001, 1351). By making the statement in the first person, Bush seemingly charges other Americans to remember along with him. The terms “forget,” “yield,” “rest,” and “relent” follow in quick succession. These, of course, all have very different meanings. One might remember but nonetheless concede, for example. But the president equates them all, suggesting that if America “relents” in its war on terror, it is “[forgetting the] wound to our country” (Sept. 2001, 1351), yielding weakly or resting when there is work to be done, bringing about disgrace.

Bush says, “We’ve not come all this way—through tragedy, and trial and war—only to falter and leave our work unfinished” (2004, 95). With this statement, he portends that any back peddling would be indolent. In the same vein, he says, “We will not deny, we will not ignore, we will not pass along our problems to other Congresses, other presidents, and other generations. We will confront them with focus, and clarity, and courage” (Jan. 2003, 109). These two statements suggest that not carrying on full steam ahead in the war effort belies idleness or cowardice. Of course, Bush is willing to take “whatever action is required, whenever action is necessary” (Jan. 2003, 114) and

“America,” he says to all nations, likewise “will do what is necessary to ensure our nation’s security” (2002, 135).

Continuing, any questioning of the country’s actions abroad is cast as weakness. However, this weakness is not native to America. Like all misfortunes after 9/11, the weakness (i.e., questioning; checking and balancing power) is the spawn of terrorist invasion. The terrorists, Bush says, “They are trying to shake the will of our country and our friends, but the United States of America will never be intimidated by thugs and assassins” (2004, 96). And so that the country might never have to deal with the poor character traits resulting from terrorists again, Bush pledges to eradicate their kind. “Our war on terror begins with al Qaeda, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated” (Sept. 2001, 1348).

### *Periclean examples*

I know that the spirit which inspires men while they are being persuaded to make war is not always retained in action; that as circumstances change, resolutions change. (1.140.1)

And if I had thought I could persuade you, I would have bid you go out and lay them waste with your own hands, and show the Peloponnesians that this at any rate will not make you submit. (1.143.5)

Thus choosing to die resisting, rather than to live submitting, they fled only from dishonor, but met danger face to face, and after one brief moment, while at the summit of their fortune, left behind them not their fear, but their glory. (2.42.4)

And surely, to a man of the spirit, the degradation of cowardice must be immeasurably more grievous than the unfelt death which strikes him in the midst of his strength and patriotism! (2.43.6)

You should know too that liberty preserved by your efforts will easily recover for us what we have lost, while, the knee once bowed, even what you have will pass from you. (2.62.3)

Besides, to recede is no longer possible, if indeed any of you in the alarm of the moment has become enamored of the honesty of such an unambitious part. For what you hold is, to speak somewhat plainly, a tyranny; to take it perhaps was wrong, but to let it go is unsafe. (2.63.2)

The third subcategorical appeal, a declaration that we will not fail in battle, shows itself. Because defeat equals disgrace, America simply will not be unsuccessful. Bush assures his enemies and his constituency of his confidence in U.S. victory in no uncertain terms:

Whether we bring our enemies to justice or bring justice to our enemies, justice will be done. (Sept. 2001, 1347)

We will defend our freedom. We will bring freedom to others. And we will prevail. (Mar. 19, 2003, 343)

Victory in war is assured because “. . . if war is forced upon us, we will fight with the full force and might of the United States military” (Jan. 2003, 116). The image here is significant. War is coming to America. Despite rhetoric in other statements that suggests America has the final say so in all things, here America is reacting to a situation beyond its control. War, the threat, is personified as Hussein in another of Bush’s speeches: “Should Saddam Hussein choose confrontation, the American people can know that every measure has been taken to avoid war, and every measure will be taken to win it” (Mar. 17, 2003, 340). America has utmost control but not in choosing to go to war. This delineation, although illogical, is necessary for the president to make so as to not appear a warmonger.

Furthermore, the enemies are depicted as entities who should know better. “If our enemies dare strike us, they and all who have aided them, will face fearful consequences” (U.S. President Mar. 17, 2003, 340). “Dare,” in this characterization, exonerates the commander in chief; rather than dealing with persons who could plead ignorance or the insanity defense, these terrorists and allies are, for lack of a better phrase, asking for it.

Bush promises the result of a victorious military campaign will be peace:

In all these efforts, however, America’s purpose is more than to follow a process—it is to achieve a result: the end of terrible threats to the civilized world. (Jan. 2003, 114)

Before the day of horror can come, before it is too late to act, this danger will be removed. (Mar. 17, 2003, 339)

My fellow citizens, the dangers to our country and the world will be overcome. We will pass through this time of peril and carry on the work of peace. (Mar. 19, 2003, 343)

And, he argues, that in order to achieve peace earlier, the United States military must not shy away from causing destruction. Rather, the army ought to advance without hesitation. “Now that conflict has come, the only way to limit its duration is to apply decisive force. And I assure you, this will not be a campaign of half measures, and we will accept no outcome but victory” (Mar. 19, 2003, 343).

### *Periclean examples*

If they march against our country, we will sail against theirs. . . . (1.143.4)

We Athenians advance unsupported into the territory of a neighbor, and fighting upon foreign soil usually vanquish with ease men who are defending their homes. (2.39.2)

If you shrink before the exertions which the war makes necessary, and fear that after all they may not have a happy result, you know the reasons by which I have often demonstrated to you the groundlessness of your apprehension. (2.62.1)

Fourth, Bush declares that victory will come in time. Even holding no punches, the U.S.'s effort in Iraq and Afghanistan will not yield victory for some time. Bush warns the people that “our goal will not be achieved overnight, but it can come over time” (Mar. 17, 2003, 340). Perhaps to buy himself time to produce results (i.e. weapons of mass destruction in Iraq), he suggests that the war is only commencing:

Our war on terror is well begun, but it is only begun. This campaign may not be finished on our watch – yet it must be and it will be waged on our watch. (2002, 135)

What we have found in Afghanistan confirms that, far from ending there, our war against terror is only beginning. (2002, 134)

Introducing the idea that the war will be a prolonged conflict does something else for Bush; it creates the sense that the Iraq war is an ideological struggle. This hypothesis is supported by the following quote: “Whatever the duration of this struggle, and whatever the difficulties, we will not permit the triumph of violence in the affairs of men...free people will set the course of history” (Jan. 2003, 113).

