

Sadat and keating

Literature



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Throughout history, the language of rhetoric has been harnessed and manipulated by public speakers throughout the world in order to effectively address key issues surrounding society and politics. The proposition that the enduring appeal of a speech lies in its ability to challenge and inspire is clearly demonstrated in both Anwar Sadat's "Statement to the Knesset" (1977) and Paul Keating's "Funeral Service for the Unknown Soldier" (1993). It is indeed the rhetorical treatment of the widely debated values in these speeches- whether it be for peace between two nations or simply the need for a stronger sense of national identity- that makes both these texts so influential in their enduring appeal.

Sadat's Speech: In the light of the four year war preceding his speech which Sadat had evidently implemented, the Prime Minister of Egypt's address to the Israeli Knesset-an audience which involved not only enemy politician's but Israelis' who were personally involved in the war- was indeed one of the most challenging and influential speeches in history. Through the language of rhetoric, Sadat draws upon religious, political and personal motivations in order to propose to the Israeli Knesset a solution for peace to end the age long conflict between the Egypt and Israel.

Beginning his speech, Sadat employs the use of religious allusion and pathos in order to set the foundations of his argument to bring unity to both countries through the use of a universal God who loves all and wishes for peace- " We all, Muslims, Christians and Jews, worship god...Gods' teachings and commandments are love, sincerity, purity and peace." Making use of inclusive language, Sadat makes sure to note that he speaks on the behalf of Egypt, who like himself, also seek peace with the rival Israelis - " We really

and truly welcome you to live amongst us in peace and security". Throughout his speech, Sadat draws upon religious similarities to sedate the cultural friction which has been so central to the countries past rivalries.

Calling upon religious allusion, Sadat explains that just like Abraham (a figure central to both Islam and Judaism) was prepared to sacrifice his own son in order to maintain God's plan, Egypt and Israel must be prepared to sacrifice their hate and differences in order to achieve peace and please the Lord. Whilst Sadat's speech has a tone of Idealism, the Prime Minister remains bluntly realistic, maintaining diplomatic posture as he defines the terms of his peace proposal-" Complete withdrawal from the Arab territories occupied in 1967 is a complete and undisputed fact". In a final application of logos, Sadat harnesses enumeration as he proposes 5 steps in which Egypt and Israel must follow to achieve peace, thus directly and diplomatically laying out a logical plan which the Israeli Knesset can relate to easily.

Concluding his speech, Sadat returns to his appeal for ethos as he calls upon the victims of war to stand up for peace, employing high modality language as he states " You, bewailing mother; you, widowed wife...you, all victims of wars- fill the earth and space with recitals of peace". Finishing on a quote from the Koran, Sadat emphasises the origins of Islam in Judaism and thus reinforces the religious base of his speech as he acknowledges the commonalities Egypt and Israel share through their religion. Highly commended by political commentators as being one of the most historic and influential speeches of all time, Anwar Sadat's peace efforts later described as " electric shock diplomacy" has led to a peace treaty between Israel and Egypt for over 30 years.

However, whilst being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize and Time magazines "Man of the Year", the assassination of Sadat by his own army officers in 1981 and the continuing friction between the two countries today demonstrates that despite his efforts, Sadat's speech had failed to achieve any long term goals. However, despite its obvious shortcomings, Anwar Sadat's speech remains to resonate within society almost 40 years later due the inspirational and courageous actions of the Prime minister which have promoted a timeless message of peace, unity, humility, religious conviction and above all the ability of one man to influence the world. Keating's Speech

Similar to Sadat's speech, Keating utilises the language of rhetoric and the occasion of the 75th anniversary of Armistice Day in order to re-present the traditional idea of 'ANZAC spirit' and thus address a variety of issues (such as the social movements of the 1960's and the High Court Mabo and Wik decisions) surrounding Australia's national identity. Keating begins his speech with an appeal to ethos through the use of inclusive language in order to establish an egalitarian relationship with his democratic audience- "We do not know this Australian's name and we never will". Utilising anaphora, Keating proceeds to employ cumulative language in order to stress the anonymity of the soldier and thus the universal nature of the speech, drawing upon Aristotelian logos as he emphasises that the purpose of his speech is not to glorify individual war efforts, but rather to stress the Metonymical significance of the Anzac- "He is all of them. And he is one of us".

Through clever use of parallelism, Keating effectively describes the Anzac characteristics as being aspects our national identity. In a move to pre-empt

his critics, Keating makes a radical diversion from previous representations of Australia's war involvement in an obvious effort to avoid glorifying the bloodshed and pain our Anzac's were subject to, making a distinct appeal to logos through the use of asyndeton to describe the true nature of past conflicts- " Because the Great War was a mad, brutal, awful struggle, distinguished more often than not by military and political incompetence..." Harnessing high modality language, Keating continues to argue that it was not the politicians and generals who were to be portrayed as heroes, but rather the ordinary soldiers who harnessed what it meant to be Australian-" It is a legend not of sweeping military victories so much as triumphs against the odds, of courage and ingenuity in adversity."

Responding yet again to his critics, Keating adheres to ethos whilst employing the use of anaphora in order to include pacifists, feminists, indigenous people and Vietnam Veterans in his justification of national identity " This unknown soldier is not interred here to glorify war over peace; or to assert a soldier's character above civilians..." However, in the concluding paragraphs of the speech, the former Prime Minister continues to then contradict himself as he is seen to appeal to a narrowly conceived myopic nationalism, describing Australia's national identity entwined with " a story of bravery and sacrifice"- disregarding those who were not involved with the war. The patriotic tone of this speech resonated within citizens throughout Australia whilst the revisionist historical view favoured by the Prime Minister placated many of the critics of the ' Anzac legacy'.

Paul Keating effectively used the language of rhetoric to not only shape an Australian identity irrespective of race, gender or political views, but in doing

so challenged traditional views in regards to glorifying the war efforts of politicians and generals, rather placing a reemphasis on the 'ordinary soldiers', recognising the horrors and hardships they endured to make the country what it is today. However, post structuralist critics have pointed out certain ideological gaps and silences evident in the speech, such as the lack of mention of indigenous Australians who fought in the war and the conscientious objectors.

Despite such criticism, it is undeniable that Keating's Remembrance Day speech has had a widespread and timeless impact in Australia, through its appeal to an audience in search of a common identity and purpose. Both Paul Keating's "Eulogy to the Unknown Soldier" and Anwar Sadat's "Statement to the Knesset" have had a resounding impact both short and long term through their use of rhetoric in addressing key issues in politics and society. Both speeches are extremely effective in challenging the traditional views surrounding the subject of their speech, inspiring generations to come to follow their lead, whether it be for peace between two countries or for a better understanding of what it means to be Australian.