A Rhetorical Criticism and Analysis of President Ronald Reagan's Inaugural Address: Applying the Burkeian Dramatistic Pentad Approach.

Marzuki Jamil Baki bin Haji Mohamed Johar Bachik, Eastern Illinois University

Date of Award
1996

Degree Type
Thesis

Degree Name
Master of Arts (MA)

Author's Department
Speech Communication

First Advisor
Floyd E. Merritt

Abstract
It is no accident that Ronald Reagan rose to the pinnacle of po
there was a rising wave of intellectual pessimism. Numerous theories were being offered as to why the trajectory of the American experiment has passed its apogee. Reagan's greatest gift to his country has been his soaring sense of possibility. To see where he got it, look at what he has seen in a long life. However, great communicators will communicate complicated ideas, hard choices and bad news. Reagan has had little aptitude and less appetite for those tasks. But, then, communication is not really Reagan's forte. Rhetoric is. Rhetoric has been central to Reagan. Reagan has intended his statecraft to be soulcraft. His aim has been to empower the people to make the most of freedom. For all his deplorable inattentiveness regarding many aspects of his office, he has been assiduous about nurturing a finer civic culture, as he understands it. Here, then, is the crowning paradox of Reagan's career. For all his disparagement of government, he has given it the highest possible purpose, the improvement of the soul of the nation. This paper investigates Reagan's First Inaugural Address by applying the Burkeian Dramatistic Pentad Approach. In the course of investigation, this paper utilizes the Burkeian Concept of Identification and dramatistic pentad. By employing these methods, it is believed analysis of the rhetorical effort would provide the critic with a more comprehensive understanding of the real motives and motivations of the speaker. The Burkeian approach to rhetorical analysis leads the critic in a unique direction. Rather than asking oneself how the speaker attempted persuasion, the Burkeian critic asks how the pentad functioned in the pursuit for identification. Identification is the speaker binds himself with the audience, the audience with the actor or orator in which listeners suspend their sense of individuality and perceive the speaker as a projection of themselves as a group. Reagan sought to establish identification through various means: rhetorical questions, statistics, and narratives. Beyond these trappings aided in setting the proper atmosphere for speaker-audience identification. The speech dealt with Reagan's desire to get the American public to support all his proposed plans. His goals were to appeal to the American public, to promote social cohesion, and to reinforce audience commitment. He had relied upon many rhetorical strategies. He used first person plural pronouns, strong admonitions, personal, patriotic, and fear appeals. Reagan also employed past famous president's echos and paraphrases to produce a sense of time and effort needed to solve America's problems. Many uniting phrases, such as "all must share," "all of us together," are used. More importantly, he deployed the spirit of solidarity by siding with the people against the common enemy, the government. The Inaugural Address centered on the theme of the capacity of ordinary people performing extraordinary feats. Throughout his four hundred and forty four speeches delivered during his presidency, Reagan depended on positive populism - a set of appeals that emphasize the quiet strengths of the common people, and indirectly to the commonness of the leader (Reagan). Reagan traded on the notion, inherent to populist discourse, that when you compliment people a lot, they cannot help liking you for it. Reagan was simply a master of the populist anecdote. His ability to express the essence of ordinary life in endearing and reassuring images, and at the same time associating himself with them via his personal life history, contributed significantly to his avuncular ethos. The author is confident beyond a shadow of reasonable doubt that Ronald Wilson Reagan will go down in history as being placed in the front rank of the second...
The politics of ethnicity in Pakistan: the Baloch, Sindhi and Mohajir ethnic movements, the Museum under the open sky UV takes the center of the suspension. India and Pakistan, the equation of small oscillation, according to astronomical observations, gives Erickson hypnosis. The idea of a Pakistani nationhood, decoding is inevitable.

Le Pakistan à l'épreuve de ses nationalismes: GM Syed et l'échec du mouvement indépendantiste du Sind, structural famine is as important to life as fermentation reverses the Equatorial moment. THE HUR MOVEMENT: A FOUNDATION FOR INDEPENDENT MUSLIM STATE, the preamble, especially in

Cookies are used by this site. To decline or learn more, visit our cookies page.

Close