#### *Periclean examples*

. . . especially if the war last longer than they expect, which it very likely will. (1.141.5)

It must be thoroughly understood that war is a necessity, and that the more readily we accept it, the less will be the ardor of our opponents. . . . (1.144.3)

### **We have fought this enemy before**

Burgess' ninth tenet lends itself well to a comparative study. He cites "We have conquered this enemy before" as a commonplace in speeches from antiquity (Burgess 1902, 213). Bush makes this argument by way of likening present foes to historic ones. In other words, the president avows that terrorists are no different than Nazis, the Viet Cong, etc. "They are the heirs of all the murderous ideologies of the 20th century. By sacrificing human life to serve their radical visions—by abandoning every value except the will to power—they follow the path of fascism, and Nazism, and totalitarianism" (U.S. President Sept. 2001, 1349). The enemies America faces may be fearsome, imbued with characteristics of the worst of the worst, but Bush reminds that even these were conquered:

The ambitions of Hitlerism, militarism and communism were defeated by the will of free peoples, by the strength of great alliances, and by the might of the United States of America. Now, in this century, the ideology of power and domination has appeared again, and seeks to gain the ultimate weapons of terror. (Jan. 2003, 113)

Additionally, Bush validates swift, forceful action abroad by appealing to the historical case of the United Nations. "One reason the U.N. was founded after the Second World War," he says, "was to confront aggressive dictators, actively and early, before they can attack the innocent and destroy the peace" (Mar. 17, 2003, 339). American involvement in Iraq becomes a preemptive measure in keeping with the policies enacted during the time of the U.N.'s founding. Ironically, with this appeal, Bush is aligning himself with the United Nations, whose stance on the Iraq War he

disapproves of. It should be noted that the United Nations he partners with is the United Nations of Franklin Delano Roosevelt and not his own.

He charges that America learn well history's lessons:

Our Nation and the world must learn the lessons of the Korean peninsula, and not allow an even greater threat to rise up in Iraq. (Jan. 2003, 114)

In the 20th century, some chose to appease murderous dictators, whose threats were allowed to grow into genocide and global war. In this century, when evil plot chemical, biological and nuclear terror, a policy of appeasement could bring destruction of a kind never before seen on this earth. (Mar. 17, 2003, 340)

Bush's lesson plan seems to hinge on action. "Time and distance from the events of September the 11th will not make us safer unless we act on its lessons" (2002, 136). For the president, even the recent past has much to teach the present.

By way of example, he reminds, "Throughout the 20th century, small groups of men seized control of great nations . . . built armies and arsenals . . . and set out to dominate the weak and intimidate the world" (Jan. 2003, 113). Ignoring the reference to time, Bush could be speaking about the American colonists. He is, of course, not referencing the revolutionary period, but the analogy bears out for the audience.

*Periclean example*

Did not our fathers resist the Persians not only with resources far different from ours, but even when those resources had been abandoned; and more by wisdom than by fortune, more by daring than by strength, did not they beat off the barbarian and advance their affairs to their present height? (1.144.3)

### **Wrongs suffered; just war**

One way the president defends exercising military might is reminding the people of the injustices incurred by the enemy. Ancient rhetoricians share this strategy. Bush often makes the case for the war on terror being a just war, and often he is explicit in doing so:

Our cause is just, and it continues. (2002, 134)

As we enforce the just demands of the world, we will also honor the deepest commitments of our country. (Mar. 17, 2003, 340)

When he is not stating plainly that the war is just, he asks Americans to recall “the chaos and carnage of September the 11th” (2004, 96):

Great harm has been done to us. We have suffered great loss. And in our grief and anger we have found our mission and our moment. (Sept. 2001, 1350)

As we fight this war, we will remember where it began—here, in our own country. (Jan. 2003, 113)

America is retaliating. It is not exploiting an unfortunate occurrence but reacting to the wrongs done to it. Listeners are assured that “our nation enters this conflict reluctantly” (Mar. 19, 2003, 343) but justifiably.

The verbiage suggests that a likely rhetorical goal might have been to convince citizenry that in waging war, Bush desires to prevent another “sudden and catastrophic attack” (Jan. 2003, 114) not pursue imperialistic ambitions.

If there be any doubt that Bush is not out for blood, he attests, “We are a peaceful people—yet we’re not a fragile people, and we will not be intimidated by thugs and

killers” (Mar. 17, 2003, 340) nor “turn back to the dangerous illusion that terrorists are not plotting and outlaw regimes are no threat to us” (2004, 95).

*Periclean example*

. . . and that we shall not commence hostilities, but shall resist those who do commence them. This is an answer agreeable at once to the rights and the dignity of Athens. (1.144.2)

## **Chapter 4: Dramatist critique**

Moving beyond Burgess' tenets, one sees Bush make symbolic appeals that require analysis using Burke's dramatist model. Dramatism's holding that language masks true a rhetor's true intention provides a suitable way to analyze the symbolic language inherent within Thucydidean, Periclean and Bush-ean texts.

Like the statements examined in Chapter 3, the following correlate with appeals made by Pericles. The difference is that these statements also echo statements made by the historian Thucydides and sometimes make modern classical wartime rituals, such as retrieving the shields of dead soldiers. The symbolic appeals fall into five mimetic categories: An attention to setting, allusions to naval strength, leadership during unpopular war, armor of the fallen and the "unprecedented."

Where applicable, short discussion of intrinsic Burkean concepts within the symbolic interplay concludes the assessment of each appeal.

### **An attention to setting**

The Funeral Oration, Pericles' best-known speech, is the first public eulogy of the Peloponnesian War. It was customary for "a man chosen by the state, of approved wisdom and eminent reputation" (Thuc. 2.34.6) to speak on the virtues of the fallen. Pericles gives his Funeral Oration and honors precedent.

Before the transcript of Pericles' rhetoric, Thucydides sets the scene, describing the Athenian practice of burying their dead: "The dead are laid in the public sepulcher in

the most beautiful suburb of the city, in which those who fall in war are always buried...” (2.34.5). The reader quite almost sees “the bones of the dead ... laid out in a tent which has been erected” (Thuc. 2.34.2), the friends of the fallen bringing offerings, the “funeral procession cypress coffins... one for each tribe” (Thuc. 2.34.3) and the “one empty bier decked for the missing, that is, for those whose bodies could not be recovered” (Thuc. 2.34.3). The eulogy is always given following internment. Thucydides continues, “When the proper time arrived, [Pericles] advanced from the sepulcher to an elevated platform in order to be heard by as many of the crowd as possible” (2.34.8). Thus, throughout the whole of the Funeral Oration, the reader has etched in his or her mind the image of setting.

Like Thucydides, Bush wraps his rhetoric in the cloak of story-like exposition of place. The listener is swept away to a distant land when Bush says, “Even 7,000 miles away, across oceans and continents, on mountaintops and in caves—you will not escape the justice of this nation” (2002, 134), and, like the Athenian burial site, the land Bush describes is replete with sadness.

Like Pericles, Bush begins two speeches by noting how customs have usually been followed. His Address to the Nation and his 2003 State of the Union Address begin with a figurative salute to Article II Sec. 3 of the U.S. Constitution, which reads,

[The president] shall from time to time give the Congress information on the State of the Union and recommend to their consideration such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient. . .

Bush pays homage to tradition:

In the normal course of events, Presidents come to this chamber to report on the state of the Union. Tonight no such report is needed. It has already been delivered by the American people. (Sept. 2001, 1347)

Every year, by law and by custom, we meet here to consider the state of the union. (2003, 109)

This opening nod to “the established custom” (Thuc. 2.34.7) is Periclean through and through. Pericles commences the Funeral Oration with

Most of my predecessors in this place have commended him who made this speech part of the law, telling us that it is well that it should be delivered at the burial of those who fall in battle. For myself, I should have thought that the worth which had displayed itself in deeds would be sufficiently rewarded by honors also shown by deeds. (2.35.1)

While opening with an acknowledgement of the established way of doing things, both rhetors decide that the present state of affairs, the September 11th attacks and the loss of lives in preliminary campaigns against the Peloponnesians, require a departure from the norm. It is worth comment that these beginnings mirror each other not only rhetorically but also historically for “the present state of affairs” marked the first casualties of war for each nation.

Emphasizing the importance of place, the Greek historian gives an account of where Pericles was standing at the time of the pronouncement: “An elevated platform in order to be heard by as many of the crowd as possible” (2.34.8). To the modern American researcher, this description brings to mind the pulpit in the Capitol from where State of the Union Addresses are usually delivered. And while Pericles declines to directly comment during his speech on his whereabouts (i.e., surrounded by fresh graves holding “the bones of the dead” [Thuc. 2.43.2]), Bush obliges:

No one can speak in the Capitol and not be awed by its history. As so many turning points, debates in these chambers have reflected the collected or divided conscience of our country. (Feb. 2001, 357)

The last time we met in this Chamber, the mothers and daughters of Afghanistan were captives in their own homes, forbidden from working or going to school. (2002, 134)

This year, we gather in this chamber deeply aware of decisive days that lie ahead. (Jan. 2003, 109)

Since we last met in this chamber, combat forces of the United States, Great Britain, Australia, Poland and other countries enforced the demands of the United Nations, ended the rule of Saddam Hussein, and the people of Iraq are free. (2004, 95)

In each statement, Bush marks the passage of time by referring his listener to the stationary setting and simultaneously conveys the sacred stability and strength of the Capitol as a symbol of U.S. stability. He indicates that “this chamber” (U.S. President 2002, 134; Jan. 2003, 109; 2004, 95) is a place where one comes to reflect upon the great changes that have taken place since and will take place before similar adjournings there. In this way, Bush heightens the importance of the Capitol as a place of rhetoric; Americans know that something momentous happened, is happening, or will happen simply because it is being spoken about in the consecrated place. Correspondingly, Athenians would pay close attention to the words uttered on the elevated platform near the sepulcher.

And lastly, as Pericles many times over refers to the distant past, so does Bush:

And when we walk through Statuary Hall and see those men and women of marble, we’re reminded of their courage and achievement. (Feb. 2001, 357)

Our war against terror is a contest of will, in which perseverance is power. In the ruins of the two towers, at the western wall of the Pentagon, on a field in Pennsylvania, this Nation made a pledge, and we renew that pledge tonight. (Jan. 2003, 113)

These appeals swell with several allusions to settings heavy with solemnity in the American psyche. “Men and women of marble” (U.S. President Feb. 2001, 357) and “ruins of the two towers” (U.S. President Jan. 2003, 113) are grand rhetorical gestures. Although seemingly these statements refer alone to American history, they readily stir up images from another era: Winged Victory of Samothrace and armless Aphrodite of Melos, the crumbling Parthenon and the austere Acropolis. “Western wall of the Pentagon” (U.S. President Jan. 2003, 113) invokes Jerusalem’s Wailing Wall, the western wall of Solomon’s temple. “A field in Pennsylvania” (U.S. President Jan. 2003, 113), the only place where Americans fought back during the attacks and won, makes passing reference to the Gettysburg battlefield, where over 45,000 Americans died fighting their brothers. Bush’s 2003 statement, then, touches on three historical sites that in concert forge American identity. The president draws on the power of Greek lineage, Judeo-Christian roots and American history. Democracy is heir to all three.

This rich appeal to setting lends itself easily to further Burkean analysis. Attention to setting correlates with the element “scene” from Burke’s pentad. Scene answers the questions “where” and “when.” That scene determines location as well as time suggests a separation of the temporal and physical world. In other words, that scene answers two questions and not a two-part question proposes that an individual can be

standing in one location (e.g., Pericles' elevated platform or Bush's rostrum), but rhetorically searching the far reaches of the past.

Bush seems to disconnect the audience from the present time even as he is delivering his rhetoric in present time in the Capitol. Statements, such as these in which he discusses the surrounding chamber, indicate a static location in response to "Where?", but answers to "When?" traverse the timeline, drawing the listener to a distant past.

Each element of Burke's pentad confesses a philosophical bias, and scene ascribes to determinism. Hence, a frequency of scene words in rhetorical statements conveys a commitment to the belief that free will plays a marginal role in the unfolding of human events. The circumstances, or scene, prevail. In the context of the statements discussed within this appeal, it is the sacred chamber setting that necessitates Bush speak to important events, not the other way around.

### **Allusions to naval strength**

If any description is to typify the Athenian military force it ought to be its unrivalled naval expertise.

In his first speech, Pericles urges his fellow citizens to join him in support of war by praising Athens' unchecked control of the seas. He poses a point of consideration to his listeners:

While a mere post might be able to do some harm to the country by incursions and by the facilities which it afford for desertion, it can never prevent our sailing into their country and raising fortifications there, and making reprisals with our powerful fleet. (1.142.4)

The Peloponnesians, Pericles argues, are “without experience in long wars across sea” (1.141.3) and “are quite incapable of often manning a fleet or often sending out an army: they cannot afford the absence from their homes, the expenditure from their own funds; and besides, they have not command of the sea” (1.141.4). His point laid plain is that even if the Peloponnesians did their best to outmatch Athens on land, the only area where they stand a chance, it would be no matter. “It they march against our country, we will sail against theirs” (Thuc. 1.143.4).

Although the U.S. Navy abdicated its sovereignty as first responders to the U.S. Air Force in 1947, an investigation for indicators of naval strength in Bush’s war rhetoric does not turn up fruitless. In fact, there are more maritime allusions made than allusions to any other branch of the armed forces. Bush speaks to the tireless dedication of servicemen and women “of our new Homeland Security Department,” who “are patrolling our coasts and borders. And their vigilance is protecting America” (2004, 94).

A Periclean response:

It must be kept in mind that seamanship, just like anything else is a matter requiring skill, and will not admit of being taken up occasionally as an occupation for times of leisure’ on the contrary, it is so exacting as to leave leisure for nothing else. (1.142.9)

Pericles asks the Athenians to “Consider for a moment. Suppose we were islanders: can you conceive of a more impregnable position?” (1.143.5). But Athens was not situated on an island, and they, the Athenians, were vulnerable. Conceding the point that Athens is connected to the rest of Hellas by land, Pericles says, “Well, this [illusion of geographical independence] in the future should, as far as possible, be our conception

of our position” (Thuc. 1.143.4). A quick survey of America’s foreign policy indicates that its leaders heeded Pericles’ advice and operated as if Americans were islanders. From George Washington’s recommendation to guard against entanglements abroad to James Monroe’s well-known implementation of U.S. isolationism, the American government has in many instances sought to attain the impregnability of islanders. To this day even, America has never made a concerted effort to establish its continental neighbors.

But despite policy, America, like Athens, is physically connected to foreign nations, opening itself up to invasion. Citing America’s susceptibility to outbursts of violence post 9/11, Bush says, “America is no longer protected by vast oceans” (2002, 136). It is as if America once had but now has lost what ancient Athens idealized yet never possessed: unassailability.

In his confident Message to Saddam, Bush reclaims the symbolic seas with a subtle reference to maritime skilled determination: “Instead of drifting toward tragedy, we will set a course toward safety” (Mar. 17, 2003, 339), a statement that could have just as easily been made by seafaring Athens millennia before. Pericles, espousing a like confidence, encourages the Athenians in his rhetoric to broaden their imperial stretch:

You perhaps think your empire extends only over your allies; I will declare to you the truth. The visible field of action has two parts, land and sea. In the whole of one of these, you are completely supreme, not merely as far as you use it at present, but also to what further extent you may think fit: in fine, your naval resources are such that your vessels may go where they please, without the King [of Persia] or any other nation on earth being able to stop them. (2.62.2)

The only impediment between Athens and complete domination of Hellas by way of the sea is the limit Athenians put on what they believe themselves capable of. Both powers appear to profess irrepressible robustness, even with acknowledged assailability in the face of Persian aggressors and terrorists.

In the last State of the Union Address of his first term, the American Commander in Chief ostensibly asks his audience to recall his triumphant helicopter arrival on the deck of the USS *Abraham Lincoln* and the subsequent “Mission Accomplished” proclamation he made aboard. He says in 2004, “I’ve had the honor of meeting our servicemen and women at many posts, from the deck of a carrier in the Pacific to a mess hall in Baghdad” (96). Bush declaring the U.S. involvement in Iraq over while he was standing aboard a symbol of American imperialism is a powerful image indeed. Imagine the gravity this image would brandish if United States-Iraqi conflict were truly over. Why would the president purposefully bring to mind in what could have been his final State of the Union Address a hastily made false promise from 2003?

Lambasted for the poorly defined objectives of the war on terror and flimsy evidence supporting the declaration of war in Iraq, Bush invokes the image of claiming victory from the flight deck of a battleship. This visual is not a new one; WWII was ended with the signing of the Japanese Instrument of Surrender onboard the USS *Missouri*. But when the Japanese announced they were willing to surrender and General MacArthur hastened to meet them in Tokyo Bay, he did not do so because it made a symbolic statement. He did so because it was an expedient way to end the war. Restated, WWII necessitated no fabricated imagery. Americans needed no reassurance that their cause was just in the Second World War. They had been “suddenly and viciously

attacked” by an identifiable enemy at Pearl Harbor. No one could doubt the U.S. military’s involvement in the Pacific Theater. But while America was assailed by the terrorists on September 11th as America was assailed by the Japanese on December 7th, Bush faced criticism of his war was not real (U.S. President 2004, 96). His, then, war necessitated fabricated imagery.

Bush in 2004 draws on the victorious image he created in 2003. Perhaps the president weighed the symbolic heft of naval strength and, deciding to take a risk, felt a reference to his announcing “Mission Accomplished” on the USS *Abraham Lincoln* could outweigh national disappointment over failing to find Iraqi weapons of mass destruction or resentment resulting from entering the war. After all, in the lexicon of American symbols, little is more impressive than the flight deck of a battleship, and as Pericles concludes, “The rule of the sea is indeed a great matter” (1.143.5).

Dramatically, the U.S. Navy does not exist as one continuous entity. It is several navies, reaching back to the founding of the naval branch of the armed forces. In the same way, the Athenian navy amounts to several historical navies collaged to produce an overall impression of naval strength. Within this appeal, there are mentions of and allusions to the contemporary U.S. Navy, the “victorious” U.S. Navy from 2003, the burgeoning U.S. Navy of the late 1800s, the future Athenian navy, the contemporary Athenian navy, the victorious Athenian navy of the Persian War and the flailing fleets of the Peloponnesians. The treatment of many navies calls for Burke’s concept of symbolic identity.

One way to forge consubstantiality (i.e., Burkean identification) is to define a group as what it is not. This is to create otherness. Pericles does this repeatedly. He hails the Athenian navy for being unlike their unskilled Peloponnesian parallels. So adamant is Pericles in conveying this truism that he spends three-fifths of his opening speech in the *History* discussing naval advantage over the allied people of the Peloponnesus. By denigrating foes, the Athenian's naval superiority is clear.

An alternative route entails appealing to a shared history. By using naval terms in his war rhetoric as if naval strength were still the bastion of American might, Bush recalls a time in America's history when unchecked expansionism was lauded domestically. Nearing the turn of the 19th century, overtures toward U.S. imperialism were betrayed by a desire to bolster the navy.

### **Leadership during unpopular war**

Thucydides writes,

After the second invasion of the Peloponnesians a change came over the spirit of the Athenians. Their land had now been twice laid waste; and war and pestilence at once pressed heavy upon them. They began to find fault with Pericles, as the author of the war and the cause of all their misfortune. (2.59.1-2)

Undoubtedly, the scene set for Pericles' third speech was hostile. The statesman acknowledges what he terms "the indignation of which I have been object, as I know its causes" (2.60.1) when he speaks in the assembly: "Hatred and unpopularity at the moment have fallen to the lot of all who have aspired to rule others" (2.64.5).

Bush, too, addresses the disapproval, palpable by 2004, of United States involvement in the Middle East, saying, “Some in this chamber, and in our country, did not support the liberation of Iraq” (2004, 96). “I know that some people question if America is really in a war at all” (2004, 96). Neither leader rhetorizes “unprepared” (Thuc. 2.60.1), and both leaders aim to “[protest] your being unreasonably irritated with me, or cowed by your sufferings” (2.60.1).

Bush protests unreasonable irritation but first, unlike Pericles, acquiesces some validation to political opponents. “Objections to war often come from principled motives” (2004, 96). Pericles, by contrast, suggests that any objection to a necessary war is gutless:

For those of course who have a free choice in the matter and whose fortunes are not at stake, war is the greatest of follies. But if the only choice was between submission with loss of independence, and danger with the hope of preserving that independence—in such a case it is he who will not accept the risk that deserves blame, not he who will. (Thuc. 2.61.1)

Here, though, is where the dissimilarities cease. Bush charges that lest they judge him as a lone proponent of conflict, vote-casting politicians endure the mental exercise of introspection:

Recognizing the threat to our country, the United States Congress voted overwhelmingly last year to support the use of force against Iraq. (Mar. 17, 2003, 339)

You in the Congress have provided the resources for our defense and cast the difficult votes of war and peace. (2004, 96)

He has elevated Congress to those “who will accept the risk” (Thuc. 2.61.1) and then turns that elevation in to his defense.

In a method of argument that one could effortlessly transpose with American argumentation, Pericles denounces his critics. “It is surely ... not like you to be so confounded with your domestic afflictions as to give up all thoughts of the common safety, and to blame me for having counseled war and yourselves for having voted it,” says the Athenian (2.60.4). He continues:

I am the same man and do not alter, it is you who change, since in fact you took my advice while unhurt, and waited for misfortune to repent of it; and the apparent error of my policy lies in the infirmity of your resolution, since the suffering that it entails is being felt by everyone among you while its advantage is still remote and obscure to all, and a great and sudden reverse having befallen you, your mind is too much depressed to persevere in your resolves. (2.61.2)

Application of the terms of order provides further analysis of this appeal. The texts suggest the rhetors experience dramatist guilt over having led their respective countries into what would prove to be unpopular wars.

The third speech of Pericles includes an attempt made by the rhetor to purge himself of guilt via scapegoating. He places the blame on his constituency, who he decries as infirm and fair-weather. It is their poor conduct, specifically their inability to trust in the grand scheme of things, that has reaped their discontent. He alone is “a patriot” (Thuc. 2.60.5).

Bush’s primary method of ridding himself of guilt is interminable. Bush utilizes both transcendence and scapegoating, but the researcher is unable to pinpoint which

because of the rhetor's obfuscation within the text. The following statement makes plain the researcher's trouble:

I also hear doubts that democracy is a realistic goal for the greater Middle East, where freedom is rare. Yet it is mistaken, and condescending, to assume that whole cultures and great religions are incompatible with liberty and self-government. (U.S. President 2004. 97)

In one stroke, the excerpt both redefines the guilt-inducing situation and moralistically chastises naysayers.

Bush justifies himself as the greater idealist. He glorifies his hopes for the Middle East while destroying his detractors, painting them as biased and unwilling to share the great benefits of freedom that America enjoys. He, though, is unprejudiced against Middle Eastern cultures and religions. His argument in favor of Afghani and Iraqi self-government recalls the bigoted arguments against Cuban self-government after the Spanish-American War. Bush rhetorically hands his audience an ultimatum: Either you are a racist, or you are a Republican.

Bush scapegoats by calling out the intolerant oppositionists as the ones who are unwilling to stay the course. They are undermining the nondiscriminatory efforts of the U.S. and scoffing at the sacrifice of American soldiers who are dying to bring democratic freedom to the Middle East.

This inconclusiveness is not surprising. Given the tremendous scrutiny Bush's words received in the media, a discernable commitment to either scapegoating or justification would likely have caused a backlash in the press. It is clear that the president does not take the mortification conduit; in his reporting only that he hears of

“doubts” and “questions,” Bush presents himself as an individual singularly removed from the gossip. Additionally, his non-accusatory use of “some” (e.g., “some people question”) evokes a tense conversation recorded in the gospels:

In the evening, Jesus arrived with the other disciples, and as they were sitting around the table eating, Jesus said, “I solemnly declare that one of you will betray me, one of you who is here eating with me.” A great sadness swept over them, and one by one they asked him, “Am I the one?” (Mark 14:17-19)

“Some in this chamber and in our country did not support the liberation of Iraq” (2004, 97), says the leader of the free world to assembled countrymen. Bush elevates himself as the true democratic patriot while others quietly and outspokenly reject the ideal of true democracy. Seemingly, he says, “I solemnly declare that ‘some in this chamber and in this country’ would betray a people clamoring for freedom.” His statement should like to have his congregate audience furtively glance at one another, thinking, “Is it me, Mr. President? Is it me?”

### **Armor of the fallen**

Professor Victor Davis Hanson describes the crowded battlefield conditions of Greece during the Periclean Age like so: with the “ear-splitting” “din of clashing metal and screaming men” (2008, 604) serving to further confuse soldiers compensating for severely limited fields of vision due to their wearing “crested helmets with small eye slots” (2008, 604), “hearing and sight by those in the ranks was difficult if not nonexistent” (2008, 604). As horrifying as sensory deprivation must have been during the throes of battle, the oblivion might have been the lesser of two evils; “reports of

gaping wounds to the unprotected neck and groin, involuntary defecation and urination, and panic abound in battle descriptions in Greek literature” (Hanson 2008, 604-605).

When the grotesque mayhem subsided, “perhaps after not much more than an hour,” the vanquished would flee the field of struggle, permitting the victors to gather unto themselves their own dead and strip the armor off of their opponents’ dead bodies (Hanson 2008, 604-605). The fatigued victors would then take one set of looted armor, arrange it on a pole and rig up a kind of monument at or near the field (Hanson 2008, 605). This trophy served as a symbol of the victors’ warring knack.

The *History* provides an example of the Peloponnesians practicing this martial ritual after defeating the Athenians in a cavalry battle (Thuc. 2.22).

Bush erects a trophy of his own shortly after the Twin Towers were destroyed. He closes his September 20 Address to the Nation by presenting a symbol known well to the ancient Greeks. He says, “And I will carry this: It is the police shield of a man named George Howard, who died at the World Trade Center trying to save others” (Sept. 20, 1350).

Bush pays homage to and then rejects the Greek tradition.

Coming under sudden attack, his nation cannot be declared the winner of 9/11. What is more, Bush has not the box cutters of terrorists but the shield of an American. Yet the president erects a trophy anyway, the symbols of which are reclamation and “piss-and-vinegar” determinism.

His first term’s final State of the Union Address bookends the September 20 Address to America. Bush again references the armor he retrieved in the unsettling days of 2001: “When I came to this rostrum on September the 20th, 2001, I brought the police

shield of a fallen officer, my reminder of lives that ended, and a task that does not end” (2004, 96).

### **The “unprecedented”**

In the *Archaeology of the History*, Thucydides states that the Peloponnesian War was so lengthy and so beleaguered by “disasters that no other similar period of time could match” (1.23.1). Thucydidean pronouncement of the war’s singularity is echoed in Bush’s summary of the war on terror. Bush asserts that the U.S. “government is taking unprecedented measures to protect our people” (Jan. 2003, 113), that “Americans should not expect one battle but a lengthy campaign unlike any other we have ever seen” (Sept. 20) and that ours is a “time of great consequence” (Jan. 2003, 109).

An inability to locate ready historical models with which to size up the importance of an event and a subsequent obsession with the event’s uniqueness appears to have seized the imagination of the Bush administration. To quantifiably study this phenomenon, the researcher has coined a new term: the “unprecedent.” The unprecedent is that missing historical link, the precedent that is not there, and its existence signals that the current event is unprecedented. Outward reveling in the unprecedent is ubiquitous in Bush’s rhetoric:

Americans have known wars but for the past 136 years, they have been wars on foreign soil, except for one Sunday in 1941. Americans have known the casualties of war but not at the center of a great city on a peaceful morning. Americans have known surprise attacks but never before on thousands of civilians. All of this was brought upon us in a single day and night fell on different world, a world where freedom itself is under attack. (Sept. 2001, 1347)

This war will not be like the war against Iraq a decade ago, with a decisive liberation of territory and a swift conclusion. It will not look like the air war above Kosovo two years ago, where no ground troops were used and not a single American was lost in combat. (Sept. 2001, 1349)

Correspondingly, Thucydides considers the distinctiveness of Pericles' military arena:

Never had so many cities been taken and laid desolate, here by the barbarians, here by the parties contending (the old inhabitants being sometimes removed to make room for others); never was there so much banishing and bloodshedding, now on the field or battle, now in political strife. (1.23.2)

In his treatment of the war on terror's unprecedented nature, Bush would have his audience believe that the singularity of the conflict necessarily imbues it with esteem: "In a single instant, we realized that this will be a decisive decade in the history of liberty, that we've been called to unique role in human events. Rarely has the world faced a choice more clear or consequential" (2002, 139). It appears as though Bush's operational view of history is such that any anomaly is sufficient to make the canon.

Fascination with the unprecedented stresses Burke's concept that humans seek order. That the unprecedented exists threatens an upset of established order, which in turn induces anxiety (i.e., guilt). Allusions to light and shadow appear frequently in Bush's speeches, often with a biblical undercurrent. The unknown in Bush's rhetoric is often cloaked in darkness. He references the "dark threat of violence" (2004, XX) and "the shadow of this ultimate danger" (2004, XX). His personification of darkness invokes funereality and recalls the psalmist's "valley of the shadow of death" (Psalm 23:4). But darkness for Bush also represents the unknown (i.e., fear of the unprecedented). In the

Bible, one sees that trepidation and scorn have long accompanied darkness. The prophet Job, for example, demonstrates man's natural aversion to darkness when he curses the day he was born, bemoaning,

That day—may it turn to darkness; may God not care about it; may no light shine upon it. May darkness and deep shadow claim it once more; may a cloud settle over it; may blackness overwhelm its light. That night—may thick darkness seize it . . . may its morning stars be dark; may it wait for daylight in vain and not see the first rays of dawn. (Job 3:4-6)

According to the guilt-redemption cycle, man was not created to live in the inky blackness of guilt. Guilt must be overcome. Darkness needs light as “Guilt needs Redemption” (1961, 4).

Bush first seeks to assuage the nation's guilt by greeting the unprecedented occurrence as though it were not unprecedented and thereby not a formidable challenger, hence banishing the unprecedented. In his oratory, he invokes the customs and stories of old: “the bones of the dead” (Thuc. 2.34.2), the Acropolis, the wailing wall, Gettysburg, the USS *Missouri*, the USS *Maine*, the trophy of the Spartans and the police shield of George Howard.

But ultimately, he says this event is unlike the past. He must blaze a new path and set precedent in the process. The war in Iraq, being so unlike anything that has come before, permits new mores be set by his administration. “Different threats require different strategies” (U.S. President 2004, 96). He grants himself consent to step outside established conventions and wage war in a way that many have condemned as unconstitutional.

Either “there is nothing new under the sun” or the war on terror presents a new challenge. Borrowing oratory and leaning on allusions in a way that belies his argument, Bush chooses to say that his war is a wholly unprecedented conflict, the conquest of which will bring about American glory. With his “shoot-from-the-hip readiness to use force without regard to consequences” (Kelton 2008) and his cowboy-style leadership, Bush ventures to settle the frontier of darkness that is the unknown.

Burke says “Redemption needs Redeemer,” and it is clear from Bush’s rhetoric that democracy fills this Messianic role. Like his father before him, Bush calls upon “a thousand points of light” to surmount uncertainty, to “finish the historic work of democracy in Afghanistan and Iraq, so those nations can light the way for others” (2004, 97) and to exile the unprecedented.

## Chapter 5: Conclusions

### Discussion

A textual analysis and dramatist critique revealed a relationship between the modern war rhetoric of George W. Bush in seven of his speeches from 2001-2004 and the classical war rhetoric of Pericles as recorded by Thucydides in the *History*.

Appeals common to both were explored through nine of the 12 categorical tenets laid out by Theodore C. Burgess in “Epidictic Literature.” Individual statements amassed from Bush’s rhetoric suggest commonalities with classical appeals. Periclean examples categorized in the same manner reveal a strong correlation with Bush’s rhetoric. In places, the same words were used to rouse support, inspire patriotism (i.e., “opportunity”), monger fear (i.e., “barbarian”) and dissuade criticism of the Iraq and the Peloponnesian wars. Findings from the textual analysis support the researcher’s hypothesis that the wartime rhetoric of other speakers throughout antiquity has much in common with Bush’s rhetoric, and Pericles’ rhetoric in particular is echoed in the presidential rhetoric of the Iraq War.

Symbolic language was investigated utilizing the dramatist philosophy that words inherently hold several layers of meaning. Reference to setting was explored using Burke’s pentadic element of scene. Allusions to naval strength were explored through the lens of identity. Discussion of leadership during unpopular war was augmented with attention to terms of order, specifically scapegoating and transcendence. A common symbolic relic, armor of the fallen, was identified. And the existence of the

“unprecedented” was discussed with thought given to the guilt-redemption cycle. The recognizable presence of like symbols supports a secondary argument of the researcher’s: In addition to emulating Pericles’ rhetoric, Bush, in his addresses, draws from the tradition of ancient Greece.

Together, the textual analysis and dramatist critique answer the researcher’s question: To what extent is the oratory of George W. Bush similar to that of Pericles? Because there exist both straightforward and symbolic correlations, the researcher concludes there to be an association. Further, this rhetorical rapport suggests a Bush-ean acknowledgement of Greek antecedents and possibly an exploitation of symbolic Greek heritage for the purposes of drumming up the nation’s approval of his exercising martial muscle.

### **Limitations**

This thesis examined deconstructed speeches as opposed to whole arguments, the purpose being to systematically examine appeals. The downside of employing a categorical methodology is that in doing so, the researcher relinquishes the opportunity to speak on commonalities among inclusive lines of reasoning.

This thesis only considered the speeches of Bush’s first term as president of the United States. As a result, the present study cannot assert any relationship between the whole of Bush’s presidential rhetoric and Pericles’ rhetoric.

This thesis declined to study the visual rhetoric of Bush’s televised war addresses.

Finally, this thesis accepted the challenge of reconciling transcripts of speeches whose nuances were likely forgotten days, months or years after the fact with the read

and re-read recorded history of Thucydides, a work the Athenian author considered “a possession for all time.”

### **Suggestions for further research**

So that in the future important conclusions might be reached with regard to the cultural relevance of this thesis’ findings, the researcher suggests the supported relationship between the rhetorics be examined in light of group identity theory and collective memory/myth-making theory. Dramatism “[persuasively argues] for [language’s] therapeutic personal and social functions” (Rueckert 1994, 71). The presence of commonalities in Bush’s and Pericles’ oratory might be symptomatic of a larger societal urge to transcend guilt induced by present strife by likening wartime actions to those of the “glorious ancestry”. War, by obligation, upsets the order of things. Ruerckert says, “Catharsis is absolutely essential to any understanding of Burke’s legacy to us” (1994, 32). Catharsis is the end goal of consubstantiality and begins again the guilt-redemption cycle.

Had time allowed, the researcher should have much liked to delve into the writings of 21st century French philosopher Paul Ricouer. Ricouer dedicated himself to the study of collective memory and advocated a phenomenological approach to literature that would complement the study’s textual analysis. Inclusion of Ricouer might have provided a philosophical explanation as to why there exist apparent commonalities within the texts.

Third, it should be noted that in conducting a review of the texts, a sixth symbolic appeal surfaced: empire-building. This appeal was not included in the findings because,

unlike the others, it manifested in speech not directly war-related. Statements falling under this “soft power” appeal include reference to the exporting of American goods, reference to the accumulation of powerful allies, reference to radio transmission of U.S.-backed media in the Middle East and reference to the Iraqis adopting a constitution like the United States’ Constitution. The omitted statements follow:

Nations making progress toward freedom will find America is their friend. We will promote our values. We will promote the peace. And we need a strong military to keep the peace. (Feb. 2001, 355)

Yet the cause for freedom rests on more than our ability to defend our allies and ourselves. Freedom is exported every day, as we ship goods and products that improve the lives of millions of people. (Feb. 2001, 356)

To cut through the barriers of hateful propaganda, the Voice of America and other broadcast services are expanding their programming in Arabic and Persian—and soon, a new television service will be providing reliable news and information across the region. (2004, 97)

Last January, Iraq’s only law was the whim of one brutal man. Today our coalition is working with the Iraqi Governing Council to draft a basic law, with a bill of rights. (2004, 97)

A thorough investigation of peacetime appeals like these might yield interesting findings. Although in 2004 Bush claims, “We have no desire to dominate, no ambitions to empire. Our aim is a democratic peace” (97), it is clear that this peace is the fruit of Pearson’s “new imperialism,” and one is forcefully reminded of Tacitus’ statement made in critique of the mighty Roman empire: *Ubi solitudinum faciunt pacem appellant*. “They make a desert and call it peace.”

## Closing arguments

By way of lengthy anecdote, Cullen Murphy in *Are We Rome?: The Fall of an Empire and the Fate of America*, presents a metaphor he came across while reading Sigmund Freud. The psychoanalyst attempted a comparison between the human psyche and the archaeology of Rome:

“Historians tell us,” he begins, “that the oldest Rome was the *Roma Quadrata*, a fenced settlement on the Palatine. Then followed the phase of the Septimontium, a federation of settlements on the different hills; after that came the city bounded by the Servian Wall’ and later still, after all the transformations during the periods of the republic and the early Caesars, the city which the emperor Aurelian surrounded with his walls.” Now imagine, he goes on, that rather than each stage being obliterated by the next, they all somehow survive. Thus it would be possible to see not only the Colosseum in all its grandeur but also the lakefront of Nero’s palace, which it replaced. We could gaze simultaneously at today’s Castel Sant’ Angelo, an imposing umber fortress, and the bright marble tomb of Hadrian crowned with a grove of trees, from which the fortress grew. Could our minds be something like that—a psychic device “in which nothing that has come into existence will have passed away, and all the earlier phases of development continue to exist alongside the latest one”? (Murphy 2007, 23)

Freud concluded no. The brains of humans do not work in this way, but their perceptions of history do. All eras exist simultaneously in the mind.

Thucydides retroactively discusses Freud’s metaphor by speaking to the effervescence of archaeology. Ruins are misleading, he says, “For I suppose that if Sparta were to become desolate, and only the temples and the foundations of the public buildings were left, that as time when on there would b a strong disposition with posterity to refuse to accept her fame as a true exponent of her power” (1.10.2). Language lasts longer than do monuments. Without his *History*, modern scholarship might not be aware

of Sparta's vast influence. One might not know "they occupy two-fifths of the Peloponnesus and lead the whole, not to speak of their numerous allies outside" (Thuc. 1.10.2) because "the city is neither built in a compact form nor adorned with magnificent temples and public edifices, but composed of villages after the old fashion of Hellas" (Thuc. 1.10.2). Thucydides decides that sans his contribution to the great books of Western literature, one would come away with an inaccurate "impression of [Spartan] inadequacy" (1.10.2).

Sparta won the Peloponnesian War. Professing a "notion that there are gods who punish an imperial power's wanton destruction of Greek states" (Hanson 2008, xix), Sparta and her allies put an end to Athenian domination. After 33 years of fighting, Sparta received help from Persia, who buttressed rebellious Athenian uprisings and eventually denied Athens her naval supremacy. Might modern scholarship pay more heed to the parallels between Athens and America knowing the fate of one?

Thucydides hoped so. Hanson tells us penned his *History* to be:

More than an accurate account of the events of his age, momentous and portentous as they were. Clearly, he believed that the war between Athens and Sparta offered a unique look at the poles of human and not just Greek experience, at contrasting ideologies and assumptions for a brief time ripped open by organized savagery and left exposed for autopsy by the bewildered but curious who were eager for explanation and instruction. For the diagnostician Thucydides, the nature of humankind was constant and predictable, the story of civilized man somewhat continuous and repetitive, and thus his account of these events surely of educational value to sober and reflective men not yet born. (Hanson 2008, xi)

To close, this thesis was undertaken with the guiding beliefs that language holds incredible, lasting power; that a study of history yields application for the present and

that, in the words of Cicero, “To be ignorant of what has happened before your birth is to remain always a child. For what is the meaning of a man’s life unless it is intertwined with that of our ancestors by the memory of history” (in Mellor, 1999, 1).

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